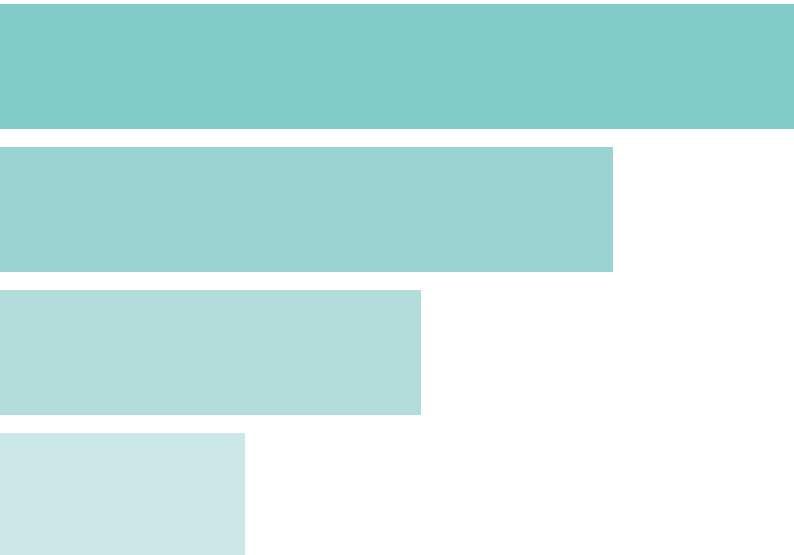


# BEST IN CLASS: THE SUMMIT REPORT

March 2016



The Sutton Trust and the Carnegie Corporation of New York organised the Best in Class summit in London on 9 March 2016.

This is a report of the proceedings of the summit.

Research, videos, photos, slides and news stories from the event can be viewed at

[www.summit-bestinclass.com](http://www.summit-bestinclass.com)

A number of policy ideas and suggestions came up through discussions on the day. Ten of these are summarised below:

## Teaching as a profession

### *1. Better housing support for teachers in high cost areas*

The Government could consider reintroducing key-worker housing, or allowances for the most experienced and effective teachers in certain areas. Teachers might also be allocated a proportion of the houses developed by the Government on its own land where housebuilding is being managed by a department or agency, such as the Ministry of Defence.

### *2. Cutting unnecessary work*

Being clearer about marking, data and meetings, as well as using standard textbooks instead of worksheets, could reduce hours of unnecessary extra work for teachers, making the profession more attractive at a time of teacher shortages.

### *3. 'Try before you buy'*

Allowing undergraduates to try teaching during their degrees could increase students' interest in the profession. This could be developed at universities to encourage more to consider teaching while also allowing those who may decide not to teach to make an early decision before entering teacher training

### *4. Making probation fit with the evidence*

The summit heard emerging research evidence that suggests that it takes longer than the probation period before many teachers demonstrate high levels of competence.

As the subsequent White Paper, Educational Excellence Everywhere advocated, qualifying as a teacher will in future take longer ensuring teachers are better prepared when they qualify.

## School admissions

### *5. Local coordination of school admissions*

With all schools expected to become academies, and the processes required by many faith schools and grammar schools, there was a strong view that coordination of admissions locally was vital. This is particularly important with banding policies to ensure they are fair.

### *6. Monitoring non-standard admissions in hotspot areas*

Concerns were raised about some disadvantaged students being hard to place if they left school during the school year. The Schools Adjudicator should monitor areas where concerns had been raised, such as inner London, and report regularly on the issue.

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## School partnerships

### *7. Incentivising greater contributions from independent schools*

Independent schools benefit from state support through charitable reliefs and teacher training, so more should be done to engage the sector, including through stronger partnerships linked to academy trusts and sharing of academic expertise between sectors.

## Teacher development

### *8. Teacher professional development using what works*

The growing evidence of what works in education, in particular the evidence in the Sutton Trust-EEF Toolkit, too often doesn't translate into what happens in many schools.

The Department for Education and the College of Teaching should work together academy chains and Teaching School Alliances to drive better practice.

### *9. Encouraging experienced teachers into schools in disadvantaged areas*

Research for the summit found that schools with the greatest level of disadvantage tended overall to have less experienced teachers, while those with the most advantaged intakes tended to employ more experienced teachers. Alongside programmes for recent graduates like Teach First, experienced teachers should be incentivised to teach in these areas, where they can have the greatest impact on disadvantaged students.

### *10. Incentivising networks*

Building on examples from Singapore, academy chains and teaching school alliances should work together with the College of Teaching to develop a national network of professional development in a way that works with England's autonomous schools. The Department should also consider ring fenced funding for network activity by schools as it develops the national funding formula.

# OVERVIEW

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A number of key points were made during the summit, these included:

- The Schools Minister, Nick Gibb MP, stressed that recruitment and retention were key priorities for the Government. The Minister also set out the administration's wider policy agenda of increasing school autonomy and raising standards, emphasising the importance of curriculum reform.
- Professor Anna Vignoles, of Cambridge University, presented her research which identified the differences in the distribution of the best teachers. The best performing teachers tended to have more experience and were more likely to work in advantaged schools. She added that 40 per cent of teachers had less than four years' experience.
- Melinda George gave her perspective on issues affecting education in the United States, as the President of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. More than 50 per cent of students in public schools were from poor families and improving teaching was crucial for increasing their chances of doing well at school.

A number of points were made about new choices for disadvantaged pupils.

- Professor Anne West of LSE said that while there appeared to be less evidence of schools breaking the school admissions code there were issues with compliance, control and the complexity of the system.
- LaVerne Srinivasan, Vice President, National Programme, Carnegie Corporation said Carnegie was interested in seeing how different strands of work in the schools system were related to one another and how more joint working could lead to improved outcomes.
- Dr Becky Allen, of Education Datalab, said there was some evidence of challenging teenage students not being able to find a place if they moved during the school year.
- Academies were improving the education of disadvantaged students in coastal or former industrial towns. Dr Toby Salt, the CEO of Ormiston Academies said there was often limited school choice in these areas.
- Saskia Levy Thompson pointed out the similarities between the schools system in England and the US. From her perspective as the Programme Director, New Designs for Schools and Systems, Carnegie, she felt a philosophical shift was taking place from standardised systems to ones where students and their parents had a range of options.

The afternoon sessions focused on getting good teachers into challenging schools.

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- Sir Michael Wilshaw called on the system to improve leadership, both by heads, middle leaders and leaders of local authorities. There needed to be improved system leadership by heads with something to offer the system as a whole and he urged independent schools to make a greater contribution.
  - Other speakers made related points. Reuben Moore of TeachFirst said the programme was an important route for bringing graduates into schools and also helping some of them return to teaching later even if they had tried the profession and then left after a few years.
  - Help with housing would encourage teachers to stay in high cost areas, according to Martin Tune, head of Bonner Primary in Tower Hamlets.
  - Norman Atkins, of Relay Graduate School of Education, said it would be better to encourage a wider range of graduates to consider teaching as it was difficult to establish who the best teachers were until they had spent some time in the profession.
  - Meanwhile, in his keynote address, Dr Andreas Schleicher set out evidence from the OECD that it is possible to find ways to improve social mobility even though in some cases failure could be designed in to education systems. He said teaching was undergoing a long term change and teachers were becoming high level knowledge workers operating in a collegiate structure and accountable to their peers and stakeholders.

The final discussion panel made a series of points on developing teachers in the most challenging schools:

- Professor Rob Coe of Durham University stressed the importance of providing high quality CPD to improve the quality of teaching.
- Dr Charles Chew said the Singaporean experience was that a national network of Master Teachers helped encourage high quality CPD, something he was helping to develop as a Principal Master Teacher in the Academy of Singapore Teachers.
- Susie Weaver, principal of Wallscourt Academy, said a new school and new buildings could help to develop a culture where informal observation was valued.
- Dr Tony Jackson contrasted episodic and skills based CPD in the US with long term development in Asia. He added that as Vice President of the Asia Society he had been able to take American policy makers to see the differences for themselves and this could transform their view of CPD.

**Sir Peter Lampl, Chairman of the Sutton Trust and of the Education Endowment Foundation and LaVerne Srinivasan, Vice President, National Programme, Carnegie Corporation**

Sir Peter opened by introducing LaVerne Srinivasan, who thanked the Sutton Trust team who had worked on the summit and she hoped the event would provoke thinking about how to better prepare students for success.

In her view one of the best ways to confront disadvantage was to prepare students better to succeed. This was challenging but Carnegie was committed to confronting disadvantage and to working in partnership with the Sutton Trust to see what more could be done to improve and prepare teachers for challenges in the classroom.

Sir Peter said the Trust had been working with Carnegie for well over 10 years and in that time had attracted a series of important speakers to their conferences and he thanked Laverne and her colleagues for their support in making this happen.

He said that Britain and the US have the lowest level of social mobility among advanced nations. For nearly 20 years, the Sutton Trust had championed social mobility through its programmes, research and advocacy. 4,000 young people had received significant support; 170 research studies had been published in that time, with nearly 6,000 pieces of media coverage a year, worth the equivalent of £15 million of advertising.

Previous research by the Trust has found that the effects of good teaching are especially significant for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds: over a school year, these pupils gain 1.5 years' worth of learning with very effective teachers, compared to 0.5 years with poorly performing teachers.

Sir Peter thanked the speakers and welcomed the Schools Minister, the Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP, who he said was a good friend of the Trust.

## Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP, Minister of State for Schools

### Introduction

Mr Gibb said that since Sir Peter established the Sutton Trust almost 20 years ago, no organisation had done more to highlight educational inequality, develop the evidence on how disadvantage can be overcome, and demonstrate the decisive role schools can play in unlocking pupils' potential.

The Trust's activity had contributed to a powerful, but simple argument: that for too many children the circumstances of their birth still determine the quality of education they receive and their life chances, but that this need not be inevitable.



### Moral purpose

He said a welcome consensus had begun to emerge that schools can - and must - be engines of social mobility.

This commitment to extend opportunity and ensure that every child receives the best possible start in life was at the heart of the Government's plan for education.

Teachers were united in their support of this moral purpose. A survey of the profession last year found that the single most popular motivation for joining the profession was a desire to make a difference to pupils' lives - cited by a staggering 93% of those polled.

But a shared moral purpose was not enough - on its own it will not deliver the transformation in the life chances of the most disadvantaged children.

### Tackling the attainment gap

Mr Gibb said that last year, 57% of all pupils in state-funded schools achieved 5 A\* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics. But just 33% of pupils entitled to free school meals achieved the same standard.

This underperformance had a clear financial impact. Department for Education analysis found that pupils who achieve 5 or more good GCSEs (including English and maths) were estimated to have lifetime productivity gains worth around £100,000 compared to those who fail to reach that level.

There was also a social cost. When disadvantaged young people do not reach their potential, their under-representation was perpetuated in the most senior ranks of the professions and public service.



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The Sutton Trust had published the latest in its long series of analyses of this and it found that 74% of the most senior judges attended private school, 71% of top generals and 51% of leading print journalists were educated privately. However, just 7% of pupils are.

### **Progress**

The disparity between the educational opportunities open to disadvantaged pupils and their peers had become entrenched, and addressing this would take many years.

But Mr Gibb said the urgency with which the Government had pursued the goal of social mobility since 2010 was already showing promising results.

In 2011, the Government introduced the pupil premium which gave teachers the resources they need to provide additional support to these pupils, and the flexibility to adopt the specific interventions likely to have the greatest impact.

It had also funded the Sutton Trust and Impetus-PEF to establish the Education Endowment Foundation to provide teachers with the evidence on which to base their decisions. And the Sutton Trust's report '*What Makes Great Teaching*', produced by Professor Robert Coe and colleagues, has been invaluable to teachers.

The Department for Education had recognised the overwhelming evidence that the most effective approach to teaching early reading is systematic synthetic phonics. In 2012, the phonics screening check was introduced to help schools identify pupils struggling to master the basics of reading so that any difficulties could be quickly addressed.

He added that the Government's 'gap index measure' showed that the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers has already narrowed by 7% at key stage 2 and 6.6% at key stage 4 since 2011.

As increasing numbers of schools adopted high-quality systematic synthetic phonics, it was possible to imagine the effect of ensuring every child leaves primary school as a fluent reader.

In the same way the new primary maths curriculum and plans for a multiplication tables check in year 6 would also have a major impact.

There were also new grammar requirements; he said these were ensuring that every primary school taught English grammar - the first time for a generation.

### **More good places**

The most fundamental feature of an education system which promoted social mobility was one in which every child is able to attend a good school.

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Over 1.4 million more children attend schools today which were judged by Ofsted to be 'good' or 'outstanding' than in 2010, this was thanks to the hard work of teachers and the reforms introduced by the Government.

The success of schools in London showed the way forward. In the capital, 61% of pupils achieve 5 A\* to C at GCSE, including English and Maths; across England, the figure was 57%. Most strikingly, the attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals in some local authorities in London, including Tower Hamlets, exceeded the average performance of all pupils across England.

But though schools in England have secured significant improvements, and some areas are achieving remarkable progress, every child should attend a school which gave them the best possible start in life.

The Secretary of State had characterised this challenge as the need to secure educational excellence everywhere.

Mr Gibb said that last year he challenged the leaders of one local authority in the North West to address the entrenched underperformance in their secondary schools.

Last year, 37% of pupils in Knowsley achieved 5 A\* to C at GCSE, including English and Maths. This was 20 percentage points lower than the national average. The figure was even lower for pupils eligible for free school meals - at 20.5% - 12.6 percentage points lower than the national average.

He said that in response, the leader of the council described the intervention as "distasteful and opportunistic", and suggested that I should be reassured by the increase in their Local Authority's GCSE results last year.

This council leader's excuses for the underperformance of schools in his area represent an unacceptable complacency which prioritises maintaining a comfortable status quo for adults over protecting the life chances of children.

The Education and Adoption Bill, shortly to receive royal assent, would give the department new powers to address failing and coasting schools.

Schools judged by Ofsted to be inadequate would automatically become academies, so that they could benefit from the expertise and support of a strong sponsor.

Schools identified as coasting would be assessed by the relevant regional schools commissioner. Those with a credible plan to improve would be helped to do so; those with greater challenges would be eligible for intervention so that they became a sponsored academy.

And the free schools programme, including studio schools and university technical colleges - which has created 380 new schools and 190,000 new places since it was established in 2010 -

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would continue to bring fresh ideas and new approaches into areas in need of additional high-quality places. The Government would deliver its manifesto commitment to open at least 500 of these new schools over this Parliament.

### **A rich curriculum**

These structural changes would contribute to higher standards for all pupils, and especially the most disadvantaged.

However, he said it was just as important to ensuring that schools have the freedom and resources to offer a curriculum which stretches all pupils and equips them for further study and employment.

For children from relatively advantaged backgrounds, the curriculum had always been less material, as their parents could ensure they had the background knowledge and cultural literacy to read widely and pursue their interests.

Disadvantaged children, though, perhaps without the benefit of educated parents at home, were more likely to rely upon their school curriculum to provide the intellectual foundation they needed.



As literary critic and education expert ED Hirsch had powerfully argued, and cognitive psychologists such as Daniel Willingham have proved, a vague 'skills-based' curriculum, light on knowledge but heavy on fads and wishful thinking, provides scant hope to disadvantaged children hoping to build a brighter future.

The new national curriculum, introduced in September 2014, had carefully sequenced knowledge at its heart. And the new GCSEs and A levels, the first of which began to be taught in September 2015, set higher expectations and reflect the advice of leading subject experts.

Ensuring that individual subject curriculums were appropriately designed would, in isolation, be insufficient. There is clear evidence that disadvantaged young people have also been less likely to take the subjects most valuable to further progression.

Mr Gibb said that some schools simply did not expect disadvantaged pupils - even when highly able - to study the most academic subjects. Without these subjects, university and many careers fell further out of reach.

Last year, the Sutton Trust published analysis which looked at the GCSE performance of pupils who had previously scored in the top 10% nationally at the end of primary school. The trust found that, even within this group, pupils who had received free school meals were

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significantly less likely to be taking history, geography, a language, or triple science at GCSE than their peers.

In the last Parliament, the Government announced that it would introduce the Progress 8 accountability measure to replace the existing 5 A\* to C GCSE metric.

And last year proposals were set out to implement the manifesto commitment for 90% of pupils to study the English Baccalaureate. For many schools, this would be a significant change as they reconfigured their curriculums and established new expectations.

Government must also do its part to support the change, especially by helping to recruit the additional teachers needed in subjects such as modern foreign languages.

But the prize was worth it to ensure that virtually all young people studied subjects which kept their options open.

### **The best teachers in the right schools**

Mr Gibb said that the report the Sutton Trust was publishing today provided more detail on the final, crucial element of an education system with social justice at its heart - ensuring that the best teachers worked in the schools which need them most.

Teacher recruitment in England has become more challenging as the economy continued to strengthen and pupil numbers rise.

The data showed that there were more teachers working in schools than ever before, that the overall vacancy rate in schools had remained broadly stable over the past 15 years, but that recruitment was tightening in specific subjects and regions.

The Sutton Trust survey also suggested that schools in the most challenging circumstances may find it more difficult to recruit experienced teachers.

The Government had heard schools' concerns, and he believed that the Department now has a strong plan.

Ministers are giving schools greater flexibility to train their own teachers. The Government had increased bursaries, it had launched a television advertising campaign, and was investing up to £67 million to recruit additional teachers in maths and physics.

It was also taking action to tackle excessive teacher workload. The OECD's TALIS survey from 2013 showed that teachers in England worked 8 hours longer than the OECD average each week, but their time in front of a class was in line with the average.

Mr Gibb said the Government was working with the teaching unions and three working groups - on marking, planning and management data - and would shortly report their findings.

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A new National Teaching Service was being introduced, which will recruit excellent teachers and place them in challenging schools.

But, alongside this work, he said he believe everyone had a responsibility to highlight the opportunities now open to teachers, to build rewarding careers and make a lasting difference to the lives of young people.

## Conclusion

Mr Gibb said he hoped the Government would be setting out further details of these priorities in due course, and that it would have more to say about the next steps in placing social mobility at the heart of the education system.

Taken together, he was confident that the Government's approach amounted to an ambitious plan which followed the evidence, built on shared moral purpose, and that it would transform the life chances of the most disadvantaged young people.

## Question and answer session

In the subsequent question and answer session, Mr Gibb responded to a number of questions on issues including supporting disadvantaged students, teacher recruitment and retention, workload, the possible development of national schemes of work, post-16, academy chains and early years.

Sutton Trust Fellow, **Tim Martin Jenkins** said that in most systems 20 per cent of schools provide 80 per cent of top career jobs and he asked how more pupils could gain access to excellent education. Mr Gibb said all local schools should be able to help students achieve at the best education, something which was being demonstrated through academy chains such as ARK.



Mr Gibb said that around 14,000 teachers were returning to the profession each year and the figures for this year were higher than in the previous one. He believed the best approach was to maintain flexibility between the state and independent sectors, in response to a question about teachers leaving to teach in independent schools.

He said the Department was working with the profession to see how workload could be reduced, focusing on three areas: marking, collection of data and preparation. It was hard to

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be sure where some pressure on teachers' time, such as dialogic marking, had come from, seemed to have come from and this needed to be addressed.

Mr Gibb said that in Shanghai teachers were able to use resources which had been developed already rather than having to repeat the process hundreds of times. However, the Government believed in the autonomy of schools and did not want to see national schemes of work developed.

Character development was also an important aspect of the independent sector which the Education Secretary wanted to work with the state sector to encourage a greater focus on this.

Mr Gibb also said that the Government saw young people attaining a C-grade at GCSE maths as an important objective for those who had not attained this at 16.

He picked up on questions about the role of academies to add that he saw a lot of advantages in multi-academy chains, including supporting professional development. The Education Secretary and regional schools commissioners were taking action to raise the performance of some academy chains.

In answer to a question from **Naomi Eisenstadt**, of Oxford University, Mr Gibb said he supported the focus on school readiness in early years.

**Anna Vignoles, Professor of Education, University of Cambridge;**  
**Melinda George, President, National Commission on Teaching and America's Future**

Professor Vignoles opened the session by presenting some of the key findings of her research into teachers in challenging schools, which used the OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) data.

The research by Dr Sonia Ilie, Dr John Jerrim, and Professor Vignoles, looked at a sample of 2,500 teachers in England across academies, maintained and independent schools to establish what the characteristics of effective teachers are and how these characteristics are distributed across schools.

The study had shown that most effective teachers tended not to be in the first few years of their career and they also had well managed classrooms, spent more time on task and used a variety of assessment approaches.



However, the evidence was weak on whether the best teachers were those with relevant post graduate qualifications.

In terms of the distribution of effective teachers, the most significant finding was the gap between which schools had the greatest need for experienced teachers and where those teachers actually taught.

Schools with the greatest level of disadvantage tended overall to have less experienced teachers, while in contrast, those with the most advantaged intakes tended to employ more experienced teachers. This was despite evidence showing that good teachers had a disproportionate impact on disadvantaged pupils.

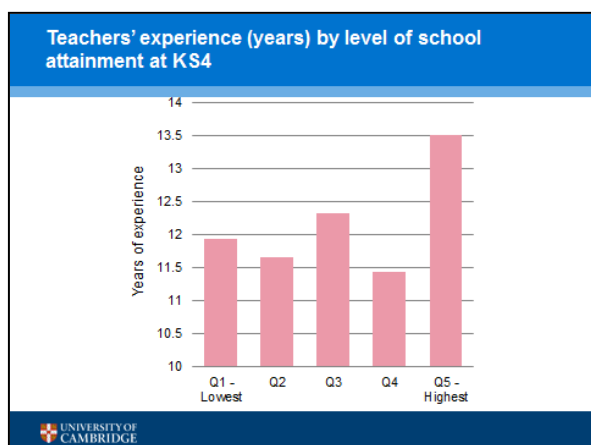
Teachers in less advantaged schools reported a number of factors that contribute to less effective teaching: only 80% of teachers in the least advantaged fifth of schools said their pupils were well-behaved compared with 96% in the most advantaged fifth. They also reported spending less time teaching and more time on classroom management.

Prof Vignoles said teachers were at the heart of an effective system and students gained 18 months more learning from an effective teacher and students from disadvantaged backgrounds were likely to benefit to a greater extent.

It was interesting that the TALIS data showed a number of changes in the teaching labour market and it was important to focus on both retention as well as recruitment. This also showed the importance of the best teachers who spent more time on task and had better organised classrooms.

The distribution of the most effective teachers showed that they were more likely to be found in high attaining schools.

Equally, the data showed that 40 per cent of teachers had fewer than four years' experience. Prof Vignoles added that the system had large numbers of teachers coming into schools then leaving teaching early.



As a result where teachers were trained was important, as they may be more likely to remain near to where they were trained when they started teaching.

She also said it was important to ask what made teaching less attractive as a career?

Subject knowledge was another important part of the debate.

In the most deprived schools, 25 per cent of teachers taught three or more subjects, which suggested that workload management could be an issue for this group of teachers even if they could manage to teach that range of subjects. In contrast, the figure was 13 per cent in the most advantaged schools.

Workload differences by subject were another issue to consider, as there was some variation, with core subjects seeming to have a higher workload.

Another aspect of the differences within the system was that teachers in most affluent areas spent a high percentage of their time teaching, while the time spent teaching in less advantaged schools was lower.

Professor Vignoles said the issue of behaviour also varied by the level of disadvantage, however it was interesting to note that there was still a high level of acceptable behaviour reported in schools in disadvantaged areas.

She also raised concerns about the lower levels of teacher job satisfaction in England compared to other TALIS countries, she asked to what extent this mattered. England was unusual although even here more than 80 per cent of teachers were still satisfied with their jobs.

It was also important to look beyond the headline data produced in the research and consider the story behind the average figures as some teachers' experience could be much more extreme than the average.



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## **Melinda George, President, National Commission on Teaching and America's Future**

In her response Melinda George said that there were a lot of similarities between England and the United States and it was good to be able to consider issues together.

Every single student should have access to great teaching and she said her organisation's role was to be a national voice for equity and access.

More than 50 per cent of public school students in the US were regarded as poor – based on eligibility for free or subsidised school lunches – and many children did not attend pre-schools. Not all Afro-American and Hispanic students had access to routes that led to college.

Improving teaching was crucial to tackling disadvantage – so that teaching was enhanced for every single student.



Ms George said there were a number of aspects to this and the first point to make was about the importance of improving the teaching environment.

Improving teacher preparation was another key priority and there needed to be a better partnership between colleges of education and school districts. There should be a full year of teaching practice with placements in the

schools where teachers would eventually teach.

Links should be developed between teachers and research and this could be used to help attract the strongest teachers into the schools which needed them most.

Retention needed to be improved and there should be more emphasis on making teaching a profession which people wanted to stay in. It was interesting that research showed that more American and English teachers felt teaching was worthwhile than felt that society as a whole recognised the value of teaching as a profession.

Retention and differences between pre and post-16 were raised in the subsequent question and answer session.

Both Prof Vignoles and Ms George addressed the question of what data was available about post-16. Prof Vignoles said that this was not something which had been covered by her research although Dr Becky Allen was currently looking at this.

Chaired by LaVerne Srinivasan, Vice President, National Programme, Carnegie Corporation

**Panellists:**

**Saskia Levy Thompson, Programme Director, New Designs for Schools and Systems, Carnegie Corporation of New York**

**Toby Salt, Chief Executive Officer, Ormiston Academies Trust**

**Rebecca Allen, Director of Education Datalab, Fischer Family Trust**

**Anne West, Director, Education Research Group, LSE.**

Ms Srinivasan set the scene by explaining that the Carnegie Corporation was interested in seeing how different strands of work in the schools system were related to one another and how greater more joint working could lead to improved outcomes.

She said human capital, new school models, learning, post-secondary pathways and community engagement could also work in relative isolation and that this needed to be examined again to stop reforms being under developed because they were taking place in silos. However, there was no silver bullet solution to this.

Ms Srinivasan said the panellists would discuss different aspects of the issues facing the system.



### **Professor Anne West**

Prof West explained some of the recent history of admissions policy in England, pointing out that successive Governments, since 1997, had changed the admissions code to make it harder for schools to carry out covert selection of students.

She said that evidence showed that covert selection was taking place to a

lesser degree than before. However, she added that published evidence could only go so far in establishing what was happening across the system.

Prof West said there were three issues for the system; the first one was about compliance with admissions rules.

Secondly she said there was an issue about control, because schools with control over their own admissions tended to have more advantaged intakes. Research on London had shown that groups of schools which were responsible for their own admissions had increased; while 44 per cent were responsible for admissions in 2001 this had risen to eight out of 10.

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The third point was about complexity. Admissions arrangements should be clear and objective., However, some arrangements were not living up to this expectation.

Arrangements in general were becoming more complicated and for some schools including some with a religious character, they were becoming much more so. Some religious voluntary aided schools had between seven and 16 religious selection criteria, for example.

Another aspect of this was differences in how testing was administered for schools which had a fair banding system for their admissions. In some cases there were different numbers of bands which could be confusing. Some schools held tests at the weekend, which might make attendance at tests harder for some groups of pupils.

### **Dr Rebecca Allen**

Dr Allen picked up Prof West's argument and said that school discretion could be hampering parental choice based on her experience of researching non-standard admissions, such as those which did not take place at the start of primary or secondary school, which amounted to 20 per cent of all admissions. These took place for a number of reasons including families moving house.

The pupils who moved at non-standard times were more than twice as likely to be in receipt of free school meals. The data was even more pronounced for those students who moved secondary school before they were 16, where 57 per cent of this group were eligible for free school meals.

She had interviewed staff at local authorities in London who had said they were concerned that they might not be able to meet their statutory responsibility for all young people in their area to be in education.

This issue had developed after the 2012 Admissions Code had allowed schools to manage their own admissions in-year. While in many areas this changed had worked well, in-year admissions arrangements had broken down in some places.

The reason for this was that schools were trying to defend their record of % A\*-C passes at GCSE and in some cases some schools seemed to be managing out pupils who were hard to teach. Dr Allen said that analysis showed this could lead to a difference of as much as five percentage points in the proportion of students gaining five A\*-C grades. She added that this was far more likely to happen in academies than in other schools.

### **Professor Toby Salt**

Prof Salt responded to some of the points the first two panellists made on admissions and also discussed other aspects of the challenges facing schools.

He said he had never met an Education Secretary who was not passionate about education and who did not want to improve social mobility.

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School choice could sometimes be bewildering and parents might lack social capital to help them make choices.

There was also an issue with the geography of where disadvantaged communities could be located as coastal and former manufacturing towns could be isolated and there may just be one school serving a disadvantaged area.

Academies made a difference to disadvantaged communities with academies in his Ormiston Academies Trust demonstrating real academic achievements, such as getting significant numbers of students to Oxbridge, for example.

His chain was also offering access to personal development like cultural experiences which would help students develop their social capital.

### **Saskia Levy Thompson**

Ms Thompson said how struck she was by similarities in the systems in England and the US and that some of the forces schools were contending with were universal.



She said that a philosophical shift was underway as part of education reform, as systems changed from ones which were standardised to systems which contained a range of options. It was reductive to talk about the difference between community and charter schools in the US as there were also a number of other issues within the system, such as academic versus social and emotional development or the length of the school day.

There was a link between admissions and the curriculum and there were also different dimensions of choice and access and it was also important to consider how supply and demand operated in the system.

### **Question and answer session**

The following question and answer session discussed academy chains, choice and support, grammar schools, the primary phase and working with independent schools.

The panel discussed various questions about admissions and social mobility.

Dr Allen said she thought it was completely reasonable to take admissions away from schools to help ensure a fairer admissions system.

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Prof West said that while improvements in choice would not be reversed she supported Dr Allen when she said there was a vested interest in the current system and that admissions could be managed by local authorities or by schools coming together.

Ms Srinivasan said that in the past in New York – prior to reforms by Mayor Bloomberg - only 50 per cent of those who participated got a match with a school on their preferred list.

A school matching algorithm had also been used and this helped more students as it gave 12 choices of school and 86 per cent got a match with one of their 12 choices, however there were challenges explaining how this type of system worked.

Saskia Levy Thompson added that it might be possible to build in incentives for schools to teach students who were harder to teach and that this might be a better approach.

Chaired by Barry Sheerman MP, former chair of the Education Select Committee

### Panellists

**Sir Michael Wilshaw**, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools

**Reuben Moore**, Director of Leadership, Teach First

**Martin Tune**, Headmaster, Bonner Primary School

**Norman Atkins**, Co-founder and President, Relay Graduate School of Education

Barry Sheerman MP opened by saying how he had been pleased to listen to the Chief Inspector at a recent meeting of Yorkshire MPs and that the parliamentarians had decided to set up a commission to investigate how to improve education and skills in the county.

### Sir Michael Wilshaw

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools set out a challenge to heads and academy principals to improve leadership.

Sir Michael said that good teachers needed to stay in the classroom; recruitment was a high priority but retention was even more significant.

It was depressing to hear that new teachers want to make a difference but were put off by poor behaviour. He said that this was linked to poor leadership and unless the system got leadership right this problem would continue.

Primary schools were doing well and the issues resided in the secondary sector and he said that in his view some secondary schools were not very good. One in three secondaries weren't doing well, particularly in the north and the midlands.

He said it was a scandal that 45 per cent of youngsters didn't get benchmark GCSEs. If England was going to model its system on the best in the OECD it had to improve its secondary schools.



He said the Sutton Trust had published some ground-breaking research on narrowing the gap. More attention needed to be paid to differences between high performing children from poor backgrounds and more advantaged pupils who performed less well initially. For example, many youngsters who did well at the end of Key Stage 2 didn't get a B grade at GCSE.

The chief inspector said something was going wrong in English secondary schools and performance had got to radically improve.

Although it might not always be popular, he believed inspectors could sense what was happening within half an hour when they visited a school. He described noisy corridors,

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students in untidy uniforms and low level disruption as tell-tale signs of an under-performing school.

This had to be tackled if England was to compete with South Korea and other OECD countries.

Poor leadership was linked to a lack of clarity among senior managers who weren't getting through to middle leaders, who in turn were not reaching teachers.

Sir Michael said schools needed leaders who were transformers, bruisers, battlers and battle axes.

He added that it was also a scandal when there was so much autonomy in the system that leadership was not stronger. Leadership programmes needed to invest in people and bring them forward into leadership.

Sir Michael also called for more support from the independent sector. Independent schools should be sponsoring academies and he said he would like to see these schools lose subsidies if they did not.

*The Times'* education editor, **Greg Hurst**, asked how the Chief Inspector would respond to independent schools that said they already provided other support to state schools?

Sir Michael responded by saying that his suggestion would be a way of responding to the needs of the Charity Commission, and he wanted the Commission to take ownership of this issue. He said he had a sense of moral outrage that independent schools were opening schools in Dubai rather than in Grimsby, Hull or Derby.

### **Reuben Moore**

Mr Moore updated the summit on the growth of TeachFirst, which had grown from having 187 TeachFirst teachers in its first year to just under 1,700 at present. It now operated in primary and early years settings as well as in secondary schools and TeachFirst also worked in schools in Wales.

However, its mission remained the same: to help bring the best people to the most challenging but also the most exciting schools. He said teaching was great, it always had been and always would be. It was also a great opportunity to develop great leadership skills and with great power came great responsibility – a great responsibility to make a difference.

Teach First also had the advantage of being able to offer graduates the chance to be surrounded with likeminded people.

It was also worth considering that many would go but come back to teaching after the end of their Teach First programme. It was important for Teach First and the system to be flexible to encourage these former teachers back into teaching, and Teach First was also a movement and a network.

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## **Martin Tune**

Mr Tune said that his primary delivered good results in a disadvantaged community in Tower Hamlets.

He described the difficulties of turning around underperforming schools, which had received critical Ofsted reports and where as a result it was difficult to recruit and retain staff.

A virtuous cycle could develop for good schools, making it easier to recruit teachers, while those which received a poor Ofsted report could find it difficult to recruit and to improve.

There was also a more general problem of recruiting and retaining staff to work in high cost areas, like inner London. In his experience it was easier to recruit young staff, who were happy to live in a room in a shared house, the problem was retaining them as they started to think about settling down and potentially buying a house.

Mr Tune believed that key worker housing could help ease some of these problems and he described how he had benefited from this type of housing as a young teacher and without this he would not have stayed in Tower Hamlets. He added that teachers felt that their workload was not necessarily generated by the needs of the children but by the needs of education policy. He called for the establishment of an impartial and independent body to offer professional advice as he said this was too important to be left to non-experts.

## **Norman Atkins**

Norman Atkins gave his experience of recruitment as an educational entrepreneur in the United States, working mainly in New Jersey.

He questioned the assumption that high achieving graduates necessarily became the best teachers. Mr Atkins was interested in the research about what predicted which ones become highly effective teachers. When he asked researchers, they weren't able to provide very clear answers.

One approach might be to allow a range of entrants and then de-select people who were not doing well after a few months.

He said teacher recruiters were looking for a diverse range of entrants into the profession who were mission-driven and were going to get the outcomes the system needed. He also suggested that it may be important not to attract new teachers into low performing schools as it could put off new teachers.

Schools should make teaching about helping to fulfil potential as this would make the profession very attractive.

He also discussed the way in which the proportion of young people considering teaching as a career dropped from secondary school with interest falling off as young people progressed through university.



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It could help to let undergraduates try teaching to see if it appealed to them rather than expecting them to join a post graduate course and then try to teach. He added that five weeks classroom practice was far too little and that this needed to increase. There should also be more feedback to trainees available from head teachers based on classroom observation.

### **Question and answer session**

The question and answer session included questions on the role of the independent sector and professional independence in a democracy,

Sir Michael responded to a question from **Sir Peter Lampl** of the Sutton Trust, about the extent to which the independent sector was able to recruit the best teachers.

The chief inspector said he was worried about a burgeoning independent sector where international schools recruited teachers whose training had been paid for by tax payers. He said the independent sector needed to be responsible if it was to have privileges.

Mr Moore called for the state sector to be made as attractive as possible to teachers and one way to do this could be through debt forgiveness and providing more time to plan.

Mr Tune added that the perception that the profession created could talk down the state sector.

**Dr Andreas Schleicher, Director of the Directorate of Education and Skills, OECD**

### **Raising social mobility through teaching policy**

Dr Schleicher used his presentation to offer a wide ranging commentary on how well systems were using teaching to support social mobility using slides showing data from PISA and a range of other OECD comparison data

He called on policy makers to consider what had been achieved in some East Asian countries and also to look at other differences within OECD members, as it was clear that there were variations in performance affecting a number of aspects of teaching.

He started by pointing out some of the differences in the shortage of teachers in disadvantaged schools, which existed in most member countries and also the way that the most talented teachers were not teaching in challenging schools.



### **International comparison**

Dr Schleicher also discussed social mobility across OECD members, highlighting the contrast between social mobility across member states. While the pupil premium was helping in England but there were many trends which were going the other way.

He went on to show the progress of different groups of pupils in terms of attainment over time in a range of member countries. This showed the difference between the most and least advantaged groups, ordering them by quintiles.

It was striking that students aged 15 from disadvantaged backgrounds in Shanghai were achieving the same results as some of the most advantaged students in England and a number of other western countries.

He pointed out that this took place even though many of this group of students in Shanghai were living in appalling housing and many also had parents who were themselves not educated.

### **Immigration**

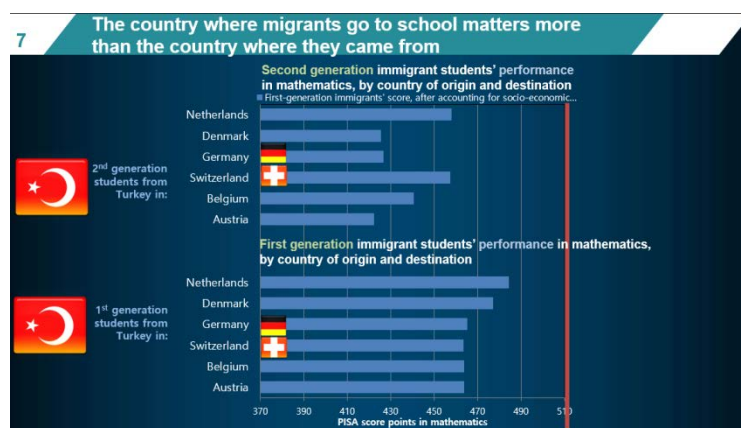
He also addressed the question of immigration which some commentators had said was responsible for changes in attainment.

The country immigrants arrived in seemed to have an effect on their attainment at school. Dr Schleicher gave two examples of this. One of these showed that Arabic speaking immigrants

varied, for example Arabic speaking immigrant students did better in the Netherlands than in Qatar.

Another piece of analysis showed differences between Turkish immigrants studying in different member states in Europe.

Looking at data on first generation ethnic Turkish migrants in six European countries showed only small differences in attainment at school in the different countries. However, much larger gaps in attainment were present between second generation Turkish immigrants in the six different countries.



## Professionalism

Looking at teachers' perceptions of professionalism and different dimensions of professionalism also showed how countries performance could vary.

In general, teachers with higher levels of job satisfaction seemed to have higher levels of belief that

they were successful teachers.

Dr Schleicher said it was possible to describe different aspects of professionalism and to look for contrasts.

Looking at professional knowledge, networks and autonomy it was possible to see some countries where all three characteristics were equally developed. In others there was a bias towards one or more of the three.

The data for Malaysia showed teachers were particularly engaged in professional networks, while in Italy there were high levels of autonomy but relatively less developed professional networks. Subject knowledge in France seemed to be better developed than in some other countries.

## Conclusions

Dr Schleicher tried to draw out some conclusions for policy makers and about the changing nature of education systems.

He said that several countries had tried to build consensus without compromising on reform and one way of helping to do this was to develop a teaching council and to carry out more piloting of reform.

Education systems were undergoing a long term process of change from ones where only some students were educated to a high level to systems where all students could achieve.

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Characteristics of the old systems included a focus on routine cognitive skills; standardisation; hierarchy within the profession and system; and accountability to authority.

This contrasted with the emerging new systems which promoted conceptual understanding and complex ways of working and where teachers were high level knowledge workers. The profession was moving towards a flat structure with a collegiate culture where teachers were accountable to peers and stakeholders.

### **Question and answer session**

In the following question and answer session there was a discussion about the impact of inspectorates, data about teachers

Dr Schleicher responded to a question from **Barry Sheerman MP** about whether it was possible to measure the impact of inspection.

He said that it seemed as though the more autonomy there was in a system the more it needed strong accountability including a good inspection system. In England Ofsted was one of the strongest inspectorates, other than in the Netherlands or the Flanders province of Belgium.

Dr Schleicher discussed what data existed about who would become a good teacher, after **John McDermott** of the *Economist* asked whether this was readily apparent.

What matters is whether a teacher is a real expert in their field, rather than their general level of education and this was the best predictor of their effectiveness, although there were gaps in the data. T

### Developing teachers in challenging schools

Chair: Dr Lee Elliot Major

#### Panellists

**Professor Robert Coe** - Professor in the School of Education and Director of the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring at the University of Durham

**Dr Charles Chew**, Principal Master Teacher at the Academy of Singapore Teachers

**Susie Weaver**, Principal, Wallscourt Farm Academy

**Dr Tony Jackson**, Vice President for Education at the Asia Society

The final panel session of the afternoon was chaired by Dr Lee Elliot Major, Chief Executive of the Sutton Trust and discussed how best to develop teachers in the most challenging schools.

The discussion was opened by Prof Rob Coe, Professor in the School of Education and Director of the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring at the University of Durham. He was followed by Dr Charles Chew, Principal Master Teacher at the Academy of Singapore Teachers. Susie Weaver, Principal, Wallscourt Farm Academy, gave a view from an English academy while Dr Tony Jackson, Vice President for Education at the Asia Society, completed the panel giving an international perspective.



#### **Professor Robert Coe**

Prof Coe started by saying he believed that improving the quality of teachers was the most important issue. The importance of closing the gap had been discussed at the summit, this was possible and things could change.

In his view there was already enough research to inform policy making, although more would

always help. Understanding of how children learn and cognitive science had progressed a lot in the last 20 years.

A lot was also known about how to make best use of classroom practice. However, what was known was not well aligned with what happens in many schools.

Ultimately he believed that the real difficulty lay in improving continuing professional development (CPD) although he added that there were a whole series of policy interventions

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which could be developed to improve recruitment and selection of teachers and other related aspects of workforce development.

### **Dr Charles Chew**

Dr Chew described how Singapore's master teacher programme worked and how professionals worked with one another to share and develop best practice.

The programme was one of three pathways in the Singapore Education Service and it was a way of helping the best teachers develop their colleagues.

The network was still being developed; so far there were 66 Master Teachers and 10 Principal Master Teachers. Dr Chew was one of them and he was working with a large sector, as there were around 1,000 physics teachers in Singapore.

Teachers who were working on the programme were codifying practice and publishing this for colleagues. Master Teachers were subject content and pedagogical leaders who worked with other teachers in the same subject.

He said the system wanted every teacher to see themselves as driving a culture of professional knowledge and Master Teachers were seen as the catalyst which would make this happen.

### **Susie Weaver**

Ms Weaver described how the academy she led had opened relatively recently and had the advantage of having new buildings. However, it served some disadvantaged pupils and only

some of them arrived with the skills and knowledge they were meant to have.



Ms Weaver described how her staff were encouraged to observe colleagues and offer feedback on a regular basis and that this had become part of working at the academy's approach to CPD.

She added that the children themselves realised that teachers were improving practice and she said she felt it was important to develop a culture of trust and genuine partnership.

This culture had been helped by having a new building which made team teaching and informal observation easier, but she said it would be possible to do this in an established school building.

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## **Dr Tony Jackson**

Dr Jackson described the differences between East Asian CPD and that in the United States, from his perspective, working in an NGO which is active in Asia, and having spent a lot of time investigating professional learning for teachers.

In East Asia, CPD was characterised by high quality provision and networks, and was provided over a long period of time.

In contrast, CPD tended to have rather different characteristics in the United States in his experience. It was often episodic, possibly linked to some event at school; it could also be focused on the need for staff to learn a new skill.

There was also a lack of deep learning and it was not focused enough on the system or students. In addition, professional development also tended to be weaker in more disadvantaged areas.

The Asia Society had developed its own model and systems for improving teacher CPD.

Dr Jackson had also taken policy makers from the United States on study tours to Asia, to see first-hand how teachers undertake professional development and Dr Jackson said many found the experience opened their eyes to other ways of developing teachers.

## **Question and answer session**

Subsequent questions and answers included a number about aspects of networks and improving CPD.

They also responded to questions about how to engage teachers in new practice, with Ms Weaver stressing that in her view success depended on how well heads explained CPD networks. Some of the teachers who questioned new ideas could become their greatest supporters.

**Dr Elliot Major** commented that there seemed to be good practice available and that it also seemed that there was a need to create a culture of collegiality and he asked whether more needed to be done through a teachers' professional body.