

## SCHOOL AND COLLEGE FUNDING INQUIRY WRITTEN SUBMISSION FROM THE PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

### Introduction

The Publishers Association represents publishers across consumer, education and academic publishing. Our members publish a wide range of nonfiction and fiction, academic journals, textbooks for higher, secondary and primary education, and children's and learning resources.

We welcome the opportunity to submit evidence to the Education Committee's inquiry into school and college funding. Our submission will highlight the importance of ensuring that schools have adequate funding to purchase high-quality published learning resources, which play an important role in reducing teacher workload and increasing pupil attainment.

### Our response

#### **1. Textbooks and reducing teacher workload**

There is a growing body of evidence demonstrating the role textbooks can play in reducing teachers' workload. Research commissioned by the PA and conducted by Frontier Economics notes that "textbooks pay for themselves four times over". The most conservative calculation is that textbooks pay for themselves by saving four and a half minutes a day; across the whole profession the time and value reward is much higher than that (see HarperCollins research below).

The importance of textbooks in this area was also recognised in a [recent report](#) from the Department for Education's Independent Teacher Workload Review Group, which noted that high quality resources, including textbooks, can reduce workload by teachers not having to 'reinvent the wheel' and ensure high expectations of the content of lessons and conceptual knowledge. This led the Review Group to include among its recommendations that more emphasis should be placed on quality assured resources, including textbooks, in order to reduce the time teachers spend on searching for ad hoc resources and to allow them to focus on the intellectual exercise of planning sequences of lessons.

Tim Oates, Group Director of Assessment Research and Development at Cambridge Assessment and former chair of the expert panel for the National Curriculum review also noted the role of textbooks in supporting teachers. In his policy paper "[Why textbooks count](#)" he notes how textbooks "free teachers up to concentrate on refining pedagogy and developing engaging, effective learning." Equally, Schools Minister Nick Gibb, in [a speech](#) in November 2015, highlighted the need to publicise "the great gains textbooks provide in reducing the burden on hardworking teachers." In addition, last year, an independent [survey](#) commissioned by the PA and conducted among heads of subject and year, with responses from 687 primary and secondary school teachers, found that 95% of teachers believed that textbooks do or could reduce the time they spend on lesson planning, while 59% said it would definitely help reduce the time they spent planning lessons.

The benefit of textbooks for reducing teacher workload was also identified in a [survey](#) conducted in 2016 by HarperCollins, which received responses from 595 teachers. When asked about how much

they thought textbooks reduced their planning or preparation time, 61% said that textbooks saved them at least an hour per week.

## **2. Textbooks and pupil attainment**

Equally there is a body of evidence highlighting the benefits of textbooks to pupil attainment. The “Why textbooks count” report from Tim Oates found that textbooks encourage clarity regarding key concepts and core knowledge, provide clear learning progressions, include a wide range of examples and applications and support learner reflection. The report also cited figures from the IEA’s Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (2011), which showed in England there is a significantly lower percentage of teachers who use textbooks as the basis of instruction for science and maths compared with teachers in Singapore and Finland, countries which both outperform England in these subjects. Using these figures, the report concluded that the low usage of textbooks in English schools is a contributory factor in England’s poor performance in maths compared to other countries.

The importance of textbooks for pupil attainment was also reflected in the survey of teachers commissioned by the PA, which showed that 90% of primary teachers and 98% of secondary teachers believe that textbooks boosts pupil attainment. Meanwhile a study in the British Education Research Journal (2003) found that raising book expenditure from £10 to £11 increases GCSE points by 0.08. The report recommended that schools spend at least £60 per student each year on books.

### **Low textbook usage in England**

However, despite the importance of textbooks for reducing teacher workload, the budget constraints schools are currently facing has reduced schools’ ability to pay for this resource. According to figures collected on behalf of the Publishers Association, in 2016 print and digital education sales fell by 13% year-on-year, highlighting the effect school cuts are having on the ability for schools to purchase these resources. The effects of funding cuts on education resources was echoed in the results of a 2017 NUT/ATL survey, where 73% of teachers said their budget for books and equipment had been cut, and fewer than one in ten teachers now say they use textbooks in more than half their lessons.

Instead, teachers are forced to rely on free online resources of varying quality, with textbooks increasingly seen as an unaffordable luxury. In the survey commissioned by the PA last year, 63% of teachers said they only make ‘some’ use of textbooks, while a third of primary school teachers and 10% of secondary teachers said they were not using textbooks at all.

Funding was cited as one of the main reasons for the low usage of textbooks, with half of all teachers surveyed saying funding strongly impacts their ability to buy textbooks. Over half (56%) of secondary teachers said funding has an “extensive impact” on their ability to purchase these resources.

### **Recommendation**

# THE **PUBLISHERS** ASSOCIATION

Given the evidence demonstrating the benefits of high quality textbooks we would recommend that the funding of high quality published learning resources is treated as a priority within the overall funding of schools and colleges.