



## COMMENTS ON THE SCHOOLS BILL (2022)

***Human Scale Education*** is a charity that has strongly advocated for putting relationships at the heart of the organisation and design of our schools for over 30 years. It has worked with schools on re-structuring, re-culturing, re-designing and re-connecting education based on 4 inter-related principles:

RESPECT FOR OTHERS  
DEMOCRACY  
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND FAIRNESS  
SUSTAINABILITY

The Schools Bill sets out the direction of travel for Government statutory education policy for the foreseeable future. The Bill adds complex amendments to largely existing legislation.

The way into the future, that is proposed, is to move to a wholly academised system in England. We believe that this will inexorably lead to:

- a direction of travel towards bigger and more centrally controlled and human unfriendly education organisations: a direction that is opposite to that needed in C21 and a direction opposite to that which many successful organisations are now taking;
- legal and practical control from the top of centralised, complex, expensive pyramids of power with decision-making over curriculum, staffing and assets in the hands of a few remote trustees
- standardisation in practices across schools in a Multi-Academy Trust made up of 7,000 + children;
- an impoverishment of the existing and potential good practices in many schools;
- damage to many future generations of children.

Despite Government rhetoric, there is no rigorous, unbiased, research evidence that academies improve relationships and education. There is such evidence for human scale education. We believe that:

- ✓ every school is located in a different context and is and should be able to be different
- ✓ schools are built on trust and a strong sense of identity based on belonging and inclusivity.
- ✓ size and scale are crucial to develop the great relationships children, teachers and parent/carers want and need. Small is beautiful in a rapidly changing and complex world;
- ✓ decisions are best made locally in a way which is democratic and with clear lines of shared moral responsibility with people who are known;
- ✓ teachers and leaders should be treated as professionals and be developed and empowered to make the best decisions for the children and families for whom they care;
- ✓ Resources should be focused on children;

The notion of “*aligned autonomy*” within a MAT is unachievable under the legislation.

**We strongly advocate that this Bill is rejected.** It is time to stop just adding to a top-heavy education organisation vessel before it sinks. **We urge a radical re-think of education**, as other countries have done, to produce the mechanisms for all schools to become fit for purpose for young people who will grow into this century and for the adults who care so much for them.

Robin Precey (Chair HSE)

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