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College accounts reveal bumper pay rises for principals

Seventeen college principals earned over £200,000 in 2016/17, while over a third enjoyed a pay rise of 10% or more, according to the latest college accounts from the Education and Skills Funding Agency. The University and College Union accused college principals of being "greedy and hopelessly out of touch" on pay and it argued that mergers were no excuse for inflating leadership pay.

The union also pointed out that several colleges, including the Hull College Group and Bradford College which were currently planning huge job cuts, had not been included in the data. UCU general secretary, Sally Hunt, said that while many of the worst offenders had been at recently merged colleges, mergers were no excuse for inflating senior pay. She added that the fact that several colleges had not been included in the data had also raised serious questions about accountability to students and taxpayers. Ms Hunt argued that greater transparency was urgently needed in how senior pay was decided to ensure that leaders at all colleges could be held to account.

Universities' spending on staff falls

UK universities' income increased by £915m (2.7%) between 2015/16 and 2016/17, according to figures published last week. During that time they made a surplus of £2.3bn and now have total reserves of £44.27bn.

The data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency also revealed an increase in capital expenditure, but that the proportion of money spent on staff had not improved. Compared to seven years ago, the percentage of expenditure spent on staff has fallen by 3.35%, but the percentage spent on capital expenditure has shot up by 34.9% over that period. From a 2009 baseline, pay awards in higher education have resulted in an indexed increase of 8.8% over eight years. In the same time period, the RPI index has increased by 28.1%. This amounts to a real terms loss of pay of 19.3% for HE staff.

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Decision day

Local authorities no longer run education in the way they once did, but the results of Thursday's local elections will still matter. There are 84 top tier councils that have responsibility for children's services and education that are going to the polls. They are all the councils in London, 35 of the 36 metropolitan district councils and 17 of the non-metropolitan unitary councils.

These council seats were last contested in 2014. That was a good year for Labour and UKIP, though it was also the year before the Conservatives under David Cameron won a surprise overall majority in the general election. All parties are now engaged in a frantic effort of expectation management so that whatever the result on Friday morning they can claim to have done better than expected.

Leaving aside the spin, what is the likely outcome? Labour start the election far ahead of the Conservatives, but only because it is the Labour heartlands in London and the metropolitan districts that are up for grabs while the Tory shire counties are not going to the polls. Yet within these Labour heartlands there are in reality two elections being fought. London has been moving towards Labour for some time. It has a higher proportion of young voters and ethnic minority voters than the country as a whole, and it voted to remain in the European Union referendum of 2016 by a considerable margin. While nearly all the metropolitan districts also have large Labour majorities, many of them are in Leave voting areas where UKIP had success in 2016. UKIP are now on three percent in the polls, compared to the high teens they were getting in 2014. Which way will the former UKIP vote crumble now?

For over a year opinion polls have shown the Conservative and Labour parties on about 40% of the vote and usually within a percentage point or two of each other. This is within the statistical margin of error. It would therefore be surprising if these local election results were that different from the last general election, allowing for the unrepresentative nature of the areas holding elections. (Apart from the elections being overwhelmingly in cities, they are also all in England.)

We are in the unusual position of both main parties being dogged by problems that will repel some key voters. The Conservatives have a difficult enough time attracting votes from ethnic minorities at the best of times and the Windrush generation fiasco will have done nothing to make it any easier. Theresa May's appointment of Sajiv Javid as the new Home Secretary was a smart move. He has already disowned the "hostile environment" phrase used by his two Tory predecessors (and Labour ministers, who coined the phrase when they were in power) but has come too late to make much impact in these elections.

Labour has had its own problems with racism. It has been mired in controversy over antisemitism for months. Jeremy Corbyn recently met the leaders of his critics in the Board of Deputies of British Jews and the Jewish Leadership Council. They were disappointed that he was unwilling to do any of the things they wanted. The Labour vote in Jewish parts of London may not be as strong as it was.

Brexit has certainly had a major impact on British politics, but public opinion has not changed much since 2016. There is no evidence, for example from local council by-elections, that Brexit has changed voting patterns since the referendum. That is a frustration for the Liberal Democrats, who have seen no benefit from being the most pro-EU party and for campaigning for a second referendum, even in areas where that is popular. The Lib Dems control only one of the 84 councils going to the polls this year, Sutton in London. A good night for them will be holding on in Sutton. A great night will be winning back the outer London boroughs of Kingston and Richmond. A bad night will be the loss of Sutton.

UKIP have had a terrible time and will probably lose all their seats as they did last year. While the Greens will not make any real advance, they will overtake UKIP to become the fourth party in England because of the collapse of UKIP.

The Conservatives will be happy to keep the 11 councils they control now, although as nine of them are in London this is unlikely. They have hopes of taking control of Dudley from no overall control. Labour hope to win Westminster and Wandsworth, although they may win neither. Outside London there is not much more left for them to win. Labour should do well in London and hold its own elsewhere. Yet that won't be enough for Labour to win the next general election. They are still as far away from power as ever.

SATs preparation taking over children's lives

Three-in-ten teachers and headteachers believe that their school expects children aged six to seven to do SATs revision at home, according to a survey by the National Education Union. The figure increased to more than eight in ten in schools that expected pupils aged 10 to 11 to revise for their SATs at home.

In a survey of 500 teachers and headteachers in England, almost one-in ten (8%) ran revision classes after school for Year 2 children, and more than half (56%) offered them to pupils in Year 6. A further 29% said that Year 6 pupils were offered SATs revision during lunchtimes.

More than six in 10 (62%) said that their school held mock key stage 1 SATs, which meant that time was being spent preparing for the tests rather than teaching the curriculum. Three-quarters (74%) of teachers and headteachers said that the preparation for SATs in Year 6 squeezed out other parts of the curriculum, and almost a third (32%) felt that that was the case in Year 2.

Education staff said that SATs were detrimental to teaching across the curriculum, as 64% believed that to be the case for Year 2 and 82% believed that it was the case for Year 6. Teachers and heads were also increasingly concerned about the effect of SATs on pupils, as 83% said that SATs in Year 6 had a detrimental effect on pupils' mental health, and 54% said that SATs in Year 2 meant that pupils' mental health suffered. Teachers and heads also felt that SATs had taken an even greater toll on their own mental health, as almost nine in 10 (89%) believed that Year 6 SATs were detrimental to their own mental health, and 74% felt the same about Year 2 SATs.

Dr Mary Bousted, joint general secretary of the NEU, said that SATs, whether at Year 2 or Year 6, were damaging to primary education as from the age of six, children were told that they were failures if they did not meet required standards.

“Education staff said that SATs were detrimental to teaching across the curriculum.”

Trans guidance for schools and colleges

Guidance to help support staff in schools and colleges who are planning to transition, *Leading Trans Equality in Education: A Toolkit for Change*, has been published by the NEU. It has been developed by the National Education Union's Trans Educators' network, which provides a space for trans and non-binary education professionals to meet and discuss experiences, support and potential solutions to issues they face in the workplace and in society.

The union said that many schools and colleges needed more support when an employee intended to transition and many did not have policies about transitioning at work, which could leave trans employees and schools and colleges in a vulnerable position.

The NEU pointed out that in some circumstances trans employees had been asked to manage their transition themselves or they had been asked inappropriate questions. The union added that a lack of understanding about legal rights and the positive steps to take had made it difficult for trans educators to stay in their jobs.

The NEU said that every school and college should have a policy to support employees who intended to transition and the NEU toolkit would help make sure that schools and colleges had the necessary support mechanisms in place so that trans workers were supported, respected and that they would have a positive transition.

Home-schooling in the UK increased by 40% over three years

The BBC has revealed that the number of children being home-schooled had risen by about 40% over three years. Across the UK 48,000 children were being home-educated in 2016-17, which was up from about 34,000 in 2014-15. Mental health issues and avoiding exclusion were two reasons that parents had given for removing children from classrooms.

Dr Carrie Herbert, the founder of a charity for children outside mainstream education, said that the rise in home-schooling suggested something quite tragic about the state of the education system. She added that she was concerned that some parents might also feel pressured into home-schooling their children to avoid exclusion or prosecution over poor attendance.

“The Association of Directors of Children's Services in England wants parents and carers who home-educate to be obliged to register with their local authority and for inspectors to be able to take action if they found a problem.”

The BBC contacted councils in England, Wales and Scotland and the Northern Ireland Department of Education for figures on home-schooling. Of the 177 authorities that had been able to provide data for all three years, 164 had reported an increase. Only 11 with figures for all three years had fewer home-schooled children in 2016-17 than in 2014-15.

While they made up just 0.5% of the school age population for England and Wales, the large rise had prompted calls from councils and education bodies for more statutory monitoring powers of home-schooled children. The Association of Directors of Children's Services in England wants parents and carers who home-educate to be obliged to register with their local authority and for inspectors to be able to take action if they found a problem. The Isle of Wight had the highest proportion of home-educated pupils, at almost one in 50. In Wales just over 1,800 out of about 430,000 children, about 0.4%, were home-schooled in 2016-17. In Scotland, just 0.1% of children were home-educated, 969 in total.

The department of education in Northern Ireland reported just 293 pupils being home educated out of a possible 343,082, which represented less than 0.1% of the school-aged population in 2017. Many authorities could not provide reasons why more parents appeared to be choosing homeschooling. Of those that did, the reasons included:

- In Devon, most parents who offered a reason for home-schooling had blamed dissatisfaction with the school environment.
- In East Sussex, lack of school choice, unmet special educational needs and the rigour and limits of the current school curriculum had been cited.
- In Gateshead, parents had felt some pressure from school to remove their children especially if the young person had poor attendance.
- In Cambridgeshire, the council said it had increased support for the home-educated community, including extending borrowing rights at libraries.
- In Darlington, local authority staff were working with the police and health to ensure the safeguarding of home educated children.

Latest figures show increases in universities' income, surpluses and reserves

UK universities' income increased by £915m (2.7%) between 2015/16 and 2016/17, according to figures from the Higher Education Statistics Agency. During that time, they made a surplus of £2.3bn and they currently have total reserves of £44.27bn. The data also revealed an increase in capital expenditure, but the proportion of money spent on staff had not improved. Compared to seven years ago, the percentage of expenditure spent on staff had fallen by 3.35%, but the percentage spent on capital expenditure had shot up by 34.9% over that period.

The University and College Union argued that the figures made a mockery of universities' claims that staff were a top priority, as staff in universities had seen their pay fall by around 20% since 2009, while university leaders' pay and perks had gone largely unchecked.

The union said that the figures also suggested that universities paid no attention to what students wanted most from their education, as they had called for investment in staff over buildings. UCU general secretary Sally Hunt said that while universities' income had risen and they hoarded huge reserves, the only people to benefit were vice-chancellors whose pay and perks had long been a source of embarrassment for higher education.

The HESA key findings were:

- Total income had increased by £915m (2.7%) and it currently stood at £35.7bn.
- Surplus for the year was £2.3bn, which was 6.4% of income.
- Income from tuition fees had increased by £931m (5.5%).
- Net current assets were up by 8.6% (£551m) to £6.8bn across the sector.
- Unrestricted income and expenditure reserves had increased by £3bn (10.7%) to £31.6bn total.
- Total reserves of £44.27bn were up from £12.33bn in 2009/10.

The UCU pointed out that the top three ways universities should save money according to students were:

- 1 Spending less on buildings.
- 2 Spending less on sports/social facilities.
- 3 Increasing class sizes.

The three most unpopular options were:

- 1 Reducing spending on student support services.
- 2 Fewer hours of teaching.
- 3 Reducing spending on learning facilities.

UCAS statement on its verification service

Helen Thorne, Director of External Relations, UCAS, said that UCAS had a responsibility, on behalf of students, universities, and colleges, to screen applications for false, missing, or misleading information, to maintain the integrity of UK higher education and prevent fraud. She explained that the aim was to avoid anyone gaining from an unfair advantage or securing a place by deception.

Ms Thorne added that if applicants or their referees appeared to have provided false or misleading information, or had omitted necessary information, their applications would be flagged for investigation by the UCAS verification service.

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She said that typically UCAS asked flagged applicants to provide original documentation or additional information and everyone was given the opportunity and time to resolve issues. Ms Thorne pointed out that through the course of an investigation, the university or college would be kept informed about the process and if issues could not be resolved, or applicants or their referees were found to have provided false or misleading information, UCAS would cancel their applications.

She said that in 2017, UCAS had cancelled less than 1% (0.06%) of applications from almost 700,000 UK, EU, and international applicants. But Ms Thorne added that applicants whose applications were cancelled could appeal the decision. She said that in response to a Freedom of Information request, UCAS analysed the data on numbers of flagged and cancelled applications by ethnicity.

“While UCAS was confident about the integrity of its verification processes, which were regularly reviewed, the analysis had showed that they were flagging a comparatively higher number of Black applicants.”

Ms Thorne said that while UCAS was confident about the integrity of its verification processes, which were regularly reviewed, the analysis had showed that they were flagging a comparatively higher number of Black applicants. She said that UCAS was therefore carrying out further analysis to understand what was driving this pattern of results and the findings would be independently audited and published, together with details of what action UCAS would take, if any.

Ms Thorne said that UCAS was also preparing to start publishing annual statistics about the numbers of applications flagged and cancelled by its verification service, including breakdowns by applicant characteristics. Both the analysis and statistics will be published by the end of May 2018.

Metacognition and self-regulated learning guidance

While evidence suggests that the use of “metacognitive strategies”, which get pupils to think about their own learning can be worth the equivalent of an additional +7 months’ progress when used well, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, less is known about how to apply them effectively in the classroom.

The Education and Endowment Fund’s Metacognition and self-regulated learning, reviews the best available research to offer teachers and senior leaders practical advice on how to develop their pupils’ metacognitive skills and knowledge. The report makes recommendations in seven areas and “myth busts”

“The Education and Endowment Fund’s Metacognition and self-regulated learning, reviews the best available research to offer teachers and senior leaders practical advice on how to develop their pupils’ metacognitive skills and knowledge.”

common misconceptions that teachers have about metacognition.

Although some teachers think that they need to teach metacognitive approaches in “learning to learn” or “thinking skills” sessions, the report warns that metacognitive strategies should be taught in conjunction with specific subject content as pupils find it difficult to transfer the generic tips to specific tasks.

Survey reveals trends in student drug use

The National Union of Students has released a report on student drug use and drug policies in the UK, in collaboration with Release, the national centre of expertise on drugs and drugs law. The report included the results of a survey of 2,810 UK-based students, which explored students' attitudes to, and experiences of, drugs.

The report also looked at the institutional support available at 151 universities and colleges, and their disciplinary responses to students who use drugs. The aim of the research had been to be able to build campaigns, policies and communities that would keep students safe and challenge the drug use stereotypes.

Key findings included:

- 39% of respondents reported that they currently used drugs, and 17% had done so in the past. As a result, 56% of the overall respondents had reported having used drugs at some point.
- Most respondents said that they used drugs occasionally (23%), rather than regularly (10%), or on most days (6%).
- Mental health was a factor in student drug use as 31 per cent of respondents who had used drugs said that they had done so to deal with stress and 22 per cent to self-medicate for an existing mental health problem. Two-thirds of those respondents had stated that taking drugs had improved their day-to-day experience of an existing mental health condition, although a third felt that a mental health condition had worsened as a result of drug use.
- Overall, students had showed largely accepting attitudes towards drugs, as the majority of all respondents (62 per cent) said that did not have a problem with students taking drugs recreationally.
- Respondents tended to disagree that institutions drug policies did not do enough to punish students who used drugs and 40% said that they would not feel comfortable disclosing information about their drug use because of fear of punishment.
- The types of support institutions made available were not the ones students were most satisfied with nor the ones they tended to access.
- In the 2016/17 academic year, there had been at least 2,067 recorded incidents of student misconduct for the possession of drugs. While many had been resolved via a formal warning or another type of sanction, such as a fine, some institutions had adopted a more punitive approach. At least one in four of the incidents (531) had been reported to the police and 21 had resulted in a student being permanently excluded from higher education.

Consortium challenged decades of further education development

By Ian Nash

A new report on the effectiveness of government policy on performance, achievement and cost-effectiveness of the further education and skills sector has become the focus for a potential rethink of post-school education and training by the Department for Education and political opposition parties.

The report by the Policy Consortium, which has emerged as a key think tank for the post-school sector (see below), reveals a range of “ill-considered” changes that are damaging the achievements of young people. They range from the scrapping of the KS4 requirement to do work experience to the inappropriate GCSE resit policy. Indeed, two-thirds of college directors, senior managers and governors responding to a survey for the report cited the GCSE resit policy, imposed by the then Education Secretary Michael Gove, as the issue which had the biggest negative impact on their work.

The GCSE demand scuppered effective numeracy and literacy programmes throughout post-school education and training, even though there was evidence to prove the inappropriate nature of the school certificate. But the report’s

conclusions relate to far more than current policy and identify 23 fundamental issues that have undermined efforts to create a successful sector. Failures at the heart of approaches to FE and skills by successive governments over past decades are revealed in the report, *The FE and Skills System*, by the Policy Consortium. The report was discussed at a seminar attending by FE and skills sector leaders, managers and government officials, organised by the Policy Consortium and Campaign for Learning in

London, under Chatham House rules. The DfE took five of the 75 places at the session and is now seeking further consultations with the group. Tony Davis, author of the report, said: “Respondents to the survey show clearly how successive policy decision have failed to create the conditions for success. We want these issues tackled head-on. We are not interested in dealing with the symptoms but with the root causes.” He accused the likes of Gove of pandering to

the headline chasers and said it was time to deal with what the report shows as the most significant common denominator of such failure – “the unintended consequences of policy volatility”.

While the Chatham House rules of debate preclude the expression of individual views and identification of participants, two key priorities emerged from the meeting as clearly shared concerns. First, there was a clear consensus that disruption of government policy-making was the underlying cause of so many problems. Second, there was a desire to somehow take the issues out of the political arena where so

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Ian Nash

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many short-term changes were imposed.

Gordon Marsden, Shadow HFE and Skills minister, used the gathering to put flesh on Labour proposals for a Lifelong Learning Commission with agency to address needs across the board and, he said, “to break down the competing silos of government departments.” He questioned why the issues around HE and those of FE and skills were addressed through separate legislation and Government edicts pulling the sector in different directions with conflicting demands. “There are so many overlapping issues in HE and FE and skills that it would have been sensible to bring these together.”

Marsden’s views were echoed by Catherine Haddon, senior research fellow for the Institute of Government. Their research, focusing sharply on the FE and Skills sector, revealed damaging effects of constantly changing efforts to respond to labour-market demands, conflicting desire to centralise and decentralise funding and control, and the competing and conflicting ideas of what the sector is for among ministers in post for a short time and wanting to make their mark. A lack of policy memory and institutional intelligence within the DfE and other departments were also cited as causing difficulties. Draconian Coalition Government cuts in the civil service since 2010 depleted departments of the knowledge and experience necessary for effective policy implementation.

The Policy Consortium report says that, while the efforts of the Government and its ministers may have been well-intentioned, changes merely tackle symptoms, not the longer-term causes. Davis says: “From medicine to engineering, all practical sectors of our society know that adverse symptoms cannot be addressed directly. We can no more fix a brain tumour with paracetamol, or a leaking engine with thicker oil, than we can poor English with yet more poetry.” There was strong support at the seminar for the Policy Consortium triggering further debate by testing the feasibility of an alliance or commission that could help develop a much longer-term policy approach and strategic development of FE and skills.

The need for such an approach was spelled out in 2015 by the House of Commons Select Committee of Public Affairs. It concluded: “The departments and funding agencies sometimes make decisions without properly understanding the impact on learners, nor the impact on colleges’ ability to compete with other education providers. Colleges face a number of external challenges, some of which are exacerbated by the actions of the departments and their funding agencies.”

- The report’s full title is *The FE & Skills System – The Consequences of Policy Decisions; Lessons for Policy Makers and Stakeholders, A study by the Policy Consortium*. A flipbook version is available at: <http://resources.ccqi.org.uk/flipbook/PCstudy/index.html>.

“There was strong support at the seminar for the Policy Consortium triggering further debate by testing the feasibility of an alliance or commission that could help develop a much longer-term policy approach and strategic development of FE and skills.”

The making of a think tank for FE and skills

By Ian Nash

Radical reform of government departments and support agencies for Further Education and Skills in 2006 raised serious concerns that essential intelligence and understanding of policy development would be lost forever. The Labour Government had closed the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA) and replaced it with the smaller Quality Improvement Agency (QIA) and an independent Learning and Skills Network (LSN).

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While the majority of hard-pressed managers, lecturers, teachers and trainers in colleges and training centres probably saw it as no more than bureaucratic tinkering, directors and senior managers such as Frank Villeneuve-Smith and Mike Cox at the LSN saw a bigger threat. Who in the slimmed-down, over-worked world would have the time and capacity to gather intelligence necessary to keep the excesses of politicians in check?

They approached Mike Cooper, former SE Regional Director for the LSDA, now self-employed, and suggested that he tender for a monthly policy and research digest “for LSN internal staff consumption only”. He gathered a small team, won the bid and expanded the team to six – all significant players in FE policy advice, support and research and often part of the LSDA: Ann-Marie Warrender, Michael Chandler, Peter Davies, Mick Fletcher and Marie Hughes.

In June 2006, the Policy Consortium was born and in August the first “LeSsoN” policy briefing appeared. “The format for the Consortium was, and has always remained, one of a loose collective,” said

“Moreover, they were all hardened to the repeated demands for change from the politicians, changes that had been in churn since 1995 and continue unabated in 2018.”

Mike Cooper. And it was a formula and approach that suited a time when freelance and self-employment suited such people who, as a group, were in a powerful position to bid for policy research and development contracts.

Moreover, they were all hardened to the repeated demands for change from the politicians, changes that had been in churn since 1995 and continue unabated in 2018. As the intelligence gathering became sharper (and government departments leakier) the private briefings grew ever more controversial, culminating in the “Policy Confidential” papers.

Other organisations spotted the effectiveness of the Policy Consortium which, by 2009 had diversified its client base to include BECTA, the QIA, FERSG, ORC International, Enterprise Insight, Ealing Borough, Westminster LA, The Gazelle Group and so much more.

At its peak, the Policy Consortium had 17 members and turned its attention in 2012 to the biggest annual FE and Skills sector survey of their kind, testing the policy reforms of the Government of the day to destruction.

By this stage, it earned the right to be classified as a think tank. Its surveys were explored and discussed at national education conferences and attracted significant media sponsorship, now from the *TES*. The House of Lords has called on the Policy Consortium for evidence and government departments make a point of being present at seminars.

Partnership arrangements have grown with the likes of the Campaign for Learning and Newbubbles, the specialist training company for FE. Former Ofsted inspector, Tony Davis, is a member and author of the latest report. Asked why he joined, he said: “The value of the PC to me is the ability to draw on a vast amount of front-line strategic and policy experience in the FE and skills sector.”

Marketing and promotions expert, Nick Warren, who is one of the early joiners, said: “The collective memory and experience of the PC is a rare thing and it is a privilege to be part of such a community of expertise.”

Dan Taubman, former UCU national FE officer and recent chairman of the PC, said: “The Policy Consortium has a proud record of producing some of the best research and surveys on FE for over ten years. When organising events for Natfhe and the UCU, I could always count on the PC members to provide interesting and hard-hitting presentations on current issues across FE.”

Tricia Hartley, who joined through an initial partnership with the Campaign for Learning, which she headed, said the PC was about more than policy memory. “Members are very actively engaged with different aspects of what is happening in the sector now and have the knowledge and background to consider them properly in context.”

* As the writer of this piece, I am also a member of the PC. I was invited to join in 2007, when I gave up the post of assistant Editor of the *TES* to co-found the media group Nash&Jones Partnership. I immediately recognised the power the organisation could have in helping shape FE policy.

Teacher labour market pressures

By Tracy Coryton

A report by the Education Policy Institute has confirmed what the profession already knew, that the teacher labour market was subject to a high level of churn. In 2016, around 50,000 teachers had left their jobs in state-funded schools in England, to be replaced by around 50,000 new entrants, which meant that about 1 in 10 teachers were replaced by a new one each year, on top of a further 8 per cent of teachers who moved school each year.

The analysis, *The Teacher Labour Market: A perilous path ahead* by Luke Sibieta and published on 25 April, examined some of the acute challenges facing the teacher labour market, the impact it had on schools and pupils, and the options for policymakers to mitigate the problems. The EPI report pointed out that between 2016 and 2026, the overall number of pupils was expected to grow by 11 per cent, although there would be much faster growth in secondary schools (20 per cent) than in primary schools (4 per cent). To prevent class sizes from rising, the total number of teachers would also need to grow by a similar amount and new entrants would need to exceed exits, rather than equalling them as they did currently.

There are some further challenges in secondary schools as the Government has set a target for 90 per cent of GCSE pupils to be entered into the English Baccalaureate by 2025, compared with the current 38 per cent. The report pointed out that to be entered into the EBacc, GCSE students had to take subjects including English language/literature, maths, sciences, geography/history and a language. While some rise in EBacc entry rates could be accommodated by filling empty seats in some lessons, the research showed that increasing take-up from 38 per cent to 90 per cent would require a significant rise in the number of teachers who could teach the subjects. EPI said that its analysis had suggested that the number of modern foreign languages teachers would need to increase by 78 per cent in 2019–20 to meet government targets.

The report warned that there had been some worrying signals from the teacher labour market. Exit rates had been creeping up over time and between 2010 and 2016, exit rates had increased from 8 per cent to 9 per cent in primary schools and from 9.5 per cent to 10.5 per cent in secondary schools. There had also been an increase in the number of teachers who had chosen to cut their teaching careers short, as 80 per cent of exits in 2016 had been due to movements to other jobs or outside the state-funded sector in England as compared with two thirds in 2010. Exits also appeared to be concentrated early in teachers' careers, as only 60 per cent of teachers had been working in a state-funded school in England five years after training. The 5-year retention rate was only 50 per cent for high-priority subjects such as physics and maths.

The report also revealed worrying signs on entrants as recent figures had suggested that applications to teacher training had been down by around 30 per cent compared with previous years.

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However, EPI pointed out that only two thirds of the applications tend to translate into entrants into teacher training each year, as some applicants either failed to get any offers or they withdrew their applications. The report pointed out that while there was still a chance that training providers would be able to get close to meeting DfE's recruitment targets, they may need to accept nearly all applicants. The problem was also worse in secondary schools. In 2017–18, training providers had managed to fill targets for a number of primary school teacher trainees. However, only 80 per cent of targets had been filled for secondary school trainees. In some EBacc subjects, such as physics, the targets had been persistently missed and in 2017–18 only 80 per cent of training placement targets had been filled in maths, chemistry and geography, whilst in physics the figure was only 70 per cent.

“In terms of how the trends were starting to impact on schools and pupils, the report pointed out that at a macro level, the ratio of pupils to teachers had barely increased at all as it had remained around 21 pupils per teacher in primary schools between 2011 and 2016, and it had only increased from 15.6 to 16.4 in secondary schools.”

In terms of how the trends were starting to impact on schools and pupils, the report pointed out that at a macro level, the ratio of pupils to teachers had barely increased at all as it had remained around 21 pupils per teacher in primary schools between 2011 and 2016, and it had only increased from 15.6 to 16.4 in secondary schools.

The analysis also suggested that the number of hours taught by subject had mostly responded in a predictable manner to the introduction of the EBacc and other changes to school accountability. The report pointed out that the NFER had found that total secondary school curriculum hours had increased in English, maths, history and geography, and fallen in the arts, technology, PE and other subjects. More surprising had been the lack of change in science hours and a fall in hours spent teaching languages.

Given the increases in exits and the persistent recruitment problems in particular subjects, schools

had managed to square the circle by increasing teacher hours over time. In some subjects, schools had been relying on staff with lower qualifications. While the proportion of teachers with a relevant degree had increased across most subjects, there had been a lot of variation. In many non-EBacc subjects, the proportion of teachers with a degree in the subject had risen, for example in music, arts, drama, PE and business/economics. In EBacc subjects, although there had been broadly steady levels or slight rises in maths, English, chemistry, biology, languages and history, there had been a decline in physics and geography, which were both EBacc subjects and where recruitment targets had been missed over time.

Differences

The absolute differences across subjects were also revealing, and in some subjects, two thirds or more of current teachers had a degree-level qualification or higher, such as Biology (79 per cent), Art (78 per cent), PE (68 per cent), English (68 per cent) and History (67 per cent). Whilst in others, half or less had a degree-level qualification, such as German (55 per cent), French (53 per cent), Physics (51 per cent), Maths (46 per cent) and Spanish (35 per cent). The report argued that the substantial differences had resulted from long-term differences in the ability of schools to recruit and retain teachers with degrees in different subjects, and also the known differences in graduate earnings by subject as maths and physics graduates tended to earn more than graduates in English, biology and the arts. The report pointed out that if schools filled teacher roles with non-specialists, which they largely had to if they could not find a specialist, the Government counted that towards meeting the demand for teachers in that subject.

In terms of what the options were for policymakers to mitigate the problems, the EPI report pointed out that while a lot of attention had been paid to increasing recruitment, including bursaries of up to £30k in some subjects, there was no evidence that they had improved recruitment where problems had

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persisted. The report added that although less attention had been paid to improving retention, 8 per cent of teachers left the profession each year for reasons other than retirement. The report noted that policymakers had been piloting a student loan reimbursement programme for early career teachers in shortage subjects in England. But it pointed out that the scheme was complicated and teachers had to make the student loan contributions first before filling out a range of paperwork and submitting payslips to claim them back. EPI argued that it would have been preferable for eligible teachers to not have to make the payments in the first place. The report added that given changes to student loan repayments, the policy was likely to have little effect on early career teachers, when exit rates were highest.

Turning to workload, the report pointed out that teacher working hours had been increasing over time and EPI analysis had shown that they were longer, on average, than many other countries. It added that while the Government had recently announced new efforts to reduce teacher workload, repeated efforts to do something about teacher workload in recent years had resulted in little.

The report concluded that almost all recent figures had suggested that the teacher labour market was in trouble, particularly in subjects where graduates could earn relatively high salaries outside teaching. EPI pointed out that evidence suggested that there was potentially some merit in salary supplements in shortage subjects. It added that while schools already had the freedom to make such payments, they may find it very difficult when overall teacher pay and budgets were being squeezed. The report suggested that if the Government was considering easing the public sector pay cap for schools, it may be worth targeting any additional funds on explicit salary supplements for early career teachers in shortage subjects.

Commenting on analysis from the Education Policy Institute on the growing pressures facing the teacher

labour market in England, Geoff Barton, General Secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said that the EPI's analysis showed the "eye-watering scale" of the challenge in having enough teachers for the soaring number of pupils over the next eight years. He argued that the situation had been caused by a toxic mix of high levels of workload, driven largely by incessant reforms and a draconian accountability system, and years of pay austerity which had seen salaries fall in real terms.

Mr Barton said that while the EPI was correct that the Government should focus more attention on retention, ASCL did not agree with its suggestion that ministers should consider targeting any additional funds on salary supplements for teachers in shortage subjects. He argued that there were teacher shortages in many subjects and the suggestion would also open up the possibility of teachers with similar workloads, who were equally committed to their pupils, earning different rates of pay. Mr Barton warned that such a move would be extremely damaging to the morale of teachers who would be disadvantaged by such a system, and potentially retention rates could deteriorate in more poorly paid subjects. He concluded that the solution to the teacher supply crisis did not lie in any single policy proposal. Instead, an overarching strategy was needed which would include easing teacher workload, improving career progression, and rewarding all teachers after many years of pay austerity.

Dr Mary Bousted, joint general secretary of the National Education Union, said that the report had provided yet more evidence of the Government's failure to ensure that there were enough teachers in schools. But she pointed out that the NEU did not agree with the EPI that the Government should prioritise retention ahead of recruitment, as it needed to stop "tinkering around the edges" and address both problems by cutting workload and offering better pay. Dr Bousted argued that the Department for Education had ignored the root causes of the crisis in teacher recruitment and retention, which were crushing workload, low pay and oppressive monitoring regimes, and instead it had focused on small initiatives that had failed to address the real problem. She said that savage cuts to funding had further reduced the ability of schools to retain and recruit staff and a recent NEU survey had found that 81% of teachers had considered leaving the profession in the last year because of workload.

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Improving skills would drive job creation and growth in Spain

Spain should boost support for the unemployed and expand vocational education and training as part of a series of reforms to promote better skills utilisation and drive job creation and growth, according to a new OECD report. *Getting Skills Right: Spain*, said that skills demands were more polarised in Spain than in many other OECD countries, as many jobs required either very low or very high levels of education.

At the launch the report in Madrid, Montserrat Gomendio, OECD Deputy Director for Education and Skills, said that the policies that had been implemented in recent years were bearing fruit, which highlighted the modernisation of vocational training and the new model of dual work-based training.

She said that their impact on the decline of early school leaving had been remarkable. Ms Gomendio stressed that improving people's skills to face the challenges of digitalisation and globalization was essential, especially for young people not in education, employment or training, the long-term

“The Government had taken a series of initiatives to bring skill supply in line with demand, including a national job portal, policies to help the long-term unemployed, an updated dual model of work-based training, and reforms to the professional training system.”

unemployed and the adults with low skills. She added that it was also key to address the transition from the traditional educational model to lifelong learning, develop new models of training for adults, and promote a more efficient use of skills at work.

The report pointed out that the Government and other stakeholders had taken a series of initiatives to bring skill supply in line with demand, including a national job portal, policies to help the long-term unemployed, an updated dual model of work-based training, and reforms to the professional training system. But the report found that further challenges remained as adults in Spain had one of the poorest performances on basic numeracy and reading skills compared to all other OECD countries. Even tertiary graduates, who performed higher than the national average, still had the lowest average literacy scores of any of their peers in OECD countries.

The report suggested that more could be done to match skill supply to demand. It added that focusing publicly-subsidised training for the employed and unemployed on skills and qualifications that were in high demand would help, as well as expanding opportunities for adults to engage in lifelong learning. Despite high and persistent unemployment, Spain spent relatively

little on training and job search assistance for the unemployed compared with other OECD countries.

The report recommended reducing the use of hiring subsidies, which would free up resources for subsidies to cover necessary training provision to help overcome skill deficiencies among jobseekers, which would make them more employable over the longer-term. The report added that the use of the new training vouchers for the unemployed should be targeted to accredited institutions and focused on the skills that were in demand. Because low basic skills among adults was making it difficult for them to get employment and not enough adult learning options were available to assist them. While free basic skills training for adults existed, participation was currently very low. The report suggested that Spain should consider making the offer of basic skills training for adults more flexible to encourage higher participation. To introduce financial incentives for lifelong learning opportunities that were linked to individuals rather than to jobs, the report recommended that Spain should consider tying the Training Account to a system of vouchers to allow individuals to upskill and retrain as demand for skills changed. It added that more training credits could be provided for those skills and occupations that were in short supply.

Education in the Syria region

Speaking at the education in Syria conference in Brussels last Wednesday, International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said that more than a million displaced Syrian children have received access to some form of education since the start of the conflict eight years ago. She acknowledged the work of Syria's neighbours in receiving and providing for millions of refugees. Jordan provided for 165,000 Syrian children after the Jordanian Government overhauled national education policies. In Lebanon, the public education system has doubled in size since the start of conflict, and as a result more than 365,000 Syrian children are now receiving an education. Turkey provided for the largest number of children, with more than 600,000 Syrian children now learning in schools.

"The education these children are receiving is helping us build the skills and knowledge needed to power the economies of tomorrow," the Secretary of State said. However, she pointed out that there were still nearly 690,000 children in the region without access to any education.

"As we strive to find a political settlement to the conflict, we must also strive to equip young people with the education they need to find employment," Ms Mordaunt said, observing that the region had one of the highest rates of youth unemployment and lowest rates of female labour market participation in the world. "By helping host countries invest and improve their education systems we can help young men and women transform their economies and spur economic growth across the region. And this means donors working with governments to make better use of education data to create better teaching programmes to drive up teaching standards."

Ms Mordaunt called for donors to make more multi-year pledges and for "smarter" funding. "Funding has to be linked to results and reforms. It must be able to measure progress and see which programmes work and which programmes need to work harder. The UK will continue to provide long-term, multi-year support to the region to create the education and employment opportunities that will spur the recovery we all want to see."

The Secretary of State said that those most at risk from being left behind must not be forgotten. "We must ensure that all our efforts to spur economic development also include refugees and the most vulnerable." These include working and undocumented children, girls and children with disabilities. She announced that in July Britain will co-host an international Disability Summit in London, which it was hoped Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey will attend. "At the summit we will set forth a set of concrete steps to ensure that people with disabilities are given the opportunities to fulfil their potential wherever they are in the world."

Youth, peace and security

Speaking at the United Nations security council meeting in New York in a debate on youth, peace and security, Britain's permanent representative to the UN, Karen Pierce, said: "If we don't factor in as a long-term trend of growing numbers of youth, particularly unemployed youth, in certain parts of the world then we will find ourselves facing many more peace and security challenges."

Ms Pearce stressed the importance of giving young people a voice. As an example of what she meant, she spoke of the recent Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting which had met in London, at the same time as the 11th Commonwealth Youth Forum which had met alongside it.

A number of speakers mentioned preventing violent extremism. Ms Pierce said: "It's very important that strategies for this, sometimes called countering violent extremism, should include youth. Young people often understand much more than my generation the dynamics and the impacts of terrorist narratives on radicalization and recruitment and they can be involved in promoting an alternative narrative of tolerance and inclusion." She gave as an example the ISIS equivalent of *Vogue*, which she said was targeted at a very particular section of young women. "In its propaganda it is incredibly skilful about getting out certain messages and countering that, dealing with that, putting out a positive narrative is something we all need to give attention to."

A culture of dishonesty

By Pericles

With the Home Secretary's resignation on Sunday night over the Windrush generation scandal, it is worth asking whether the Home Office practice of deporting people knowing that some of them would have every right to be in the UK was the sort of dishonest practice that was confined to the Home Office. Has the rip-off Britain culture to be found in parts of the private sector, such as banks and utilities, now infected other parts of the public sector as well? The evidence is that it has.

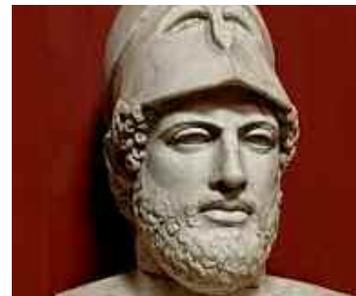
Let us deal with the Home Office first. When some 600 people from Jamaica arrived at Tilbury on the liner the Empire Windrush in June 1948 they came as British citizens from one part of the British Empire to another. Several Labour MPs wrote to the Prime Minister of the day, Clement Attlee, demanding controls on what was then called coloured immigration. These demands were considered but, as correspondence from within the Home Office dated 5 July 1948 shows, "the Home Secretary has considered this suggestion in consultation with the Secretary of State for the Colonies and feels that there are the strongest objections to it. It is a traditional element in United Kingdom policy that British subjects of whatever colour and whether of Dominion or Colonial origin, are freely admissible to the United Kingdom." This was particularly true as the Windrush immigrants, two thirds of whom had served in the British Armed Forces, had been invited by the UK to help meet labour shortages. When the British Nationality Act 1948 was passed it regularised the existing practice of imperial citizenship by creating the status of citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies. From the arrival of the Empire Windrush in 1948 to independence for most of the islands of the British West Indies in the 1960s, those coming to Britain and their children were British and had every right to be here. They should have had nothing to do with policies of curbing illegal immigration.

By the turn of the new century public concern at the large increase in immigration, mainly from Europe, was growing. Once Tony Blair decided to allow those from the new EU states in Eastern Europe to have unhindered access there was nothing the government could do about European immigration. Ministers therefore started to focus on reducing the number of illegal immigrants. The first to use the phrase "hostile environment" for illegal immigrants was Liam Byrne MP, then Minister of State for Borders and Immigration in the Labour government of the day, in 2007.

In the 2010 general election, and subsequently, the Conservatives had promised to reduce immigration to "the tens of thousands", a reckless and completely unattainable promise that increased the "hostile environment" for migrants. Theresa May, as Home Secretary, doubled down on reducing immigration. She strongly opposed Michael Gove who wanted to take overseas students out of the calculation. She sent vans round London telling illegal migrants to go home, which made even Conservative ministers, never mind their Liberal Democrat coalition partners, feel deeply uncomfortable. Privately, comparisons were made with 1930s Germany.

Ministers, both Conservative and Liberal Democrat, and before them Labour, were responding to public pressure, indeed outrage, at people who had no right to be here and yet who, in so many cases, ministers seemed powerless to deport. Much of the difficulty was in identifying who the illegal immigrants were. With an impossible immigration target to try and meet and a Home Secretary determined to crack down, the Home Office became ever more desperate. As the immigration rules were tightened, ministers were warned that people who had come to the UK perfectly legally would have difficulty proving that as the rules were retrospectively changed. It led to what the Labour MP Liz Kendall called an "if in doubt you're out" approach.

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Yet the Home Office is far from alone in this culture of dishonesty. In April 2013 the Personal Independence Payment, known as PIP, was introduced in pilot areas to replace the Disability Living Allowance. The purpose of PIP was to cut welfare costs by 20%, which Coalition ministers felt was a necessary part of cutting the deficit. In practice the cost went up and, when new rules were introduced by the Conservatives in 2017, many charities warned that disabled people would be left without support. Ministers knew that the proposals would not work out as in theory they claimed they would and sure enough, in June 2014, never mind 2017, the Public Accounts Committee expressed the view that the implementation of the PIP scheme had been "nothing short of a fiasco".

Then there is the catalogue of errors coming from the tax authority HMRC. Last month HMRC, in response to a series of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, admitted that it has no detailed evidence to demonstrate that its Check Employment Status for Tax (CEST) tool was accurate. CEST had failed 97% of BBC broadcasters who had used the CEST tool. With more than 40,000 individuals currently using CEST to assess their IR35 status each month, many will have been forced into false employment, and subject to excessive taxation, as a result. HMRC failed to test the CEST system properly. As the website Contractor Calculator noted last month: "CEST was built using an Agile Software Development approach, a central tenant of which is automated testing. However, an examination of the code base available for inspection online, along with an analysis of HMRC's responses to several FOI requests, suggests that no formally documented or automated acceptance tests even exist. As a result, HMRC is unable to prove that CEST correctly calculates the results for the historic IR35 court cases, or any cases for that matter."

HMRC administers the tax credits scheme, which supports working families on low incomes. When mistakes are made HMRC hides behind quite complex regulations that enable it to extort what for those on tax credits are substantial sums of money. Sometimes mistakes are made, which may be legitimate when people are required to estimate their income while still in the current tax year, but HMRC still pursue claims even once they know that no money is owed to them. All too often, HMRC pursue claims for substantial sums that could be countered if challenged in court knowing that families on tax credits are unlikely to have the funds to go to lawyers. In another area of embarrassment for HMRC, it was revealed last week that the tax authority had cancelled 270,000 late payment penalties in 2016. It was only when a large law firm, Clifford Chance, challenged HMRC that they backed down. An unknown number of these penalties had been issued in error to taxpayers who had actually submitted their Self Assessment tax return prior to the deadline, while others were cancelled because HMRC finally conceded that some taxpayers had a "reasonable excuse" for the late filing. If this was so, why had they been fined in the first place?

At the end of last week a court case illustrated an injustice within the Ministry of Justice that has now become widespread. A retired doctor was accused by a fantasist with mental health problems and a history of making false allegations of molesting her a quarter of a century ago. She had also become involved in a sexual relationship with the lead detective on the case, which had compromised his impartiality. The case never came to court, but by the time it was dropped the doctor had run up costs of over £100,000, most of his life savings. He was awarded only £7,280 towards his costs. Until 2012 the state would pay the legal costs – within reason – of anyone acquitted of a criminal offence. The Coalition government then changed the law so that those acquitted would only have their costs paid by the state if they had applied for legal aid and then at legal aid rates that are much lower than needed for a decent defence. This was done purely to save money and in the certain knowledge that injustice would follow.

In all these cases Government knew that there were negative consequences of its policies, but still carried on with them because they could and civil servants knew that ministers would only intervene if there was a major outcry, which was judged to be unlikely. In the case of the Windrush generation the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, alerted by the governments of Caribbean Commonwealth countries, warned the Home Office in 2016 that its policy was hitting people who had every right to be in Britain. HMRC are extorting money from people who they know don't owe them anything but are unlikely to have the resources to challenge them in court. The Ministry of Justice know that the change of rules on costs is causing huge injustice. In all these cases it is civil servants who are making the decisions, but it would be wrong to blame them. They are responding to what their political masters demand of them. It is ministers who have created the culture within which the civil service operates and it is ministers who are responsible. If this culture of dishonesty is to be stopped, it is ministers who will have to step forward and stop it.

Tuning fork!

By Professor Jan Willem de Graaf

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

Sometimes I dream that after driving away I find that the road network management has changed all signs at night. The priority sign means, for example, stop. A yield line means you can just drive. Car parts and hospital beds would, I fear, be quickly "sold out".

In my leisure time I play guitar. On my smartphone, I have an app - Guitartuner - that produces a beautiful A of 440Hz. Everywhere I go I tune my guitar (or bass) on the tone generated by this app. To me it is a handy tool. There are tuners in the stores that can be clipped on the head of the guitar, indicating

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whether a string produces the correct pitch. The hearing of the musician is eliminated here, and the tuner is certainly not precise enough, because tone depends on many more factors than just the loose strings. Now I am a very careful person when it comes to updating my apps (I usually skip updates consistently), but last Saturday when I was in the studio to complete recordings for a new CD with my love and a few friends, I found out that my digital tuning fork had been updated to a perfectly working chromatic tuner, but without tuning fork. The ears of the musician are now completely out of the game...

One moment you have something, the other moment you've lost it. Digital technology is beautiful but, unfortunately, is also incredibly unreliable. Imagine, after a night of good sleep, you enter your car where you find that the brake pedal is on the right and the accelerator pedal on the left. An update, with kind regards from Volkswagen. Or that the manufacturer of your piano - for example Steinway or Grotrian Steinweg - decided to do an update, inverting all the keys: on the right the basses and on the left the high tones. Of course this would never happen I hear you say. If that is true, why does this happen almost continuously with updates of apps?

Handy pieces of tools are assimilated by humans in their action repertoire. During development we learn to work with it. A person adapts to the possibilities and limits of such a tool and eventually mastery arises. If the tool constantly changes, mastering and developing skills disappear into the background. Apps aren't skill-centred but technology-centred. Of course it can be didactically very good to use a tool temporarily "differently", for instance to play guitar with the non-dominant hand, or to use the hockey stick the other way around. From the disruption this evokes, sometimes a "breakthrough" can be forced into "normal" use. But sustainable development

is virtually impossible if the sustainability of a tool or a relevant aspect of it has become a question mark for every update of the app.

My grumbling about the lack of a good voice tone didn't make the atmosphere good at the recordings. As good and bad as it went, I tuned my guitar on the recordings of last Saturday. During the break I decided to visit the music store. I asked for an ordinary, old-fashioned tuning fork. You guessed it: sold out!

Landmark *Training Needs Analysis* report calls for investment in workforce development

A focus on leadership and management, English, maths and digital skills are needed to take the FE profession forward with confidence through the current set of reforms, according to the landmark analysis of the training needs for the Further Education and Training sector. Published by the Education and Training Foundation, the *Training Needs Analysis* report reflects the perspectives of over 400 institutions and more than 2,000 individual practitioners including teachers, trainers, leaders and assessors.

The ETF stressed that the report had been supported by all the key sector membership bodies and trade unions in the sector, as well as the Department for Education. The ETF explained that the purpose of the report had been to provide intelligence that could support policy-makers and the sector in making informed investment decisions to support the workforce, to meet the challenges and opportunities that the technical education reforms, including T-levels, would bring over the next three years.

The report's key conclusion was that while providers and those working in the sector felt that their recent training and development activities had met most or all of their development needs, there were key areas that required further investment and focus. They said that if more budget and time permitted, there would be scope for additional training to take advantage of the reforms, with a particular focus on leadership and management, maths and English, alongside the use of digital and other new technologies for teaching and learning.

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David Russell, Chief Executive of the Education and Training Foundation, said that the country was entering one of the most critical phases in its history of further education and training and the opportunities the reforms would bring, alongside the renewed focus on technical education, would mean that a high-quality workforce would be needed to make them a success.

The research, which had taken place in Autumn 2017, had been commissioned, conducted and part-funded by the ETF, which had surveyed 2,366 individual respondents and 481 learning providers, and it had undertaken 50 in-depth discussions with senior representatives of FE sector organisations. The ETF commissioned BMG Research to undertake the research.

The Training Needs Analysis report, found that:

- The vast majority of providers had said that the training and development they had received over the past year had met all (22%) or most (69%) of the significant needs of the organisation. However, a significant minority (23%) of individual respondents had not received all the training and development they had wanted or needed, with the highest numbers (28%) of these being in colleges (Figure 32). Overall, 59% had said that they had received all of the training they needed.
- Individuals had reported spending significant time on CPD over the past year, although it had varied by job role and type of provider. On average, staff had reported spending 44 hours on CPD over the past year, which had varied from 73 hours reported by governors and trustees to 22 hours spent by learning

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support staff. Lecturers, teachers and tutors had spent an average of 41 hours on CPD over the past year. In general, staff at ITPs had reported higher number of hours spent training (57 hours) while in local authorities the figure had been 37 hours.

- The amount spent on external training per member of staff by institutions in the last academic year had varied considerably, as ITPs had spent the most per member of staff (£761 – £889) and colleges had spent the least (£172). But the report acknowledged that because of their internal training resources colleges may not need to spend as much on external training supply.

In addition, the ETF, for example, provided a range of free or subsidised training, which meant that the time spent on training may be a more useful indicator. 48% of individuals had revealed that their training costs from external providers had been entirely funded by their employer, whilst 8% had self-funded and 30% had said that their training had involved no cost.

- There had been demand for future training which would lead to a qualification or accreditation. A third of individuals would like to gain a qualification (22%) or accreditation (11%) through training related to their role. Training and development that enhanced teaching and learning (12%) was considered to be most valuable.

- The key drivers of training identified by institutions differed markedly across the sector. National policy changes, especially apprenticeship reform, had been a significant concern to ITPs (78% of those who had considered national policy changes a key driver). The reforms of technical education (including the introduction of T-levels had been the biggest issue (38%) amongst those colleges that believed that training would be driven by national policy, closely followed by apprenticeship reform (31%).

For colleges and third sector providers, the needs of the organisation itself would be the key driver of training needs (36% and 47% respectively), in particular, the organisation's desire to maximise the efficiency, performance and professionalism of its workforce (71% and 59% of this group respectively).

In terms of the future:

- Seven in ten individuals working in the FE sector believed that they would benefit from training and development over the next year and institutions had a similar view. Amongst staff groups identified for more training by institutions, the majority had identified lecturers, teachers and tutors (85%), senior management team (79%) and middle/junior managers (78%). 80% of prime ITPs had said that specialist assessors/verifiers/trainers of instructors would need training in the next year, whilst for lecturers/teachers/tutors the figures had ranged from 89% for colleges, 84% for ITP prime contractors and 79% for those in local authorities.

- Teaching and pedagogy had been the key priority for training for individual respondents, (44%). Obtaining QTLS status had been a top priority for 9% overall, most notably for lecturers (13%), assessors (16%) and learning support staff (13%). Governance, leadership and management skills had been the top priority across the board, (20%) of all respondents.

The report concluded that the priorities may be affected by the composition of the sample (which was reflective of the sector), as unsurprisingly senior managers believed that in future there would need to

“Staff had reported spending 44 hours on CPD over the past year, which had varied from 73 hours reported by governors and trustees to 22 hours spent by learning support staff. Lecturers, teachers and tutors had spent an average of 41 hours on CPD over the past year.”

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be more leadership and management training (71%) and, lecturers, teachers, trainers and tutors said that there was a need for more training in teaching and pedagogical skills (74%).

- The main barriers individuals believed would prevent them from undertaking training and development in the next year had been being too busy at work (38%), their employer being unable to supply or fund it (33%), and a reluctance to fund it themselves or they could not afford it (31%).

- Institutions believed that a wide variety of future training would be required, particularly in terms of subject/sector knowledge (78%) and governance, leadership and management skills (75%).

The subject areas that providers had identified as requiring further training and development apart from general subject knowledge (38%) had been health/public services/care (27%), engineering/manufacturing (22%) and English (22%). The figure for maths had been 21%. In terms of leadership and management, the key areas had been general organisational management (76%) and team leadership (70%).

- The organisations from which institutions would most welcome support on training and development had been the Education and Training Foundation (66%), the Department for Education (66%), followed by the sector's membership bodies AELP, AoC and Holey.

Commenting on the report from the Education and Training Foundation on training needs analysis, David Hughes, Chief Executive of the Association of Colleges, said the Government and employers had become increasingly aware of the need to invest more in skills for young people and adults. But he argued that the investment would only be effective if the lecturers and other staff supporting students themselves had the skills and knowledge to provide quality experiences.

Mr Hughes said that while the AoC and ETF could agree on the priorities that colleges and their staff wanted and need in terms of workforce and professional development, and much of that need would be met by college investment, some of it would need continued Government support, particularly as new policy was implemented, such as T-Levels.

The University and College Union's head of further education, Andrew Harden, said that the report had showed that further education staff had a huge appetite for training, but too often workload and budget constraints stood in the way of their professional development. He added that if the Government wanted a well-trained professional workforce to support its technical education reforms, it would need to invest in ensuring that staff could access the learning they needed.

“The report concluded that the priorities may be affected by the composition of the sample (which was reflective of the sector), as unsurprisingly senior managers believed that in future there would need to be more leadership and management training (71%) and, lecturers, teachers, trainers and tutors said that there was a need for more training in teaching and pedagogical skills (74%).”

C O N S U L T A T I O N S

There were no education consultations or consultation outcomes published last week.

Inquiry into alternative provision

In another busy week on the Committee corridor of the House of Commons, the Education Committee will meet later today and take evidence for its inquiry into alternative provision (AP) from Stuart Gallimore, president of the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS), Kevin Courtney, joint General Secretary of the National Education Union, and Sue Morris-King, Senior HMI, Ofsted. It will then hear from Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP, Minister of State for School Standards.

In its written submission for today's session ADCS stated: "ADCS members believe reintegration to a mainstream provision must be a priority, AP should be used as an intervention to stabilise poor behaviour, understand suddenly emerging complex needs or to provide additional help and support in times of crisis. It should not routinely be considered as a destination in itself."

ADCS quantified the scale of AP, noting that the number of permanent exclusions across all state-funded schools has increased from 5,795 in 2014/15 to 6,685 in 2015/16. This equates to around 35 permanent exclusions per day in 2015/16, up from a daily average of 30 in 2014/15. Exclusion has historically been reserved for only the most serious acts of misbehaviour, however, persistent disruptive behaviour is currently the most common reason for permanent exclusions in all state funded schools (likewise for fixed period exclusions). Over half of all permanent and fixed period exclusions occur in national curriculum year 9 or above. ADCS found this "very concerning". Compared to the general school population learners who are eligible for free school meals and those with special educational needs are over-represented in PRUs and other forms of AP.

ADCS noted that research published by the DfE earlier this year found a growing number of schools are developing their own in-house AP. ADCS felt that this approach "seems particularly valuable for older learners preparing to transition from school to post-16 education. The best AP units enable learners to stay for short periods during which the demands of a fulltime timetable is too great e.g. during family breakdown. In-house AP maintains the learner's sense of connectivity with the school community." ADCS felt that AP was sometimes conflated with unregistered (or illegal) schools and elective home education (EHE), which it felt was unhelpful. "There is no clear picture of the numbers of children and young people who are EHE, however, ADCS members are reporting a growing number parents and carers citing emotional and behavioural reasons for choosing to home school." ADCS was concerned about the growth of EHE as an intervention and the numbers of pupils becoming EHE in advance of sitting their GCSEs. "ADCS members worry that increased accountability and competition in the school system, a high stakes inspection regime, ongoing exam and curriculum reforms and an ever-tighter funding regime are driving exclusive practices as a route to improvement. Schools and their leaders stand and fall by their reputation and the most vulnerable learners are being squeezed out of the mainstream schooling system as a result."

In its written submission, Ofsted pointed out that alternative provision remains a largely uninspected and unregulated sector. Beyond pupil referral units and the other full-time provision, there is no requirement for the majority of alternative providers to register with any official body and no formal arrangements to evaluate their quality. Eighty-nine per cent of alternative provision schools (LA-run PRUs and AP academies) have good or outstanding teaching at their most recent inspection. This is similar to the proportion of all state funded schools judged good or outstanding for teaching (90%). However, even where teaching is good, some pupils' attendance is so poor that they do not benefit from it. The overall absence rate for pupil referral units in autumn/spring 2016/17 was 33.2%, compared to 4.5% for all schools⁵. The Attainment 8 and GCSE results for pupils in PRUs are far lower than those seen for all pupils nationally. Because Ofsted does not directly inspect unregistered alternative provision, there is no overall national picture of the quality of teaching in such provision.

Tomorrow the Education Committee will meet and take evidence for its inquiry into education in the North and improving skills and training from former Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne in his capacity as chairman of the Northern Powerhouse Partnership (NPP). Also giving evidence will be Lord Jim O'Neill, vice chairman of the NPP, and Henri Murison, a director of the NPP.

School funding

In a major debate on school funding, the Shadow Education Secretary, Angela Rayner (Lab, Ashton-under-Lyne) introduced a debate on a motion that noted the Conservative Party manifesto pledge to make sure that no school has its budget cut as a result of the new national funding formula, noted that the formula did not guarantee this and called upon the Government to ensuring that every school received a cash increase in per pupil funding in every financial year of the 2017 Parliament. (House of Commons, Opposition Day debate, 25 April 2018.)

Mrs Raynor pointed out that the motion simply asked Government MPs to implement the commitment in their own manifesto and support the positions of the Chancellor and the Secretary of State for Education. She said that teachers had warned of a growing child poverty crisis as staff had reported that children had been going to school without clean clothes and pupils had been showing signs of malnutrition. Mrs Raynor added that the Government was still without a chairman for its Social Mobility Commission and funding for Sure Start had been slashed by hundreds of millions of pounds. School funding cuts had left more children crammed into super-size classes, there were fewer subjects on offer and the school day had been squeezed. Mrs Raynor cited the warning from the NASHUA union that one in five new classrooms were pomeranians.

She said that for children with special educational needs, the funding crisis had created even greater challenges because when school budgets were cut, the services that supported children who were most in need were often lost first. Mrs Raynor added that the National Education Union had revealed that almost two thirds of schools had to cut special needs provision.

She argued that the Government's new funding formula presented local authorities, which were at breaking point due to cuts to their budgets, with the terrible choice between top-slicing additional funding for high needs and giving schools their full allocation. Turning to the new rules on free school-meal eligibility, Mrs Raynor said that despite ministers and Government members claims that no children would lose their existing allowance, the Institute for Fiscal Studies had found that one in eight children who were eligible under the legacy benefits system would not be eligible after the changes.

She said that £1.2 billion had been slashed from the 16-to-19 education budget, which had hit sixth forms and colleges, and apprenticeship starts were in freefall. Mrs Raynor said that while the Secretary of State would remind members of the £1.3 billion his predecessor had eventually come up with in 2017, he should also explain where the money would come from, as £300 million had been raided from the healthy pupils fund despite the Government's promise that it would not be cut and the previous Secretary of State had indicated that she would save money by rowing back on the free schools programme, which was an admission that conventional schools were actually cheaper.

Education Secretary

The Secretary of State for Education, Damian Hinds (Con, East Hampshire) argued that more money was going into schools than ever before as funding would rise from almost £41 billion in the previous year to £42.4 billion in the current year and it would rising again to £43.5 billion next year. He added that the figure included the additional £1.3 billion, which was being directing to frontline spending by prioritising money from elsewhere in the Department for Education's budget, which meant that overall the Government would be protecting schools' per pupil funding in real terms over the next two years. The minister said that primary schools were also being given £320 million a year for PE and sport, which was double the figure in 2016 and £600 million a year would be invested to provide free school meals for all infants. He added that in the current year, over £60 million would be invested in maths, science and computing, and over £100 million, in arts and music.

Mr Hinds insisted that spending was high by historical standards as the Institute for Fiscal Studies

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had shown that, in real terms, per pupil funding in 2020 would be at least half as much again as it had been in 2000. He added that internationally, the country spent more on schools in total than both the EU and OECD averages and at levels that were comparable with key competitor countries. But he acknowledged that in terms of technical and vocational education, the figures compared less favourably and in Germany in particular, the spend was considerably more on secondary-level vocational programmes. The minister said that he was therefore pleased that the Chancellor had committed extra money to boost the size and funding for the new T-level programmes, which would total over £500 million a year in additional resources for post-16 education when T-levels were fully rolled out.

Turning to the National Funding Formula, he said that the Government had gone further than its manifesto promise that no school would lose funding as a result of the national funding formula, as the formula would give every local authority more money for every pupil in every school in 2018-19 and 2019-20. Mr Hinds pointed out that every school would attract at least a cash increase of 0.5% per pupil through the formula in the current year, and 1% more next year, compared with their baselines.

More money needed

John Redwood (Con, Wokingham) asked the Secretary of State whether he accepted that although his area had achieved above average results with some of the lowest amounts of per pupil funding anywhere in the country, there was simply too little cash available. Damian Hinds replied that as well as ensuring that every school attracted more money, the national funding formula also allocated the biggest increases to schools that had historically been the most underfunded. He pointed out that thousands of schools would attract 3% more per pupil this year and another 3% per pupil next year, and some of the lowest-funded schools would attract even more as a result of the minimum per pupil funding levels, which meant that every primary school would attract £3,500 per pupil and every secondary school £4,800 per pupil by 2019-20. The Secretary of State said that as a result, many areas would see “quite big increases across the board”, and by 2019-20 in Knowsley, there would be an increase of 4.3%, while in Derby, there would be an increase of 6.7% in the same timeframe. He added that in York, there would be an increase of 7.9% and in Bath and North East Somerset, there would be an increase of 7.2%.

David Drew (Lab/Co-op, Stroud) urged the Secretary of State to look at the way in which special needs allocation was operating to ensure that the poorer schools would not get even poorer, relatively. Damian Hinds said that local authorities had the most up-to-date figures and profiling of the children in their areas, in terms of special educational needs and protections also applied to the high needs block through the minimum guarantees, while overall high needs funding has gone up.

Wes Streeting (Lab, Ilford North) claimed that the Secretary of State was “in cloud cuckoo land” as there was no flexibility in children’s services departments, just consistent need and insufficient funding. Damian Hinds argued that the funding formula was what it was and it guaranteed allocations of money from central funding to local authorities in respect of each school. But he acknowledged that schools had faced significant cost pressures over recent years in respect of national insurance and pension contributions, for example. The minister added that there are also new costs, such as spending on technology which had exceeded £500 million across the system in 2016.

While he realised that there could be particular pressures on high needs budgets, such funding had benefited from the same protections that had been provided for mainstream schools. But Mr Hinds agreed that schools were doing more to support pupils with a complex range of social, emotional and behavioural needs. The Government was redoubling its efforts to help schools to get the best value from their resources, through free procurement advice via the pilot buying hubs in the north-west and south-west, which provided face-to-face and phone advice to schools on complex procurement and on how to get the best value for money; through nationally negotiated purchasing deals; and through school resource management advisers.

John Redwood (Con, Wokingham) said that primary schools in his local authority had received less than £3,500 per pupil and secondary schools had received less than £4,600 per pupil. He asked the Secretary of State when they would be brought up. Damian Hinds said he would write to Mr Redwood with

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the specific figures for his schools. The minister added that in terms of future funding, there was a comprehensive spending review process. He added that the Government had set out in the national funding formula what would happen over the two-year period and established the principle that funding should be fair.

Select Committee

The chairman of the Education Select Committee, Robert Halfon (Con, Harlow) warned that it was not clear how school improvement could be sustained in the face of rising pressures on schools. He added that the education system faced a number of major challenges, the first being resources. Mr Halfon pointed out that despite steady investment in the English education system over the last 20 years and record overall levels of public money going into schools, there were rising cost pressures, which had led to serious challenges to the delivery of high-quality education for all children. He said that the Education Committee had recently announced a new inquiry into school and college funding ahead of the next spending review and the aim was that a forward-looking inquiry would move beyond the exchanges in Parliament and elsewhere, which have largely taken place at cross purposes and to little effect.

Mr Halfon thought that the country need the same level of vocal support for schools and colleges, and a similar long-term vision as the Secretary of State for Health had achieved for the NHS. He pointed out that while the previous Secretary of State for Education, Justine Greening, should be commended for redirecting money from the Department to the frontline of schools, the time had come to seriously rethink the way in which the Government funded schools and colleges and to adopt a much more long-term perspective. Mr Halfon had suggested 10 years as a starting point, which was being talked about for the NHS, because making a decision every three to four years was just not strategic enough.

He thought that the second challenge that schools were facing was the workforce. Mr Halfon pointed out that the National Audit Office had found last year that whereas £555 million had been spent on training and supporting new teachers in 2013-14, the Department for Education had spent just £35.7 million in 2016-17 on programmes for teacher development and retention, of which just £91,000 had been aimed at improving teacher retention. He added that in 2016, Policy Exchange had published research which had shown that a quarter of teachers leaving the classroom had been women aged between 30 and 39. Mr Halfon argued that the situation was a challenge for productivity and for social justice, and schools would need to become much more open to part-time and flexible working to stop the classroom brain drain. Mr Halfon pointed out that the third challenge involved improving social justice in the school system, which went beyond just increasing public investment and strengthening the teaching workforce, because there were still great social injustices in the education system. He stressed that just 1.3% of children who were taught outside mainstream settings achieved five good GCSEs. Mr Halfon said that as he knew that the schools minister was passionate about GCSEs, he wondered why the group of children were being neglected. He added that only a third of children receiving free school meals achieved five good GCSEs, compared with 61% of their better-off peers.

Mr Halfon argued that given the charitable status benefits that private schools enjoyed, there should be a levy on private schools similar to the apprenticeship levy, to ensure that the very poorest children in the country could be given the chance to access and climb the private school ladder. The fourth challenge Mr Halfon saw concerned the curriculum and he warned that the Government must not allow “a gradual and dangerous narrowing of the curriculum, to the exclusion of either creativity or vocational education”.

The Minister for School Standards, Nick Gibb (Con, Bognor Regis and Littlehampton) said that although that had been some consensus in the House about the principles underlying the national funding formula, the Government disagreed with the Opposition on the overall amount. He said that the question was would the £42.4 billion that was being spent in the current year be enough and could public finances afford more. Mr Gibb pointed out that in the past two years schools had incurred increased costs, such as higher employer’s national insurance contributions and higher pensions contributions. But he argued that both had applied to other public services, and higher national insurance had also applied to private sector employers.

Higher education

The Shadow Education Secretary, Angela Rayner (Lab, Ashton-under-Lyne) had two major debates to initiate last week. (House of Commons, Opposition Day debate, 23 April 2018.) She introduced a debate to annul the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (Consequential, Transitional, Transitory and Saving Provisions) Regulations 2018 (S.I., 2018, No. 245), dated 26 February 2018.

She argued that throughout the passage of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017, the Opposition had raised questions and concerns that had remained answered, such as the appointment of Toby Young, who's "shambolic and politicised" appointment process was still hanging over both the Office for Students and the Government. Ms Rayner added that the commissioner for public appointments had found that the governance code had not been followed, which in itself had been a breach of the ministerial code. She claimed that the composition of the board remained highly controversial and she added that the University and College Union had called for a voice for staff.

Mrs Rayner noted that the Government's Office for Students guidance had abandoned the category of registered provider and she asked the minister whether new small providers would be outside the regulation of the Office for Students entirely. She pointed out that the regulations transferred the powers of the Higher Education Funding Council for England to the Office for Students and in taking on the functions of HEFCE, the Office for Students would set and implement its own policy agenda. Ms Rayner questioned whether the Office for Students had the powers it needed to protect students when they needed its protection. She argued that the danger of the regulations passing on powers of the Office for Fair Access would be that the director of fair access would lose their independence and ability to negotiate directly with universities.

Mrs Rayner said that poorer students were leaving university with the highest levels of debt and the Government had scrapped the maintenance grants that would have helped them. She pledged that a Labour Government would reintroduce maintenance grants and scrap tuition fees. She said that in terms of the Committee stage of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017, it seemed ironic that many of the organisations or individuals that had been listed under the NUS's no-platform policy had been banned by the Government. Ms Rayner questioned whether it remained the Government's policy to fine universities for the actions of autonomous student unions.

She argued that the Government had also taken no action whatsoever against vice-chancellors' pay. Mrs Rayner added that the simple fact was that the Government had created a regulator in which it would be hard for the sector to have any confidence, and the regulations would simply entrench the problem.

Select committee

The chairman of the Education Select Committee, Robert Halfon (Con, Harlow) said that his committee had been conducting an inquiry into value for money in higher education, which had included an investigation of the role of the Office for Students. He supported the OfS as the new regulator, and he would support the Government in the debate. Mr Halfon stressed that he had confidence in Sir Michael Barber, the chairman of the OfS, especially in the light of his appearance before the Committee, when he had spoken positively about the increase in the number of degree apprenticeships. But Mr Halfon added that he was concerned about the lack of further education representatives on the board. He said that it was "incredibly disappointing" that such an important part of the education sector was being "neglected yet again".

Mr Halfon explained that when Sir Michael Barber had appeared before the Education Committee on 27 March, he had been asked whether he would like to "give consideration to the lack of people with direct experience of FE and apprenticeship backgrounds on the board". He added that on 5 April, the Committee had received a letter from him, in which he had said: "I recognise and agree with the clear message that was delivered on the importance of representation from the further education sector in our operations." Mr Halfon said that Sir Michael had also said that the OfS would: "welcome high-quality applications from people with experience of the further education sector when the DfE launch their recruitment campaign for the current 'ordinary member' board vacancy."

He pointed out that the Committee had been so concerned by the process of appointments to the board that it had received a private briefing from the Commissioner for Public Appointments, Peter Riddell,

which had laid bare some of the problems. Mr Halfon said he would welcome the appointment of a panel of apprentices alongside the OfS student panel to inform the work and ensure that the views of apprentices were properly listened to. He added that the OfS should be leading the whole sector in its approach to embracing different models of higher education.

Mr Halfon said that for a number of years FE funding had been neglected and although it had been stabilised, the sector needed a lot more funding. He revealed that his hope was that one day, FE colleges would lead the vast majority of apprentice training in the country. Mr Halfon said that while it was good to have some private providers, further education had an incredibly important role. He added that skills and apprenticeships should be at the heart of the Office for Students.

The Minister for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation, Sam Gyimah (Con, East Surrey) said that the motion was a very serious one that called for the set of regulations before the House to be annulled. But he argued that the legislation should be a piece of good news for the House. The minister argued that it would be unviable to continue with the existing legislation because the Higher Education and Research Act had replaced the previous legislative framework for higher education that had been established in 1992, when the sector had been smaller and competition had been limited.

He argued that the Office for Students was an independent regulator that put the interests of students and value for money at its heart. Mr Gyimah added that it stood for a new, outcome-driven approach to regulation that sought to open up university opportunities to all, to enhance the student experience, to improve the accountability and transparency of providers, to promote the quality and flexibility of higher education choices, and, crucially, to protect students' interests. He claimed that the old system, to which the Opposition would like to return, was a recipe for state control of universities, which would see a return to top-down planning of higher education and student number controls.

The minister insisted that the Secretary of State's first set of strategic guidance to the OfS had set a very clear expectation that apprenticeships must be taken into account whenever the OfS exercised its functions, and that apprentices must be represented within its widening access and participation activity. He said that while he had noted the points that had been made about the composition of the board, there would be "no going back". Mr Gyimah pointed out that HERA had established the new Office for Students, which regulated in a very different way by imposing terms and conditions on providers that wanted to be on its register, and only registered providers could benefit from their students having access to student support. He stressed that HEFCE had already been abolished, as had the Office for Fair Access, and neither of the bodies could be resurrected without primary legislation.

The minister warned that if the motion was carried, students' fees would be uncapped, because while the amount of fees that students could be charged had been set out in separate legislation, the transitional regulations ensured that until the new regime went fully live on 1 August 2019, a cap would remain on student fees. He added that without fee caps, access plans would be lost, because it was the incentive of being able to charge students up to the current higher fee cap that had driven providers towards agreeing access plans. Mr Gyimah said that establishing a single regulator, which brought together the regulatory functions of HEFCE in relation to teaching in higher education with the statutory remit of the Director of Fair Access, delivered a significant change in ownership of responsibility for widening access and participation. He added that it brought together the powers, duties, expertise and resources under the collective responsibility of the OfS and it allowed for a smooth and orderly transition.

A division resulted in the motion being lost by 211 votes to 291.

“Mr Halfon said that for a number of years FE funding had been neglected and although it had been stabilised, the sector needed a lot more funding. He revealed that his hope was that one day, FE colleges would lead the vast majority of apprentice training in the country. Mr Halfon said that while it was good to have some private providers, further education had an incredibly important role.”

Social mobility

On behalf of Lord Lennie (Lab), Baroness Lister of Burtersett (Lab) asked the Government what progress had been made on the appointment of the new chairman and members of the Social Mobility Commission. (House of Lords, oral question debate, 23 April 2018.) The Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Department for Education, Lord Agnew of Oulton (Con) said that applications had closed and new commissioners would be recruited as soon as possible after the appointment of the new chairman to allow him or her to provide input. He added that they were public appointments, and the process would be completed following the governance code for public appointments.

Baroness Lister pointed out that it had been nearly five months since the commission had resigned en masse because it had been reduced to a rump of four from 10, and it had felt that it had not been listened to. She said that as the Conservative chairman of the Commons Education Select Committee had observed, the situation had seemed extraordinary in light of the Prime Minister's concern to fight burning injustices and given that the commission's final report had warned that there had been no overall national strategy to tackle the social economic and geographic divisions facing the country. Baroness Lister asked what steps the Government was taking to develop such a strategy and to reconstitute a strengthened commission to oversee it, as recommended by the Education Committee. Lord Agnew said that the recommendations of the Education Select Committee were being considered by the Government.

Lord Lexden (Con), the historian to the Conservative Party and the Carlton Club, asked what the Government was doing to help break down barriers between children from different religious and cultural backgrounds. Lord Agnew said that the integration strategy had recently been announced, via the schools linking programme to create sustained opportunities for children of different backgrounds to mix and socialise and strengthening expectations on integration for all new free schools. Lord Cameron of Dillington (CB) pointed out that the Social Mobility Commission had indicated that intergenerational poverty and deprivation had been as bad, if not worse, in rural England than anywhere else, including urban England. Lord Agnew said that rural areas would be an important part of the criteria in the interview process.

The Bishop of Norwich (Ind) said that it had been because social mobility had been one of the drivers of the original academies programme set up by the last Labour Government, that some had supported it so strongly. He asked the minister whether he believed that that still held true for academies and that widening educational opportunities for the disadvantaged was the key factor in promoting social mobility. Lord Agnew said that 1,950 previously largely failing schools had been taken into sponsored academy status. He added that at the time they had been taken in, only 10% had been rated good or better, but currently 70% were good or better, which accounted for about 450,000 children.

Baroness Hussein-Ece (LDP) argued that social mobility inequalities were not narrowing or improving. Lord Agnew said that the 30-hours policy in December 2017, which had been aimed at disadvantaged families; Unlocking Talent, Fulfilling Potential, which had been aimed at improving social mobility, in December 2017; the integration strategy; and the careers strategy in December 2017, had all been aimed at improving social mobility.

Lord Watts (Lab) insisted that social mobility in the UK was declining. He asked the Government to issue priorities and set out some targets by which social mobility could be measured. Lord Agnew argued that the number of children living in poverty had declined since 2010. He pointed out that in the recent social mobility action plan that had been issued in December, the Government had reasserted its aim to focus on areas such as the word gap, which was one of the biggest areas of disadvantage for young children.

Baroness Berridge (Con) pointed out that the Select Committee had looked at social mobility for those young people who did not go to university. She pointed out that the majority of young people had gone into jobs, vocational training such as apprenticeships or into further education. Baroness Berridge asked the minister whether the department intended to ensure that some of the commissioners would come from a non-university education background. Lord Agnew said that T-levels were aimed at the group of people who did not consider a university career as their priority. He pointed out that there was a growing awareness that there are other routes and an education and skills company was working with schools to provide mentoring.

Integrated Communities Strategy

Viscount Ridley (Con) asked the Government what contribution schools could make to the policies outlined in its *Integrated Communities Strategy* Green Paper. (House of Lords, oral question debate, 24 April 2018.) The Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Department for Education, Lord Agnew of Oulton (Con) said that while many schools already successfully created inclusive environments where children were able to learn the values that underpinned society, in the Green Paper in March the Government had announced a strengthened package of support for schools and measures to deliver quality education across all settings.

Viscount Ridley said that given that the Integrated Communities Strategy had committed to supporting schools to increase diversity to ensure they were more representative of their wider area, and in light of the evidence that religious selection by schools divided children along not just religious lines but ethnic and socio-economic lines, what was the Government doing to ensure the promotion in schools of the universal humanist values of the secular enlightenment and to break down barriers between children of different religious and cultural backgrounds.

Lord Agnew pointed out that in addition to promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty, all schools were required to promote mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs. He added that as part of teaching a broad and balanced curriculum, all state-funded schools were required to provide religious education. Turning to integration, the minister said that the Integrated Communities Strategy had set out a package of measures to help increase integration among children, which included working with admissions authorities, where five areas were being piloted to increase diversity of pupil intakes, funding the schools linking programme, which involved twinning schools of different faiths, and strengthening expectations for all new free schools on how they improved integration.

The former Education Secretary, Lord Blunkett (Lab) pointed out that the Select Committee on Citizenship and Civic Engagement had published its report, which had revealed “the staggering revelation” that the Government had failed to mention citizenship education at all in the strategy document. Lord Agnew invited members to meet him to discuss their recommendations and any criticisms that they had of the Government’s handling of the area. He said that citizenship was part of the key stages 3 and 4 curriculum and in its recent integrated strategy document the Government suggested a number of additional methods to push the agenda further forward.

Lord Singh of Wimbledon (CB) said that while people should be free to believe what they liked, schools should emphasise respect for different faiths and the exploration of the many commonalities between them. Lord Agnew said that all state-funded schools, including faith schools, had a legal obligation to promote community cohesion and to teach a broad and balanced curriculum. He added that they were required to promote the fundamental values of democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty and the Government was currently considering how faith free schools could pay more attention to how they attracted pupils from different faiths and backgrounds.

Lord Watson of Invergowrie (Lab) pointed out that the Green Paper had highlighted the fact that 60% of minority ethnic pupils were in schools where they were in the majority, which the paper said would reduce opportunities for young people to form lasting relationships with those from other backgrounds and it could also restrict pupils’ outlook and education. He noted that the previous year’s Conservative manifesto had contained a pledge to remove the 50% cap on faith schools admissions. Lord Watson argued that all state schools should be open, inclusive, diverse and integrated and they should never be exclusive, monocultural or segregated. Lord Agnew said that the matter of the faith cap was still under consideration.

Lord Pearson of Rannoch (UKIP) asked whether the Government knew what was being taught in the 2,000 madrassas, which were not inspected by Ofsted, and which taught Muslim children about Islam and to recite the Koran for 20 hours a week. Lord Agnew said that Ofsted had been given additional powers and budgets in January 2016 to carry out inspections of what might be consider to be unregistered schools. So far 208 out-of-school settings had been inspected and of the 51 that had been unregistered schools in the formal sense, 44 had been closed. The minister pointed out that seven were still under investigation and the Government had recently renewed the contract with Ofsted to carry on the work.

Academies' gender pay gap

Lord Storey (LDP) asked the Government what assessment it had made of gender pay gaps in academy schools and trusts. (House of Lords, oral question debate, 25 April 2018.) The Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Department for Education, Lord Agnew of Oulton (Con) pointed out that the UK had been one of the first countries in the world to require all large employers to publish their gender pay gap and bonus data. He added that the figures would mean that academy trusts would be able to start to analyse the data and take action to close the gap.

Lord Storey pointed out that in a Written Question to the minister about the gender pay gap he had said that academy trusts were free to set their own salaries. He argued that when the median pay gap was 31.7% in 471 multi-academy trusts, it was not a proper use of taxpayers' money, especially when some chief executives of multi-academy trusts earned upwards of £400,000 a year. Lord Agnew said that while it was correct that academy pay was set by the trusts themselves, the Government had taken action on high-end pay. He added that one of the first things he had done when he had taken on his job in September 2017, had been to ask officials to write to 29 single-academy trusts where there had been high pay. The minister explained that since then, the Government had resolved that 16 of them no longer paid the levels that had been indicated in their returns. He added that his Department had also written to a number of multi-academy trusts, and in the last couple of weeks it had written to all trusts which paid more than £100,000 or which had more than two people in their trust who were paid more than £100,000.

Lord Watson of Invergowrie (Lab) accused the minister of being personally associated with the issue of gender pay gaps, as the website for the Inspiration Trust, which ran 14 academies in East Anglia, had listed him as "a trustee and a person with significant control". Lord Watson questioned why, seven months after being appointed as an Education Minister, Lord Agnew had been allowed to continue to hold the posts. He asked the minister whether he agreed that, despite the fact that trusts had the right to set their own salaries, the size of the gender pay gaps was a scandal and the department should advise the trusts to begin to close them. Lord Agnew said that he had been the founder of the Inspiration Trust first. He insisted that no one was more messianic about the misallocation of taxpayers' money than him, but balance had to be struck between autonomy, where good teachers and good leaders were given the chance to develop and improve schools, and those who were not good were held to account.

Baroness Watkins of Tavistock (CB) argued that the gender pay gap in academy schools was associated with the subjects that each gender taught as people who taught physics were traditionally paid significantly more than those who taught arts. Lord Agnew said that unfortunately there was a market in different skills and professions and there was a shortage of good physics teachers. But he argued that looking more broadly across the gender pay gap, academies did not look as bad as people suggested. The minister said that while in the top quartile men occupied 23% of the total workforce had had 32% of the jobs, the situation in the middle quartile was almost even, as men occupied 23% of the workforce and only 25% of them had upper-middle jobs.

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean (Lab) asked the minister to clarify whether he had been a director of the Inspiration Trust while holding his current office. Lord Agnew said that he was a director and a trustee, but he had stood down as the chairman. He added that the matter had been discussed with the Propriety and Ethics Team in the Cabinet Office and it had been fully disclosed in his ministerial declaration.

Baroness Burt of Solihull (LDP) argued that the real problem was that disproportionately high pay was being channelled up to a tiny number of male-dominated posts at rates that were far higher than the local authority-run schools could pay. Lord Agnew said that the pay in maintained and academy schools was actually very close, as the data to November 2016 showed that a maintained secondary school head teacher had earned £88,300, compared to an academy secondary school head teacher who had earned £92,500. But he added that the maintained head teacher had received a 1% increase in that year, whereas the academy head teacher had had a 0.4% decrease.

The minister explained that in the primary sector, the comparisons were even closer, at £62,400 for a local authority school and £65,500 for an academy. He said that he did not accept that money was being drawn up to mostly male teachers, as 65% of primary heads were women.

Home Education Bill

Lord Clive Soley's (Lab) Home Education (Duty of Local Authorities) Bill is that rare thing, a Private Member's Bill that could become law, or at least the basis of it might end up in Government legislation even if this particular Bill fails. (House of Lords, legislation, committee stage debate, 27 April 2018.) The Home Education Bill is being taken seriously by ministers. It covers an issue, the monitoring of those educated at home or outside the state and normal independent school sectors, whose time has come.

This is largely because of the growth of Islamic institutions many of which have a fundamentalist ethos that is increasingly deemed unhealthy for British society. Ofsted is already inspecting such institutions and if they look like schools and are unregistered it is losing them down, but this Bill, or one like it, that would allow local authorities to keep an eye on those educated outside the mainstream would help both with those who want a rather extreme Islamic education for their children and with safeguarding issues for those educated at home.

This short Bill therefore was given time for a Committee stage, with a number of probing amendments moved to tease out what Clive Soley, who as an MP was a junior minister under Tony Blair, a former chairman of the Labour Party and a politician respected on all sides of Parliament.

Lord Lucas (Con) wanted to making sure that there would be a flow of information to Ofsted that would enable it, when it inspected a school, to understand what the school was doing, and whether the moves to home education had been well advised or whether they had been a covert form of exclusion. Ofsted had told him that it currently could not get at the data and therefore when it visited a school, it knew that children had moved into home education, but it had no way of finding out why that had happened. Lord Lucas added that because there was no record, information or contact with the parents involved, Ofsted had to accept the school's explanation. He argued that schools should not be allowed, whether by way of exclusion or off-rolling, to throw children away, to absolve themselves of responsibility for them. Lord Lucas suggested that children should stay on schools' registers for the purposes of performance tables until the next point of measurement, key stage 2, 4 or 5, so that the decision the school had taken about where a child went, if they left the school, would be one for which the school would be held accountable. But he added that in the general context of the Bill, members should be careful to be fair and not to single out the home educated just because some of them were different, as there was no evidence to suggest that they were a source of great problems.

Lord Addington (LDP) insisted that there was undoubtedly a problem with home education, as it was totally unregulated and no one really knew what was going on. But he added that many people were home educating because they felt the system had failed them.

Lord Adonis (Lab), a former education Minister of State, said that social workers were concerned about "off-rolling" which involved getting pupils off the school rolls and into pupil referral units so that they could not engage in disruption in school. He added that "off-rolling" did not count in performance and league tables which were published for schools at the end of each academic year. Lord Adonis argued that parliament needed to adopt a much more robust approach and temporary exclusions should be banned. He added that for serious disruption, schools should not be allowed to permanently exclude pupils unless there were issues of violence at stake which could not be managed inside the school. Lord Storey (LDP) said it was "absolutely bizarre" that, as a society, no one had a clue how many children went missing from the education system or how many were being home educated.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Department for Education, Lord Agnew of Oulton (Con) said that the Government had published a call for evidence on 10 April to seek information and comment about a wide range of issues within the broad headings of registration, monitoring and support for home education. He added that the consultation would be open until 2 July. The Minister stressed that the Government supported home education when it was done well and it wanted to find ways to support families that were achieving that goal. But he pointed out that while the aim should be to help good home education, poor home education must be dealt with quickly.

The Bill passed its committee stage unopposed and will now go to the report stage in the House of Lords.

The following written questions were answered in Parliament last week.

House of Commons

Department for Education

Academies

Lucy Powell: [136168] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what guidance his Department provides on how multi-academy trust board minutes and other records should be stored in instances where (a) a previous academy board is replaced and placed under new sponsorship and (b) an academy trust closes.

Nadhim Zahawi: Legislation set out in The Charities Act 2011 requires charity trustees to preserve a charity's accounting records for a period of six years following its dissolution. As Charitable Companies, trustees of Multi Academy Trusts must comply with this legislation.

The Charity Commission strongly recommends that trustees uphold a similar period of retention for all other important documents such as meeting minutes, meeting agendas, papers and reports.

Monday 23 April 2018

Academies: Standards

Imran Hussain: [135670] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department has taken to improve the scrutiny of (a) finances and (b) academic performance at academies as a result of the collapse of the Wakefield City Academy Trust.

Nadhim Zahawi: The department continually reviews and improve systems and processes to oversee academies. We have strengthened our processes for monitoring the overall performance of MATs and ensuring growth is sustainable and delivers improvement. We have also improved support available, for example, through funding professional development programmes for MAT trustees^[1] and funding Academy Ambassadors to match high calibre business leaders with academy trusts. Academy Ambassadors work closely with academy trusts and Regional Schools Commissioners to identify trust boards where additional business expertise would improve the governance of the trust and any skills or background that would be particularly desirable in light of the opportunities and challenges the trust is facing. The department has a robust system of financial accountability. Processes are founded on a clear framework communicated and regulated by the Education Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA), with effective oversight and compliance based on proportionate risk assessment, and robust intervention when things go wrong. ESFA scrutinises a broad range of academy trust data and intelligence to identify risk, including audited accounts and a number of annual financial returns. All academy trusts must publish details of their financial performance in annual accounts. To ensure strong external scrutiny, all academy trusts must have an annual external audit of their annual accounts by a registered statutory auditor and the department expect trusts to act on audit findings as an opportunity to strengthen their systems. The ESFA's focus is much broader than intervention, working with the sector to continue building capacity and expertise in financial management and forecasting. To reinforce the importance of three-year financial planning the ESFA are further strengthening budget forecasting, the ESFA CEO Eileen Milner wrote to academy trusts in March

2018 setting out the requirement for all academy trusts to submit three-year financial forecasts. Where concerns arise, ESFA works with trusts to prevent financial instability and enable them to recover their financial position and return to stable governance. Intervention is always proportionate, risk-based, and linked to non-compliance with requirements set out in the Academies Financial Handbook and academies' funding agreements. The sector remains in a stable position, with just over 1% of academy trusts subject to an active Financial Notice to Improve. We constantly keep under review the financial control and reporting framework for academies and introduce any necessary enhancements through the Academies Financial Handbook and the Academies Accounts Direction, both of which are reissued on an annual basis. [1] <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-governors-professional-development>

Monday 23 April 2018

Business: Education

Dan Jarvis: [136582] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to promote entrepreneurship in schools.

Nick Gibb: The Government's careers strategy, published in December 2017, aims to give young people from all backgrounds the opportunity to learn from employers about work and the skills that are valued in the workplace. The Careers & Enterprise Company's network of Enterprise Advisers are senior business volunteers who help schools to work with local businesses. The network is already operating in over half of secondary schools and colleges and will be available to all of them by 2020. There are a number of opportunities for pupils to develop entrepreneurial skills. The new Business GCSE, which was first taught from 2017, is intended to enable students to develop as commercially minded and enterprising individuals. In 2014, for the first time, financial literacy was made statutory within the national curriculum as part of the citizenship curriculum for 11-to-16-year olds. Schools are free to cover enterprise and entrepreneurship teaching within their personal, social, health and economic education.

Monday 23 April 2018

Education: Standards

Andrew Percy: [135225] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department plans to take to aid the development of the Integrated Communities Strategy.

Sam Gyimah: Education has a crucial role to play in promoting integration and widening opportunities for all communities. Schools, in particular, are at the heart of our communities, bringing families from all walks of life together. We know that many schools already successfully create inclusive environments but we want to ensure this is the case for all schools and other types of education settings. As part of the Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper, we announced a strengthened package of support for schools, and measures to deliver quality education across all settings, for all groups. We will support schools to increase the diversity of their pupil intakes, by developing model admission arrangements; and will strengthen expectations for all new free schools to show how they improve integration further. Our measures aimed at boosting local capacity to identify and tackle concerns in out-of-school settings; and our consultation on strengthened guidance and wider call for evidence on issues connected with elective home education, will support better quality education provision outside of schools.

Monday 23 April 2018

Faith Schools: Admissions

Crispin Blunt: [135492] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent estimate he has made of the number of school-age children who live in the catchment area of only a state-funded faith school.

Nadhim Zahawi: All mainstream state funded schools, including faith schools, must comply with the School Admissions Code. This requires all admissions authorities to publish admission arrangements, which detail how, in the event of more applications than places, allocation of places will be prioritised. Admission authorities may choose to give priority to children living within a designated catchment area, but not all will set a catchment.

Monday 23 April 2018

Music: Primary Education

Dan Jarvis: [136583] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans his Department has to improve the level and availability of music education in primary schools.

Nick Gibb: The National Plan for Music Education sets out a vision for schools and education organisations to drive excellence in music education: www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-importance-of-music-a-national-plan-for-music-education. The Department for Education is providing £150 million in funding over the next two years for music education hubs to augment and support music teaching in schools so that more children can be offered the experience of a combination of classroom teaching, instrumental and vocal tuition. Music education hubs draw in the expertise of a range of education and arts organisations, such as local orchestras, ensembles, charities and other music groups.

Monday 23 April 2018

Primary Education: Free School Meals

Mike Kane: [135308] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many pupils have been in receipt of universal infant free school meals since its introduction.

Nadhim Zahawi: This information is in the public domain and for every year since 2015 the number of infant pupils who took a free school meal on census day is published (in Table 3d) in the below National tables: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristicsjanuary-2015>.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristicsjanuary-2016>.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristicsjanuary-2017>.

Monday 23 April 2018

Pupils: Disadvantaged

Catherine McKinnell: [136545] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department's review on the educational outcomes of children in need of help or support aged 16 and 17 will consider any other outcomes where the support those children have received may cause an effect.

Nadhim Zahawi: On 16 March 2018, the government published data and analysis as part of the Department for Education's Children in Need Review. This included the finding that Children in Need have worse educational outcomes than their peers from the early years, make less progress throughout school, and are more likely than other children to become a young adult who is Not in Education, Employment or Training three years after completing Key Stage 4. The scope of the review is focussed on educational outcomes, and we have no plans to extend this. However, we recognise that the factors affecting these children and young people's educational outcomes, such as the support they receive, may also lead to other poorer outcomes. That is why our data publication sets out our intention to understand the lifetime outcomes of Children in Need, including exploring the feasibility of matching the Department for Education's Children in Need data with data from other government departments. Children's social care and schools have a central role in supporting Children in Need. It is therefore important for us to focus the review on what we can do now whilst making progress and working across government to understand more about other outcomes over the longer-term.

Monday 23 April 2018

Pupils: Sanitary Protection

Damien Moore: [135325] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to encourage schools to use their budgets to provide sanitary products for children who are unable to afford them.

Vicky Foxcroft: [135447] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate his Department has made of the number of young women who were absent from school as a result of not being able to afford feminine hygiene products.

Nadhim Zahawi: Our Sex and Relationships Education guidance encourages schools to make adequate and sensitive arrangements to help girls cope with menstruation. Schools are best placed to assess the needs of their pupils, have discretion over how they use their funding and can make sanitary products available to pupils if they identify this as a barrier to attainment or attendance. We support schools in addressing the needs of disadvantaged pupils through the provision of the Pupil Premium, equivalent to almost £2.5 billion of additional funding this year alone. Moreover, as a government, in this round of the Tampon Tax Fund we will provide £1.5 million for the 'Let's Talk. Period.' Project, which will distribute sanitary products to young women and girls in need across England. We are committed to ensuring that any action to support disadvantaged pupils is based on robust evidence. We have sought to establish whether there has been any rigorous national assessment of the prevalence of period poverty or its impact on attendance, however none appears available. We reached out to school stakeholders in July 2017 through the Association of School and College Leaders forum asking for contributions on the issue and received a very limited response. As promised in the House, we have reviewed our absence statistics and our recently published analysis shows no evidence that period poverty has a significant nation-wide impact on school attendance. We do want to find out more; this is why we intend to place questions on these issues in the department's 2018 surveys for pupils and senior school leaders.

Monday 23 April 2018

School Meals

Frank Field: [135384] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what his Department's policy is on schools requiring children to eat a lunchtime meal in a separate room as a result of their parents being

unable to pay a minimum advance payment to cover meals.

Frank Field: [135853] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what his Department's policy is on schools charging pupils for hot water used to prepare food they have brought from home.

Nadhim Zahawi: Schools should not charge for hot water and should definitely not segregate pupils whose parents were unable to pay for their school meals. By law, local authorities are required to provide facilities for pupils who bring their own lunch and/or drink at maintained schools, however it is ultimately for schools to set their own packed lunch policies. Schools are expected to be reasonable in the policies that they choose to adopt and the department expects schools to consider pupils' medical, dietary and cultural needs accordingly. Schools are obliged to provide meals where a child is eligible for free school meals (FSM). Where a child is not eligible for FSM, parents are expected to cover the cost of any meal.

Monday 23 April 2018

Schools: Asbestos

Tracy Brabin: [136279] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what advice his Department provides to early years settings on (a) identifying and (b) removing asbestos from premises.

Nadhim Zahawi: The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is the lead regulator on managing asbestos and publishes guidance on effective and safe management of asbestos in line with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012. The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage requires providers to keep children safe, ensure premises are fit for purpose, are able manage any risks and undertake risk assessments to identify aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis or be removed or minimised. Providers must comply with requirements of Health and Safety legislation. The responsibility for managing asbestos in a building rests with the 'duty holder'. The duty holder being the 'person or organisation that has clear responsibility for the maintenance or repair of non-domestic premises.' Duty holders are required to survey their building, create a register of Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs) and write a management plan detailing the procedures for monitoring the condition of ACMs. The department publishes guidance ('Asbestos Management in Schools') that would be relevant for early years provision in schools and could be applicable for a range of settings. This is intended to help duty holders understand their obligations and to support the effective management of asbestos. The HSE advice remains that as long as asbestos-containing materials are undamaged, and not in locations where they are vulnerable to damage, they should be managed in situ.

Monday 23 April 2018

Schools: Construction

Stella Creasy: [136568] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the names and addresses are of all schools in England and Wales which have been constructed via a private finance initiative or PF2 programme.

Nick Gibb: In 2015 and 2016 the Department signed five PF2 contracts and the names and addresses of the 46 schools in these contracts are given in the attached annex. Prior to these PF2 contracts, between 1997 and 2013, 169 contracts were signed by local authorities under the private finance initiative. Whilst the Department holds a list of these contracts, which is published by Her Majesty's Treasury, it does not maintain a list of the individual schools within these contracts. Local authorities will hold this information.

Attachments: 1. PF2_contracts_2015-2016. [PF2_Contracts_2015-2016.xls]

Monday 23 April 2018

Schools: Standards

Lucy Powell: [136177] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many schools by type of school are rated as (a) requires improvement or (b) inadequate in each regional schools commissioner area.

Nick Gibb: Referring to the Ofsted statistical first release data, as at 31 December 2017, there were 1,989 schools in England rated as requiring improvement. At the same point there were 386 schools rated as inadequate.[1] The attached table, shows the number of schools rated requires improvement or inadequate as at 31 December 2017, broken down by region and type of school. The majority of schools rated as requires improvement or inadequate are community schools. Where schools are judged inadequate by Ofsted, the Department will act quickly. RSCs and the wider Department will work with schools where necessary to decide whether additional support is needed to help it improve. [1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/maintained-schools-and-academiesinspections-and-outcomes-as-at-31-december-2017> Attachments: 1. Schools_that_are_Inadequate_or_RI,_2017/18 [136177_Table.pdf]

Lucy Powell: [136181] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many schools by type of school have improved from (a) inadequate or requires improvement to (b) good or outstanding in each regional schools commissioner jurisdiction area in each year since regional schools commissioners were established.

Lucy Powell: [136183] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many schools by type of school have moved from (a) good or outstanding to (b) inadequate or requires improvement in each regional schools commissioner jurisdiction area in each year since regional schools commissioners were established.

Nick Gibb: A table is attached, giving a full breakdown by regional schools commissioner region and type of school, of schools that improved their Ofsted rating from inadequate or requires improvement (RI) to good or outstanding. A second attached table gives a full breakdown by regional schools commissioner region and type of school, of schools whose Ofsted ratings changed from good or outstanding to inadequate or requires improvement.

Attachments: 1. Schools_that_moved_from_Inadequate_or_RI [136181_136183_Table_1.pdf] 2. Schools_that_moved_from_Outstanding_Good [136181_136183_Table_2.pdf]

Monday 23 April 2018

Secondary Education: Standards

Mike Kane: [136488] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many complaints he has received on the effectiveness of the secondary school performance Progress 8 measure; and what steps his Department is taking to address those complaints.

Mike Kane: [136489] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he plans to make an assessment of the effectiveness of the secondary school performance Progress 8 measure.

Nick Gibb: The Department has a number of feedback mechanisms regarding Progress 8 and regularly engages with the sector through conferences, meetings and correspondence. The Department is making

changes to Progress 8 in response to feedback. Following concerns about the disproportionate effect that a small number of extremely negative scores can have on a school's average progress score, from 2018 a limit is being introduced on how negative a pupil's progress score can be when calculating the school average for both Progress 8 and primary progress measures. Further details can be found in the secondary accountability guidance: www.gov.uk/government/publications/progress-8-school-performance-measure.

Monday 23 April 2018

T-levels

Gordon Marsden: [136588] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent discussions (a) he and (b) the Minister of State for Apprenticeships and Skills have had with businesses to understand the level of demand for T Levels from employers.

Sam Gyimah: The government believes that employers are best placed to advise on the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to succeed in their industries. That is why T levels are being designed by panels of employers and industry experts to ensure that students come away with the skills that businesses are looking for. We also held a Skills Summit in November last year where over 100 employers signed a Statement of Action to commit to providing opportunities for young people to develop their skills. In particular, we are talking to employers about how we can best support them to deliver work placements as part of T levels. For example, we have commissioned a research project interviewing employers about their capacity and demand to offer T level work placements. We have also engaged with over 1000 employers through the work placement pilots, who are now offering work placements to students in the 17/18 academic year. A large proportion of responses to the recent consultation on T level implementation were from employer representative organisations – and we will publish the government response to this in due course.

Gordon Marsden: [136590] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the proportion of students completing T levels who will go on to (a) employment, (b) higher education and (c) apprenticeships.

Sam Gyimah: T levels are rigorous, technical study programmes at level 3, designed by employers to meet their skills needs. Their central purpose is to enable students to progress to skilled employment at level 3 and above, and into further relevant training at level 4, 5 or 6, either in the workplace or at an education provider. It is too early in the development of T level programmes to identify the proportion of students who will progress to employment, higher education or apprenticeships.

We are working closely with employers and higher education providers to ensure that T levels support progression to skilled employment and higher levels of technical education.

Monday 23 April 2018

Universities Superannuation Scheme

Paul Blomfield: [135802] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will publish the dates of all meetings the Minister for Higher Education has held with (a) Universities UK and (b) the Universities and College Union on the Universities Superannuation Scheme.

Sam Gyimah: I have held a number of meetings and conversations in relation to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) dispute with interested parties, including Universities UK (UUK) and the

University and College Union (UCU). I consistently urged both UUK and UCU to continue to negotiate in order to find a solution. I welcome the recent vote by UCU members in favour of the proposal to create a Joint Expert Panel to examine the USS valuation.

Monday 23 April 2018

Free School Meals

Frank Field: [135719] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to ensure that children registered for free school meals access a hot meal each day; and which agency is responsible for the enforcement of the standards of free school meals.

Nadhim Zahawi: We expect schools to provide hot meals. The legal requirement on schools is to provide a lunchtime meal that meets the school food standards, where they apply. School governing boards are responsible for ensuring that school food standards are met.

Tuesday 24 April 2018

Further Education: Contracts

Gordon Marsden: [136100] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when his Department plans to publish the subcontracting management fees for all further education providers for 2016-17.

Nadhim Zahawi: The Education and Skills Funding Agency will publish on GOV.UK the level of funding paid and retained by providers for each of their subcontractors that delivered full programmes or frameworks during the academic year 2016 to 2017 in June 2018.

Tuesday 24 April 2018

Teachers: Training

Jim Cunningham: [136677] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of recent trends in the number of people enrolling in secondary education teacher training.

Nick Gibb: The Government recognises the importance of increasing the number of trainees in secondary education training and is committed to focusing funding on secondary subjects. While enrolment in secondary education teacher training in 2017/18 was slightly down on numbers in 2015/16 and 2016/17, the overall trend is positive with postgraduate recruitment at its highest level since 2011/12. To ensure that secondary education teacher training continues to attract talented graduates, the Department focuses funding on secondary subjects. This includes offering increased bursaries, typically worth up to £26,000, for priority subjects such as maths and physics. The Department has also taken further steps to improve this year's recruitment figures. These steps include boosting our marketing and support to applicants, making it easier to take the skills test, and working with providers to ensure that more applicants who are ready to train to teach are accepted.

Tuesday 24 April 2018

Universities UK: Freedom of Information

Preet Kaur Gill: [136624] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will make it her policy to make Universities UK subject to Freedom of Information requests.

Sam Gyimah: Universities UK does not meet the criteria for being added to the scope of the Freedom of Information Act and there are no plans to alter this.

Tuesday 24 April 2018

Universities: Admissions

David Simpson: [135992] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what his Department's policy is on encouraging working class students to attend university.

Sam Gyimah: Widening participation to higher education is a priority for this government. It is vital that everyone with the capability to succeed in higher education has the opportunity to benefit from a university education, regardless of background. University application rates for 18-year-olds to full-time study remain at record levels, including those from disadvantaged areas. Our first guidance to the Office for Students, asked them to encourage providers to make further progress in ensuring that students from areas of low higher education participation, low household income and/or low socio-economic status, can access, participate and succeed in higher education. A new transparency condition will require higher education providers to publish application, offer, acceptance, non-continuation and attainment rates by socioeconomic background, gender and ethnicity, which will provide greater transparency and help drive fairness on admissions and outcomes.

Tuesday 24 April 2018

Grammar Schools

David Simpson: [136331] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many grammar schools he is responsible for.

Nick Gibb: There are 163 state-funded grammar schools.

Wednesday 25 April 2018

Sex and Relationship Education

Sarah Champion: [136400] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the timetable is for the publication of the draft guidance on Relationships and Sex Education.

Nick Gibb: The Department has conducted a thorough and wide-ranging engagement process, including a call for evidence, on the scope and content of Relationships Education for primary schools and Relationships and Sex Education for secondary schools, and on the future status of Personal, Social, Health and Economic education. We are currently considering the responses to the call for evidence and representations through the engagement process and are developing draft regulations and guidance. These

will be subject to a full consultation before the regulations are laid in Parliament for debate.

Wednesday 25 April 2018

Teachers: Recruitment

Jim Cunningham: [136676] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many secondary school teachers have been recruited in each year since 2010, and if he will make a statement.

Nick Gibb: [Holding answer 24 April 2018]: The number of new entrants to state funded secondary schools are shown in the attached table. Figures on the numbers of new entrants are only available for 2011 onwards, figures on the movement of teachers between state funded schools are not available. The rise in the number of new entrants to state funded secondary schools in 2016 is encouraging and shows that teaching remains an attractive and rewarding career for talented graduates. Attachments: 1.

FTE_number_of_qualified_teacher_entrants

[136676_Full_Time_Equivalent_number_of_qualified_teacher_entrants_to_State_Funded_Secondary_Schools.pdf]

Wednesday 25 April 2018

Teachers: Training

Lucy Powell: [136072] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of early years tutors in further education settings have taken part in the professional exchange trial.

Nadhim Zahawi: We asked the Education and Training Foundation (ETF), as the body whose purpose is to improve the quality of further education and training and to support workforce development, to conduct an analysis into the training needs of early years tutors and to provide a report for ministers by the end of March. Alongside that report, and to help inform it, we asked the ETF to trial some professional exchanges for early years tutors to enable them to share challenges and effective practice. The training needs analysis report and a report on the outcomes of the professional exchanges will be published in due course.

Wednesday 25 April 2018

Universal Credit: Free School Meals

Graham P Jones: [135189] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the number of children in Year 3 and above who will be affected by the new means-tested entitlement for free school meals in households on universal credit with work-related earnings of more than £7,400 a year.

Nadhim Zahawi: [Holding answer 16 April 2018]: Our new criteria for free school meals eligibility will increase the number of children eligible by around 50,000 children by 2022. Due to the generous protections we will provide, all children receiving free school meals at the point the threshold is introduced, and all those who gain eligibility during the rollout of Universal Credit, will continue to receive free school meals until the end of Universal Credit rollout. After this point, those children who were protected – should they still be in school – will continue to be protected until the end of their current phase of education. Our protection arrangements will also cover pupils in receipt of benefits-related free school meals in Reception,

Year 1 and Year 2, as well as those in Year 3 and above.

Wednesday 25 April 2018

Educational Visits: Countryside

Dan Jarvis: [137129] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to support visits by urban schools to the countryside.

Nick Gibb: Not all children have easy access to green spaces and the Government is taking action to address this. Spending time in nature during school can encourage children to have a relationship with the outdoors and the new science and geography curriculum and qualifications encourage pupils to undertake fieldwork as part of their course of study. In the 25 Year Environment Plan, £10 million has been committed over the next five years to programmes that will connect pupils in the most disadvantaged areas with nature. This includes ensuring that schools, special schools and alternative provision institutions in the most disadvantaged areas will be offered support to establish a programme of visits to natural spaces, such as city farms, local nature reserves or Nationals Parks. This programme will be open to schools from autumn 2019. The Government will also support these settings with funding to transform their school grounds and to design and run activities to support pupils' health and wellbeing through contact with nature. More information regarding these programmes will be made available in due course, and the 25 Year Environment Plan can be viewed here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>.

Thursday 26 April 2018

GCE A-level

Gloria De Piero: [136934] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the most recent average point score per entry was for students of A-levels and equivalent qualifications in (a) Ashfield, (b) Nottinghamshire and (c) England who were (i) eligible and (ii) not eligible for free school meals aged 15.

Nick Gibb: The average point score per entry for A level students [1], [2] in (a) Ashfield, (b) Nottinghamshire and (c) England who were (i) eligible and (ii) not eligible for FSM at the end of Key Stage 4 for 2016/17[3] are in the attached table. [1] Student characteristics, such as ethnicity and free school meal eligibility are not routinely or consistently collected at 16-18. Characteristics information as recorded for students at the end of key stage 4 are used in this analysis. [2] Covers students aged 16-18 who were at the end of advanced level study and entered for at least one A/AS level, applied single A/AS level, applied double A/AS level or combined A/AS level during 16-18 study. [3] Based on final data and may differ from previously published figures. Attachments: 1. Students eligible and not eligible for FSM [136934 table.docx]

Thursday 26 April 2018

Students: Loans

Gordon Marsden: [137156] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the additional cost to students in loan fees following the increase in March of the retail prices index.

Sam Gyimah: The mechanism for setting student loan interest rates is set out in legislation. Interest rates are set annually. They apply from 1 September and are based on the retail prices index (RPI) figure from the previous March. The RPI for March 2018 was 3.3%, compared to 3.1% in March 2017. The interest rate on post-2012 student loans is set at RPI+3% during study and then varies with earnings. The government increased the repayment and interest thresholds for student loans to £25,000 in April 2018, saving graduates up to £360 per year in repayments and reducing the interest charged for many borrowers. Borrowers with earnings of up to £25,000 are charged an interest rate of RPI, which increases to RPI+3% for borrowers earning above £45,000. It is not possible to provide a meaningful estimate of the additional amount that a student will need to repay in future as a result of the change in interest rates, as this will depend on the borrower's loan balance and future earnings. The increase in student loan interest rates from 1 September 2018 will affect only high-earning borrowers who will pay back all, or very nearly all, their student loans. The government expects that around 30% to 35% of post-2012 borrowers with higher education loans and 40% to 45% of borrowers with advanced learner loans will repay their student loans in full.

Thursday 26 April 2018

Alternative Education: Codes of Practice

Sarah Champion: [136548] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will reassess the potential merits of requiring a code of practice for schools which operate outside mainstream education.

Nadhim Zahawi: On 14 March, as part of the government's Integrated Communities Strategy, we announced our intention to consult on a voluntary code of practice for out-of-school settings providers. This will set out clear standards and expectations for providers, which would include those providers operating schools outside of mainstream education, such as part-time or supplementary schools. We will invite views on the code of practice later this year.

Friday 27 April 2018

Free School Meals: Sixth Form Education

Lloyd Russell-Moyle: [137640] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Answer of 27 February 2017 to Question 64323, what proportion of students enrolled at (a) selective schools and academy sixth forms, (b) non-selective schools and academy sixth forms and (c) sixth form colleges were eligible for free school meals at academic age 15.

Nadhim Zahawi: The information requested is not readily available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. The department does not produce the requested figures for selective and non-selective institutions.

Friday 27 April 2018

Health Education

Karen Lee: [136706] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department plans to introduce the teaching of menstrual wellbeing in schools.

Nadhim Zahawi: The national curriculum for science includes content on puberty and the menstrual cycle in key stages 2 and 3. The government also provides guidance on Sex and Relationship Education which outlines how and when schools can prepare girls and boys for puberty and menstruation. Under reforms in the Children and Social Work Act 2017, all primary schools will be required to teach Relationships Education and all secondary schools to teach Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). We are also considering compulsory status for Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education. To help reach evidence-based decisions on what these subjects may look like, the government has been conducting a thorough engagement process with a wide range of expert stakeholders. Departmental officials are currently analysing the evidence gathered during this process and intend to put new statutory guidance and regulations out for public consultation later in the year.

Friday 27 April 2018

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education

Preet Kaur Gill: [136633] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will make it her policy to include practical life lessons into the PSHE curriculum.

Nick Gibb: The Department has conducted a thorough and wide-ranging engagement process, including a call for evidence, on the scope and content of Relationships Education for primary schools, Relationships and Sex Education for secondary schools, and on the future status of Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education. The findings of the call for evidence and wider engagement process will support decision-making on PSHE and development of regulations and statutory guidance on the subjects. These will be subject to a full consultation before the regulations are laid in Parliament for debate.

Friday 27 April 2018

Vocational Education

Ben Bradley: [136875] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to consult small and medium-sized businesses on the future of (a) technical and (b) vocational education.

Nick Gibb: The Government believes that employers should be at the heart of reforms to technical education. Employers and their representatives have been consulted in the development of plans for delivering technical education reforms and designing the outline content for new T level programmes. The Government is working in partnership with employers and industry experts, including small and medium size enterprises (SMEs), to design T levels in a way that meets the needs of business. The Department is also talking to employers about how they can best be supported in delivering work placements as part of T levels. For example, a research project has been commissioned which will interview employers about their capacity and demand to offer T level work placements. Over 1000 employers, many of them SMEs, have been engaged through the work placement pilots, and are now offering work placements to students in the 2017/18 academic year. A public consultation on T level implementation has recently been completed, and the response will be published in the spring.

Friday 27 April 2018

Work Experience: Safety

Gordon Marsden: [137463] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent discussions has he had with (a) employers and (b) further education colleges on the effect of health and safety requirements on the use of work experience and work placements.

Nadhim Zahawi: We have been talking extensively to employers and providers over the last few months about how we can best support them to deliver work placements as part of T levels. One of the issues we have discussed is the legal, safeguarding and health and safety responsibilities on employers and providers for students on a work placement. Over the coming months, we will be publishing clear guidance on this, including setting out the clear responsibilities and legal requirements on employers and providers.

Friday 27 April 2018

Ministry of Defence

Armed Forces: Schools

Ruth Cadbury: [136840] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether he plans to publish the scope and further details of the review he commissioned on the merits of a military ethos in education.

Tobias Ellwood: My hon. Friend the Member for Scarborough and Whitby (Robert Goodwill) will soon be undertaking an independent study that will look into the benefits of military ethos in schools. The Government's Cadet Expansion Programme has already proven that it can increase social mobility and help disadvantaged children reach their potential. My hon. Friend's study has not been commissioned by the Ministry of Defence.

Friday 27 April 2018

Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

ERASMUS

Cat Smith: [135836] To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions representatives of his Department have had with representatives of the Department for Exiting the European Union on protecting the UK's involvement in the European Union's Erasmus training and study programme after 2020 as part of the Government's negotiations on the UK leaving the EU.

Tracey Crouch: The Department for Education (DfE) is the national authority for the whole Erasmus+ programme while the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is responsible for policy on the specific youth and sport opportunities offered under Erasmus+. DCMS Ministers and its officials are working closely with their colleagues across Government, including DfE and the Department for Exiting the EU, on the UK's Exit from the EU. No decisions on UK participation in the future post 2020 Erasmus+ programme have yet been taken, as the scope of the programme has not yet been agreed. UK participation in the successor programmes will form part of the negotiations about our future relationship with the EU.

Monday 23 April 2018

Youth Services

Cat Smith: [135210] To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to strengthen the evidence base of open access youth work and non-formal learning opportunities for young people.

Tracey Crouch: The Government recognises the importance of evidence for youth work, which is why we are making investments to build and strengthen the evidence base for open access, 'informal' youth provision. We fund the Centre for Youth Impact in its efforts to lead the thinking around impact of work with young people and are investing £1 million in a three-year evaluation (<https://yiflearning.org/>) of open access youth provision through the Youth Investment Fund, which aims to develop practical and relevant measurement approaches for open access youth services. We are also actively engaging organisations from the youth sector and young people on this issue as part of the Civil Society Strategy.

Monday 23 April 2018

Computers: Education

David Simpson: [135993] To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether he plans to take steps to (a) introduce and (b) support courses to improve computer literacy.

Margot James: We are introducing, from 2020, fully-funded basic digital skills training for adults. Adults will have the opportunity to take improved basic digital courses based on new national standards setting out the basic digital skills needed to participate effectively in the labour market and day-to-day life. The Government will consult on these new standards in the autumn. We also fund the Future Digital Inclusion programme managed by the Good Things Foundation and delivered through the 5,000 strong Online Centres network. To date this programme has supported over 800,000 adult learners to develop their basic digital skills, many of whom are socially excluded. In the 2017 Autumn Budget the Government announced a National Retraining Scheme which will have an early focus on digital. As part of the Digital Strategy over half of the 4 million digital skills training opportunities pledged by industry have now been delivered. Creation of the Digital Skills Partnership, also highlighted the Digital Strategy and support for Local Digital Skills Partnerships to ensure that partners across public, private and third sectors work collaboratively to design, develop and deliver innovative digital skills programmes will also help improve digital inclusion.

Tuesday 24 April 2018

Department for Health and Social Care

Speech Therapy

Richard Burden: [136790] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Education on the role of speech and language therapy services in developing communication and literacy skills.

Caroline Dinenege: The Department of Health and Social Care are working with the Department for Education and Public Health England to enable early years professionals to identify and support children's early speech, language and communication needs. In an exchange of letters with the former Minister of State for Children and Families (Robert Goodwill MP) last November, the Department agreed to ensure that we and Public Health England prioritise the required activities to support the social mobility action plan

launched in December 2017. Detailed work is ongoing between the Department for Education and Public Health England.

Friday 27 April 2018

Speech Therapy: Children

Richard Burden: [136789] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of recent trends in waiting times to access children's speech and language therapy services.

Caroline Dinenage: No assessment has been made of recent trends in waiting times to access children's speech and language therapy services as this data is not reported centrally. There are no mandated referral to treatment times for speech and language therapy services. Local commissioners have responsibility for assessing the needs of their local population and arranging services to meet those needs.

Friday 27 April 2018

Home Office

Speech Therapy

Richard Burden: [136790] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Education on the role of speech and language therapy services in developing communication and literacy skills.

Caroline Dinenage: The Department of Health and Social Care are working with the Department for Education and Public Health England to enable early years professionals to identify and support children's early speech, language and communication needs. In an exchange of letters with the former Minister of State for Children and Families (Robert Goodwill MP) last November, the Department agreed to ensure that we and Public Health England prioritise the required activities to support the social mobility action plan launched in December 2017. Detailed work is ongoing between the Department for Education and Public Health England.

Friday 27 April 2018

Knives: Students

Sarah Champion: [136404] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the effect of banning the possession of a knife on a further education premises on students studying catering.

Victoria Atkins: As part of the development of the new Offensive Weapons Bill, which was announced on 8 April, we held a public consultation on a number of proposals including making it an offence to possess a knife or offensive weapon in an educational institution other than a school. Legislative measures arising from the consultation, including specific details on how they will operate, will be introduced when parliamentary time allows. Current legislation relating to the possession of knives on school premises includes a defence of possessing the knife for educational purposes and we will be looking to include the

same defence in relation to further education premises. This would cover possession of a knife by catering students as part of their studies.

Friday 27 April 2018

Department for International Development

Yemen: Education

Keith Vaz: [136723] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, which projects her Department sponsors to support child education in Yemen.

Alistair Burt: DFID supports the education of children in Yemen through two multilateral funds: Education Cannot Wait and the Global Partnership for Education. DFID also supports Yemen's Social Fund for Development's work on education, including child education.

Keith Vaz: [136725] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much money her Department has committed to improve child education in Yemen.

Alistair Burt: DFID supports the education of children in Yemen through two multilateral funds: Education Cannot Wait (ECW) and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). DFID provides 32% (\$4.8 million) of the ECW's funding of \$15 million in Yemen over 2017-19, and 15% (\$10.89 million) of the GPE's funding of \$72.6 million in Yemen over 2014-19. DFID's £108 million in funding to Yemen's Social Fund for Development over 2010-17 includes £30 million towards education.

Tuesday 24 April 2018

Pakistan: Education

Tom Brake: [136721] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what UK funds are earmarked for supporting education initiatives for minority communities in Pakistan.

Alistair Burt: The UK Government is firmly committed to promoting and protecting the right to freedom of religion or belief and to ensuring that our development assistance reaches the poorest and most marginalised, including minority groups, regardless of race, religion, gender, social background or nationality. DFID has education programmes in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab provinces that support the implementation of Pakistan's 2006 reformed curriculum, which teaches religious tolerance and respect for diversity. Independent evaluations have confirmed this curriculum to be based on the values of democracy, pluralism and peace aimed at educating students to be able to think critically about these issues.

Thursday 26 April 2018

House of Lords

Free School Meals

Lord Bassam of Brighton: To ask Her Majesty's Government how many pupils would have been entitled to free school meals in 2022 under the previous system of benefits-based eligibility; and how many pupils will be entitled under the system of eligibility based on receipt of Universal Credit. [HL6345]

Lord Bassam of Brighton: To ask Her Majesty's Government how many pupils will be entitled to free school meals for each year from 2022 to 2030. [HL6346]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The information requested is not held centrally. The department's modelling estimates the difference in those eligible and claiming under the new government regulations compared to those eligible and claiming under the previous benefits system. From the modelling, we estimate that by 2022, around 50,000 more children will benefit from free school meals compared to the previous benefits system. The government is committed to reviewing the level of the threshold in order to ensure that the children in need of free school meals the most will continue to receive.

Lord Bassam of Brighton: To ask Her Majesty's Government how many children previously ineligible for free school meals will now become eligible as a result of the adoption of the new earnings threshold of £7,400 excluding benefits. [HL6347]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The department estimates that by 2022, around 50,000 more children will benefit from a free school meal compared to the previous benefits system.

Lord Bassam of Brighton: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether pupils transferring from primary school to secondary school who are currently entitled to free school meals will carry with them a continuing entitlement under the new arrangements; and if that entitlement ceases, how many children will be affected in each year to 2027. [HL6348]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Pupils eligible for free school meals will retain eligibility when transferring from primary to secondary school under the new system. During the period of Universal Credit (UC) rollout, those who claim free school meals will retain their eligibility even if their income rises above £7,400, because of the protections the government has put in place. At the end of UC rollout, those children who were protected – if they are still in school – will continue to be protected until the end of their phase of education (such as primary or secondary school). The department has not produced forecasts of the number of children receiving free school meals, protected or otherwise, that transition between primary and secondary school.

Monday 23 April 2018

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