

# MAYOR OF LONDON

---

## Mayor's Education Conference – 21 November 2014

### How data can help schools face the challenges ahead

Chair:	Dr Kevan Collins, Chief Executive, Education Endowment Foundation
Panel discussant:	Tom Bennett, Director of ResearchEd, Author and TES Blogger
Panel discussant:	Mark Hartley, Head Teacher, Barnes Primary School (Gold Club School 2013 and 2014)
Panel discussant:	Daisy Christodoulou, Research and Development Manager, Ark Schools
Panel discussant:	Heather Storey, Education & Youth Team, Greater London Authority

### Session plan:

*The session will focus on the education challenges and successes in London as set out in the newly published Mayor's Annual London Education Report and in the context of a broader discussion of data- and research-driven school improvement. Panel member contributors include a Gold Club school Headteacher, the Director of ResearchEd and ARK Schools' Research and Development Manager. London Leadership Strategy, SQW and Project Oracle have also been invited to participate in the session as audience members. This session will include an exclusive preview of the new London Schools Atlas.*

### Session inputs:

**Mark Hartley** presented 10 points of reflection about data use in a school context:

- Data comes in many forms - not all of it is numerical.
- Beware of categorising and labelling pupils based on data (ie more able, less able).
- Do research findings actually inform practice? How can we promote this?
- Senior leaders need to implement conclusions from research, otherwise the impact is limited.
- Cyclical review of key aspects of a school's provision produces invaluable information.
- Key data in school includes findings from regular evaluation of additional support programmes (eg TAs, reading recovery).
- Data is a key component in the change management process.
- Who owns data is a key consideration as it will influence how you disseminate it.
- A listening organisation is one that genuinely values feedback from all stakeholders.

# MAYOR OF LONDON

---

- All who work in a school have to be prepared to respond positively to all feedback, even if you feel it isn't relevant.

## **Daisy Christodoulou:**

- Daisy focused on the idea that categories and levels of academic progress are largely ineffective as the moment that they become targets, they lose their meaning.
- Teaching to the test compromises inference skills in the students. No test, however well designed, can capture pupil ability effectively.
- Gaining quality data and undertaking effective analysis is difficult in a school setting, due to lack of time and often a lack of research skills.
- In England, particularly in London, we are data rich but currently data interpretation poor. Daisy recommended a particularly useful American book on data use in education: Daniel Koretz, *Measuring Up: What Educational Testing Really Tells Us*.
- [See a recent [TES article](#) of Daisy's on this subject.]

## **Heather Storey** presented some key headline facts from the [Mayor's Annual Report](#):

- The Annual London Education Report highlights London's exceptional performance across many areas.
- However, it also evidences that there are a number of areas in which we could improve, such as closing attainment gaps for the most disadvantaged students and reducing the dropout rate at Level 3/age 17.
- Heather called for the delegates to consider how we can use the report findings to inform London education's next steps. What can we do to build on what we already know about London's educational performance?

## **Questions from the floor to the panel:**

How do schools know what realistic targets are in narrowing the gap for pupil premium children? Are they national or regional? How do we focus on the progression of students, without using grades?

- *Daisy suggested that employment and destinations data be used to track progression as, ultimately, the goal of schooling is work-readiness.*
- *Daisy also suggested that teacher training be the key mechanism for understanding how to read and use data effectively.*
- *Mark indicated that there is a difficulty with Ofsted being the only current validator of good practice; schools should be able to gain validation from other sources and at different times.*
- *Heather pointed out that the diversity in London makes diverse the nature of challenges experienced by different boroughs and areas. Therefore, London-wide generalisations are necessarily difficult.*