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**166Academy and School News and Resources Update, April 30-May 6 2022**

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**Early years and primary**

* STA has issued “**Instructions for completing KS2 test attendance registers**, sending scripts for marking and submitting the headteacher's declaration form”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-attendance-register-and-test-script-dispatch>
* STA has issued “Guidance about **how to become a marker for the key stage 2** (KS2) English, mathematics and science **national curriculum tests**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/key-stage-2-tests-how-to-become-a-marker>
* STA has issued guidance on the “**Reception baseline assessment framework**” See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reception-baseline-assessment-framework> and “Information for **assessing and reporting the reception baseline assessment** (RBA) in the 2022 to 2023 academic year”, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2022-reception-baseline-assessment-assessment-and-reporting-arrangements-ara>
* **Nurseries across the UK are being forced to close or reduce their services at an alarming rate** because they are struggling to recruit and retain staff, the National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) has warned.The crisis is only set to deepen as more childcare providers go out of business, increasing demand for places and pushing prices even higher for families struggling with the rising cost of living.About 95% of nurseries say the government’s funding does not cover their costs and 85% are operating at a loss or breaking even, says the NDNA. Now the recruitment crisis has reached a level that is forcing many nurseries to reduce their intake. See <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2022/apr/30/uk-faces-childcare-crisis-as-staff-shortages-force-nurseries-to-close>
* Children in state-funded primary schools across the United Kingdom will, from mid-May, begin to receive **a free commemorative book to mark Queen Elizabeth’s Platinum Jubilee**, but it will **not be welcomed in all Welsh or Scottish schools**.On the request of the Scottish and Welsh governments, schools in those regions will be asked instead to opt-in to receive copies.It has been described as having taken an Anglocentric line that did not give due regard to the history of the devolved regions of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.See <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2022/may/01/childrens-book-on-the-queens-jubilee-given-cold-shoulder-by-schools-in-wales-and-scotland> New details and images of the book reveal the narrative will focus on the adventures of a little girl called Isabella, who visits her great grandmother and finds out about many of the highlights of Queen Elizabeth II’s 70-year reign. Put together in collaboration with royal experts and historians, the book includes famous quotes from the Queen, facts on the coronation ceremony, and anecdotes about the lives of famous Commonwealth figures, such as Nelson Mandela. It also contains information about notable kings and queens and a timeline of Queen Elizabeth’s own life. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/platinum-jubilee-book-to-arrive-in-primary-schools-from-mid-may> for full details
* The DfE has issued “**Survey of childcare and early years providers and coronavirus (COVID-19): wave 4”.** See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/survey-of-childcare-and-early-years-providers-and-coronavirus-covid-19-wave-4>

**NTP and learning recovery**

* Schools face being forced to **spend millions of pounds of catch-up tutoring money by August 31 or hand it back**, despite the bulk of the funding - £150 million - only being paid out by the government last Friday or Monday. The money arrived in schools' accounts just four months ahead of the deadline to spend it. Multiple emails sent to headteachers from the DFE in the past few weeks have warned that funding not used would have to be returned to the government. An email, sent earlier this month, said the government would "encourage" schools to access tuition "to provide support to pupils over the summer term and through July and August".
* **Parents in England will be given access to data revealing how their school is using the National Tutoring Programme**, the Education Secretary has announced, and confirmed his intention to publish the data of each school’s involvement this Autumn. The data will also be shared with Ofsted, with the department working with Ofsted over the coming months on the best use of that data.The department estimates that 40% of schools are yet to offer any tutoring sessions on the National Tutoring Programme this academic year. The DfE will contact those schools yet to offer tutoring support to discuss their plans and offer further support to ensure they can offer tutoring to their pupils this term. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/education-secretary-urges-remaining-schools-to-participate-in-national-tutoring-programme>

**Unions** accused Zahawi of breaking his department’s own pledge that new policies on accountability should be brought in, wherever possible, at the beginning of the school year. The DfE’s protocol for “changes to accountability, curriculum and qualifications” says there should be a lead in time of “at least” a year where the change requires schools to make “significant changes which will have an impact on staff workload”. **ASCL and NAHT in their letter to the DfE** also made these points:

*We have shared with you and your team at the DfE extensive anecdotal feedback as to why some schools have not yet engaged with the National Tutoring Programme, including the complexity of the requirements, the variable availability and quality of tutors, the lack of capacity in many schools to do anything more than attempt to keep the school open in the face of significant and ongoing Covid-related staff absences, the requirement for schools to contribute 25% of the cost of school-led tutoring themselves out of increasingly stretched budgets, and the inappropriateness of the programme for pupils in most specialist settings. What research has the department done into the reasons why significant numbers of schools haven’t yet engaged with the programme, and what more might need to change to support them in doing so?*

*The letter said that the department will be contacting those schools yet to offer tutoring support to discuss their plans and offer further support to ensure they can offer tutoring to their pupils this term. What form will that ‘further support’ take?*

*The letter also said that the department will publish data in the autumn term on each school’s tutoring delivery alongside the funding allocations and numbers of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, and will also share this information with Ofsted. How will Ofsted use this data?*

*Given the extensive ongoing disruption to education this year as a result of the pandemic, and the fact that the decision was only recently made to move more funding into the school-led tutoring route, why are you not reviewing the requirement for any unspent funding to be returned to the department by the end of August? Would it not make more sense to enable schools to roll any unspent funding over to next year, to enable as many pupils as possible to benefit from tutoring?*

*You intend to reduce the government subsidy for tutoring costs from 75% this year to 60% in 2022/23 and 25% in 2023/24. Given your stated desire, in the Schools White Paper, to “cement one-to-one and small group tuition as a permanent feature of our school system”, and given the significant additional pressures on school budgets as a result of increased energy costs in particular, are any discussions taking place about increasing the level of government subsidy for the NTP in subsequent years?*

**Ofqual**

* **Ofqual has issued its corporate plan**, its programme of work, comprising 4 priorities, to fulfil its statutory duties in the period of 2022 to 2025. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofquals-corporate-plan><https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-ofqual-3-year-plan-puts-students-and-apprentices-at-its-heart> Ofqual has pledged to:
* It will “secure trust and confidence” in exams this year “and beyond”, and “be ready to implement contingency arrangements if needed due to the impact of the pandemic”.
	+ It will support exam boards to use “innovative practice and technology”, as well as “removing regulatory barriers where innovation promotes valid and efficient assessment”.
	+ It will also look into the use of adaptive testing – a computerised test that adapts to the students’ ability – and whether it could be a possible replacement for tiering in certain GCSEs.
	+ Ofqual will evaluate the “risks and benefits” of remote invigilation, where a student can sit a test at home or the workplace.
	+ It will also look at the “feasibility” of using more objective test questions – where there is usually only one right answer – to “improve reliability and resilience” in exams.
	+ It will evaluate the use of extra-time in exams for disabled students.
	+ Ofqual will research different ways of identifying potential bias in written tests.
	+ It will look how to reduce the impact of the exams system on the environment.
	+ The watchdog will also monitor the “financial health” of awarding bodies in light of the pandemic’s effect on the qualifications market.
	+ Ofqual’s ‘register of regulated qualifications‘ will be “significantly enhanced” and made interactive. This platform can be used to compare qualifications, but Ofqual said its changes will “improve clarity” of the market.

**Ofsted**

* Ofsted has updated **pen portraits of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs**). See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-pen-portraits-of-her-majestys-inspectors-hmis>
* Ofsted has issued “Information for families about **inspections of local area services for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-area-send-inspections-information-for-families>
* Ofsted has issued advice on how it is inspecting the way **schools are supporting secondary school pupils who are behind with reading**. See <https://educationinspection.blog.gov.uk/2022/04/28/supporting-secondary-school-pupils-who-are-behind-with-reading/>
* **Analysis of inspection management information from March 2020 with that published in March 2022** shows that the proportion of secondary schools rated ‘good’ and above increased from 63 to 81 per cent over the two periods. A similar number of inspections were completed in both periods; 355 and 379 respectively.The percentage of secondary schools downgraded following section 5 inspections dropped from 32 to 25 per cent.Primary schools were still most likely to earn the top grades, but their improvement was far less stark – rising from 80 to 85 per cent rated ‘good’ and ‘outstanding’ in the two periods.In contrast, special schools suffered a decline in outcomes, with the proportion of schools rated ‘good’ or above dropping from 80 to 73 per cent.While there were more special schools inspections conducted pre-pandemic – 129 compared with 70 – the proportion judged to be ‘outstanding’ fell from 40 to 26 per cent.The proportion downgraded during section 5 inspections increased from 38 to 55 per cent. See <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/post-covid-ofsted-ratings-lift-in-secondary-schools/>

**Attendance**

* **Attendance as of 28.4.22**. Note that from 21 April 2022, attendance figures for state-funded secondary schools, state-funded special schools and state-funded alternative provision have been adjusted to exclude year 11-13 pupils who are not in attendance because they are off-site for study leave, visits to education providers or other arranged activities out of school.
* Attendance in all **state-funded schools** was adjusted to exclude year 11-13 pupils who are not in attendance because they are off-site for approved purposes was 92.3%. This is not comparable to the previous published attendance rate of 88.6% on 31 Mar as this figure included all pupils in year 11-13.
* Attendance in state-funded **primary** schools was 94.9% on 28 Apr, up from 91.8% on 31 Mar.
* Attendance adjusted to exclude year 11-13 pupils who are not in attendance because they are off-site for approved purposes in state-funded **secondary** schools was 89.5% on 28 Apr.
* Attendance adjusted to exclude year 11-13 pupils who are not in attendance because they are off-site for approved purposes in state-funded **special** schools was 87.8% on 28 Apr.
* Attendance adjusted to exclude year 11-13 pupils who are not in attendance because they are off-site for approved purposes in state-funded **alternative provision** was 56.2% on 28 Apr.

Attendance of vulnerable children and pupils eligible for free school meals

* In state-funded **primary** schools, approximately 93% of pupils with an education, health and care plan (EHCP), 92% of pupils with a social worker, and 94% of pupils eligible for free school meals were in attendance on 28 Apr. Attendance rates are higher than on 31 Mar when 90% for pupils with an EHCP, 90% of pupils with a social worker, and 90% of pupils eligible for free school meals were in attendance.
* Equivalent figures for state-funded **secondary** schools are affected by some schools offering different provision for year 11-13 students and are therefore not summarised.

Workforce absence

* The estimate is that 5.5% of **teachers and school leaders** were absent for any reason from open schools on 28 Apr, down from 8.7% on 31 Mar.
* The estimate is that 4.9% of **teaching assistants and other staff** were absent for any reason from open schools on 28 Apr, down from 8.2% on 31 Mar.

See <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/attendance-in-education-and-early-years-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/2022-week-18>

* The DfE has issued “**Response to the consultation to improve the consistency of support available to families in England on school attendance**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance-consultation-response> The consultation sought views on 4 proposals to build on schools, trusts and local authorities’ existing work on attendance and improve the consistency of attendance support for families across England through better, more targeted multi-agency action for the pupils who need it most. These were:
	+ Requiring **schools to have an attendance policy**, and have regard to statutoryguidance on the expectations of schools, academy trusts and governing bodies ofmaintained schools on attendance management and improvement.
	+ Introducing guidance on the **expectations of local authority attendanceservices.**
	+ Introducing a clearer more consistent national framework for the use of **attendance legal intervention**, including a new regulatory framework for issuing fixed penaltynotices for absence.
	+ Bringing the rules for granting **leaves of absence** in academies in line with otherstate funded schools.

Following this feedback, the Secretary of State is now publishing non-statutory guidance to schools, trusts, and governing bodies of maintained schools which includes an expectation that all schools develop and publish a school attendance policy. All schools’ policies will be expected to cover attendance expectations, named attendance staff contacts, day-to-day attendance management processes, their strategy for using attendance data, their strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence, and the point at which sanctions will be used. These expectations will apply on a non-statutory basis from the beginning of academic year 2022-23 to give schools time to implement them before legislation requires it. The Secretary of State also plans to legislate at the earliest opportunity to introduce a new statutory duty on proprietors to ensure such a policy is produced, published and regularly publicised. Legislation will also (subject to Parliamentary approval) require schools to have regard to guidance, putting the expectations on a statutory footing. This will come into force no sooner than September 2023.

This non statuary guidance, is:

 “**Working together to improve school attendance.** Guidance to help schools, academy trusts, governing bodies, and local authorities maintain high levels of school attendance including roles and responsibilities”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

**Ukraine**

* The DfE has issued “Secretary of State letter to schools and local authorities about **supporting Ukrainian children to integrate into English schools**. Letter to schools and local authorities on offering a full curriculum, support and Ukrainian learning materials to children arriving from Ukraine”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/secretary-of-state-letter-to-schools-and-local-authorities-about-supporting-ukrainian-children-to-integrate-into-english-schools>Schools can lend laptops provided by the government during the Covid crisis to Ukrainian pupils. He has also encouraged schools to ensure eligible pupils have access to the Holiday Activities and Food programme. Schools may wish to share Ukrainian curriculum resources with pupils, but that this should not replace a school's usual curriculum.He highlights that the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science has published the Ukrainian curriculum, <https://lms.e-school.net.ua/>Schools are also responsible for ensuring that all their pupils - including refugees and migrants who have a first language other than English - develop the English language skills they need in order to access the curriculum and achieve their potential. Where Ukrainian children and young people may be attending supplementary schools in the evenings or at weekends, schools "may wish to signpost parents and carers to the guidance on keeping children safe in out-of-school settings". Schools can exceed maximum class sizes to enable Ukrainian children to attend "as soon as possible". For **general advice** on taking on Ukrainian students, see <https://teaching.blog.gov.uk/2022/04/26/our-schools-journey-supporting-refugees/>

**Public examinations**

* The JCQ has produced updated “**Guidance for centres managing exams, June 2022 series**” See <https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Guidance-for-centres-managing-exams_June22_v4.pdf> Some of the key points:
* Under normal circumstances, exam centres are required to ensure at least one **invigilator** is present for each group of 30 or fewer pupils. For practical exams, the ratio is normally 20:1 However, schools will be allowed to use one invigilator for a group of up to 40 pupils during summer exams “where it is not possible for the centre to meet standard requirements”. The threshold for practical exams has also been increased to 30:1. JCQ states that in “exceptional cases”, where all other options have been exhausted, “the examination may continue with the invigilators that are available provided that the centre notifies the relevant awarding body on the day of the examination”. The awarding body will then decide if the exam scripts can be accepted. But if the exam centre is not confident the exam “can be conducted with integrity” due to a lack of invigilators, they are advised to consider delaying the exam until later that day or splitting the cohort into smaller groups. If no other suitable invigilators are available, subject teachers can invigilate an examination in their own subject. This is normally prohibited, but will be allowed this summer as long as the teachers are briefed to be “particularly careful not to influence candidates’ responses”. These teachers must not be the sole or lead invigilator for a group of pupils they have taught. Remote invigilation may be permitted in “very exceptional cases”. But JCQ warns that prior approval must be granted from the relevant awarding body and “will not be granted on the day of the examination”.
* Exam centres can normally vary an **exam start time** by up to 30 minutes. This summer’s exams may start later as long as they take place on the timetabled date and pupils are supervised “from no later than 30 minutes after the published start time until the examination starts”. In this scenario, the exam centre must notify the relevant awarding body on the day of the exam. “If groups of candidates are due to take the examination in different rooms, centres may start each group as soon as they are ready, provided that the remaining candidates remain under supervision.”
* Schools are advised to follow existing **alternative site guidance**, which requires exam centres to submit a notification of intent six weeks before exams begin. It is acknowledged this may not always be possible for a candidate in hospital or sitting an exam at home, but “late submission should be made as soon as the details are known”. JCQ adds: “This process can also be used if it is necessary to split a cohort of candidates and relocate one group of candidates to an alternative site.”
* Where candidates cannot sit the exam within the centre or at an alternative site a “**calculated grade**”, known as an aegrotat, may be used to ensure they are not disadvantaged. This scenario would occur when some exams in the qualification have already, or can be, completed, and centres must apply for special consideration in the normal way. Where candidates cannot sit any exams, they should sit them in a later series.
* **From the JCQ**:

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| **Informing students of centre-assessed marks before submission** We want to remind you that before you submit your centre-assessed marks to exam boards, you need to:* Inform students about their centre-assessed marks (and endorsement grades)
* give students the chance to request a review of their marks
* complete any requested reviews

Please allow enough time for these steps before the mark submission deadlines.  For more information, see section 6.1 of the [Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments](https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Instructions_NEA_21-22_FINAL.pdf) and section 13.5 of the [Instructions for conducting coursework](https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Coursework_ICC_21-22_v5.pdf).  This applies to GCSEs, AS and A Levels.  As set out in the coursework instructions above, it also applies to AQA Applied General qualifications, OCR Cambridge Nationals, CCEA GCE unitised AS and A-level qualifications, WJEC GCE legacy AS and A-level Health & Social Care, ELC and Project qualifications.  It may also apply to other awarding body specific Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3 qualifications so please check your awarding body instructions. |

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| **Guidance for managing exams in Summer 2022** The JCQ has produced some additional [guidance for centres managing exams](https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Guidance-for-centres-managing-exams_June22_v4.pdf) for general and vocational qualifications this summer.  This includes information about varying start times; alternative sites; invigilation ratios; use of subject teachers as invigilators; addressing challenges for individual candidates; and remote invigilation. |

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| **Exam Day Guidance Video** The JCQ has produced a new [video](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations/) for Exams Officers to help ensure things run smoothly on exam days.  |

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| **JCQ Form 14 updated** The [JCQ Form 14](https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Form-14_Self-Certification-Form-Updated-form-26.04.22_England.docx) for students self-certificating illness has been updated.  Please note, this form is intended for use by centres in England.  |

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| **Special Consideration FAQs** Some [Frequently Asked Questions](https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/FAQs_Special_consideration_June22_FINAL.pdf) on the special consideration process for centres in England have now been published.  |

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| **Results and Post Results Services Summer 2022** The [JCQ Notice to Centres - Release of results for the June 2022 series](https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Notice_to_Centres-Release_of_results_June_2022_FINAL.pdf) and the [JCQ Post-Results Services booklet for the June 2022 series](https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Post-Results-Service_June22_FINAL-1.pdf) are now available. |

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| **Cyber Tools for UK schools!** The NCSC's free [Web Check](https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/information/web-check) and [Mail Check](https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/information/mailcheck) services can help protect schools from cyber attacks.  Two NCSC cyber security services, which are already helping thousands of organisations to protect their websites and email servers from cyber attacks, are now available to **all UK schools**.  Both tools are available free of charge, are quick to set up, and thereafter run automatically.  More information is available from the [NCSC website](https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/blog-post/cyber-tools-for-uk-schools).* For **all the JCQ documents relating to the summer exams**, see <https://www.jcq.org.uk/summer-2022-arrangements/> and <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/>
* Teachers in England have observed **high levels of anxiety among pupils in the run-up to GCSEs and A-levels**, with reports of panic attacks, angry outbursts, self-harm and disengagement among students who will be the first to sit examinations in three years due to the pandemic.With the main summer exam period due to begin next week, headteachers say they have seen a rise in requests from GPs and mental health teams, asking for individual pupils to be allowed to sit their exams in a separate or smaller room, away from the main exam hall, because of stress and anxiety. Numbers have more than doubled in one school, creating space and invigilation challenges.A-level candidates have also reported fewer university offers from the most sought-after institutions – fuelling their anxiety – partly as a result of a rise in the number of students who deferred places last year following record A-level results, but also because there are more 18-year-olds in the population competing for places. See <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2022/may/06/pupils-showing-high-anxiety-run-up-gcses-a-levels-teachers-say>
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**Schools and universities**

* The Cambridge University Vice-Chancellorhas **warned private school pupils to accept that they will lose places at Oxbridge** to their public school peers in a bid to increase diversity.'I would say we have to keep making it very, very clear we are intending to reduce over time the number of people who are coming from independent school backgrounds into places like Oxford or Cambridge.' State school pupils made up 72% of Cambridge's intake in September last year, up from 70.6% in 2020 and 68.7% in 2019. Private schools educate just 7% of children, with the proportion for sixth-formers believed to be about 12%.
* **Complaints from students in England and Wales about their university courses** reached a record high last year; the total number of complaints submitted in 2021 was 6% higher than the year before. More than a third of the 2,763 complaints to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) were related to the impact of pandemic. The amount of compensation given to students exceeded £1.3m, it said. A report suggested that staffing issues, industrial action, and delays in submitting complaints from 2020 were behind the high figures. As a result of the Covid pandemic "some students found that they weren't getting the learning experiences that they reasonably expected" said the OIA. See <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/media/2706/oia-annual-report-2021.pdf>
* More than two months after they were unveiled, the government’s **student loan changes** have now been reviewed and analysed in detail. Analysis by the **Institute for Fiscal Studies** (IFS) thinktank found that lower-middle- and middle-income graduates would be hardest hit, paying £30,000 more than current graduates, with repayments spread over 40 years. But graduates in the highest income brackets will pay £20,000 less as the progressive elements of the existing loan package are stripped away. The IFS also found that proposals under consideration to restrict loans to those with minimum exam grades could have a dramatic effect on who goes to university. Imposing a requirement of GCSE passes in English and maths might have stopped 10% of recent undergraduates accessing loans – in effect barring most of them from campus. The IFS found the majority would be from disadvantaged families or ethnic minorities, precisely the groups that successive governments have encouraged to consider higher education. See <https://ifs.org.uk/uploads/BN341-Student-loans-reform-is-a-leap-into-the-unknown.pdf>
* ESFA has issued “Guidance on **higher education short courses**. The courses in the trial of higher education (HE) short courses”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-education-short-courses>

**School finances**

* A head teacher has warned her secondary school will **struggle to buy books and computers after being hit by a sharp rise in food and energy prices**. St Michael's Catholic Academy, in Billingham, on Teesside, has seen its gas and electricity bill double in recent months. The cost of providing school dinners has risen by 10%. More than £115,000 has been added to St Michael's annual energy bill after the cost of electricity went up by 95% and gas by 139%, head teacher Helen Keough said. The school - which has 1,025 pupils aged 11-16 - must also pay an extra £30,000 after national insurance costs for staff were increased - equivalent to the salary for one teacher. A third of schools are planning for a deficit budget by the end of next year as a direct result of soaring energy costs. Research involving more than 1,000 school leaders in England found that they are anticipating an average 106% increase in energy costs over the next 12 months. One in six of the respondents is predicting an increase of 200% of more in their bills.
* The DfE is looking into **how schools are being affected by energy price increases** so it can consider what "additional support" it can provide. Schools are being invited to complete a survey setting out how much they are paying for gas and electricity, and whether their contracts are coming to an end, <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc5rIg_Bd8KjktfdfvvncCFu8kh8vf16_P3dJzy68W2GWXfzw/viewform> The DfE said it wants to get basic data from state schools on their current and future energy tariffs, and whether they are looking to move to a new tariff. "We want to do as much as we can to help schools when it comes to renewing your contracts and getting the best value for money".

**Academies and Trusts**

* Large employers have had to publish **median male and female pay** per hour since 2018. Among the 20 biggest **MATs**, women lag behind men by 26 per cent, but it marks a 1.2 percentage point improvement year-on-year. The gaps narrowed in half of the trusts, one stayed the same and nine worsened. Many trusts attribute the large gap to more women in lower-paid roles. Some academy trusts say they are launching women-only leadership programmes, promising flexible working and overhauling recruitment advertising to attract more men into “traditionally female” roles to drive down gender pay gaps. See <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/school-gender-pay-gap-narrows-but-slowly/>The **NASUWT** had a significant 33 per cent gap among staff, compared with 7.7 per cent at the **NEU**.The **DfE** fared better at 4 per cent, although the gap widened among its senior staff.
* The DfE’s plans to allow **councils to run multi-academy trusts** could lead to a large expansion of the programme. Several councils have said that they are already exploring setting up a trust or trusts, e.g, Northumberland, Hertfordshire, Hampshire, Dorset, West Berkshire
* ESFA has updated “**Academies chart of accounts and automating the accounts return**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academies-chart-of-accounts>
* The DfE has issued:
* Model documents to help **church schools converting to academies**, plus supporting documents, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/church-academies-model-documents>
* Model documents **for PFI schools converting to academy status**, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/private-finance-initiative-pfi-academies-model-documents>
* The DfE has updated “Information on **all academies, free schools, studio schools and university technical colleges (UTCs) open in England, and those in the process of opening**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-academies-and-academy-projects-in-development>

**NAHT Conference**

* **Paul Whiteman, the general secretary of the NAHT accused the government of an “absolute failure of political leadership**”, which is leading to a breakdown in trust among young people. He said the government is undermining the teaching of decency and honesty in schools, after “misleading” the country over Partygate and showing a lack of compassion towards refugees; the government’s failings are making it harder for schools to produce well-rounded young people who are ready to fulfil their role in society.“The basics taught in school are not how to write and how to count. The first things are self-regulation, good behaviour, decency, honesty and integrity. Things that are hard to observe in the UK government right now”. See [https://www.naht.org.uk/News/Latest-comments/News/ArtMID/556/ArticleID/1667/NAHT-general-secretary-Paul-Whiteman%e2%80%99s-speech-to-Annual-Conference-29-April-2022](https://www.naht.org.uk/News/Latest-comments/News/ArtMID/556/ArticleID/1667/NAHT-general-secretary-Paul-Whiteman%E2%80%99s-speech-to-Annual-Conference-29-April-2022)
* Three-quarters of school leaders polled by the NAHT**do not expect the government’s multi-academy trust agenda to improve outcomes for pupils**.Some 57 per cent of NAHT members already working in multi-academy trusts said they were satisfied by the experience. Many NAHT members in MATs praised the cross-school collaboration and sharing of resources that the structure facilitated, and said centralising HR and finance was beneficial. But the Union said the DfE should explore how schools could “divorce their MAT when things aren’t working” to address members’ concerns.Among leaders of standalone trusts and maintained schools, 83 per cent do not expect their school to join a trust in the next four years, and 62 per cent think it will never happen. NAHT members’ greatest fears about MATs were losing autonomy for school leaders (92 per cent) or boards (74 per cent), losing a school’s “unique local context” (83 per cent) and the financial impact (60 per cent). Asked what might make them more likely to join trust, respondents highlighted a right to leave where it is not working (52 per cent) and protections around their funding to limit top-slicing or pooling (51 per cent).
* “We have noticed a rise in children coming to school tired as they have no heating on at home and find it difficult to sleep on cold nights. The rise in poverty in my school’s community is shocking and stark.” Tackling poverty must be placed at the heart of the government’s plans if it is to achieve any of its education ambitions, **the new president of NAHT)** said. In his inaugural address, Dr Paul Gosling painted a bleak picture of the impact of rising poverty and the on-going impact of a cost-of-living crisis on families. See <https://www.sec-ed.co.uk/news/what-century-are-we-living-in-poverty-disadvantage-national-association-of-head-teachers-dr-paul-gosling-naht/> He also cited school funding, pay, and access to mental health provision as particular areas of concern.<https://www.naht.org.uk/News/Latest-comments/News/ArtMID/556/ArticleID/1666/New-NAHT-president-urges-government-to-listen-to-leaders>

**MFL**

* A study of 1,300 Year 8 pupils has revealed that parents' beliefs are a bigger influence on children's views of themselves as language learners than are teacher opinions. **Parents are twice as likely as teachers to influence pupils' success in modern foreign languages (MFL)**, according to research by the University of Cambridge. The Cambridge researchers say their findings show that measures to reverse the national decline in language learning at GCSE and A level should target families rather than just children. The researchers also say that new government measures designed to improve pupil uptake and motivation in MFL "**focus narrowly on so-called 'linguistic building blocks'**", which require, for example, students to learn 1,700 common words in the target language. But they say pupils need "a broader-minded approach", and to understand what languages mean to them through, for example, hearing and using them in their communities or while travelling abroad. See <https://www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/want-more-students-to-learn-languages-win-over-the-parents-research-suggests>

**SEND**

* The government is currently unable to hold the special educational needs and disabilities system to account properly because it **doesn't collect data on whether education, health and care plan (EHCP) targets are being met**, a DfE adviser has said."What we see when we look at EHCPs is that there is not very much guidance on what they should be other than the chapter headings. So you see very different formats and level of detail across local areas. Nowhere in the system, even where we do have time-bound targets that are very specific, are we tracking what proportion of children with EHCPs actually meet the targets we're putting all of this funding into”.

**Teacher misconduct**

* The DfE has concluded its consultation on “**Teacher misconduct: regulating the teaching profession**” See <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/teacher-misconduct-regulating-the-teaching-profession>The government will close a series of loopholes in the teacher misconduct regime, after sector leaders broadly welcomed a proposed shakeup, including:
* Widening its sanction powers to cover individuals not currently working as teachers, as well as teachers at online, post-16 and further education providers.
* Letting its own officials refer cases for investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency, such as exam cheating or fraud uncovered in their work.

The DfE will implement all the plans “at the next legislative opportunity”

**Education news for schools**

* The Tory MP **Michael Fabricant** has apologised for suggesting many teachers and nurses enjoyed a “quiet drink” at the end of the day in staff rooms during lockdown. See <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/apr/30/michael-fabricant-sorry-teachers-nurses-lockdown-drinks>
* The government has issued a 10-year plan aimed at cutting crime and saving lives by **reducing the supply and demand for drugs** and delivering animproved treatment and recovery system. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/from-harm-to-hope-a-10-year-drugs-plan-to-cut-crime-and-save-lives>
* The DfE will scrap its **edtech demonstrator programme** after just over two years, claiming it is no longer needed as schools reopen after Covid closures; the programme will end after the summer term. See <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/dfe-bins-flagship-edtech-demonstrator-programme/>
* The DfE has updated a list of **successful applicants who applied to the EdTech demonstrator schools and colleges programme** up to July 22. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/edtech-demonstrator-schools-and-colleges-successful-applicants>
* The government wants all schools and nurseries to have **designated sustainability leads** by 2025 and will require the chosen individual to "own" a "climate action plan" that will outline a setting's approach to sustainability in terms of "curricular and extracurricular activity", procurement, adaptation to climate change and decarbonisation plans. The NAHT has now said, "Given the potential scope of the role, this could have major workload implications on an already stretched workforce, and there seems to be no additional funding attached to actually pay for the new role either. The reality is that there are only so many members of staff available, particularly in primary and smaller schools - it is not entirely clear precisely who the government expects to do this role." See <https://www.tes.com/magazine/analysis/general/tough-task-ahead-new-school-sustainability-leads>
* Nominations are open now for **Royal Society of Chemistry Education prizes 2022**. See <https://www.rsc.org/prizes-funding/prizes/>
* For the **Tes Schools Awards 2022 shortlist**, see <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/revealed-tes-schools-awards-2022-shortlist>
* The DfE has issued “**Behaviour and discipline in schools**”. How school staff can develop a behaviour policy. Includes checklists and resources to support full school opening during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-and-discipline-in-schools>
* The Children and Young People’s Mental Health Coalition, which is led by Sir Norman Lamb, has announced **an inquiry into behaviour and mental health in schools**. The inquiry will “explore the links between mental health and behaviour”, and look at how current school policies on behaviour “affect young people and their families”. Announcing the inquiry, the coalition claimed there were “widespread concerns about the increased use of punitive approaches such as exclusion and removal rooms to improve behaviour in schools”. Lamb, a former Liberal Democrat politician who served as a health minister in the coalition government, said his organisation was “concerned that too often children are punished for behaviour that is linked to their mental health, and that such punishments can cause further harm”. See <https://cypmhc.org.uk/>
* Dozens of allegations of **safeguarding failures in after-school clubs** - including assaults, neglect and sexual abuse - have been uncovered by BBC News. More than 80 referrals have been made about clubs in school grounds in the past five years, according to information requests. See <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-61325477>
* The DfE has published “The **link between absence and attainment at KS2 and KS4** 2018-2019” See <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/the-link-between-absence-and-attainment-at-ks2-and-ks4/2018-19>Pupils with higher attainment at KS2 and KS4 had lower levels of absence over the key stage compared to those with lower attainment.
	+ Pupils who did not achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and maths in 2019 had an overall absence rate of 4.7% over the key stage, compared with 3.5% among pupils who achieved the expected standard and 2.7% among those who achieved the higher standard.
	+ Pupils who did not achieve grade 9 to 4 in English and maths GCSEs in 2019 had an overall absence rate of 8.8% over the key stage, compared with 5.2% among pupils who achieved a grade 4 and 3.7% among pupils who achieved grade 9 to 5 in both English and maths.
* A “toxic” **TikTok** trend has left tormented pupils reluctant to attend school and their teachers yet again facing a drawn-out process to remove “derogatory and defamatory” videos. In a new “Guess Who” TikTok trend, anonymous profiles, which in many cases include the school name, post videos with clues to a classmate’s identity.These clues usually have the pupil’s initials or year group, but also often contain references to physical appearance, sexuality and personality. Some accounts also encourage other pupils to tag the victims in the comments section. See <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/new-tiktok-social-media-trend-torments-school-pupils/>

**School management**

* ESFA has updated the **course directory which contains information on courses offered by learning providers** who are contracted with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sfa-course-directory>
* The DfE has updated “Find out how to apply for a grant and access DfE quality assured training to help develop a **whole school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/senior-mental-health-lead-training>
* The ONS has issued “**OVID-19 Schools Infection Survey, England: pandemic response measures in schools: January to February 2022**” See <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/bulletins/covid19schoolsinfectionsurveyenglandpandemicresponsemeasuresinschools/januarytofebruary2022>
* Schools are facing **problems recruiting and retaining their support staff** with low wages, combined with the cost of living crisis, resulting in many considering jobs outside of education. School leaders are struggling to fill vacancies, as staff find that they can earn more in retail roles where they are paid similar hourly rates, but can work longer shifts and have year-round contracts.
* For the latest **ESFA Update**, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esfa-update-4-may-2022>
* ESFA has issued a collection of documents, “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>
* ESFA has issued guidance for local authorities on the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) **DSG deficit management plan template**. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dedicated-schools-grant-dsg-deficit-management-plan>
* The DfE has updated “**School food standards: resources for schools**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-food-standards-resources-for-schools>

**Post 16**

* The DfE has listed the **ICT user and related qualifications at level 2 that the ESFA will stop funding from 1 August 2022**. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/level-2-ict-qualifications-removed-funding-from-1-august-2022>
* For **Ofqual’s response to the review of post-16 qualifications at level 2 and below**, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/qualifications-at-level-2-and-below-consultation-response>Ofqual advises that the government considers further the phases proposed for the implementation of the reforms. The qualifications in scope of this review are numerous and diverse. They span academic and technical provision of a range of forms and at multiple levels – entry levels, level 1 and level 2 – as well as including a number of specific qualification types. At present, there is a risk that the large number of proposed groupings are not sufficiently clear or straightforward for students and others to differentiate between. To address this, Ofqual’s expert opinion is that it would be helpful further to segment, and define, the provision based on aspects such as qualification purpose – in effect, combining those of the 17 proposed groupings that have common features. At level 3, implementation of the Department’s proposals has been delayed by a year. This means that the proposals at level 2 and below – which were originally intended to follow those at level 3 – will now largely be implemented at the same time.The further segmentation that Ofqual proposes would provide the scope to increase the coherence of the phased implementation between level 3, and level 2 and below

**Tony Stephens**