

Coalition Changes – Update November 2011 to January 2012

Reforming Early Years

1. The Government has responded to the consultation on the Early Years Foundation Stage and confirmed [changes](#) to be introduced from September 2012. Changes will include a new progress check for children aged 24-36 months and simplified assessment at age 5. The revised EYFS statutory framework will be published in the Spring to enable settings to prepare for implementation from September 2012.

Free Early Education for more 2 year olds

2. Free early education will be extended to more disadvantaged two-year-olds, and parents will be able to access the free entitlement more flexibly, under plans published by the Government. The announcement follows the Government's commitment, made by the Deputy Prime Minister in October 2010, to extend 15 hours of free early education – currently available to all three- and four-year-olds – to disadvantaged two-year-olds from September 2013.
3. The [consultation](#) (which closes on 3 Feb 2012) includes proposals to:
 - Make the free entitlement to 15 hours per week of early education more flexible, so it can be taken between 7am and 7pm, and spread across two days instead of the current three days.
 - Use the criteria which is used for free school meals to decide which disadvantaged two-year-olds should qualify for free early education,
 - Include two-year-olds who are looked after by the state in the eligibility criteria for free early education.
 - Slim down statutory guidance for local authorities from 100 pages to fewer than 20 pages.

Education Bill receives Royal Assent

4. The Coalition Government's Education Bill has been granted Royal Assent. This completes the legislative framework for the Government's key education reforms, and paves the way for important changes in schools in England. Provisions in the Act include:

- a power for schools to search pupils without consent for any dangerous or banned items
- the removal of restrictions that prevent schools from issuing detentions to pupils without providing 24 hours' written notice
- new pre-charge reporting restrictions on allegations of criminal offences made by pupils against teachers at their school
- a power to create an entitlement to free early years provision for disadvantaged two-year-olds
- reforms to the procedure for the establishment of new schools, to give preference to Academies and Free Schools
- a re-focusing of Ofsted routine school inspections on four key areas that matter most to parents– pupil achievement; quality of teaching; leadership and management; and behaviour and safety.
- a power to exempt schools from routine Ofsted inspections
- new powers to tackle underperforming schools, including extended powers for the Secretary of State to close them

Ministerial Statement on the National Curriculum Review

5. Over the past year the review of the National Curriculum in England has been looking at curricula in the highest performing, and fastest improving, jurisdictions internationally. The review team's work has uncovered a consistent theme: these high-performing jurisdictions set materially higher expectations in terms of what they believe children can and should master at different ages. The Expert Panel has made far-reaching and complex recommendations, and to allow for more radical reform of both curriculum and qualifications, it has been decided to change the planned timetable for the introduction of the new National Curriculum. Instead of new curricula for English, mathematics, science and PE being introduced from 2013, and the remainder in 2014, the new curriculum for all subjects will be introduced in 2014. A suite of [documents](#) have been published which, taken together, provide a summary of the findings to date of the review:
 - The report of the review's Expert Panel setting out their recommendations in relation to the framework for the new National Curriculum.
 - A summary of the evidence gathered about curricula for English, mathematics and science in high performing jurisdictions.
 - A research report that looks at subject breadth in the curricula used in other education jurisdictions.
 - A summary report of the responses to the review's Call for Evidence.

ICT curriculum

6. Education Secretary Michael Gove has announced he was replacing the existing ICT curriculum. In its place, new courses of study in Computer Science will be

introduced. The move will give schools the freedom to create their own ICT and Computer Science curricula that equip pupils with the skills employers want. A consultation on withdrawing the statutory Programme of Study from September 2012 will begin in January. The status of ICT within the school curriculum from 2014 onwards will continue to be considered by the National Curriculum review alongside that of all other National Curriculum subjects.

GCSE reforms

7. Ofqual has confirmed short-term reforms to current GCSEs from September 2012. It follows plans outlined in last year's White Paper to return exams to the end of each course and stop the culture of re-sits. The changes also mean that students will once again be marked on the accuracy of their spelling, punctuation and use of grammar in GCSEs in key subjects.
8. The reforms effectively end modular GCSEs. The Government is planning to make longer-term changes to GCSE syllabuses and exam requirements to reflect the new National Curriculum - focusing on the essential knowledge in key subjects and in-depth study. Under the proposals:
 - Students starting two-year GCSE courses starting in September 2012 will have to sit their exams at the end of the course in summer 2014.
 - Pupils will no longer be able to re-sit individual unit exams in order to boost their marks – although they may retake the whole GCSE exam. Students will, however, be given an early opportunity to resit maths, English and English Language GCSEs every November because these are key subjects needed to progress to further study or employment.
 - Students will be marked on the accuracy of spelling, punctuation and grammar and their use of specialist terms. In the first instance, these will be those subjects that involve extended writing - English Literature, geography, history and religious studies. Five per cent of total marks in these subjects will be for spelling, punctuation and grammar. Marks assessing written communication skills already exist in English and English Language. The changes will affect externally assessed units from September 2012.

Schools get more freedom to manage teacher performance

9. New arrangements have been published for teacher and head teacher appraisals in maintained schools in England, and for dealing with underperforming teachers. They will come into effect from September 2012 and include:
 - giving schools more freedom over managing their teachers through simpler, less prescriptive appraisal regulations;
 - removing the three-hour limit on observing a teacher in the classroom (the so-called "three-hour observation rule") so that schools have the flexibility to decide what is appropriate;
 - a requirement to assess teachers every year against the new, simpler and sharper Teachers' Standards – the key skills that teachers need;

- allowing poorly performing teachers to be removed in about a term – the process can currently take a year or more;
- an optional new model policy for schools that deals with both performance and capability issues; and
- removing more than 50 pages of what was felt to be unnecessary guidance.

Ministers are also consulting on new proposals to help schools when they recruit new teachers. This will mean that schools will have to pass on information to prospective employers, on request, about whether a teacher is or has been subject to capability procedures. This would help deal with the problem of 'recycling' of poor teachers, by helping schools make better, more informed decisions when recruiting.

Pupil Premium

10. Children eligible for free school meals and looked after children are set to benefit from £600 each after the Department for Education announced next year's Pupil Premium will increase by £112 for each pupil. Additional children will also qualify for the premium as the Government has extended its reach to cover any child that has been registered for Free School Meals (FSM) in the past six years.

Ministerial Statement on education funding

11. On the 13 December 2011 DFE announced [details](#) of education funding for 2012/13. They confirmed that the current methodology for funding schools would be used for 2012-13 through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The underlying school budget will be kept at flat cash per pupil for 2012-13. Local decisions may mean variations to individual budgets but the Minimum Funding Guarantee ensures that no school sees more than a 1.5% per pupil reduction.

Consultation on academies funding transfer for 2011-12 and 2012-13

12. The Secretary of State for Education, in consultation with the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, has reached a "minded to" decision on the way forward in relation to the calculation and recovery arrangements for the academies funding transfer for 2011-12 and 2012-13. They are consulting with local authorities, the Local Government Association and London Councils on the "minded to" decision. The [consultation](#) ran for four working weeks and closed on 12 January 2012.
13. The consultation focussed on the calculation of the adjustment to the local authority budget for funding that is to be transferred to academies for services that the LA would provide free to maintained schools. Funding has been top sliced on a pro rata basis from the local government finance settlement in 2011/12 and 2012/13 and the level of top slice has been taken in to account in the Council's business plan. The Secretary of State has proposed a revised methodology to ensure that the reduction to each local authority's funding should reflect the actual number of pupils within academies in its area, rather than a pro-

rata top slice. Whilst the calculation will be revised, in the interest of stability it is not proposed that any changes will be made to the 2011/12 finance settlement. For 2012/13 the government will carry out the revised calculation. If the cost of the funding transfer to academies in a local authority area is lower than the top slice originally applied, the DfE will refund that local authority with the difference. If the cost of the funding transfer to academies is greater than the original top slice then the top slice will be capped so there is no detriment to the local authority.

14. Some changes are also proposed to the calculation of the transfer of funding to academies from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). These changes will be applied in 2012/13 and could have implications for a number of services that are funded by DSG as the scope of the calculation has increased to cover a number of services not previously included.
15. The government intends to consult further on arrangements for 2013/14 but the initial proposal is that funding for services that would be transferred to academies would be removed from the local government funding settlement altogether and paid as grant by the DfE either to the LA or direct to academies proportionate to pupil numbers. The impact of this on the 2013/14 budget will need to be modelled when more detail is available.

Academies Update

			Date opened
	Sponsored academies:		
1	The Wellington Academy	Salisbury	September 2009
2	Sarum Academy	Salisbury	September 2010
	Non-sponsored academies:		
3	Hardenhuish	Chippenham	September 2010
4	Lavington	Lavington	January 2011
5	South Wilts	Salisbury	January 2011
6	Bishop Wordsworth's	Salisbury	March 2011
7	Corsham Primary School	Corsham	April 2011
8	The Corsham School	Corsham	April 2011
9	Sheldon School	Chippenham	April 2011
10	Pewsey Vale	Pewsey	July 2011
11	Wootton Bassett	Wootton Bassett	July 2011
12	Kingdown School	Warminster	August 2011
13	St Laurence	Bradford on Avon	August 2011
14	Malmesbury	Malmesbury	August 2011
15	The Holy Trinity School	Great Cheverell	September 2011
16	Saint Edmund's Catholic Academy	Calne	September 2011
17	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School	Devizes	September 2011
18	St Augustine's Catholic School	Trowbridge	September 2011
19	Springfields School	Calne	September 2011
20	The John Bentley	Calne	November 2011

Local Authority Land Transfer

16. The DFE has launched a [consultation](#) with local authorities on regulations so that local authority land can be transferred more quickly when a maintained school becomes an academy. The consultation ran for ten weeks until 18 January 2012.

Positive for Youth

17. Central Government has published its new vision for young people and youth services, "[Positive for Youth](#)". It includes:

- Providing £320,000 to Business in the Community to build links between businesses and young people in their local areas.
- Giving young people the chance to 'youth proof' government policy. A new national scrutiny group and youth select committee will monitor and advise on government policy.
- Calling on all local authorities to give young people a voice in local decision-making. Local authorities should introduce programmes like youth mayors or youth inspectors to give youngsters a say. This could include: auditing local services such as youth clubs and leisure services to make them more youth-friendly.
- Establishing four new Youth Innovation Zones to develop new, creative approaches to youth services across the country. The first four areas, Devon, Hammersmith and Fulham, Haringey, and Knowsley will each get £40,000 to set up the zones.
- Publishing revised statutory guidance for consultation early in 2012 on local authorities' duty to secure activities and services for young people.
- Providing capital investment to complete 63 myplace centres by April 2013, and developing a national approach to exploit their potential to be led by communities and businesses.
- Expanding National Citizen Service to offer 30,000 places to young people in 2012, 60,000 in 2013, and 90,000 in 2014.

Participation of 16-24 year olds in education, training and work

18. '[Building Engagement, Building Futures](#)' sets out the Government's strategy to improve the opportunities for young people, so they can succeed in education and training and gain the skills they need to secure an apprenticeship or employment. It includes radical reforms to schools, vocational education, skills and welfare provision. The strategy includes five priorities for action:

- Raising attainment in school and beyond to ensure that young people have the skills they need to compete in a global economy
- Helping local partners to provide effective and coordinated services that support all young people, including the most vulnerable, putting us on track to achieve full participation for 16-17 year olds by 2015
- Encouraging and incentivising employers to inspire and recruit young people by offering more high quality apprenticeships and work experience places.

- Ensuring that work pays and giving young people the personalised support they need to find it, through Universal Credit, the Work Programme and our Get Britain Working measures.
- Putting in place a new Youth Contract worth almost £1 billion over the next three years to help get young people learning or earning before long term damage is done.

Tackling troubled families

19. Plans to radically transform the lives of the country's most troubled families have been announced. Almost £450 million has been made available in a new, cross-government drive to turn around the lives of 120,000 of some of the country's most troubled families by the end of this Parliament.
20. New figures show that troubled families cost the tax payer an estimated £9 billion per year, equivalent to £75,000 per family. This is spent on protecting the children in these families and responding to the crime and anti-social behaviour they perpetrate. The costs are exemplified by the fact that children who live in troubled families are 36 times more likely to be excluded from school and six times more likely to have been in care or to have contact with the police.
21. The Government will offer up to 40 per cent of the cost of dealing with these families to local authorities - but on a payment-by-results basis when they and their partners achieve success with families. For the first time, the Government has outlined the headline goals and how success will be measured with the following, straightforward, criteria:
 - children back into school
 - reduce their criminal and anti-social behaviour
 - parents on the road back to work, and
 - reduce the costs to the taxpayer and local authorities.
22. The full detail of these arrangements is not yet available. The new programme will also fund a national network of Troubled Family 'Trouble-Shooters' who will be appointed by local councils. The trouble-shooters will oversee the programme of action in their area. Their responsibilities will include making sure the right families are getting the right type of help, that sanctions are in place when needed, and that positive results are being achieved with the troubled families in their area.

Tackling child sexual exploitation

23. Children's Minister Tim Loughton has highlighted the need to recognise and deal with the problem of child sexual exploitation. He said tackling child sexual exploitation must be a priority and Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) must act to establish the severity of the problem in their areas, make sure they are tackling it effectively, and put in place robust preventative strategies.
24. The Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation [Action Plan](#) brings together for the first time actions by the Government and partners to protect children from this largely hidden crime. These include:

- Work with the Association of Chief Police Officers, health professional bodies, and the Social Work Reform Board to make sure child sexual exploitation is properly covered in training and guidance for frontline professionals.
- LSCBs to prioritise child sexual exploitation and undertake robust risk assessments and map the extent and nature of the problem locally.
- Support organisations like Rape Crisis, and local sexual assault referral centres, to improve services for young victims. It will also look at raising awareness by improving sex and relationships education in schools and helping parents know what tell-tale signs to look out for.
- The police, the Crown Prosecution Service, judges and magistrates to fully support young witnesses and victims, and increase the use of 'special measures' in court to ease the stress and anxiety of criminal proceedings on young people. For example, live links to the court from an outside location and screens so the witness does not see the defendant.
- This work is underway in Wiltshire led by the LSCB.

Government response to the Munro Review

25. Tim Loughton, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families gave an update to Parliament on progress being made across the range of commitments in the Government response to the Munro Review, published in July. The following progress was included in the Minister's update.

- Government has worked with professionals to inform the consultation on Working Together to Safeguard Children (Working Together) and the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families, which will take place early next year.
- [Local child safeguarding performance information](#) has been developed by the Government, Ofsted, the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) and a range of other partners. National performance information will be consulted on in the new year.
- Ofsted has consulted on child-centred inspection, and relevant inspectorates have agreed to update on a joint inspection model by May 2012.
- The Government has published a work programme, [Safeguarding Children in the reformed NHS](#). This will be followed by a stakeholder consultation in January 2012 on a draft Accountabilities Framework, prepared by the Chief Nursing Officer.
- Following work with partners, the Government has decided that a new statutory duty on delivering a transparent and coordinated offer of early help is not needed, as there is sufficient existing legislation to deliver Professor Munro's vision for children and families. In the meantime, local areas are encouraged to continue to work to provide early help for the reasons articulated by Professor Munro.
- Eight local authorities are trialling more flexible approaches to assessment and emerging evidence is encouraging, and suggests that replacing nationally prescribed timescales for assessment with timely, professional judgments can have the positive impact on practice envisaged by Professor Munro. To gather further evidence, trials have been extended until 31 March 2012 and flexibilities will be consulted on

as part of the broader Working Together to Safeguard Children and the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families early next year.

- Following a consultation and a market sounding exercise, it has been decided that the [National electronic Common Assessment Framework system \(National eCAF\)](#) will be decommissioned.
- To support the local redesigning of child and family social work, the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) and the College of Social Work are supporting local authorities in designating a Principal Child and Family Social Worker in every local area. In Wiltshire we have already progressed this.
- The Government has been making preparations for the appointment of a Chief Social Worker and is confident that they will be in post in 2012.
- A consultation on new guidance for Directors of Children's Services and Lead Members is currently underway, to clarify their roles. Discussions with groups of Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Chairs about how to strengthen their central role have also taken place.

Assessment process for adopters

26. The Government has announced that the assessment process for prospective adopters is to be overhauled. A group of experts have been asked to draw up a new process to recruit, train and assess people as adoptive parents and provide recommendations in March on a new, more efficient process to be introduced later in 2012. The group has been asked to:

- Consider arrangements for an improved recruitment process for adopters and ensure those who do come forward are not lost to the system.
- Streamline the training and assessment process, building on existing good practice.
- Remove bureaucracy and over-prescription regarding the information to be collected about prospective adopters.
- Provide set timescales for training and assessing the suitability of adopters, along with a new national assessment form based on a concise but robust analysis of capacity to care for a child in need of adoption.
- Suggest what, if any, new monitoring and evaluation mechanisms would need to be put in place to measure the success of the new system.

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Largely taken from the DFE website content up to 13 January 2012

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