



Highfield School
Downham Road
ELY, Cambs, CB6 1BD
Tel: 01353 662085
Fax 01353 662096
Email: office@highfield.cambs.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mr. Simon Bainbridge

25th April 2016

Dear Parent or Carer,

The government published its schools White Paper recently. There are some widespread implications for schools which I thought you may like to know about. Here is, what I hope to be, an easy read summary of the main points:

Ofsted

- Consult with Ofsted 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.
- To 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.

Every school an academy?

- Apart from in exceptional circumstances, the smallest schools will have to form or join a Multi Academy Trust (MAT).
- But other successful, sustainable schools will still be able "to continue as single academy trusts if they choose to do so".
- To create new government 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.
- Seek views on a number of changes to the school admissions system to make it simpler and clearer, including "requiring local authorities to coordinate in-year admissions and handle the admin of independent admission appeals".
- The government will consider how parents may be able to petition regional schools commissioners for their school to move to a different MAT "where there is underperformance or other exceptional circumstances".
- 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.

Reformed teacher training

- Replace the current "[Qualified Teacher Status](#)" with a "stronger, more challenging accreditation based on a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom, as judged by great schools".
- 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".
- Reform the allocation of teacher training places so that initial teacher training "is delivered by the best higher education institutions 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".
- Continue to "increase the proportion of ITT offered by the best schools".



Cambridgeshire County Council



- Strengthen initial teacher training 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”.

Improve Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

- Create a new standard for teachers’ [continuous professional development](#) to help schools improve the quality and availability of CPD.
- The government will examine the feasibility of incentivising teaching schools to publish their research and CPD materials on an "open-source" basis.
- The establishment of a new peer-reviewed British education journal, independent of government.
- Design new voluntary National Professional Qualifications for each level of school leadership – they will not be mandatory, but will “set a ‘gold standard’ against which licensed providers can develop their own innovative programmes for leadership development”.

Teacher recruitment

- Create simple web tools that enable schools to advertise vacancies for free, and to launch a new national teacher vacancy website.
- Legislate to create Achieving Excellence Areas where there are not enough pupils going to a good school and not enough high-quality teachers.
- Legislate to transfer responsibility for school improvement from local authorities to school-led systems. The aim is to create a comprehensive network of school-led support, building on the London Challenge. There will be 300 more teaching schools and 800 more National Leaders of Education.

Leadership

- Rebalance incentives in the accountability system “so that great leaders are encouraged to work in challenging schools and areas”.
- Launch a new Excellence in Leadership Fund to encourage the best MATs and other providers “to develop innovative ways of boosting leadership in areas where great leaders are most needed”.

Students and parents

- Make all mainstream schools responsible for the education of students in alternative provision.
- Expand the National Citizen Service (NCS) and expect schools to give every pupil the opportunity to take part.
- Create 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 in education.

Not all of the changes will impact on special schools (for example pupil admissions will likely stay the same as they are currently). It is clear that the scenery in education is changing rapidly, and there may be further changes to come.

Many thanks,

Simon



Cambridgeshire County Council

