



The Studio Schools Trust

The Studio Schools Model

An introduction



Introduction to the Studio Schools model

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP

Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove MP makes the case for Studio Schools and greater diversity in education.

We need greater innovation in our school system. In communities up and down the country, parents, businesses and young people are calling for greater diversity. Studio Schools are an important part of that wider shift; away from one size fits all solutions in education towards a more localised approach that reflects the specific needs of local communities.

Employers lie at the heart of life in towns and cities in every part of the country. Yet for years their concerns around education have gone unaddressed. Chief amongst these is the view that far too many young people are leaving school without the skills and experiences they need for work. Of course education is about far more than employment. But unless we're preparing young people for real life, with all that entails, we are selling them short. That's why Studio Schools are such an exciting innovation.

Through a bold new approach to education involving practical learning and paid work, Studio Schools will help young people develop the knowledge, skills and experiences they need to succeed. It is these innovations, based on extensive research from around the world, that exemplify why greater diversity in education is so important. Studio Schools offer a vital new option for parents and young people that will make a real difference to employers from across the country.

We need greater diversity in our education system. But the days of 'the man in Whitehall knows best' are over. The work of the Studio Schools Trust and its many partners serves as a pertinent reminder that bold reform in education must come from the bottom up. Studio Schools will break new ground in the education system and I look forward to seeing many more open across the country in the coming years.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Gove". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" and the last name "Gove" clearly legible.

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State for Education



The Studio Schools Trust

The Studio Schools model

Studio Schools are gaining momentum with new schools set to open in every region of England.

Studio Schools are a new type of state school model for 14 to 19 year olds. They have been designed to equip young people with the knowledge, skills and experience they need to succeed in life and work. Studio Schools are at the forefront of innovation in the English education system, offering a bold new approach to learning rooted in the real world.

Five years in the making, Studio Schools have been developed in partnership with local and national employers, leading education agencies, government and local partners from across the country. They are grounded in extensive research and best practice from Britain and around the world that highlights the need for new options for young people who are alienated by the traditional pedagogy or are looking for a more entrepreneurial approach to education.

The Studio School model is gaining momentum. The first schools are now in operation with many more set to open in every region of England. Our goal is to see Studio Schools become a new mainstream option that can be accessed by young people in every part of England.

The Studio Schools Trust has bold plans for Studio Schools and, working with our local partners, we aim to establish a large network of schools across the country. If you are interested in setting up a Studio School in your local area please contact the Studio Schools Trust via email at enquiries@studioschoolstrust.org or by telephone on 0161 220 3910. For further information about the model and the work of the Trust please visit the Studio Schools Trust website at www.studioschoolstrust.org.



Building momentum. Up and down the country schools, colleges, employers and local authorities have been in touch about establishing Studio Schools in their local area.



Overview

Studio Schools will pioneer a bold new approach to learning involving enterprise projects and real work.

Studio Schools offer an important new mainstream option for young people of all abilities. They seek to address the growing gap between what young people require to succeed in life and the skills and experiences that the current education system provides. In a country in which many lessons are taught in a traditional way, Studio Schools will provide a vital alternative that will make a real difference to the lives of young people across the country.

Studio Schools will pioneer a bold new practical approach to learning involving enterprise projects and paid work. Learning will be rooted in the real world, involving employers and community organisations in all aspects of the curriculum. The key elements of the model are tried and tested. What makes Studio Schools unique is that they bring these together, for the first time, into one whole school model.

Studio Schools combine the practical learning pioneered by New Tech High Schools in the United States with the real work element that has made Production Schools in Denmark such a success. They bring together the small school environments of Rhode Island's Met Schools with the personalisation and pastoral care that has made New York's Good Shepherd world-renowned. Real work, personalisation, pastoral care and practical learning – these are the key elements that underpin the innovative Studio Schools model.

Essential elements

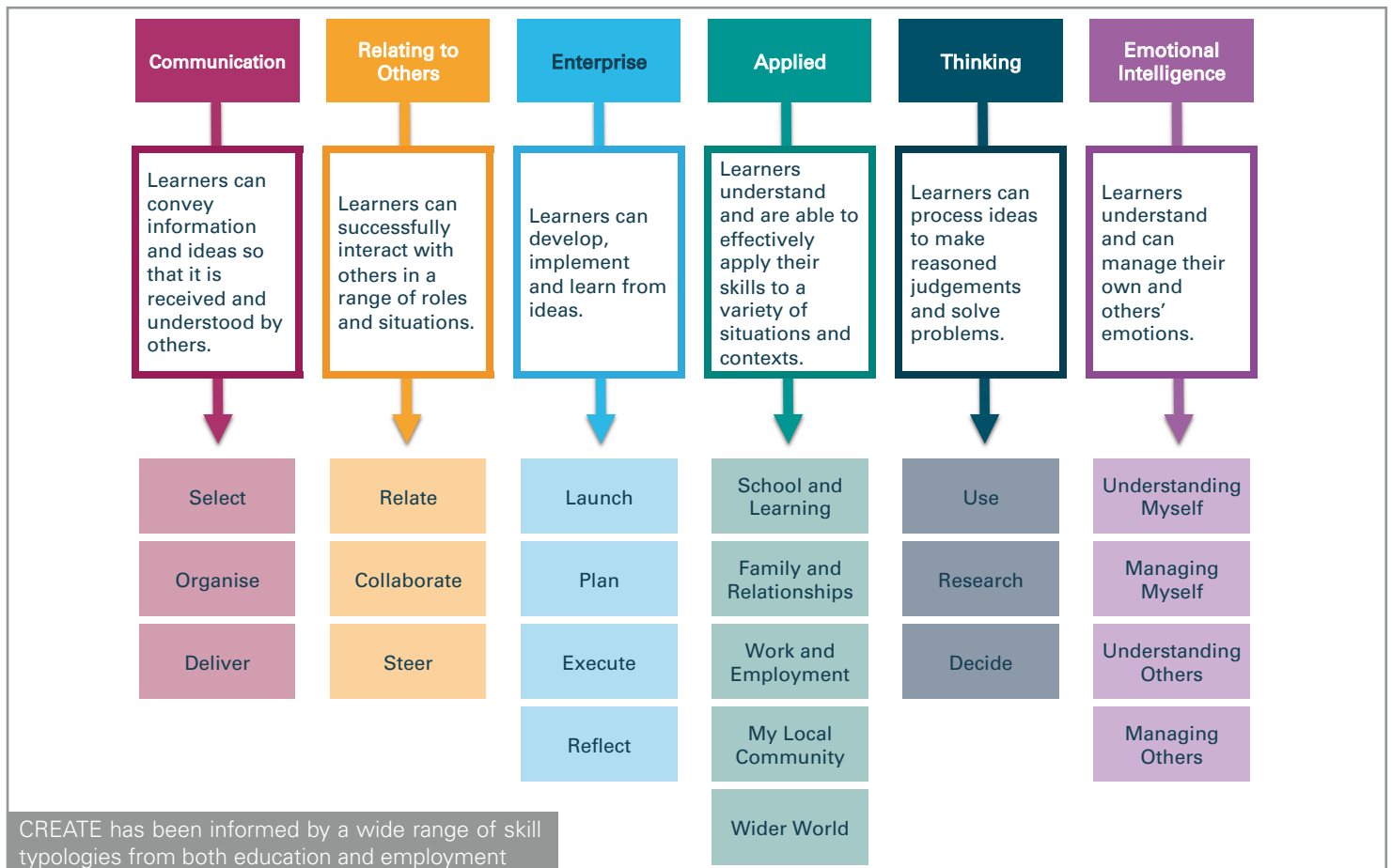
Seven essential elements lie at the heart of this innovative school model. These are the key ingredients of Studio Schools.

At the heart of the Studio School model are seven essential elements. These are the key ingredients that a school must have to be classed as a Studio School. The essential elements of a Studio School have been developed through extensive research and consultation with education experts, employers and young people themselves. They reflect the latest in academic research and, taken together, aim to ensure that young people develop the skills, experiences and qualifications they need for life and work.

The essential elements of Studio Schools are:

- Academic excellence
- Employability and enterprise skills
- Personalised curriculum
- Practical learning
- Real work
- Small schools
- Students of all abilities

These essential elements will provide a framework for all Studio Schools and will be built upon by individual schools who will tailor the model to meet the needs of their local community and local labour market. For further information please visit the Studio Schools Trust website at www.studioschoolstrust.org.




Academic excellence Employability skills

Studio Schools will deliver the key academic and vocational qualifications young people need to progress along their chosen path.

Academic excellence lies at the heart of the Studio School curriculum model. Studio Schools will teach the national curriculum and will offer the same key qualifications as traditional schools. What makes them unique is not what is offered but how it is delivered. Studio Schools will take education out of a traditional classroom setting with students learning principally through Enterprise Projects in the school and surrounding community.

The qualifications offered by individual Studio Schools will vary depending on local circumstances. However, all schools will deliver qualifications at Level 2 and above and will offer GCSEs in Maths, English, dual award Science and ICT. The curriculum framework developed by the Studio Schools Trust allows for a high degree of flexibility, ensuring individual schools can tailor the curriculum to deliver a full range of qualifications including GCSEs and A-Levels.

On leaving their Studio School, students will have the full range of options available to them. They will have gained the qualifications, knowledge and skills they need to either enter the jobs market from an advantageous position, start an apprenticeship or go on to further or higher education. For more detailed information about the Studio Schools curriculum model visit the website at www.studioschoolstrust.org.

The  skills framework is unique to Studio Schools and has been developed by the Studio Schools Trust.

Evidence consistently shows that employers are concerned about key skills gaps in the British economy. Every new survey of unfilled vacancies confirms that employers are looking for – and not finding – key employability skills amongst schools leavers. The Leitch Review backed this up. Commissioned by the last government to identify Britain's long term skills needs it identified employability skills such as critical thinking, communication skills and team work as amongst the country's biggest gaps.

Key employability and life skills will underpin all of the activities at a Studio School through the unique CREATE skills framework. CREATE is comprised of a wide range of skills and stands for Communication, Relating to people, Enterprise, Applied skills, Thinking skills and Emotional intelligence. Four years in the making, CREATE is grounded in a wide range of skill typologies and has been developed specifically for Studio Schools in order to equip young people with the key skills that they need to flourish.

The five principles that underpin CREATE are:

- **Accessibility** – a simple and easy to use structure;
- **Simplicity** – no jargon, just clear and simple language;
- **Transparency** – clear assessment criteria for students;
- **Transferability** – skills exhibited in a range of settings;
- **Evolutionary** – a skills framework that evolves over time.



Personal coaches will work with students to tailor the curriculum to their individual needs

Personalisation

Each student will have a personal coach who will work with them to tailor the curriculum to their individual needs.

In a rapidly changing world students increasingly require specific personalised support during their school life. Whilst traditional teaching performs the important role of helping students gain specific knowledge and qualifications, more could be done to facilitate the personal development of individual students. Evidence shows that students respond best when their learning is tailored to their individual strengths, interests and aspirations. To facilitate this, the Studio Schools Trust has worked with education experts to develop a truly personalised curriculum and an innovative staffing structure that can support it.

In Studio Schools, all students will be assigned a personal coach who will meet with them on a regular basis to develop their own personalised learning plan. This will help students navigate and personalise their curriculum, allowing them to learn in a way that best meets their interests and needs. It will also allow them to track their progress towards their CREATE skills and qualifications.

Personalisation of the curriculum will be further supported through a small school environment in which every young person will be able to access the tailored support that they need. This will ensure that no student is lost and that young people are able to build strong relationships with staff and students alike. This personalised approach will help ensure that each student is able to fulfill their individual potential within an open and supportive learning environment.

Practical learning

All learning in Studio Schools will be authentic and will actively involve local employers and community organisations.

Forty years of accumulated evidence highlights that project and enquiry based learning can be more effective than traditional approaches at engaging young people and equipping them with key employability and life skills. Crucially, this more practical approach to learning has been shown to lead to improved educational attainment for a significant number of young people, even in traditionally academic subjects such as Maths and English.

Enquiry and project based learning lies at the heart of the Studio Schools curriculum model. In Studio Schools, students will learn the national curriculum principally through enterprise projects in their school and surrounding community. By working with education experts, local partners, and a range of employers the Studio Schools Trust has developed its own framework for the delivery of these innovative projects. This framework will ensure that young people are able to gain the key academic and vocational qualifications they need to progress along their chosen path.

To root students' learning in the real world, most projects will involve external commissions. So whether it is a health report for their local hospital or a business brief for a local employer, students' learning will be authentic and will actively involve them in local community life. This will not only make learning more engaging, leading to improved attainment, it will also help young people to develop the wide range of skills they need to succeed.



Each week students will participate in real work with those over 16 earning at least the minimum wage

Real work

In Studio Schools all students will spend a significant portion of their weekly time in real work.

Employers have consistently raised concerns about the quality of employer engagement in education. Specifically, many share the view that more must be done to improve the authenticity of work experience. Almost half (48%) of employers surveyed by the CBI made the case that work experience could be improved by giving firms greater flexibility to deliver placements outside the traditional two-week block. By making work experience more challenging and frequent, students will better develop the skills and experience they need to succeed in the working world.

In Studio Schools, students will do just that, spending a significant portion of their weekly time in real work placements. These will go far beyond the work-related learning or work experience offered by traditional schools. Rather, each week students will work as employees in local businesses and, crucially, pupils over sixteen will earn at least the minimum wage. There is considerable evidence that this direct, hands-on experience better prepares young people for life and work.

Studio School students will be employed on the same basis as regular employees. Each Studio School student in Years 12 and 13 will sign a contract of employment. They will participate in at least two days work each week, for which they will be paid. Students in Years 10 and 11 will participate in a minimum of four hours unpaid work experience each week.

Small schools

Studio Schools will be small schools, offering a personalised and supportive learning environment.

Extensive research and best practice from Britain and around the world highlights the crucial role that small school environments can play in improving attainment and engaging the disengaged. The research shows that in small schools, on average, student attainment improves; the negative effects of poverty are reduced; student affiliation to their local community increases; there is greater safety and order; and truancy and dropout rates fall. On average small schools exhibit fewer discipline problems and much greater satisfaction amongst families, students and teachers.

As small schools of around 300 students, Studio Schools will offer a supportive personalised learning environment in which strong pastoral care will run through all the school's activities. Consequently, the needs of all students are clear to staff and no child is left behind. Crucially, coaches will know their students well, making them better able to tailor the curriculum to their individual needs and aspirations.

There are also important practical benefits to Studio Schools being small schools. As small schools it will be easier to manage and successfully deliver the various aspects of the Studio Schools curriculum, such as enterprise projects and paid work placements, which involve close working with external organisations and employers.



Our partners

The Studio Schools model has been developed in partnership with government, business and local partners.

Studio Schools have been developed in partnership with local and national employers, leading education agencies, government officials and local partners from across the country. They have been backed by the UK's largest employer organisations as well as local and national politicians from across the political spectrum. They have been described by the Secretary of State for Education as "a bold new approach" that will "break new ground in English education."

Our partners include:

- Local and national employers;
- Leading employer organisations;
- Local partners from across the country;
- Department for Education;
- Young People's Learning Agency;
- National College for School Leadership;
- Ofsted;
- Charles Dunstone Charitable Trust;
- Edge;
- Young Foundation;
- Paul Hamlyn Foundation;
- The Resolution Trust.

Our offer

The Studio Schools Trust will provide a broad range of support from development to implementation.

By establishing a Studio School you become a member of the Studio Schools Trust. This entitles you to a bespoke package of support tailored to your individual needs. The Studio Schools Trust will provide you with a broad range of support from developing your initial proposal to helping you implement your Studio School on the ground. To support this work we suggest partners pay a voluntary contribution, currently set at £8,000. These subscriptions allow us to continue to work as a charity and account for less than half of our annual income.

For your contribution you will get a broad range of support from the Studio Schools Trust, tailored to your individual needs. This includes help with developing your proposal, guidance through every stage of the application process, as well as ongoing support during the pre-opening period and once your school is fully open. We also act as a linking point between Studio Schools, enabling the sharing of best practice and expertise. We hold a range of conferences, workshops and events throughout the year.

The Studio Schools Trust has bold plans for Studio Schools and we aim to establish a large network of schools across the country. If you are interested in setting up a Studio School in your local area please contact the Studio Schools Trust at enquiries@studioschoolstrust.org or on 0161 220 3910.

Endorsements

“I’m a big fan of Studio Schools – they offer an exciting new option for parents and students.”

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State, Department for
Education

“The Federation of Small Businesses are excited about Studio Schools. Through real work and a focus on employability skills, they will equip young people with the skills that small businesses need.”

Colin Willman
Chairman of Education Policy, Federation
of Small Businesses

“Studio Schools will make a real difference to businesses across the country. They will ensure young people develop the key employability skills they need to succeed in work.”

James Fothergill
Head of Education and Skills, CBI

“The British Chambers of Commerce believes that stronger links between schools and employers are crucial for the future of businesses up and down the country. Studio Schools will do just that, involving local and national business in all aspects of this innovative curriculum model.”

David Frost
Former Director General, British Chambers
of Commerce

“The Institute of Directors has long argued that improving employability must be central to the education system. Through real work and an emphasis on key employability skills, Studio Schools will help to improve the work-readiness of young people and widen understanding of enterprise and business.”

Mike Harris
Head of Education and Skills, Institute of
Directors



Want to find out more?

The Studio Schools Trust is working with partners in every region of England to establish new Studio Schools. If you're interested in finding out more about how this bold new school model is breaking new ground in English education, please visit the Studio Schools Trust website at www.studioschoolstrust.org.

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