

Eighty-thousand more children in good or outstanding sponsored academies

Eighty-thousand more children are now studying in good or outstanding sponsored academies, thanks to significant improvements in the last eighteen months.

[Latest figures](#) published by the Department for Education today (Thursday 11 July), show there are 380,000 children in England now studying in good and outstanding sponsored academies, up from 300,000 in December 2017.

By matching typically under-performing schools with a strong academy, schools are able to benefit from the network of support from a trust with both the capacity and capability to drive up standards, giving parents the opportunity to send their children to a good or outstanding school, where they may not have previously been able to.

Today's figures also show that 7 in 10 previously under-performing council-run schools, that have converted to become sponsored academies supported by a strong academy trust, are now rated good or outstanding by Ofsted.

Education Secretary Damian Hinds said:

Academies have been at the heart of reforms that have revolutionised education and driven up standards since 2010, and this is just the latest evidence that they are leading the way in turning around some of the most challenging schools.

It should not be forgotten that academy trusts are charitable institutions, giving back to their communities, and making a huge difference to the futures of thousands of young people – the figures today prove this point loud and clear, and it is important that we tell their stories.

The figures published today follow a significant increase in the proportion of children studying in good or outstanding schools – of all types, not just sponsored academies – in England since 2010, which has increased from 66% in August 2010, to 85% in March 2019. It also builds on an analysis published earlier this year which showed that standards typically rise faster in many sponsored academies than in similar council-run schools.

At a summit of academy leaders from some of the largest education trusts across the country on Wednesday (10 July) the Education Secretary Damian Hinds also paid tribute to academy trusts that have turned around under-performing schools since 2010 and called for trust leaders to redouble their efforts to place their charitable institutions at the heart of their communities.

Representatives from education trusts across the country attended the meeting, including Lucy Heller Chief Executive of Ark and Sir Daniel Moynihan of the Harris Federation, whose trusts are leading examples of the central role that academies have played in driving improvements in some of the worst performing schools across the country.

Harris Academy Bermondsey, for example, opened as a City Academy in 2006, replacing Aylwin Girls High School. Prior to conversion, Aylwin had underperformed for three years in a row, between 2001 and 2003. Since opening as an academy, the school has been judged Outstanding on both occasions, with Ofsted praising the 'excellent support' of the Harris Federation in supporting disadvantaged students.

To further build on the government's ambition to improve how all types of schools across the country are run and ensure transparency is consistent across the education system, the department will also shortly be publishing a new consultation to address the disparity between transparency of financial reporting in local authority schools and academies.

This will aim to strengthen local authority schools by bringing them in line with the accountability and transparency standards that academies are already required to meet.

Leora Cruddas, Chief Executive of the Confederation of School Trusts, said:

School trusts are education charities that are set up purely for the purposes of running and improving schools to give children a better future.

They do this by creating a strong and resilient structure to ensure that each child is a powerful learner and that adults have the opportunities to learn and develop as teachers and leaders.

More than 8,300 schools in the country have become an academy or opened as a free school since 2010 and hundreds of schools each year make the positive choice to become an academy. Earlier this year, to mark the milestone of 50% of children in state-funded schools in England being taught in an academy or free school, Damian Hinds called on more schools to consider becoming an academy and to embrace the freedom and autonomy it offers.

Government announces £135 million investment in health research

The NHS is partnering with universities, innovators and local authorities to

solve some of the biggest issues facing health and social care over the next 5 years.

The government is awarding funding through the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) to 15 partnerships.

The partnerships each have ground-breaking new projects aiming to address the increasing demands on the NHS and give patients greater independence and choice about how they manage their healthcare.

The funding totals £135 million and could transform the lives of millions of people living with a range of conditions, including dementia, mental ill health and obesity.

The extra funding follows a number of successful projects funded by NIHR in the past, including research which led to the [Long Term Plan](#) commitment of every woman receiving care from the same midwife during pregnancy, birth and postnatally by 2021.

Health Minister Nicola Blackwood said:

As the population grows and demand on the NHS increases, it is paramount we develop the next generation of technologies and improve the way we work to ensure the NHS continues to offer world-leading care.

The UK has a proud history of cutting-edge health research and, by supporting the great minds in health and social care, this funding has the potential to unlock solutions to some of the biggest challenges facing healthcare and revolutionise the way patients access treatments in the future.

Professor Chris Whitty, Chief Scientific Adviser to the Department of Health and Social Care, said:

The unique local collective approach at each NIHR applied research collaboration will support applied health and care research that responds to, and meets, the needs of local patients, and local health and care systems.

The network will also be able to tackle health priorities at a national level.

The 15 new NIHR applied research collaborations will ensure that we grow applied health and care research in every region in England.

The additional funding announced today means we will ensure that our world-leading research is turned into real benefits for patients to ensure the applied research collaborations work together to have national-level impact.

Work underway to remove tonnes of plastic from West Cumbrian river

The first phase of a £1.5m partnership project between West Cumbria Rivers Trust and the Environment Agency, which aims to remove a huge plastic liner installed in the bed of the River Keekle approximately 25 years ago, has begun.

Not only will the project remove the 2.5km of plastic, which currently poses plastic pollution and erosion risks, once complete, the project will allow the river to function more naturally, improve habitat and biodiversity and improve river access for local people to allow them to enjoy their local natural environment once again.

If nothing is done to prevent erosion and further degradation of the river, there could be further reduction of water quality and pollution to the River Keekle (one of the most constrained rivers in Cumbria) which could also impact one of the most important rivers in Europe further downstream (the River Ehen Special Site of Scientific Interest and Special Area of Conservation).

Contractors 'Open Space' are carrying out the physical works on site on behalf of the Trust.

Luke Bryant, Project Manager from West Cumbria Rivers Trust, said:

We have started work on the first phase of the River Keekle Restoration Project on approximately 170m of river channel and work should last a few weeks.

Phase one of the project involves detailed studies, monitoring, project design, community liaison and getting the contractor to remove the plastic from approximately 170m of river as a trial to ensure we are working correctly and effectively, before the second phase of full removal, begins in 2020.

It's a huge and complex project with lots of unknowns, such as how far the liner goes into the river bank and what lies underneath, so it needed to be carried out in two phases.

Once the liner is removed, cobbles/stone/gravel will be placed onto

the riverbed in place of the plastic, re-naturalising the river and providing protection from vertical erosion. This will allow the river to function more naturally and improve habitat and biodiversity.

We also plan to improve river access for local people to allow them to enjoy their local natural environment once again.

The project is part of the River Restoration Programme in Cumbria – one of the biggest portfolios of river restoration projects in the UK.

Oliver Southgate, Environment Agency River Restoration Programme Manager, said:

This is likely to be the most significant river restoration project delivered in the UK this year – we have never seen this much plastic in a river before, or as degraded!

The Upper Keekle is one of the most degraded sections of watercourse in the UK and is classed as a failing river, so by putting the river back to a natural state and directly improving 2.5km of river and opening access to a further 4km, we aim to improve the whole water environment in this area with multiple benefits for people and wildlife.

We are continuing our work to improve water quality, which is now better than at any time since the Industrial Revolution thanks to tougher regulation and years of hard work by the Environment Agency and others.

Removing the plastic now prevents the material entering our oceans in the future and the river will be left in a much more natural condition, improving the habitats for Salmon, Trout and other fish species as well as removing the threat to the River Ehen SSSI/SAC further downstream.

Once the plastic has been taken out of the river, it will be tested, and the aim is for it to be recycled and also used for something as part of the project, such as a boardwalk, if possible.

The area used to be used for coal mining operations and when these ceased, it was thought that lining the river would prevent the river bed from eroding. Plastic was used to contain and control surface water due to it being a

flexible, impervious and resistant material. At the time, this type of plastic had been used extensively for landfill lining.

The Environment Agency have undertaken a significant number of surveys to check what lies beneath the river bed and to check water quality. Once the plastic is removed, we aim to introduce a range of natural materials like stone, which will allow the river to actually recap itself overtime and prevent further bed erosion. Phase one of the project is funded by the Environment Agency and is costing £175,000. Phase two has been awarded £1.3m by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development's Water Environment Grant.

Counterfeit watch dealer hit with bankruptcy restrictions

Jamie Paul Thorpe (35), of Brighton, has signed an eight-year Bankruptcy Restrictions Undertaking. It is the latest in a series of restrictions imposed upon Jamie Thorpe in connection with his trading as Ludgate Watches, a business that sold counterfeit luxury watches.

In June 2015, following a search of his property, West Sussex Trading Standards seized a range of goods, including watches, which Jamie Thorpe valued at £100,000 in total. The watches, when examined by the original manufacturers later, were all confirmed to be counterfeit.

Jamie Thorpe was given a 12-month jail sentence, suspended for 2 years, for trade mark offences and, later, a £28,000 confiscation order following a Proceeds of Crime investigation. He was also made bankrupt for failing to pay the correct taxes.

Bankruptcy restrictions are usually lifted after a year but, due to the seriousness of Jamie Thorpe's offences, the Insolvency Service launched additional bankruptcy proceedings to curtail his activities further.

On 10 June 2019 the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy accepted an eight-year bankruptcy restrictions undertaking from Jamie Paul Thorpe, of Brighton.

Effective immediately, Jamie Thorpe is under a number of restrictions, including not being able to borrow more than £500 without disclosing his bankrupt status and he cannot act as a company director without the court's permission.

Liesl Cook, Official Receiver for the Insolvency Service, said:

Eight years of extended bankruptcy restrictions is a significant result. It serves as a clear warning to others attempting to deceive customers, whether online or in person, that, when you are caught, we will seriously curtail your activities.

Jamie Paul Thorpe is of Brighton and his date of birth is September 1983.

Detail of Jamie Paul Thorpe's Bankruptcy Restrictions Order (BRO) and Bankruptcy Restrictions Undertaking (BRU) is available on the [Individual Insolvency Register](#).

Bankruptcy restrictions are wide ranging. The effects are the same whether you are subject to a Bankruptcy Restrictions Order or to an undertaking.

It is an offence if you:

- do not disclose your status as a person subject to bankruptcy restrictions to a credit provider if you wish to get credit of £500 or more.
- carry on business in a different name from the name in which you were made bankrupt, you must disclose to those you wish to do business with the name (or trading style) under which you were made bankrupt.
- act as the director of a company or take part in its promotion, formation or management unless you apply to the court for permission to do so.
- act as an insolvency practitioner, or as the receiver or manager of the property of a company on behalf of debenture holders.

Further guidance on the additional effects of a bankruptcy restrictions order or undertaking Persons subject to a BRO/BRU is [available](#).

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[**Ambitious targets to cut shipping emissions**](#)

- zero-emission capable ships to be in UK waters by 2025
- competition launched to spark innovation in clean maritime technology
- Clean Maritime Plan part of long-term strategy to keep UK as world leader in maritime sector

All new ships for UK waters ordered from 2025 should be designed with zero-

emission capable technologies, in ambitious plans set out by Maritime Minister Nusrat Ghani to cut pollution from the country's maritime sector.

The commitment is set out in the [Clean Maritime Plan](#) published today (11 July 2019). The government is also looking at ways to incentivise the transition to zero-emission shipping and will consult on this next year.

The plan also includes a £1 million competition to find innovative ways to reduce maritime emissions and is published alongside a [call for evidence to reduce emissions on UK waterways and domestic vessels](#).

The Clean Maritime Plan is part of the government's [Clean Air Strategy](#), which aims to cut down air pollution across all sectors to protect public health and the environment. It will also help deliver the United Kingdom's commitment to be net zero on greenhouse gases by 2050.

Maritime Minister Nusrat Ghani said:

Our maritime sector is vital to the success of the UK's economy, but it must do everything it can to reduce emissions, improve air quality and tackle climate change.

The Clean Maritime Plan sets an ambitious vision for the sector and opens up exciting opportunities for innovation. It will help make the UK a global hub for new green technologies in the maritime sector.

The maritime sector has already taken significant strides to reduce emissions – hybrid ferries are already being used in UK waters, including in the Scottish islands and on cross-Solent journeys to the Isle of Wight. The Port of London Authority – where the Maritime Minister launched the plan today – also uses hybrid vessels.

Guidance has also today been issued to ports to assist them in developing air quality strategies. This will both address their own operations and support improving air quality across the country.

A further consultation to increase the uptake of low carbon fuels will also take place next year.

The Clean Maritime Plan is part of the government's [Maritime 2050](#), a long-term strategy published in January 2019 to keep the UK as a world leader in the maritime sector for decades to come.