

Recognising 'educational isolation' as a place-based disadvantage for schools



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Aims of the workshop

To introduce you to the concept of educational isolation

To support understanding of what educational isolation means

To develop consideration of educationally isolated schools locational or 'place-based' challenges

To identify potential 'solutions' to educationally isolated school challenges

Educational Isolation

A challenge for schools in England

February 2019



The concept of **Educational Isolation** has evolved from the following:

1. Coastal Schools Research (2010 onwards)

<https://www.marjon.ac.uk/research/research-specialisms--facilities/coastal-schools/>

<https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/schools/education/coastal-schools-and-educational-isolation>

(3 related studies – Ovenden-Hope and Rowena Passy)

2. RETAIN: Early Career Teacher Retention Programme (2015 – 2017)

EEF Funded pilot intervention with educationally isolated schools with independent evaluation and follow on research.

https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Projects/Evaluation_Reports/Retain.pdf

(Director Ovenden-Hope, with Blandford & Cain. Independent evaluation by Sheffield Hallam University)

3. Educational Isolation Project (EIP) (2017 – 2019)

<https://marjon.ac.uk/educational-isolation>

4. Understanding Educational Isolation to develop a large Multi Academy Trust (MAT) hub school model (2020 – 2023) (Ovenden-Hope and Passy)

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Exploring Teacher Recruitment and Retention

Contextual Challenges from
International Perspectives

getty
Anna Bl

ROUTLEDGE

With a special focus on teacher supply (recruitment and retention)

Tanya Ovenden-Hope and Rowena Passy (Eds) (2020) **Exploring Teacher Recruitment and Retention: Contextual Challenges from International Perspectives**. London, Routledge.

Ovenden-Hope, T., Passy, R. and Iglehart, P. (2022) **Educational Isolation and the challenge of 'place' for quality in teacher supply**, in Menter, I. (Ed) *The Teacher Education Research Handbook*. London, Palgrave..

Ovenden-Hope, T. and Passy, R. (2023) **Educational isolation in England: understanding place-based challenges for teacher recruitment and retention in coastal and rural schools**, in Roberts, P. and Downes, N. (Eds) *The rural school challenge: International comparisons in the staffing of rural schools*. Singapore, Springer. In publication.

Considering 'educational isolation'

<https://www.menti.com/alr5ffyz8m3s>

Or

www.mentimeter.com and type in the voting code: 6916 1229

Or

Scan the QR code



'Educational Isolation'



Rowena and I define Education Isolation as:

'A school experiencing limited access to resources for school improvement, resulting from challenges of school location'

(Ovenden-Hope and Passy, 2019: 4)

Educational Isolation is more complex than a school being in a geographically remote place.

Place-based challenges for schools



The challenges of place, or location, affect rural and coastal and rural-coastal schools to a much greater extent than urban, or urban-coastal schools.

The three combined challenges of place that create educational isolation, limiting access to resources for schools are:

Geographic remoteness

Socioeconomic deprivation

Cultural isolation

Educationally isolated schools have limited access to:

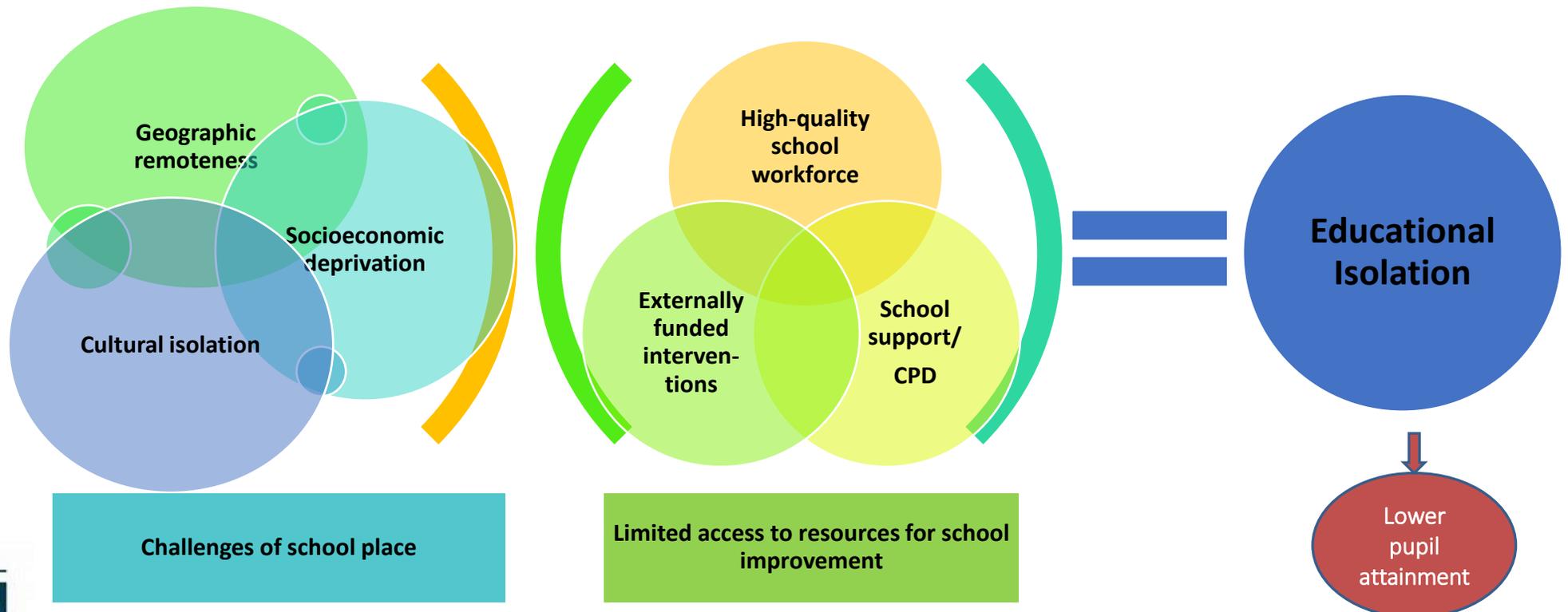
A high-quality workforce

School support (CPD)

Externally funded interventions

Place and the 'Educational Isolation' effect

Educationally isolated schools have specific placed-based challenges that limit their access to resources for school improvement. In England and the UK these schools are predominantly rural and coastal.



Rural/Coastal England

17.1% of the population in England live in rural areas (0.9% of these people live in a 'sparse setting' (DEFRA, 2020))

1/5 of local authority areas in England are coastal (SMC, 2017)

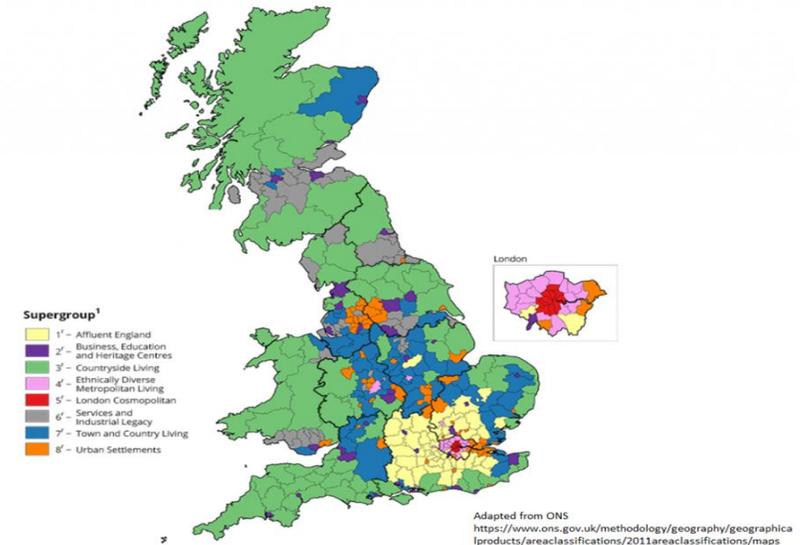
In 2020, there were 3268 state maintained rural primary schools in England (DfE, 2020) compared to 5210 in 2008 (Countryside Agency, 2008). These rural primary schools are **19% of all primary schools** in England. This decline is linked to education policy and funding in England, which tends to benefit larger schools and Multi Academy Trusts (see Ovenden-Hope and Luke, 2019).

551 secondary schools (ages 11–16) were in rural areas (Gov.uk, 2021) in 2020, forming **16%** of the total 3448 **secondary schools** in England in 2020 (DfE, 2020).

Persistently disadvantaged pupils in rural and coastal schools have poorer outcomes than similarly disadvantaged pupils in urban schools.

For example: Pupils in schools in countryside living areas (includes coastal) were found to have a 0.58 correlation between disadvantage and attainment at the end of secondary school (age 16)(GCSEs), the highest of all areas in England (The Centre for Education and Youth, 2019).

Place causes inequity in educational outcomes #PlaceMatters



The 'educational isolation' issue...

'Isolated rural and coastal towns and former industrial areas feature heavily as social mobility coldspots. **Young people growing up in these areas have less chance of achieving good educational outcomes** and often end up trapped by a lack of access to further education and employment opportunities.' (Social Mobility Commission, 2017:2)

'The proportion of pupils achieving English and Maths A to C grades or equivalent in their GCSEs at the end of Key Stage 4 (end of secondary-level education), based on residency of pupil...was lower for all rural areas for each level of deprivation (IDACI decile group) compared with urban areas.'*
(DEFRA, 2019: 7)

The three challenges of place and infrastructure

- Poor public **transport**
- Expensive/cheap/lack of **housing**
- Poor **employment** opportunities
- Fewer **leisure/cultural** facilities

School leaders need the support of Government to address these challenges.

1. Geographic remoteness

- Limited access to public transport
- High cost of travel and long journeys affected teacher recruitment and retention, parental/community engagement, the amount of trips/visits for pupils, opportunities for professional development and school to schools support

‘You've got the geographical isolation that is hard actually if you want to support one another. I went to do a challenge partner review the other day, I had to drive all of 40 miles, but that necessitated an overnight stay because those 40 miles were winding country lanes if you're with me. So the ability to network is a bit thinner.’

Principal (Educational Isolation Research)

2. Socioeconomic deprivation

Rural and coastal school leaders indicated the highest levels of perceived isolation in relation to economic and social indicators.

- Few large-scale employers
- A high level of seasonal and poorly-paid employment - seen to limit young people's expectations from employment and reduce their motivation to work hard at school.
- Housing costs/availability

'Without much work out there, and what work there is is typically low-paid, low-skilled work...that means there's not much money at home. And there's not much incentive for folks, you know parents, to say look if you [student]work hard you can get on and get a good job in [the town].'

Principal (Educational Isolation research)

Socioeconomic deprivation affects student and staff expectations



'I mean I've thought about it with the seaside thing ... It's the redundancies in the 80's and early 90's where a huge amount of males were made redundant ... Now we're teaching ... probably the second generation of kids that have gone through a whole life [without seeing their parents employed] ... I think that's got a lot to do with it. They just, they don't see, they don't connect school with employment ... I would say on the whole, the vast majority of the boys just don't see a future, [a connection] between what they're doing in this place and what's going to be happening in 18 months' time.'

Senior leader (Coastal schools research).

3. Cultural isolation

Rural and coastal school leaders indicated the highest levels of perceived isolation in relation to cultural opportunities:

- Less access to museums and theatres
- Considerable time, money and effort is invested by schools in introducing children to different ethnicities and lifestyles
- The disparity in school funding between London and more remote areas was seen as a major barrier to encouraging children to experience cultural diversity.

‘And culture diversity experienced in large towns and cities. We have to work really hard at it [teaching about cultural diversity] and it doesn’t come naturally. And if you’re only accessing 75 per cent of British society then that is going to make you a less culturally rich school, so it is bound to mean we are not going to have the same doors open to us as other schools.’

(Assistant Principal, Case Study School 1)

There are 3 school resources predominantly limited for Educationally Isolated schools

1. A high quality/stable teacher supply
2. School support/CPD
3. Externally funded interventions

Current state of teacher supply in England

Increases in the number of trainee teachers in 2020 - 2021 (NFER, 2021) was a response to the economic uncertainty caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and is not being sustained:

- Evidence suggests that as the economy recovers and private sector graduate jobs arise, teachers will leave teaching (Hutchings, 2010).
- This is now happening, with newly trained teachers opting not to work in schools and ITT applications down (TES, 11 June 2022) and the lowest number of applicants to ITT for 15 years

Teacher supply will be even more problematic in schools that have traditionally been 'hard to staff' such as rural and coastal schools in geographically remote areas with persistent cultural and socioeconomic disadvantage (Ofsted, 2020), or **Educationally Isolated schools.**

'The most deprived coastal rural areas have one and half times the proportion of unqualified secondary teachers that the least deprived inland rural areas have.' (Social Mobility Commission, 2017: 39)

There is 12.5% teacher attrition by Yr 1, 23% by Yr 3 and 40.3% by Yr 10 (DfE, 2022).

There will also be demographic bulge of 15% more secondary school's students (age 11+) from 2025.

Place-based teacher recruitment and retention challenges for educationally isolated schools:



'As an isolated school, our staff face challenges in travelling in and this has a knock-on effect on recruitment and retention ... Teachers in [town] probably travel for about half an hour whereas our staff that travel in from [city] are travelling an hour. When you say that in London you think it's not too bad, but actually that's a journey in a car on a single-track road. If you get delayed, then it becomes problematic very quickly.' (school leader, EIP case study school 4)



'I think we also struggle in terms of getting quality staff because we're ... remote ... An awful lot of teachers that live and work in [local city] would be going, Oh I don't want to ... commit to that finance [for travelling] every day.' (principal, EIP case study school 1)

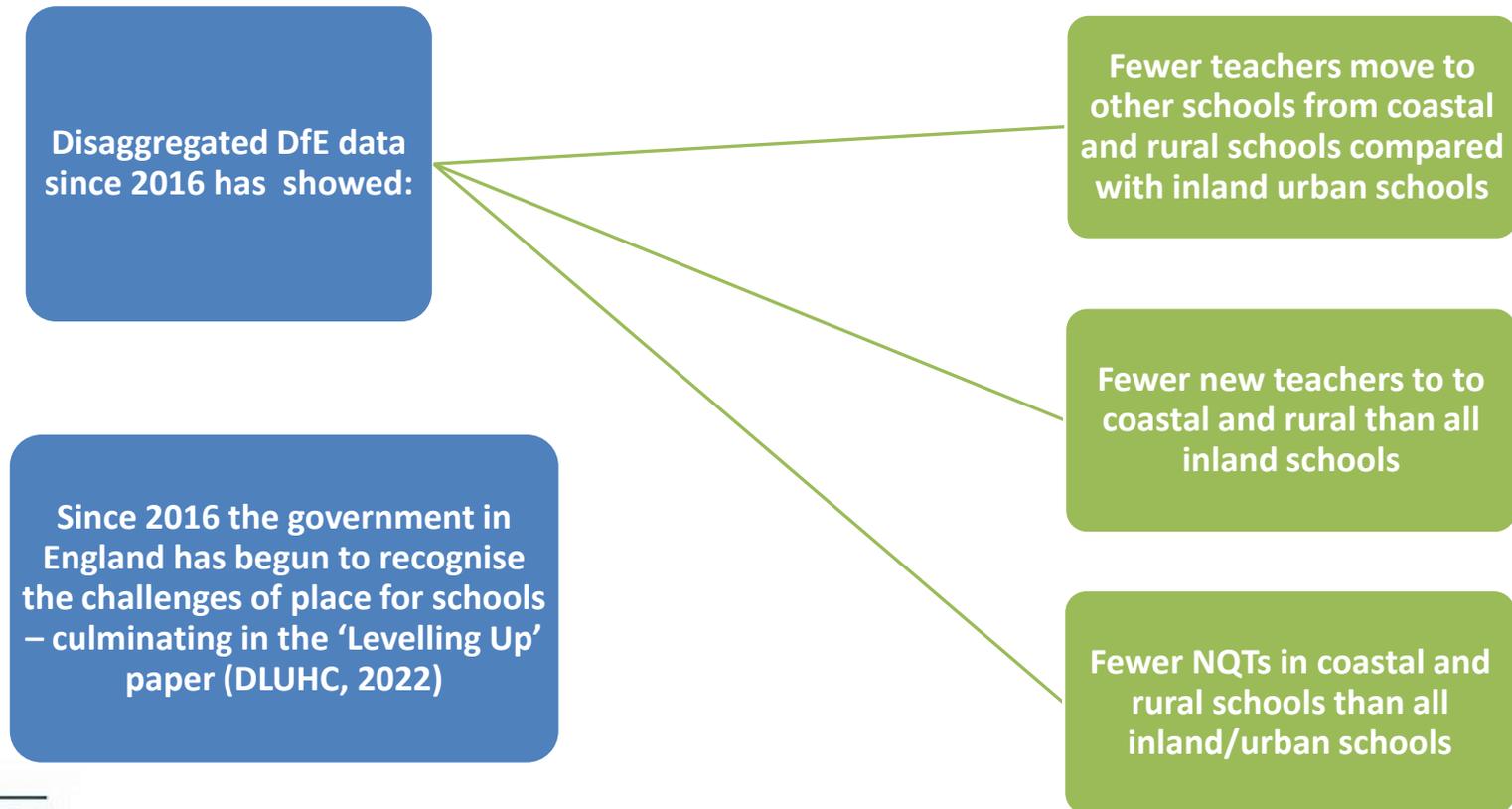


'Trying to recruit young staff to coastal/rural areas is very difficult ... The high cost of housing does make a long-term commitment difficult for young staff, and rental properties are expensive due to the amount of holiday opportunities in the area.' (headteacher, EIP questionnaire)



'Talented teachers and middle leaders often leave. We have a lot of staff who have been here a long time so internal promotion opportunities are low.' (secondary senior leader, EIP questionnaire)

Students can be negatively affected by a schools' place e.g., limiting access to teachers



Department for Education response

Opportunity Areas (DfE, 2017) and then Education Investment Areas (DfE, 2022)

Recruitment and Retention Strategy (DfE, 2019)

Early Career Framework (DfE, 2019)

Levelling Up for the UK White Paper (DLUHC, 2022)

These approaches recognised the challenges of recruitment and retention for schools in England, some are an attempt to mitigate place-based school challenges.

For 2021 the DfE funded the Rural Teaching Partnership to be delivered by the Church of England, Teach First and the Chartered College of Teaching, recognising the need for contextualised ITT for trainees in rural schools. In 2023 the CofE offers a rural school NPQL

There were 12 Opportunity Areas and now 55 Education Investment Areas)

1. West Somerset
2. Norwich
3. Blackpool
4. North Yorkshire coast
5. Derby
6. Oldham
7. Bradford
8. Doncaster
9. Fenland and East Cambridgeshire
10. Hastings

11. Ipswich
12. Stoke-on-Trent

Q: Urban or rural-coastal or urban-coastal areas?

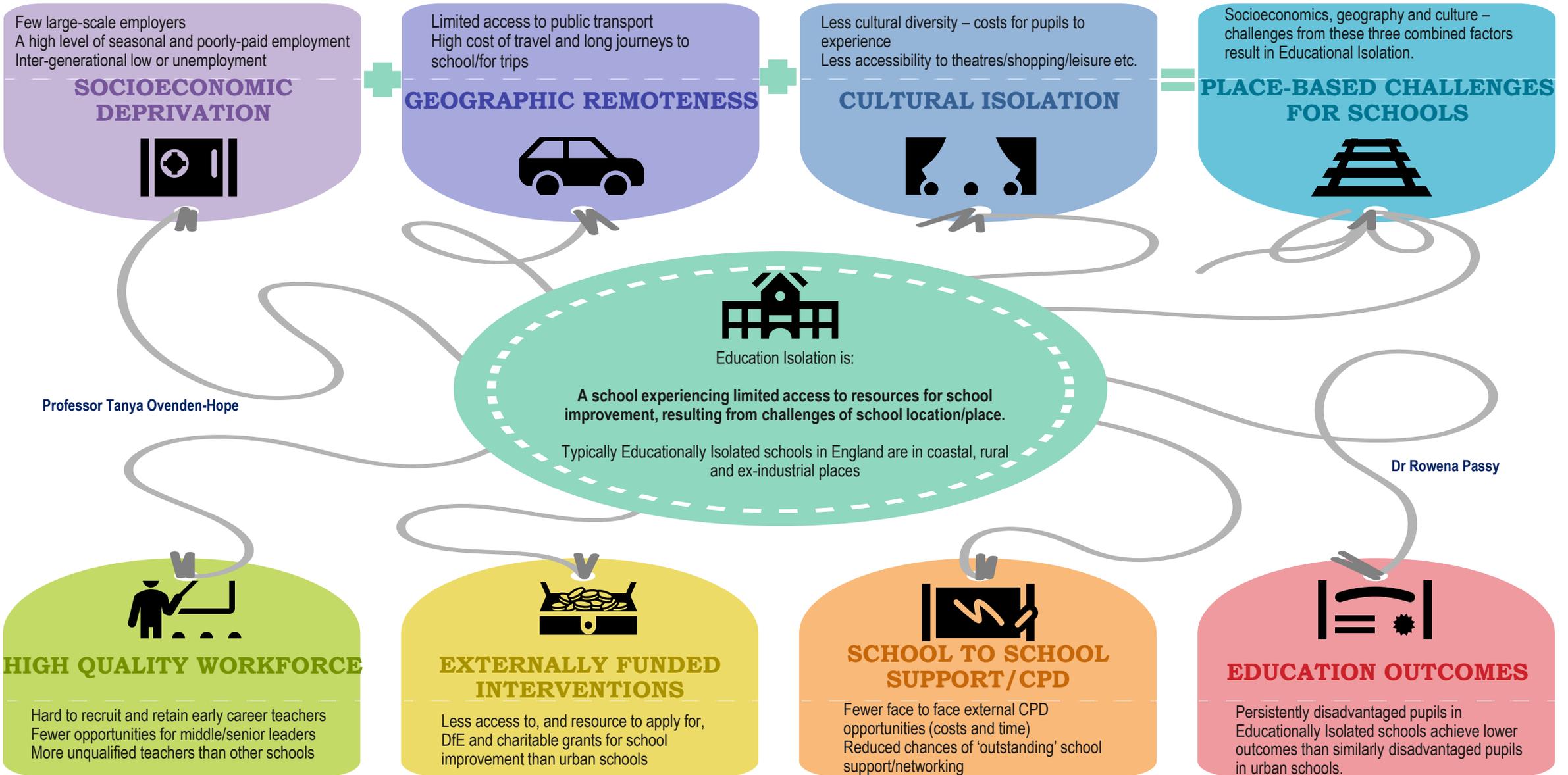
Q: Do you know how the OA areas were selected?

Q: Is Devon a EIA?

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-social-mobility-through-education>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/package-to-transform-education-and-opportunities-for-most-disadvantaged>

EDUCATIONAL ISOLATION



Q: What could you do tomorrow to mitigate place-based school challenges?

1. Consider a resource limited by place in a school where you hold governance responsibility.
2. What solution can you think of that may mitigate this limited resource in part or full?
3. What would the impact of the solution be?
4. Who do you need to speak to start the process for the solution?
5. Plan to speak to that person in the next week or month.

What next for educationally isolated schools in Devon?



Place Matters! Understanding this in governance can make a difference.



Information on educational isolation

A PADLET for you with lots of resources around the topic of educational isolation:

<https://padlet.com/unieducator/SchoolLeaders>

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