

CASE briefing

A Briefing from Campaign for State Education

WHY ACADEMIES? UNNECESSARY, UNDEMOCRATIC AND DANGEROUS

◆ There is no 'problem' that requires such a drastic 'solution'

The Economist Intelligence Unit has compared the education results of the forty most developed countries. (See 'The Learning Zone') This shows that:

- ◆ In 2014 /15 **the UK ranked 6th**, after South Korea, Japan Singapore, Hong Kong and Finland. *But only South Korea and Japan were significantly better.*
- ◆ In terms of *educational attainment* (based on literacy and graduation rates) the **UK was in second place** after South Korea and ahead of countries such as Poland, Finland, Japan, Hong Kong and Singapore.

Does this support a move to force all schools to become 'independent'? **No. All of the countries with better scores than the UK are fully committed to a national school system.**

The Economist	Intelligence Unit
	<p>The EIU produces a wide-ranging programme of quantitative and qualitative analyses, published by Pearson.</p> <p>Among these is the Global Index of Cognitive Skills and Educational Attainment, which uses all the major international studies to compare the education outputs of the 40 most developed countries and is referenced here.</p>

◆ Will schools be any more 'independent' than now - and is that a good thing, anyway?

Many will have little choice but to join academy 'chains' which are run by unelected sponsors and thus are not accountable to local people - including parents.

It is wrong to accuse Local Authorities of 'controlling' schools. Since 1991, Headteachers and Governors have had total control of their budgets and all staff appointments — just like Academies!

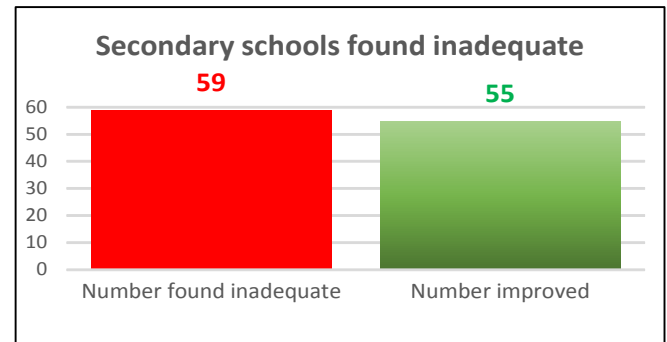
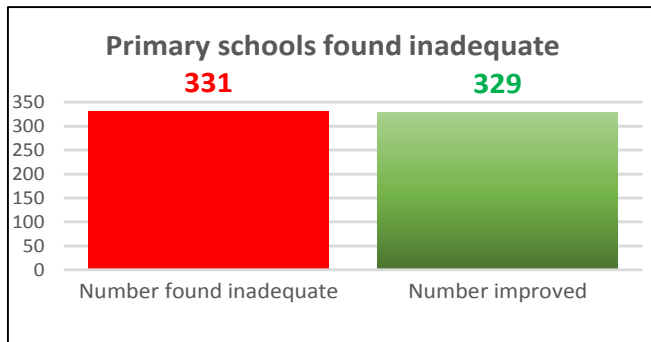
The big growth in 'central control' has been from the Secretary of State who has sought to micro-manage education even the choice of set-books!

In 2016, the **National Audit Office** reported to Parliament that the Department for Education has failed to properly account for the way public money is spent by Academies. It expressed growing concern over the risks of *material or systematic irregularity* and asked auditors to look out for academy funds being used for personal gain, including unjustified salary increases and inappropriate expense claims.

CASE believes in a fully comprehensive, locally accountable and democratic education system.

◆ Local Authorities are better at improving schools

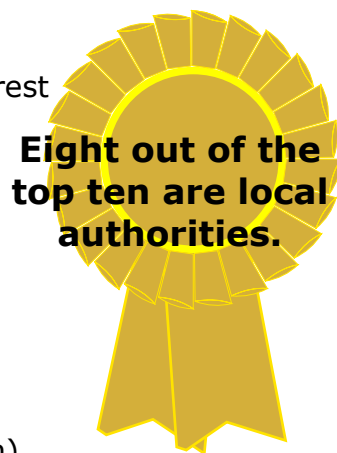
When schools have been found inadequate at a first Ofsted inspection, of those that did not convert to academies, **99%** of primary and **93%** of secondary schools subsequently improved with help from their local authorities.



Schools that have been graded 'inadequate' by Ofsted and become academies are far more likely to fail to recover than those that are supported by their local authority. Secondary schools are four times worse-off if they become academies, while primary schools are eleven times worse-off.

◆ Who does better in terms of students' progress – local authorities or academy chains?

- 1st Hackney
- 2nd Barnet
- 3rd Waltham Forest
- 4th Merton
- 5th Ealing
- 6th Haringey
- 7th Islington
- 8th Enfield
- 9th ARK (chain)
- 10th Harris (chain)



- ◆ The Government claims that there are "a million more children in schools rated as 'good' or better".
- ◆ But they ignore the fact that **930,000 of them (93%) are not in academies but in schools maintained by local authorities.**

Source: Department for Education

◆ What do independent commentators say?

The Sutton Trust warned that *low performing chains may be harming the performance of disadvantaged students.*

The Conservative-chaired **Education Select Committee** report on Academies and Free Schools found no evidence of better academy performance. It stated, "*Academisation is not always successful nor is it the only proven alternative for a struggling school*" and added that "*the Government should stop exaggerating the success of academies*".

The **National Foundation for Educational Research** said in 2014, "*no significant improvement is seen in the rate of improvement of GCSE results for academy schools over and above the rate of improvement in all schools*".

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