A note on the reshuffle and new ministerial appointments:

Since this edition was first drafted there have been a number of ministerial changes and new appointments within the Department for Education.

These include:

- Secretary of State for Education: Damian Hinds replaces Justine Greening;
- Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation (jointly with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy): Sam Gyimah replaces Jo Johnson;
- Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families: Nadhim Zahawi replaces Robert Goodwill (who was Minister of State for Children and Families).

In Parliament:

Government publishes a green paper and launches a consultation on mental health provision for children and young people

On 4th December, the Government released a green paper entitled *Transforming children and young people’s mental health provision* which proposes measures to improve mental health support for children and young people.¹ A consultation has also been launched in relation to the paper. It closes on 2nd March and can be accessed here. The green paper focuses on earlier intervention and prevention, especially linked to schools and colleges. Proposals include:

- Creating a new mental health workforce of community-based mental health support teams;
- Every school and college will be encouraged to appoint a designated lead for mental health;
- A new 4-week waiting time for NHS children and young people’s mental health services to be piloted in some areas.

Following this publication, on 19th December the House of Commons Library published a briefing on children and young people’s mental health policy which focuses partially on education. The briefing explains that the Government “wants to increase teaching about mental health in schools, as well as improving access to mental health support in schools”. To date there has been work to pilot, and in some cases strengthen, partnerships between education providers and mental health services.²

² [http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-7196#fullreport](http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-7196#fullreport)
House of Lords Citizenship and Civic Engagement Committee: notes on faith schools

On 6th December the House of Lords Citizenship and Civic Engagement Committee examined the religious aspect of civic engagement, what faith communities contributed to society, and considered the meaning of fundamental British values. Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis and Cardinal Vincent Nichols were invited to give evidence.

In relation to faith schools Baroness Barker asked whether the witnesses upheld Government actions against faith schools which had failed to uphold ‘fundamental British values’. Cardinal Vincent Nichols said that he understood that these ‘British Values’ had their origin with Ofsted within the structure of ‘spiritual, moral, and cultural education’ which, he argued, illustrated that those values could best be shared in a spiritual context.

House of Commons briefing on mental health services for post-16 students in England

On 7th December the House of Commons released a briefing paper outlining recent studies on the mental health of students, Government mental health policy for students, support in FE and HE providers, and the legal duties of providers. The paper finds that young adults aged 16-24 today are more likely than previous generations of young adults to experience mental health issues- indeed, the number of students reporting mental ill health is increasing.

Archbishop’s debate on the role of education in building a flourishing and skilled society

On 8th December, the Archbishop of Canterbury led a debate, ‘That the House [of Lords] takes note of the role of education in building a flourishing and skilled society’. The Archbishop’s opening speech included a brief overview of the ongoing and historical work of the Church in education, the value of higher and further education, the need for a more inclusive approach to those with disabilities or special educational needs, and the role and importance of education in aiding social mobility. The Bishops of Ely, Oxford, and Gloucester also spoke.

During the debate many peers referred to the development of technical education and apprenticeships, as well as the importance of ensuring young people are skilled to meet new industrial demands. Many noted the positive links between education and success in life, both financially and personally speaking. Some drew on the Government’s ‘Opportunity Areas’ initiative and the importance of investment in and emphasis on the role of early education.

---

4 http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-8163
6 https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2017-12-08/debates/864C5DA0-37B5-4C2F-8A9C-EACC5EB3180FC/EducationAndSociety
Department for Education consultation on accelerated degrees

On 11th December the Department for Education launched a consultation entitled *Accelerated degrees: widening student choice in higher education*. Accelerated degrees give students the opportunity to study the same content and quality of degree as a standard three year course over two years. By compressing study into two years, the overall cost of the degree is cheaper for the student and HE provider. Graduates can also enter or return to the workplace a year faster than those studying over three years. The Department are consulting on changes to the annual tuition fee cap, as well as a range of measures to incentivise innovation and encourage wide provision and take-up of accelerated degrees. The consultation closes on 11th February 2018 and can be accessed here.

Education Secretary publishes Social Mobility Action Plan

On 14th December Justine Greening published ‘Unlocking Talent; Fulfilling Potential: a plan for improving social mobility through education’ within which she detailed ambitions to deliver equality of opportunity through education. The plan highlights four main ambitions:

1. Close the ‘word gap’ in the early years (tackle key early language and literacy skills);
2. Close the attainment gap in school while continuing to raise standards for all;
3. High quality post-16 education choices for all young people;
4. Everyone achieving their full potential in rewarding careers.

Government advice given to schools on sexual harassment

On 14th December the Women and Equalities Committee welcomed new advice published by the DfE to schools on sexual harassment. However, the Committee noted that more will need to be done to ensure that future generations of girls are safe and equal at school. The advice, entitled *Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges*, provides advice on how to tackle the problem, highlighting best practice, statutory guidance, and the legal framework.

The Committee’s report of the same title published in September 2016 uncovered the scale and impact of sexual harassment and sexual violence in schools in England and called for it to be acted upon urgently. The report found that neither Ofsted, nor the DfE had a coherent plan to tackle the issue and called for clear national guidance.

On 19th December a briefing paper on sexual harassment in all stages of education was released. The paper sets out the legal duties of institutions and their responses to the problem of rising incidents of sexual harassment and violence. It can be read here.

---

8 [http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2017-12-14/HCWS347](http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2017-12-14/HCWS347)
10 [https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmwomeq/91/91.pdf](https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmwomeq/91/91.pdf)
DfE launches consultation on strengthening qualified teacher status and career progression

On 15th December the Department for Education (DfE) launched a consultation on proposed changes to qualified teacher status and on proposals for how to improve career progression for teachers. The consultation seeks views on how to support teachers at the beginning of their career, how newly qualified teachers embed the skills and knowledge from their initial teacher training, and how to improve career progression opportunities for all teachers throughout their careers. The consultation closes on 9th March and can be accessed here.

Education Secretary launches RSE call for evidence

On 19th December Justine Greening launched a call for evidence on Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) to help shape the new curriculum. The current statutory guidance for teaching RSE was introduced in 2000 and fails to address risks to children which have grown in prevalence in recent years, including online pornography, sexting, and staying safe online. The guidance is being updated after Parliament passed legislation earlier in 2017 to make relationships education compulsory in all primary schools and RSE compulsory in all secondary schools. The consultation is to help improve the teaching of both RSE and personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE). The House of Commons Library briefing on PSHE was released on 20th December and can be read here. The consultation on RSE closes on 12th February and can be accessed here.

School Revenue Funding Settlement

On 19th December Minister of State for School Standards, Nick Gibb confirmed the school and early years funding allocations for 2018-19. This followed announcements by Justine Greening in April 2017 regarding the introduction of a national funding formula for early years, and on 14th September of a new national funding formula for schools and high needs from April 2018, respectively. The pupil premium rates (per pupil) for 2018-19 will be:

- Disadvantaged pupils (Primary): £1,320
- Disadvantaged pupils (Secondary): £935
- Pupil Premium Plus (Looked After Children and those adopted from care or who leave are under a Special Guardianship Order or Child Arrangements Order): £2,300
- Service Children: £300

---

15 http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications-written-questions-answers-statements-written-statement/Commons/2017-12-19/HCWS369/
In the news:

Apprenticeships and Skills Minister unveils careers strategy

On 4th December Anne Milton unveiled the careers strategy at the Careers Development Institute’s annual conference. The strategy includes £4 million to support every school and college to have a careers leader and a further £5 million funding to develop twenty careers hubs, which will be led by the Careers and Enterprise Company. From September 2018 college inspection reports produced by Ofsted will have to comment on the careers guidance provided to young people. The National Careers Service, for which a new website will be launched, will also provide specialist advice for the long-term unemployed and adults with additional needs.17

Pro Bono Economics report reveals that PSHE supports academic success

On 7th December, third sector organisation Pro Bono Economics18 published a report finding ‘very strong evidence’ that personal, social, health, economic education (PSHE) has a positive impact on academic attainment. The independent review examined national and international evidence, covering over 1200 studies. The report shows that disadvantaged pupils enjoy the greatest benefits to academic performance, particularly through the proven impact of PSHE on physical and mental health, levels of bullying, and general behaviour. This removes barriers to learning and develops skills that help young people succeed. In light of the report, the PSHE Association is urging the Government to follow through with proposals to make PSHE statutory to ensure all pupils benefit.19

Education secretary expands UK-China internship programme

On 7th December Justine Greening announced that the government-funded Generation UK-China internship scheme will be expanded to give at least 300 young people from disadvantaged and less represented backgrounds the opportunity to take up internships in China from 2018.20

Young Londoners 25% more likely to enter HE in 2017 than their counterparts across the rest of England

Figures published by UCAS on 11th December reveal that 41.8% of 18 year olds from London entered HE in 2017 - an increase of 4.7% from 2016. This compares to 33.3% of 18 year olds in England. The lowest entry rate to university came from the South West, with 28.9% of its 18 year olds entering HE in 2017. The number of Scottish students going to university also increased by 3.0% in 2017, to 34.830%- the highest figure on record.21

27 https://feweek.co.uk/2017/12/04/milton-finally-launching-much-delayed-careers-strategy/
28 http://www.probonoeconomics.com/about
29 http://www.probonoeconomics.com/sites/default/files/files/PSHE%20Evidence%20Review%202017.PDF
30 https://www.wired.gov.net/wg/news.nsf/articles/Education+Secretary+expands+UK-China+internship+programme+08122017142500?open
Government confirms that RSE will be LGBT-inclusive

On 13th December it was confirmed that from September 2019, all schools in England will be required by law to teach RSE and “ensure that young people, whatever their developing sexuality or identity, feel that RSE is relevant to them and sensitive to their needs.” The commitment to LGBT-inclusive RSE came from the Department of Education on behalf of Justine Greening, replying to correspondence from human rights campaigner Peter Tatchell, who had previously raised concerns that the Government had not made it clear that RSE would address the needs of LGBT+ pupils.22

£170m competition launched for new Institutes of Technology

On 15th December the application window to establish new Institutes of Technology (IoTs) opened. Employers, HE and FE providers can now apply for a share of £170m to establish new IoTs. These will specialise in delivering the higher level technical skills that employers need. IoTs will see businesses and education and training providers working together to deliver provision to help tackle the skills gap at local, regional, and national level. IoTs are one of the skills reforms outlined by Justine Greening on 30th November at the DfE’s Skills Summit which brought together education experts and some of the country’s top employers to forge a new alliance to deliver a skills revolution. The first IoTs are expected to open in 2019.23

Universal Credit: One million children in poverty to miss out on free school meals

On 19th December findings from The Children’s Society revealed that one million children living in poverty in England will miss out on free school meals under universal credit proposals. Until now as universal credit has been rolling out, all families in receipt of universal credit have been automatically entitled to free school meals. However, the Government is planning to introduce means testing for free school meals under universal credit. Figures from The Children’s Society show that once a family with one child passes the £7,400 threshold, they would need to earn £1,124 a year more - the equivalent of working 2.4 hours more each week at national living wage- to make up for the loss in free school meals. As such, The Children’s Society warns the proposed introduction of means-testing will create a ‘cliff-edge’ where many families would be better off taking a pay cut as their children will lose out on free school meals if not.24

Access to high quality school places becoming more unequal

On 21st December the Education Policy Institute (EPI) published a report entitled Access to high performing schools in England. The report looks at the density of high quality secondary school places across England, comparing those in 2015 with those available in 2010 in order to identify whether geographic access to high performing schools is improving. The report states that, “Widening access to high performing schools is crucial if the Government’s policy objective of improving social mobility is to be met”, and finds that “there are large areas of the country in which parents and pupils currently have no access to a high performing secondary school”. This is particularly the case in the North East, yet there is no Opportunity

Area in the region. Hence, the report recommends that “measures are [put] in place to raise the quality of provision available to pupils in this region.”

New Year’s Honours List 2018

A number of notable figures involved with education in the Church have been included in this year’s new year’s honours list. These include:

- Professor Joy Carter, Vice-Chancellor, University of Winchester, who will receive an OBE for services to Higher Education;
- Colin Hopkins, Diocesan Director of Education in the Diocese of Lichfield, School Governor, and Chair of Trustees, Church of England Central Education Trust, who will receive an OBE for services to education;
- Professor Margaret Ann House, Vice-Chancellor, Leeds Trinity University, who will receive an OBE for services to Higher Education;
- Elizabeth Woverson, Chief Executive, London Diocesan Board for Schools Academies Trust, who will receive an OBE for services to education.

An outlined agenda for Higher and Further Education in 2018

(Frankie Webster, Parliamentary Assistant & Researcher to the Bishop of Winchester)

- A major review of university funding and student finance, previously promised by Theresa May during their manifesto and again at the Conservative Party Conference in October 2017. The review is due to be completed by the end of 2018.
- Once the Department for Education’s consultation ends in February, we should see further movement on T-Levels. Adding to this, the Institute for Apprenticeships will take up its expanded role as the Institute of Apprenticeships and Technical Education in April, with its new CEO now in place.
- The Office for Students has now come into being, with its first major task the analysis of Consultation responses on its planned Regulatory framework, implementation of which is due to begin from April. Notably, journalist and Director of the New Schools Network, Toby Young, who was initially appointed to the board of the OfS, resigned within a number of days of his appointment after his suitability for the role was attacked in light of his history of controversial comments.
- Reports are due to be released from several parliamentary committees:
  - Commons Education Committee: Value for Money in Higher Education
  - Lords Economic Affairs Committee: Economics of higher, further and technical education
  - Joint Committee on Human Rights: Freedom of Speech in Universities
  - Commons Treasury Committee: Student Loans
  - Commons Science and Technology Committee: Science Budget and Industrial Strategy
  - Lords Science and Technology Committee: Life Sciences and the Industrial Strategy

- The issue of senior pay continues to be high on the agenda of the media, the government and the sector’s alike, although Jo Johnson’s December interview was more emollient than some headlines suggest. Expect OfS action on greater transparency over VC and senior manager’s pay, for example by publishing pay ratios and rationale for staff earning in excess of £150k.
- While the sector as a whole is financially sustainable, HEFCE has indicated concerns about some types of institution, for instance those relying on major growth in international recruitment or with heavy borrowing to fund extensive building works.
- There continue to be disputes about changes to the main HE staff pensions schemes, with industrial action a strong possibility.
- This summer sees the Year 3 TEF results, along with the findings from the Pilot for Subject Level TEF scores (date still to be announced).
- The Research Excellence Framework will be finalised by the end of 2018
- Expect lots of Statutory Instruments, especially those bringing into effect HE and Research Act clauses, for example on accelerated degrees. Schedule 2 of the Act promises more Parliamentary debate, as it must be put to a vote in both Houses.

Upcoming Events and Dates:

Church of England Foundation for Educational Leadership Awards 2018

The Church of England Foundation for Educational Leadership is currently accepting nominations for highly-educational projects which reflect the four themes of the Church’s Vision for Education from a broad range of settings, including Schools/Academies, Teaching Schools, MATs, HE Institutions, Educational Charities/Support Services, Governance, and Dioceses. Project team award winners will be invited to attend an awards ceremony on 29th June 2018. For more information visit https://www.cefel.org.uk/awards/.

Contact:

If you would like further information regarding any of the items in this briefing, please contact me at sophie.marquand@churchofengland.org or telephone 0207 898 1098.