Tony Stephens Education Support

http://tonystephens.org.uk

[tonystephens856@gmail.com](about:blank)

07977804899

**196 Academy and School News and Resources Update, Nov 26-Dec 2 2022**

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**Public Examinations**

* The DfE has issued the outcome of its consultation on ensuring **the resilience of the qualifications system in 2023**: GCSE, AS, A level, Project and AEA. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/ensuring-the-resilience-of-the-qualifications-system-in-2023-gcse-as-a-level-project-and-aea>

**Schools will have to collect student performance evidence again this year in case exams are cancelled**, government has confirmed, despite half of schools consulted saying it will increase workload. The DfE and Ofqual have confirmed their plans for “supporting resilience in the exam system” in 2023. The guidance tells schools to collect and retain evidence to be used for potential teacher grades for GCSEs and A-levels. The two organisations said it was “very unlikely” exams would be canned, but “good public policy means having contingency, even for extremely unlikely scenarios”. The government and Ofqual said schools should plan test opportunities in line with their usual assessment approaches, such as mock exams. These can be varied if a school needs more evidence, they said. But they stopped short of repeating advice on the frequency of testing from last year’s guidance, which said a “sensible approach” would be to test once a term. Teachers should also “guard against over-assessment”, and normally would “not need to spend longer on these assessments than they would on their existing” test plans. Ofqual made some tweaks to its proposed guidance, such as clarifying evidence can be kept digitally or physically, and that students should normally only be assessed on the content they have been taught. Students should be supervised during tests, but schools don’t need to use external invigilators. **The detailed guidance on all this has been issued by Ofqual and can be found at** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-resilience-in-the-exam-system-in-2023/supporting-resilience-in-the-exam-system-in-2023>

* Ofqual has issued the consultation outcome re proposed changes to the **assessment of mathematics, physics and combined science GCSEs in 2023**. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-changes-to-the-assessment-of-mathematics-physics-and-combined-science-gcses-in-2023> **Exam boards will continue to provide formulae and revised equations sheets for GCSE mathematics, physics and combined science exams in 2023**
* Following consultation, in **GCSE modern foreign language** (MFL) Ofqual will **remove permanently the requirement for exam boards to include unfamiliar vocabulary that is not on vocabulary lists**. This will take effect for assessments from 2023 onwards. The exam boards can now give the meaning of (gloss) unfamiliar vocabulary, if they consider this necessary. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-changes-to-the-assessment-of-modern-foreign-language-gcses-from-2023> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-the-subject-content-for-modern-foreign-language-gcses>
* Ofqual has issued “**Exam system contingency plan**: England, Wales and Northern Ireland”. This joint contingency plan is in place to deal with any major disruption that may affect exam candidates. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>

**ITT and teacher recruitment**

* **New initial teacher training (ITT) provider partnerships could be given more time before an Ofsted visit** but the DfE “cannot guarantee” that they will be last to be inspected, an official said today. It also emerged that the Ofsted will be looking for a **“single accountable accredited provider” for each new partnership**, with new DfE guidance set to be released next week that will “outline where the accountability should be held”. Potential providers who have been unsuccessful so far will receive the results of the long-awaited **reaccreditation appeals process** by the end of this week. Providers that have not been successfully accredited can choose to join a partnership with an accredited provider. The DfE has also said there will be **grants available for new partnerships** with existing delivery organisations, which will be “targeted towards regions where we have reservations on the provision”. **The accreditation process for the ITT sector will open again in 2025-26**. **There are also plans to review both the ITT Core Content Framework (CCF) and the Early Career Framework (ECF)**. See <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/new-teacher-training-partnerships-get-more-time-ofsted>
* Teacher shortages are set to become more acute amid the cost-of-living crisis as **teacher trainees are forced to drop out of courses**, school-based training providers have warned. The vast majority of school-centred initial teacher training providers (SCITTs) are concerned that soaring costs will lead to trainee dropouts. See <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/teacher-trainee-dropout-warning-costs-crisis-ITT-schools>
* The DfE has updated:
  + **Teach in England if you qualified outside the UK**, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teach-in-england-if-you-qualified-outside-the-uk>
  + **Recruit teachers from overseas**, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/recruit-teachers-from-overseas>
  + **Apply for qualified teacher status (QTS)** if you teach outside the UK, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-qualified-teacher-status-qts-if-you-teach-outside-the-uk>
  + **Awarding qualified teacher status to overseas teachers**, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/awarding-qualified-teacher-status-to-overseas-teachers>
* The DfE has issued “**Initial teacher training: trainee number census 2022 to 2023**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/initial-teacher-training-trainee-number-census-2022-to-2023> **The government missed its target for recruitment of new secondary school teachers by 41 per cent this year, and also recruited fewer primary teachers than needed**.
  + In total there were 28,991 new entrants to ITT in 2022/23 compared to 36,159 in 2021/22, 40,377 in 2020/21 and 33,799 in 2019/20. In 2020/21, there was an unprecedented increase in new entrants to ITT, which was likely to be a direct result of the impact of COVID-19, and these higher levels continued, to a lesser extent, into 2021/22.
  + Of the new entrants in 2022/23, 23,224 were starting postgraduate ITT, a decrease (23%) from 30,093 in 2021/22. There were 5,767 new entrants to undergraduate ITT in 2022/23, a decrease (5%) from 6,066 in 2021/22.
  + The percentage of the Postgraduate Initial Teacher Training (PGITT) target achieved for all subjects (secondary and primary) was 71%. This is a decrease of 26 percentage points, down from 97% in 2021/22. This was driven by a decrease in the number of new entrants to PGITT (of 6,869) and an increase in the target (from 31,030 in 2021/22 to 32,600 in 2022/23).
    - Overall, 93% of the PGITT target was achieved in primary (compared to 131% in 2021/22). Prior to this year, the PGITT primary target was met in 5 of the latest 7 years, including in 2020/21 and 2021/22.
    - Overall, 59% of the PGITT target was achieved in secondary subjects (compared to 79% in 2021/22). The PGITT secondary target has not been met since 2012/13, except in 2020/21.
    - Overall, 62% of the PGITT target was achieved for English Baccalaureate (EBacc)] subjects (compared to 84% in 2021/22). Within EBacc subjects, recruitment exceeded the PGITT target for History and Classics. Targets were not met for the other EBacc subjects.
    - Physics has taken the biggest hit, with just 17 per cent of the teachers needed recruited. The DfE’s target was 2,610. It recruited just 444. Recruitment was also very low in design and technology (25 per cent) and computing (30 per cent). Recruitment in modern foreign languages fell from 69 per cent of the target last year to just 34 per cent this year. Of a targeted 2,140 languages trainees, only 726 were actually recruited. For computing, 348 out of a targeted 1,145 trainees were recruited. A total of 1,844 new maths teachers were recruited – 90 per cent of the government’s original target. Targets for chemistry and biology were also missed by 14 per cent and 15 per cent respectively. The government also only recruited 62 per cent of its target in EBacc subjects.
    - PGITT targets for 2022/23 were set using analysis from the Teacher Workforce Model (TWM)

For the **statistics for previous years**, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-teacher-training>

**Ofsted**

* Ofsted has issued “**State-funded schools inspections and outcomes as at 31 August 2022**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/state-funded-schools-inspections-and-outcomes-as-at-31-august-2022> For previous years, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/maintained-schools-and-academies-inspections-and-outcomes-official-statistics>
* Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) have launched a new joint framework for **inspecting provision for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities** (SEND) within a local area. Beginning in January 2023, inspections will focus on whether local area partnerships are delivering improved outcomes and experiences for children and young people with SEND. See:
* **Area SEND: framework and handbook**, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/area-send-framework-and-handbook>
* **The consultation outcome**, <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/a-new-approach-to-area-send-inspections>
* **Children and young people’s consultation outcome**, <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/children-and-young-peoples-consultation-changing-the-way-we-look-into-services-for-children-and-young-people-with-send>
* Ofsted has also published a **commentary** about the changes to the framework by the Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/hmci-commentary-publishing-our-new-area-send-framework>
* Area SEND inspection: **guidance for inspectors**, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-area-send-inspection-guidance-for-inspectors>

The new framework will consider how local area partnerships are going beyond fulfilling their legal duties, to make a positive difference to the lives of children and young people with SEND. Inspections will now also evaluate how local authorities commission and oversee alternative provision, given the large number of children and young people with SEND in this kind of provision. A new ongoing cycle of inspections will be introduced, with the aim of strengthening accountability across the local area partnership and supporting continuous improvement across the SEND system. There will also be a programme of monitoring inspections for areas with systemic or widespread weaknesses. To support joint working across the sector, the inspection framework will apply a multi-disciplinary approach to gathering evidence, by deploying an inspection team that includes education, health and social care inspectors. Any local areas inspected previously that were required to produce a Written Statement of Action (WSoA), and have not had a revisit by the end of 2022, will have a full inspection under the new framework within three years. The new inspections will begin in 2023. Ofsted dismissed calls for the new inspections to be delayed until after the government’s SEND review reforms have been implemented. Inspections will focus more on the impact SEND services have on children and young people, use children’s experience as a “starting point” and increase scrutiny on alternative provision. **Services will be rated with three new inspection “outcomes”.**

* The first will be for services which “typically lead to positive experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND”.
* The second will be for when services lead to “inconsistent experiences and outcomes”.
* The third will highlight “widespread and/or systemic failings leading to significant concerns”.

Ofsted has also announced it will carry out an “**annual series of thematic reviews** as part of the area SEND inspection arrangements”. The first will focus on **AP,** to “improve our knowledge of how it is used in practice, and the extent to which it meets pupils’ education, health and care needs”. Findings will be shared next autumn.

* Ofsted has issued “**Glossary of terms**: Ofsted statistics. Explanation of terms used in Ofsted's official and national statistical releases”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/glossary-of-terms-ofsted-statistics>
* Ofsted has issued “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>

**Staff welfare**

* **Teachers are being forced to take second jobs, including driving taxis, bar work and private tutoring**, in order to pay bills and eat, headteachers and unions warned last week. The NASUWT has found that one in 10 teachers now have a second or even third job because their teaching pay doesn’t cover their monthly outgoings. With teachers resorting to school food banks, heads are warning that the recent 5% pay rise will still leave many unable to manage basic living costs.
* Findings from the **2022 Teacher Wellbeing Index**, <https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/resources/for-organisations/research/teacher-wellbeing-index/>
  + Three-quarters of all **school staff are stressed**, with a three percentage point increase in the number of education staff who described themselves as stressed since 2021 and among support staff, a rise of eight percentage points to 68 per cent. Responses came from 3,082 staff across primaries, secondaries, sixth-form and further education colleges, early years and adult education settings. Those working in secondaries and primaries were most likely to report being stressed – at 79 per cent and 78 per cent respectively. Though the number of staff reporting experiencing a mental health issue dropped by seven percentage points on 2021 to 36 per cent this year, symptoms of poor mental health actually increased. Half, or 50 per cent, of all staff said they had experienced insomnia or difficult sleeping. Another 44 and 41 per cent reported difficulties with concentrating and forgetfulness respectively. Asked if they felt, or it had been suggested to them, that their symptoms were a sign of burnout, 28 per cent of all respondents agreed. When their scores were measured using the Warwick-Edinburgh Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS), 35.5 per cent of education staff were found to have a score of 40 or below, which indicates probable depression. The average wellbeing score for England’s population is 52.40. Nearly two-thirds, or 59 per cent, of all staff said they had considered leaving the education sector in 2021-22. Of those, 55 per cent said they had actively sought to change their current job in the same timeframe.
  + **Mental health and wellbeing among heads, assistants and deputies in particular has worsened in recent years**. In the poll of 707 senior leaders working across primaries, secondaries and further education, 67 per cent said they thought about leaving the sector in the 2021-22 academic year. It marks a four percentage point increase from the previous year, when 63 per cent of senior leaders told charity Education Support – which conducts the index – they had considered leaving education in the past two years. Of those considering leaving this year, just over half had actively sought to quit. This equates to 37 per cent of all those polled. The heads’ telephone wellbeing service Headrest, <https://www.headrestuk.co.uk/> , saying it was unsurprised by the report. “Sadly, this report is not a surprise to us: we are deeply concerned at the loss of many headteachers due to a variety of factors.” It added that these included the “oppressive nature” of Ofsted inspections, budget pressures and “increasing difficulties” in recruiting other staff. The report shows the average wellbeing score of senior leaders is at 43.37 – the lowest in four years. During lockdowns in 2020, the figure stood at 45.20. Those with scores of between 41 and 45 on the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale are considered at high risk of psychological distress and increased risk of depression. The average wellbeing score for England’s population is 52.40.

**Welfare of children and young people**

* **NHS Digital has published the results of its third survey on children and young people’s mental health in England**, which was first recorded in 2017. See <https://digital.nhs.uk/news/2022/rate-of-mental-disorders-among-17-to-19-year-olds-increased-in-2022-new-report-shows> The document is full of detailed information, but some of the key points are:
* The overall rate of probable **mental health disorders** for seven to 16-year-olds has remained stable since 2021. It remains at about 1 in 6 children (18 per cent), a rise from 1 in 9 in 2017. But the rates for 17 to 19-year-olds soared to 25.7 per cent – or 1 in 4. This is up from 1 in 6 last year and 1 in 10 in 2017. There has been a drop in primary pupils with probable disorders (from 18.1 per cent in 2021 to 15.2 per cent this year) but a rise in secondary (from 17.7 per cent to 20.4 per cent) But the figures show how in primary school, boys are more likely than girls to have a probable disorder – 19.7 per cent compared to 10.5 per cent. While boys are most impacted at primary school, the trend then flips in secondary school and into young adolescence. Among 11 to 16 year olds, 22 per cent of girls have a probable disorder, compared to 18.8 per cent of boys. The rates for girls continue to soar between 17 and 24 years old – 31.2 per cent compared to 13.3 of boys. Rates of probable disorder for all children have risen in secondary-age children – from 17.7 per cent last year to 20.4 per cent.
* Overall, 34 per cent of seven to 16-year-olds had **experienced sleep problems** three or more times within the week the survey was taken. This has dropped from 38 per cent in 2021. But for girls with a probable disorder, this has soared from 72.8 per cent last year to 82.4 per cent. It dropped for boys with a probable disorder from 71.5 per cent to 64.2 per cent.
* The rates of secondary-age children with a probable disorder **feeling lonely** “often or always” has begun to rise again. It was at 21.4 per cent in 2020, before dropping to 17.1 per cent last year. This year, it has risen to 18 per cent. This compares to just 1.7 per cent of pupils considered unlikely to have a disorder.
* There has been a drop in the number of school children with probable disorders **missing more than three school weeks**. Last year this was 18.2 per cent, but is now 12.6 per cent. But those with probable disorders are three times more likely to be absent for 15 days than their counterparts without a disorder. Of these, only 3.9 per cent missed these days. And absence rates of between one and five days have risen for children with probable disorders, from 15.5 per cent last year to 36.7 per cent. Just 17.5 per cent of these children missed no days, compared to 33.4 per cent of their peers.
* **Secondary-age children** with a probable mental disorder were less likely to **feel safe at school** than peers without – 61.2 per cent compared to 89.2 per cent. They also **enjoyed learning** much less (51.5 per cent compared to 73.1 per cent) and were more worried about the impact of Covid-19 on their exam results (52.2 per cent compared to 41 per cent). While 97 per cent of children without a disorder said they had **at least one friend** to turn to, only 77.8 per cent of those with a probable disorder said the same. Children with a probable disorder were also nearly four times more likely to report they had been **bullied online** compared to their peers – 29.4 per cent compared to 7.9 per cent.
* Among all 11 to 16 year olds, 25.1 per cent said they had **accessed mental health and wellbeing support at school.** Eighty-three per cent of all secondary-aged children knew how to get help at school and 70 per cent felt they could get mental health support without others finding out about it. But only 57 per cent felt comfortable talking to adults about their mental health, while 61 per cent agreed the support was helpful.
* A school-age child with a probable disorder was more likely **to live in a household that could not afford to keep the home warm enough** – 13.6 per cent compared to 6 per cent of children who are unlikely to have a disorder. The same is true of pupils in households that have fallen behind with bills, rent or mortgage (17.8 per cent compared to 7.6 per cent) and where the household could not **afford enough food** or had to use a food bank (11.8 per cent compared to 4.4 per cent).
* Six in ten (60%) 17- to 19-year-olds have “possible **problems with eating**”. An even higher proportion of those aged 20 to 23 – 62.3% – display the same behaviours. However, many fewer 11- to 16-year-olds – one in eight (12.9%) – are affected. The problems are more common among girls and young women than their male peers. For example, they were found in 17.8% of girls aged 11 to 16, but only 8.1% of boys the same age. A staggering three-quarters (75.9%) of girls and young women aged 17 to 19 told researchers they had experienced such feelings or behaviours, as had almost half – 45.5% – of boys and young men that age.
* In a survey of 6,200 teachers in schools across England commissioned by The Sutton Trust, 52 per cent of senior leaders said they had seen a rise in pupils being unable to afford lunch when they are not eligible for free school meals. This figure rises to 59 per cent for heads in the most deprived areas. Nearly four in 10 heads also reported more pupils **coming to school hungry** (38 per cent) and the same proportion said that the cost-of-living crisis is affecting the attainment of at least one-third of their students, rising to 72 per cent for senior leaders in the most deprived areas. The impact of the cost-of-living crisis is also evident, the majority of heads said, in student behaviour. Three-quarters (74 per cent) of teachers said they have seen an increase in pupils being unable to concentrate or being tired in class. Over half (54 per cent), meanwhile, have seen an increase in pupils coming to school without adequate winter clothing. The survey shows marked differences between the experiences of teachers in schools in the most deprived areas and those in the most affluent areas. See <https://www.suttontrust.com/news-opinion/all-news-opinion/the-cost-of-living-crisis-and-its-impact-on-education/>

**Student carers**

* With one in five students having caring responsibilities, schools are being helped to identify and support these vulnerable young people ahead of new census requirements. The number of young carers in England remains, officially, unknown with many hiding their caring role and therefore remaining unsupported in school. **However, from January 2023, schools are being asked to identify young carers as part of the annual school census**. A young carer is a child or young person who cares for a friend or family member who, due to illness, disability, a mental health problem, or an addiction, cannot cope without their support. Estimates vary as to how many young carers there are. The 2011 national census identified 178,000 young carers in England and Wales. One in eight of those were aged under eight. However, in 2018, the University of Nottingham in 2018 estimated that there could be as many as 800,000 young carers aged 11 to 16 in England, while the Carers Trust has suggested that there may be as many as one in five secondary-aged pupils with caring responsibilities. Research earlier this year involving 600 young carers in the UK (Carers Trust, 2022) found that a third were caring for 20 to 49 hours a week, with 14% caring for 50-plus hours a week. They said they often feel worried, lonely, burnt-out, and stressed. Bullying is also a significant problem with a quarter of young carers being bullied because of their caring role. When it comes to their studies, a quarter of young carers aged 11 to 15 miss school or struggle with their education. Previous research from the Children’s Society tells us that young carers achieve on average one grade lower per subject in GCSEs than their peers without caring responsibilities.

Ahead of this January’s new school census requirements, the Carers Trust and Children’s Society have published **a new resource to help schools identify and support young carers**. Entitled A step-by-step guide for leaders, teachers, and non-teaching staff, it is designed for use in primary and secondary schools. It offers 10 steps to help schools identify and support young carers, with associated resources and downloads. See <https://youngcarersinschools.com/> <https://youngcarersinschools.com/ycis-guide/>

**Early years and primary**

* The DfE has commissioned NCFE to review the **EYE level 3 criteria** and recommend revisions. It is consulting on the suitability of the revised criteria for qualifications in early education and childcare. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-recovery-programme-level-3-qualification-review> The consultation is at <https://consult.education.gov.uk/early-years-workforce/early-years-educator-level-3-criteria/>
* An **additional bank holiday** in honour of the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III will take place on Monday 8 May 2023. As this date had previously been announced as the first day of the 2023 key stage 2 (KS2) test week in England, a **change to the KS2 test schedule** next year will be necessary. Ministers have considered the situation carefully and have decided that KS2 tests will take place in the same week with tests following the usual order but each taking place one day later than originally planned. As such, the new schedule will be:
  + Tuesday 9 May: English grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS) papers 1 (questions) and 2 (spelling)
  + Wednesday 10 May: English reading paper
  + Thursday 11 May: mathematics papers 1 (arithmetic) and 2 (reasoning)
  + Friday 12 May: mathematics paper 3 (reasoning)

The KS2 timetable variation (TTV) window for each assessment will also move back one day, in accordance with this change. There will be no changes to arrangements for our other assessments, including KS2 teacher assessments, key stage 1 tests and teacher assessments, the phonics screening check and the multiplication tables check. Dates and deadlines for these assessments remain as previously announced. The DfE is aware that schools may have booked events or activities for their year 6 pupils on Friday 12 May. Where possible, schools should look to rearrange or delay the start of any such events or activities to accommodate mathematics paper 3. Where it is not possible to change plans in this way then, exceptionally for 2023, it will approve applications for TTVs arising from booked residentials, trips or similar events scheduled for Friday 12 May only. Schools will need to reschedule the date of the test (mathematics paper 3) for the affected pupils to one of the following five school days. Note that it will not approve TTVs for any such events that are scheduled on other test days, in line with existing rules. Other TTV rules will continue to apply as normal for Friday 12 May, including in relation to pupil absence or attendance at alternative provision.

* For information about the **Ofsted Early Years Blog**, see <https://earlyyears.blog.gov.uk/about-us/>
* The DfE has updated, **“Information on new continuing professional development, qualifications and support and guidance for the early years sector** funded by the DfE”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-education-recovery-programme>
* Ofsted has issued “**Guides for parents: how early years settings are inspected**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guides-for-parents-how-early-years-settings-are-inspected>

**Covid**

* **Primary** school pupils were more heavily **impacted by partial school closures as a result of Covid lockdowns**, a research paper released today suggests. Evidence collected by parents showed a worsening of mental health among primary-aged pupils across the two periods of national lockdown during the pandemic, when schools were closed to most pupils, according to National Foundation for Educational Research analysis. However, a mixture of parent and self-reported evidence on **secondary** school students’ mental health showed there was not such a marked worsening linked to school closures, the NFER said. Evidence also suggests that the Covid restrictions in early 2021 may have had a more negative impact on school pupils than the first lockdown in March to June 2020, according to the report. Other findings flagged up in the NFER report include:
  + **Secondary-aged girls** consistently reported lower overall scores around happiness, life satisfaction and worthwhileness than their male counterparts throughout the pandemic.
  + **Primary-aged boys**, however, showed signs of worse mental health from the end of 2019 to March 2021 than their female peers, according to parent reports.
  + **Disadvantaged children and young people** were not more negatively impacted than their non-disadvantaged peers by the pandemic in terms of wellbeing, although the pre-pandemic evidence is clear that disadvantage is associated with lower overall wellbeing and poorer mental health, the NFER says.
  + For some young people, particularly those with **pre-existing poorer mental health**, the restrictions at the start of the pandemic were associated with some improvement in their mental health.
  + Young people reported greater feelings of **“connectedness” with school** during the first lockdown compared with before the pandemic. The authors of one study reported that students with low school connectedness pre-pandemic showed a greater increase in wellbeing scores and a greater reduction in anxiety in comparison to those with average-high school connectedness. This group also showed a small reduction in depression scores.

See <https://www.nfer.ac.uk/news-events/press-releases/nfer-review-sheds-light-on-impact-of-covid-19-on-young-people-s-mental-health-and-wellbeing/>

* A **book on the UK’s vaccine taskforce** is to be sent to every secondary school in England. The Long Shot, written by former taskforce director Kate Bingham and former Times journalist Tim Hames, charts the success of the vaccines squad in enabling the UK to become the first country in the world to deploy approved Covid vaccines

**School finances**

* School leaders are **demanding clarity over the government’s energy price guarantee,** with some schools likely to pay tens of thousands of pounds more if it ends in April. The autumn statement stated public sector organisations would “not be eligible”. Government figures have argued £2.3 billion extra school funding would help instead. Then Nick Gibb said, “An HM Treasury led review of the Energy Bill Relief Scheme (EBRS) will determine support for non-domestic consumers in the UK from 1 April 2023, with results to be published by the end of 2022. Schools will continue to receive the EBRS until 31 March 2023”. For fuller details, see <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/leaders-demand-clarity-after-energy-support-hokey-cokey/>
* The influential **school cuts campaign will now refocus on highlighting the plight of special schools and post-16 institutions after claiming success in its push for more funding**. For the first time, its website will give funding figures for non-mainstream schools amid fears their high teacher-pupil ratios will put them in greater financial difficulty. The campaign’s focus on SEND is prompted in part by concerns about the disproportionate impact of rising costs on special schools. “Our campaign worked”, a new home page for the union-backed campaign’s website now states, after the chancellor announced an extra £2 billion of school funding in each of the next two years. See <https://schoolcuts.org.uk/>
* The NEU is “working to understand” **how the £2 billion of extra funding will be distributed.** DfE permanent secretary Susan Acland-Hood told MPs has said it was “highly likely it will go out through a version of the [existing funding formula]”. However, allocations are unlikely to be published before next month, and it is also not clear how much of the funding will be for high needs or post-16 education.
* Under the DfE’s school resource management adviser (**SRMA**) scheme, schools are visited by advisers, generally experienced school business leaders, to “help leaders identify new opportunities to make better use of their funding”. But schools have faced **five-month waits** to get this financial help. The delay has been criticised as “far too slow” by school leaders facing severe financial challenges, who say the advice risks being out of date by the time it arrives, due to pay awards and fluctuating energy prices. See <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/schools-wait-cost-cutter-financial-help-government>
* Some schools have been given extra time to **contest government plans to clawback cash earmarked for running National Tutoring Programme** sessions, after communications with heads fell down this week. Schools that wanted to query the clawback were initially told to contact the ESFA by Monday afternoon (5 December), but those that did not get the email will now have until 10am next Thursday (8 December) to respond. See <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/dfe-forced-delay-catch-clawback-deadline>
* In the chancellor’s Autumn Statement last month schools were awarded a two-year funding boost of £2.3 billion per year from 2023, but post-16 settings were not given any extra cash. The DfE said this means schools with sixth forms attached will be allocated money based on their 11-16 students, leading some trust and school leaders to say they could have **to make “difficult decisions” on their post-16 provision**. School business experts have said that schools will in many cases have to make a choice between subsidising their sixth form from their 11-16 funding - which will “squeeze” their core provision - or scaling back their sixth forms.

**School buildings**

* The DfE has issued “**Schedule of Accommodation tools for schools and colleges**. Tools and templates to help identify the internal spaces needed in mainstream schools and colleges”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mainstream-schools-schedule-of-accommodation-tools>
* The DfE has issued the documents that form the **Employer’s Requirements for the DfE Construction Framework 2021 and the Offsite Schools Framework (MMC1)** See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/employers-requirements-part-a-general-conditions>
* Ministers are urgently asking for details about a “crumbly” type of concrete used widely in flat-roofed school buildings, often hidden from sight but now feared to be leaving schools “liable to collapse” because of the potential danger of **reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete’s (RAAC) fragility**. This September, the Office for Government Property (OGP) issued a safety briefing notice to all property leaders warning RAAC is “now life expired and liable to collapse”. They warned “this has already happened in two schools with little or no notice”. A 2019 safety alert from the Standing Committee on Structural Safety on the “failure of RAAC planks” recommended all those installed before 1980 were replaced. But while the government has pledged to eradicate them from hospitals, it has not made the same assurances to schools. In fact, the information for schools applying for grants in next year’s condition improvement funding round says that “not all RAAC is dangerous”. The concrete has nonetheless moved up the DfE’s priority list. DfE has recently updated guidance to schools on identifying and managing RAAC amid concerns it is little understood, and that many remain unaware the problem exists in their buildings. But the department is also in the dark. In March, responsible bodies of state-funded schools were invited to complete a survey so ministers can get a clearer picture on the prevalence of RAAC in the school estate. But many have yet to respond. The survey was recirculated in October with a message urging a response as soon as possible. For full details, see <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/the-ticking-time-bomb-leaving-schools-liable-to-collapse/>
* The DfE has issued information for academies, sixth-form colleges and voluntary-aided schools about the **outcome of the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) 2022 to 2023**. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/condition-improvement-fund-2022-to-2023-outcome>

**Academies and Trusts**

* Analysis of government figures shows 2,460 trusts were running schools in October, down by 100 or 3.9 per cent year on year. There were **23 fewer multi-academy trusts (MATs) and 77 fewer standalone academies**. The pace of trusts disappearing has also increased slightly, from 8.1 a month between June 2019 and October 2021 to 8.3 a month since. For a related article, “Welcome to the academy trust merger era”, see <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/welcome-to-the-academy-trust-merger-era/>
* The DfE has been warned plans to launch **a trust leadership development programme could “seriously undermine” existing providers and risk breaching competition rules**. The DfE white paper in March promised extra training and support to ensure trusts have enough “highly effective leaders” as more schools academise and trusts grow in size. Contract documents show it has begun searching for operators to “build a sector-leading multi-academy trust (MAT) CEO training programme”, ready for a first cohort next September. But the move has sparked alarm among organisations already offering leadership development support to trust leaders. They warn that government could use its dominant position as a regulator and founder of trusts to “ensure its CEO framework and leadership development programme achieve a monopoly” or undermine other providers. See <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/mat-ceo-leadership-development-programme-dfe-alternatives/>
* An academy could be transferred to its fourth trust in under a decade in what critics dub a “taste of the chaos” to come under a fully academised system. Figures reveal **more than 50 schools have been run by three different trusts**. Some transfers were trust-initiated, others forced by the government. See <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/academy-set-for-transfer-to-fourth-trust-in-a-decade/>

**Education news for schools**

* Sixteen winners from across UK schools and colleges have been honoured in the **2022 Pearson Teaching Awards** for their dedicated work in education. For a list of winners, see <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/revealed-the-2022-pearson-teaching-awards-winners/>
* The DfE has issued “Data showing **the proportions of 16- and 17-year-olds in education and training** and an estimate of those not in education, employment or training (NEET)”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/neet-and-participation-local-authority-figures> This release presents data for England showing the proportion of 16 and 17 year-olds participating in education and training and an estimate of those not in education, employment or training (NEET) **by local authority (LA). The DfE also issues a scorecard which:**
* allows local authorities and their partners to monitor their own performance and compare it with that of others
* puts into context local authorities’ figures on the proportion of young people who are NEET and those with unknown education, employment or training status

See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-people-neet-comparative-data-scorecard>

* A judicial review legal challenge has been launched against the government’s **Oak National Academy**. The British Educational Suppliers Association (BESA), the Publishers Association, and the Society of Authors said formal action was lodged with the courts earlier this week. The NEU is also backing the action as an “interested party”.
* The DfE has issued fresh calls for companies to **train educational psychologists** (EP) in a project worth £32 million. In a contract published this week, <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/notice/de74e60a-0a4c-4b9e-b3fb-5651e18b230a> the DfE laid out plans to train “three cohorts” of EPs, each with “over 200” trainees, between September 2023 and August 2029. See <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/send-dfe-bids-boost-school-psychologist-staff>
* **Sixth-form college staff across England walked out on Wednesday in the first national teacher strike in six years**, with one union leader warning disruption could be repeated on a greater scale next year. Members of the NEU took action at 75 colleges after voting overwhelmingly in favour of a strike over pay. Like their colleagues in schools, most sixth-form college teachers have received below-inflation pay rises of about 5 per cent. The NEU said the action was “strongly supported”, although it would not say how many of its 4,200 eligible members walked out. It is understood no college had to close.

**From the DfE**

* The **DfE ministerial team was questioned by MPs**. From the answers:
* The **DfE SEND review response** will be coming in ‘early’ 2023
* Under the government’s school rebuilding programme, 500 schools will get full or partial rebuilds over a ten year period. Ministers have only confirmed the first 161 projects. It now says, “Bids to the schools **rebuilding programme** are being assessed by officials, and we expect to confirm up to 300 schools this financial year, in fact, we hope to make that announcement by the end of December.”
* Labour announced last year that it would keep the policy of **ending tax breaks for private schools** if it wins the next general election. Gillian Keegan said, ““It could indeed cost money and lead to disruption as young people move from the private to the state sector. It is the politics of envy.”
* Ministers plan **to send capacity checkers into all secondary schools to see if they can fit in more pupils**. Local authorities could then use the updated numbers to force schools to take more pupils. Government officials also believe the checks would help to boost funding – as schools could take in more pupils – and would relieve pressure on the government to build new schools to meet any rise in pupil numbers. A pilot involving “net capacity assessment” (NCA), <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/area-guidelines-and-net-capacity> visits in more than 200 mainstream schools found 6,000 potential extra places, the documents show. The DfE now plans to carry out two years of assessments at 4,500 secondary and special schools from May next year.

**Universities**

* **England’s poorest HE students will be more than £1,000 worse off this academic year than the last, according to a new analysis that warns of “significant hardship for many this winter”**. According to the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS), the reduction – which means students from the poorest families will be £125 out of pocket each month – is due to the falling value of maintenance loans, which students take out to cover their living costs. Maintenance loans are adjusted in line with inflation forecasts rather than inflation itself. Because inflation has been significantly higher than forecast, students are being hit harder by the cost-of-living crisis than previously thought. See <https://ifs.org.uk/news/cost-living-crisis-hit-students-harder-expected>

**School management**

* **Partnerships between private and state schools** can take a number of different forms, including sharing facilities or expertise, invitations to events, or even sponsoring academies – in the case of some larger schools. Figures show **partnership work has declined** since 2017, when the annual report for the Independent Schools Council found there were more than 10,000 partnerships. According to the same census in 2021 there were just over 6,900, though the ISC said Covid had made partnerships more difficult.
* The DfE has issued guidance on how local authorities can share aggregate data on children who receive **elective home education (EHE) and those children missing education (CME)**. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/elective-home-education-and-children-missing-education-submit-your-data>
* For the latest **ESFA Update**, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esfa-update-30-november-2022>
* ESFA has issued “**High needs benchmarking tool**. A comparative tool to help local authorities plan for future high needs spend and provision”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/high-needs-benchmarking-tool>
* ESFA has issued guidance to help local authorities and academies account for **national non-domestic rates** (NNDR). See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-non-domestic-rates-accounting-guidance>

**Post 16**

* ESFA has updated “**T Levels resources for teachers and careers advisers**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/t-levels-resources-for-teachers-and-careers-advisers>
* The DfE has updated “An overview of **capital funding for post-16 education providers**, the type of funding available, what it can be used for and when to apply”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fe-capital-funding>
* The DfE has issued “**Further education corporations and sixth-form college corporations: governance guide**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-education-corporations-and-sixth-form-college-corporations-governance-guide--2>
* The DfE has issued a list of **regional further and higher education Prevent co-ordinators**. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/regional-further-education-fe-and-higher-education-he-prevent-coordinators>

**Tony Stephens**