

The globalised challenge

SSAT National Conference, November 25 to 27, Birmingham

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Your guide to the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust's 17th National Conference – 21st Century Schooling: The Globalised Challenge



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Secretary of state for children, schools and families, **Ed**

Balls, gives his take on globalisation and what his department is doing to try and meet the challenges of the 21st century

The world today is very different to even 20 years ago and it is my job to make sure that in this rapidly changing world, every young person has access to the skills and qualifications they need to secure a good job.

Economic and technological change means that if we are to continue to attract the most advanced businesses to this country, we need to be a recognised world leader in learning, skills and creativity – particularly in fields such as science, technology, mathematics and engineering – and make sure that everyone can develop their skills and talents.

That is why we are raising the participation age, increasing the number of Apprenticeships and have introduced Diplomas so that every young person leaves school with the skills they need to succeed.

Feedback from employers shows that the education system is increasingly meeting their needs, but the challenge is growing.

I expect the demand for high-level skills, knowledge and understanding will continue to grow and that the proportion of the workforce which is unqualified will decrease.

The implications of this are clear: without skills and qualifications, today's young people will struggle to find meaningful work in the future. So we must inspire all young people to remain engaged and to succeed in education and training into early adulthood.

As well as teaching the traditional knowledge and skills, including literacy and numeracy, it is more important than ever that our education system equips young people with a broader set of personal, learning and thinking skills, including confidence and the ability to think analytically and creatively; to learn and research in depth; to be active citizens; and to work on their own, with others, and in teams.

It is also important that our young people have access to the best technology and I am looking forward to the Department for



An ever changing world

Children, Schools and Families attending the Learning and Technology World Technology Forum and discussing this with ministers from across the globe early next year.

Here, we are looking at how we roll out our Home Access programme so more pupils in state-maintained education in England have the opportunity to access computers and the internet at home.

The family of specialist schools now has more than 3,000 members. It is a family that is growing rapidly, with some of the fastest improving schools in the country. I am committed to ensuring that every secondary school is working towards specialist, academy or trust status.

But schools do not exist in a bubble and, as set out in our *21st Century Schools White Paper*, no school can go it alone. Forging partnerships with other schools and local businesses is essential for providing

all children with excellent teachers, new facilities, and the skills and confidence they need for greater independence in adult life. This is not just about improving our schools, but about driving up standards, offering a broader curriculum to pupils, and making budgets go further as well.

I am committed to making sure that children and young people have access to the best subject teaching and centres of excellence.

Specialist schools have an important part to play in this by developing partnerships, sharing their expertise and facilities with other schools, and providing children with the skills and confidence needed for greater independence in their future careers.

• Ed Balls will address the SSAT National Conference during the afternoon session on Thursday, November 26.

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Globalisation: How do we meet the challenge?



Elizabeth Reid,
chief executive
of the SSAT,
discusses the
challenges of globalisation,
the core theme of the
organisation's 17th National
Conference

Globalisation is changing the way we live and work. It is also creating challenges for our schools as they re-assess how and what they teach to ensure young people have the skills, knowledge and understanding to succeed in the 21st century.

There are many aspects of globalisation that have an impact on our education system. Migration, economic integration, increased international travel, new technologies, and the emergence of global issues such as climate change all affect how we prepare young people to become global citizens.

Schools are already starting to address these challenges and our 17th National Conference in Birmingham will provide the opportunity for nearly 2,500 school leaders from more than 1,000 schools to share their knowledge and experiences and to hear from leading academics and thinkers on globalisation.

Keynote speakers include the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Thomas L Friedman, whose recent international bestselling books, *The World is Flat* and *Hot Flat and Crowded* explore the impact of globalisation and how governments, societies and schools can and must adapt.

One leading academic whose work on globalisation has helped shape our thinking is Professor Yong Zhao from Michigan State University. His pamphlet for the SSAT, *Preparing Global Citizens: Globalisation and Education*, provides a provocative perspective on how the world is changing and the need for schools to look beyond their communities, and even their borders, in order to prepare students for the future.

As he says: "To prepare students to live successfully in the globalised world, schools must adopt a global perspective." We look forward to Professor Zhao sharing his thoughts with delegates on days one and two of the conference (see page 4).

Making sure every young person receives a world class education that equips them with



The global debate: The SSAT National Conference is famed for its breathtaking student showcases. The Red Rhythm dance group from Davison CE High School for Girls in Worthing were among those who stole the show at last year's event

essential skills and knowledge is a goal I know our members share. To achieve this, we need to collaborate with leading practitioners and academics from around the world, to identify best practice from wherever it can be found and implement it in our schools.

One way in which school leaders are doing this is through our international network, iNet, which provides English schools with the opportunity to explore other education systems and build partnerships with more than 1,600 schools across 32 countries.

iNet also provides students with the opportunity to learn about and visit other countries. With the growth of economies such as China and India and increasing economic integration, businesses want employees who have language skills and knowledge of other cultures.

Specialist language colleges are playing a central role in meeting this demand, with students twice as likely to study a language GCSE in a language college as in other maintained schools. Language colleges are also leading the teaching of important world languages such as Chinese and Arabic.

The Anglo-European School in Essex is a specialist language college and also one of the SSAT's 12 Confucius Classrooms pioneering the teaching of Mandarin Chinese in England. As highlighted on page 6, from year 7 every student studies French and German with the most able students adding Japanese, Spanish, Russian, Italian or

Mandarin Chinese. It also has three partner schools in China.

International guests are an important part of the conference and we are delighted Her Excellency Madame Fu Ying, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the UK, will be addressing delegates on day two of the conference. There is also a series of international school showcases, including Changzhou Senior Middle School from Jiangsu Province in China, which will be showcasing its work and how it is redesigning schooling to face the globalised challenge. We will also be joined by a substantial delegation from Abu Dhabi schools. We look forward to welcoming all our international guests.

I know all our guests and delegates will be inspired by the school-led sessions which once again play a prominent role in our National Conference. These presentations enable schools to share their thinking on the implications of globalisation for teaching and learning, and to show how they are responding creatively to this theme.

I hope this supplement and our conference provide school leaders with an even greater understanding of the challenges of globalisation by stimulating debate and informing future practice.

• Elizabeth Reid will address the SSAT National Conference during the morning session on Wednesday, November 25.



21st century challenges

Globalisation – one educational challenge, two ideologies on how to tackle the problem

How does 21st century education need to adapt to prepare young people for the globalised world they live in, and make them competitive in the jobs market?

Professor Yong Zhao and Bob Compton are well known to SSAT members for their forthright views and stimulating debates on the future of globalisation and how Western education systems must adapt to ensure their students are able to compete internationally in the 21st century. Here they outline what they believe is the challenge for globalisation and 21st century schooling, and what must be done in the West if our young people are not to be left lagging behind their peers in Asia.

Yong Zhao, Distinguished Professor in the Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology, and Special Education at the College of Education, Michigan State University, is the author of *Catching Up or Leading the Way: American Education in the Age of Globalization* (ASCD, 2009). He is also chair for Globalisation and New Technologies with iNet.

“Creativity and seeking out diversity of talent is needed more than specific knowledge to produce global citizens.

During the industrial age, we looked for a few select skills and talents to meet the needs of that industry and to enable mass production to take place. Now we need to look for people who have skills for the 21st century and everything that involves.

What we must develop now are different, niche talents and aptitudes among people who can operate in the modern world.

One way to achieve this is to personalise how we teach. I am not talking about helping students work towards a set of outcomes or benchmarks, but the use in the classroom of different ways of helping people to achieve these, based on their particular talents and aptitudes.

By developing each child individually and playing to their strengths, we will develop a diversity of talents. The success or otherwise of this will be down to teachers. They know their pupils, just as parents do, from the tasks they expect them to carry out in the classroom.

Too often, we ignore the individual talents

that young people display because there is no time, or they don't fit into what we are trying to assess and test. We need to develop a system of education where we value all types of talent.

In some of these areas, such as music or art, for example, there may be no existing assessment benchmarks, but we must find them to make those young people feel valued and that they have a contribution to make.

It is up to teachers and parents at home to guide this and encourage more of the types of opportunities for young people that enable them to explore and discover for themselves where their aptitudes lie and what they are good at. It is very sad that we don't have such a system at the moment.

It is down to governments to change the way education systems work. At the moment they have the attitude that if you know this in maths and that in science then you will be fine. But we are living with a very uncertain future and have to address the other abilities that young people need to be global citizens.

We need to move away from thinking about content, to thinking about talent. Children need to be involved in more diverse activities than those that can be easily measured in literacy, maths and science.

There are also other measures of success that governments need to consider. For example, are children happy? Are they engaged enough to be attending school regularly? Are they emotionally secure?

There is a general assumption that if children are in school then they are taking in knowledge, but this is not necessarily the case.

Our education officials in the US, and the UK to some extent, are therefore asking the wrong questions about what it is that young people should know. Governments and the public need to move away from being focused on the belief that only a focus on maths, literacy and science matters. In particular, the status of foreign languages needs to be elevated to that of these subjects.

If you do not have some of these other abilities then you will not survive in the global world. You should not be trying to teach numeracy and literacy at the cost of other subjects, otherwise you are depriving young people of a real education.

I am fearful for the future, but I believe that enough educationalists in the UK and US are coming around to this way of thinking, even if governments are not.

The problem is that our systems are based on a need to measure, and to measure you have to arrive at outcomes that pupils must reach. This results in a very narrow form of education.”

“What we must develop now are different, niche talents and aptitudes among people who can operate in the modern world”

Bob Compton, entrepreneur, venture capitalist and film-maker, produced the controversial film *2 Million Minutes*, which followed the activities of six exceptional high school students in the United States, India and China to compare their lifestyles and academic achievements

“People who have seen my film make the erroneous assumption that I want American young people to be as conscientious, hard-working and absorbed in their education as the Indians and Chinese. This is simply not the case.

However, American and British students have to find new ways of differentiating themselves economically in the global setting so that they can be financially prosperous and stand out as having something to offer. They must find something that gives them a competitive advantage.

I believe that in order to be economically competitive in the global economy, individuals must be at least as well prepared intellectually as their competitors.

You have to be solid in the fundamentals of maths and science, for example, because these are the disciplines of the 21st century and they require more rigour and intellectual teaching than what was required in the 20th century.

We have to take a step up in every subject, but particularly maths and the sciences, because it is in these subjects that we have really failed to keep up. As a result, many countries in Asia have caught and overtaken us.

We also have to ask ourselves how we use our cultural advantages to differentiate children in the global economy and allow them to find careers and jobs that are high-wage, highly stimulating, and satisfying.

My film shows how none of the Asian students were successful in getting into their preferred universities, and yet the Americans, who don't devote as much time to their school work, did. Many Americans perceive this as fine, but they are missing the point.

It just shows that in Asia, the level of



anything wrong in the West, but we have been complacent.

Countries like China and India have come through the turmoil of poverty, relatively recent independence or revolution and recognised that the way to prosperity is through education.

China dealt with the situation particularly well because it put all its efforts quietly and humbly into its schools.

GDP that was lower than that of Brazil. But because the country wasn't rich in natural resources, it decided to develop its brain power instead. Today, following a series of five-year plans that targeted its education system, the per capita GDP is four times that of Brazil.

What this shows is that the rate of growth and economic prosperity of a country has a direct correlation to the educational achievement levels of its young people, particularly in maths and science.

I do not think that countries such as the US and UK should berate themselves for what we have failed to do, but we need to recognise the reality and take action. If we did not keep up and improve ourselves then someone was bound to have beaten us eventually. Once we understand the crisis in our schools and realise that we have our backs to the wall, we can do something about it. It is not too late.”

Further information

Prof Zhao is due to address the SSAT National Conference during the afternoon session on Wednesday, November 25, while Mr Compton will speak during the morning session on Thursday, November 26.

Both speakers will also host breakfast seminars from 9.15am on Wednesday, November 25, and 8am on Thursday, November 26.

For more information on the programme, see page 8 of this supplement or visit www.ssatrust.org.uk/nationalconference

“We have to take a step up in every subject, but particularly maths and the sciences, because it is in these subjects that we have really failed to keep up. As a result, many countries in Asia have caught and overtaken us”

competition is so much greater than in the United States. Even if those countries cannot educate all of their populations, they have a lot more untapped potential than we do because these are more populous countries.

China will still have more than 200 million young people who are better educated than our students, with another 100 million who are desperate to get into school. So the brain power in those countries has room to grow in a way we do not. It is not that we have done

It was happy to allow the US to brag about its achievements and accomplishments and we didn't realise they were quietly coming up behind us. Now, they have caught and passed us.

We have been arrogant and self-centred. We still have a school system in the US that is designed around the needs of the 19th century.

Another country that has crept up is South Korea. In the 1970s, it had a per capita

A love of languages

When it comes to preparing our students to be true global citizens, you cannot ignore the role of languages. **Dorothy Lepkowska** looks at this core conference theme

“In 21st century education it is important that children and young people perceive their place in the world.”

The words of Judith Masters, the SSAT’s head of cultural networks. Speaking to *SecEd*, Ms Masters emphasised that there are a great many young people growing up in this country for whom languages are second nature because they speak a mother tongue at home and English is their second language.

“For them,” she continued, “this is everyday life and not something that they just do at school. Those pupils are at a huge advantage.”

“I don’t think you necessarily have to learn a foreign language to be a global citizen, but thinking ahead to the future, many young people will be going to work all over the world. They might not be fluent, but any knowledge will facilitate relationships and understanding between cultures and openness, which is vital to understanding how different people operate.”

Ms Masters believes that the languages traditionally taught in our schools, such as French and German, will maintain their importance, but many schools would now be looking to offer additional languages, adding that this ambition is being driven by the work

of specialist language colleges. There are now more than 380 language colleges, which work in partnership with other schools and the wider community to raise standards in the teaching and learning of languages.

Ms Masters continued: “Two of the languages that are really taking off are Arabic and Mandarin Chinese, but we have already set up networks for teachers of Urdu, Punjabi and Russian, so that teachers of those subjects don’t feel isolated in terms of access to resources.”

She added that it was vital that initiatives to introduce language in primary schools were effective: “Spreading an enjoyment of learning languages is vital at that age and gets them thinking about foreign languages in a positive way. It is also easier to learn at that age and to instil a love of language at a young age. The trick is to keep the momentum going into secondary school.”

The importance of languages was highlighted in a recent report from the Confederation of British Industry, which stated that employers placed a premium on staff who could converse in a foreign language, especially when this was accompanied by cultural knowledge.

It found that while traditional school-taught languages, such as French and German, continued to be much sought-after by businesses, increasingly firms were looking for speakers of Chinese, Spanish and Russian. The report said: “In an increasingly competitive job market, it is clear that foreign language proficiency adds significant value to a candidate’s portfolio of skills, and can give them a real competitive edge when applying for jobs.”

Case study

Students at the Anglo-European School amaze visitors with their confidence and maturity.

Perhaps it is not surprising. By the time they reach the 6th form, most pupils will have been on four overseas exchange trips – to France, Germany, Italy and Belgium – staying with families and experiencing first-hand daily life in another country.

Language learning and citizenship go hand-in-hand at the Essex school. Headteacher, Jill Martin, said: “We consider languages to be the key learning experience, alongside citizenship, to producing truly global citizens.”

“This is extremely important for inter-cultural co-operation and tolerance, understanding global markets, and the ability of people to move seamlessly from one community to another with some cultural understanding.”

More than 550 pupils travel abroad every year through the school’s exchanges and visits programme, where they stay with families. Their language learning comes from day-to-day communication and observing how other people live.

“This communication is built around real relationships and this breaks down barriers, giving pupils the confidence to move freely between countries,” Ms Martin added.

“When people visit the school, they comment on the exceptional independence and maturity of our 6th-formers. We believe this is down to the visits programme that enables them to associate with different people and cultures.”

“As well as our European exchanges, we also have three partner schools in China and 20 of our students recently returned from a trip where they were staying with families.”

The Anglo-European School was the first language college in the country when it was set up in 1994 and is also one of the SSAT’s Confucius Classrooms, which are centres of excellence in teaching Mandarin Chinese chosen for their commitment to develop networks and support other schools in offering the subject.

At the school, every pupil studies French and German from year 7, with the most able pupils adding one from Japanese, Spanish, Russian, Italian or Mandarin Chinese from year 9. At key stage 4, every pupil takes two languages at GCSE, and special needs pupils study at least one. More than 60 per cent of students get at least a C grade at GCSE. Every student entering the 6th form must do some sort of language component as part of their A levels or International Baccalaureate.

“France might just be a hop away from us, but the cultural differences can be great,” Ms Martin added.

“Our pupils’ exposure to other cultures breaks down the barriers and allows them to enjoy a joke with their peers.”





Working together

International partnerships play a vital role in education.

Dorothy Lepkowska looks at the iNet Charter and Innovation Fellows, two schemes bringing together schools and teachers to help transform education to meet the challenges of the 21st century

iNet Charter

Established by the SSAT in 2003, iNet (International Networking for Educational Transformation) is an international network of schools, organisations and individuals who are committed to transforming learning through innovation. It has more than 5,600 members in 32 countries.

The signing of the iNet Charter in June 2009 by 65 school leaders from seven countries signified a shared commitment by heads to shape practice and lead the way forward.

The relationship stems from an earlier acceptance of five main principles, including the acknowledgement of the different talents of learners, globalisation, and the need for school leaders to lead transformation and innovation. Heads also urged respective governments to support them by removing barriers to change, attracting the best staff to the profession, and giving schools the authority and resources to respond to the needs of their learners.

They also agreed to lead the development and delivery of curricula to respond to the needs of students and called for flexibility to allow them to respond to the needs of a changing world.

In signing the Charter, school leaders committed to raising the esteem of the profession and building confidence, and to creating an environment in their schools where innovation could flourish.

They also made a moral commitment to supporting schools in developing countries.

Sylvia Paddock, the SSAT's operational director for iNet and international contracts, said: "The iNet Charter is a commitment

by school leaders to transform education so that all students, wherever they are in the world, receive a first class education.

"By bringing together experiences from their own schools and education systems, the signatories have identified how school leadership should be exercised to ensure school systems can meet the diverse needs of the 21st century learner."

She said that schools will use the Charter as a "guiding framework" to influence their work and will encourage colleagues around the world to do the same.

iNet members support each other to raise standards through a shared belief that no one school has all the answers to the educational challenges that are being faced, but that collectively they may find some of the solutions.

"They believe that it is no longer a matter of choice for schools to decide if they should reach out beyond their immediate locality, but that they have a moral imperative to do so," Ms Paddock added. "Through iNet, school leaders can work together for the benefit of all young people, making sure they have the skills and knowledge to succeed in a globalised economy."

School leaders will be able to sign up to the Charter at the SSAT National Conference.

Innovation Fellows

Teaching in the 21st century requires innovation and new methods.

The SSAT's Innovation Fellows are a group of 19 practitioners – mainly classroom teachers and heads of department – in schools in England and Wales who are working together on five action research

programmes to establish models of effective practice. The participants, who will shortly be joined in their work by colleagues from schools in Michigan, USA, are investigating five areas of personalising learning.

The two main projects will look at Web 2.0 functionality and its impact on pedagogy and how it can be used more creatively. They will look closely at project-based learning too.

But they will also consider the structure of the curriculum and "collapsing" of timetables into theme and topic-based learning days; new patterns of school-led CPD and how these impact on staff and students; and student leadership in their learning, which will follow on from work already done as part of student voice activities.

Each of the 19 practitioners is seconded to the SSAT for one day a week during the current academic year to work on the projects.

Andrew McDonald-Brown, the SSAT's head of regional networks – London, said: "The practitioners have all been chosen by their headteachers as pioneers in the areas of innovation.

"We have established an online community for them, which includes a discussion forum, in which they create a weekly diary and activities so others can see what they are doing. The online community helps them to communicate and share their developments.

"We also encourage them to visit each other's schools and to look at other schools and academies which are known effective models of good practice in these areas.

"The intention has been to have a fluid and unstructured exercise which aids creativity."

At the same time, partnerships are being developed with two regional education school associations in Michigan, which are expected to join the project shortly.

"The outcomes will be disseminated through our conference in 2010, but we will also be looking at dissemination through regional networks, symposiums and national events," he added.

Further information

www.ssatrust.org.uk

The SSAT 17th National Conference

21st Century Schooling: The Globalised Challenge
November 25 to 27, 2009
International Convention Centre, Birmingham
www.ssatrust.org.uk/nationalconference

This year's SSAT National Conference takes place in the midst of a rapidly changing national and international context.

To prepare young people for the future they face, we need to provide them with an understanding of the opportunities they have in a global employment market.

Schools will play a crucial role in equipping students with the talent and skills to succeed in the 21st century.

Conference highlights

Thomas L Friedman

(Wednesday keynote and breakfast session)

The Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist's international bestseller *The World Is Flat* has helped millions of readers to see globalisation in a new way.

He will explain how the flattening of the world happened at the dawn of this century; what it means to countries, companies, communities, and individuals; and how governments and societies – and schools – can, and must, adapt.

Professor Yong Zhao and Bob Compton

(Wednesday and Thursday keynote and breakfast sessions)

Follow the debate on how the West should develop its education systems. Professor Yong Zhao believes that Western countries will maintain a competitive edge in the 21st century global economy by unleashing the creative potential of students.

Bob Compton argues that they will need an intense focus on producing highly qualified graduates, especially in science and maths. They will debate the issues through their keynotes and breakout sessions.

Political visions

(Wednesday sessions and Thursday keynote)

Hear the education policies of the main political parties. David Laws MP, Liberal Democrat shadow schools secretary, and Nick Gibb MP, Conservative shadow schools minister, will lead sessions with

question and answer opportunities, while the schools secretary, Ed Balls MP, will speak from the main stage.

Her Excellency Madame Fu Ying, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the UK

(Thursday keynote)

An opportunity to hear from the Chinese ambassador.

The global teachers

(Ongoing throughout the conference)

Sixty aspiring school leaders visited Brazil, India and China to investigate the changes taking place in these countries and how these will affect the UK. They will contribute to the keynote presentations and showcase programme to shape the discussions about how we educate young people to rise to the challenges of the 21st century.

NESTA SSAT student-led research project

(Showcase sessions throughout the conference)

Students present their research into how schools can better meet the needs facing education in the 21st century.

Unlock teacher creativity with Gareth Malone, the celebrity choirmaster

(Wednesday lunchtime session)

Gareth Malone and Karen Gillingham will run a workshop to develop simple techniques for encouraging confidence and self-expression in young people.

Professor David Jesson

(Friday breakfast session)

Achieving three As at A level: perception and reality. This session will explore a framework for assessing the effectiveness of your own school's provision and how you can help students to make realistic choices.

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