Measures that matter

analysing disadvantage, identifying outperformance and increasing diversity in graduate recruitment

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rare

DIVERSITY
RECRUITMENT
EXCELLENCE
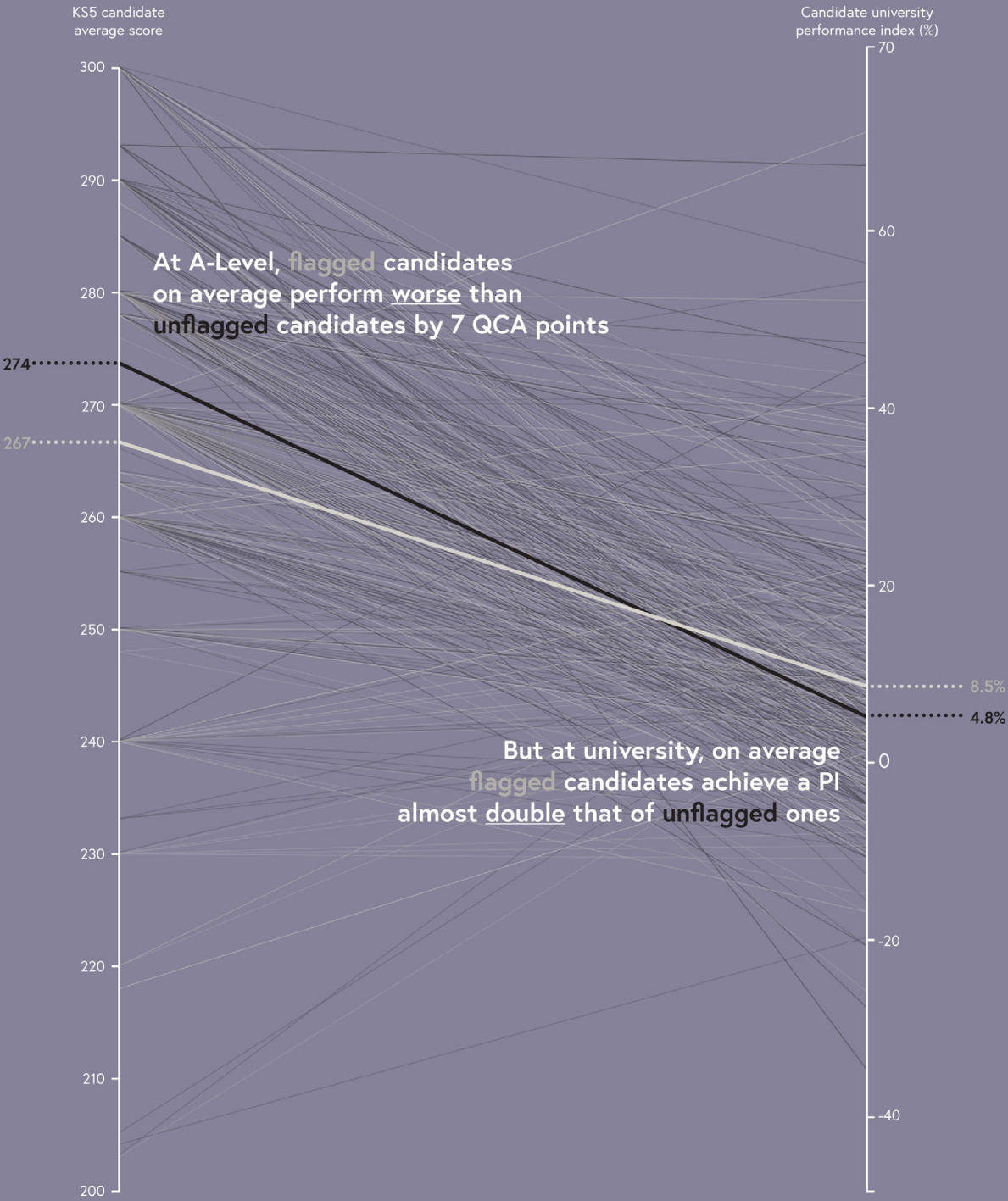
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INTRODUCTION

Three years ago we launched the CRS. Hundreds of thousands of applications later, we have a much clearer sense of what the applicant pool for elite graduate jobs looks like. Using contextual data, our clients have collectively hired thousands of outperformers who they would otherwise have missed. We understand how best to contextualise academic achievement, and what the medium-term impacts of such contextualisation are likely to be. We are now in a position to use data to broaden our collective applicant pool over the next three years.

1. CONTEXTUALISATION LEADS TO OUTPERFORMANCE

Our data shows that candidates from disadvantaged backgrounds on average perform worse at A Level but better at university. Academic grades mean more in context – the data shows that a disadvantaged candidate that has done worse than you would normally expect from a top applicant at A level is likely to go on to outperform.
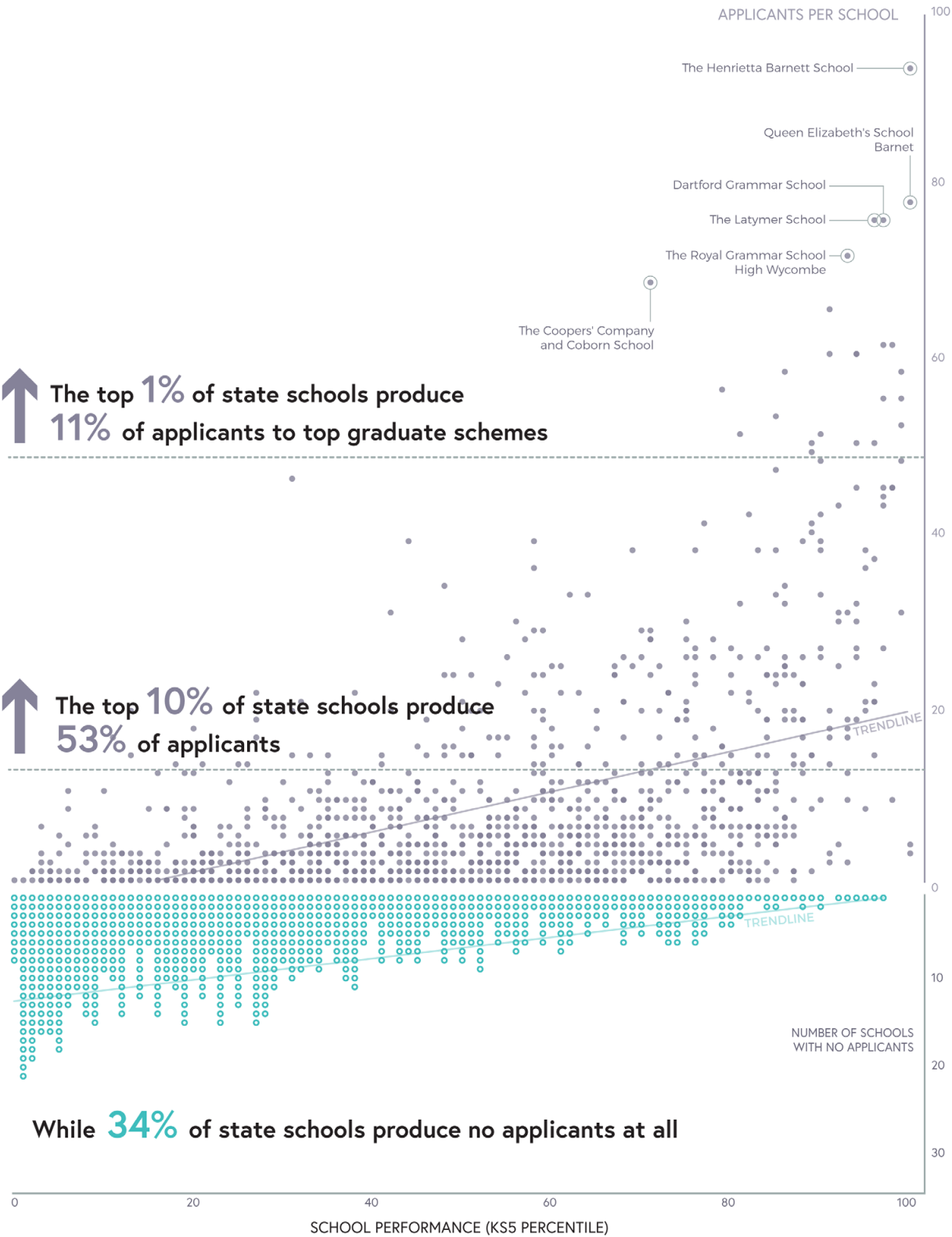
Deloitte.

3,450 INTERVENTIONS AND ALMOST 200 OFFERS THROUGH CRS OVER THE LAST 3 YEARS

KS5 candidate average score

Candidate university performance index (%)

At A-Level, flagged candidates on average perform worse than unflagged candidates by 7 QCA points

But at university, on average flagged candidates achieve a PI almost double that of unflagged ones
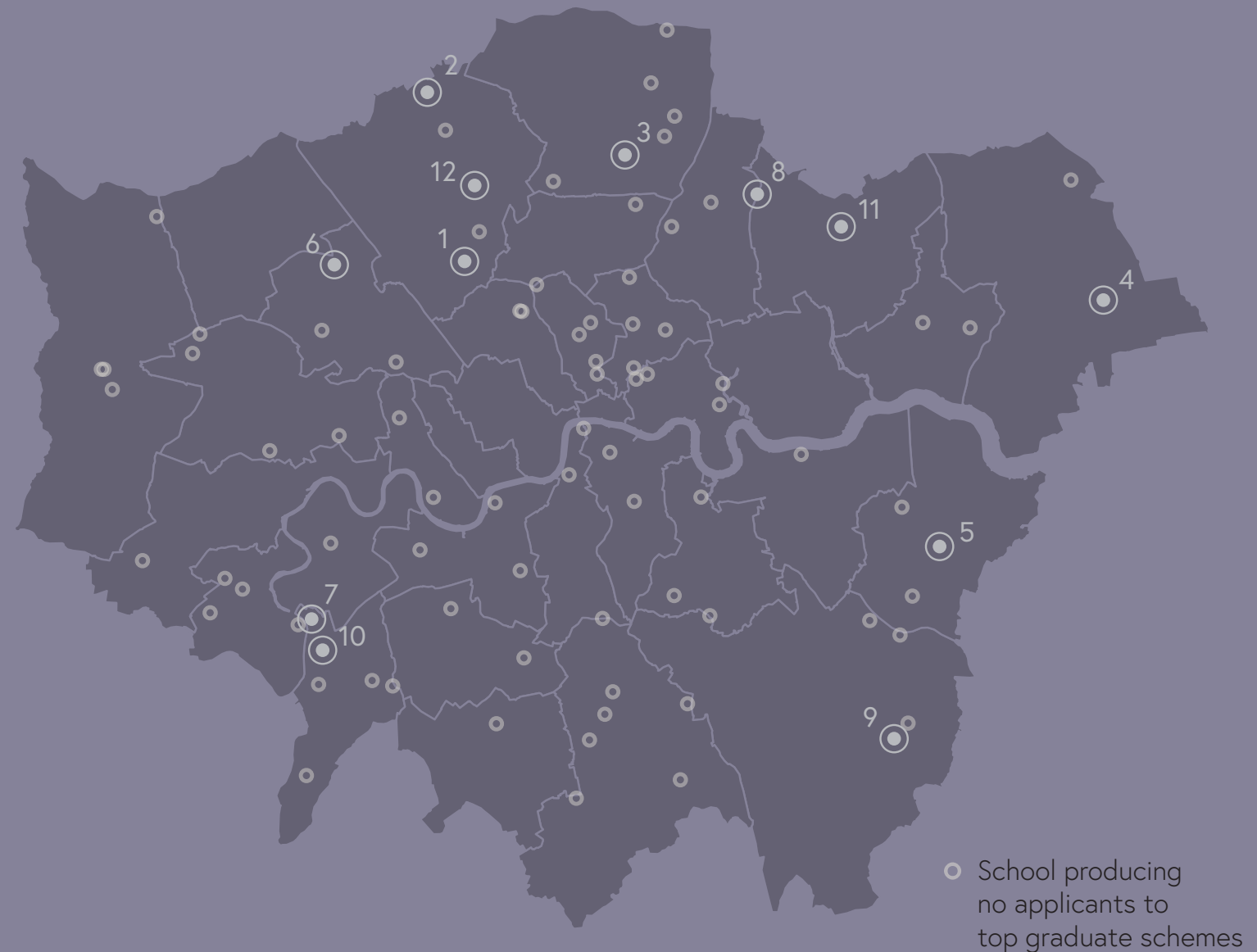
274
267
8.5%
4.8%

2. "STATE SCHOOL" IS NOT A GOOD WAY TO MEASURE SOCIAL BACKGROUND

1. Gathering and reporting data on the proportion of your applicants or workforce that attended state school is not anywhere near as useful as looking at which specific schools candidates attended. Indeed, in some cases, it may be positively misleading to celebrate an increase in state school applicants or employees if the increase is solely from a subset of elite 'state super schools'. These schools have a much higher than average proportion of students from affluent backgrounds, send the majority of their intakes to Russell Group Universities, and are each responsible for dozens of applications to elite jobs each year. Recruiting more middle-class alumni of highly selective grammar schools is hardly evidence of your social mobility policies working.

2. We recommend concentrating employer outreach activity on the 34% of state schools that are not producing any applications to top firms – and especially those with high academic standards.

APPLICANTS PER SCHOOL

The Henrietta Barnett School

Queen Elizabeth's School Barnet

Dartford Grammar School

The Latymer School

The Royal Grammar School High Wycombe

The Coopers' Company and Coborn School

↑ **The top 1% of state schools produce 11% of applicants to top graduate schemes**

↑ **The top 10% of state schools produce 53% of applicants**

TRENDLINE

TRENDLINE

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS WITH NO APPLICANTS

While 34% of state schools produce no applicants at all

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE (KS5 PERCENTILE)

Of the 20 state schools that produce the most applicants to top graduate schemes, **12 are in London**
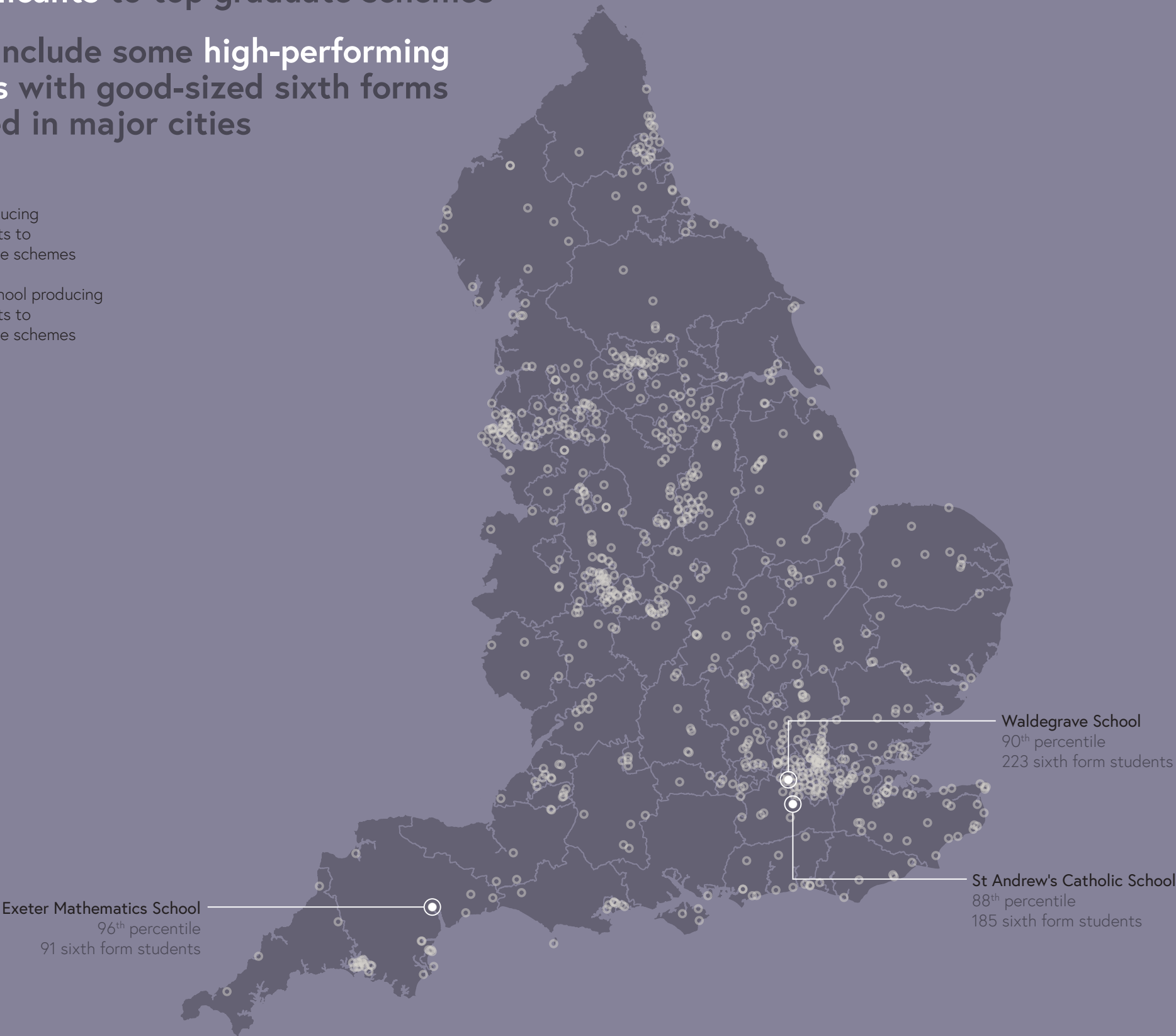
1 The Henrietta Barnett School
2 Queen Elizabeth's School, Barnet
3 The Latymer School
4 The Coopers' Company and Coborn School
5 Townley Grammar School for Girls
6 JFS
7 The Tiffin Girls' School
8 Woodford County High School
9 St Olave's and St Saviour's Grammar School
10 Tiffin School
11 Ilford County High School
12 St Michael's Catholic Grammar School

⊙ School producing no applicants to top graduate schemes

34% of state schools produce no applicants to top graduate schemes

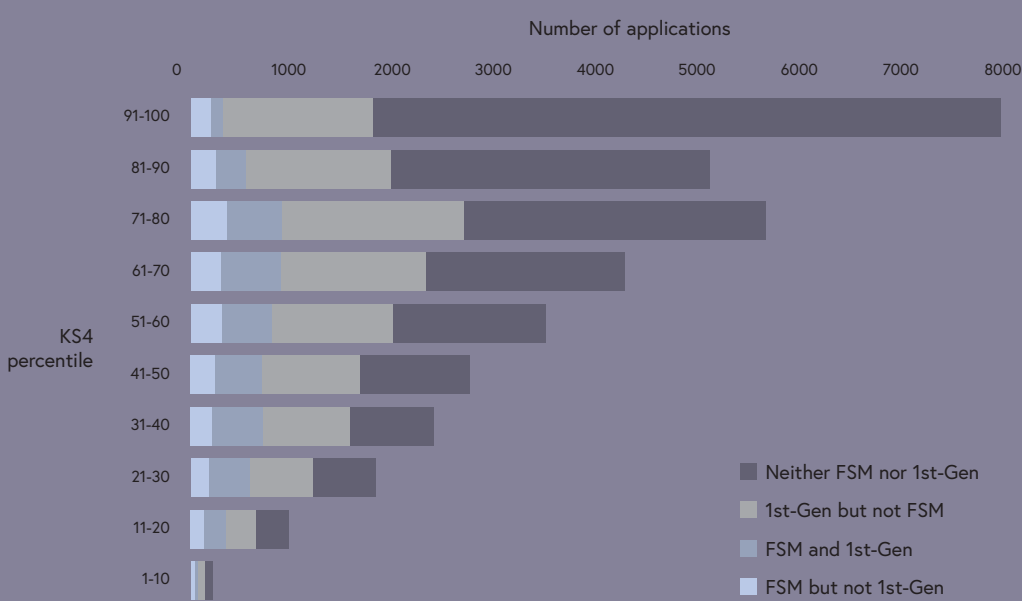**These include some high-performing schools with good-sized sixth forms situated in major cities**

○ School producing
no applicants to
top graduate schemes

◉ Top 20% school producing
no applicants to
top graduate schemes

Waldegrave School
90th percentile
223 sixth form students

St Andrew's Catholic School
88th percentile
185 sixth form students

Exeter Mathematics School
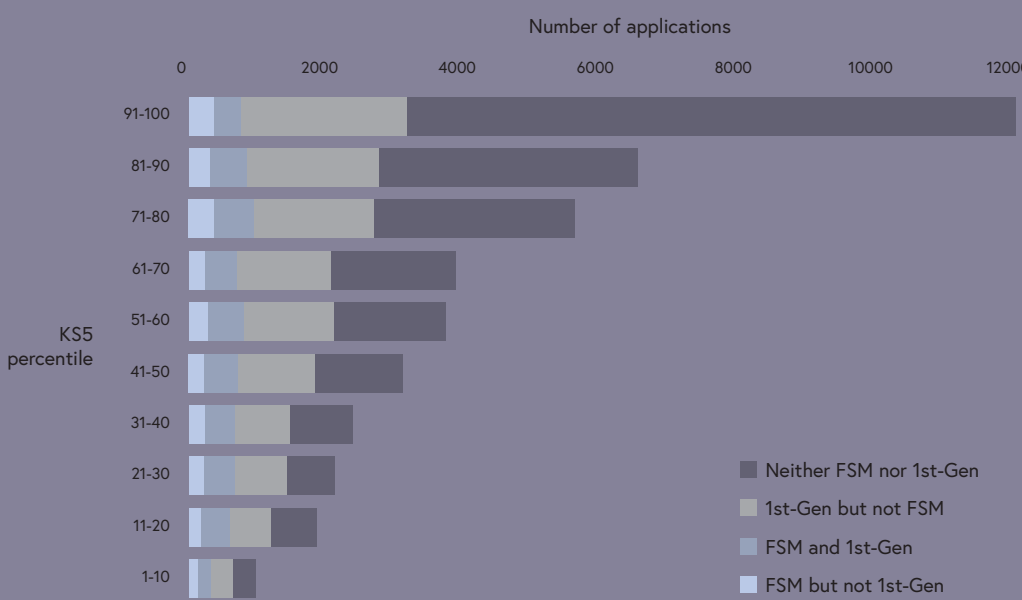96th percentile
91 sixth form students

3. CORRELATIONS

Personal, educational and socioeconomic disadvantage are distinct categories. They need to be measured and reported on separately in order for social background to be measured accurately.

Applications by KS4 percentile

Number of applications

Applications by KS5 percentile

Number of applications

0.65

CORRELATION BETWEEN YEAR 11 SCHOOL AND YEAR 13 SCHOOL
Most people stay at the same school for sixth form (though 42% switch). This is by far the closest correlation between measures in our dataset.

-0.09, -0.04, -0.04

CORRELATION BETWEEN YEAR 11 SCHOOL AND PERSONAL DISADVANTAGE
There is almost no correlation between personal disadvantage and school quality – candidates who have been in care, were refugees or are carers or parents are roughly as likely to be found in high-, middle- and low-performing schools.

0.37

CORRELATION BETWEEN SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUND AND SCHOOL QUALITY
There is a correlation between socioeconomic background and school quality – students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to attend low-quality schools. But this is more than offset by the higher number of applicants from higher-quality schools. The proportion of candidates on Free School Meals (FSM) is highest in the bottom 10% of schools, but there are actually more FSM candidates making applications from the top 10% of schools than from the bottom! Using school quality as a proxy for socioeconomic background does not work.

4. DEFINITIONS

A note on some of the terminology we use:

Top graduate schemes
Highly competitive work experience, internship, apprenticeship and graduate schemes that use CRS and where both employer and candidate have consented to data being used for research purposes.

State schools
Schools funded by the state that are free for pupils to attend. For the purposes of this analysis sixth form colleges have been excluded as their large size makes comparisons with school years 12 and 13 difficult.

FSM
Free School Meals at secondary school – for which children with low household incomes are eligible.

1st-gen
Students who are or would be the first generation in their immediate family to attend university.

About the authors

Naomi Kellman is Rare's Senior Manager for Schools and Universities. In 2012 Naomi founded Rare's Target Oxbridge programme, which has supported 81 black students to secure Oxbridge offers. She has worked on education policy at the Department for Education and HM Treasury, and has served as a school governor.

Naomi has a first class degree from Oxford University. She has written for The Guardian and has appeared on BBC, Channel 5 and Sky News.

Raphael Mokades is the founder and Managing Director of Rare. He founded Rare in 2005, on his own, with no recruitment experience, no technology expertise, no clients, no systems, and a desk in someone else's office. Today, Rare works with over eighty of the world's most prestigious employers.

Raphael has a first class degree from Oxford University. He has written for The Guardian, Times and Financial Times and was Legal Week's Outstanding Innovator for 2017.

Dr Jonathan Ward is Rare's Research Analyst. A mathematician, Jon took his PhD at Queen Mary College, University of London. He has worked for a number of startups and small businesses, helping them to analyse and understand their data.

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Rare is the UK's leading diversity graduate recruitment company. We provide cutting-edge data services that help our clients make better hiring decisions.

Rare was founded by Raphael Mokades in 2005. The company now employs some 35 people. Rare's Contextual Recruitment System (CRS) has been adopted by 70 top employers and has featured in the Washington Post, the Huffington Post, the Financial Times and on BBC News.

Rare was certified for ISO27001, the international platinum standard for data security, in June 2018.

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