

New schooling for a new century

The Innovation Unit today launches a publication by leading writer on innovation Charles Leadbeater that looks at the most radical innovations in today's schools and offers an entirely new way of tackling educational reform. Leadbeater argues the current approach is running out of steam, suggesting that 3 key challenges require us to re-think the improvement of learning for young people. These challenges: a plateau in achievement; stubborn inequality; increasing uncertainty over what schools are really for, demand innovative responses.

“What’s Next? 21 ideas for 21st century learning” makes 21 recommendations which, taken together, provide a new narrative for better schools and more engaged learners.

Recommendations include;

- Individual Budgets and Self Directed Support Plans for Families at Risk
- Breaking up large schools
- A 'learning concierge' service
- Scrapping the 6-week summer holiday
- Wider measures of progress and outcomes

The publication is based on the work of nearly a hundred innovative schools which have been a part of the *Next Practice in Education* programme supported by The Innovation Unit over the past two years.

Leadbeater commented: *“The commitment, professionalism, energy and creativity of the schools I’ve visited is no less than inspiring. A key theme is the centrality of relationships to the future of learning. We must design schools and services to support relationships for learning that encourage participation and motivation.”*

Valerie Hannon, Director of Strategy in The Innovation Unit said: *“This publication ‘joins up the dots’ of a number of fascinating innovations in learning around the country. It creates a picture of a more personalised, relationship-based service. Many schools will recognise their aspirations in it. We hope that it will provoke an important policy debate about how these ‘islands of innovation’ can stimulate positive, more widespread change.”*

The launch will be Chaired by Lord Puttnam, and Lord Adonis, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools and Learners, will begin the subsequent

discussion with an audience of headteachers and other education professionals, policymakers, Directors of Children's Services and business leaders.

The launch will take place at:

Guardian Newsroom, 60 Farringdon Road, London, EC1R 3GA on 10th July 2008 at 08.00.

For more information contact:

The Innovation Unit on (020) 7259 1232 or press@innovation-unit.co.uk.

A full version of the publication can be downloaded from

<http://www.innovation-unit.co.uk/about-us/publications/whats-next.html>

Notes for Editors

- The Innovation Unit works as an innovation intermediary in public services. It is devoted to stimulating, incubating and accelerating innovation to achieve transformed services with better outcomes for citizens. We believe passionately that the creativity of public service practitioners, working collaboratively with service users, holds the key to this transformation. We support the process by bringing evidence-informed disciplined methods to innovation. Major strands of work include the *Next Practice in Education Programme* in schools and children's services; and the *Innovation Exchange* for the Third Sector. Further information can be found at www.innovation-unit.co.uk
- Lord Adonis is Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools and Learners. His principal policy areas include school formation including Trust schools, Academies and Specialist schools, primary education including phonics, the City Challenge programme, and Special Education Needs
- Lord Puttnam CBE is, among many other roles, Chair of the education innovation charity Futurelab and founding chair of NESTA – National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts. He was the founding Chair of the General Teaching Council in England.
- Charles Leadbeater is a leading authority on innovation and creativity, an independent writer and innovation advisor. His earlier pamphlets for The Innovation Unit - *Learning about personalisation: how can we put the learner at the heart of the education system?* and *The Shape of Things to Come: personalised learning through collaboration* - helped to launch the debate over personalised learning. He has advised companies, cities and governments around the world on innovation strategy. Charles has worked extensively as a senior adviser to governments over the past decade, advising the 10 Downing St policy unit, the Department for Trade and Industry and the European Commission on the rise of the knowledge driven economy and the Internet, as well as the government of Shanghai. A visiting senior fellow at the British National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts, he is also a longstanding senior research associate with the influential think-tank DEMOS and a visiting fellow at Oxford University's Saïd Business School. His most recent book is *We Think: Mass innovation, not mass production*, published by Profile. He writes here in a personal capacity