

## Teachers remain unaware DfE now controls Oak National Academy and see it as a bad use of public money once they learn this

- 72% did not know that Oak National Academy is now part of the Department for Education (DfE)
  - Only 13% agree that it's right for DfE to control the whole curriculum

**London, 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022:** In new polling released today, the Publishers Association found that 72% of teachers are unaware that Oak National Academy is now entirely part of the Department for Education (DfE). This is despite Oak becoming a government controlled arm's length body (ALB) on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September. When respondents were informed of this, only 13% agreed that it's right for DfE to control the whole curriculum this way.

It was announced in September of this year that the Government would set aside £43 million for three years to "support" the quango. This week's poll of 388 teachers found that only 3% of respondents would want the DfE to invest this money in a single set of free government-approved curriculum resources. This is in comparison to 35% who want more teaching staff, and 30% asking for reduced class sizes.

Only 11% agreed that it's a good use of public money for the government to spend £43 million on a single set of curriculum resources through Oak National Academy, with 56% disagreeing strongly.

**Dan Conway, CEO at Publishers Association** said: *"This polling highlights just how strongly teachers across the country feel about Oak National Academy and its roll out in their classrooms. Many were unaware of how much power and influence this would give the Department of Education in lesson planning and curriculum choices, and we see a strong opposition to this once the facts have been communicated."*

*"It's also overwhelmingly seen as a bad use of public money at a time when the education sector needs support in so many other areas."*

*"In their efforts to create a one-size-fits-all state publisher, the DfE are destroying years of work by authors, teachers, and publishers who have invested not only expertise, but millions of pounds in resources for school children across the country."*

*"We once again call on the Secretary of State to work with us, teachers, unions, school groups, edtech firms, and other stakeholders across the school system to find a workable compromise that will help teachers and learners of the future"*.

**Kevin Courtney, General Secretary of National Education Union** said: *"High quality education won't be achieved by a curriculum planned in detail by a branch of government. Classroom expertise is found in schools, not in Westminster. We would like the DfE to support the work of teachers by a focus on staffing levels, recruitment and professional development, not on expensive initiatives like the national academy."*

**Nicola Solomon, Chief Executive of the Society of Authors,** said: *"What this polling highlights is that these plans have not been properly thought through, consulted on or explained. The Society of Authors has been one of a host of industry voices to criticise plans to convert Oak National Academy"*

*into an arm's length body of the government for the damaging effect it would have on the quality and diversity of educational resources, and we see that teachers feel the same. We urge the Secretary of State to reconsider."*

**ENDS**

### **Background/method**

On 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022, the Publishers Association used YouGov's online sample panel to survey 388 teachers on the subject of Oak National Academy.

### **About the Publishers Association**

We are the member organisation for UK publishing, representing companies of all sizes and specialisms. Our members produce digital and print books, research journals and educational resources across genres and subjects.

We exist to champion publishing to the wider world and to provide our members with everything they need to thrive. We have helped change laws, improved business conditions, and inspired people to become publishers.

We are passionate about the capacity for books and reading to make life better for people.

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