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**162 Academy and School News and Resources Update, April 1-7 2022**

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**Attendance**

* **Attendance as of 31.3.22**
* Attendance in all **state-funded schools** was 88.6% on 31 Mar, down from 89.7% on 17 Mar.
* Attendance in state-funded **primary** schools was 91.8% on 31 Mar, down from 92.0% on 17 Mar.
* Attendance in state-funded **secondary** schools was 85.3% on 31 Mar, down from 87.4% on 17 Mar.
* Attendance in state-funded **special** schools was 81.1% on 31 Mar, down from 83.0% on 17 March
* Attendance in state-funded **alternative provision** was 51.6% on 31 Mar, down from 55.3% on 17 Mar.
* In **primary** schools, approximately 90% of pupils with an **education, health** **and care plan** (EHCP), 90% of pupils **with a social worker**, and 90% of pupils **eligible for free school meals** were in attendance on 31 Mar. Attendance rates are lower than on 17 Mar when 90% for pupils with an EHCP, 91% of pupils with a social worker, and 91% of pupils eligible for free school meals were in attendance.
* In **secondar**y schools, approximately 79% of pupils with an **EHCP**, 74% of pupils **with a social worker**, and 81% of pupils **eligible for free school** **meals** were in attendance on 31 Mar. Attendance rates are lower than on 17 Mar when 81% for pupils with an EHCP, 75% of pupils with a social worker and 83% of pupils eligible for free school meals were in attendance.

**Covid related absence**

* Coronavirus (COVID-19) related pupil absence in **all state-funded schools** was 2.2% on 31 Mar, down from 2.5% on 17 Mar.
* Among pupils absent for COVID-19 reasons, the main reasons for absence on 31 Mar were: pupils with a **confirmed** case of COVID-19 (1.5%), and pupils with a **suspected** case of COVID-19 (0.2%).

*Note that under new “living with Covid measures”, the government is no longer advising schools to code Covid absence separately; the figures for pupils isolating and with confirmed cases of Covid "may be impacted by levels of testing".*

**Workforce absence**

* The estimate is that 8.7% of **teachers and school leaders** were absent for any reason from open schools on 31 Mar, down from 9.1% on 17 Mar.
* The estimate is that 8.2% of **teaching assistants and other staff** were absent for any reason from open schools on 31 Mar, down from 8.5% on 17 Mar.

Levels of workforce absence in education settings

Teachers and school leaders

* 20% of all state-funded schools had more than 15% of their teachers and school leaders absent for any reason on 31 Mar, down from 23% on 17 Mar.
* 40% of all state-funded schools had up to 5% of their teachers and school leaders absent for any reason on 31 Mar, up from 37% on 17 Mar.

Teaching assistants and other staff

* 15% of all state-funded schools had more than 15% of their teaching assistants and other staff absent for any reason on 31 Mar, down from 17% on 17 Mar.
* 37% of all state-funded schools had up to 5% of their teaching assistants and other staff absent for any reason on 31 Mar, up from 35% on 17 Mar.

Workforce absence by state-funded school type

Teachers and school leaders

* 8.3% of teachers and school leaders absent for any reason in state-funded **primary** schools on 31 Mar, down from 9.2% on 17 Mar.
* 8.9% of teachers and school leaders absent for any reason in state-funded **secondary** schools on 31 Mar, up from 8.8% on 17 Mar.
* 11.0% of teachers and school leaders absent for any reason in state-funded **special** schools on 31 Mar, down from 11.3% on 17 Mar.
* 12.4% of teachers and school leaders absent for any reason in state-funded **alternative provision** on 31 Mar, up from 10.9% on 17 Mar.

Teaching assistants and other staff

* 8.0% of teaching assistants and other staff absent for any reason in state-funded **primary** schools on 31 Mar, down from 8.8% on 17 Mar.
* 7.2% of teaching assistants and other staff absent for any reason in state-funded **secondary** schools on 31 Mar, up from 6.6% on 17 Mar.
* 11.9% of teaching assistants and other staff absent for any reason in state-funded **special** schools on 31 Mar, up from 11.7% on 17 Mar.
* 11.7% of teaching assistants and other staff absent for any reason in state-funded **alternative provision** on 31 Mar, up from 10.6% on 17 Mar.
* The DfE has updated “**School attendance: guidance for schools**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance> Schools have been told to **stop recording when a pupil is off for Covid-related reasons.** Schools will no longer have to mark Covid-related absence with "code X". The updated guidance states that pupils with symptoms of Covid-19 are no longer advised to get a test, and most of the scenarios that this category was brought in to record no longer apply. Schools may continue to use the sub-code (I02) to record illness due to suspected Covid-19, although they are not required to. Schools were previously advised on 21 February this year that, where a pupil has a confirmed case of Covid-19, they should be recorded as code I (illness) and all other Covid-related reasons such as isolation should be marked with code X. The DfE had already removed the requirement to record Covid-19 related staff absence last month. The DfE says, "where a pupil is not attending because they have symptoms of Covid-19 or have had a positive test, schools should record this using code I (illness)”. The changes will take effect after Easter.

**In response**, it has been pointed out that at the moment, there's absolutely a postcode lottery on how badly you've been affected by Covid. This change will make it harder to identify the reasons behind regional disparities. For some schools, it has been horrendous the amount of time that's been lost to Covid and yet there's no indication of that in terms of Ofsted or anything else unless schools are prepared to do the legwork and go and find it all for them." The NAHT said that the change amid high Covid absences made "very little sense" and "ultimately means that we will have less granular information about why pupils have been absent from school".

* The DfE has updated “How to complete the **educational setting status form**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-complete-the-educational-setting-status-form>

**Ofsted**

* Ofsted has published the second set of reports in a series looking at the pandemic’s continued impact on education providers.
* **Education recovery in schools: spring 2022,** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-recovery-in-schools-spring-2022>
* **Education recovery in early years providers: spring 2022,** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-recovery-in-early-years-providers-spring-2022>
* **Education recovery in further education and skills providers: spring 2022**, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-recovery-in-further-education-and-skills-providers-spring-2022>

A **summary of the main points** in each,

**Early Years**

* The pandemic has continued to affect young children’s communication and language development, with many providers noticing delays in speech and language. Others said babies have struggled to respond to basic facial expressions, which may be due to reduced social interaction during the pandemic.
* The negative impact on children’s personal, social and emotional development has also continued, with many lacking confidence in group activities.
* Children’s social and friendship-building skills have been affected. Some providers reported that toddlers and pre-schoolers needed more support with sharing and turn-taking. To address this, staff were providing as many opportunities as possible for children to mix with others and build confidence in social situations.
* There continues to be an impact on children’s physical development, including delays in babies learning to crawl and walk. Some providers reported that children had regressed in their independence and self-care skills. As a result, several have increased the amount of time children spend on physical activities, to develop gross motor skills.
* An increasing number of providers were concerned that, compared with before the pandemic, fewer children have learned to use the toilet independently. This means that more children may not be ready for school by age 4. Providers were also concerned about obesity and dental health, so have focused on providing well-balanced meals and increased time for physical activity.
* Many providers reported difficulties retaining high-quality staff since the start of the pandemic. This has left some short of skilled practitioners, which has affected the quality of teaching and catch-up strategies.
* Some providers are concerned about their long-term sustainability given fluctuations in numbers of children on roll.

**Schools**

* The pandemic continued to hinder pupils’ learning and personal development into this year. Leaders still described gaps in pupils’ knowledge, particularly in mathematics, phonics and writing stamina. However, compared with last term, more leaders said these gaps were closing.
* Inspectors saw schools were using effective strategies to check what pupils have learned and to adapt the curriculum to fill gaps in knowledge and skills. Some schools were using regular assessment to identify what pupils have remembered and providing time to revisit concepts that had not been learned well remotely.
* The pandemic’s impact on some pupils’ mental health and well-being remained a concern. Leaders talked about pupils having lower levels of resilience and confidence, and increased levels of anxiety. Many schools were providing in-house support for these pupils because external agencies often had long wait times. This has been particularly challenging for special schools, who rely on a lot of support from other agencies.
* Some schools were using the National Tutoring Programme to help pupils who need additional support, but most told Ofsted they preferred to train their own staff as tutors rather than using tuition partners, mainly due to a lack of available tutors. However, this placed additional pressures on school staff.
* Staff absence related to COVID-19 was a challenge for schools in the spring term, which was exacerbated by difficulties recruiting supply teachers. This resulted in increased staff workloads, as schools used their own staff to cover lessons.

**Further education and skills (FES)**

* Providers have continued to respond to the ongoing challenges of the pandemic with creativity and resilience. New elements have been added to programmes to reflect the pandemic’s impact on the employment landscape, and there has been increased collaboration across the sector to address gaps in learning.
* Sixth form colleges noted that many learners had lower levels of knowledge and skills, and were adapting their curriculum to help them make progress.
* Work experience placements remained difficult to secure, particularly in health and social care, but providers were working hard to offer alternatives.
* The disruption to GCSEs experienced by the newest intake of learners had adversely affected behaviours and attitudes. Providers reported that social skills and confidence had dwindled, and more disruptive behaviour was observed.
* The recruitment and retention of staff was challenging for many providers. In some cases, this had impacted on the quality of education and increased staff workloads.
* Mental health concerns remained high. New learners who had enrolled from school were experiencing higher levels of exam anxiety. Providers were offering additional support to help learners increase their stamina and prepare for formal examinations.
* Many apprentices were not at the required level to take their end-point assessments, and a significant number remained on programmes beyond their planned end date.
* Under the new inspection framework, it is alleged that schools risk being marked down if pupils fail to adequately recall or articulate what they have been taught, sometimes years before, when given an **impromptu “pop quiz” by inspectors**, e.g, the names of rivers in geography or if they struggle to explain key concepts in history. “School leaders are increasingly worried about the conclusions some inspectors draw in response to pupils saying the ‘wrong’ thing or giving the ‘wrong’ answer or not understanding a question,” said the **NAHT**. “It is really problematic to try to gauge how much children know by asking them ‘pop quiz’ questions and seeing if they remember things and can articulate [them] adequately. This kind of approach is subjective and variable. Neither of these is a good thing in an inspection system where you need consistency.” See <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2022/apr/02/pop-quiz-ofsted-tests-are-downgrading-schools-unfairly-say-heads>
* For Ofsted's framework and guidance for **inspecting local authority services** for children (ILACS) in need of help and protection, children in care and care leavers., see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-local-authority-childrens-services-from-2018>
* Ofsted has issued an **explanation of terms** used in Ofsted's official and national statistical releases. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/glossary-of-terms-ofsted-statistics>
* For, “**Ofsted Parent View: toolkit for schools**”, see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofsted-parent-view-toolkit-for-schools>
* Ofsted has issued “**Exploring Ofsted inspection data with Data View”.** See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exploring-ofsted-inspection-data-with-data-view>
* Ofsted has issued “**Area SEND inspections and outcomes** in England: management information autumn term 2021 to 2022”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/area-send-inspections-and-outcomes-in-england-management-information-autumn-term-2021-to-2022>

**Issues from the SEND Green Paper**

* Ministers want special educational needs co-ordinators (**SENCOs**) in senior leadership teams and to inform schools’ “strategic direction”, under plans announced in the SEND review. At present co-ordinators (SENCOs) have three years to complete the National Award for SEN Coordination (**NASENCo**), which is taught at a master’s level by about 40 universities. But the government claims the qualification has “variability” and might not provide “the knowledge and skills needed for the role”. It also sits outside the “wider” teacher development reforms. Ministers want to “strengthen the statutory timeframe” so headteachers must be “satisfied” SENCOs are “in the process of obtaining the qualification when taking on the role”. **The NASENCo will be replaced with a new, mandatory SENCO national professional qualification**. This will “improve the expertise and leadership” so staff are “well-placed to sit on a senior leadership team and inform strategic direction”. All mainstream schools must have a qualified teacher or headteacher designated as the SENCO. SENCOs will also be given “sufficient protected time” to carry out their role, alongside “dedicated administrative support” to reduce the time on paperwork.
* **Alternative provision reforms** in the SEND review will create a **new “three-tier” system of support**, with a focus on early intervention in mainstream schools.
* The **first tier** will be “targeted support” for children whose needs “lead to behaviour that disrupts theirs or others’ learning”. This could include advice, coaching, self-regulation classes for groups or one-to-one support.
* The **second tier** will be “time-limited” placements in AP for those who need more “intensive support” to address behaviour or anxiety and “re-engage in learning”. Pupils would be dual-registered, and “supported to return to their original school as soon as is appropriate”.
* The **third tier** will make transitional placements for children who won’t go back to their old school, but will be supported to transition to a different school “when they are ready, or to a suitable post-16 destination”.

The green paper also pledged to **“break the link” between individual pupil movements and funding**. Local SEND “partnerships” will have to create AP-specific budgets, “ideally for a minimum of three years”. Partnerships will then work out the amount each tier needed, agreeing the cost of each service and how to manage changes in demand. Councils will then have to distribute funding in line with the plan, with cash “no longer following the movement of each individual child or young person”. Ministers also plan to shake up accountability with a **new performance table and national performance framework for AP**. This would be based on five key metrics: outreach support, attendance, reintegration, attainment (with a focus on English and maths) and post-16 transitions.

* Ministers will consult on **mixing up performance league tables to incentivise mainstream schools to become ‘more inclusive**’, under plans announced in the SEND review. They want mainstream provision built on “early and accurate identification of needs, high-quality teaching of a knowledge-rich curriculum and prompt access to targeted support”. But there are “too many examples” where inclusive mainstream schooling “does not happen”. The DfE admits accountability measures can be seen as a disincentive. This is combined with a perception that those who welcome pupils with SEND become “magnet schools” and “unsustainable over time”. But proposed **new national standards** will set out “when needs can and should be met effectively in mainstream provision” and what support should be available. School performance tables will also be updated to consider “contextual information” about a school alongside its results data. This will “make it easier to recognise schools” that are “going well for children with SEND”.

**Issues from the White Paper**

* The DfE will consult on the “exceptional circumstances in which **a good school could request that the regulator agrees to the school moving to a stronger trust**”. Transfers currently only happen on trusts’ say-so or the government’s orders. Ministers also appear set to strengthen schools’ voices within their multi-academy trusts. MATs “should have local governance arrangements” and protect schools’ local identity, the white paper says. There will be “transparency measures” too over cash that trusts top-slice from their funding. The measures are aimed at easing the worries of reluctant academy converters as the government embarks on its mission for an all-MAT system by 2030. However, dates for the introduction of the changes are vague.
* The white paper says a regulatory review in May will look at “**how we will hold trusts to account through inspection**”, and ensure a “single regulatory approach”. The review will consider how to hold trusts accountable against new criteria for a “strong trust” – including high-quality, inclusive education, school improvement, maintaining local school identity, value for money and workforce development. Standards will be underpinned by “new statutory intervention powers”, allowing “robust” action on trusts not achieving expected outcomes. A lot will now hinge on the role and powers of the regulator.”
* Schools will have to **use their own money to pay for tutoring** when government subsidies end, with an expectation that **pupil premium** is also spent on literacy and numeracy interventions. Ministers expect tutoring to be a “staple offer from schools” when current financial incentives end in 2024. Schools will be expected to “use their core budgets” to fund the provision, which will become a “core academic option in the pupil premium menu”. The government also said it would “make it easier” for schools to use the £2.6 billion annual pupil premium funding to “support literacy and numeracy skills where needed”. Although the fund will retain its “core focus” on improving attainment for disadvantaged pupils, the new expectations show the government becoming more prescriptive about what cash is spent on.

**Covid**

* Guidance sent to headteachers confirms that **free testing will not continue at almost all education settings from the end of this week except for residential special school settings at secondary age or above**. And schools have also been told in an email from the DfE that they should not give out any excess stock of Covid test kits to teachers, pupils or other staff. Children and young people aged 18 or under who have tested positive for Covid will be advised to **stay home for just three days** from 1 April, and the reason for this decision was that "following expert advice", it is known that "Covid presents a low risk of serious illness to most children and young people, and most of those who are fully vaccinated". Adults and pupils who are unwell and have a high temperature should stay at home and avoid contact with other people. See <https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2022/03/30/living-with-covid-the-end-of-routine-testing-in-schools-colleges-and-childcare-settings/>
* ASCL and NAHT have called **the decision to withdraw free Covid testing from pupils and staff "reckless in the extreme"**, in a joint letter to the education secretary. Their letter also urges Mr Zahawi to rethink the decision to publish school performance tables based on this summer's exam results, and the decision to share key stage 2 Sats results with Ofsted. They say ay that many heads are reporting that disruption caused by Covid is greater than at any previous point during the pandemic, and that it is increasingly difficult for many schools to stay open. See <https://www.naht.org.uk/News/Latest-comments/Press-room/ArtMID/558/ArticleID/1603/School-leader-unions-call-for-government-action-over-Covid-disruption>

**School finance and funding**

* The DfE has updated “**Schools financial value standard (SFVS**) and assurance statement”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-financial-value-standard-sfvs>
* The DfE has issued statutory guidance for local authorities **on producing and amending school financing schemes**. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schemes-for-financing-schools>
* The DfE has updated “**School-led tutoring grant**. How schools and academy trusts should plan and deliver the **national tutoring programme's** school-led tutoring to help pupils catch up on missed learning”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-led-tutoring-grant>
* ESFA has issued “**National non-domestic rates: guidance for billing authorities**”, See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-non-domestic-rates-guidance-for-billing-authorities> and “**Information for academies about how to claim for national non-domestic rates (NNDR)**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academies-funding-claims>
* Nearly half (48 per cent) of headteachers say that **energy and heating costs** are their biggest worry over the next year. But almost a third (32 per cent) also said the costs of **providing supply to cover staff absence** was causing the greatest concern amid a spike of Covid disruption in schools School leaders and unions are urgently calling for "more help" from the government as increasing Covid disruption is leading to schools overspending their supply budgets by up to three times in some cases, amid wider concerns about energy and cost-of-living price increases. Leaders say that they fear a "never-ending conveyor belt" of Covid disruption as some teachers are now testing positive for a second time. In a snap poll, 84 per cent of teachers said their school had spent more than three times its supply budget as the financial year closed at the end of last month. One school said that catch-up tutors that his school has employed from the school-led tuition funding have had to turn to covering regular classes on arrival due to staff shortages
* **Financial pressure on schools this spring**:
  + Gas prices are up 250 per cent.
  + Electricity prices are up by over 200 per cent.
  + Catering costs are rising.
  + Building materials inflation is at 20 per cent.
  + NI costs are up.
  + Staff supply costs are up 400 per cent for some.
* ESFA has updated its manual, “**Consistent financial reporting framework**: 2021 to 2022” See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/consistent-financial-reporting-framework-2021-to-2022>
* ESFA has issued “Local authorities: **pre-16 schools funding**”. Guidance, allocations and conditions of grant for pre-16 schools funding. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-authorities-pre-16-schools-funding>
* **Spending on teaching aids and equipment** is stuck below 2015-16 levels as schools face mounting financial pressures, according to data. Spending on these resources will average £55 per primary school pupil and £49 per secondary school pupil in 2022-23 - around 25 per cent less than in 2015-16, data collected by the British Educational Suppliers Association (BESA) shows. Spending on aids and equipment - which includes all classroom teaching and learning spending excluding ICT, furniture and stationery - had been rising in secondary schools up to 2018-19, but then saw a steep fall. The BESA data shows an average forecast spend on resources of £15,270 per primary school in 2022-23, compared with £16,510 in 2015-16. In secondaries, the figures were £49,660 and £62,370, respectively.

**Academies and Trusts**

* ESFA has issued guidance for academy trusts, external auditors and reporting accountants on preparing, auditing and submitting an **academy trust's annual financial statements**. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academies-accounts-direction>
* ESFA has issued “Information for academy trusts to complete **their accounts return**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academies-accounts-return>
* ESFA has issued “**Academies land and buildings collection tool**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academies-land-and-buildings-collection-tool>
* ESFA has issued “**Academies revenue funding allocations**. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academies-funding-allocations>
* ESFA has updated its **guide for newly opened academies, academy trusts and free schools**. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guide-for-newly-opened-academies-academy-trusts-and-free-schools>
* The DfE has issued “**Academy conversion: important dates**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academy-conversion-important-dates>

**Disadvantaged students and student welfare**

* Children are having to wait up to five years for an **NHS autism appointment**, according to research; this is also true of children with **attention deficit hyperactivity disorder**. See <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/apr/02/children-with-autism-wait-up-to-five-years-for-an-nhs-appointment>
* The DfE has issued a list of the 75 local authorities pre-selected for the **family hubs** and start for life package and the selection methodology. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/family-hubs-and-start-for-life-package-methodology-for-pre-selecting-local-authorities> These hubs give parents advice on how to take care of their child and make sure they are safe and healthy – providing services including parenting and breastfeeding support. This is part of the **Supporting Families programme**, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/supporting-families>
* The DfE has issued findings from the evaluation of the **holiday activities and food programme**, which was carried out between May 2021 and February 2022. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluation-of-the-2021-holiday-activities-and-food-programme> See <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/infants-children-and-families-to-benefit-from-boost-in-support>
* Most participating schools hosted just one week of a **Covid summer school** last year – with less than a third running for the two weeks funding allowed; a lack of available staff and ongoing Covid restrictions created challenges for participating schools. In total, 2,755 schools have completed a claim form for the programme with over 336,000 pupils attending. Just under eight out of 10 secondary schools participated nationally. Analysis found that 67 per cent of these schools delivered up to five days of summer school, while 28 per cent delivered between six and 10 days. A small proportion, four per cent, provided over 10 days. The report states that 94 per cent of schools believe their summer school programme was very or extremely effective in improving transition between academic years. See <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1065682/Summer_schools_research_final_report_March_2022.pdf>
* **Funding for young people leaving social care** will see several targeted support programmes continue for the next three years. These include:
  + £99.8 million for **Staying Put Funding** for local authorities will help care leavers stay with their foster families after they turn 18, potentially through to their 21st birthday. It means care leavers can continue to benefit from a stable and secure family setting, and prepare for independence at a more gradual pace, allowing them to lean on the supportive, nurturing family network.
  + £36 million for the **Staying Close programme** More care leavers will be supported to live near their former children’s home with support from a trusted adult – providing stability and a safety net into adulthood.
  + £36.4 million for **Personal Advisors** These advisors support care leavers up to age 25, helping them navigate services such as housing, health or benefits and providing practical or emotional support to help them prepare for the challenges of living independently.

See <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/infants-children-and-families-to-benefit-from-boost-in-support> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-put-grant-determination-letters> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/funding-for-personal-adviser-support-for-care-leavers-to-age-25>

* **Children and young people who are anxious, depressed or are self-harming are being denied help from swamped NHS child and adolescent mental health services**, GPs have revealed. Even under-18s with an eating disorder or psychosis are being refused care by overstretched CAMHS services, which insist that they are not sick enough to warrant treatment. Mental health experts say young people’s widespread inability to access CAMHS care is leading to their already fragile mental health deteriorating even further and then self-harming, dropping out of school, feeling uncared for and having to seek help at A&E. See <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/apr/03/swamped-nhs-mental-health-services-turning-away-children-say-doctors>
* Young adults and teenagers who went to state schools in England **are as happy with their lives as their peers at private schools,** according to a new study by researchers at University College London. The research found few differences in mental health or life satisfaction between the two groups, which surprised the study’s authors because of the substantial advantages in spending on wellbeing and support enjoyed by those at private schools. See <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0305764X.2022.2040951>
* For an article on the effects on parents of school children of the **cost of living crisis**, see <https://inews.co.uk/news/cost-of-living-crisis-parents-children-growing-out-clothes-school-uniforms-families-1550972>
* More than one in four children across the UK are **living in poverty**, with almost one million living in “food insecure” households – and the situation is set to worsen as inflation soars. New household income figures have been published by the government covering the April 2020 to March 2021 period. They show that the number of children living in relative poverty after housing costs in the UK stands at 3.9 million. The new figure represents 27% of the UK’s children and compares to the 3.6 million children who were living in poverty in 2010/11. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/households-below-average-income-for-financial-years-ending-1995-to-2021>
* The DfE has issued “**Guidance for parents and carers on safeguarding children in out-of-school settings”**. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-safeguarding-children-in-out-of-school-settings> and “**Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings: code of practice**”, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-out-of-school-settings-code-of-practice>
* The DfE has listed “**Independent schools for pupils with special educational needs,** including those approved under section 41 of the Children and Families Act”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-special-schools-and-colleges>

**ITT, staff recruitment and qualifications**

* **Secondary school classroom teacher vacancies are at their highest level in at least five years**, new data suggests. The data from TeachVac, shows the highest recorded number of secondary teacher vacancies in the last five years, with a 12 per cent increase since the last comparable year (2020). In 2020, there were 19,626 secondary teacher vacancies recorded in three months (between January and March, inclusive). This figure was 22,014 for the same period in 2022 - higher than any of the previous four years. The data also shows a 47 per cent increase in the number of vacancies found in March 2022 (9,984) compared to March 2020 (6,811). General teacher vacancies (primary and secondary) in the first three months of this year have also risen by 29 per cent compared to 2020. In 2022, 33,580 overall teacher vacancies were recorded by the end of March, much higher than in 2020 when 25,939 were recorded for the same period. Design and technology saw the largest increase in vacancies, rising by 51 per cent between 2020 (1,089) and 2022 (1,643). Business vacancies also rose by 45 per cent, from 701 in 2020 to 1,018 in 2022. The figure was closely followed by computing, which saw a 44 per cent increase from 828 to 1,191.
* There has been a marked increase in **headteacher vacancies** compared with 2020 levels amid warnings that the government's latest response to the pandemic could drive school leaders out of the profession. New data from TeachVac, reveals that headteacher vacancies rose by 18 per cent when comparing the first three months of 2020 (957) with the same period this year (1,125). Figures also show that secondary school teacher vacancies are now at their highest point in at least five years. The figures come after union leaders wrote to the education secretary, Nadhim Zahawi, warning that a lack of recognition of the impact of Covid on schools and the reintroduction of league tables this summer will be "the final straw" for school leaders.
* The DfE has issued “Find out about eligibility and **how to become an accredited provider of initial teacher training (ITT)**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/initial-teacher-training-itt-accreditation>
* The DfE has issued a list of national professional qualifications (**NPQs) providers**, divided by region. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-professional-qualifications-npqs-list-of-providers>
* The DfE has issued “**Apply for qualified teacher status (QTS) if you teach outside the UK”**. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-qualified-teacher-status-qts-if-you-teach-outside-the-uk>
* The DfE has issued “**How teachers can apply for modern foreign language (MFL) curriculum design and pedagogy courses**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/modern-foreign-languages-curriculum-design-courses-apply-now>
* The DfE kas issued “**Treating candidates fairly when you recruit trainee teachers**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/treating-candidates-fairly-when-you-recruit-trainee-teachers>

**Early years and primary**

* Ministers are being warned against **loosening the rules around the number of children nursery staff can care for**, after it was revealed that regulations are being examined as a way of cutting costs for parents. Expanding the number of children per staff member or relaxing other rules are being reviewed by children’s minister Will Quince, who is undertaking an international comparison as part of attempts to tackle the cost of living crisis. See <https://www.theguardian.com/money/2022/apr/03/easing-nurseries-staffing-ratio-in-the-uk-would-be-childcare-disaster>
* STA has issued “**Preparing to administer the phonics screening check**. Information and a training video regarding the structure and content of the phonics screening check to help administrators prepare”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-screening-check-sample-materials-and-training-video>
* The DfE has issued:
* **Key stage 1 assessments data collection: guide to submitting data**, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/key-stage-1-assessments>
* **Key stage 1 assessments data collection 2022: guide**, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-1-assessments-data-collection-2022-guide>
* The DfE has issued:
* **Phonics screening check data collection 2022: guide,** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-screening-check-data-collection-2022-guide>
* **Phonics screening check data collection: guide to submitting data**, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/phonics-screening-check-data-collection>
* STA has issued “**Primary assessments: future dates**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/primary-assessments-future-dates>

**Public examinations**

* There is an increased risk of exam malpractice this summer owing to a "dire" **shortage of invigilators for GCSEs and A levels,** the government is being warned. The shortage also means that schools face paying out for supply staff, while some are training all teachers in the event of needing them in the summer, it is understood. More than nine out of 10 exams officers are concerned about having an insufficient number of invigilators for this summer's exams, a survey by the National Association of Examinations Officers (NAEO) has found. Many schools are reliant on retired people to act as invigilators but there could be some reluctance among this age group to mix in exam halls with pupils owing to high Covid cases. Another reason could be the rise in the number of pupils likely to need special arrangements for exams this year due to anxiety. See <https://www.thenaeo.org/monthly-message.aspx?nid=49>
* Exam boards are in the process of finalising their **examiner teams** for this summer’s activity. Further information about the role of examining can be found on the JCQ Become an Examiner webpages. For specific information about the subjects, required roles and criteria to examine for each examination board, refer directly to their dedicated webpages - these can be accessed via the quick links on the JCQ Become an Examiner webpage, <https://examining.jcq.org.uk/> The ‘Invigilator Vacancy Map’ developed by The Exams Office, is now live:, <https://www.theexamsoffice.org/invigilator-recruitment-map/>
* The DfE has updated “**Responsibility for exams**. Guidance for schools, colleges and exam centres on who should enter students for exams and the support DfE is providing”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/responsibility-for-autumn-gcse-as-and-a-level-exam-series>
* Ofqual has issued its “**Qualification funding approval**: funding year 2022 to 2023 manual” See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/qualification-funding-approval>

**Ukraine**

* The government is encouraging councils to **breach school capacities and infant class size caps “where necessary”** to accommodate Ukrainian children arriving in England. Ministers have set out plans to accept up to 100,000 Ukrainian children following Russia’s invasion of the country in February, though the government has been criticised for the slow pace and strict criteria for its visa schemes. Nadhim Zahawi has now written to councils to make clear they “should be looking to provide places”. Councils should also “use flexibilities to admit above the published admission number and exceed the infant class size limit” where necessary, he said. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/secretary-of-state-letter-to-local-authorities-about-children-arriving-from-ukraine>
* The DfE has issued “**Move to the UK if you’re coming from Ukraine**. Check what you need to do before you travel to the UK and what to do after you arrive”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/move-to-the-uk-if-youre-from-ukraine>
* Heads have been told to read government guidance on **cyber attacks** to avoid being targeted by Russian "hacktivists". An email sent by the DfE to school leaders says that all public sector organisations should reconsider their risks if using Russian-based antivirus software or IT applications. Heads have also been told to read advice on cyber threats and "hacktivism" from the government-run National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/actions-to-take-when-the-cyber-threat-is-heightened>

**Education News for schools**

* Due to COVID-19, the DfE has changed its approach to **accountability data in 2020 to 2021 and 2021 to 2022**. It has now issued guidance documents which explain how school and college accountability will now operate. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-school-and-college-performance-measures>
* ESFA has issued “**Dance and Drama Awards guide 2022 to 2023** academic year”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dance-and-drama-awards-guide-2022-to-2023-academic-year>
* The DfE has updated “**Get help with technology for remote education**. Find out about the support available for educational settings and local authorities for remote and face-to-face education, and access to social care”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-help-with-technology-for-remote-education>
* The DfE has appointed 28 more schools and eight multi-academy trusts to its **behaviour hubs programme**. The £10 million scheme, led by government behaviour tsar Tom Bennett, involves schools and trusts helping their peers “diagnose issues and implement new behaviour approaches”. The DfE said almost 700 schools will receive support between 2021 and 2024, including training by expert advisers and access to networking events and open days. For names of the schools, see <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/new-mat-school-behaviour-hubs-lead-schools/>
* The DfE has updated information on **pupil premium funding**, how school leaders can use it effectively and pupil premium strategy statements. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium>

**School management**

* The DfE has updated its **Good estate management for schools manual**. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/good-estate-management-for-schools>
* The DfE has issued “**Emergency planning and response for education, childcare, and children’s social care settings**. How educational and childcare settings should plan for and deal with emergencies, including significant public health incidents and severe weather”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-planning-and-response-for-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings>
* The DfE has updated information about the **School Rebuilding Programme** including how responsible bodies can nominate a school. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-rebuilding-programme>
* ESFA has issued “How to use the **Recruit an apprentice service** to create, post and manage apprenticeship adverts”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/apprenticeship-vacancies> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/display-adverts-from-find-an-apprenticeship-if-you-dont-have-an-apprenticeship-service-account>
* The DFE has issued “**Health and safety: advice for schools**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools>
* ESFA has updated “**Senior mental health lead training grant funding**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/senior-mental-health-lead-training-grant-funding>
* For the latest **ESFA Update**, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esfa-update-6-april-2022>
* The DfE has updated “**Complete the school census**”. See

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census>

* The DfE has updated the **Local authority interactive tool (LAIT**). See

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-interactive-tool-lait>

**Post 16**

* The DfE has issued a list of successful applications at stage 2 of bidding for the **Further Education Capital Transformation fund**. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-education-capital-transformation-fund-stage-2-successful-applicants> For details of the **next phase** in the Further Education Capital Fund, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/cash-boost-to-transform-colleges-across-england>
* The DfE has issued “Post-16: intervention and accountability. Information about **the intervention framework for post-16 education and skills providers**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-education-accountability>
* For FE providers, the DfE has issued “**Strategic Development Fund**: apply now” See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/skills-accelerator-apply-now> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-accelerator-trailblazers-and-pilots>
* The DfE has issued information for further education and sixth-form colleges when directly **enrolling 14 to 16 year olds** for academic year 2022 to 2023. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/full-time-enrolment-of-14-to-16-year-olds-in-further-education-and-sixth-form-colleges>
* The DfE has issued the consultation outcome re the **National Skills Fund**. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/national-skills-fund>
* The DfE has issued information on the measures set out in the **Skills and Post-16 Education Bill.** See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-and-post-16-education-bill-impact-assessment-and-jchr-memorandum>
* ESFA has issued “Qualification achievement rates (**QAR**) 2020 to 2021”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/qualification-achievement-rates-qar-2020-to-2021>
* A number of top UK universities have changed the contracts they make students sign at the start of the year in an apparent bid to **protect against claims for refunds if teaching is disrupted by Covid-19**. The universities of Edinburgh, Glasgow and Leeds, an investigation by The Tab student newspaper found, changed their terms and conditions since covid struck in 2020 to add clauses which potentially limit their liability for pandemics. See <https://inews.co.uk/news/education/uk-universities-change-student-contracts-refunds-covid-disruption-1546445>
* The DfE has issued details on how further education providers can apply for round 5 of the **Taking Teaching Further (TTF) programme**. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/taking-teaching-further-programme>
* Ofqual has issued a collection of documents, “**Functional Skills qualifications: requirements and guidance” See** <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/functional-skills-qualifications-requirements>
* ESFA has issued “16 to 19 funding: **16 to 19 tuition fund**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-funding-16-to-19-tuition-fund>
* The DfE has updated “**Guidance for FE ITE providers about bursary funding** for the 2022 to 2023 academic year”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fe-funding-initial-teacher-education-ite-bursaries-2022-to-2023>
* ESFA has issued “The purpose and characteristics of **core maths qualifications for 16- to 19-year-olds** who do not progress to AS/A level maths”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/core-maths-qualifications-technical-guidance>
* ESFA has updated “Advice: **funding regulations for post-16 provision**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-funding-regulations-for-post-16-provision>
* The DfE has issued a list of **Regional further education (FE) and higher education (HE) Prevent co-ordinators**. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/regional-further-education-fe-and-higher-education-he-prevent-coordinators>
* ESFA has issued “**Care to Learn Guide** for the 2022 to 2023 academic year”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-to-learn-guide-for-the-2022-to-2023-academic-year> This scheme helps those under 20 to study when facing childcare costs
* ESFA has issued “**Post-16 audit code of practice**” See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/post-16-audit-code-of-practice>
* The DfE has issued “**College Collaboration Fund (CCF) insight reports**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/college-collaboration-fund-ccf-insight-report>

**Tony Stephens**