
School Direct: a hastily constructed model or a systematically designed campaign?

CLARE KELLY & MAGGIE PITFIELD

ABSTRACT This article examines School Direct, a model of initial teacher education (ITE) in England, recently introduced by the coalition government and based on a paradigm of teaching as a craft to be learned as an apprenticeship, significantly reducing and in some cases removing the influence of higher education. The history of the move away from university-based ITE to a school-led model is examined and situated within a wider neoliberal agenda. It is argued that School Direct as one manifestation of an ideologically-based strategy for education has serious abiding consequences for the future of the teaching profession and the stability of the educational infrastructure.

Introduction

Teach First, Teach Next, Troops to Teachers, Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Professional Graduate Certificate in Education and even no requirement for teaching qualifications for those working in free schools and academies. Initial teacher education (ITE) is currently subject to a chaotic eclecticism that creates choice but does not necessarily represent quality or consistency for beginning teachers. School Direct, the focus of this article, is the coalition government's latest plan to remove the responsibility for postgraduate ITE from universities to schools.

Each year, education departments in universities are allocated numbers for student places in individual subjects and age phases. For 2013-14 the School Direct model has been rolled out nationally to replace university-led school partnerships with a system that gives responsibility for initial teacher education to schools. It relies upon schools to recruit prospective teachers and to contract education departments in universities to provide part of their training. This involvement could range from universities operating a full-scale PGCE to stamping a certificate at the end of a school-based ITE course.

Teaching Schools play a key role in the plan to shift to a school-led model of ITE. These are schools which have been designated as outstanding by the inspection body, Ofsted, this rating allowing them to take the lead amongst other local schools in running continuing professional development courses and training beginning teachers. There are financial incentives and rewards which accompany Teaching School status. All Teaching School alliances receive £60,000 in their first year of operation and will receive an additional grant of £33,000 for 2013/14, to 'boost the quality of teacher training' (DfE 2013c). There are now over 350 Teaching Schools in England (ibid 2013), some of which have been encouraged by government and praised by Gove (DfE, 2012) for developing their own ITE programmes, accrediting their own courses and dispensing with any higher education (HE) connection.

The economic implications of School Direct have potentially serious consequences for education departments in universities. The finance that would normally come to the universities from student fees (and a limited number of student bursaries) is an increasingly uncertain funding stream. Another consequence is that universities do not have a clear picture of the government's overall estimates for the number of new teachers required, and therefore the exact scale of its ambitions regarding the expansion of School Direct is also unclear, resulting in a level of uncertainty that is already leading universities to take difficult decisions about the practicalities of remaining involved in ITE. As we write, Bath University is proposing to close its highly regarded PGCE programme, 'amid fears over a lack of government support for higher education-based provision' (Mansell 2013b, p. 35). This is despite the outstanding grading it received from Ofsted and its thriving partnership with local schools.

Universities that decide to remain as providers of ITE must make up the shortfall in funding resulting from the School Direct model by negotiating on a school-by-school basis to secure School Direct contracts, and as the contracts are time-limited, every year renegotiation must take place. The unwieldy nature of such a process has far-reaching implications for the workloads and job security of ITE lecturers as well as for the quality of their courses. At the UCU Congress in May 2013 a motion was passed deploring the implications of School Direct and calling for action in collaboration with other education unions.

The uncertain landscape clearly benefits the government in its mission to reduce or remove university influence in ITE. While universities are pulling out of established PGCE programmes, School Direct remains an untested model, not least in its ability to ensure the coherent provision of an adequate supply of teachers across the country. The level of disinformation emanating from government via the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL), an executive agency of the Department for Education, suggests that there are real concerns about the viability of the School Direct project from within. The announcement that '[t]he number of lead schools taking part in School Direct has exceeded our expectations' (email to ITE providers, 19 April 2013)

contradicts the evidence on the ground in schools (Tickle, 2013). Indeed, in May the forerunner of the NCTL wrote to all applicants to ITE already accepted on traditional PGCE routes in universities extolling the benefits of School Direct and asking them to consider changing from their university-based course. Such a degree of interference from central government hardly suggests a satisfactory level of recruitment had been achieved at that point.

However, School Direct must not be allowed to fail, and both Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Education, and Charlie Taylor, Chief Executive of the National College for Teaching and Leadership, have spoken of the positive transformation that School Direct will bring to the education of new teachers. A look at the history and implications of this new model may tell us otherwise.

The Historical Context of Partnership between Universities and Schools

Underpinning the concept of partnership is the belief that the progress of beginning teachers is best supported by schools and universities working together in a collaborative relationship to ensure that theory, research and practice are fully integrated within a PGCE programme, and it is this model that has been under attack over a number of years.

The central control of a framework for university-school partnership in ITE can be traced back to the policies of the previous Conservative government as specified in Circulars 9/92 (DfE, 1992) and 14/93 (DfE, 1993). The changes proposed were bound up then, as now, with attempts to limit the influence of teacher education institutions. Even though 'prior to 1992 many teacher education courses had close working relationships with local schools' (Furlong et al, 1996, p. 41), the Secretary of State for Education at that time, Kenneth Clarke, implemented a range of measures designed to give schools the lead in all the important aspects of the training process. A key part of this policy was to stipulate the amount of time that student-teachers on PGCE courses spent in schools.

Some eighteen years later, in the Conservative-led coalition government's schools white paper 'The Importance of Teaching' (DfE, 2010), the idea of the school as the leading partner in ITE has been newly minted, and is supported by continuing government rhetoric about the paucity of the in-school training element of current ITE courses. Charlie Taylor (2013) goes further by suggesting that prior to School Direct, beginning teachers were 'parachuted into schools from on high without any direct school involvement in the content or the focus of their training course'. He claims that many headteachers are so in the dark about ITE that they 'don't know what goes on or how it is done' (Taylor, 2013), a bizarre accusation given that PGCE placements in school have always been used by headteachers as a means of recruiting the next generation of newly qualified teachers (NQTs). Such ill-informed claims contribute to a broader narrative which seeks to draw a direct causal link between a perceived decline in educational standards in schools and the content and approach of ITE

programmes. Those involved in ITE who raise a challenge to this very biased account are characterised by Michael Gove and his acolytes as either ivory towers academics or a new set of ideologically driven 'Enemies of Promise' (Gove, 2013), which is redolent of Prime Minister Tony Blair's well-publicised reference in 1999 to those who challenged New Labour's education reforms as the 'forces of conservatism' (Taylor, 1999).

It is therefore important to see the assault on the role of the universities in teacher education as an ongoing ideological project, with Gove's approach to university-school partnerships moving this towards its endgame. Not only has School Direct subjected university education departments to market forces in their pursuit of contracts for ITE provision, it has also ensured that discussions about course content are framed and shaped by the discourse of the financial transaction. The School Direct system is given a helping hand by the very high-stakes judgements of Ofsted. The next step for Gove is to push ahead with his apprenticeship model of teaching by allowing more schools, specifically academy chains, to become ITE accrediting bodies, eventually removing university education departments entirely from the sphere of influence. At the moment the tenuously defined School Direct model allows only a set of downgraded roles for university education departments. At best they become subsidiary partners in arrangements for beginning teachers to work in schools; at worst they have no function at all. As Gove reminded those attending the National College annual conference in June 2012, they run the risk of 'going out of business' (DfE, 2012).

HEI-led Partnership Is Not a Broken Model

For the reasons described above, Gove is promoting a model of partnership that is school led. There was a similar impetus for change following the reforms to teacher education in the 1990s, but the model that emerged at that point, and for more than merely practical reasons, was higher education institution (HEI) led. Partnership agreements were developed, university education departments offered mentor training for teachers, and in turn teachers had input into the school-based aspects of the training. During this time, concerns of both a pragmatic and a philosophical nature were expressed by teachers and ITE tutors about creating too reduced a role for higher education in teacher education, with questions raised about 'practice-focused approaches', 'the apprenticeship paradigm' and the separation, perhaps even the removal, of theory from practice (Jones et al, 1997, p. 258). Davies and Ferguson (1997) reported on a survey asking teachers whether they felt they could take over the role of teacher trainers: 'in our sample 85% said no ... None of the sixty one teachers wanted the links between the higher education institutions and the schools to go, whether they answered "yes" or "no"' (Davies & Ferguson, 1997, p. 47). Burton (1998) examined the partnership scheme at her own HEI and found that the schools did not want to take on the additional burden of quality assurance and

accountability for teacher education, given that they were already managing a particularly coercive schools inspection regime.

So what is different now? At the level of the classroom teacher there is scant evidence to suggest dissatisfaction with the current PGCE arrangements. However, at the macro level of government policy, the sheer pace and single-mindedness of Gove's education reforms have been key in moving ITE away from an HEI-led model. Just as important are changes to the educational landscape as far as schools are concerned. The coalition has expanded the New Labour academies programme to the point where 48% of secondary schools have now been granted academy status, with more in the pipeline, taking the total to over 50% (DfE, 2013a). An increasing number of primary schools are also being forced into becoming academies – in many well-publicised cases, against the wishes of parents (Mansell, 2011; BBC News London, 2012). This campaign of academisation has effectively cut schools loose from local support and accountability. In addition, a considerable part of the education budget has been diverted to the development of free schools, which, in the case of primaries, are often opened in areas where additional places are not required, thus depriving those in areas of real need (Boffey, 2013). Academies and free schools 'enjoy' freedoms not afforded to the maintained sector: there is no requirement to teach to the National Curriculum or employ qualified teachers, and the schools' self-appointed governors set the pay and conditions of service for staff. With teaching schools being offered financial sweeteners to ensure the success of School Direct, Gove's determination to destroy university-based ITE seems clear.

'The Importance of Teaching': an object lesson in disinformation

In its annual report for 2009/10 on standards in ITE the government's own inspection body found that '[t]here was more outstanding initial teacher education delivered by higher education-led partnerships than by school-centred initial teacher training partnerships and employment-based routes' (Ofsted, 2009/10, p. 59). The evidence provided by Ofsted to support this finding is largely ignored in the 2010 schools white paper, and instead policy is made on the basis of cherry-picked examples from favoured education systems around the world. Finland comes in for particular praise, with a strong but overly simplistic correlation drawn between Finland's policy on teacher recruitment and the high achievement of its students.

However, schools do not exist in a social vacuum and there is much research to suggest that overall achievement is higher in societies such as Finland's, where inequality is less marked (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010). This does not apply to England, where all the indicators point to an ever-increasing gap between rich and poor. Similarly, the fragmentation of the school system started under New Labour but enthusiastically accelerated by Gove has led to differences in admissions procedures and internal organisational structures such

as streaming and setting. This flies in the face of research evidence which suggests that achievement tends to be higher in inclusive school systems that do not promote early segregation of pupils:

Any restriction on enrolment or early setting aside of certain students, any grouping by distinct level or streaming (in the framework of compulsory schooling), and all phenomena of segregation among schools (which create a 'supply' of uneven quality) tend to increase social inequality in performance without improving average level or even elite level. (Duru-Bellat & Suchaut, 2005, p. 192)

The white paper does pay lip service to the Ofsted findings about the quality of the training in HEI-led partnerships, stating that 'the current cohort of trainees is one of our best ever' (DfE, 2010, p. 3). Yet in its proposals to give 'outstanding schools a much greater role in teacher training in the same way that our best hospitals train new doctors and nurses' (DfE, 2010, p. 3) because 'too little teaching takes place on the job' (DfE, 2010, p. 19), it immediately sets out to dismantle the very system that has produced these outstanding trainees. Whilst there is much emphasis in the document on the schools' role in teacher training, the part to be played by university education departments is far less clear beyond a promise to invite 'some of the best higher education providers of initial teacher training to open University Training Schools ... as a means of training teachers in practice' (DfE, 2010, p. 23). To date we are only aware of concrete proposals to build one training school, and its opening date has already been postponed to September 2015. Government encouragement and funding to take forward this initiative have been significant by their absence. By contrast, the white paper paves the way for the School Direct model, and since its publication all the resources of government have been marshalled in support of implementation.

The Well-planned Route to School Direct

The range of measures simultaneously detrimental to university ITE provision and advantageous to School Direct has been supported by the key appointment of Sir Michael Wilshaw, ex-headteacher of one of Gove's favourite academies, as the Chief Inspector of Schools. A new inspection framework for ITE was introduced in 2012, and at the same time universities were told that only HEIs graded as 1 by Ofsted would retain their core PGCE allocations at the levels of previous years and that this guarantee would not apply beyond the academic year 2013/14. Meanwhile the new, tougher inspection framework has led to the downgrading of a number of university ITE providers previously graded as 1, while providers already on grades 2 and 3 have had their PGCE allocations reduced, and in some secondary subjects completely removed, thus justifying the need for the untried School Direct system.

In an Ofsted press release on 22 March 2013 statistics from a small sample of inspections were presented as proof that the quality of HEI-led ITE has within the space of three years plummeted to below that of school-led providers. Wilshaw claimed this as justification for government policy regarding ITE, but was roundly challenged in a letter from James Noble-Rogers of the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET) for the 'misleading, inaccurate and inappropriately political' nature of his comments. Ofsted is supposedly a body independent of government, yet the timing of Wilshaw's endorsement of School Direct, following on immediately from a DfE announcement on 21 March 2013 that Gove intended to release extra ITE funding for teaching schools, suggests that it is being used as an instrument to ensure the success of the School Direct programme.

A Reductionist View of Teaching

The School Direct model may at first appear to be a recognition of teacher knowledge and expertise, but a closer look shows it reflects the erosion of teacher professionalism which has been evident for the last fifteen years. In 1998 the Primary Literacy Strategy, developed by New Labour from an idea conceived by the Conservatives, became a requirement for all primary schools. It set out the literacy curriculum and, crucially, for the first time dictated how to teach it. The ubiquitous clock, directing how much time was to be devoted to different teacher-led activities in the literacy hour, became a raft for teachers to cling to in the sea of over 300 learning objectives to be addressed in planning for each year group during one year. Moving to more contemporary times, proposals for the new National Curriculum 2014 are pedagogically inflexible at primary level particularly and have been denounced as a 'straight-jacket' for teachers and as being 'so prescriptive they denied teachers the scope to exercise their professional judgment' by Andrew Pollard, who was on the advisory panel (Pollard, 2012; Vasagar, 2012).

School Direct fits well into this rigid model of learning and teaching because it enables beginning teachers to learn the 'craft' of teaching at the feet of teachers who are performing a role that is dictated to them by a heavily prescribed curriculum. These are the same teachers whose creativity is increasingly constrained by the requirement to impart knowledge to children underpinned by high-stakes testing and coercive accountability practices.

This reductionist view of teaching denies the role of the teacher as a facilitator of learning who draws on a complex integration of knowledge of individual children and their families and the context of the school, combined with theory, research evidence and a reflexivity that enables professional growth (Alexander et al, 2009; Wrigley et al, 2013). Charlie Taylor, speaking at the North of England conference in January 2013, proclaimed, 'There is no doubt that the better the subject knowledge of a teacher, the better the teaching', but failed to provide evidence to back that up. So it is no coincidence that School Direct places beginning teachers in schools. Educational policy that

characterises education as the acquisition of knowledge and has no place for the agency of the teacher in developing children's understanding negates the necessity for knowledge of theory and the development of criticality in becoming an effective practitioner.

School Direct, therefore, is about the narrowing of horizons, confining the beginning teacher to an experience of one school (supplemented by a brief placement in a second linked to the first) with the expectation, but no promise, of employment in that same school at the end of the training year. This is entirely in keeping with a view of teaching as a craft, a learned set of transferable skills informed not by research but by a programme of continuing professional development (CPD), determined and delivered by Ofsted-rated outstanding schools (DfE, 2010, p. 23), the same schools that are given the lead in providing ITE. Children, their parents and teachers might legitimately question how the schools can simultaneously assume these onerous roles and fulfil their core commitment – that is, the education of young people. In addition, this is an issue for teaching unions because there are workload implications for members who in the School Direct model find themselves responsible for educating beginning teachers.

Gove's Contradictory Messages: are teachers to be trusted?

Gove's insistence on placing initial teacher education in the hands of schools carries an inconsistency that illuminates the ideological basis of his policies. Since taking office he has shown no confidence in the teaching profession, which he has characterised as promoting mediocrity, accepting low standards and tolerating low aspirations. In May 2013, speaking at Brighton College (DfE, 2013b), he suggested that the much-criticised phonics test of nonsense words for six-year-olds is 'designed to identify those who may have reading difficulties and ensure they are supported in their reading', thereby repudiating teachers' knowledge of the children they teach and their professional judgements. He has derided and misrepresented teaching approaches that might encourage children to think for themselves as embodying low expectations. For example, in the same speech he accused teachers who asked Year 11 students, after they had studied the rise of Hitler, to depict the course of events as a story for Year 6 pupils as 'denying them access to the best that has been thought and written, because Nemo and the Mister Men are more relevant'.

High praise is bestowed upon 'Teaching Schools and the best Academy chains', which have become a collocation in government rhetoric as the natural seat of ITE with their 'rigorous training' by teachers who are 'high performing'. Yet, in reality, any school can apply for School Direct places as long as it is linked to an 'outstanding' school, another indication of the desperation to make the system work and to keep higher education out at all costs.

Downgrading Theory and Research-informed Teaching

Gove does not acknowledge that in the current ITE system in England it is the university setting which provides exposure to and the space to engage with research-informed teaching and teaching-informed research. Here, beginning teachers are encouraged to make sense of their experiences in schools as members of a community of learners. Indeed, in the Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector 2009/10 the HEI-led partnership model is singled out as providing valuable opportunities for critical reflection and thinking, and the importance of lecturers using their own research to inform their teaching is highlighted as a significant factor in promoting the progress of beginning teachers.

School Direct is another weapon in the ideologically driven attack on education as an academic discipline and on the value, validity and future of educational research. In his speech to the National College in June 2012, Gove sought evidence for School Direct by misquoting Andreas Schleicher, Head of Education at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), as declaring 'many countries have shifted the emphasis from academic preparation to preparing professionals in schools instead. Teachers now get into classrooms earlier, spend more time on-site in schools and get more and better support in the process.' What Gove conveniently omitted was Schleicher's emphasis on the role of theory and research, the link between the school and the university and his references to the system in Finland, frequently extolled as the pinnacle of good practice, where beginning teachers spend five years studying and are required to gain qualifications at master's level in a programme that fully integrates theory, research and practice (Sahlberg, 2011).

Such a significant distortion reflects Gove's distrust of universities. Even the scant reference to research in the 2010 white paper referred to above has been erased from the narrative by 2012. In June of that year, a spokesperson for the DfE told the *Daily Telegraph*: 'For too long left wing training colleges have imbued teachers with useless theories that don't work and actively damage children's education' (Paton, 2012). Statements such as this, which have no evidence base, influence public opinion by contributing to a discourse that denigrates teachers and educational research and ultimately serves to undermine the education system. It is particularly worrying that one of the reasons the head of Bath University's education department gave to schools for pulling out of PGCE was the 'desire to focus on education research' (Mansell, 2013b), suggesting a resignation about the separation of schools from universities and practice from research that School Direct has wrought.

School Direct, depending on how it is interpreted by the school, can deny beginning teachers opportunities that university-led courses provide to take time away from the immediacies of the classroom, to talk together about their experiences of different schools and contexts, to think, discuss and question, based on a knowledge of theory and research evidence. Placing students in teaching schools is unlikely to produce practitioners who will ask difficult questions about the next initiative that is handed to them. For example, without

recourse to the space and time for reflection and access to the research-informed specialist knowledge that university-led courses offer, how would beginning teachers know there are different perspectives on learning to read or alternative explanations of the role of phonics in becoming a reader? This enhanced understanding constitutes a more complex definition of subject knowledge than that of Charlie Taylor, discussed earlier, and is unlikely to take place in busy schools and classrooms that are subject to the micromanagement of the curriculum and the twin threats of high-stakes testing and punitive outcomes from Ofsted inspections.

School Direct and the Neo-liberal Agenda

It is not difficult to see where School Direct fits into the coalition government's attack on education and the dismantling of the state. Situating ITE in schools is preparing the system for the academy chains and free schools to take full responsibility for educating beginning teachers. In the spirit of free enterprise, teaching schools and academies are likely to compete for ITE places, and it will be their construction of teaching and learning that new teachers will be subjected to: a doctrine of individualism, target-setting, measurement and conformity that is likely to inform their understanding of what it means to be a teacher.

Academy chains such as Ark and Harris are being lauded as taking responsibility for ITE, yet the picture of their success is far from clear. In March 2013, the only two Harris primary schools to have had inspection verdicts published both received 'requires improvement' judgements from Ofsted inspectors (Mansell, 2013a).

The *Times Educational Supplement* recently gave an example of practices at Ark, one of the biggest academy chains, set up by a group of hedge fund financiers:

Teachers who join the Ark family of schools go through a week-long induction where they are expected to learn the different teaching models used across the institutions: 'cold calling', for example, where teachers fire unexpected questions at students to check they are paying attention; 'strong voice', where a teacher pauses mid-sentence to show they know that not every student is listening; and 'finger clicking' by students to show encouragement when their peers answer a question correctly. (Vaughan, 2013)

The School Direct route to qualified teacher status, in the hands of such schools where a disturbing view of teachers and pupils as automatons is promoted, will leave no room to develop a set of principles to guide practice. These beginning teachers will be placed in the classroom from the start, learning 'the craft' of teaching, with no time to discuss the purposes of education and a vision for its future: a dangerous position indeed, but one that is likely to produce a compliant workforce.

The encroachment of the business model in all schools which began under New Labour continues to flourish. For example, the newly appointed head of Pimlico Academy primary school, a former deputy director of the right-wing think tank Civitas, gained her teaching qualifications in Wandsworth in July 2013. She will take up her position in September without having been responsible for teaching or managing a class, working with children and their families or understanding the difference between devising school policies and implementing them on the ground. She intends to follow the Core Knowledge Curriculum developed by Ed Hirsch, a retired professor of English Literature from the United States. His published work on education promotes the view that children should learn a body of factual knowledge in a highly structured way, and has informed the proposals for the new National Curriculum, much criticised by educationalists.

Academies are already run as businesses and it is not difficult to see how ITE can increase the list of services they offer. At the time of writing, a DfE leak reported Gove's belief that schools could be run for profit, like some of the charter schools in the United States. Charlie Taylor, speaking at the North of England Education conference, declared, 'School Direct is the new way of training teachers which puts schools, the employers, the customers, at the heart of the process.' Gove has already announced that schools will be able to decide 'how much to spend on trainees' salaries and how much on training' so that, in his distasteful words, they 'get the biggest possible bang for their buck' (DfE, 2012).

School Direct represents a wider attack on higher education evident in the government's drive to privatise universities. The withdrawal of public funding for humanities and arts courses following the Browne review in 2010 reinforced universities' role in servicing the economy. Instead of offering opportunities for critical thinking, universities became locations for instrumental learning. Des Freedman (2012, p. 1) suggests that they have become sites of 'service promise, consumer activity and commodity exchange'. Those roles will certainly be fulfilled under School Direct if the only function of universities is to accredit qualifications for activities carried out independently of them on school sites.

The School Direct model is a further manifestation of the coalition government's strategy of decentralisation or, as Gove declared at Brighton College in May 2013, getting 'the state out of the way' of education. The increasing privatisation of education through the proliferation of academies and free schools has already legitimated a move away from democratic accountability and the provision of education as a public service. School Direct will further erode the diminishing power of local authorities, as school federations and academy chains oversee the supply of newly qualified teachers. Charlie Taylor refers to such schools as 'blazing a trail towards a school-led system in which the best schools are in control of the future' (Taylor, 2013). He is referring in particular to his plans that schools will determine local teacher supply. The implications of this model are serious. Who will consider factors such as the birth rate in projecting how many qualified teachers will be required

nationally? As Brighouse (2013) laments, it is of real concern that 'no one person or agency has the duty to ensure a sufficient supply of trained teachers nationally, or an efficient local distribution of training places'. As these schools begin to make policy-related decisions, the picture becomes even more serious. For example, in the case of language teaching, individual schools will be empowered to decide both the number of places for ITE they offer and in which languages, thus dictating local curriculum policy that has national repercussions.

Conclusion

It would be unwise to dismiss the School Direct policy, with its shift to school-led ITE and the lack of any overall planning for teacher supply, as merely chaotic. Certainly it might appear that Michael Gove's adherence to ideology is creating an incompetent system for ITE, one that is doomed to fail, but in fact this chaos is part of the design to wrest control for ITE from the universities, to dictate the school curriculum and to shape those who 'deliver' it. Creating a marketplace in ITE is one short step away from freeing up schools to act as businesses in a for-profit education system. Gove's designed chaos for ITE must be exposed for what it is – a key part of his broader campaign to change the landscape of state education in England beyond recognition, and potentially beyond repair. For this reason it must be resisted at all costs.

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Correspondence: c.kelly@gold.ac.uk, m.pitfield@gold.ac.uk