

# Press release: New RSC appointed for East Midlands and the Humber

John Edwards, Director of Education and Skills at Manchester city council, has been named as the new Regional Schools Commissioner for East Midlands and the Humber.

He will be responsible for overseeing the growth of academies in the region and will monitor their performance to ensure children receive the best possible education. He is taking over from Jennifer Bexon-Smith.

John will start later this year, working with Sir David Carter to shape the role and priorities of the growing numbers of academies in the region, contributing to the government's agenda of raising standards, by tackling underperformance to create more 'good' school places for every child regardless of background or circumstances.

John Edwards said:

I'm very much looking forward to the challenges of my new role as Regional Schools Commissioner for the East Midlands and the Humber, and hope I can make a real difference to the lives and outcomes of children and young people working in partnership with everyone in the region.

I will undoubtedly miss Manchester and particularly all the people I work with. I know however that in their capable hands learning in the city will continue to go from strength to strength.

National Schools Commissioner Sir David Carter said:

I am thrilled that John Edwards is joining my team as the new Regional Schools Commissioner for the East Midlands and the Humber region. John was selected from a strong national field and will bring a wealth of experience and talent from his work as Director of Education and Skills in Manchester, that has improved the life chances of many young people.

Regional Schools Commissioners' (RSCs) responsibilities include:

- taking decisions on the creation of new academies
- monitoring their performance and improving underperforming academies
- ensuring there is a strong supply of excellent sponsors to work with underperforming schools in the region
- encouraging and supporting high-quality applications for new free schools

The East Midlands and the Humber commissioner works with 970 academies and free schools across the region.

[John will be advised by a board of headteachers](#) of 'outstanding' academies or experienced educational leaders. The board challenges and supports the work of the commissioner, bringing additional educational insight and local intelligence to decision-making.

1. The Regional Schools Commissioner for East Midlands and the Humber is responsible for making decisions about academies and free schools in the following local authorities:
  - Barnsley
  - Derby
  - Derbyshire
  - Doncaster
  - East Riding of Yorkshire
  - Kingston upon Hull
  - Leicester
  - Leicestershire
  - Lincolnshire
  - north-east Lincolnshire
  - north Lincolnshire
  - Nottingham
  - Nottinghamshire
  - Rotherham
  - Rutland
  - Sheffield
  - York
2. The [full list of Regional Schools Commissioners](#) are:
  - Tim Coulson: East of England and north-east London
  - John Edwards: East Midlands and the Humber
  - Vicky Beer: Lancashire and West Yorkshire
  - Janet Renou: North of England
  - Martin Post: north-west London and south-central England
  - Dominic Herrington: South-East England and south London
  - Rebecca Clark: South-West England
  - Christine Quinn: West Midlands
3. The RSCs, supported by their headteacher boards, perform functions of the Secretary of State on her behalf, within a national framework. This will not cut across existing accountability lines; accountability will remain with the Secretary of State, with decisions better informed by sector expertise.
4. Mr Edward's biography: John Edwards has been the Director of Education and Skills for Manchester city council since February 2013, with responsibility for all of the council's education functions, including schools, early years, youth, 14 to 19 and adult skills. Prior to this role, John was Assistant Director for Learning and Skills at Kirklees council, and previously worked for Manchester city council (as Deputy Director of Children's Services) and for Wakefield council. Before moving into local government, John worked in schools across Yorkshire

for over a decade, as a maths teacher, head of sixth form and senior leader. He is married with 2 school-age children and lives in Sheffield.