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**193 Academy and School News and Resources Update, Nov 5-11 2022**

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**Early years and primary**

* STA has issued a collection of related documents, “Information and guidance about the **multiplication tables check**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/multiplication-tables-check>
* ESFA has updated “**PE and sport premium: conditions of grant 2022 to 2023**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pe-and-sport-premium-conditions-of-grant-2022-to-2023>

And “**How much PE and sport premium funding schools receive and advice on how it should be spent**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pe-and-sport-premium-for-primary-schools>

* An **extra bank holiday on Monday May 8 to mark the coronation of King Charles III next year will clash with the first day of key stage 2 SATs tests**. Year 6 pupils are expected to sit tests between May 8 and May 11, with a test on English grammar, punctuation and spelling currently scheduled on the same day as the bank holiday It comes after election officials warned that a Friday bank holiday could disrupt Though the government’s announcement on Sunday did not specify that schools would be expected to close, it said the date would be “an opportunity for families and communities across the country to come together to celebrate”. The DfE is yet to confirm if schools will be expected to close and how this would impact SATs.
* The number of five and six year olds who need **speech and language support** at school has risen by 10% in England over the past year, BBC analysis shows. The increase, which is substantially greater than previous years, is partly due to lockdown limiting social interactions, experts say. The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists says the profession is struggling to cope with the demand. A total of 42,341 children required extra support in 2021/22, up from 38,560 in 2020/21. This is the year group who started reception after the first lockdown and had considerable disruption to their early years learning. See <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-63373804>
* New Ofsted research finds **a lack of access to specialist help means more primary school children with additional needs are being referred to alternative provision (AP)**. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision-for-primary-age-pupils-in-england-a-long-term-destination-or-a-temporary-solution>

Around 7,000 primary-age children in England are currently known to be in AP. While this is a small proportion of all primary pupils, the number has risen by over a quarter in the last 5 years. Ofsted’s study found that most primary-age pupils only stayed in AP for a few weeks or months, and usually attended part time. However, some children with additional needs stay in AP for years while they wait for a special school place, and AP staff may be unable to meet their needs fully in the meantime. This absence of appropriate teaching and specialist support could have long-term consequences for these vulnerable children. Primary school staff told Ofsted that the strain on specialist services nationally - exacerbated by the pandemic - has made it more difficult to support pupils with special educational needs. Limited access to professional help, such as speech and language therapists or educational psychology services, could be leading to more AP referrals and potentially more permanent exclusions. The report states that a high-quality curriculum and high-quality teaching are crucial in preventing pupils’ needs from developing or worsening. Teachers would also benefit from improved access to appropriate external services, and opportunities to develop the right knowledge and skills. This could allow more mainstream schools to support pupils with additional needs, avoiding an AP referral or exclusion. Issues raised:

* Children were referred to an AP when their schools’ support strategies had not worked - either because of a lack of training, funding or facilities. Support strategies also became ineffective when relationships between parents and school staff broke down. In these cases, an AP referral was sometimes used as a ‘circuit breaker’ to repair relationships, with the AP acting as a mediator between the school and parents, while supporting the child.
* School staff believed pupils’ violent behaviour often stemmed from difficult home lives or undiagnosed SEND. A large majority of children in the study had social, emotional and /or health needs. This aligns with national statistics on pupils referred to AP.
* Staff had high expectations for pupils’ progress and outcomes, and most were expected to return to school. For other children, schools and APs worked together to identify the right future setting, such as a special school.
* Schools saw outreach work by APs to be important for the early identification of children’s needs, preventing an escalation in behaviour and helping retain pupils in mainstream education. However, AP staff said that funding arrangements affect the amount of outreach work they can do.
* Some APs had specialist teams on site, so that pupils’ needs could be understood and addressed quickly. APs may also extend help to families, because some parents of children in AP have their own emotional, cognitive or learning needs.
* All parents involved in the research said their child’s behaviour and academic work had improved since joining an AP, but some were unsure whether AP could substantially ‘change’ their child’s behaviour or lead to them have a happy and full life after leaving AP.
* The DfE has issued “**Early years funding benchmarking tool**. Information on indicators of local authority (LA) early education services, and ways to compare an individual LA to other LAs. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-benchmarking-tool>
* The fast pace of inflation will **significantly erode funding for early years care** in nurseries and childcare providers over the next three years, according to a report by the Institute for Fiscal Studies. The IFS said funding for childcare places in England will in effect fall by 8% by 2024-25 as a result of inflation, with providers facing costs rising by 16% over that period, mainly as the result of higher wage bills. The result is that the significant increase in the 2021 spending review – up to £3.75bn a year until 2024-25, covering the universal entitlement to 15 hours a week childcare, rising to 30 hours for many working parents – will be undone by higher-than-expected inflation. The Early Years Alliance says 4,000 nurseries and childminder services have closed in the past year. See <https://ifs.org.uk/publications/early-years-spending-update-impact-inflation>

**Attendance**

* **Attendance**. Due to the majority of schools being closed for half term in the week commencing 24 October 2022, the latest data relates to the **week commencing 17 October 2022**. **The attendance rate was 92.6% across all schools** in the week commencing 17 October 2022. **The absence rate was, therefore, 7.4% across all schools**. By school type, the absence rates across the week were:
  + 6.3% in state-funded **primary** schools (4.5% authorised and 1.8% unauthorised)
  + 8.7% in state-funded **secondary** schools (5.3% authorised and 3.4% unauthorised)
  + 12.7% in state-funded **special** schools (9.6% authorised and 3.1% unauthorised)

The data shows that the **attendance rate across the academic year to date** was 93.6%. The absence rate was, therefore, 6.4% across all schools. By school type, the absence rates across the year to date were:

* + 5.1% in state-funded **primary** schools (3.7% authorised and 1.4% unauthorised)
  + 7.8% in state-funded **secondary** schools (5.0% authorised and 2.8% unauthorised)
  + 11.9% in state-funded **special** schools (9.1% authorised and 2.7% unauthorised)

See <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/pupil-attendance-in-schools>

* The DfE has updated “**Improving attendance: good practice** for schools and multi-academy trusts. Schools and multi-academy trusts (MATs) share their different techniques for improving attendance rates in their settings”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/improving-attendance-good-practice-for-schools-and-multi-academy-trusts>

This includes a DfE video as a **training session for the new attendance guidance,** “What the new attendance guidance means for schools and academy trusts

* Every morning after registers up to six cars with experienced teachers leave North Shore Academy to go **door knocking to boost attendance**. The school, in Stockton-on-Tees, was struggling with around 87 per cent attendance in 2017. In one year, staff did 4,000 home visits to ensure pupils had the support they need. When Ofsted visited in July last year, attendance was 94 per cent. The school – ‘requires improvement’ in 2018 – was rated ‘outstanding’ in every category. Seventy per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals. See <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/the-knock-on-the-door-a-simple-solution-to-poor-attendance/>

**Public examinations**

* **JCQ awarding bodies have now published their final timetables for the summer 2023 examination series**. These include GCSE, GCE AS and A level examinations and can be found on individual awarding body websites:
  + **AQA**  <https://www.aqa.org.uk/exams-administration/dates-and-timetables>
  + **CCEA (GCSE / A level**) <https://ccea.org.uk/key-stage-4/gcse/timetables> <https://ccea.org.uk/post-16/gce/timetables>
  + **WJEC and Eduqas** <https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/administration/key-dates-and-timetables/#tab_0> <https://www.eduqas.co.uk/home/administration/key-dates-and-timetables/#tab_0>
  + **OCR** <https://www.ocr.org.uk/administration/key-dates-and-timetables/>
  + **Pearson** <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/exams/exam-timetables.html>

**Contingency days update**. These are now timetabled for the afternoons of the 8 and 15 June as well as the day of 28 June 2023. These contingency days are designed to be used in the event of national or significant local disruption to examinations.

The **JCQ Key dates in the examination cycle** document (June 2023) is now available at <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/key-dates-and-timetables/>

The document features key dates for main examination series of GCSE, GCE and Project qualifications which are common to all the JCQ awarding bodies, as well as key dates for

* + Access arrangements
  + Entries
  + Submitting centre assessed marks
  + Release of results
  + Final dates for post-result services

Note that **basedata for the summer series**, which enables centres to make EDI entries via A2C, will be available to download from the awarding body websites by 24 November 2022. Centre staff with teaching and administrative responsibilities will need to be aware of these dates.

**The JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE) for academic year 2022/2023**, was updated on 25 October 2022. An amendment has been made to page 29, paragraph 14.3. This applies only to AQA GCSE Bengali, Modern Hebrew and Panjabi examinations. A bilingual translation dictionary is not permitted in these examinations. This also extends to the preparation time for the Speaking Test. See <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations/>

* Ofqual has issued “**Access arrangements for GCSE, AS and A Level: 2021 to 2022 academic year”**. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/access-arrangements-for-gcse-as-and-a-level-2021-to-2022-academic-year>
* There were 512,085 approved access arrangements, up by 14.4% compared to the 2020 to 2021 academic year. This is a continuation of the upward trend seen before the 2020 to 2021 academic year. In the 2020 to 2021 academic year the decision to cancel the summer exams and to instead award teacher-assessed grades (TAGs) was announced before the deadline for submitting applications for access arrangements. Please note that more than one type of access arrangement can be granted per candidate.
* 5,485 centres (92.9% of all centres) had approved access arrangements for one or more of their candidates this year, compared to 5,175 centres (88.2% of all centres) in the 2020 to 2021 academic year.
* Among the types of access arrangements approved, arrangements for 25% extra time made up 65.3% of all approved arrangements in the 2021 to 2022 academic year, compared to 65.8% in the 2020 to 2021 academic year.
* There were 61,125 requests for modified papers this year, up 4.9% on summer 2019. We compare the numbers against summer 2019 since no GCSE, AS and A level exams took place in summer 2020 and 2021 due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and therefore data on modified papers was not collected.
* The DfE has issued “**Qualification funding approval**: funding year 2022 to 2023. Principles and processes we use to approve qualifications for funding in England”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/qualification-funding-approval>
* Ofqual has issued “**Appeals in vocational and technical qualifications**: guide to the data submission process”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/appeals-in-vocational-and-technical-qualifications-guide-to-the-data-submission-process>

**A-level and 16-18 results 2022**

* The DfE has issued “**A level and other 16 to 18 results: 2022 (provisional)**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/a-level-and-other-16-to-18-results-2022-provisional> The 16 to 18 performance measures reported in this provisional release for the 2021/22 academic year, and to be included on the Find School and College Performance Data website, have been affected by our commitment not to include results from qualifications awarded between January 2020 and August 2021 (see section ‘Changes to the data in 2021/22’). Throughout this release, comparisons are made with both 2021, the most recent year, and 2019, because it is most meaningful to compare to the last year summer exams were sat.
* **Average A level result**, B. An increase from C+ in 2018/19. (33.77 points to 38.77 points).
* **Average applied general result**, Dist-. An increase from Merit+ in 2018/19. (28.37 points to 31.88 points).
* **Average tech level result**, Dist-. An increase from Merit+ in 2018/19. (28.43 points to 30.61 points).
* **Average Point Score (APS) per entry for all level 3 cohorts** is lower compared to 2020/21: A level, -2.8 ppts; applied general, -0.9 ppts; tech level, - 1.2 ppts. However, attainment remains higher compared to 2018/19: A level, +5.0ppts; applied general, +3.5 ppts; tech level +2.2 ppts. [An increase of 10 points is equivalent to an increase in one full grade]. This follows Ofqual’s announcement in September 2021 that 2022 will be a transition year where the aim was for exam results to broadly reflect a midway point between 2021 (TAG grades) and 2019 (the last year all students sat exams).
* The trend for falling average **attainment across level 3 cohorts** in 2021/22 compared to 2020/21 was observed across institution types generally (when grouped into state-funded schools, independent schools, sixth form colleges, and ‘Other FE sector colleges’) with the exception of applied general attainment in sixth form colleges and independent schools which increased in 2021/22 (+ 0.2 ppts and + 0.7 ppts respectively).
* The **disadvantage gap** (between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students) is at its widest level for all exam cohorts (A level, applied general, tech level, technical certificates) since disadvantage measures began in 2016/17. The average A-level result for poorer children in 2021-22 was C+ compared to B for non-disadvantaged. In 2018-19, this was C for poorer students against C+ for everyone else.
* **Gender gaps** in favour of female students in average attainment at A level, applied general, and tech level have narrowed in 2021/22 compared to 2020/21; average attainment had increased more for female students than males with the alternative Centre Assessment Grade (CAG) and Teacher Assessed Grade (TAG) awarding processes in 2019/20 and 2020/21 compared with 2018/19.
* The proportion of entries **awarded A\*** decreased across nearly all institution types compared to 2020-21 – with private schools observing the largest drop of 11.1 percentage points. The exception is sixth form colleges, where the proportions of A\* grades has remained level with last year.

There are **more detailed tables** available for schools to analyse at the website

For **statistics on the attainment of 16- to 19-year-olds in England, including exam results and performance tables, 2009-2022**, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-attainment-at-19-years>

**NTP**

* **Around 850 schools are set to NTP catch-up cash clawed back by the government because they did not return a form setting out how they spent the money.** Sector leaders are urging the DfE to be “accommodating” to those affected and say that taking back the money - worth tens of thousands of pounds in some cases - would be “tone deaf” given the financial pressures that schools are under. Others say that smaller schools may have lacked the capacity to complete the form or to spend the cash as required. The form was mandatory for all schools that received school-led tutoring funding as part of the government’s National Tutoring Programme last academic year. Schools missing the deadline to fill in the form would have to return all their catch-up cash, the DfE warned. The DfE initially set a deadline of 16 September - and said even schools that had not used the grant were required to fill it in - but later pushed this back to 30 September due to the mourning period following the death of Queen Elizabeth II. According to the DfE, it then continued to follow up for three more weeks - including via phone calls, emails and extra guidance - but around 850 schools had still not submitted by 21 October, when the form was closed. The DfE said it was making final checks on the data sent by schools and would be writing to them to confirm their return statement and, where applicable, the amount that would be claimed back. It will also contact those that have not submitted returns to outline the next steps, with leaders having the opportunity to contact the ESFA if they wish to query the outcome. It said the money would be recovered in December and January - by offsetting payments from the ESFA - with some money also being clawed back from those who did not use their full allocation
* The DfE faces having to **hand back more than £100 million of unspent tutoring funding to the Treasury** after schools struggled to access the NTP. Huge problems with the National Tutoring Programme (NTP) led to low take-up of its tuition partners and academic mentors arms last year. Most leaders opted instead to make use of direct school-led tutoring funding. This has resulted in an underspend of at least a sixth of the total budget for 2021-22, which will now automatically be clawed back by the Treasury. See <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/treasury-to-claw-back-staggering-100m-of-unspent-tutoring-cash/>

**Oak National Academy**

* According to an analysis carried out by SchoolDash:
  + A significant proportion of **video lessons** provided by the, Oak National Academy, were left unfinished by pupils last year. In the academic year 2021-22, just over four in 10 of the lessons were not completed. Furthermore, pupils in deprived areas were slightly less likely to complete lessons than their peers in more affluent areas. But the way in which video lessons are used seems to have changed somewhat since the pandemic”, with “portions of videos” now also being “used to reinforce class learning or to serve as revision aids
  + The analysis shows “**no clear trend” between Oak usage and a school’s Ofsted rating in schools overal**l, although it says there did seem to be higher usage among **primary schools** with “good” or above ratings from the schools’ watchdog.
  + Under half of all schools in England (45 per cent) **used Oak resources** at some point during the year, the analysis shows. However, usage was **much higher in secondary schools** (74 per cent) compared with primary schools(37 per cent).
  + Oak usage increases during “**educational disruptions**”.
  + Around 70 to 90 per cent of Oak lessons were **started on a computer** across the academic year, while 10 to 20 per cent of lesson starts were made on mobile phones. Fewer than 10 per cent were accessed on a tablet.

**From the DfE**

* **DfE new team**:
* Gillian Keegan, education secretary
* Nick Gibb, schools minister
* Baroness Barran, academies minister
* Claire Coutinho, children’s minister
* Robert Halfon, skills and higher education minister

**For their exact job descriptions**, see <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/meet-the-ministers-dfe-confirms-briefs-again-of-new-team/>

* Ministers have launched a **voluntary exit payout scheme for DfE staff without the “skills the department needs for the future”, as it seeks to cut around 10 per cent of its workforce.** Staff were told about the “selective voluntary exit scheme” on Monday. In a message seen by Schools Week, the DfE said it aimed to get staffing numbers “closer to” 2020 levels, when it employed around 7,000 people. The department will offer eligible staff three weeks’ salary per year of service to leave next May. Managers will “robust and fairly” assess civil servants’ applications to the scheme. A voluntary exit scheme is not the same as voluntary redundancies, and as such can offer different terms. The DfE told staff it has no plans to make redundancies, but has also ruled out simply not replacing those who leave through “natural attrition”. According to official figures, the DfE and its agency the Education and Skills Funding Agency employed 8,294 people as of September. In pre-pandemic February 2020, the two organisations had a joint headcount of 7,489.
* **The DfE has been reprimanded over a “serious breach” of data protection law** which allowed a firm providing age-verification for gambling companies access to the personal information of millions of young people, with a warning over “woeful” data protection practices. An Information Commissioner’s Office investigation into data shared from the learning record service (LRS) found “prolonged misuse of the personal information of up to 28 million children”. The LRS holds data on pupils and learners over 14 for 66 years, and is only supposed to be accessed for education purposes. But the Sunday Times revealed that employment screening firm Trustopia had used the data to provide age verification serves to the GB Group, to help gambling companies confirm customers were over 18. See <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/dfe-warned-after-woeful-data-breach-helped-betting-firms>
* Liz Truss’s plan to lift the ban on new **grammar schools** looks dead in the water after **the new education secretary said she was focused on pupils in “comprehensive education**”. Asked about the policy new education secretary Gillian Keegan said “we’ve got to focus on the 90-odd per cent who don’t get to go”. “The thing about grammar schools is 90-odd per cent of kids just never get to go to one. There was no grammar school anywhere near Knowsley [where she went to school]. “What I’m focused on is the 90-odd per cent who will go to comprehensive education, like I did. When asked what she wanted her legacy in the job to be, she said, “It’s the reform of our technical education and making sure everyone has access to high-quality apprenticeships”.
* Around a quarter **of staff at the DfE and one sixth of Ofsted employees could strike** after a vote in favour of “major industrial action” across the civil service. It means school inspections, academy conversions and support for school leaders could be disrupted in the coming months. At the DfE, 911 staff, or 88 per cent of the 1,031 employees who cast a vote in the ballot were in favour of industrial action. The 1,816 PCS members at the department equate to 24 per cent of its total workforce. Of the 161 Ofsted employees who voted, 88 per cent were in favour. In total, 291 staff members – 16 per cent of the inspectorate’s workforce – were entitled to vote.

**School finances**

* Tens of millions of parents will, from April next year, **be able to see the precise level of budget cuts hitting the state schools their children attend**, thanks to an information campaign by teaching unions. The planned cuts to be imposed on every school in England and Wales – with figures detailing what this amounts to per pupil – are available on a revamped version of the **school cuts website**, run by the unions and unveiled this week. Until now, the site gave only retrospective data, for the financial year 2021-22. But in the hope of getting parents to pressurise their MPs on the issue before the next general election, the NEU, with support from the NAHT and ASCL is launching a new site showing data for the year ahead. The newly relaunched school cuts website now predicts that 90 per cent of schools will have lower per pupil funding in real terms in 2023-24, compared to the current financial year. cross England, the website suggests the typical cut will be £147 per pupil. For the site, see <https://schoolcuts.org.uk/>
* A new survey of more than 11,000 school leaders in England from the NAHT, shows that:
* The majority of schools report that they will have to make **redundancies** next year:
* Two thirds (66%) say they will have to make **teaching assistants** redundant or reduce their hours#
* Half (50%) say they are looking at **reducing the number of teachers** or teaching hours

Paul Whiteman, NAHT general secretary, said: “Schools are being hit by a **perfect storm of costs**. In attempting to balance their budgets, school leaders are being faced with eye-watering energy bills, spiraling costs to resources and supplies, and the financial impact of an unfunded pay increase this year. With no fat left to cut following a decade of austerity, many thousands of schools are now looking at falling into deficit unless they make swingeing cuts. Education is truly in a perilous state.”

* More than half (54%) of schools say they will **go into deficit** this year, unless they make further cuts.
* Just 5% of schools say they will be able to pay their costs next academic year (23-24) without going into deficit – meaning more than 9 in 10 schools **won’t be able to balance their budgets** without drastic action.

Since most schools are not permitted to operate a deficit budget, they must make significant cuts to remain in the black.

* Close to half (47%) of schools said they would be forced to reduce **non-educational support and services** for children next year. This means cutting back on vital services such as counselling, therapy and mental health support.
* Over four in ten (44%) said they would have to reduce spending on additional targeted interventions for pupils requiring additional support. This means pupils needing extra help or those with **SEND** may not get the support they need.
* A third (31%) said they will have to **reduce the number of children receiving tutoring support** through the National Tutoring Programme (NTP). This means fewer children receive Covid recovery support.

For more detail, see <https://www.naht.org.uk/News/Latest-comments/Press-room/ArtMID/558/ArticleID/1893/Majority-of-schools-looking-at-redundancies-due-to-funding-crisis-largest-survey-of-school-leaders-shows>

* **More than half of academy trusts in England could fall into deficit within two years without additional financial support**, a new analysis suggests. The Confederation of School Trusts (**CST**) said higher-than-expected, unfunded pay offers for staff, spiraling energy costs and inflation had led to huge budget blackholes. An analysis of budget forecast submissions and responses to a survey covering almost 1,000 academies found that if cost pressures remained the same, more than 50 per cent of trusts could be in deficit by 2024-25, while average reserves could fall as low as 1 to 1.5 per cent. As a result, trusts are already looking to make cuts including reducing curriculums, increasing class sizes and closing specialist facilities in specialist and alternative provision (AP) schools. See <https://cstuk.org.uk/news-publications/press-releases>
* A series of “undeniable truths” make it **“impossible for most schools to remain financially viable**” without drastic cuts, the body for school business leaders has warned education secretary Gillian Keegan. In a letter to Ms Keegan, the Institute of School Business Leadership (ISBL) said that unless there was a “material change in income”, many schools could become “technically insolvent” by spring 2024. See <https://isbl.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/2022-11-09-ISBL-letter-to-Rt-Hon-Gillian-Keegan-MP_public-version.pdf>
* ESFA has issued “**Payments made to institutions for claims made to ESFA for various grants** including, but not exclusively, coronavirus (COVID-19) support grants”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-data-on-funding-claims-by-institutions>

**School and academy buildings**

* The DfE has updated “Information for eligible academies, sixth-form colleges and voluntary aided (VA) schools about the **Condition Improvement Fund** (CIF)”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/condition-improvement-fund>
* The DfE has issued “**Condition improvement fund (CIF) application outcomes**: 2019 to 2020. Information for academies and sixth-form colleges about the outcome of their applications for CIF: 2019 to 2020”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/condition-improvement-fund-cif-application-outcomes-2019-to-2020>
* Many headteachers working in **sub-standard and even dangerous school buildings** also fear that promises of funding for rebuilding and renovation could fall victim to cuts in the allocation for school capital projects. A DfE report on the state of schools and their buildings has been delayed. Emails earlier this year showed that the dangerous state of many schools was one of the biggest concerns inside the department – and that officials were pressing for more Treasury money to fund rebuilds. DfE staff called for the Treasury to urgently make extra billions available to increase the number of school rebuilding projects from 50 a year to more than 300. The NAHT, said: “The government needs to accelerate the school rebuilding programme. On current plans to rebuild 50 schools a year, it will take over 440 years to repair and replace all schools. This is woefully inadequate. “There are now parts of the school estate that are in a dangerous state of repair. The DfE assessed the condition of nearly all schools in England between 2017 and 2019. It is only right that there is now full disclosure of what was discovered. Parents and school staff deserve to know the risk.” The DfE said it would be issuing a report on the state of school buildings by the end of the year

**Ofsted**

* The government has asked Ofsted to carry out a **thematic review of careers guidance** for young people in schools and further education and skills providers, and to make recommendations to improve practice. It will review careers guidance both in mainstream provision and in specialist settings, such as special schools and alternative provision. The thematic review will:​
  + assess the quality of careers guidance in schools and further education and skills providers​
  + inform relevant stakeholders, including policymakers and providers, about the quality of careers education, information, advice and guidance​
  + identify strengths and weaknesses in careers provision in schools and further education and skills providers, and make recommendations to improve practice​
  + help to identify potential developments in the inspection training and guidance, and help share good practice and thinking across the inspectorate

Ofsted will:

* + review existing inspection evidence​
  + carry out research visits to a sample of schools and further education and skills providers in the spring and summer of 2023; during these visits, we will talk to leaders and teachers, as well as to learners, about their experiences and perceptions of careers guidance
  + hold focus groups with employers, education and training providers and inspectors

The review will be published in autumn 2023. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsteds-thematic-review-of-careers-guidance-terms-of-reference/terms-of-reference-ofsteds-thematic-review-of-careers-guidance>

* For **Ofsted inspection data as of 31.10.22**, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/monthly-management-information-ofsteds-school-inspections-outcomes> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/further-education-and-skills-inspections-and-outcomes-management-information-from-september-2022-to-august-2023>

**Welfare of young people**

* For a thought provoking article, “**This is no country for young people. The fate of so many of our children is sealed at birth**”, see <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/nov/06/this-is-no-country-for-young-people-fate-of-so-many-of-our-children-is-sealed-at-birth>
* **Children as young as five who suffer from anxiety are to be prescribed cognitive behavioural therapy apps on the NHS via mobile phones, tablets and computers**. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (Nice), the health regulator, has conditionally recommended digital CBT for use in the health service to help children and young people with symptoms of mild to moderate anxiety. Draft guidance released for consultation says the technologies can be used with support from a mental health professional, while further evidence is generated to check if the benefits they offer are realised in practice. See <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/nov/04/nhs-to-prescribe-cognitive-behavioural-therapy-apps-to-children-with-anxiety>
* The mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has invested £1m in a new education toolkit, which is to be made available to all secondary schools in the capital **to help pupils recognise and call out sexist and misogynistic behaviour**. The mayor’s initiative will help pupils understand the impact of sexist and misogynistic behaviour on women and girls, as well as support them to identify and call out misogyny and help prevent violence against women and girls. The training sessions will be taught by teachers with the support of workshop leaders from Tender – an arts and education charity that works to end abuse through healthy relationships education, <https://tender.org.uk/> See <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2022/nov/08/london-pupils-to-be-trained-to-recognise-sexist-behaviour>
* Thousands of online child sex offences will have been recorded during the on-going delays to the progress of the landmark **Online Safety Bill**, frustrated campaigners have warned this week. The NSPCC is urging politicians to get on with finalising the legislation, which is set to put a duty of care on social media companies and others to protect their users. It would mean any platforms that allow users to post content or interact with one another – namely social media companies – would have to put measures in place to prevent and disrupt child abuse on their sites and protect children from harm.
* Headteachers say they have never seen anything like it: a “perfect storm” of rising poverty, higher prices and shrinking school budgets resulting in **more hungry children in classrooms** but fewer resources to help them. Children not eligible for free school meals are coming to school with mouldy bread, empty wraps and in some cases nothing at all, according to teachers who told the Guardian they had never seen such desperation in the communities they serve. While the proportion of children eligible for free school meals (FSM) in England has jumped from 15% in 2019 to more than 22% this year, headteachers say the numbers of “invisible hungry” – from families in poverty but not poor enough to qualify – has also increased. On top of the 1.9 million children eligible for FSM, mainly because they live in households receiving benefits and with an annual income below £7,400, the Child Poverty Action Group estimates that there are 800,000 children in families below the poverty line, on universal credit or other benefits but missing out on FSM. See <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2022/nov/10/children-not-eligible-for-free-school-meals-going-hungry-say-teachers> <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2022/nov/10/hungry-children-miss-out-on-free-meals-and-struggling-schools-cannot-help> Most schools do not have the resources to help out, because of the current financial problems. For the example of one school that does **provide free meals for all,** see <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2022/nov/10/the-benefit-is-massive-the-school-offering-free-meals-to-all-students>
* Two-thirds of people (66 per cent) say schools should help to **cover the cost of uniforms**, according to YouGov research. This includes more than a third (37 per cent) who believe schools should help to meet the expense by providing uniforms to children from low-income homes, while an additional 29 per cent say schools should give uniforms to all pupils. Recent research conducted by the Children’s Society found the average yearly spend in 2020 was £337 for secondary school students and £315 for primary school pupils. Only a fifth of the public (22 per cent) think schools shouldn’t have to contribute to the provision of uniforms at all. Last year, the Education (Guidance About Costs of School Uniform) Act stated second-hand uniforms must be available as an affordable and environmentally friendly option. It introduced statutory guidance to help families cope with the cost, which requires branding - such as school logos - to be kept to a minimum, and called for parents to be allowed to buy cheaper items from supermarkets and shops rather than school suppliers, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cost-of-school-uniforms/cost-of-school-uniforms>

**Education news for schools**

* For an article, “**Inside the battle to shape the Labour party’s education reforms**”, see <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/inside-the-battle-to-shape-the-labour-partys-education-reforms/>
* **Boys should be encouraged to ignore gender stereotypes and share their emotions**, according to the team behind a new UK initiative aimed at encouraging them to talk about their feelings and speak out against inequality. The Global Boyhood Initiative, co-founded by the US-based gender equality organisation Equimundo and the French violence against women charity the Kering Foundation, aims to equip adults with the tools to raise boys to become men who embrace a healthy masculinity. A report – The State of UK Boys – has been published to mark the launch of the US initiative in the UK, pulling together findings from a range of academic research over the past 20 years – with insights from 15 researchers in the field of gender, masculinities and boyhood. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=efxq6M9ESAM> <https://boyhoodinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/State-of-UK-Boys-Long-Report.pdf>
* The DfE is urging headteachers to contact the police if they **see drones flying** over their schools, after an increase in reported incidents at education settings. Schools are being warned that most drones will be able to capture high-quality video or photo images from miles away. The warning came in an email sent by the government department to school leaders
* **University lecturers and other staff across the UK will strike this month** over pay, pensions and working conditions, the University and College Union (UCU) has said. Strikes will take place on 24, 25 and 30 November at 150 universities. The UCU claims 70,000 staff members will strike.
* **ASCL is planning a “consultative ballot” on industrial action**. In a video address to members, ASCL general secretary Geoff Barton said the union would “wait and see” what happens in next week’s budget - in which it is anticipated that education spending could be reduced - but said that, from next week, it would start talking to members about a consultative ballot. This will ask them “what would you be prepared to do?” around funding, pay and conditions. “This is an unprecedented step for ASCL and we have never before in our 150-year history consulted on industrial action on this scale. We will set out a timeline for the consultative ballot shortly.”
* The EIS, Scotland’s largest teachers’ union, said **teachers would strike in nearly all Scotland’s schools** on Thursday 24 November, in the first national stoppage by the union for almost 40 years, in pursuit of a 10% increase in pay.
* Guidance for maintained schools and academies in England on the **provision for transgender pupils** has been jointly produced by ASCL, NAHT, NGA, the Institute of School Business Leadership, the Chartered College of Teaching and the Confederation of School Trusts. The organisations have said the briefing is not official guidance but is being provided to help members ahead of the anticipated publication of guidance by the DfE. The document has not been officially published by the organisations involved but it has been distributed to their members in schools. See <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/transgender-guidance-schools-may-need-single-sex-and-unisex-toilets>

**Academies and Trusts**

* ESFA has issued “Information **for academy trusts to complete their accounts** return”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academies-accounts-return>
* A survey by the National Governance Association (NGA) has **highlighted multi academy trusts (MATs) trustees' views on the government's plans for school and trust reform** – including those laid out in March's school's white paper. See <https://www.nga.org.uk/News/NGA-News/November-2022/New-report-reveals-MAT-trustees-hold-mixed-opinion.aspx>

**ITT**

* The DfE has issued a list of organisations accredited to **provide ITT courses from September 2024**. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/accredited-initial-teacher-training-itt-providers>
* The DfE has updated ” An overview and directory of **subject knowledge enhancement courses** for lead schools and initial teacher training (ITT) providers”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/subject-knowledge-enhancement-course-directory>

**School management**

* The DfE has updated “How business professionals working in schools can find, join or create a **network of local school business professionals**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/join-or-create-a-network-for-school-business-professionals>
* **ESFA has issued its annual report and accounts 2021 to 2022**. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-and-skills-funding-agency-esfa-annual-report-and-accounts-2021-to-2022> **School resource management advisers** identified £292 million in potential savings in schools - a 20 per cent increase on the previous year it says. However, it does not identify the nature of the savings, or say whether schools and trusts accepted the recommendations. The report also says the number of trusts of most significant concern and the number in active intervention both reduced by around one-third; and the number of active “**Notices to Improve” to academy trusts** fell from 37 in April 2021 to 29 in March 2022. For a summary of some of the other issues covered, see <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/20-rise-in-cost-cutter-savings-and-6-more-esfa-accounts-findings/>
* For the latest **ESFA Update**, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esfa-update-9-november-2022>
* ESFA has issued “**Course directory**”. This 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>
* For the latest **Education Support** newsletter, see <https://mailchi.mp/edsupport/your-october-newsletter-3175227?e=e7e9149d14>

**Post 16**

* The DfE has issued “Find out about the role of **national leaders of further education** and how they support college improvement”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-leaders-of-further-education-guidance-for-potential-applicants> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-leaders-of-further-education-programme-current-national-leaders>
* ESFA has issued “**How to report your (COVID-19) 16 to 19 tuition fund funding spend** for organisations that opted in to receive the grant in 2020 to 2021 and 2021 to 2022”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-16-to-19-tuition-fund-reporting-your-funding-spend>
* ESFA has issued “Guidance for sixth form and FE colleges **on preparing and submitting their annual report and financial statements ('accounts') to ESFA**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/college-accounts-direction>

**Tony Stephens**