

Your Letters

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Academy trust slammed by Ofsted should release control of Richmond Park Academy, according to cabinet member for schools Paul Hodgins

So another academy in the borough failing along with Hampton and Twickenham academies, so is the Conservative councillor in favour of his party's policy of making all schools academies and away from local government control?
● Daddyelf

This action proves the Council and the Conservatives are all over the place and the policy of forced academies is going to have to be dropped. A mad decision.

● dotcomlad



Molesey Lock at dawn – a moment of serenity. David Mumford. Send your pictures to lettersrtt@newsquest.co.uk

quest to get an OFSTED excellence rating for their schools.
6. Teachers take daily abuse, and although some of it comes from children, most comes from parents, department heads and head teachers.
7. Complaints procedures in schools are so unnecessarily complicated with so many procedures to follow. Again, head teachers are protecting themselves from accountability. They always have someone else to blame.
8. The problem with unsatisfactory education isn't the national curriculum. Convenient as it may be to blame government and individuals (think about Gove wanting grammar to be a part of language teaching) the problem lies with the way schools decide to interpret the curriculum, chipping away at what isn't covered by an OFSTED inspection.
9. However well-meaning, OFSED is its own worst enemy. It discourages whistle-blowing and make it very difficult for a teacher to report malpractice at a school (trying to negotiate the OFSTED website is a quagmire in itself).
10. Some of the teaching unions are so politicised that the individual teacher is left exposed and unprotected. These unions fight "causes" rather than support individuals. Too often teachers are left to fight their own battles while unions worry about their own political clout.

There was a time when I was proud to be a teacher. It was a noble and honourable job, where nurturing minds and developing children was the intention and purpose of the role. Now, I must confess that the future scares me. If I had to put children through the system now, I would either educate them at home or find a way to pay for private education. I would wish for my child to be able to learn music, play a musical instrument, learn about good sportsmanship, understand the part of religion, health, citizenship and values of the country, as well as having met some tick box audit objective.

Veritas
Name and address supplied

Ten points on academy schools in Richmond upon Thames

WITH the recent furore surrounding the conversion of schools into academies, perhaps a view differing from the rhetoric of the unions and school heads should be offered.

1. Schools squander money in a way businesses would never allow. As a teacher myself, I have worked at primary schools in Surrey and watched resources like musical instruments and entire libraries dumped in skips to create more space for classrooms.

2. Academies need a business person at the helm rather than a teacher. Britain needs educators,

so let teachers teach and managers manage.

3. Recruiting supply teachers through agencies allows for a lack of accountability and transparency. Schools should be compelled to appoint permanent staff and be held responsible for staff turnover. The Surrey schools I have worked in over the past years have had a staggering number of teachers leave, yet the head teacher is able to sidestep the issue of no continuity in teaching by blaming it on "difficulties with supply agencies".

4. The focus by primary schools

on numeracy and literacy (or mathematics and English, numbers and writing or whatever the current year's fancy terminology may be) at the exclusion of other subjects in order to have specific objectives ticked off isn't education; it is auditing.

5. Bullying and discrimination are a part of the average school day for primary school children. Whether this discrimination is based on religion, skin colour, gender preference, ability at sport, income of parents, all too often it is concealed by head teachers in their

Complaints Who to contact

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God's infinite goodness is source of constant surprise – and help

THE GOD SPOT

By Paul van Essen
greaterlife.org.uk

IN ALMOST forty years of Christian living, and more than 25 years as a minister, there is one thing above all others that I have discovered that has both helped me and rather surprised me. It is the goodness of God.

Much religious teaching and many Church experiences have been more associated with feeling guilty than feeling happy; feeling small rather than living an expansive life;

feeling hemmed in rather than free. I must admit in my early years I know all about that too. But the whole purpose of Jesus can be summed up in one phrase: He came to give us abundant life. I wish that we all knew it – I wish that all Churches experienced it – I mean no criticism when I say that some do not. But the truth we must remember is that no matter what our experience may have been, God remains true to His word and He is good beyond our ability to comprehend. He is much, much better than even the very best human father that ever lived. He is with us

even when we are not with ourselves; He cares for us even when it seems no-one else does. He will, in the words of the writer to the Hebrew Christians, never, never, never leave us. In a world where the reliability and integrity of those who influence us daily is questionable, there is One who is reliable in His love for us no matter what. My hope is that you experience His goodness. My hope for you is that today, no matter your situation, you would be lifted by His love.

PAUL VAN ESSEN
Pastor - Greater Life Church
www.greaterlife.org.uk

High Tides at Richmond Bridge

Hammersmith Bridge 26 minutes earlier;
Kew Bridge 12 minutes earlier

	time	ht.m	time	ht.m
Friday	0901	3.97	2117	3.69
Saturday	1018	3.92	2239	3.65
Sunday	1131	4.04	2353	3.81
Monday	1236	4.27		
Tuesday	0053	4.06	1327	4.46
Wednesday	0139	4.26	1408	4.53
Thursday	0217	4.38	1444	4.55

National Severe Weather Warning Service
01344 856264. Floodline 0845 9881188.

The Port of London Authority (PLA), Bakers' Hall, 7 Harp Lane, London EC3R 6LB. 020 7743 7900, portoflondon.co.uk. Environment Agency floodline information environment-agency.gov.uk/floodwarning

Type in Paper: 40,107

jicreg audited circulation, January to December 2014. 94.5% free.



Audience on the web:

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