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Education unions call for an immediate 5% pay rise for teachers

A group of five education unions - the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL), the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT), the National Education Union (NEU, a merger between ATL and the NUT), the Welsh teacher union UCAC, and Voice – are today calling for an immediate, fully funded, 5% pay rise for all teachers.

In a letter to the Secretary of State for Education, Justine Greening, the unions set out their concerns about the adverse impact that teachers' pay is having on teacher supply because pay levels have fallen behind that of other graduate professions. After seven years of minimal if any pay rises, which after inflation the unions claim are a real terms pay cut, due to the Government's public sector pay policy, unions want the Government to make a significant pay increase for all teachers and school leaders.

The unions note the School Teachers' Review Body's view "that uncompetitive teacher pay, in a strong labour market with increasing opportunities for graduates, makes it a difficult environment in which to recruit and retain high quality graduates as teachers. The situation is now so critical that it requires firm and decisive action" and "presents a substantial risk to the functioning of an effective education system".

The unions want the Government to:

- Restore teachers' pay levels to at least the levels that existed before the start of pay restraint in 2010.
- Give teachers a pay rise of 5% in 2018 as a first step towards restoration.
- Make teachers' pay a priority in discussions within Government.
- Provide sufficient additional funding for this increase in teachers' pay in the Chancellor's Budget statement this Autumn.

While today's letter is obviously a wish list delivered ahead of the Budget, the reality is likely to be much more limited. If the Government was to give all public sector workers a pay rise of 3% that would add a billion pounds to public spending. A pay rise of 2% is more likely, and that not necessarily fully funded. As for teachers' pay, or education funding in general, being the Chancellor's top priority, that looks a forlorn hope as housing seems to be the priority now.

In this issue

Pay rises

News.

Pages 1 and 5

Mental health

News. Parliament.

Pages 5 and 26

Sexual

harassment

Editorial.

Parliament.

Pages 4, 22 and 23

Child poverty

News. Parliament.

Pages 10, 11, 12 and 24

Children's

Services

News.

Pages 12 and 13

Elvis and illiteracy

Opinion.

Page 19

OECD reports

Pericles.

Page 20

Editorial**4 Sexual harassment**

The tide of sexual harassment cases sweeping over Westminster starts in schools, and little has been done since the report of the Women's select committee on sexual harassment and violence in schools was published a year ago.

News**1 Teacher unions want a 5% pay rise**

In a wish list delivered ahead of the Budget, five teacher unions demand a pay rise of 5%.

5 FE wants more cash as well

Ten FE unions have also written to the Chancellor, asking for extra funding to ensure a "stable and well-resourced further education sector".

Mental health in schools

The Blues Programme of mental health support for schools is being brought to the UK for the first time at no cost to schools in a move fully funded by Royal Mail.

6 Technical education to be reviewed

The DfE has confirmed its intention to conduct a review into higher level technical education, which will look across Level 4 & 5.

New Institute for Teaching

The Education Secretary has opened the new Institute for Teaching in Manchester.

7 Helping teachers boost maths skills

Teachers are being encouraged to address common maths misconception as part of wider guidance for teaching the subject to 7-14-year-olds.

8 Educating for the economic future

A new report from EPI has urged the Government to put the future economy first, as it reforms the schools and post-16 education landscape.

Supporting functional skills

New materials have been developed for Functional Skills maths and English teachers.

10 Debating school funding

NAHT has called for Parliament to be "alive with debate" over school funding.

Troubled teens or teens in trouble?

The UK youth homelessness charity Centrepoin, has undertaken research with the largest ever group of young people who had experienced homelessness, to get a true account of the challenges they faced.

11 Absolute child poverty set to increase

A new report by the Institute of Fiscal Studies combines official economic forecasts with planned tax and benefit reforms to project incomes and poverty rates among UK households between 2015-16 and 2021-22.

12 Children in workless families down

The number of children in long-term workless households has fallen to its lowest level in a decade.

Gloucestershire Children's Services

Improvements to children's services in Gloucestershire have been "too slow", according to Ofsted.

13 Councillors warn children's needs not met

A survey of councillors responsible for children's services has confirmed the increasing crisis in children's social care, as the overwhelming majority (87%) said that demand for local authority support for children and families had risen over the past two years. The findings show that many councils were struggling to provide help.

14 Air pollution advice for schools

With more than 2,000 schools and nurseries located close to roads with illegal levels of pollution, the NEU and the British Lung Foundation have published guidance warning schools about air pollution.

Dentists warning over child tooth decay

Tooth decay is now the most common reason that children between 5-9 years old need hospital treatment, according to the Royal College of Surgeons.

Research

15 Threat to UK leading knowledge economy

A policy briefing by the Centre for Global Higher Education at the UCL Institute of Education has highlighted the urgent need for a new partnership in research, science and innovation with the EU if the UK is to remain a leading knowledge economy.

Drug taken in pregnancy linked to ADHD

A large study recently published in the journal *Pediatrics* found evidence of a link between prenatal acetaminophen usage and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

Conferences

16 Nick Gibb speaks to FASNA

School Standards Minister, Nick Gibb, said that FASNA was an independent voice, arguing for the empowerment of teachers and the pursuit of evidence-based policies that enable schools to raise standards.

17 North Academies conference

Lord Agnew, Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the DfE, addressed delegates at the 2017 North Academies Conference, the first he had attended since being appointed minister.

International

18 Nigeria: highest rate of out of school kids

The UK's High Commissioner in Nigeria said that the key question as a development partner was why support private sector investment in education rather than the public sector?

Opinion

19 Elvis and the advantages of illiteracy

Prof. Jan Willem de Graaf, Professor of Brain and Technology at Saxion University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands, writes about Elvis and the advantages of illiteracy.

20 Pericles

The OECD has just published two interesting documents, *Education Indicators in Focus* and *PISA in Focus*.

Reference

21 Consultations

A consultation outcome on the revised statutory guidance for local authorities on the care of unaccompanied asylum seeking and trafficked children was the only one published last week.

Parliament - Debates

22 Sexual harassment in school

Maria Miller (Con, Basingstoke) introduced a debate on the report from her Women's select committee on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence in Schools.

24 Children in temporary accommodation

Oral questions to the DCLG on children in temporary accommodation and family hubs.

25 Olympic sports and GCSE PE

Anna Soubry (Con, Broxtowe) introduced a debate on Olympic sports and GCSE PE.

Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+

Catherine West (Lab, Hornsey and Wood Green) asked what steps had been taken to maintain UK access to EU programmes after the UK leaves the EU.

26 Mental health

Baroness Walmsley (LDP) asked what action i was being taken to ensure that children could obtain timely access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

27 Strengthening families

Lord Farmer (Con) introduced a debate in the Lords on *A Manifesto to Strengthen Families*, which had been published by a group of Conservative parliamentarians.

Parliament - Questions

28 Answers to written questions

Answers to written questions to the Department for Education, the Department of Health, the Ministry of Justice, the Prime Minister's Office, the Department for Work and Pensions and the House of Lords.

Publisher information

46 Subscriptions.

Publisher information and subscriptions details.

Sexual harassment

This week Westminster has been awash with reports and rumours of sexual harassment and more serious forms of sexual violence. The Defence Secretary, Sir Michael Fallon, resigned stating that his behaviour fifteen years ago fell below that which was expected of the Armed Forces that he led. It then emerged that there were more recent incidents than that initial hand on the knee and that Sir Michael was unable to assure the Prime Minister that more revelations would not come out.

The de facto Deputy Prime Minister, Damien Green, has been accused by a journalist of inappropriate behaviour and a computer seized from his office nine years ago is alleged by a former police officer to contain pornography, albeit images that are not illegal. Mr Green strongly denies both charges, which are being investigated, and for the moment he hangs on. This is not just a Conservative Party problem. A Labour activist Bex Bailey, says she was raped by a senior party figure (not an MP) and a number of MPs have been suspended or accused of inappropriate behaviour. The former SNP leader and Scottish First Minister, Alex Salmond, gleefully said that there had never been a better time to argue for Scottish independence because of the scandals at Westminster, apparently oblivious to the resignation of the SNP Children Minister in the Scottish Parliament for exactly the same kind of behaviour.

What started in the American film industry as revelations about the film director Harvey Weinstein has not only crossed the Atlantic to Westminster but has shone a light on practices in almost all walks of life including journalism. Sir Michael Fallon is one of those who has come out with the excuse that he is resigning because what was acceptable 15 years ago is no longer acceptable now as public attitudes have changed. He is both wrong and right. Sexual harassment was never acceptable, but public attitudes are, indeed, changing and people who could get away with it before now can't.

Yet where did all this tide of sexual harassment spring from? Its origin is to be found in our schools. Just over a year ago, on 13 September 2016, the House of Commons Women and Equalities Select Committee published its report, *Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence in Schools* (HC 91). The committee found that sexual harassment and sexual violence in schools was a significant issue which affected a large number of children and young people, particularly girls, across the country. The evidence showed that the majority of perpetrators of the abuse were boys, and the majority of victims were girls. Little was done to stop it, so the lesson so many boys learned as they grew into men was that sexual harassment was something that they could get away with. It was the same lesson that previous generations of boys had learned for decades. Teachers, parents, young people and third sector organisations told the Committee that sexual harassment and sexual violence in schools was having an impact on young people and school life. Consequences included: physical and emotional harm, including teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases; girls feeling unable to fully participate in educational and extra-curricular opportunities; teachers spending valuable time dealing with incidents of sexual harassment and bullying; and young people developing a sense that sexual harassment and sexual violence were acceptable behaviours and learning social norms that were carried through to adult life.

While there was insufficient data to conclusively demonstrate that sexual harassment and sexual violence in schools was a growing problem, significant qualitative evidence suggested that increasing access to pornography and technological advances, including online social media, could facilitate harassment and violence and therefore were exacerbating the problem to a greater degree than in the pre-social media era.

So where are we now? Not much further on, as a debate in the Commons last week that we report below showed. The chairman of the Women's Committee, Maria Miller, pointed out that the point of the debate was to check what progress the Government was making in responding to the Select Committee report, which was over a year old. Ms Miller added that in the light of new evidence from *Girlguiding* and *Panorama*, the situation had not improved. The Prime Minister and the Education (and Equalities) Secretary will no doubt be preoccupied with what is happening to their colleagues in Parliament, but if they want to ensure real change they will have to act and tackle the problem in schools with more urgency than has been shown so far.

FE bodies call for Budget investment

In a joint letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, ten bodies representing further education staff, students and providers have called for extra funding to ensure a “stable and well-resourced further education sector” which can meet different needs and ambitions. The letter, sent ahead of the Budget on 22 November, warned that cuts had reduced the availability of learning opportunities for young people and adults, which had led to the loss of over a million adult learners and thousands of staff from the sector.

While the letter welcomed additional spending on technical education, it warned that investment in technical learning alone was not sufficient to reverse the impact of the cuts or to meet the country’s skills needs.

The letter urged government to fund a wider range of opportunities to help people progress into higher level learning or employment, build confidence and resilience, develop basic skills or return to education in later life. The letter was co-signed by the University and College Union, UNISON, the Association of Colleges, the National Union of Students, the Association of School and College Leaders, the National Education Union, Hoxley, the Third Sector National Learning Alliance, the Learning and Work Institute and Voice.

Mental health practitioners to be based in schools

A new initiative to help teenagers who show early signs of mental health problems has been launched by Action for Children in schools and colleges in three locations across the UK, with an ambition to roll out across the UK in 2018, to eventually reach 8,000 15-to-18-year-olds. The Blues Programme is being brought to the UK for the first time by the children’s charity at no cost to schools in a move fully funded by Royal Mail. Developed in the USA, the programme is a preventative course aimed at young people nearing the end of school who are showing early signs of anxiety, depression or other problems.

Specially trained practitioners, called “Blues Busters”, will work with teenagers to introduce the first phase of the programme in specially selected schools and colleges in Buckinghamshire, Worcestershire and Cardiff in Wales. It will then be rolled out to deliver face-to-face support sessions across the country. The skills and knowledge passed on will provide young people with cognitive restructuring techniques to identify and challenge feelings which cause anxiety, as well as an understanding of coping strategies and how to apply these skills to life. Sir Tony Hawkhead, Chief executive of Action for Children, explained that the fun and engaging group-work programme worked with young people to help them to understand why they were feeling down and find ways to improve the way they felt. Lily Heinemann, Head of Corporate Responsibility at Royal Mail, said that mental health was such an important issue for the business and the people who worked for it, many of whom were parents and carers of young people themselves.

Worcester Sixth Form College has started the new scheme, principal Michael Kitkat, said that all local authorities were under financial pressure and there was often limited access to services and lengthy waiting times for young people. He explained that young people at the college had completed a survey that sought to identify if they were showing early signs of poor mental wellbeing or were at risk of developing problems. He added that those identified as showing early signs were then offered a place on a six-week course which involved weekly one-hour group sessions on site, together with work at home. Mr Kitkat pointed out that the weekly activity sessions were aimed at identifying the situations that could trigger anxiety, fear or depression and young people were taught a range of coping strategies to help them change the way they thought and felt about stressful situations so that they did not become overwhelming and develop into more serious problems in later life.

Level 4 & 5 technical education to be reviewed

The Department for Education has confirmed its intention to conduct a review into higher level technical education, which will look across Level 4 & 5 education, and focus on how technical qualifications at that level could be improved to address the needs of learners and employers. The Apprenticeships and Skills Minister, Anne Milton, said that the review would also ensure that learners could progress from the Government's new T-Levels, and other full-time education, into the workplace. She added that it would also consider how the qualifications would work for those in the workforce who wanted to upskill or retrain. Stakeholders can engage with the DfE by contacting Level4-5.Team@education.gov.uk

The Level 4 qualifications are:

- Certificate of higher education.
- Higher national certificate.
- Level 4 award.
- Level 4 certificate.
- Level 4 diploma.
- Level 4 NVQ.

The Level 5 qualifications are:

- Diploma of higher education.
- Foundation degree.
- Higher national diploma.
- Level 5 award.
- Level 5 certificate.
- Level 5 diploma.
- Level 5 NVQ.

In response, to the announcement of a review into higher level technical education, David Hughes, Chief Executive of the Association of Colleges, said that the review was long overdue because it would address a long term, structural problem within the education system. He pointed out that the OECD and many others had repeatedly highlighted the very low numbers of people in the area compared to other countries, which was in part due to the relatively high numbers taking full degrees (at Level 6) and in part the lack of opportunities for people of working age to retrain and upgrade their skills. Mr Hughes argued that for the economy to be strong, the country would need to find way to fund and provide more options for young people and adults who wanted to retrain.

He said that while Brexit would make the problem more urgent, even without it, the labour market changes that were being driven by new technology and automation would require a new culture and approach. Mr Hughes pointed out that for young people, routes into high skilled work would need to be provided would not involve full-time residential degree courses costing more than £50,000. He suggested that colleges would have an important role to play and for adults, flexible ways would need to be found to help them fit training in with work and life. Mr Hughes added that because he was also keen to see the review examining employer responsibilities because any solutions would require their investment as well.

New Institute for Teaching

The Education Secretary has opened the Institute for Teaching in Manchester. Addressing an audience of teachers, Justine Greening said that the courses would be available for teachers at all stages of their career, including those wishing to become experts in their subject or wanting to learn the most effective ways to share best practice.

The Institute for Teaching will operate mainly in the North and central England, including in the Education Secretary's Opportunity Areas which had been identified as social mobility "cold spots". The Institute for Teaching received government funding as part of the £75 million Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund, which supports new programmes to deliver knowledge and skills-based training for teachers. The first eight projects to benefit from the fund include programmes focused on leadership, managing challenging pupil behaviour, improving the quality of teaching and phonics. The Director of the Institute of Teaching, Matt Hood, said that having an expert teacher in every classroom was the best way to make sure that every pupil, regardless of their background, would receive a great education. But he added that to improve teaching, the training teachers received would need to be improved.

Guidance to help teachers boost maths skills

Teachers are being encouraged to address common maths misconception as part of wider guidance for teaching the subject to 7-14-year-olds. *Improving Maths in Key Stages Two and Three*, published by the Education Endowment Foundation, reviews the best available research to offer schools and teachers practical “do’s and don’ts” of successful maths teaching.

One of the recommendations focuses on how to develop good maths knowledge and it highlights some areas that pupils should get to grips with, as well as some common misconceptions that they may pick up.

Three examples given in the report are:

- Pupils should master basic mental arithmetic (addition, subtraction, multiplications and division) and be able to recall their times tables quickly as those who did not may have difficulty with more challenging maths later in school.
- Pupils sometimes think “multiplication makes bigger, division makes smaller”. While this is accurate with numbers greater than 1, it is not correct when applied to numbers less than 1 and therefore, $5 \times 5 = 25$ but $0.5 \times 0.5 = 0.25$.
- Learning how to add fractions together can often cause difficulty. For example, many believe that the answer to $\frac{1}{8} + \frac{1}{2}$ is $\frac{2}{10}$. But teachers can help pupils to understand that the right answer would be $\frac{5}{8}$ by using diagrams which help to visualise the different values of fractions.

The report has recommendations in eight areas, each designed to support primary and secondary schools to close the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their classmates. The latest data shows that just over half (54%) of pupils who are eligible for free school meals achieved the expected standard in maths by the end of primary school, compared to almost three-quarters (73%) of all other pupils.

The seven other recommendations for good maths teaching for seven – 14-year-olds are:

- Support pupils as they make the transition from primary to secondary school, when attitudes and attainment in the subject tend to dip.
- Use physical objects and diagrams to help pupils engage with and understand maths concepts.
- Help pupils become better problem solvers, so that if they do not know how to work something out they will be able to draw on different strategies to help them understand.
- Use tasks and resources like digital technology to support good maths teaching.
- Encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning by developing their “metacognitive” skills – their ability to plan, monitor and evaluate their thinking and learning.
- Use assessment of children’s maths to focus on the maths they find difficult.
- Give children who were struggling with maths additional support through high-quality one-on-one or small-group interventions.

Sir Kevan Collins, Chief Executive of the Education Endowment Foundation, said that getting to grips with basic maths was not just crucial for academic success and future job prospects. He added that even though such skills also helped in everyday life, a disadvantaged pupil was still much more likely to leave education without them. Sir Kevan said that teachers were inundated with information about different programmes and training courses to help boost the maths skills of their pupils and there were also re thousands of studies. But he added that because most were presented in academic papers and journals, it could be difficult to know where to start.

Sir Kevan said that the practical and evidence-based steps in the EEF’s latest Guidance Report had been based on the best research available and they had been designed to help schools navigate the wealth of information out there and give all their pupils, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, the skills they needed to succeed.

Educating for the economic future

A new report, published by the Education Policy Institute and Pearson, has urged the Government to put the future economy first, as it reforms the schools and post-16 education landscape. *Educating for our Economic Future* is the second report by an Independent Advisory Group consisting of prominent business and education leaders and chaired by leading academic Professor Sir Roy Anderson.

It follows the 2014 report *Making Education Work*, which saw many of its recommendations adopted by the Government. The report points out that with growing uncertainty about the country's supply of skilled workers following the EU referendum, and with economic challenges such as low productivity, stagnating wages, and intergenerational inequality, the UK is at a critical juncture in terms of meeting its future labour market needs.

The second report of the Independent Advisory Group assesses England's progress in equipping young people with the right skills for the future – focusing on literacy and numeracy, digital capabilities and employability skills. It also makes recommendations on reforming educational pathways from school to the workplace.

The Independent Advisory Group called on the Government to:

- Ensure that new T-Level reforms will fit with wider educational reforms, and not close off options of further study and long-term career development with a simplistic bifurcation between academic and technical pathways.
- Refocus away from a single, crude apprenticeships target and replace it with a wider set of success criteria that focus on quality and benefits for both learners and employers.
- Continue to equip young people for the future with core literacy and numeracy, and ensure that the development of digital and financial knowledge in young people is also fit for the future.
- Establish mechanisms to ensure that long-term school and college curriculum decisions reflect independent advice and meet the full range of society's interests in education.

Supporting the teaching of functional skills in maths and English

The Education and Training Foundation has commissioned ccConsultancy and partners to develop and deliver professional development courses for teachers of Functional Skills maths and English using a new set of materials, developed by Pye Tait Consulting on behalf of ETF, to support the teaching and learning of the qualifications.

The content of the materials have been designed to help build learner confidence and they are appropriate to a range of contexts, including 16-19 learners, apprentices, adult returners, learners in prisons and ESOL. They can also be used in both high and low-tech teaching environments. The package comprises:

- Interactive webinars introducing the materials and how they can be used.
- One-day practitioner courses (one maths and one English) that will enable practitioners to explore the Functional Skills subject materials in depth and understand the underpinning approaches that shape them.
- Two-day, in-house CPD courses that will enable teams of Functional Skills teachers to receive bespoke support to meet their learners' needs and secure high-quality learning outcomes.

Booking will be open from November/ December, and courses will be delivered from February 2018.

Reading the Evidence

Synthetic Phonics and Literacy Learning



Edited by
Margaret M Clark OBE

Available as an ebook from Amazon for £10
Available as a paperback from Amazon for £15

Published by Glendale Education, Birmingham

Parliament should be “alive with debate” on school funding, says NAHT

The School leaders’ union NAHT has written to every Westminster MP to urge them to take the education funding crisis more seriously. In a two-page briefing, NAHT set out the four main reasons why school budgets were at breaking point:

- National Insurance and Pensions: Increases in the cost of employers’ contributions of over 5.5% in April 2015 had had a big impact on schools.
- £600 million of cuts to the Education Services Grant: The ESG had been used by local authorities and academies to fund school services, such as HR and facilities management. As the services were still needed, the cost had been shifted to individual schools and academies, which had put further pressure on school budgets.
- Pay: The cost of annual pay awards for teaching and support staff, however minimal, had been unfunded in school budgets.
- The Apprenticeship Levy: The levy came into effect in April 2017. While only 1% of employers had to pay, nearly all maintained schools and most academies would have to pay an extra 0.5% on their payroll costs.

In the letter to MPs, Paul Whiteman, NAHT’s general secretary pointed out that £2.8bn had been cut from school budgets since 2015 and seven out of ten of NAHT’s 29,000 members expected their budgets to be untenable by 2019.

Troubled teens or teens in trouble?

The UK youth homelessness charity Centrepont, has undertaken research with the largest ever group of young people who had experienced homelessness, to get a true account of the challenges they faced. The results showed that issues in school and education were common in the lead up to a young person becoming homeless.

- Almost half of vulnerable young people (49%), had been absent from school for long periods due to problems at home.
- 51% had been unable to finish exams/coursework due to a problematic personal life.
- Nearly a third (28%) had never felt settled as they had moved from school to school.

Centrepont is calling on educators to be particularly vigilant to the signs of potential homelessness among their at-risk students and direct them to the newly launched Centrepont Helpline, a free service designed to provide help and guidance for vulnerable young people. Centrepont aims to raise awareness that the inability to complete education or take the necessary exams to gain qualifications could be due to a set of personal circumstances beyond their control, not a lack of commitment, as was sometimes assumed. Further Centrepont research showed that 58% of young people who had experienced homelessness had encountered violence at home. Therefore, the lack of stability in education could be the catalyst that forced young people out on their own.

Dr Mary Bousted, Joint General Secretary of the National Education Union said that teachers were on the front line when it came to supporting their students through education and they were in a unique position to notice changes in behaviour. She pointed out that exam periods in particular could be immensely stressful, and it could easily be exacerbated by the difficult home lives of many young people. Dr Bousted stressed that it was essential for students to be able to access the advice and help they needed at a critical time, and she added that the NEU welcomed the efforts of Centrepont to provide it. Centrepont CEO Seyi Obakin said that because homelessness forced independence on young people regardless of whether they were ready, Centrepont provided tailored support in a range of areas to give young people the skills to live and work independently.

Absolute poverty among children to increase in every English region and nation of the UK

A new report by Institute of Fiscal Studies researchers, with funding from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, combines official economic forecasts with planned tax and benefit reforms to project incomes and poverty rates among UK households between 2015-16, the latest data available, and 2021-22.

According to the latest forecasts from the Office for Budget Responsibility, if the Government sticks to current plans for changes to benefits, including the roll-out of universal credit, between 2015-16 and 2021-22:

- Absolute child poverty would increase by around 4 percentage points on the government's official measure, measured after housing costs have been deducted from income. Of that increase, around three-quarters, equivalent to 400,000 children, would be attributable to benefit changes. The freeze to most working-age benefits will mean that around 7.5 million low income households will see their benefit entitlements cut by over £500 per year in real terms. The limiting of tax credits and universal credit to two children will mean that some low-income families will receive over £2,500 less in benefits than they otherwise would have.

- Absolute child poverty had been projected to increase the most in Wales, the North East, East Midlands and Northern Ireland, where poor households received more income from benefits and less from earnings, or where there were more low-income households with at least three children who would be affected by the limiting of means-tested benefits to two children. Low-income working-age households in the North East get around a third of their income from earnings, and those in Northern Ireland and Wales less than half, compared to 60% in the South East.

The report also revealed that:

- Median income had been projected to grow by just 4% in real terms over the next four years, which would be slow by historical standards. But things could well be even worse as the projection was highly sensitive to the OBR forecast for real earnings. The OBR had already indicated that they would downgrade their forecast for productivity growth at the Budget later in November. Such a downgrade would depress forecast earnings growth and leave the projection for median income, based on the OBR's March forecast, looking optimistic.

- Across the whole of the UK, absolute poverty on the government's official measure, which was measured after deducting housing costs, was projected to remain roughly unchanged between 2015-16 and 2021-22. In the absence of planned reforms, absolute poverty could have been expected to fall slightly, but the reforms will add about 1 ppt (or 700,000 people) to the absolute poverty rate.

- Different areas face different prospects and absolute poverty is projected to rise overall in the North East, the North West, the Midlands, Wales, and Northern Ireland; and fall in Yorkshire & the Humber, East England, the South, and Scotland. Among children, however, absolute poverty is projected to increase in each English region and nation of the UK. As indicated above, these patterns could differ from our projections if trends in earnings and rent growth differ across regions.

“While every region and nation is expected to see an increase in child poverty, the largest increases will be in the North East, East Midlands, Wales, and Northern Ireland, and the smallest will be in London, the South East, and South West.

Tom Waters, an author of the report and a Research Economist at IFS, warned that if the Government stuck to its planned benefit cuts, according to the official measure, absolute child poverty would rise. He added that every region and nation was projected to see an increase in child poverty, but the largest increases

(Continued on page 12.)

would be in the North East, East Midlands, Wales, and Northern Ireland, and the smallest would be in London, the South East, and South West. Mr Waters pointed out that the larger projected rises would occur in areas where families with children were more reliant on benefits than earnings for their income, and where more families were likely to be adversely affected by the new two-child limit on means-tested benefits.

Andrew Hood, an author of the report and a Senior Research Economist at IFS, said that the growth in average household incomes over the next few years was likely to be sluggish at best. He added that if workers' earnings grew as the OBR had expected at the time of the March Budget, median income would rise by just 4% over the next four years, which was about half as fast as it had been before the financial crisis. Mr But Mr Hood said, given that the OBR had already indicated that they now believed that the forecast had been too optimistic, the true picture could be even worse.

Government boasts number of children in long-term workless households lowest in a decade

The number of children in long-term workless households has fallen to its lowest level in a decade, according to new statistics which suggest that the figure is down by 505,000 since 2010. Data from the Office for National Statistics showed that 9.3% of children, around 1.1 million, were in long-term workless households, which is the first time in at least a decade that the percentage figure had fallen below 10%.

The number of children living in lone parent households which were long-term workless had fallen 73,000 on the year and around 9 in 10 children are currently living in households with at least one working adult. The Minister for Employment, Damian Hinds said with more than 3 million people in work since 2010, the Government was giving people the chance to find work and to achieve a regular household income.

However, the minister did not say how many children were living in households that were within the "working-poor" bracket. A study by Cardiff University academics in 2016 had revealed that the risk of poverty for adults in working families had grown by a quarter over the past decade.

Gloucestershire children's services changes "too slow"

Improvements to children's services in Gloucestershire have been "too slow", according to Ofsted, which had found serious and widespread failures in children's services in the county, in June, which had led to an "inadequate" rating. While Ofsted criticised the time the county council had taken to implement changes, it praised the decision to remove the senior management team.

Ofsted's concerns had been raised in the interim letter sent to the Conservative-controlled local authority on 18 October, which had been especially critical of the department's senior leadership team. The report had warned that too many children had been left in situations of risk of significant harm for too long because dangers had not been recognised. Ofsted had also concluded that standards had deteriorated significantly since the department was last been rated inadequate in 2011.

Councillors warn that children's needs are not being met

A survey of local councillors responsible for children's services has confirmed the increasing crisis in children's social care, as the overwhelming majority (87%) said that demand for local authority support for children and families had risen over the past two years. The findings suggested that many councils were struggling to provide such help.

The results of the survey, published by the National Children's Bureau, found that two-thirds (66%) of lead members for children said that their local authority lacked the resources to provide universal services such as children's centres and youth clubs. Four in ten (40%) said that they did not have enough money to meet one or more of their statutory duties to children. Over a third (35%) said that their local authority lacked the resources to support children in need, 35% had insufficient funding to help children in care, and nearly 1 in three (30%) lacked the resources to support children with protection plans.

Lead members responsible for children's services pointed out that the extra burden on local authorities had come about for a number of reasons. Half (50%) had cited increased levels of poverty and hardship, while 45% had said that cuts to other services for families, such as housing support, had been a contributing factor. Nearly a quarter (24%) said that rising levels of abuse and neglect had been one of the reasons behind the increase in demand, while more than a third (36%) said it had been partly due to professionals getting better at spotting the signs of a child in urgent need.

“Four in ten councils did not have enough money to meet one or more of their statutory duties to children.”

When the lead members for children's services were asked what their top three priorities for spending would be if they had a 10% increase in their annual budget, over half (54%) said that they would target the money at early support for families, half (50%) would prioritise children in care, and nearly a quarter (23%) would improve support for children with mental health problems.

The report, *Off the Radar*, calls on Government to take action across a range of areas, including:

- Creating a cross-Government strategy with a comprehensive approach to improving children's lives.
- Increasing funding for children's social care, investing in high-quality early education and providing additional resources for mental health services.
- Developing better social care assessments for disabled children.
- Action to create a more inclusive education system.
- Improved data collection and sharing by professionals working with children.

Commenting on the National Children's Bureau report, *Off the Radar*, Alison Michalska, ADCS President, welcomed the focus of the report and she added that members shared the concerns expressed by councillors in the survey that rising demand and reducing resources were leaving children's needs unmet. She pointed out that on average local authority budgets had been reduced by 40% since 2010 and at the same time demand had risen significantly, which had forced local authorities to reduce vital non-statutory services, which in turn had tipped more families into crisis and driven up demand for child protection services.

Ms Michalska stressed that providing children and their families with the right support at the right time was the only way to manage demand and improve outcomes for children and their families in the long run. She added that the hope was that children and young people were high on the Chancellor's agenda in the forthcoming autumn Budget.

Air pollution health advice for schools

With more than 2,000 schools and nurseries across the country located close to roads with illegal levels of pollution, the National Education Union has joined forces with the British Lung Foundation, to publish guidance warning school staff and pupils about the dangers of air pollution.

The guidance includes:

- Linking air pollution and its impact to the National Curriculum in Science, personal, social, health and economic or Citizenship, English and Geography.
- Reminding parents that children in buggies are at greater risk, due to their proximity to vehicle exhaust pipes.
- Encouraging the creation of action plans to protect pupils' health, including installing air pollution monitors to show when toxic air is worst and what measures could be the most effective to tackle the problem.
- Introducing travel plans, and a range of options to reduce air pollution round schools, such as encouraging car sharing, and safe walking routes away from main roads.

“As only a third of local authorities were monitoring pollution levels outside schools guidance would address the lack of information and data.”

Dr Penny Woods, Chief Executive of the British Lung Foundation, said that the Foundation's research had found that only a third of local authorities were monitoring pollution levels outside schools and therefore the guidance would address the lack of information and data that was available to teachers and parents. Kevin Courtney, Joint General Secretary of the National Education Union, said that air pollution was a growing area of concern for members of the NEU. He added that because schools could not solve the problem alone, the union was delighted to publish guidance which would help schools take practical steps to protect children.

Dentists' warning over child tooth decay

Tooth decay is now the most common reason that children between 5-9 years old need hospital treatment. According to the Royal College of Surgeons, figures for England showed that twice as many children under the age of 10 had received hospital treatment for tooth decay as those who had been treated for broken arms in the year to March.

“While tooth decay was preventable in 90% of cases, many parents were unaware that NHS dental care was free for under-18s, and therefore not all children were being taken to the dentist.”

The Faculty of Dental Surgery at the RCS said that while tooth decay was preventable in 90% of cases, many parents were unaware that NHS dental care was free for under-18s, and therefore not all children were being taken to the dentist. The British Dental Association has called for a coherent national strategy to tackle the problem. It pointed out that while there were oral health schemes for children in Wales and Scotland, there had been a lack of action in England. Henrik Overgaard-Nielsen, the BDA's chairman of general dental practice, argued that the shocking statistics were rooted in an abject failure by government to tackle a preventable disease.

UK's status as leading knowledge economy under threat

A policy briefing by the Centre for Global Higher Education at the UCL Institute of Education has highlighted the urgent need for a new partnership in research, science and innovation with the EU if the UK is to retain its status as a leading knowledge economy. In the briefing, Dr Vassiliki Papatsiba, CGHE Co-Investigator, and Dr Ludovic Highman, CGHE Senior Research Associate, outline why clarity on the future of the UK's research relationship with the EU is so necessary.

They argue that the UK government's September policy paper, *Collaboration on Science and Innovation: a future partnership*, failed to provide much-needed detail and it had overlooked key issues. Dr Papatsiba and Dr Highman pointed out that the net €3.4 billion the UK received from the EU research and development budget was equal to more than a year's worth of funds from the UK's seven research councils. They added that the EU's announcement in July that it was considering doubling its R&D budget meant that maintaining research collaboration with EU partners would be more critical than ever.

The authors argued that the government paper had failed to specify the size of the financial contribution the UK would be in a position to make to future research programmes and how it would secure its participation. They added that it had also made no mention of social sciences, humanities, arts and education, which were dependent on the EU for between a fifth and a quarter of their research funding. The policy briefing stressed that one of the most important areas requiring clarity was researcher mobility and Dr Papatsiba and Dr Highman argued that while the Government paper had emphasised researchers' individual freedom, researcher-to-researcher links were influenced by broader policies and perceptions.

They warned that reduced rights to stay in the UK for EU citizens would inevitably lead to less mobility and therefore there would be a drop in researcher numbers. The authors also warned that the UK would lose voting rights over the thematic directions of the future Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development, along with the ability to shape funding allocation rationales. The briefing concluded that the UK would need to secure continued and sustainable cooperation in research, and not demand concessions on the assumption that the EU needed the UK more than the UK needed the EU.

Acetaminophen during pregnancy associated with ADHD

A large study recently published in the journal *Pediatrics* found evidence of a link between prenatal acetaminophen usage and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Acetaminophen is used by up to 70 percent of women during pregnancy in the United States, and between 50 and 60 percent of pregnant women across Western and Northern Europe.

The over-the-counter medication is deemed relatively safe to use during pregnancy and is recommended to ease fever and pain. Data were taken from the Norwegian Mother and Child Cohort Study, including 114,744 children who had been born between 1999 and 2009, as well as 95,242 mothers and 75,217 fathers. Of the mothers, almost half (52,707) had used acetaminophen during pregnancy. The research team discovered that acetaminophen use for 7 days or fewer during pregnancy was negatively associated with ADHD. But for longer than 7 days, the risk of ADHD increased. The children of mothers who had used acetaminophen for 29 days had more than double the risk of developing ADHD and children of mothers who had had taken acetaminophen for fevers and infections for 22–28 days were more than six times more likely to have an ADHD diagnosis.

Nick Gibb, champion of the “teacher-bloggers”

Speaking at the Freedom and Autonomy for Schools National Association autumn conference, the School Standards Minister, Nick Gibb, said that FASNA was an independent voice, arguing for the empowerment of teachers and the pursuit of evidence-based policies that enable schools to raise standards for all pupils.

He said that by empowering teachers and headteachers and promoting an atmosphere of innovation and evidence, power would be “wrestled from the old authorities”. The minister added that ideas would be weighed and, if they were found wanting, they could be discarded. Mr Gibb argued that by unleashing the proliferation of ideas, it would no longer be the exclusive prerogative of LA advisers or education faculties of universities to dictate pedagogy or curriculum to teachers. He added that teachers, empowered by government reforms, had “seized back their profession”.

The minister said that, thanks to the expansion of the academies and free schools programmes, teachers and headteachers were currently enjoying far greater control over the destiny of their school and decision making had truly been “localised and professionalised”. He said that alongside the greater freedoms that had been made available to teachers in free schools and academies, the Government had also scrapped 20,000 pages of unnecessary regulation and guidance, which had freed teachers to focus on teaching. Mr Gibb said that the determination of teachers to prove that all children could thrive when given a classical liberal education had been the most important consequence of greater teacher autonomy. He added that the flourishing online community of teacher-bloggers had raised the status of the profession and improved the lives of pupils.

“Nick Gibb said that by empowering teachers and headteachers and promoting an atmosphere of innovation and evidence, power would be wrestled from the old authorities”.

“The School Standards Minister claimed that the flourishing online community of teacher-bloggers had raised the status of the profession and improved the lives of pupils.”

The minister claimed that schools that offered the EBacc to more pupils had seen the pupil premium gap close slightly more compared with schools with similar pupil intakes, but which had not adapted curriculum choices to promote greater take up of the EBacc. But he added that there was much more to do to achieve the Government’s target of 75% of pupils studying for the EBacc by 2022 and 90% studying the EBacc suite of qualifications by 2025. Mr Gibb pointed out that in the current year, the proportion of pupils entering subjects in all five pillars had fallen slightly, whilst the proportion of pupils entering four pillars or more had risen by 6%. He added that the proportion of pupils taking GCSE languages had risen from 40% to 47% in the current year, which represented a fall from 49% in 2016.

New minister Lord Agnew addresses North Academies Conference

Lord Theodore Agnew, Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Department for Education, addressed delegates at the 2017 North Academies Conference, the first he had attended since being appointed minister. He said that as an ex-chairman of a trust, he had been enthused to hear about the work that was being done to drive up standards and he thanked MATs and sponsors that were taking struggling schools into their trusts and turning them around.

Lord Agnew said that having taken on seven schools in Special Measures and two with Requires Improvement five years ago, he knew that it was hard work. He stressed that importance and he urged delegates to consider putting good local MAT CEOs or chairmen onto their boards, which he had done with his trust.

The minister said that from personal experience as an academy sponsor, he had seen how one could harness the energy of individual teachers and deploy them across several schools because they were seeking career advancement that was not readily available in an individual school, or because they had such strong skills that they were able to share their best practice with others.

He noted that in the North of the country there were 66 MATs of two or fewer schools and 86 SATs. Lord Agnew urged delegates to seriously consider teaming up to create bigger MATs as the collective firepower of a bigger group made a huge difference. He said that the “sweet spot” was somewhere between 12 and 20 schools, or something like 5,000 to 10,000 pupils. The minister said that while the move would mean a certain loss of autonomy, it was certainly the way to strengthen educational provision. He pointed out that in his case, the move had created a full-time director of music, six specialist subject leads who had developed the curriculum, and the school had been extended by three hours per week, which could not have been possible as a small trust.

Lord Agnew argued that at its best, the MAT model had the potential to be the most powerful vehicle for improving schools quickly and he added that examples of rapid school improvement in the North included Zoe Carr of WISE Academies, and Rob Tarn, CEO of Northern Education Trust. The minister pointed out that in Ms Carr’s case, Bexhill Academy’s primary pupil outcomes had increased year on year over the last four years, from 22 percentage points below the national average to 11 percentage points above the national average.

Turning to the Strategic School Improvement Fund and the MAT Development and Improvement, he said that whoever was bidding for the funding must prove that they had a strong track record in school improvement and it would have to be proven that the school receiving the support would be able to carry on the work when the funding ended. Lord Agnew pointed out that the funds that the Department had created were specifically to help support trusts in school improvement. He added that with local knowledge, the delegates were best placed to address the regional and local disparities which existed across the country. The minister noted that the North was geographically large, it covered a very diverse school landscape and it had an interesting mix of urban, coastal, and rural communities. He concluded that each area brought its own unique strengths and challenges that affected how national policy could be delivered.

“Lord Agnew argued that at its best, the MAT model had the potential to be the most powerful vehicle for improving schools quickly.”

Nigeria has the highest percentage of out of school children in the world

The UK's High Commissioner in Nigeria, Paul Thomas Arkwright, opened the 8th annual conference of the Association of Private Educators in Nigeria. He pointed out that the key question as a development partner was why support private sector investment in education rather than the public sector?

Mr Arkwright explained that there was a growing trend of private sector education in Africa, and the growing population in sub-Saharan Africa as well as the evidence, favoured a hybrid system that would support both the public and the private sectors. He pointed out that according to the recent Business of Education in Africa report, 21% of African children and young people were already being educated in the private sector and the percentage was expected to rise to one in four by 2021. Mr Arkwright said that the research had revealed that despite the progress by sub-Saharan Africa since the Millennium Development Goals, 30 million children in SSA were not receiving any form of schooling, and tertiary education was capacity constrained.

He stressed that Nigeria had the highest number of out of school children in the world as over 11 million children did not attend school. Mr Arkwright added that the challenge had been compounded by a worsening fiscal squeeze, underinvestment in education and a population that was estimated to reach 450 million by 2050. He warned that the challenges in the Education sector in Nigeria were enormous and public-sector investment alone could not meet the current demand. He added that according to recent statistics on private sector education in Nigeria, 40% of pupils were already attending private schools and in some states of the federation, the figure for private provision of education was even higher. Mr Arkwright said that the Department for International Development's experience, working in the Education sector in Sub-Saharan Africa, had showed that supporting the public sector alone would not be sufficient to address the problems of access and quality education. He pointed out that in Nigeria, the bulk of the funding supported the public sector to strengthen systems and improve schools and the programmes included:

- Education Sector Support Programme: Which involved systems building and school improvement in over 16,000 public primary schools in 6 states, which benefitted 6.5m Nigerian children.
- Girls' Education Project: To enable a million additional girls to gain access to better education in five Northern states by 2020. The project is currently working with nearly 3,000 public primary schools and 1,000 Integrated Quranic schools.
- Teacher Development Programme: To train 62,000 teachers and 4,000 student teachers in maths, science and English, using mobile technology. It also provides teachers with support and ongoing coaching in classrooms at Federal level and in 5 states.
- DFID also invests in Nigeria through the Global Partnership for Education and the Girls Education Challenge Fund.

Mr Arkwright said that in Lagos State where there were an estimated 18,000 private schools and 1,600 public schools, taken pragmatic steps had been taken to support opportunities in the private sector through the Developing Effective Private Sector Education Nigeria programme, which uses the making markets work for the poor approach, to build the regulatory and quality assurance capacity of government, while supporting the low-cost education market in Lagos. He added that the programme worked with government, private school associations, financial institutions, community based groups, the media and parent associations. Mr Arkwright pointed out that the British Council also played a vital role in the Education sector in Nigeria through programmes such as Connecting Classrooms.

The advantage of being illiterate!

By Professor Jan Willem de Graaf

Professor of Brain and Technology, Saxion University of Applied Sciences, Deventer, Netherlands

Did you ever notice? Almost without exception Elvis imitators technically sing better than Elvis did. Yet they all miss the magic. Exchange Elvis for any other game-changing star, thinker, writer or scientist, and the clue remains the same: technically better performers, less magic. What's up with that?

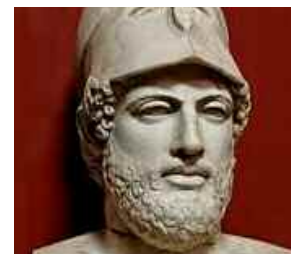
Every child enters the world illiterate. The onset of the acquisition of our first language begins when our brains start to construct invariants from an endless stream of variant sound. Your brain constructs traces based on the sounds of the voices of, among others, both mama (high voice), and daddy (low voice). Pitch height is still variant, but it also includes regularities and repetitions that can be detected and thus constructed into additional invariant brain traces: "Cells that fire together wire together" (the so-called Hebbian rule). Slowly but steadily, in a bottom up manner, every child constructs the native language. However, in learning a second language at a later age (eg in high school or in elderly), the circumstances are completely different. You're no longer helpless laying in your crib, or box. In addition, you have built an instrument of understanding, your first language. The new language will be learned to a large extent through the first language, through some kind of top-down shortcuts. This is a disadvantage.

With newborns their first contact with the world is on a sensorimotor basis, through tasting and touching, by bringing things to the mouth. The first words accomplish, and later replace, this sensorimotor understandings. In this way, words stand for grasps without necessarily having to grab: abstract grasping, understanding. In this sense, first language acquisition is all about the abstract understanding (grasping) of things, events and situations, very much in a bottom up manner. However, learning a second or third language, is not primarily based on bottom-up properties. Top-down aspects (already present language, knowledge of the world, etc.) prevent the bottom up emergence and therefore acquisition of the new language. Moreover, in second language acquisition there is much less synesthesia (connection between different modalities, sound -hearing - and shape - sight - for example), both because second language acquisition depends grossly on top down processes, and because the brain has already been divided into specialities/modularity. Knowing this, it offers opportunities for education. A good language teaching method should inhibit reasoning and all the same facilitate bottom-up aspects of the first language acquisition (laying in the arms of a teacher who really loves you).

What does this have to do with Elvis? Often a first generation artist, scientist, or writer is particularly busy discovering new art, technics, or science in a bottom-up manner. They are inventing themselves, quite illiterate in terms of their to be reached achievements. The second generation is literate, using top-down shortcuts, knowing what has become successful. Often this leads to stereotypy, exaggeration, but if people aim for more than imitation - transformation - this can lead to re-developing. Then again, this second generation becomes a new first generation (bottom up) and goes on exploration: new language variation, theory, music style may be born!

Finally, virtually all major inventions are done simultaneously in multiple places, often independently. The big name is the one who first came to the patent office, or the artist who was in the right place at the right time. Also that is true! History - both individually and collectively - emerges, bottom up! Illiteracy means that one seeks bottom up, not yet fully injected by reason, as opposed to literacy (top down with reason). Sometimes novelty emerges easier from illiteracy than from literacy. In the second language, we have learned to trust our eyes, our reason, our literacy. We've forgotten to hear our hearts, the magic. The advantages of illiteracy have become unattainable. In any situation concerning development, it is important to make room for exploration starting from relative illiteracy. In education, more attention should be paid to this.

Pericles



The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is best known in education for PISA, its triennial research programme of the performance of 15-year-olds, and its massive annual volume of education statistics, *Education at a Glance*. We at *Education Journal* have long been big fans of the OECD, from the days of the first round of PISA in 2000. It has just published two interesting short studies.

Education Indicators in Focus No. 55 looks at the gender differences and the labour market outcomes across different fields of study. It notes that, across the OECD, although girls and boys perform similarly in the PISA science assessment at age 15, girls are less likely than boys to see their future as a career in science and engineering, even in countries where they outperform boys. Current gender disparities in the labour market will not be addressed by the inflow of new graduates: in all OECD and partner countries, women significantly outnumber men in education while men largely outnumber women in engineering, manufacturing and construction in both fields of study and the labour market. Male-dominated fields of study such as engineering, manufacturing and construction have high employment rates but also the greatest difference between the employment rates of men and women.

As the document observes: “Young men and women may base their choice of a particular field of study on predicted labour market outcomes, but other factors also come into play including availability of study places, academic interests and the expectations of their parents, peers and teachers. Their decision can often be influenced by role models and their experiences before tertiary education.”

The last round of PISA, in 2015, identified gender differences in student-level factors, such as attitudes or aptitudes for specific subjects. However, these differences are not enough to fully explain the considerable gender disparities observed in the way tertiary students choose their fields of study, suggesting that gender stereotypes may influence more strongly students at the crossroad of a career path than 15-year-olds still in school. Labour market outcomes also differ significantly by gender even among those who graduated from the same field, particularly where men form the majority. The large gender gap in employment rates in male-dominated fields such as engineering, manufacturing and construction may discourage girls who envisage a career in this type of industry. Gender imbalances in career aspirations are not due to differences in aptitude between boys and girls. Stereotyping, labour market outcomes and the division of labour in society are bigger factors.

How does PISA measure students’ ability to collaborate? was the title of the latest issue of *PISA in Focus*, No. 77. “Solving unfamiliar problems on one’s own is important,” it observes, “but in today’s increasingly interconnected world, people are often required to collaborate in order to achieve their goals, both in the workplace and in their personal lives. Teamwork has numerous benefits: a diverse range of opinions and prior experiences can be drawn upon; there may be synergies among team members, resulting in better and more efficient solutions; and labour can be divided and tasks assigned to those who are best at each of them. Collaboration can also be fraught with difficulties. Instead of dividing tasks effectively, one team member might end up reproducing another’s work. Interpersonal tension and poor communication within the team might also prevent it from achieving its full potential. Working with others is a skill that might not be natural to everyone, but that can be developed with time and practice.”

PISA 2015 goes beyond individual problem solving and, for the first time ever in any international assessment, measures students’ ability to solve problems collaboratively. Students in 52 education systems completed this assessment. The OECD’s director of education and skills, Andreas Schleicher, observed last week in a blog that on 21 November the OECD will be releasing the results of PISA’s first-ever assessment of students’ ability to solve problems collaboratively. *PISA in Focus* explains how PISA is able to measure students’ collaboration skills – not by observing students as they work with other students, but by following their interactions with team members who are actually computer simulations of humans. *Education Journal* will rep the full report when it comes out in a couple of weeks.

Consultations published last week

There were no relevant consultations published last week.

Consultation outcomes published last week

There was one relevant consultation outcome published last week.

Consultation on the revised statutory guidance for local authorities on the care of unaccompanied asylum seeking and trafficked children

There were 23 responses to this consultation, from voluntary sector organisations (8 responses), individuals (6), representative bodies (5) and local authorities (4). The consultation had asked three questions. The first asked whether there was anything in the revised guidance that should be amended: 71% thought that there was. The second question asked whether there was anything that should be added to the revised guidance: 83% thought there was. The third question asked for suggestions for further links or resources to be added: 52% thought there were. As this piece of statutory guidance cuts across many government policies, in line with government policy, it does not replicate advice or guidance that is published elsewhere to restrict the length of the guidance and ensure that future updates are effective. A number of suggested amendments/additions have therefore not been included for this reason but the Department has added links to the relevant guidance wherever appropriate. Nonetheless, the guidance has been expanded significantly in response to a number of requests (both before and after the public consultation period) to provide additional guidance on a range of issues.

Department or agency: Department for Education

Coverage: England

Document type: Consultation document outcome response

This response published: Wednesday 1 November 2017

The original consultation ran from 3 March to 17 March 2017

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/care-of-unaccompanied-and-trafficked-children#history>

Sexual harassment in schools

The chairman of the Women and Equalities Committee, Maria Miller (Con, Basingstoke) introduced a debate on the *Third Report of the Women and Equalities Committee, Session 2016-17, on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence in Schools*, HC 91, published on 13 September 2016, which recognised that peer-on-peer sexual abuse was a significant issue affecting a large number of children and young people in schools, particularly girls. (House of Commons, debate, 2 November 2017.)

She pointed out that the Committee had found that data collection on instances of such abuse was inadequate and that too often schools had failed to recognise, record and report sexual harassment and sexual violence. The Committee had called on the Government to ensure that revised, specific guidance for schools on preventing and responding to sexual harassment and sexual violence was put in place before the end of the current academic year. While the scale of the problem among children in schools had been set out by the Committee over a year ago, the new evidence that had triggered the Committee's desire to call for another debate had been collected by the BBC programme *Panorama* from 38 police forces.

Ms Miller explained that in October the police data had shown a 71% increase in peer-on-peer abuse in schools over the last three years and more than 7,800 cases had been reported in 2016 alone. She added that the evidence suggested that the levels of sexual harassment in schools continued through to universities and into the workplace. Ms Miller pointed out that more than two thirds of female students had reported being victims of sexual harassment at university and the most recent data on sexual harassment in the workplace, from BBC Radio 5 Live through a ComRes poll, had revealed that more than half of women had experienced sexual harassment at work or in school. Data showed that three quarters of the reports that had been made to the police about children abusing other children at school had led to no further action at all. Children had said that sexual assaults and harassment were written off by some teaching staff as just banter, despite the safeguarding responsibilities that were already in place.

She pointed out that the point of the debate was to check what progress the Government was making in responding to the Select Committee report, which was well over a year old. Ms Miller thought that in the light of new evidence from Girlguiding and *Panorama*, the situation had not improved. The Select Committee report had advocated a whole-school approach to creating a culture of respect and responsibility; that all incidents should be recorded and reported, and that they should be looked at in detail by Ofsted; that sex and relationship education should be compulsory for all school-age children; and that the guidance given to schools should be urgently updated. She argued that parents needed to be aware of the consequences of putting their children online, and age restrictions should be considered on tablets and smartphones. Ms Miller said that while she applauded the Government's work on restricting underage people's access to pornography sites and encouraging parental blocks, as fast as the Government could implement their plans, a way around them would be found. She added that "Unblock in school" advertises to children a product called X-VPN, which allowed access to blocked sites when at school. Ms Miller argued that as multinational corporations generating significant profits in the UK were causing harm to children, levies should be introduced to ensure that they paid for the harm they were doing.

Jess Phillips (Lab, Birmingham Yardley) said that the Committee had heard from parents whose children had been left in the same classroom as their perpetrator. She stressed that the complaint was not just about how harrowing that was, but the fact that there had been no guidance and no process to tell people what to do. Ms Phillips argued that getting SRE right did not need to take the length of time that had been proposed. It already existed in schools, but it was patchy. She pointed out that the advisory group on sexual violence and sexual harassment, which the Government had got on board to help with SRE, did not have any sexual violence academics, frontline specialists, or sexual violence organisations working on it.

John Mann (Lab, Bassetlaw) said that there was much ignorance about the scale of the problem, which had been made worse by social media, by the extent of exposure to it and the fact that people were being exposed to things that they had not been exposed to before. The fact was that an epidemic of abusive sexual photographs of girls was being circulated on a daily basis around schools. He added that

schools and teachers had no idea what to do about the problem as they had not been trained, and Ofsted had no criteria for dealing with it. Even if all of that had been in place, the law in relation to the social media companies in the country needed to be fundamentally changed. He called for the exemption from publishers' liability to be removed, because if the system had been breached, it would allow people or organisations to take legal action, exactly as they could in the print media. Mr Mann argued that the exemption, which had come from the United States at the beginning of the internet industry, was fundamental to the UK's ability to do something about social media, because people across the world had been left powerless. He added that making training on understanding consent should be made compulsory in universities, schools and in education for 16 to 18-year-olds, particularly in sports academies.

Stella Creasy (Lab/Co-op, Walthamstow) said that there had been an opportunity to deal with the issue in the Bill that had become the Children and Social Work Act 2017 when the Committee had highlighted the need to make sure that the guidance was updated on what schools should do if they had reports of sexual harassment and abuse. She urged the minister to fast-track the necessary legislation through a Statutory Instrument Committee.

Layla Moran (LDP, Oxford West and Abingdon) said that she agreed with the Committee's sensible recommendations on improving child safeguarding, which included rewriting the Government guidance and allowing Ofsted to inspect how well schools were dealing with sexual harassment. But while the measures were necessary to protect children from abuse, they would not address how to prevent people from being abusive in the first place. Ms Moran especially endorsed the report's recommendation that all children must be given personal, social and health education that would include sex and relationships.

Alison Thewliss (SNP, Glasgow Central) pointed out that the Scottish Parliament Equalities and Human Rights Committee, under the chairmanship of Christina McKelvie MSP, had produced a similar report in July, on prejudice-based bullying and the harassment of children and young people in schools. The report had addressed a lot of similar issues. Ms Thewliss said that what she had noted from both reports had been the issue of the prevention of misogynistic behaviour, which was not just a matter for girls or for boys. She argued that the whole school community should be involved in considering the issues that were driving sexism in society. Rape Crisis Scotland, in its evidence to the Scottish Committee, had talked about the focus schools often had on how girls were supposed to dress or act in a particular way, and how they should not feel pressurised to engage in sexting and so on, when it should be the other way around. She argued that girls should not be pressured or made to feel that what they wore had anything to do with other people's behaviour towards them. Ms Thewliss said that the Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016, which had come into force in July, had made it a criminal offence, with a sentence of up to five years' imprisonment, to disclose, or threaten to disclose, an intimate photograph or film. She said that in Scotland, teachers had been at the forefront of campaigning and she commended the report by the Educational Institute of Scotland, *Get it Right for Girls*, which challenged misogynistic behaviour in schools, which covered everything from physical attacks down to the language used in schools.

The Minister for Women, Anne Milton (Con, Guildford) said that in terms of whether the law was clear and if teachers understood it, she argued that even when people understood the law and what they were required to do, they still needed training in how to do it. She confirmed that while there would be more directive guidance, in some ways action would need to be taken on a case-by-case basis. Although teachers could not be the arbiter, schools would have to recognise that a referral of a serious sexual assault to the police was not the end of the matter. Relationship education in primary schools and relationship and sex education in secondary schools had been made compulsory by the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the Act had also provided powers to make PSHE mandatory in schools, subject to consultation, which was ongoing. Ms Milton added that the Government would develop new statutory guidance on RSE, and the aim was to ensure that draft regulations and guidance would be published in 2018.

In terms of RSE, high-quality training must include an understanding of power in relationships and among peers, and how it could be used in a sexual nature to force young people to submit. The minister pointed out that *Working Together to Safeguard Children* was the definitive piece of statutory guidance on safeguarding as it clarified the legislative requirements on local authorities, children's social care, health services, the police, schools, and other organisations that worked with children and families. She added that inadequate safeguarding was one of the few reasons why Ofsted could rate a school as inadequate, irrespective of other good performance. The motion to take note of the report was agreed.

Children in temporary accommodation and family hubs

Gavin Shuker (Lab/Co-op, Luton South), Ruth Cadbury (Lab, Brentford and Isleworth) and Sarah Jones (Lab, Croydon Central) asked the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what recent estimate he had made of the number of children in temporary accommodation. (House of Commons, oral questions to the Department for Communities and Local Government, 30 October 2017.)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Communities and Local Government, Marcus Jones (Con, Nuneaton) did not answer the question. Mr Shuker asked why there were more than 120,000 children in temporary accommodation, which was a 66% increase since the Conservative's had been in government. Mr Jones argued that the number of children in temporary accommodation was below the peak in 2006. He added that the Government had put £402 million into the flexible homelessness support grant over the next two years to enable local areas to plan strategically to reduce the number of people in temporary accommodation.

Ruth Cadbury pointed out that three and a half billion pounds had been spent on temporary accommodation in the private sector in the past five years. She argued that the money could have been better spent on building and letting council homes as the rent would be less than half that of expensive, poor-quality, temporary accommodation. Mr Jones said that that had been why he had introduced the flexible homelessness support grant and why £402 million would be devolved to local authorities over the next two years. Sarah Jones pointed out that the number of families in temporary accommodation in Croydon had doubled in seven years. She added that currently, two thirds of families in Croydon in local authority housing were in debt and at risk of eviction directly because of universal credit.

Mr Jones claimed that the latest available figures showed that the number of people in temporary accommodation in Croydon was falling. He pointed out that the Government had given £1 million to Croydon for the homelessness prevention trailblazer that it had put in for and £870 million had also been given in discretionary housing payments to help people who had short-term difficulty in sustaining their accommodation. Peter Bone (Con, Wellingborough) pointed out that while child victims of human trafficking were the responsibility of local government, adult victims of human trafficking were dealt with nationally. He suggested that child victims of human trafficking should be looked after nationally, which would free up the money for local government to look after other children. Mr Jones said that the issue was being considered very carefully, particularly in the run up to the local government finance settlement.

Family Hubs

Edward Leigh (Con, Gainsborough) asked what steps were being taken to encourage local authorities to work with voluntary and private sector partners to establish family hubs. Marcus Jones (Con, Nuneaton) replied that local government and its partners understood the needs of their communities best, and therefore they should be the ones to determine how they provided services for families. Edward Leigh argued that family hubs could be an essential part of the solution, to improving the lives of children up to the age of 18, and he suggested that more local areas should upgrade their children's centres to family hubs. Mr Jones said that although it was ultimately up to councils to decide on the best solution for their area, it was important for the whole family to have access to the right services to meet their needs.

Siobhain McDonagh (Lab, Mitcham and Morden) pointed out that, of the 120,000 children in temporary accommodation across 77,240 families, 28% were housed in boroughs other than their own, but the receiving boroughs often had no idea that many of the children were vulnerable. She urged the minister to consider providing family hubs at large-scale temporary accommodation centres outside home boroughs. Mr Jones said that when people were moved to a neighbouring or different borough, the receiving borough should be informed and support should be given to the families.

Lucy Powell (Lab/Co-op, Manchester Central) argued that the support of the local authority was critical to family hubs, but the "slash and burn approach" to early intervention moneys was putting children's lives at risk. Mr Jones insisted that the Government was committed to early intervention.

Olympic sports and GCSE PE

Anna Soubry (Con, Broxtowe) introduced a debate on Olympic sports and accepted GCSE PE activities. She pointed out that for several years Governments had had a policy of encouraging young people who had elite status over the course of their development so that they could achieve the very highest recognition, in the Olympic games.

Ms Soubry stressed the importance of providing such young people with the training, expertise, aspiration, coaching that they required to achieve at the highest level. She said that while a review of the accepted activities would take place in 2018, young people across England and Wales would be seriously discriminated against because of the arbitrary list. Ms Soubry pointed out that sports such as judo, in which the country had done so well at the Olympics, had been taken off the list.

The Minister for Children and Families, Robert Goodwill (Con, Scarborough and Whitby) said that although not all Olympic sports were included in the PE GCSE activity list, their inclusion or non-inclusion did not represent a view on the legitimacy or value of the activity. The minister added that for PE, the subject content had been revised to address comments that the current GCSE and A-level had not been of comparable rigour to other subjects, that they did not provide suitable progression and that they had led to inequalities in assessment. He said that as part of the revisions, awarding organisations had proposed revising the list of activities that could be assessed in the practical element of the course to ensure that all the activities reflected Ofqual's principles and that non-exam assessment should ensure sound assessment practice, be manageable and ensure that a qualification was not easily distorted.

Mr Goodwill pointed out that in determining which activities should be included in the list, awarding organisations had considered the range and demand of skills and techniques in the activity; the application of tactics and strategy in the activity; the ability to develop skills over a significant time; whether there were suitable conditions in which to perform; and whether the level of performance could realistically be assessed by PE practitioners, which was probably the key point of the debate. Anna Soubry said that as well as judo, fencing, pentathlon, sailing, shooting, archery and many other Olympic sports had also been removed from the list. Mr Goodwill said that the feedback from the awarding organisations had been that, in some cases, the proficiency had not been available across the country to assess some of the sports. He argued that when applicants put in for a GCSE exam, they may not necessarily all be of Olympic standard, and it was important for assessments to be made across the ability range in the sports. The minister added that having discussed the issue with the Under-Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, it had been agreed that it would simply not be practical for every sport to be assessed as part of GCSE PE. But he added that the Government would review the activity list in autumn 2018, following the first examinations in summer 2018.

Horizon 2020 and Erasmus + programmes

Catherine West (Lab, Hornsey and Wood Green) asked what steps had been taken to maintain UK access to the Horizon 2020 programme and the Erasmus+ programme after the UK leaves the EU. (House of Commons, oral questions to the Department for Exiting the EU, 2 November 2017.) The Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Exiting the European Union, Robin Walker (Con, Worcester), said that the Government would like to continue working with the EU on ways to promote the long-term economic development of the continent, which would include continuing to take part in specific programmes that were greatly to the UK's and EU's joint advantage, such as those promoting science, education and culture, which would be a matter for the negotiations.

Catherine West asked why the Secretary of State had not engaged on the issue with more energy with the Commission. She asked whether there would be a commitment to funding UK researchers as third-country participants, if access was not maintained. Mr Walker said that the Government had published a paper with regard to the issues which had set out the intention, including "a very open offer" to the EU to discuss the issues.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

Baroness Walmsley (LDP) asked the Government what action it was taking to ensure that children and young people could obtain timely access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. (House of Lords, oral question debate, 30 October 2017.) The Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Department of Health, Lord O'Shaughnessy (Con) said that since publishing *Future in Mind*, the Government had made an additional £1.4 billion available to improve children's mental health.

Key mechanisms for delivery, he said, were local transformation plans, which covered the full spectrum of mental health, and the upcoming children and young people's mental health Green Paper, which would contain proposals for further improving access to services. Baroness Walmsley pointed out that the number of CAMHS psychiatrists had fallen by 6.6% between 2013 and the current year, while demand for their services had risen. She added that the number of qualified doctors who went into psychiatry was 2.6%, which was the lowest of any specialism, and some universities did not send any. Lord O'Shaughnessy said that Health Education England had announced that there would be 21,000 more mental health staff by 2021, of which 13,000 would be qualified clinical staff, including 700 more doctors.

Baroness Pitkeathley (Lab) said that while there had been high hopes of specific action on mental health for young carers in the refreshed carers strategy, it was being rolled up into the consultation on the social care Green Paper. She asked the minister how he would ensure that the mental health needs of young carers were urgently addressed. Lord O'Shaughnessy said that in the upcoming Green Paper on children and young people's mental health, there would be an expansion of some of the work that had already gone on providing mental health first aid and various other things in schools, which would capture some of the young people that Baroness Pitkeathley had been talking about.

“The Archbishop of Canterbury (Ind) argued that one of the major failures in CAMHS had been that, because of the shortage of resources, only those with the most critical needs were being treated at all...”

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Ind) argued that one of the major failures in CAMHS had been that, because of the shortage of resources, only those with the most critical needs were being treated at all, and the early intervention which would help prevent needs becoming critical had been deeply neglected owing to an absence or lack of specialised therapies, particularly talking therapies. Lord O'Shaughnessy said that the additional funding that was being provided was helping with the rollout of the children and young people's talking therapies. He explained that the intention of the extra funding was to be able to treat 70,000 more young people, on top of those who had already been treated, by 2021, which would increase the 25% of the potential caseload that was currently dealt with to 35%.

Lord Farmer (Con) asked the minister what the Government was doing in relation to preventing children's mental health problems by addressing parental conflict and family breakdown. Lord O'Shaughnessy said that the Green Paper would look at the role of family conflicts. He added that the Department for Work and Pensions was launching a programme to reduce parental conflict in conjunction with the Early Intervention Foundation.

Lord Brooke of Alverthorpe (Lab) argued that there was a wide variation in the offering of services between one geographical location and another. Lord O'Shaughnessy pointed out that the recent CQC thematic review on mental health provision had shown that 80% of specialist in-patient care was good or outstanding but that that was true of only two-thirds of community care provision, as around a third either required improvement or it was inadequate. He said that the best way of improving the situation would be to expand both the number of children being treated and the size and quality of the workforce.

Baroness Jolly (LDP, Life) pointed out that English CAMHS was struggling to satisfy the rapidly growing demand of referrals. She added that within the past decade, 68% of admissions into hospital because of self-harm had been girls under the age of 17. Lord O'Shaughnessy said that NICE had produced guidelines on self-harm and its treatment and there would be a new care pathway by 2019.

Strengthening families

Lord Farmer (Con) moved that the House of Lords should take note of *A Manifesto to Strengthen Families*, which had been published on 6 September by a group of Conservative parliamentarians. (House of Lords, Motion to Take Note, 3 November 2017.) He pointed out that the manifesto highlighted the fact that parental conflict devastated a child's emotional world and it was a cause of mental ill-health, even if it manifested itself not in violence or verbal aggression but in a pervasive and permanent atmosphere of coldness, indifference and hostility.

Lord Farmer argued that couple counselling should be available through children and young people's mental health services if parental conflict lay behind children's mental illness. He cited research by Amato and Booth, which had showed that low-conflict divorces could be as harmful to children as high-conflict but stable relationships. Lord Farmer added that the UK had one of the highest divorce and separation rates in the OECD and one of the highest rates of children growing up without both birth parents. The cost of family breakdown had been set at around £50 billion per annum, but many indirect costs accrued to every department of government.

Lord Nash (Con), who had recently retired as an education minister, said that he strongly supported any initiative that could help to deal with the impact of parental conflict on children and he welcomed the manifesto. He added that he was particularly attracted to the idea of family hubs and he hoped that the Government would consider piloting at least some of them.

Lord Parekh (Lab) pointed out that by the age of five, around half the children in low-income families had seen matrimonial breakdown. But he questioned what kind of family the report was talking about, as there was one structure of family among Afro-Caribbeans, another among the south Asians and a third among the white community. Lord Parekh noted that in the manifesto, the ethnic-minority family was virtually absent. He added that the other difficulty was that the report had talked about strengthening families, when in many cases, for the south Asian family it was not a question of strengthening the family bond but of it being too strong. Lord Parekh pointed out that there were occasions where children were very deeply bonded to their parents and unable to exercise autonomy and independence, especially girls.

Baroness Eaton (Con) cited research from King's College which had suggested that 13 months separation within a three-year period was likely to damage a romantic relationship. She pointed out that the Armed Forces families regularly deployed for much longer periods and therefore family hubs, as suggested in the manifesto, would offer support to Armed Forces families who had chosen to settle in the community rather than live close to a base. Baroness Eaton added that accessible parenting support that recognised the particular challenges of service families would be especially welcome, as the deploying or weekendend parent could struggle to maintain an effective parenting relationship.

The Earl of Kinnoull (CB) said that as the effects of policy interventions, good and bad, became truly visible only many years after they had been made, it was disastrous to chop and change policy every few years. He added that while the House rightly concentrated regularly on those in society who were at a disadvantage, the Government's efforts in the policy area must not forget the importance of supporting and bolstering families that were in good shape.

Baroness Walmsley (LDP) said that there were so many policy areas that could be improved to redress the magnitude of family breakdown in the country that it was difficult to know where to start. But she highlighted adoptive families, the benefits of family hubs, what could be done to keep offenders in touch with their families to reduce reoffending and the importance of teaching children about relationships in school. Baroness Walmsley said that Adoption UK believed that a quarter of all adoptive parents were in crisis and in need of professional help to keep the family together.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Department for Education, Lord Agnew of Oulton (Con) said that because a vital component of good education and social mobility was good parenting, he wholeheartedly supported the premise of the debate. The Department for Work and Pensions would be launching a new reducing parental conflict programme to help local areas improve their support for families, which would be available to families whether parents were together or separated. The Government wanted to ensure that all pupils were taught about healthy and respectful relationships, including the core knowledge that all children needed to form safe and positive relationships.

The following written questions were answered in Parliament last week.

House of Commons

Department for Education

Academies: Finance

Angela Rayner: [109402] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether her Department or any of its agencies hold reports that raise concerns on the financial situation in multi-academy trusts; and if she will make a statement.

Angela Rayner: [109403] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department takes upon discovering concerns about the governance and financial management of multi-academy trusts; and if she will make a statement.

Robert Goodwill: The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) periodically visit academy trusts to assess their financial management and governance arrangements; this includes multi-academy trusts reviews. We do not routinely publish these assurance reports. Where a concern is identified, ESFA will respond proportionate to the severity of the risk, taking into account the scale and nature of the issue, and any local circumstances. Where there are significant concerns about financial management or governance in an academy trust, ESFA may visit the trust to investigate and/or issue, and publish, a Financial Notice to Improve, available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/academies-financial-notice-to-improve>. The trust must comply with the terms of a Financial Notice to Improve; failure to comply will be deemed a breach of the funding agreement.

Monday 30 October 2017

Academies: Headteachers

Helen Jones: [109561] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what information her Department holds on the (a) number and (b) amounts of settlements paid to head teachers leaving schools in multi-academy trusts in the last 12 months.

Robert Goodwill: Information on staff settlements is disclosed and published by academy trusts in their audited financial statements. Academy trust information for year ending 31 August 2016 is included in the Sector Annual Report and Accounts (SARA), which was published on the 26 October 2017 and available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academiesconsolidated-annual-report-and-accounts-2015-to-2016>. Information for the year ending 31 August 2017 will be disclosed by academy trusts in their financial statements in January 2018. Academy trusts must obtain approval from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and HM Treasury in advance for any non-statutory / non-contractual staff severance payments of £50,000 or more; and ESFA approval where a Financial Notice to Improve is in force. For the 12 months to September 2017 there were two payments of £23,025.50 and £62,235.50.

Monday 30 October 2017

Alternative Education

Darren Jones: [109024] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the legal basis is for her Department's collection of data on pregnancy, health and mental health from January 2018 to inform the Alternative Provision Census.

Robert Goodwill: The Education (Information About Children in Alternative Provision) (England) Regulations 2007, made in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 537A and 537B of the Education Act 1996 provide the statutory basis for the collection of data about children in alternative provision.

Monday 30 October 2017

Apprentices

Gordon Marsden: [109668] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether she plans to appoint further ambassadors for the apprentice ambassador programme on a cross-party basis.

Robert Goodwill: The apprenticeship ambassadors have been selected for their enthusiasm and ability to drive support for the apprenticeship programme. The Apprenticeship Ambassadors that have been appointed will work with all MPs in England to champion the opportunities and benefits that apprenticeships can offer and promote the programme to employers, young people, schools and other key partners. If any further MP Apprenticeship Ambassadors are to be appointed, MPs from all parties will be considered in light of their support for the apprenticeships programme. Future appointments will be announced as and when they are made.

Monday 30 October 2017

Breakfast Clubs: Finance

Angela Rayner: [109689] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, further to her Department's publication on an open process to provide breakfast clubs in schools, how much of the funding from this process is additional to the ring-fenced revenue from the Soft Drinks Industry Levy in schools.

Angela Rayner: [109743] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to her Oral Statement of 17 July 2017, Official Report, columns 563 to 566, on schools update, whether the £10 million ringfenced from the soft drinks industry levy revenue to provide breakfast clubs will be affected by changes to the funding levels available through the healthy pupils capital budget.

Robert Goodwill: We announced within the Childhood Obesity Plan in August 2016 that we would launch a breakfast club programme using funds solely from the Soft Drinks Industry Levy. We published an invitation to tender on the 16 October 2017 indicating that we are investing £26 million from the levy over the next three years to expand breakfast club provision. We have also invested £100 million from the Soft Drinks Industry Levy in the healthy pupils capital fund to facilitate an improvement in children's physical and mental health by increasing and improving access to and use of relevant facilities, such as kitchens, dining facilities, changing rooms and sports facilities.

Monday 30 October 2017

Pupils: Personal Records

Caroline Lucas: [108863] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether pupil nationality data is used to match pupil or family records in order to process data requests by the Home Office, for purposes including immigration enforcement as part of the ongoing monthly data transfers to the Home Office; and if she will make a statement.

Caroline Lucas: [108864] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will place in the Library a copy of any current Memorandum of Understanding between her Department and the Home Office on the use or sharing of pupil data.

Nick Gibb: The National Pupil Database (NPD) is a longitudinal research database that provides evidence on educational performance to inform independent research, as well as studies commissioned by the Department. The Department may legally share the NPD (or elements of it) with third parties, using powers set out in Section 537A of the Education Act 1997 and the Education (Individual Pupil Information) (Prescribed Persons) (England) Regulations 2009. Organisations requesting access under those powers must show how it will be used to promote pupils' education, through evidence or research. In addition to the provisions within the Education Act 1997, in line with the Data Protection Act 1998, where the police or Home Office have clear evidence that a child may be at risk or evidence of criminal activity, limited data including a pupil's address and school details may be requested from the NPD. It is right that we share this data if it helps to keep a child safe from harm or to disrupt a crime. This data does not include nationality or country of birth information. These data items are not processed into the NPD. Thus they are not used in any matching work associated with provision of data to the Home Office. The current Memorandum of Understanding between the Department and the Home Office is in the House Library.

Monday 30 October 2017

Schools: Vocational Guidance

Gordon Marsden: [109667] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 19 October 2017 to Question 107822, what steps she is taking to ensure that schools meet more than two Gatsby benchmarks of good practice in careers education, information, advice and guidance.

Robert Goodwill: The careers strategy will include proposals to improve the quality and coverage of careers advice in schools. These proposals will be informed by evidence regarding what works. The Gatsby benchmarks are based on the best national and international research and define excellence in careers provision. A two-year pilot of the Gatsby benchmarks in the North East has demonstrated that significant improvements can be made.

Monday 30 October 2017

Sex and Relationship Education

Stella Creasy: [109340] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Written Statement of 1 March 2017, Sex and Relationships Education, HCWS 509, and pursuant to the Answer of 11 July 2017 to Question 2526, what the (a) timetable and (b) planned commencement date is for the consultation on the provision of relationships education.

Nick Gibb: We want to help all schools to deliver high-quality Relationships Education, Relationships and

Sex Education (RSE) and Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education so that all young people are equipped to have healthy and respectful relationships, and leave school with the knowledge to prepare them for adult life. The Department remains fully committed to conducting thorough and wide-ranging engagement with stakeholders, which will help us to reach evidence-based decisions on the content of the regulations and statutory guidance, as well as on the status of PSHE. We will set out shortly more details about the engagement process, the timetable and the work to consider age-appropriate subject content. We will consult on draft regulations and guidance and the regulations will then be laid in the House allowing for a full and considered debate. We are working towards schools teaching the new subjects from September 2019.

Monday 30 October 2017

Supply Teachers: Conditions of Employment

Theresa Villiers: [109278] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when she last met representatives of supply teachers to discuss their concerns about insecure working practices.

Theresa Villiers: [109408] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Taylor Review of modern working practices, published in July 2017, what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to improve the working practices in the supply teaching profession. Nick Gibb: The Department regularly meets with teaching unions who represent the views of their members, which include supply teachers. The last meeting my department held to specifically discuss supply teacher working practices was in October 2017. The Department is aware of concerns about insecure working practices for supply teachers, in particular relating to practices of some supply teacher agencies. The Department is in the planning phase of a new commercial framework for schools that use supply agencies. The Department will discuss these proposals with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, particularly in relation to the Taylor Review of modern working practices.

Monday 30 October 2017

Adult Education: Finance

Ian Austin: [109944] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the adult education budget is in each region of England for the current financial year.

Anne Milton: The Adult Education Budget (AEB) is not allocated to specific regions. The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) allocates AEB to individual providers, who under the current freedoms and flexibility policy are able to use their funds to support any English learner. The published allocations can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sfa-funding-allocations-to-trainingproviders-2016-to-2017>.

Tuesday 31 October 2017

Education: Finance

Jim Cunningham: [109845] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent discussions she has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on funding education for 16 to 19-year olds.

Anne Milton: The Secretary of State has regular discussions with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on funding for all aspects of her Department's responsibilities, including education for 16 to 19-year olds. Long term funding decisions are made as part of government's Spending Review process; the current Spending Review period extends up to and including 2019-2020.

Tuesday 31 October 2017

Institute for Apprenticeships

Gordon Marsden: [109924] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many apprentices are currently employed by the Institute for Apprenticeships.

Anne Milton: The Institute for Apprenticeships is an independent body with responsibility for the development and approval of apprenticeship standards. I have therefore asked the Institute to write to the Rt hon. Member for Blackpool South directly responding to the question about apprentices currently employed by the Institute for Apprenticeships. A copy of that response will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses when it is available.

Tuesday 31 October 2017

Offences against Children

Alex Burghart: [108953] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when she plans to publish her response to the consultation on mandatory reporting and acting on child abuse and neglect.

Robert Goodwill: The consultation 'Reporting and acting on child abuse and neglect' sought views on the advisability, risk, nature and scope of a mandatory duty to report child abuse and neglect and an alternative duty focused on taking appropriate action, as well as the effects of embedding current government reforms. The government has committed to laying a report before Parliament on the outcome of the consultation. Submissions are being considered and a government response will be published in due course. Just as it was right to consider in depth the evidence around these questions, it is important that we apply equally careful consideration to formulating our response in such a complex policy area, with such vitally important implications for the safety and welfare of children.

Tuesday 31 October 2017

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education

Liz Twist: [109098] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the timetable is for a decision on the mandatory introduction of personal, social, health and economic education for schools in England.

Nick Gibb: We want to help all schools to deliver high-quality Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education so that all young people are equipped to have healthy and respectful relationships, and leave school with the knowledge to prepare them for adult life. The Children and Social Work Act places a duty on the Secretary of State to make Relationships Education mandatory in primary schools and RSE mandatory in secondary schools through regulations. The Act also provided the Secretary of State with a power to make PSHE mandatory in all schools.

The Department intends to conduct thorough and wide-ranging engagement with stakeholders, which will help us to reach an evidence-based decision on PSHE, as well as to determine the content of the regulations and statutory guidance. We will set out shortly more details about the engagement process, the timetable and the work to consider age-appropriate subject content. We will consult on draft regulations and guidance and the regulations will then be laid in the House allowing for a full and considered debate. We are working towards schools teaching the new subjects from September 2019.

Tuesday 31 October 2017

Physical Education: GCE A-level

Vernon Coaker: [109942] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will reverse the decision not to include speed skating as an option available in A-level PE for the current academic year.

Vernon Coaker: [109945] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, for what reasons speed skating was not included as one of the options available in A-level PE courses for the current academic year.

Robert Goodwill: The subject content for GCSE and A-level PE was revised in 2015 to address concerns that the previous GCSE and A level courses were not of comparable rigor to other subjects, did not provide suitable progression and had led to inequalities in assessment. As part of these revisions, the activity list was reviewed to ensure that all activities could be assessed reliably, were of comparable demand amongst pupils, and were manageable for schools to assess. The inclusion or non-inclusion of sports does not represent a view on the legitimacy or value of the activity. The government will review the activity list in autumn 2018, following the first examinations next summer. We will agree this process with the exam boards and announce details closer to the time.

Tuesday 31 October 2017

Universities: Mental Health Services

Jim Shannon: [109171] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to address mental health problems within universities.

Joseph Johnson: Mental health is a priority for this Government. This is why the Department for Health, together with the Department for Education (DfE), is publishing a joint green paper on Children and Young People, which will set out plans to transform specialist services and support in education settings and for families. As autonomous organisations, it is for Higher Education Institutions to determine what welfare and counselling services they need to provide to their students. Each institution will be best placed to identify the needs of their particular student body, including taking actions in line with any legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. The DfE is engaging with Universities UK (UUK) on their ongoing programme of work on Mental Health in Higher Education (MHHE). As part of UUK's MMHE Programme, UUK launched their Step Change programme on 4 September, which encourages higher education leaders to adopt mental health as a strategic imperative and implement a whole institution approach. Additionally, as part of MHHE, UUK has worked in partnership with the Institute for Public Policy Research to strengthen the evidence-base on mental health in higher education. Their independent report – 'Not by Degrees: Improving student mental health in the UK's universities' was published on 4 September 2017 - <https://ippr.org/research/publications/not-by-degrees>.

Tuesday 31 October 2017

English language and Mathematics: Standards

Ian Austin: [109951] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what 50 institutions or providers have the best post-16 catch-up rates in (a) English and (b) mathematics in England; and in which local authority area each of those institutions and providers are located.

Anne Milton: The request has been interpreted as students who are included in the English and maths progress measure. This reports on students who did not achieve A*-C at GCSE or equivalent in English and maths by the end of key stage 4. These students are required to continue studying GCSE English and maths, or other equivalent qualifications from 16 to 18. The measure shows how much progress students have made by looking at the average change in grade. The latest information available for the academic year 2015/16 is published in the data tables for 'All schools and colleges in England' on the 16-18 performance tables'

[1]. The English and maths progress measure can be found in the '16 to 18 performance' section. The underlying data for both institution level and local council can be found in the 'Download data for all of England or a local authority'[2].

[1] The 2015/16 performance tables and English and maths progress scores can be found here <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/schools-bytype?step=phase&geographic=all®ion=0&phase=16to18&for=16to18&basedon=%20English%20and%20maths>.

[2] The underlying data for 16-18 performance tables can be found here <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/downloaddata?currentstep=datatypes®iontype=all&la=0&downloadYear=2015-2016&datatypes=ks5>.

Wednesday 1 November 2017

Pupil Premium

Stephen Timms: [110321] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, which pupils whose parents claim universal credit count towards a school's pupil premium; and if she will make a statement.

Stephen Timms: [110323] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, which categories claimants of universal credit are entitled to claim free school meals for their children; and whether she plans to review that entitlement.

Robert Goodwill: All pupils whose parents are in receipt of universal credit (UC) are currently entitled to free school meals (FSM). This is an interim arrangement during the initial roll-out of UC. All pupils registered for FSM attract pupil premium. The Department for Education is working closely with the Department for Work and Pensions, other Government departments and other interested parties to establish criteria for determining entitlement to benefits-related FSM as the roll-out progresses. No decision has been taken yet, and our proposals on this matter will be announced in due course.

Thursday 2 November 2017

Pupils: Health

Lyn Brown: [110230] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to her Department's guidance, entitled Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, published in December 2015, what the scope and timetable for the planned review of that guidance will be.

Robert Goodwill: We know how important it is that children with medical conditions are supported to enjoy a full education. That is why we introduced the duty to require governing bodies to make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions and have provided statutory guidance outlining schools' responsibilities in this area. We keep the statutory guidance under review and will ensure that it continues to set out the arrangements that governing boards are expected to make to support pupils with medical conditions, based on good practice.

Thursday 2 November 2017

Schools: Vocational Guidance

Angela Rayner: [109699] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when her Department plans to launch its careers strategy.

Anne Milton: The Government will publish a careers strategy in the autumn. The strategy will have a clear focus on social mobility and will include proposals to improve the quality and coverage of careers advice in schools and colleges and give people the information they need to access training throughout their working lives.

Thursday 2 November 2017

Science: Teachers

Louise Ellman: [110214] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment her Department has made of the effectiveness of (a) government and (b) other schemes in recruiting science teachers in secondary schools.

Nick Gibb: The Department commissioned an evaluation of four targeted interventions to increase the supply of maths and physics teachers and upskill existing teachers, which were delivered for the first time to participants in 2015/16. The full findings from this research were published at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/maths-and-physics-teacher-supplypackage>. Recruitment in Science, technology, engineering, and maths subjects has historically been challenging but in 2016/17 (the last year for which we have data) we had the highest number of trainees in science and maths since 2011/12. We review our recruitment strategies every year and will continue to evaluate options on how best to incentivise recruitment to the profession. Analysis of past recruitment shows that increasing bursaries in subjects that are difficult to recruit to has a positive influence on recruitment performance.

Thursday 2 November 2017

Young People: Disadvantaged

Gregory Campbell: [110242] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what progress has been made on targeting young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to further their education in the last 10 years.

Robert Goodwill: Educational achievement is at the heart of our commitment to making this a country where everyone has a fair chance to go as far as their talent and hard work will take them. Thanks to our reforms, there are 1.8 million more children in schools rated good or outstanding than in 2010. We

recognise that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds - defined as those currently or formerly in receipt of free school meals and currently or formerly looked after - may face extra barriers to achieving their potential. This is why we introduced the pupil premium in 2011 and have invested over £11bn - almost £2.5bn this year alone – so that schools can provide extra support to disadvantaged pupils of all abilities. We created the early years pupil premium in 2015 so disadvantaged children are better prepared for school and, beyond school, the independent Director of Fair Access has agreed access agreements for 2018/19 which will see universities plan to spend more than £860 million - significantly more than the £404 million in 2009 - on measures to continue to improve access for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers has decreased at both age 11 and age 16 since 2011. This means better prospects for disadvantaged pupils and a more prosperous life as an adult. But we know there is more to do. Our £72 million opportunity areas programme will create opportunities for young people in social mobility ‘cold spots’ and share effective practice across the country to ensure all young people can access the opportunities they deserve. In addition, the Education Endowment Foundation, which we established with a £137 million grant in 2011, is working in hundreds of schools to expand the evidence of what works best to accelerate progress.

Thursday 2 November 2017

Academic Year

Justin Tomlinson: [110644] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will make an assessment of the German model for varying school term dates by region.

Robert Goodwill: We agree that school term dates should not be determined at a national level. We believe that head teachers, school governors and local councils are best placed to set school term and holiday dates in the interests of the pupils and parents at their school. As such, term dates are currently determined locally by schools and local councils. Governing bodies and councils must set dates in line with the requirements of the length of the school year as set out in the Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999. Academy trusts (of academies and free schools) are free to make changes to term and holiday dates. We expect term dates to be arranged in a way that helps pupils to learn and gives them time away from school. While there is no formal process for coordination of term dates, in practice many schools and local councils work together, and with other areas. They do this because of practical constraints such as the timing of examinations and local areas’ desire to minimise any disruption to parents. If schools do decide to change their term dates, they are required to act reasonably; giving parents notice and considering the impact on those affected – including pupils, teachers, the local community and parents’ work commitments and childcare options for both parents and teachers.

Friday 3 November 2017

Academies: Inspections

Angela Rayner: [109665] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether she plans to allow Ofsted to inspect multi-academy trusts.

Robert Goodwill: Ofsted currently makes a valuable contribution to the Department’s understanding of multi academy trust (MAT) performance through focused inspections of schools within the same MAT. The Department is also working with Ofsted to develop new approaches to better scrutinise MATs. We will publish details in due course.

Friday 3 November 2017

Adult Education: Finance

Ian Austin: [109583] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of Adult Community Learning funding has been spent on (a) English, (b) mathematics and (c) ESOL courses in (i) the UK and (ii) London.

Ian Austin: [109584] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many learners funded through the Adult Community Learning budget studied (a) English, (b) mathematics and (c) ESOL courses in (i) the UK and (ii) London in the last 12 months.

Anne Milton: We do not hold information on English, mathematics and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses funded through the Adult Community Learning budget. In addition, since 2016/17 this provision is funded through the Adult Education Budget. Across wider adult education budget lines, data on funded learner participation in English, mathematics and ESOL courses are published for England and London. The latest published adult (19 and over) participation figures for England (provisional full year data for the 2016/17 academic year) are as follows:

- English 536,700
- Mathematics 529,300
- ESOL 114,400 Note: we do not hold data for the UK. The latest published adult (19 and over) participation figures for London (final full year data for the 2015/16 academic year) are as follows:
 - English 88,450
 - Mathematics 75,850
 - ESOL 42,720

Friday 3 November 2017

Department for Education: Brexit

Seema Malhotra: [109532] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether her Department was consulted by the Department for Exiting the European Union on the economic impact assessments conducted for the UK leaving the EU.

Robert Goodwill: The government is carrying out an ongoing programme of comprehensive analytical work that will inform our negotiating position with the EU, to define our deep and special partnership with the EU and inform our understanding of how EU exit will affect the UK's domestic policies and frameworks. The Department for Education is working with officials across government, in close coordination with the Department for Exiting the European Union, to ensure the delivery of a holistic programme of analysis across government.

Friday 3 November 2017

Educational Institutions: Fraud

Ian Austin: [109828] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to prevent private providers operating as bogus colleges.

Anne Milton: Further education (FE) providers receiving public funds are monitored by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and placed on a register for funded organisations. Ofsted only provide inspections for established FE institutions. Individuals wishing to cross-reference a course or provider that is

nationally recognised can visit the National Careers Service website:

<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/course-directory/home>.

The ESFA will investigate complaints of bogus educational institutions. Those concerned about a particular organisation can also register their complaint with the Citizens Advice and Trading Standards.

Friday 3 November 2017

ICT: Teachers

Jim Shannon: [109646] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps the Government is taking to enhance collaboration between the (a) Network of Teaching Excellence in Computer Science and (b) other programmes in England and equivalent computing teacher support programmes in the devolved nations.

Nick Gibb: The Network of Excellence for Computer Science Teaching is a Department funded programme which provides high-quality continuing professional development to existing teachers in England. This programme is contracted to the British Computing Society who have members and local branches across the whole of the UK. Through its management of Computing At Schools, a network of local hubs for computing science teachers across the UK, the British Computing Society ensures that the Network of Excellence is part of a collaborative UK wide network. The Network of Excellence responds to local needs through collaboration with wider programmes such as the STEM learning centre in York, the London mayor's digital programmes, the Raspberry Pi Foundation and Apps for Good.

Friday 3 November 2017

Offences against Children

Louise Haigh: [110566] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when her Department plans to publish its response to the Home Office public consultation, Reporting and acting on child abuse and neglect; and if she will pay particular regard to mandatory reporting and acting on child sexual abuse and neglect in that response.

Robert Goodwill: The consultation 'Reporting and acting on child abuse and neglect' sought views on a mandatory duty to report child abuse and neglect and an alternative duty focused on taking appropriate action, as well as the effects of embedding current government reforms. The consultation was a broad exercise which invited views on a range of different models, including the potential scope of any duty and the types of abuse such a duty might pertain to. Tackling both child sexual abuse and neglect remains a key focus of the government's reforms to create a world class child protection system, where the needs of individual children are identified early and they get the help and support they require as soon as possible to keep them safe. The government has committed to laying a report before Parliament on the outcome of the consultation. Submissions are being considered and a government response will be published in due course. Just as it was right to consider in depth the evidence around these questions, it is important that we apply equally careful consideration to formulating our response in such a complex policy area, with such vitally important implications for the safety and welfare of children.

Friday 3 November 2017

Pupils: Absenteeism

Justin Tomlinson: [110642] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the effect of each day of school missed on a pupil's attainment record.

Robert Goodwill: The latest evidence on the link between pupil absence and attainment at Key Stage 2 (KS2) and Key Stage 4 (KS4) is available in the "Absence and attainment at Key Stages 2 and 4: 2013 to 2014" research report at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/absence-and-attainment-at-key-stages-2-and-4-2013-to-2014>. The analysis of the link between overall absence (and individual reasons for absence) and attainment when taking prior attainment and pupil characteristics into account showed that, for each KS2 and KS4 measure, overall absence had a statistically significant negative link to attainment – i.e. every extra day missed was associated with a lower attainment outcome. Results from the modelling carried out are available in section 4.4.1 of the report.

Justin Tomlinson: [110643] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the merits of allowing parents to take children out of school and on educational visits during term-time.

Robert Goodwill: The government's priority is to reduce overall school absence. The evidence shows that every extra day of school missed can affect a pupil's chances of achieving good GCSEs, which has a lasting effect on their life chances. A pupil who is absent is also liable to interrupt the education of other pupils and to increase the workload on teachers, as schools seek to ensure that absent pupils catch up with work that has been missed. We acknowledge that some parents may wish to take their children out of school for educational visits during term time; however, it would not always be possible to ensure these visits were conducted in support of the curriculum. Such visits would also be very different to excursions arranged by the school, which are conducted in an educational context where pupils are under the supervision and control of teachers, and are required to adhere to school discipline and behaviour policies. Whilst head teachers of maintained schools have the ability to decide when exceptional circumstances allow for a child to be absent; our position is that no child should be taken out of school without good reason.

Friday 3 November 2017

Schools: Finance

Rosena Allin-Khan: [109698] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the change will be in funding to schools from baseline block funding allocation 2015-16 to academic year 2019-20 of the implementation of the National Funding Formula in (a) Tooting constituency, (b) Wandsworth Borough Council, (c) Greater London Authority and (d) the UK in (i) nominal and (ii) real terms.

Nick Gibb: The schools block funding allocation in 2015-16 was £32.2bn for England and £148m for Wandsworth local authority. We have now published full detail of the school and high needs national funding formulae, and the impact they will have for every local authority here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-funding-formula-tables-for-schools-and-high-needs>. In 2019-20 England's schools block allocation would rise to £33.6bn, based on pupil numbers and characteristics from 2017-18. The actual allocation for 2019-20 will be adjusted to take account of more recent pupil number and characteristic data. On the same basis, Wandsworth would receive £155m and Tooting would receive £61.2m. We do not allocate funding on a regional basis so we do not calculate statistics for the Greater London Authority. The independent Institute for Fiscal Studies have said, the additional £1.3 billion we are investing in schools funding means that overall funding per pupil across the country will now be maintained in real terms up to 2020. We do not calculate real terms funding estimates at a local level.

Friday 3 November 2017

Schools: Fire Extinguishers

Royston Smith: [109693] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of making it compulsory for all schools to have sprinklers installed.

Nick Gibb: The Government takes the safety of pupils and teachers very seriously. All schools have to follow strict fire safety regulations, including having a Fire Risk Assessment, designed to ensure they are as safe as possible and well prepared in the event of a fire. All new school building projects must comply with Building Regulations, including on fire safety, and this is independently certified by Building Control or an Approved Inspector before buildings are occupied. Where sprinklers are deemed necessary to keep pupils and staff safe, following an assessment of risk at the design stage, or to meet local planning requirements, they should be fitted. Following the tragic Grenfell fire, the government has launched a Public Inquiry and an independent review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety. Alongside the rest of Government, we will take forward any relevant recommendations.

Friday 3 November 2017

Vocational Education: Reviews

Gordon Marsden: [110700] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to her Department's press release of 31 October 2017, when she plans to release further details of the review of higher-level technical education.

Anne Milton: This policy review looks across Levels 4 and 5 in education, focusing on how technical qualifications can better address the needs of learners and employers. It will enable the Government to produce a clear programme for T-Level students and set out their progression into higher education. Following the review, the Government will implement its commitments set out within the Skills Plan. We will continue consulting with employers, providers and other experts to ensure learners develop the knowledge they need for skilled employment or for further technical study.

Friday 3 November 2017

Department of Health

Female Genital Mutilation

Laura Smith: [108937] To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent steps he has taken to ensure that data on cases of FGM are collected and made public.

Jackie Doyle-Price: The Department's Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Prevention Programme with NHS England introduced the first ever FGM data collection across the National Health Service, published quarterly by NHS Digital as an official statistic on the NHS Digital website. The data is collected by healthcare providers in England including acute hospital providers, mental health providers and general practitioner practices. It mandates clinicians to record patient demographic data, specific FGM information, referral and treatment information. The information is being collected to gain a clearer national picture of the prevalence of FGM and to deepen the health sector's understanding of the practice. It is also used to inform how NHS England and other sectors provide services for women and girls with FGM, and to indicate national trends. To improve rates of compliance with the enhanced dataset, NHS Digital analyse the reports to follow up with trusts who are not submitting data, to improve the completeness of the collection. NHS

Digital also issued a Data Provision Notice on 25 November under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to communicate more clearly the requirement to comply with the dataset and set out its benefits. In addition, we continue to work with the Royal Colleges of General Practitioners, the British Medical Association and others to further improve compliance.

Tuesday 31 October 2017

Medicine: Education

Cat Smith: [108956] To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the recommendations of the Mental Health Workforce Plan, published by Health Education England in July 2017, whether his Department plans to allocate additional medical student places to medical schools which have demonstrated a proven track record in producing psychiatrists.

Philip Dunne: On 3 October 2017, the Higher Education Funding Council for England and Health Education England invited universities to bid for 1,000 additional medical school places available from September 2019. This is part of a historic expansion announced by my Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health in October 2016 and includes an additional 500 places allocated for September 2018 entry. The published criteria against which bids will be assessed for the remaining 1,000 places include how proposals support specialities such as psychiatry and general practice.

Tuesday 31 October 2017

Ministry of Justice

Prisons: Education

Frank Field: [109425] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 18 October 2017 to Question 106123, if he will hold discussions with the Chair of the Sentencing Council on linking the length of custodial sentences to the acquisition of specified skills in prison.

Dominic Raab: The Secretary of State will shortly meet the Chairman of the Sentencing Council. An agenda has not yet been agreed but discussions will cover many aspects of custodial and non-custodial sentencing and guidelines.

Thursday 2 November 2017

Young Offenders: Speech and Language Disorders

Seema Malhotra: [110325] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of how many and what proportion of young offenders in young offenders institutes have speech, language and communications difficulties; what proportion of such offenders are receiving support services; and what proportion of those not receiving such support services are in a waiting list to receive them.

Phillip Lee: There are high numbers of young people with special educational needs including speech, language and communication needs in youth custody. Data collected to inform the custody placement decision for young people shows that 32% were recorded as having 'learning disability or difficulty

concerns' between April 2014 and March 2016. Both health and education partners fulfil key roles in meeting the needs of young people with speech language and communication needs but we do not collect assessment data centrally. NHS England screen and assess every child and young person that enters the secure estate using the Comprehensive Health Assessment Tool (CHAT) that assesses any neurodisabilities. Following this assessment individual care plans for all children and young people are put in place. Education providers are also required to assess the educational needs of young people and their contracts require them to provide support services for young people with special educational needs or disabilities. We are committed to strengthening health services and special needs support as part of youth justice reforms. Reforms include implementing the NHS-led Secure Stairs project, an integrated framework of care for the Secure Estate for Children and Young People and investing in Enhanced Support Units, smaller units to provide specialist interventions, mental health and psychological support, in under-18 YOIs.

Thursday 2 November 2017

The Prime Minister's Office

Higher Education: Staff

Caroline Lucas: [109352] To ask the Prime Minister, whether the hon. Member for Daventry was acting on behalf of the Government when he wrote to university vice-chancellors requesting the names of academic staff who teach European affairs with a particular focus on the UK leaving the EU.

Theresa May: Free speech is one of the foundations on which our universities are built and this should be protected. This government respects the freedom and independence of universities, and the role they play in creating open and stimulating debate. The hon. Member for Daventry (Mr Heaton-Harris) was acting in his capacity as a member of parliament.

Monday 30 October 2017

Department for Work and Pensions

Poverty: Children

Dan Jarvis: [110630] To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Answer of 18 April 2017 to Question 69473, on children: poverty, what the factors of disadvantage are that will be taken into consideration by local government.

Caroline Dinenage: As part of 'Improving Lives: Helping Workless Families' publication on 4 April, we made public our latest analysis and the evidence base about multiple disadvantage. This will enable local authorities, local partners and others to understand the complex factors of disadvantage in their local area and take practical action to improve children's outcomes. As part of this evidence-sharing approach we made available local level data on the factors of disadvantage via a local government data tool (LG Inform) which can be found in the following link. http://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/view/dwp/improving-lives-helping-worklessfamilies-local-data-report-3?mod-area=E09000033&modgroup=AllBoroughInRegion_London&mod-type=namedComparisonGroup. The parental disadvantage factors included in the local government data tool are parental worklessness, parental conflict, poor parental mental health, drug and alcohol dependency, problem debt and homelessness. The outcome indicator areas covered are early years, educational attainment and youth employment.

Friday 3 November 2017

House of Lords

Apprentices

Lord Ouseley: To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the causatory factors leading to a decline in the number of young people starting an apprenticeship in the current year; and how that decline will affect their target to create three million apprenticeships by 2020. [HL2073]

Lord Ouseley: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, in the light of the reduced number of young people starting an apprenticeship in the current year, they have considered withdrawing the apprenticeship levy charged to companies with more than 250 members of staff. [HL2074]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: There have been over 1.1 million apprenticeship starts since May 2015 and the Government remains committed to reaching 3 million apprenticeship starts in England by 2020. The Government has introduced the Apprenticeship Levy to provide sustainable investment in high quality apprenticeships, and by 2020 apprenticeship funding in England will be £2.45 billion, which is double than in 2010. The Government is monitoring the number of apprenticeship starts as these changes take effect. Ultimately, it is too early to draw conclusions on the impact of these reforms before employers have had time to adjust. However, the Government will continue to oversee the apprenticeship program to ensure its success. These reforms to apprenticeships are the biggest changes the Government has ever made in this area, and include the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy and new funding arrangements in April and May respectively. As a result, the Government expects a period of adjustment for employers wanting to explore the opportunities such reforms offer. Employers have 24 months to spend their levy funds.

Monday 30 October 2017

Vocational Guidance

Lord Shipley: To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to publish the comprehensive careers strategy announced in the *Building the Industrial Strategy* Green Paper, published in January. [HL2236]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: My Rt hon. Friend, the Secretary of State has confirmed that we will publish a careers strategy shortly. The strategy will have a clear focus on social mobility. It will include proposals to improve the quality and coverage of careers advice in schools. The strategy will also include steps to improve the access to advice on training and careers for adults throughout their working lives.

Lord Shipley: To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that working people of all ages have easy access to information and guidance on the education and training they can undertake to reskill or upskill. [HL2237]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Government will publish a careers strategy shortly, with a clear focus on social mobility. This will include proposals to provide information for individuals to access education and training throughout their working lives, as well as help those who want to reskill and upskill. The National Careers Service provides free and impartial guidance on careers, skills and the Labour Market in England. It allows working people to identify opportunities and respond to challenges within their employment.

Monday 30 October 2017

Home Education

Lord Warner: To ask Her Majesty's Government how many children were receiving home education in each of the last 12 months for which figures are available; and what arrangements are in place to ensure that this education enables children to experience a broad and balanced curriculum as required by legislation. [HL2300]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: No information is collected centrally on the numbers of children in England being educated at home. Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents are responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age receives an efficient full-time education suitable to his or her age, ability, aptitudes, also any special educational needs and disabilities that the child has. There is no specific legal requirement for a 'broad and balanced curriculum' and parents who educate children at home have freedom to devise their own curriculum and pedagogical approach. Local councils have a duty to identify, so far as possible, children who are not receiving an education which meets the requirements in section 7, and as part of that process will consider the educational provision made when it appears that it may not be suitable for the child in question or her age, ability, aptitudes, also any special educational needs and disabilities that the child has. There is no specific legal requirement for a 'broad and balanced curriculum' and parents who educate children at home have freedom to devise their own curriculum and pedagogical approach. Local councils have a duty to identify, so far as possible, children who are not receiving an education which meets the requirements in section 7, and as part of that process will consider the educational provision made when it appears that it may not be suitable for the child in question.

Tuesday 31 October 2017

Universities: Finance

Baroness Garden of Frognal: To ask Her Majesty's Government when the terms of reference and membership of the major review of university funding and student financing, announced by the Prime Minister on 4 October, will be published. [HL2198]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: Sustainable university funding and student finance are a priority in delivering this government's objectives on higher education. The government will set out further steps on higher education student financing in due course.

Wednesday 1 November 2017

Home Education

Lord Warner: To ask Her Majesty's Government what guidance they provide to local authorities to ensure that children receiving home education achieve key milestones in their education. [HL2410]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Departmental guidance for local councils on elective home education, copy attached, is published at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/electivehome-education>. It gives advice on the legal framework under which education may be provided, and the processes which are relevant for local councils seeking to identify children who may not be receiving a suitable fulltime education. However, the guidance document does not set out detailed advice on educational outcomes, because parents have a substantial degree of flexibility in terms of educational content and whether to enter children for examinations. Local councils which assess the educational provision made for a child educated at home need to decide whether it meets the requirement in section 7 of the Education Act 1996,

that the education must be suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitudes, and any special educational needs. The Answer includes the following attached material:

Elective Home Education [guidelines_for_las_on_elective_home_educationsecondrevisev2_0.pdf] The material can be viewed online at: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-10-23/HL2410>

Thursday 2 November 2017

Pupils: Attendance

Lord Warner: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether conduct by a parent preventing a child from attending an inspected state or independent school for religious or other reasons is recorded as a criminal offence; if so, what other criteria are taken into account before recording such an offence; and what guidance they have issued to (1) police forces, and (2) the Crown Prosecution Service, regarding this matter. [HL2411]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Parents have a duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age receives full-time education, either by attendance at school or otherwise. If parents choose to register their child at school, we expect them to ensure that their child attends all sessions required by the school, except where a statutory exception applies. The statutory exceptions in which a child shall not be taken to have failed to attend school regularly are: where the school has granted leave; where they are unable to attend due to sickness or unavoidable cause; on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs; or where the local council has failed to fulfil any duty it has to help them get to school. If, having chosen to register their child at school, parents fail to ensure their child attends school regularly, they may be guilty of an offence, and may be issued with a penalty notice or prosecuted under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. We provide statutory guidance 'School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures', which schools, local councils and the police must have regard to when carrying out duties relating to poor attendance and behaviour in schools.

Thursday 2 November 2017

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In January 2017 the Education Publishing Company Ltd (EPC) amalgamated three magazines into one under the name of *Education Journal*. The three were:

Education, a magazine published weekly from January 1903 to March 1996. It was published by EPC in 1998 in print form and electronically from 2000 onwards.

Education Journal was published monthly by EPC from 1996 to 2012 and weekly since 2012.

Children's Services Weekly was published by EPC from 2012 to December 2016.

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