
DfE Changes – Update March 2017 to May 2017

General Election

1. Following the announcement of the general election and subsequent vote in the House of Commons, the Cabinet Officer has advised that the civil service will enter a period of pre-election silence from midnight on Friday 21 April.

Spring Budget 2017

2. The Chancellor of the Exchequer gave his Spring Budget to Parliament on 8 March 2017. The full budget can be found [here](#)¹. Key to children's services:
 - Investment in technical education for 16 to 19 year olds rising to over £500 million - New T-levels for 16 to 19 year old technical students will be introduced from autumn 2019. Students will be able to choose from 15 different routes such as construction, digital or agriculture. The number of hours of training for these students will increase by over 50%. As part of the course, all students will take part in an industry work placement. The government will also provide maintenance loans for students doing higher-level technical courses at National Colleges and Institutes of Technology – like those available to university students.
 - £536 million for new free schools and to maintain existing schools - £320 million will be invested to fund 140 more free schools and £216 million will be invested in school maintenance.
 - Free transport for children from poorer families who go to selective schools - Children aged 11 to 16 who get free school meals or whose parents are on the Maximum Working Tax Credit will get free transport to their closest selective school, if it is between two and 15 miles away from their home. Children aged 8 to 16 are already entitled to free transport to their closest suitable school, if they live more than three miles away.
 - Tax-Free Childcare will soon be available to working parents - Tax-Free Childcare will provide up to £2,000 a year in childcare support for each child under 12. Parents will be able to receive up to £4,000 for disabled children up to the age of 17. Parents of younger children will be able to apply for the scheme first, with all eligible parents able to access the scheme by the end of the year. Working parents in England will also be able to apply for an additional 15 hours of free childcare for three and four year olds, bringing the total to 30 hours a week.

Early Years Model Agreement and Statutory Guidance

3. The government has published the early years model agreement and the revised local authority statutory guidance which support delivery of the 30 hours free early entitlement offer, which comes into effect from 1st September 2017.
4. The [model agreement](#)² sets out the Department for Education's expectations for what should be included in agreements set up between

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/spring-budget-2017-documents>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/free-early-years-provision-and-childcare-model-agreement>

local authorities and providers to deliver the free education entitlement. The document sets out responsibilities from local authorities, including ensuring sufficiency of childcare for eligible children in their area, and being clear about their role in meeting the needs of children with special educational needs and disabilities. It also sets out responsibilities for providers in delivery of the free entitlement, including submitting regular data to local authorities, maintaining records and charging.

5. The [statutory guidance](#)³ sets out in detail what local authorities must adhere to in delivering the free entitlement (both 15 hours and 30 hours). It covers childminder agencies; local authorities' duties to secure early education for 2-, 3- and 4-year-olds; the provision of information for parents; and responsibilities to ensure the promotion of British values.

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

6. The new [EYFS](#)⁴ has now been released, bringing together changes in legislation published since the 2014 framework. The new EYFS became mandatory on Monday 3 April 2017. From this date, all providers in England will be inspected against the updated framework.

Early Years Workforce Strategy

7. The DfE has published an [early years workforce strategy](#)⁵ for England. The strategy aims to support the early years sector to remove barriers to attracting, retaining and developing the early years workforce by:
 - Raising the status of early years specialist teachers
 - Supporting the growth of the graduate workforce in disadvantaged areas
 - Establishing a panel of professionals to help develop clear early years career routes
 - Raising the profile of early years careers among young people
 - Developing a qualification in special educational needs and disabilities
 - Helping attract more men to the profession
 - Supporting professional development
 - Investing in quality improvement.
8. The government's response to the consultation on level 3 qualification requirement is available [here](#)⁶.

Relaunch of the Childcare Business Grant Scheme

9. The DfE has re-launched the Childcare Business Grant Scheme. It helps new childminders and childminder agencies (CMAs) enter the childcare market by awarding one-off start-up grants of either £500 or £1000. The grants are to help with the set up costs of new childminding businesses involved in the delivery of the new 30-hours entitlement. To be eligible, businesses must start within three months of the registration date on their Ofsted/CMA certificate, or be due to start within the next six months. Full details can be found [here](#)⁷.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-education-and-childcare--2>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-workforce-strategy>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/level-3-early-years-educator-numeracy-and-literacy-requirements>

⁷ <https://www.childcarebusinessgrants.com/>

Primary school accountability

10. The technical guidance on primary accountability and school-level progress measures has been updated to include proposed changes to methodology in 2017 for including pupils below the standard of the test in the progress measures. It also confirms that the thresholds for floor standards and coasting definition for 2017 will be published in the autumn. The updated guidance can be found [here](#)⁸.

Primary assessment in England

11. The DfE has launched a public consultation exercise about the future of the primary assessment system in England. The consultation sets out wide-ranging proposals for improving the primary assessment system. These include consideration of the best starting point from which to measure pupils' progress, how to ensure the assessment system is proportionate, and how to improve statutory end of key stage teacher assessments. The consultation can be found [here](#)⁹.
12. A parallel consultation is asking for views on the recommendations of the independent Rochford Review. The recommendations focus on the future of statutory assessment arrangements for pupils working below the standard of national curriculum tests at the end of key stages 1 and 2. This consultation can be found [here](#)¹⁰.
13. Both consultations are open until 22 June 2017.

School exclusion guidance: proposed revisions

14. The government are seeking views on revisions being proposed to the statutory guidance on the exclusion of pupils. In December 2014 the Department published a revised version of the statutory exclusion guidance which was subsequently withdrawn, so the 2012 guidance has been in force for some time.
15. The consultation seeks views on revisions being proposed to the statutory exclusion guidance for 2017. The revisions make changes in a small number of areas to provide greater clarity to head teachers, independent review panels and governing bodies on their responsibilities when considering exclusion decisions. The consultation seeks feedback on whether the clarifications proposed for the guidance are sufficient and clear to understand. The revisions should correct factual inaccuracies and clarify areas that are causing confusion in the system.
16. The consultation ran from 14 March to 25 April and can be found [here](#)¹¹. The results of the consultation and the Department's response will be published in summer 2017. The revised guidance will come into effect on 1 September 2017.

Capital allocations and planning for pupils with SEND

17. Details of £215 million of capital funding allocated to local authorities to help create new school places and improve existing facilities for children and

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/primary-school-accountability>

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/primary-assessment-in-england>

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/primary-school-pupil-assessment-rochford-review-recommendations>

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/school-exclusion-guidance-proposed-revisions>

young people with special educational needs and disabilities have been released and can be found [here](#)¹².

18. Local authorities can use the funding to improve special provision in mainstream schools and academies, special units, special schools and academies, early years settings, further education colleges or to make other provision for children and young people aged from 0 to 25. Local Authorities will be expected to consult with local parents, carers, schools, and others on how their funding should be used, and will be required to publish a short plan showing how they will spend the funding. Wiltshire has been allocated a total of £800,933 from 2018 to 2020.

Academies Update

19. Number in Wiltshire at the end of May 2017:

Sponsored academies	19
Non-sponsored converter academies	65

20. New academies in this period:

Southbroom Infants' School
Heytesbury Church of England Primary School
Shrewton CofE Primary School
Wyvern College
The Trafalgar School at Downton

Children and Social Work Bill receives Royal Assent

21. The Children and Social Work Bill has now received Royal Assent. It includes measures to establish a new social work regulator, new powers for the education secretary to set 'improvement standards' for social workers, and introduce assessments for practitioners. The act places Sex and Relationships Education on a statutory footing, will change multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, and permit the use of secure placements in Scotland. The legislation will also require councils to provide personal advisers to care leavers up to the age of 25.
22. The full Act can be found [here](#)¹³.
23. A policy statement to explain the government amendment to the Children and Social Work Bill to introduce statutory relationships education in primary schools, relationships and sex education in secondary schools, and PSHE in all schools, can be found [here](#)¹⁴.

Consultation on revised UASC/Trafficked children Statutory Guidance

24. The statutory guidance on the care of unaccompanied asylum seeking and trafficked children was originally published in 2014. Recent legislative changes such as the Modern Slavery Act 2015, policy developments such as the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) for unaccompanied asylum seeking children and events around the recent migration crisis have meant that it is necessary to update the guidance so that it is of best use to local authorities.

¹² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-provision-capital-funding-for-pupils-with-ehc-plans>

¹³ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/16/contents/enacted>

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-rse-and-pshe>

25. The consultation seeks views as to whether the revised guidance provides sufficient advice to local authorities in England looking after unaccompanied migrant children and child victims of modern slavery. Full detail of the consultation and the revised statutory guidance can be found [here](#)¹⁵.
26. The consultation ran from 03 to 17 March, with the government plan to publish the revised statutory guidance by Spring 2017.

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Largely taken from the DfE website content 01 March 2017 to 30 May 2017.

¹⁵ <https://consult.education.gov.uk/children-in-care/care-of-unaccompanied-and-trafficked-children/>