

Coalition Changes – Update January 2012 to March 2012

Children's Centres - payments for improving outcomes for children

1. Children and Families Minister Sarah Teather announced that trial local authorities will test a range of measures which aim to reinforce the role of Sure Start Children's Centres in improving outcomes for all children, while focusing on reaching those who can most benefit from their services. The purpose of payment by results is to reward progress to reduce inequalities in child development, school readiness, health and life chances, and to improve parenting aspiration and skills.

2. The measures announced today for the payment by results trials are:

Increasing the school readiness of young children by:

- Narrowing the gap in attainment through the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.
- Increasing take up of the two year old free entitlement.
- Increasing take up of early education amongst disadvantaged three year olds.

Improving health and child development by:

- Increasing the prevalence of Breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks.

Improving parenting skills and support provided to families in need of children's centre services by:

- Increasing the proportion of families in greatest need completing evidence based parenting programmes.
- Increasing the proportion of families with children under 5 years who are identified as being "in greatest need" and have "sustained contact" with children's centres in the local authority area.

3. Local authorities running the trials are also developing local measures to test payment by results arrangements with their children's centres. The trials will be evaluated to inform a decision about potential national rollout and the most suitable measures for a national payment by results scheme. Wiltshire applied to be part of the trial but was unsuccessful.

4. The DfE has also begun a [consultation](#) on Sure Start Children's Centres Statutory Guidance which sets out that local authorities must have sufficient children's centres to meet the needs of young children and parents living in the area, particularly those in greatest need of support.

Interim report on early education and childcare qualifications

5. Professor Cathy Nutbrown has published an [interim report](#) which explores how to help people working in the early years to improve their skills, knowledge and development. During a public consultation people raised concerns about the quality of tuition, the standard of qualifications, recruitment and retention, and career progression. Professor Nutbrown is considering the following issues as she develops her recommendations for government:
 - An effective qualifications structure that motivates people working in the early years and tells employers what skills and knowledge they have.
 - Courses that prepare people for working in the early years, raise the standards of those choosing to enter the profession, give them the right skills in literacy and numeracy and include the latest cutting edge detail about child development.
 - The case for expanding the role of teachers in the early years, creating new teaching pathways with an early years specialism, linking more closely the education worlds of the school and the early years.

Summer school fund launched to help disadvantaged children into secondary school

6. A £50 million summer schools fund to help the most disadvantaged pupils is now available. The money will help up to 100,000 pupils making the transition from primary to secondary school, a time when Ofsted research shows performance can take a significant dip.
7. Secondary schools can sign up for £500 for every disadvantaged pupil taking part in a two-week summer school. The money applies to all pupils transferring in to Year 7 who are on Free School Meals or have been in care for six months or more. Headteachers will be able to design and run summer schools, targeting pupils who will benefit the most. The funding could be used for activities such as:
 - Transitional activities such as meeting teachers, having a tour of the school or learning more about their new curriculum, to build on schools' own induction arrangements. This will help pupils familiarise themselves with their new environment and give them a flying start.
 - Additional intensive support in English and mathematics to enable pupils who need it to make progress in these key areas before the start of the autumn term, both as catch up and preparation for the secondary curriculum.

- Wider enrichment activities such as arts, music and sports activities, trips to theatres and museums, visits to local higher education institutions and employers etc.
8. Secondary schools can opt in by providing a few key pieces of information, such as how many pupils they expect to attend and how long they will run the school for, in a web form available on the DfE website. Applications must be submitted by 30 April 2012. Schools will receive confirmation of their funding allocation in May.

New award to raise university aspirations of all pupils

9. Schools Minister Nick Gibb has announced a [new national award scheme](#) to recognise the top achievers in every secondary school in England – and those showing great potential. He said that the “Dux” – Latin for leader or champion – would help raise the aspirations of all pupils, including those from less affluent backgrounds, to go to university, including our top higher education institutions. A similar scheme, also called Dux, already exists in schools in Scotland.
10. The award, open to all maintained secondary schools, will see teachers selecting a Year 9 pupil as their Dux. They will be rewarded with a visit to one of the 20 current Russell Group universities. The Russell Group represents leading UK universities which are committed to maintaining high-quality research, outstanding teaching and education, and excellent links with business and the public sector.

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	Devizes	September 2011

	Primary School		
18	St Augustine's Catholic School	Trowbridge	September 2011
19	Springfields School	Calne	September 2011
20	The John Bentley	Calne	November 2011
21	St Edmunds CE Girls School	Salisbury	February 2012

Improving alternative provision

11. The [Taylor Review](#) of alternative provision has been published. The main recommendations include:

- Improved teacher training in managing disruptive behaviour
- Ensuring that all children in alternative provision continue to receive appropriate and challenging English and Maths teaching.
- Schools rather than local authorities should become responsible for commissioning alternative provision and PRU services.
- Schools should share all relevant information about the pupil they are sending to alternative provision with providers, agree the nature of the intervention and set targets for the pupil. Progress should be regularly monitored and plans put in place for the next stage in the child's life.
- The Department for Education should commission a payment by results trial for alternative provision.
- Schools should look at using money they currently spend on alternative provision to build up their capacity for managing pupils' behaviour.
- Ofsted should challenge schools on their use of alternative provision.
- Ofsted should improve its intelligence gathering on poor practice – they should make sure that information on poor practice by commissioning schools and alternative provision providers is shared effectively within Ofsted and informs decisions about inspections.

New approach to NEETs

12. The Government has unveiled a new scheme to get 16- and 17-year-olds who are out of work and not in education, earning or learning again. As part of the Deputy Prime Minister's Youth Contract, the Coalition Government will, for the first time, target funding to this group of teenagers through tailored support on a payment-by-results system. The Government is making £126m of new money available to give teenagers opportunities to train, work and get their lives on track.

13. Charities and businesses with expertise in supporting young people are being invited to bid for contracts worth up to £2,200 for every young person they help. Support will be tailored to suit individuals' needs, and may include support to help them access and remain in education, training or an apprenticeship. Unlike any past schemes for this age group, payment will depend on results.

Organisations will receive an initial payment for taking young people on, followed by subsequent payments when they show progress – including remaining in education, undertaking apprenticeships, or holding down a job. To achieve the best results, the scheme will give total freedom to those providing support – as long as the end result is success for the young person.

14. Local authorities will be central to the success of the programme. They will work with successful providers to target those young people in their area who will benefit most, fitting this programme with other provision on offer locally.

Major overhaul to reform family justice system

15. In the Government's response to the recommendations made by the independent Family Justice Review Panel, Ministers have outlined their plans to reform the system to help strengthen parenting, reduce the time it takes cases to progress through the courts, and simplify the family justice system. This will include speeding up care and adoption cases by reforming the Public Law System and increasing transparency. Data on the timeliness of court cases will be published so that it can be seen where delays are occurring. Legislation will be introduced to enable a six month time limit to be set while retaining the flexibility to extend complex cases where this is genuinely in the children's interest. The Government's response to the Family Justice Review is published on the [Ministry of Justice website](#). A young person's version of the response is also available from the website.

Savings accounts for children in long term care

16. Children's Minister Tim Loughton announced the appointment of charity The Share Foundation to support more than 55,000 children who are in long term care. The Share Foundation will open a Junior Individual Savings Accounts (Junior ISAs) for every young person who has been in care for more than a year, who do not have a Child Trust Fund, with the Government providing initial payments of £200 for each account. In addition, they will seek donors who recognise that these vulnerable children often miss out on the kinds of support and chances that most children can take for granted. Funds raised by The Share Foundation will be distributed amongst the accounts they open.
17. The scheme, worth a total of £16.7m until 2015, will offer tax-efficient savings accounts that can be held in cash or shares and will mature and be accessible on the account holder's 18th birthday.

Measures to speed up adoptions

18. The Prime Minister has set out proposed changes to legislation to ensure that, when adoption is in a child's best interests, they are placed as soon as possible. The average time between a child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family is one year and nine months. The Government believes

this is too long and will consult on changes to the legislation later in the year. The three key measures are:

- Local authorities (LAs) will be required to reduce delays in all cases and will not be able to delay an adoption for the perfect match if there are other suitable adopters available. The ethnicity of a child and the prospective adopters will, in most cases, come second to the speed of placing a child in a home.
- Proposed changes to legislation will make it easier for children to be fostered by approved prospective adopters while the courts consider the case for adoption. This will mean they stay in one home with the same parents, first as foster carers, and then as adopted parents if the court agrees to adoption.
- If a match has not been found locally within three months of a child being recommended for adoption, LAs will have to refer them to the national Adoption Register so they can find a match in a wider pool of prospective adopters.

19. The Government has published an [Action Plan for Adoption](#) to overhaul the system for prospective adopters and strengthen the performance regime for local authorities. The new action plan includes proposals for:

- New adoption scorecards, to hold local authorities to account. The first scorecards will be published in the coming weeks.
- A revised approval process for new adopters, cutting it to six months.
- A national gateway for adoption, providing a first point of contact for anyone interested in adoption.

Carolyn Godfrey, Corporate Director

Report author: Lynda Cox, Head of Performance and Information Management, Children's Services.

Largely taken from the DFE website content 18 January – 15 March 2012

15/03/12