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**The Budget, spending review, prior announcements from the Treasury and implications for education**

**Funding**

* Prior to the budget, the IFS had said that spending per pupil in England is "still close to or just below levels seen a decade earlier" despite recent increases, according to a new report. A report from the Institute of Fiscal Studies finds that between 2009-10 and 2018-19, spending per pupil fell by 8 per cent in real terms in England, while since then, total school spending per pupil has risen by about 8 per cent in real terms to reach just below 2009-10 levels. The 1 per cent real-terms fall in spending per pupil between 2009-10 and 2021-22 is a result of growth in total spending (12 per cent) not keeping pace with rising pupil numbers (13 per cent), the report says. "This is a remarkable squeeze on school resources over more than a decade," the report adds. See<https://ifs.org.uk/publications/15764>
* **£4.7bn extra school funding …**

The spending review is allocating an additional £4.7 billion by 2024-25, for the core schools budget in England. This is “over and above” the spending commitments made in 2019, and the Treasury said this would be “broadly equivalent to a cash increase of over £1,500 per pupil by 2024-25 compared to 2019-20″.The government previously committed to funding an extra £7.1 billion school funding by 2022. According to the documents, the core schools budget will increase from £49.8 billion this year to £56.8 billion in 2024-25. This equates to an average annual real-terms rise of 2.5 per cent from 2019 to 2024. This is a 4% increase in school spending per pupil in 2022, and 1% per year in 2023 & 2024 .Coupled with spending increases announced in 2019, the additional cash would “restore per-pupil funding to 2010 levels in real terms by 2024-2025”. This was equivalent to a cash increase for every pupil of more than £1,500, the chancellor said. But it will not cover the 9% fall in funding since 2009 - the biggest cut in 40 years.

The £4.7 billion funding increase **“includes public sector compensation for employer costs of the Health and Social Care Levy**”. This is the increased cost of national insurance contributions, which are rising by 1.25 per cent from next April.

* **£1.8bn more for education recovery**

There is an additional £1.8 billion for education recovery. This is on top of the £3.1 billion already announced.

The new commitment includes **a £1 billion “recovery premium**” for the next two academic years “to help schools to deliver evidence-based approaches to support the most disadvantaged pupils”. Under this premium, primary schools will “continue to benefit” from an additional £145 per eligible pupil, while the amount for secondary schools will “nearly double”. In “broad terms”, this will mean an average secondary school “could attract up to £70,000 per year”. This seems to be an extension of the current school-led tutoring fund, but the DfE said she funding could also be used for after-school provision and summer schools. Currently, a secondary school of 1,000 pupils this year gets around £35,000, while a primary of 200 children gets £6,000. The 2021-22 recovery premium is worth around £6,000 to the average primary school, and £22,000 to the average secondary. This brings the government’s “total support for education recovery to almost £5 billion”. However this is still just a third of the support requested by the government’s own catch-up commissioner Sir Kevan Collins.

The **remaining £800 million of the funding will be allocated across the spending review period to “ensure all 16-19 students will benefit from an additional 40 hours of education** across the academic year – the equivalent of one additional hour a week in school or college”. The DfE said this time would be used for extra teaching and learning “including in English, maths and other subjects – depending on students’ individual needs”.

* **£2.6bn for SEND places**

The spending review includes £2.6 billion over the next three years to create school places for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. This amounts to a tripling of current capital funding levels to over £900 million a year by 2024-25, the Treasury states. So far, the government has said the investment will be used to fund:

* More than 30,000 new high-quality school places for pupils with SEND to support their learning in both mainstream and special educational needs schools;
* Improvements in the suitability and accessibility of existing buildings, recently recommended in the government's National Disability Strategy; and
* New special and alternative-provision free schools.
* **£200m a year for holiday activities and food programme**

The holiday activities and food programme, which was extended to all areas and to the Easter and Christmas holidays this year, will continue to be funded at “over £200 million a year”. However, it is not known how long the funding will continue for.

* **£560m for youth services**

£560 million will be invested in youth services over the next three years. This will provide “up to 300 youth facilities – targeted at areas most in need – through the Youth Investment Fund, and support young people to develop skills and confidence outside school through the National Citizen Service”

**Pay**

Teachers are set to see their wages rise next year, after the government confirmed a **pay freeze is being lifted**. The Treasury said exactly how much of a pay rise public sector workers receive depends on the recommendations from the independent pay review body. The NAHT highlighted that predictions of four per cent inflation next year mean that any rise below inflation would actually mark a real-terms cut. All eyes will now turn to Nadhim Zahawi to see what kind of remit he will give to the STRB as it makes it recommendations for next year’s pay awards.

Treasury documents **state the extra funding today will go towards “supporting delivery” of its pledge to raise new teacher starting salaries to £30,000**, suggesting schools will have to fund future pay rises If so, it would mean a big chunk of the extra cash announced today will be wiped out by pay increases. The announcement gives no extra indication of exactly when the £30,000 minimum salary will kick in.

To ensure the “fairness and the sustainability of the public finances”, public sector pay growth over the next three years “**should retain broad parity with the private sector and continue to be affordable**”.

The **National Living Wage** is to rise from £8.91 to £9.50 per hour.

**Other areas**

* The DfE is consulting up to Nov 26 **on reforming how local authority school improvement functions are funded**. See <https://consult.education.gov.uk/simb-grant-team/local-authority-school-improvement-funding-reform/> The DfE is consulting on plans to scrap the £50 million school improvement monitoring and brokering gran, asking councils to top-slice school budgets instead. Funding arrangements will become more like academy trust top-slicing. Councils will be empowered to “de-delegate” or take all their improvement funding from dedicated schools grant budgets allocated for schools. The move, which will see extra grant funding tapered off before being scrapped altogether by April 2023, will “support our overarching policy of ensuring maintained schools and academies are funded on an equal basis”. Doing so will provide a “smoother transition” to its longer-term plan for all schools to join multi-academy trusts, the DfE said. The **NAHT** said the news would be “greeted with disbelief” by many in the week of the spending review. “Never has the phrase ‘give with one hand, but take with the other’ rung truer.” He added that the government should remain “even-handed” in its academisation drive when around four million children were still in maintained schools. See also <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-improvement-monitoring-and-brokering-grant-allocations>
* When it released its catch-up package in June, the government committed to a review of the time spent in school, amid calls for an **extended school day** to aid with recovery. Ministers said at the time that the findings would be set out “later in the year to inform the spending review”. But no findings have been released, and there was no mention of any plans for an extended school day in Sunak’s speech or the Treasury documents. It comes after the chancellor said at the weekend that there “isn’t as strong an evidence base for [this], compared to tutoring and improving the quality and support we give to teachers”.
* The Chancellor also announced an additional £170m by 2024-25 for the funding paid to **nurseries and early years providers** for state-backed nursery places. The Treasury also reaffirmed plans to invest £150 million in **the training of early years staff**, to "support children's learning and development". This will be funded by the £1.4 billion catch-up package announced in June 2021.The additional funding for providers will be worth £160 million in 2022-23, £180 million in 2023-24 and £170 million in 2024-25. This extra money is for local authorities to increase the hourly rates paid to providers for the government’s entitlement offers. See <https://www.tes.com/news/what-budget-means-early-years-settings-eyfs>
* Spending per student in **further education and sixth form colleges** will remain well below 2010 levels. According to the IFS, spending on post-16 colleges would be 10% below funding in 2009-10 in real terms, with projected spending on sixth form colleges alone down by 23% by 2024-25, despite the government’s claims of funding a “skills revolution”.

Rishi Sunak announced £1.6bn to roll out new **T-levels** for 16 to 19-year-olds, £550m for adult skills in England in his autumn statement and there is a further £170m for apprenticeships and training. There will also be £830m confirmed to continue a five-year-scheme to revamp and modernise colleges. The £1.6bn cash investment for colleges over three years to 2024-25 will be used, in the main, to provide additional classroom hours for up to 100,000 young people taking T-levels. Presently there are about 2,000 students on T-level courses. College principals said the funding was welcome but would not go far enough. A report by the IPPR think-tank last year suggested colleges in England would have needed an extra £2.7bn a year since 2010 just to catch up with investment levels then.

Ministers have also been considering cutting **the threshold at which graduates begin to repay their tuition and maintenance loans**, from just over £27,000 to £23,000 as part of an overhaul of student financing designed to save the Treasury billions of pounds, but this was not mentioned in the spending review

**Reaction**

* **The NAHT** said “The increase in per pupil spending announced by the government takes us back to 2010 levels. This is no proud boast, as it represents a failure to invest in children’s futures for over a decade.”
* **ASCL** said that the recovery funding is a “long way short of what is needed”. “We will continue to press for the education recovery funding that children need and deserve,” he added. “They have suffered the most educational disruption of any generation since the second world war and the government must do better for them.”
* **Sir Kevan Collins** said the £1.8 billion of new recovery funding, which takes the total pledged so far to £4.9 billion, “falls far short” of the amount needed to achieve Boris Johnson’s ambition to recover lost learning within this parliament. “Meagre” catch-up measures announced in yesterday’s spending review are a step towards a “less equal society”
* Analysis by the **Institute for Fiscal Studies** found that the increases in education spending in England was lower than the increases enjoyed by other departments. While the DfE’s funding is to rise by 2.2% in real terms, the average increase across government is higher at 3.3%, with the Department of Health and Social Care receiving a 4% increase.

**Careers**

* The **Careers & Enterprise Company** has launched its online learning modules, written in partnership with University of Huddersfield, to help key education stakeholders better understand the value of careers leadership in schools, special schools and colleges, the careers education landscape and understand the role and value of a careers leader. See <https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/careers-leaders/careers-leader-training/online-learning-modules/> There are separate online learning modules tailored for the following groups:
* **Careers Leaders: Induction** <https://careersenterprisecompany-learnedcpd.talentlms.com/catalog/info/id:129,cms_featured_course:1>
* **Education Leaders: Careers Awareness** <https://careersenterprisecompany-learnedcpd.talentlms.com/catalog/info/id:131,cms_featured_course:1>
* **Governors: Careers Awareness** <https://careersenterprisecompany-learnedcpd.talentlms.com/catalog/info/id:130,cms_featured_course:1>

To accompany these modules and provide further support, there are now dedicated pages with:

* **Resources for educational leaders** <https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/for/education-leaders>
* **Resources for governors** <https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/for/governors>

You can also register to receive the “**Education ​Leader Digest**” <https://careersandenterprise.us12.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=5edc7f4f08ea35cadfe6465b7&id=42005e22e1>

and **Governor newsletter** <https://careersandenterprise.us12.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=5edc7f4f08ea35cadfe6465b7&id=7fd9180f3e>

There is also a **Primary careers resource platform**, <https://primary-careers.careersandenterprise.co.uk/> Key features of the platform include:

* Free and adaptable resources ranging from podcasts for pupils to CPD for teachers
* A school self-assessment quiz, designed in collaboration with Skills Builder, that will help teachers to think about how they approach career-related learning in their settings
* Case studies that showcase different approaches to career-related learning

**Covid safety and infections**

* **People working in the education sector are more likely to test positive for Covid than any other sector** due to high infection levels among school children, according to new official data. The latest ONS infection survey states this is the “first time we have seen statistical evidence of a difference in recent fortnights for the educational sector”. According to ONS analysis between September 20 and October 3, the estimated likelihood of an education worker testing positive for Covid was 0.39. The ONS explains that this number, or coefficient, indicates the likelihood of an individual with a particular characteristic testing positive for Covid. Zero would indicate that there had been neither an increased or decreased likelihood of testing positive, while 0.39 suggests an increased likelihood of having Covid. By comparison those working within the IT sector had a -0.48 estimated likelihood.
* As of Oct 22, 9.1% of those in secondary schools are estimated to be **tested positive for covid** in England, (1 in 11 students), compared to 2% among their parents and 1% among other adults.” Since the start of the term, the percentage of secondary pupils testing positive for Covid has more than tripled from just 2.5 per cent. On October 17, **nearly 1900 in every 100,000 10-14 year olds tested positive** for covid, almost twice the highest rate of any age group at the peak of the second wave. At primary level, 4.1 per cent of children aged two to school year 6 are estimated to have tested positive in the week before half term, equivalent to one in 24 pupils. See <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/bulletins/coronaviruscovid19infectionsurveypilot/29october2021>
* Schools in England hit by high numbers of Covid-19 cases among staff and pupils have been forced to **reinstate mask wearing, send whole year groups home to study online and in some cases close early for half-term** as the pandemic continues to wreak havoc in education. Despite the government narrative of a return to normality in classrooms, schools in areas with high coronavirus rates say they have struggled to function, with many **staff off sick** and **problems securing supply teachers** because of high demand. For a range of examples, see <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/oct/22/english-schools-struggling-to-cope-as-covid-wreaks-havoc>
* Local public health chiefs in England are breaking from the government’s official guidance and recommending so-called **plan B protective measures** to combat a surge in coronavirus cases. For examples that relate to schools, see <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2021/oct/23/english-local-health-chiefs-urge-extra-covid-measures-in-break-from-guidance>
* **Nearly one in three pupils are likely to have been exposed to Covid in some of the hardest-hit areas of the country**, according to new data published this morning from the Office for National Statistics School Infection Survey (SIS). In one London borough, Barking and Dagenham, where only 3 per cent of 12- to 15-year-olds had been vaccinated earlier this month, over 30 per cent of primary school pupils had Covid antibodies, suggesting prior infection. Manchester also saw over 30 per cent of primary pupils infected over time according to the new data. The study looked at the proportion of pupils "ever testing" positive for Covid antibodies between November 2020 and July 2021, using data from the SIS sampling 15 local authorities.
* Just 8% of schools have received their allocation of the 300,000 **CO2 monitors** the government pledged to send to primary and secondary schools in England this term, a Twitter poll by a primary school headteacher revealed last week. The poll found that about 92% of schools were still waiting for the devices, which will warn if air quality in a room has become unhealthy and airflow is poor.
* Young people are being **urged by the DfE to do a rapid Covid test before they return to school after half-term** to prevent more new infections. The UK Health Security Agency says cases among 10 to 19-year-olds are currently the highest of any age group. Free lateral flow kits can be collected from local pharmacies if pupils do not already have them at home. Latest figures for England suggest 17% of young people aged 12 to 15 have had the jab. See <https://twitter.com/nadhimzahawi/status/1454048486052311040?s=20>
* The DfE has issued “School snapshot panel: COVID-19. A summary of responses to questions asked in the **COVID-19 school snapshot survey**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-snapshot-panel-covid-19> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-snapshot-survey-covid-19>

**Key points**

* Schools were asked in the July survey if they were planning to use the **national tutoring programme** this academic year. Just 29 per cent said they were planning to use the service, while 30 per cent were unsure and 41 per cent said they didn’t expect to use it. Secondary schools were more likely to be intending to use the programme than primary schools – 40 per cent compared to 26 per cent. Schools with the highest proportion of free school meal eligible pupils were more likely to use it compared to those with the lowest proportion – 37 per cent compared to 24 per cent.
* In the March survey of just over 1,000 respondents, 12 per cent of secondary schools and just 1 per cent of primary schools reported that they **finished before 3pm**. Secondary schools were also more likely to start the school day before 8.30am (17 per cent, compared to 1 per cent of primaries). Ninety-two per cent reported the school day finished between 3pm and 3.30pm, and the same proportion said it started between 8.30am and 9am.
* In July, schools were asked how they would use the extra time if the government funded them to **extend the school day** by around 30 minutes to an hour per day. Almost four in ten – 37 per cent – reported it would be solely for enrichment activities such as sport, arts or wellbeing support, while three per cent would use the extra time solely to teach a broader curriculum. But most commonly, 41 per cent said it would be used for a mixture of both. Over half – 54 per cent – of schools said they would use a mixture of teachers and non-teachers to staff this time.
* Only 26 per cent of secondary schools and 10 per cent of primary schools reported using the issued **covid testing data** when asked in July. Asked about their experience with testing, 46 per cent of leaders said answering parent queries took up too much time. This was followed by communications to maintain or increase engagement, an issue for 39 per cent, and reading DfE daily updates at 38 per cent.
* The DfE said some of the laptops and tablets provided to schools had **safeguarding software** installed that was due to expire on September 30 of this year. After this, schools had to install their own software. Forty-four per cent of schools said they had received such devices, but of those that did only 51 per cent were aware before the survey that the existing settings would expire in September. Sixty-six per cent said they would be able to replace this software on all devices. However, 2 per cent said they wouldn’t be able to, and a further 26 per cent said they weren’t sure. The most commonly reported issues were a lack of resources, including not enough people or time available (34 per cent), being unable to retrieve the devices in question from families (30 per cent) and lacking the necessary IT skills within the school (21 per cent).
* In July, 64 per cent of teachers said they were concerned to some extent about **disengagement from learning**, with 61 per cent worried about behaviour issues. Secondary teachers were significantly more concerned than primary teachers about disengagement from learning “to a great extent” – 34 per cent compared to 10 per cent.
* In June, 92 per cent of leaders reported that their schools had taken some action to **reduce workload** in the last 12 months. But a far lower proportion of teachers – 65 per cent – reported that this had happened.
* In June, 53 per cent of leaders and teachers expected to **remain in their current position**, a drop from 57 per cent in the late February survey. One in five – 20 per cent – said they were going to seek promotion. Seven percent of all leaders and teachers surveyed said they intended to leave the teaching profession entirely, an increase from five per cent in late February. Leaders were more likely to say that the pandemic had contributed to them wanting to leave to a “great extent” – 21 per cent compared to 14 per cent of teachers.

**Vaccinations**

* **Vaccination news:**
* It has been agreed that **those aged 16 or 17 can have second jabs**
* In the US, it has been deemed safe to allow child sized Pfizer doses for **children aged 5-11**
* By half term, in England **only 18.9% of 12-15 year olds had received a covid vaccination**
* Councils should be able to stop **anti-vaccination protesters** from demonstrating outside schools by using exclusion orders, Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer has said. Sir Keir said it was "sickening" that protesters were spreading "dangerous misinformation" to children. He urged the government to "urgently" update the law so exclusion zones can be rapidly set up around school gates. Almost eight in 10 schools said they had been targeted by anti-vaccine protesters in a recent survey by the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) union. Most of this had been through emails threatening legal action, but the ASCL said in some cases staff had been threatened with physical harm and on other occasions protesters had gained access to school sites. See also <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2021/oct/26/liverpool-headteachers-describe-sinister-tactics-of-anti-vaxx-protesters>

**Learning recovery**

* Up to half a million more disadvantaged children and young people in England will receive new devices to support their education and help keep them connected to peers and professionals, through a £126 million funding programme. Ahead of Care Leavers Week (25-31 October), the government has announced an **expansion of the Get Help with Technology programme**, with up to 10,000 devices for children with a social worker and those leaving care. Laptops and tablets will help these vulnerable young people stay in touch with their social workers, personal advisors and wider support networks, along with supporting their education or training. Devices will also be allocated to children who have recently arrived from Afghanistan, to help them to adjust to life in England and support their education. Additional devices will be provided to schools and colleges to help give children and young people who are not in school or college due to Covid access to lessons, keeping them connected to their classmates and teachers. Schools, colleges and councils will be invited during November and December to order their allocation of devices, which will be determined by the proportion of pupils on free school meals and numbers of care leavers in each local authority. The department is also making £13 million available to schools and colleges that need to buy IT support to set up the devices. The funding also covers the costs of resetting and reconfiguring devices previously received via Get Help with Technology, which will allow schools to make full use of them in the long-term. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/care-leavers-and-disadvantaged-pupils-to-benefit-from-126-million-investment-in-new-laptops-and-tablets>
* ESFA has issued “**Get help with technology: conditions of internet access and device grants**” Information about the eligibility criteria and payment process for connectivity and device funding. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/get-help-with-technology-conditions-of-internet-access-and-device-grants>
* Schools have been ordered to **submit performance data on how they are spending school-led catch-up tutoring grants** from the first week back after half term. In an email to heads, the DfE said schools will be contacted on Wednesday 3 November to request information about their plans to use the school-led recovery tutoring grant and its delivery so far. The DfE has now said that schools will be asked for data on a monthly basis showing whether they are currently using the grant to provide tuition, how many pupils have received tuition and how many hours of tuition have been delivered using the grant since the start of the autumn term.
* In a recent assessment of 32,000 **Year 8 pupils**, test score data show students have "rebounded significantly" for the cohort following a significant fall in scores in September 2020, No More Marking has said. See <https://blog.nomoremarking.com/writing-on-the-rebound-a-v-shaped-recovery-247d94f182ca>
* The DfE has issued research reports presenting findings from analysis into the **progress pupils have made during the 2020 to 2021 academic year.** See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupils-progress-in-the-2020-to-2021-academic-year-interim-report> The report concluded that periods of partial school closure “created and exacerbated learning losses in both reading and mathematics”. These were “partially counterbalanced” by periods where schools fully re-opened for in-person learning, but certain characteristic groups and pupils in different regions of England experienced “greater learning losses”.
* The study found by the summer term there was “notable catch-up” for **primary-aged pupils in reading.** The average learning loss for this cohort improved by around 1.3 months on the 2.2 month gap found in the spring, resulting in average learning loss of around 0.9 months by the summer term. However, **secondary** pupils had “only caught up slightly” by the summer, with the gap closing from 1.5 months to 1.2. In **maths**, there was also “notable” catch-up for primary pupils by the summer, with the average gap closing from 3.4 months in the spring to 2.2 months. Limited sample sizes meant robust estimates could not be determined for **secondary** maths.
* The study found that pupils from **disadvantaged backgrounds** experienced greater learning losses than their more affluent peers. By the summer term, the estimated gap in learning loss in **reading** between disadvantaged pupils and their better-off peers was around 0.4 months for primary pupils and 1.6 months for secondary. In **secondary reading**, pupils eligible for free school meals were 2.4 months behind by the summer term, compared to just 0.8 months for non-free school meals pupils. In **primary reading**, free school meals pupils were 1.2 months behind their usual progress, compared to 0.8 months for those not eligible. In **primary maths**, free school meals pupils were 2.6 months behind by summer, compared to 2.1 months for non-free school meals pupils.
* In **reading**, the extent to which disadvantaged pupils lost learning by the summer term “appears to be equivalent to **undoing a third of the progress made in the last decade on closing the gap in primary schools”.** In **maths,** the difference in progress lost relative to other pupils by the summer term “would be equivalent to **undoing around a half of the progress made over the past decade** in closing the disadvantage gap in primary schools”.
* Pupils with **SEND** were, by the summer term, 1.6 months further behind non-SEND pupils in **reading at secondary level**, and 0.1 months further behind at **primary.** **Children in need** were around 1.5 months further behind their peers in **secondary reading**, and 0.3 months further behind in **primary**.
* The study also found **a correlation between pupil absence and levels of learning loss** in the autumn and spring terms. In the second half of the autumn term last year, pupils in schools with high levels of absence had lost around 2.4 months of progress in **secondary reading** and 1.6 months at **primary**, compared to 1.1 months and 0.5 months respectively in schools with low levels. In **primary maths**, those in schools with high levels of absence had lost around 3.8 months, compared with 2.1 months for those with low levels. By the spring, learning loss in schools with high levels of absence was 3.2 months for **primary reading**, compared to two months in low-level absence schools. However, at **secondary** level, learning loss in **reading** was the same as for high and low-absence schools, at 2.4 months. Learning loss in **primary maths** in the spring term was 4.7 months in schools with high levels of absence, compared to 3.2 months in those with low levels.
* Data shows **regional disparity** in level of learning loss as a result of the Covid pandemic with the parts of the **North** hardest hit in both reading in maths. The greatest losses in reading were in the **North East** and in **Yorkshire and the Humber**, for both primary and secondary, where pupils in these regions experienced greater learning loss than the average for all primary and secondary aged pupils. In maths it was again pupils in the **North East** and **Yorkshire and the Humber** who experienced the greatest learning losses along with the **East and West Midlands.**

**Student behaviour**

* Sending children to “**isolation booths**” in schools should be banned until a system is in place to monitor their use, according to the British Psychological Society. It said that the use of isolation booths is not backed by evidence and has been proven not to be effective, and adds that such approaches to children’s behaviour are overly simplistic and “run counter to the understanding of child development”. “The use of isolation rooms breaches the UN convention on the rights of the child, denying them their right to learn effectively, and disproportionately affects those children and young people who need the most support. This includes children with disabilities and special educational needs, those living in poverty, children in care, boys from black and mixed backgrounds and children already experiencing lower levels of emotional or psychological wellbeing. The use of isolation booths locates ‘the problem’ within the child and fails to recognise the links between disability special education needs, poverty, inequality, lower wellbeing, poor mental health and children’s behaviour in school. "We need to see a cultural shift on how schools support vulnerable children, focusing on building supportive environments for our children within schools and colleges, encouraging creativity, teaching social-emotional skills and autonomy, and a strong sense of school belonging to promote positive behaviour in children and young people.”

However, its call for a ban has been strongly criticised by the DfE’s lead behaviour adviser, Tom Bennett, who described it as “the kind of advice that leads to schools being violent and unsafe for staff and students”. “They're not 'isolation booths', they're rooms, supervised by staff, where children are temporarily taken when their behaviour is unsustainable in a classroom. This includes violence, threats, intimidation, abuse, racism, etc. If you don't remove students when they do this, you're expecting children and staff to put up with it: intimidation, threat, violence, etc. My response is always, 'Would you expect your child to endure that kind of toxic hell?' Of course not. It's always someone else's kids” “Children frequently need to be removed for their safety and wellbeing, too – e.g, sometimes when they have a meltdown or a crisis. Do you really think a classroom is the right place to do this? And does the education of everyone else not matter? Why not? In many schools, removal leads to a place of respite and calm, away from the triggers that inspire their outbursts. Their bodies can calm down in peace. Every student is entitled to uninterrupted education, so children must continue to receive this even when removed. Work must be provided, and support given. Whether they are emotionally capable of engaging with it or not at that moment. Every child matters. Claiming that removal denies them their UN guarantee rights is ridiculous. Keeping hostile aggressors in the same rooms as their victims is far more ruinous for the rights, liberties and dignity of all.”

**Climate change**

* **Climate change education** should become fully embedded in the system, two major teaching unions have urged. A joint letter from organisations including the NEU and NASUWT teaching unions to Nadhim Zahawi calls for ministers to introduce a comprehensive plan to “decarbonise the entire school estate by 2030” as part of an overdue refurbishment and repair programme. The letter also calls for a “comprehensive review of the entire curriculum” and a “detailed policy” on green travel for students, staff and parents. The letter also suggests that teacher training standards could be amended to include learning about the climate emergency and a new professional qualification for teachers on climate could be created to address concerns. It adds the Education Act could be amended to impose a new duty on schools to ensure they designate a member of staff as a climate coordinator. “It is the next generation that will bear the brunt of any inaction on climate change. We all need to play a part in ensuring a sustainable future for our young people”. See <https://neu.org.uk/press-releases/education-unions-call-urgent-action-climate-change-crisis>
* The government is bringing “forward” a strategy to set **out how education will “support the UK to meet its net zero targe**t, become more resilient to climate change and improve biodiversity”. The DfE has set up a “sustainability and climate change unit” and is recruiting an environmental analyst or scientist to “make sure decision-makers in the department are aware of the environmental impact of new policies and major programmes”. See <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/long-read-how-schools-will-join-the-green-revolution/>

**Welfare, health and safety of young people**

* **Virtual school heads lack the powers to get children in care the education they need** in the face of “pushback” from schools, MPs have been warned. Patrick Ward, chair of the National Association of Virtual School Heads, told the education committee councils were “failing as a corporate parent” because they were often not using statutory powers to secure school places. Legally, schools have to prioritise looked-after children in admissions. Councils can resort to forcing schools to take them, but not all councils delegate the powers to virtual school heads. Ward also warned the government did not collect data on looked-after children missing in education, leading to a lack of accountability for councils and virtual school heads. “No one holds a director of children’s services or a local authority to account, or a virtual school for that matter, over how many of their children are missing in education or in unregulated provision. ASCL said children in care “can have complex needs and it is important that the school in which they are placed has the expertise and capacity to meet those needs”
* At least two schools in England are reversing their plans to install **facial recognition systems** in their canteens after a Scottish council faced widespread criticism for its use of the technology. Nine schools in North Ayrshire launched the biometric systems this week to allow pupils to make contactless payments for their lunches. The move sparked a backlash from campaigners and prompted the UK’s data privacy watchdog to make enquiries and advise schools to use a “less intrusive approach”. This advice has led to schools in England rethinking their approach. The Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) warned that “organisations need to carefully consider the necessity and proportionality of collecting biometric data before they do so” Schools should consider “using a different approach if the same goal can be achieved in a less intrusive manner”.
* Private providers of **children’s homes and foster care** are making **“significant and persistent” profits** by charging cash-strapped local authorities elevated prices for increasingly scarce placements, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has said. The largest private providers of children’s homes are now charging councils an average of £3,830 a week per child, with an average operating profit margin of 23%, according to the CMA’s interim report on children’s social care. For fostering agencies, the average weekly price for fostering was about £820 a week, with an average operating profit margin of 19%. See <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2021/oct/22/private-childrens-home-providers-charging-councils-elevated-prices-report-finds>
* The government is to fund a network of "**family hubs**" in England as part of a £500m package to support parents and children. The centres in 75 different areas will provide a "one stop shop" for support and advice, the government said. The funding includes £200m to support 300,000 families who face complex issues that could lead to family breakdown. Some £82m will be given to 75 local authorities to fund the new family hubs, while another £100m will go towards mental health support for expectant parents. And £50m will be spent on breastfeeding support - including antenatal classes and one-to-one support - to build upon best practice from areas such as Tower Hamlets in London, which has the highest breastfeeding rates at six to eight weeks in England. Parenting programmes will receive £50m and £10m will go to signposting the Start4Life initiative, which offers help and advice from the NHS during pregnancy, birth and parenthood.
* The DfE has issued “Statistics on **children referred to and assessed by children's social services** for the year ending 31 March 2021”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/characteristics-of-children-in-need-2020-to-2021> Referrals from schools to social services fell by 31 per cent in the year ending 31 March 2021 – a drop of just under 36,000 referrals, according to data from the DfE. The DfE said this reflected the restrictions on school attendance in place for parts of the year, with the majority of pupils being home-schooled during two national lockdowns during that time. The figures have prompted warnings about the potential for vulnerable pupils to have dropped off the radar without regular contact from schools during the pandemic. The police remained the most common source of referrals, accounting for 195,270, while there were 81,180 from schools. More than half of the children in need on 31 March had abuse or neglect identified as their primary need when assessed by a social worker. The most common additional factors identified in assessments during the year included concerns about a parent or carer being a victim of domestic violence (168,960 assessments) and the mental health of a parent or carer (157,600). The number of assessments involving concerns about a parent’s drug or alcohol use rose compared with the previous year. Gangs were a factor in 12,720 assessments. Data published for the first time this year also shows there were 7,390 assessments where child-on-child sexual abuse was a concern, and 10,070 assessments where child-on-child physical abuse was a concern.
* The Coalition for Youth Mental Health in Schools in a report calls for an **overhaul of counselling and PSHE** in secondaries and a step change in the provision of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. Radical reform of mental health support in schools and more funding is needed to support pupils after the Covid-19 pandemic. They warn that catch-up efforts will be "blocked" unless government tackles a mental health crisis enveloping young people and schools. See <https://cypmhc.org.uk/early-support-is-needed-for-childrens-mental-health-says-the-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-coalition/>

**Early years and primary**

* The DfE has issued “**PE and sport premium for primary schools**. 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>
* ESFA has issued “**PE and sport premium: conditions of grant 2021 to 2022**”, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pe-and-sport-premium-conditions-of-grant-2021-to-2022>
* Ofsted has issued its **research for early years**. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ofsted-early-years-survey-reports>
* This Sunday (31 October) is the **deadline for prospective pupils to submit their applications for state-funded secondary school places**.
* The DfE has issued” **Early education use and child outcomes up to age 7**. The impact of early education at ages 2 to 7 on child outcomes as part of the study of early education and development (SEED)”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-education-use-and-child-outcomes-up-to-age-7> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/study-of-early-education-and-development-seed>
* The DfE has issued “**Early education and development: alternative quality scales** This examines whether current quality scales used to assess childcare settings are the best predictors of children’s cognitive and self-regulation development. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-education-and-development-alternative-quality-scales>
* The DfE has issued “Early education and development: Coronavirus (COVID-19) study Research on **the experiences of children and parents from the study of early education and development (SEED) longitudinal study during the COVID-19 pandemic”.** See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-education-and-development-coronavirus-covid-19-study>

**SEND**

* Support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in seven of eight areas visited by Ofsted after inspections restarted this year had “**significant areas of weakness**”. The shocking reports detail how vulnerable children and their families are left to fall into crisis before getting help. Youngsters are waiting more than two years for support in some areas, with delays exacerbated by the pandemic, Ofsted found. It comes as the government this week sent a SEND commissioner to remedy failures in Birmingham – the first intervention of its kind. See <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/hanging-by-a-thread-how-the-system-is-failing-send-children/>

**University news for schools**

* The DfE has issued “Information on who is eligible for **undergraduate, postgraduate and further education financial support from Student Finance** England”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/student-finance-eligibility-2021-to-2022-academic-year>
* The government is considering new plans to **limit the number of students studying creative arts and other degrees with lower salary returns** as part of its spending review negotiations. Sources say the DfE’s review of post-18 education, promised alongside the spending review, is considering ways to limit numbers. There is speculation that they could use new minimum A-level grade requirements to raise the entry bar for some courses and therefore reduce numbers, especially in newer universities. “They would like to control numbers in specific subjects. The Treasury is particularly obsessed with negative return in creative arts subjects.” The universities regulator has already confirmed it will be cutting its funding for arts subjects by 50%. See <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2021/oct/23/ministers-could-limit-student-numbers-lower-earning-art-degrees>
* High-level discussions have been held in Whitehall over controversial proposals to **cut university tuition fees** from £9,250 to £8,500, according to sources. Officials from No 10, the Treasury and the Department for Education (DfE) are said to have been engaged in “lively” talks about a possible cut to fees but have struggled to thrash out an agreement in time for the chancellor’s spending review.
* More than a **third of first-year students in England** who started university this autumn have shown symptoms of **depression and anxiety**, a survey by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) suggests. Almost two in five (38%) new students surveyed said they felt unprepared for studying at university because of the loss of face-to-face learning as a result of the Covid pandemic. Asked how they felt over the previous two weeks, 37% showed “moderate to severe symptoms of depression” and 39% showed signs of “likely having some form of anxiety”. Responses from 27% of students suggested they may have an eating disorder, according to the ONS. While more than 40% said their mental health had improved since the start of the autumn term, 23% said their mental health or wellbeing was “slightly or much worse”. The survey also found that their satisfaction with life was significantly lower than that of the general adult population, at 6.6 out of 10 compared with 7.1, though similar to the general student population at 6.5. See <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandwellbeing/bulletins/coronavirusandfirstyearhighereducationstudentsengland/4octoberto11october2021>
* The first survey examining **sexual violence by male UK students** has shone a light on misogyny at universities, with scores admitting to rape, sexual assault and other forcible acts. Of the 554 male students surveyed, 63 reported that they had committed 251 sexual assaults, rapes and other coercive and unwanted incidents in the past two years, according to researchers at the University of Kent. The study, Understanding Sexual Aggression in UK Male University Students, examined both the psychological profiles of sexually violent male students and their self-reported rates of offending. It identified a strong association between toxic masculinity and sexual violence, with those who reported committing offences also admitting to misogynistic views, such as believing that women who get drunk are to blame if they get raped, and having sadistic sexual fantasies about raping or torturing women. The outcomes of the survey have obvious implications for how schools addressed these issues. See <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/10790632211051682>
* The number of 18-year-olds from the poorest backgrounds applying to Oxford and Cambridge and competitive courses like medicine has **jumped 8 per cent.** However, the head of Ucas said that “increased demand” and a “continued rise” in the 18-year-old population would “put a **squeeze on available places**” at “the most competitive institutions and on the most competitive courses”

**Ofsted**

* Ofsted has issued “**Ofsted Parent View**: management information” See <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/ofsted-parent-view-management-information>
* The organisation Headrest has written to Nadhim Zahawi and Ofsted chief inspector Amanda Spielman to demand that **inspections be halted over concerns that they are causing health problems** and driving heads out of the profession. The Headrest group said it has received calls from school leaders who need medication to manage their anxiety and workplace stress and that an impending Ofsted inspection is “often a key contributory factor”. Headrest provides a free and confidential wellbeing telephone support service for school leaders. See <https://www.headrestuk.co.uk/>
* Ofsted has suspended **four PGL holiday activity centres** for children in England over “serious safeguarding concerns” including allegations of substance abuse by staff, in a rare move by the education watchdog. The sites to have their registration suspended are Liddington in Wiltshire, Marchants Hill in Surrey, Osmington Bay in Dorset and Windmill Hill in East Sussex. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/suspension-of-pgl-settings-on-ofsted-childcare-register>

**Parliamentary public accounts committee report on the DfE**

* A **parliamentary public accounts committee** report found that:
* Although councils were legally required to ensure their maintained schools received the minimum funding levels, **academy trusts could pool the funding** and did not have to provide each school with the minimum. As a result, it was not possible to tell whether individual academy schools received the government’s guaranteed minimum per-pupil funding. The committee said the DfE should publish “annual details, starting with the year ending August 31 2021, of the schools’ block per-pupil funding that each academy received”.
* The DfE “does not seem to have a grip on **the impact of falling rolls** on schools”. It found schools with dwindling rolls due to changes in local populations still had to cover fixed costs, while their funding fell “significantly”. The DfE highlighted a “falling rolls fund” for local authorities and the lump sum handed to all schools through the national funding formula. But the report found the department “does not appear to have a strong understanding of the practical financial impact of falling rolls on individual schools”. The department should carry out an “evidence-based assessment of whether there is enough support for schools whose rolls are falling”, and write to the committee by the end of next March “with an update on the results of its assessment and what it is doing to address any concerns”, the report said.
* It pointed to the findings of an earlier report by the National Audit Office, which warned in July that the national funding formula had **shifted cash from deprived schools** to their more affluent counterparts, sparking warnings ministers are “taking from the poor and giving to the rich”
* The report also warned of a “lack of urgency” in the DfE’s approach to making improvements to the school system. **Delivery of a number of its initiatives has “slipped”**, with the department “unwilling or unable to commit to revised timetables”. One example is the **SEND review**, which has faced “unacceptable” delays since it was announced in September 2019, leaving more and more pupils “without the support they need”. The department should “write to us, within a month of this report being published, with details of the progress it has made towards finalising the SEND review”, the report said. The PAC also called on the DfE to “set out a timetable” for meeting its pledge to **raise teachers’ starting salaries to £30,000**. This was supposed to happen by 2023, but was delayed by the pay freeze announced at last year’s spending review.
* Schools are having to “**cross-subsidise their sixth forms** with funding intended to support younger pupils”. MPs found that between 2014-15 and 2020-21, the balance of funding “**shifted from secondary schools to primary schools”**. Secondary school funding per pupil dropped by 3.9 per cent in real terms, while primary school funding increased by 4.2 per cent, the report said. “Part of the reason for this was that the Department reduced funding per sixth-form student, which fell by 11.4 per cent in real terms.” The report recommended that in “making and communicating decisions” about school funding, the department should “explicitly consider how different funding streams interact so that schools do not have to cross-subsidise, for example, in order to support sixth-form provision”.

See <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/127/public-accounts-committee/news/158161/deprived-local-areas-and-schools-hit-hardest-by-dfes-school-funding-changes/>

**Academies and Trusts**

* More than 100 academy trust deals with linked companies or individuals were vetoed by the government last year, new figures reveal. The ESFA vetoed 108 “**related party transactions**” (RPTs) worth at least £20,000 each in 2020-21, more than double the 48 deals rejected in 2019-20. Trusts recorded 1,285 deals with influential related parties in the year to April 2021, up 10.1 per cent on the previous year. Two hundred and fifty-two deals worth at least six figures were submitted for sign-off, up from 206. The proportion rejected also rose from 42.6 to 52.9 per cent among submissions deemed “in scope”.

**Education news for schools**

* ASCL is calling for an **earlier release of 2022 exam materials** as new data analysis reveals that Year 11s have experienced the highest absence rates of any year group this term. In analysis of attendance data from 2,400 secondary schools from FFT Education Datalab, Year 11 students have missed 11.5 per cent of sessions during the first half of the autumn term, up to 15 October. While this is an improvement on the 13.6 per cent of sessions missed by Year 11 last year, this means the year group has missed more schooling than any other, with nearly double the absence rates of 2019 (6.3 per cent. The data also shows that absence rates so far this term for students taking GCSEs next summer closely mirrors rates for Year 11s in the same period last year, whose exams were later cancelled in favour of teacher-assessed grades (TAGs).
* The schools minister Robin Walker has confirmed plans for **a model history curriculum**, which will equip teachers to teach about “migration, cultural change and the contributions made by different communities”. “We will work with history curriculum experts, historians and school leaders to develop a model history curriculum that will stand as an exemplar of a knowledge-rich, coherent approach to teaching history.”
* The DfE has issued “**Pupils and their parents or carers: omnibus survey**. Findings from research on pupils and their parents or carers and responses to questions asked in the survey”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupils-and-their-parents-or-carers-omnibus-wave-1-survey> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parent-and-pupil-panel-omnibus-surveys>
* The DfE has issued “Results of the **National Foundation for Education (NFER) teacher voice omnibus surve**y, the school snapshot survey and post-16 institutions omnibus survey” See <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/nfer-teacher-voice-omnibus>

**Teacher recruitment, pay and pensions**

* The DfE has updated yet again “An overview **and directory of subject knowledge enhancement course**s for lead schools and initial teacher training (ITT) providers”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/subject-knowledge-enhancement-course-directory>
* The DfE has issued “Guidance for schools and local authorities on the **teachers' pay grant**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-pay-grant-methodology>
* ESFA has issued “**Teachers’ pay grant**: allocations for 2021 to 2022 financial year”, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-pay-grant-allocations-for-2021-to-2022-financial-year>
* ESFA has issued “**Teachers’ pension grant**: 2021 to 2022 allocations” See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-pension-grant-2021-to-2022-allocations>
* The DfE has updated “**Train to teach in England: non-UK applicants**” See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/train-to-teach-in-england-non-uk-applicants>

**School management**

* The DfE has issued a list of COLLECT queries and acceptable explanatory notes to help schools, academies and local authorities complete **the school workforce census 2021**. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-workforce-census-2021-notepad-entries-for-collect-queries> and “School workforce census: guide to submitting data”, see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-workforce-census>
* The DfE has updated “Coronavirus (COVID-19): **financial support for education, early years and children’s social care.** Funding and financial support available for education, childcare and children’s social care organisations”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-financial-support-for-education-early-years-and-childrens-social-care>
* ESFA issued a case study, “How a multi academy trust supports their workforce development **using the apprenticeship levy**”. Plymouth CAST are a multi academy trust who secured more than £100k in apprenticeship levy transfer funding to support their workforce development. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/how-a-multi-academy-trust-supports-their-workforce-development-using-the-apprenticeship-levy>
* The DfE has issued “**School-to-school support directory**. Find and contact a **system leader** in your area”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-to-school-support-directory>
* The DfE has updated yet again “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 DfE has issued “Reports summarising how responsible bodies have used the **school condition allocation** (SCA) from 2015 to 2019”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/condition-spend-data-collection-csdc-data-collection-report>
* For the latest **ESFA Update**, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esfa-update-27-october-2021>
* The DfE has issued “**Schools financial value standard (SFVS)** and assurance statement” This guidance helps schools and local authorities meet basic standards for good financial health and resource management. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-financial-value-standard-sfvs>
* Schools face **energy price hikes** of up to £80 million in a year as gas and electric prices soar, Labour has warned. The party’s analysis of school finances data published by the government found that state schools pay more than £660 million in energy costs every year. Rising fuel prices are expected to see the average energy bill rise by 12 per cent in the coming months, which Labour warned could see schools’ outlay rise to almost £740 million. The party said secondary schools were likely to be hit particularly badly due to their size, with the average institution facing a £10,000 hike. The **NAHT** also warned that school budgets could be "crippled" this winter by soaring energy costs and the need to keep buildings heated with windows open as a Covid safety measure; it was already hearing from schools where bills “dramatically increased, even when they thought they were locked into a fixed tariff”.
* The NAHT undertook a snap poll of more than 240 school leaders to gauge the financial pressures schools are experiencing. Nearly three quarters (72 per cent) of respondents reported they are having **to rely on external fundraising**, as opposed to state funding, to supplement their core budgets. Twenty-three per cent said they were not, while 5 per cent did not know.

**Post 16**

* The DfE has issued “**College collaboration fund (CCF**)”, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/college-collaboration-fund-ccf> and a summary of the projects developed using CCF funding and resources developed by lead and partner colleges. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/college-collaboration-fund-ccf-projects>
* The DfE has issued the purpose and characteristics of **core maths qualifications** for 16- to 19-year-olds who do not progress to AS/A level maths. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/core-maths-qualifications-technical-guidance>
* The DfE has issued “How **FE providers can hire teachers who are not UK or Irish** nationals”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/recruit-further-education-fe-teachers-from-overseas>
* For details on all aspects of the **Skills and Post-16 Education Bill**, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-and-post-16-education-bill-impact-assessment-and-jchr-memorandum>
* ESFA has issued information for 16 to 19 providers delivering **CDF industry placements** for the 2021 to 2022 academic year. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/applying-for-and-delivering-industry-placements-capacity-and-delivery-fund-cdf-for-the-2021-to-2022-academic-year>
* The DfE consulted on “**Digital functional skills qualifications: subject content** <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/digital-functional-skills-qualifications-subject-content> For the outcome, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/digital-functional-skills-qualifications>
* ESFA has issued information for colleges, training organisations and employers about the learning aim reference service, also known as **LARS.** See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/learning-aim-reference-service-lars>

**Tony Stephens**