

# News story: Pupils from across the country celebrate Mandarin success

The celebration event took place today (Wednesday 6 December) and is part of the China and UK People to People event.

Mandarin Chinese is the most spoken language in the world, and the programme delivered through secondary schools will equip young people with the knowledge and skills to compete in a global jobs market.

The Mandarin Excellence Programme, delivered by the UCL Institute of Education in partnership with the British Council, is on track to have 5,000 young people fluent in Mandarin by 2020 – helping to ensure Britain has the skills fit for the future.

The programme was introduced in September 2016 and the results from the first year show that more than 380 out of 400 pupils achieved over 80 percent in reading, writing, listening and speaking tests, which shows their quick progress and the advanced understanding of the language.

School Standards Minister Nick Gibb said:

Mandarin Chinese is the most spoken language in the world, so this programme plays a crucial role in helping these pupils achieve the fluency they need to succeed in an increasingly global economy.

The level of fluency in Mandarin achieved by these dedicated pupils after the first year demonstrates the commitment of the pupils and teachers involved in the programme. Young people fluent in Mandarin will be at a significant advantage when competing for jobs with their peers from around the world, and will help us to build a Britain that is fit for the future and ready to compete.

Pupils on the programme spend an average of eight hours per week studying the language, including four hours of classroom taught lessons.

In addition to improving students' fluency in the language, the UCL Institute of Education, aims to have trained at least 100 new qualified Chinese teachers by the end of the programme.

Katharine Carruthers, Director of the UCL Institute Of Education (IOE), said:

The pupils who took part in the programme of events at the Foreign Office today had the opportunity to participate in what must surely have been the country's largest ever Chinese lesson. They met government ministers from both the UK and China and talked enthusiastically about their progress in the language, their

enjoyment of lessons and the forthcoming visit to China in July 2018. They all felt this was a great opportunity to see the Foreign Office, to meet pupils from other schools and to realise that they are participating in a prestigious national DfE programme which is considered of significant importance to both the UK and China.

Mark Herbert, Head of Schools Programmes at the British Council said:

Mandarin Chinese is one of the languages that matters most to the UK's future – and its importance is only likely to increase as the country repositions itself on the world stage. Not only is learning Mandarin a fascinating process which creates a connection to the rich and varied Chinese culture but is also a language spoken by over a billion people worldwide. If the UK is to remain globally competitive in the years ahead, we need many more young people being given the chance to master Mandarin.

The celebration event, which took place today, was held at the Foreign Office and was attended by over 140 pupils from 14 schools who are part of the scheme. The event formed part of the People to People week to celebrate the cultural, educational and social links with China.

The pupils took part in a number of activities today that were designed to showcase their skills and help them continue their learning. This included a game of Chinese whispers, where the pupils were split into groups and had to communicate a message in Mandarin to help them practise their Mandarin speaking. The pupils were also invited to contribute to scrolls which included the words and characters they had learnt through their time on the programme.

This programme and associated funding is available to state-funded secondary schools with good or outstanding Ofsted ratings.

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## [News story: Government launches independent inquiry following the conviction of surgeon Ian Paterson](#)

The inquiry will look at lessons that can be learned from the case, and how these can improve care by the independent healthcare sector across the country. It will be chaired by the Right Reverend Graham James, Bishop of Norwich.

Paterson was a consultant breast surgeon employed by the Heart of England NHS Foundation Trust (HEFT) and had practising privileges in the independent sector at Spire Parkway and Spire Little Aston.

He was found guilty in April this year of 17 counts of wounding patients with intent. He was sentenced to jail for 20 years.

The scope of the investigation has been widened to include the independent sector, including any further action needed to strengthen CQC's inspection regime.

Philip Dunne, Health Minister, said:

Ian Paterson's malpractice sent shockwaves across the health system due to the seriousness and extent of his crimes, and I am determined to make sure lessons are learnt from this so that it never happens again in the independent sector or the NHS.

I believe an independent, non-statutory inquiry, overseen by Bishop Graham James, is the right way forward to ensure that all aspects of this case are brought to light and lessons learned so we can better protect patients in the future.

The inquiry will also draw on issues raised in previous reviews about Ian Paterson's conduct, particularly Sir Ian Kennedy's review on behalf of HEFT and Verita's investigation into the governance arrangements at two Spire Healthcare hospitals.

The Right Revd Graham James, Lord Bishop of Norwich, said:

The actions of Ian Paterson and the grievous harm he inflicted on patients are deeply concerning, and they have given rise to some serious questions which remain unanswered.

It is vital that the inquiry be informed by the concerns of former patients of Ian Paterson and their representatives. The interests of all patients, whether they seek treatment in the NHS or the private sector, should be at the heart of this inquiry and I will do my very best in the interest of those affected and the public.

The inquiry will be informed by the victims of Paterson and their families, and is likely to consider:

- the responsibility for the quality of care in the independent sector
- appraisal and ensuring validation of staff in the independent sector
- the safety of multi-disciplinary working
- information sharing, reporting of activity and raising concerns between the independent sector and the NHS
- the role of insurers of independent sector healthcare providers

(including how data it holds about the scope and volume of work carried out by doctors is shared with the sector)

- arrangements for medical indemnity cover for clinicians in the independent sector

The Inquiry will be formally established from January 2018 and is expected to report in summer 2019. The terms of reference and other arrangements relating to how the Inquiry will be conducted – including the exact scope it will cover and how it will work within the system – will be announced at a future date.

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## **Press release: New business incubators will help space industry grow**

The incubators, in Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, Leicestershire and London, will provide world-class science innovation support for entrepreneurs and small businesses to help grow the UK space industry.

The funding follows the launch of the government's [Industrial Strategy](#), which includes a [£50 million programme](#) to enable new satellite launch services and low gravity spaceflights from UK spaceports, to boost the economy and inspire the next generation of scientists and engineers.

UK Space Agency Chief Executive, Dr Graham Turnock, who made the announcement at the STFC RAL Space Appleton Space Conference at Harwell in Oxfordshire, said:

"The funding for these new business incubators will see the excellent network of support we have in the UK expand and provide further opportunities for exciting start-ups in the space sector, with 15 incubators working across 22 locations.

"The Industrial Strategy underlined the government's commitment to make Britain the best place to start and grow a business, with prosperous communities across the UK. Supporting new businesses across the UK is central to reaching our ambition of capturing 10% of the global space market by 2030 and I am sure these new incubators will have a fantastic impact."

The funding will see £50,000 go to Oxford Innovation, for two new incubators in Fareham and Bordon in Hampshire, £50,000 for Seraphim to establish a space accelerator in London and £50,000 for the Satellite Applications Catapult at Harwell to establish a space incubator at Westcott, Buckinghamshire. The University of Leicester will receive £50,000 to establish a graduate pre-incubator to help students develop entrepreneurial ideas.

The space sector is a UK success story, underpinning industries worth more

than £250 billion to the UK economy. Last week Business Secretary Greg Clark launched the [Industrial Strategy](#), which sets out a long-term vision for how Britain can build on its economic strengths, address its productivity performance, embrace technological change and support businesses and workers.

A key policy includes driving over £20 billion of investment in innovative and high potential businesses, including through establishing a new £2.5bn Investment Fund, incubated in the British Business Bank.

The [£50 million space programme](#) builds on the £99 million already invested in the National Satellite Test Facility run by STFC RAL Space at Harwell, which was recommended by the UK Space Facilities Review, a report commissioned by the UK Space Agency to look at ways to help grow the UK space industry.

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## **Speech: DFID Ghana Country Director's speech at Business Cost of Violence Against Women & Girls in Ghana forum**

Honourable Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection Distinguished representatives of Government British High Commissioner for Ghana, Members of the Diplomatic Corps Development Partners, academia, representatives of the private sector Traditional leaders, Members of the press. Ladies and Gentlemen, Good Afternoon.

It's great to be here today at the British High Commissioner's Residence to mark the 16 Days of Activism towards ending gender based violence and to launch preliminary findings from the UK aid-funded study on the "Business Costs of Violence Against Women and Girls in Ghana".

35% of women across the world have experienced some form of violence in their lives.

As well as a gross violation in itself, Violence Against Women and Girls also limits individuals, communities and societies.

Girls and women who experience violence are less likely to complete their education, 1.5 times more likely to acquire HIV, and are at increased risk of maternal mortality.

For children that see one parent assaulting another, the long-term health and social consequences are similar to those of child abuse and neglect.

For economies, the costs of VAWG are estimated at between 1.2% and 3.7% of GDP. And we will hear more later from Dr Asante and his team on how Violence Against Women impacts on the economy.

In short, violence against women and girls is a global pandemic.

But while the scale of the problem seems daunting, change is possible and is already happening. This year's 16 Days of Activism is occurring at a time when across the world men and women are standing up to address the issue of violence against women.

The #MeToo movement has gone viral. The hashtag has been used by more than 4.7 million people in 12 million posts. It has trended in at least 85 countries. For too long, violence against women, including sexual harassment and assault, has been unspoken, private, something to be ashamed of. This campaign has succeeded in breaking the silence – providing us with a real sense of the magnitude, and the shocking scale and reach of the phenomenon in both public and private spheres across the world. And it has opened up a global conversation about men's behaviour towards women.

Ladies and Gentlemen The UK is proud to be a global leader in efforts to eradicate violence against women and girls in all its forms. This includes support to women's rights organisations; tackling the attitudes that make violent behaviour seem normal; getting comprehensive services to those who have experienced violence; and ensuring that national legislation and policies are in place and implemented.

DFID currently works across 12 countries – including Ghana – to tackle Child Early and Forced Marriage – a £39m programme funded by the UK taxpayer. We continue to build on the momentum of the 2014 Girl Summit by supporting new international resolutions on Child Marriage.

The UK also provided financial and technical support to government for the 2016 Domestic Violence in Ghana Survey.

Our new Secretary of State announced last week a £12 million package to help around 750,000 women and girls globally over the next three years.

Studies reveal that in Ghana VAWG is deep-rooted and widespread. We know from a UK aid funded Domestic Violence in Ghana survey that an estimated 71.5% of women and 71.4% of men reported having experienced at least one form of violence (domestic and non-domestic) over their lifetime. A number of other harmful traditional practices still exist in Ghana, including female ritual slavery, FGM, Child Early Forced Marriage, widowhood rites and witch's camps.

We appreciate that the Government, under the leadership of the Honourable Minister, is actively addressing these challenges – through the work of the Domestic Violence Secretariat, and ongoing reforms are being put in place to tackle violence against women. For example, laws have been passed on inheritance rights, FGM, the Children's Act (1998), Human Trafficking Act (2005), Domestic Violence Act (2007).

I mentioned earlier the UK's global lead in efforts to address VAWG.

Ghana could also be a global leader on this issue. In the past week His Excellency the President has passionately espoused the need for African

countries to grow “beyond aid”. The President is championing gender equality and ensured that women are represented at the very highest levels in his government with 29 female parliamentarians and 20 female Ministers and Deputy Ministers.

The President is also the AU Gender Champion and Co-chair of Advocates for the SDGs.

Ghana, as it prepares to organise a Girls’ Summit in 2018, could take a leadership role in addressing VAWG across the region, if not the continent. The UK stands ready to support this.

Ladies and Gentlemen, today, the Institute for Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER) – University of Ghana – will present preliminary findings from a survey conducted among 100 businesses in Ghana assessing how domestic violence impacts businesses.

The UK aid-funded research looking at the Economic and Social Costs of Violence against Women and Girls is a three year multi-country project that estimates the costs of violence, both social and economic, to individuals and households, businesses and communities in Ghana, Pakistan and South Sudan. As we stand here this afternoon, people are similarly gathered – but in a much colder London – to launch the findings from South Sudan.

No such analysis has previously been carried out in Ghana, or indeed elsewhere in West Africa. The impact of the Ghana study, once assessed, is therefore likely to be significant – with the new data helping us better understand the impact of Violence Against Women on community cohesion, economic stability and development and providing further evidence for government to accelerate efforts to address Violence Against Women.

Before I hand over to the Honourable Minister to say a few words, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Honourable Minister for agreeing to assume the Chairmanship of the National Advisory Board (NAB) – the body which will ensure that the research is used effectively to advocate for increased resources and emphasis on the elimination of violence against women in Ghana.

In conclusion, I’d like us all to remain alert to the fact that VAWG is present in our homes and our work places. With the #MeToo movement in mind, let us create opportunities to break the silence, opened up a conversation about men’s behaviour towards women, and be bold for change in order to end the violence.

I’d now like to introduce the Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection – Honourable Otiko Afisa Djaba.

Thank You.

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# Press release: CMA examines heat networks

Heat networks – systems that heat multiple homes from one central source – currently supply about half a million UK homes through about 17,000 networks.

They can also be more environmentally friendly than some other sources of heat, delivering lower carbon emissions and resulting in cost benefits to households.

As a result, heat networks form an important part of government strategy to reduce carbon and cut heating bills. The number of customers using heat networks is expected to grow significantly to around 20% of all households by 2030.

Whilst heat networks may have these wider benefits, the sector is not currently subject to the same regulation as other forms of energy supply such as mains gas and electricity.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) is concerned that many customers, a large proportion of whom live in social housing, may be unable to easily switch suppliers or are locked into very long contracts – some for up to 25 years – and that there is a risk they may be paying too much or receiving a poor quality of service.

It will now be thoroughly examining a range of potential issues in a new market study into the sector.

The CMA is planning to examine 3 broad themes:

- Whether customers are aware of the costs of heat networks both before and after moving into a property.
- Whether heat networks are natural monopolies and the impact of differing incentives for builders, operators and customers of heat networks.
- The prices, service quality and reliability of heat networks.

Andrea Coscelli, CMA Chief Executive, said:

Heat networks can play an important role in cutting carbon and keeping down energy bills for customers.

However, we have concerns that this sector may not be working as well as it could be for the half a million homes heated by these systems now and the millions that may be connected in the future.

That is why we're taking a closer look at this market to ensure that heat network customers get a good deal on their energy now and in the future.



The CMA will complete [its study](#) within the next 12 months. Evidence will be gathered from a wide range of stakeholders, including heat network builders and operators, other government departments, local authorities, sector regulators and consumer groups.

An interim report, with the CMA's initial findings and views on potential remedies, will be produced within the next 6 months, ahead of the final report. Where issues of particular concern are found the CMA may take further action during or after the end of the 12-month market study, such as opening consumer or competition enforcement cases or launching a full market investigation.

## Notes for editors

1. The CMA is the UK's primary competition and consumer authority. It is an independent non-ministerial government department with responsibility for carrying out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries and enforcing competition and consumer law.
2. Market studies may lead to a range of outcomes, including:
  - a clean bill of health;
  - actions which improve the quality and accessibility of information to consumers;
  - encouraging businesses in the market to self-regulate;
  - making recommendations to the government to change regulations or public policy;
  - taking competition or consumer law enforcement action; and
  - making a reference for a more in-depth market investigation, or accepting formal undertakings in lieu of a reference.
3. Heat networks involve the generation and distribution of heat to buildings and consist of district heating and communal heating. District heating comprises a network of insulated pipes used to deliver heat, in the form of hot water or steam, or cooling from the point of generation to an end user. Networks vary in size and length, carrying heat from just a few hundred metres between homes and flats, to several kilometres supplying entire communities and industrial areas. In comparison, communal heating systems generally serve one building with multiple occupants, such as a block of flats.
4. The CMA would welcome views on any of the issues raised in the Statement of Scope, which has also been published today. Views should be sent to [heatnetworks@cma.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:heatnetworks@cma.gsi.gov.uk) by no later than 5pm on 12 January 2018.
5. Media enquiries should be directed to [press@cma.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:press@cma.gsi.gov.uk) or call 020 3738 6191.