

Press release: New teacher recruitment service set to save schools millions

The Education Secretary is calling on all schools in England to use a free service to advertise teaching vacancies – and invest the millions spent every year on recruitment back into teaching.

Launching Teaching Vacancies today – a website to advertise full, part-time and job-share roles – Damian Hinds is calling on all schools to sign up to the service to cut down on up to £75 million spent every year to advertise jobs. This comes ahead of 31 May, where there is often a peak in the number of teachers who hand in their notice, if they want to switch jobs next year.

To avoid expensive charges when advertising available roles – said to cost, on average, more than £1,000 per advert with some agencies – more than 8,000 schools (38%) nationwide have already signed up to the service. It was first unveiled last year as part of the latest step taken by the Department for Education to help schools clamp down on costs. This includes every school in Cambridgeshire, where the service was first piloted.

To coincide with the full launch, Mr Hinds has today told schools they should now stop using agencies that charge “excessive” fees to pay to list job adverts immediately – encouraging even more schools to switch to the new, free-of-charge service.

Education Secretary Damian Hinds said:

Teachers are the beating heart of our education system and school leaders want to make sure they recruit the best to inspire students. But finding the best has become very expensive.

With every school in the country now having access to this completely free site, I am calling on schools to ditch platforms that charge a fee. Why spend £1,000 on a service you can get for free?

As we head into the Easter holidays, where teachers may be thinking about their next classroom move, I want to make sure school leaders are signed up to this free site – allowing them to maximise the money they have to spend in our schools.

Today’s announcement is the latest in a series of steps taken by the department to help schools deliver the best value for money and ensure resources can be targeted at the frontline, including:

- The launch of price comparison site to help schools avoid overpriced energy suppliers;
- The launch of a list of approved agencies to help schools avoid those

that charge fees for making staff permanent;

- Recommended deals that are helping schools to save money on the things they buy regularly, such as printers and photocopiers – one school in the North West has saved an estimated £40,000 on its printing costs;
- Regional Schools Buying Hubs, piloted in the North West and South West, providing hands-on support and advice to schools on complex procurement. One school saved £75,000 across a three-year cleaning contract, while 82 schools in the South West have saved an estimated £137,000 on water;
- A network of advisers providing practical support on how schools can use their budgets more effectively. During the pilot phase of 72 deployments, advisers identified £35 million of potential savings for schools;
- A benchmarking website to allow schools to compare their income and expenditure with others in England.

These steps underpin the Secretary of State's commitment to champion the teaching profession – having launched the first-ever integrated recruitment and retention strategy – and to make a strong case for education spending across Government ahead of the next spending review.

Press release: Mark Field statement on settlement plans across the West Bank

Acting Minister for the Middle East Mark Field condemns the advancement of plans by the Israeli authorities for further settlement units across the West Bank.

Press release: Mark Field statement on settlement plans across the West Bank

The UK strongly condemns the Israeli authorities' advancement on 5 April of plans and tenders for yet more settlement units across the West Bank.

This follows the announcement in December for over 2,000 units. Settlements are illegal under international law and undermine the physical viability of the two-state solution.

I call on Israel to halt such counterproductive action, and for all parties to commit to further efforts to de-escalate current tensions and create the

right environment for a just and lasting peace.

Press release: Minister of State for Africa Harriett Baldwin visits Rwanda to commemorate the Genocide Against the Tutsi

The UK Minister of State for Africa, Harriett Baldwin MP, arrived in Kigali on Friday to join the commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.

Press release: Minister of State for Africa Harriett Baldwin visits Rwanda to commemorate the Genocide Against the Tutsi

The UK Minister of State for Africa, Harriett Baldwin MP, arrived in Kigali on Friday to join the commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.

On Sunday she will join dozens of other dignitaries from across the world to mark a day of remembrance at the Gisozi memorial in Kigali.

Minister for Africa Harriett Baldwin said:

I am proud to be here in Kigali to represent the United Kingdom and to pay my respects to the victims of the Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. The Rwandan people have shown incredible resilience and unity and I am truly inspired by the transformative progress that Rwanda has made since 1994.

The UK Government is committed to continuing to assist Rwanda's recovery from the Genocide: holding perpetrators to account and

ensuring justice is achieved.

The UK and Rwanda have a deep, long-standing relationship and I look forward to continuing to work together to build a more peaceful, prosperous and stable future for all.

Minister Baldwin is also planning to visit UK aid funded programmes in Rwanda. She will talk to those who have benefitted from the Government of Rwanda's VUP social protection programme which has received £62.3 million (RWF 73.3 billion) from UK aid over the last 5 years.

The programme has helped over 242,000 of the poorest households through public works and cash transfers. This is aligned with a UK aid priority to leave no-one behind.

Minister Baldwin said:

I am looking forward to spending time in Rwanda and reaffirming the partnership with the UK.

I was last in Rwanda in 2009. This visit will allow me to see the significant development and economic growth that I know the country has experienced in the last 10 years.

As Chair In Office of the Commonwealth Heads of Government, we are looking forward to working with Rwanda as it prepares for CHOGM 2020.

Minister Baldwin will also spend some time looking at how UK aid is supporting jobs and economic growth in Rwanda.

She will visit the Africa Improved Foods factory, which is a joint venture producing highly nutritious foods used to combat malnutrition in humanitarian operations around the world.

As well as the Minimex factory which is the largest mill in the country, producing high quality maize flour sold across East Africa. With the support of UK aid, the recent investment by AgDevCo will allow it to increase its capacity and ramp up purchases from tens of thousands of maize farmers across the country.

This is part of a set of UK aid investments supporting agriculture worth £59.5 million (RWF 70.3 billion) from the UK Department for International Development over the period 2015 to 2022.