

# 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 6<sup>th</sup>**, 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 <b>EIU</b> produces a wide-ranging programme of quantitative and qualitative analyses, published by Pearson.</p> <p>Among these is the <b>Global Index of Cognitive Skills and Educational Attainment</b>, 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!

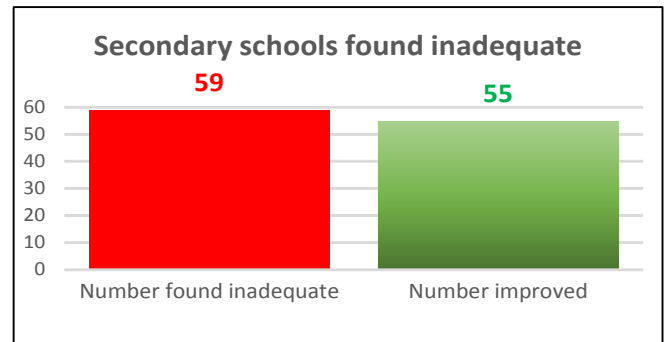
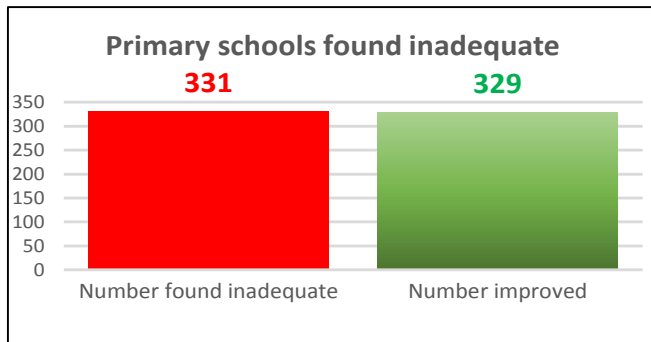
**The big growth in 'central control' has been from the Secretary of State who has sought to micro-manage education even the choice of set-books!**

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

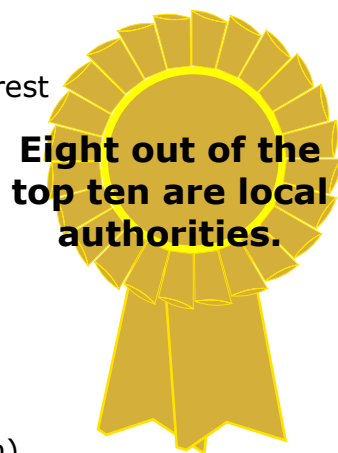
When schools have been found inadequate at a first Ofsted inspection, of those that did not convert to academies, **99%** of primary and **93%** of secondary schools subsequently improved with help from their local authorities.



**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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