
DfE Changes – Update July 2019 – August 2019.

Government response to the Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee Report on funding of local authorities' children's services

1. The DfE and MHCLG have published a joint response to the Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee Report on funding of local authorities' children's services. It confirms that all future funding decisions are for the Spending Review, when the Government will set out its approach for the future. There is also a commitment to report back to the committee by December 2019 with an update on all areas of work that address recommendations made within the report.
2. Responses to the 22 recommendations can be found [here](#).

School funding

3. The Prime Minister has announced he will invest over £14 billion in primary and secondary education between now and 2022/23. As part of this, every secondary school will receive a minimum of £5,000 per pupil next year, with every primary school getting a minimum of £4,000 from 2021/22.
4. The deal also includes £700 million extra for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in 2020/21, so every pupil can access the education that is right for them.
The full press release can be accessed [here](#).

School attendance

5. The DfE has updated the non-statutory guidance on attendance for maintained schools, academies, special schools, independent schools and local authorities. It provides information about interventions to address pupils' poor attendance and behaviour at school, and information on changes to school day and school week. The updated guidance can be accessed [here](#).

School improvement

6. The DfE has published additional resources to the school improvement support collection. 'School improvement support for the 2019 to 2020 academic year' and 'Emergency school improvement fund (non-capital)' have been added to School Leadership section, detailing support for schools identified as requires improvement in their latest Ofsted report, and details of how to access the grant to support schools facing unexpected or imminent failure. The collection can be accessed [here](#).
7. In conjunction with this, the Secretary of State has announced plans to invest £33.5 million in school improvement, £17 million of which has been allocated to the Trust Capacity Fund, to help high performing academy trusts to expand further. The remaining £16.5 million will go towards a new leadership support package for 2,400 underperforming schools. The press release can be found [here](#).

Raising standards in schools

8. The Education Secretary has announced new measures to continue raising standards in schools, including lifting the exemption on outstanding school inspections and more support for struggling schools. Plans include: Reintroducing regular Ofsted inspections for outstanding schools by removing rules which exempted top-rated schools from routine inspection; Increasing the level of support available to some of the most challenging requires improvement schools; Piloting a new specialist academy trust in the north, specifically established to take on the most challenging schools; and Working with Ofsted to ensure all reports also include a rating for financial management and oversight within the school, academy, college or trust in order to ensure best practice is shared across the sector. The press release can be found [here](#).

Review of home to school transport guidance

9. The DfE is consulting on revised guidance on local authority's statutory duties in relation to home to school transport for children of compulsory school age. The revised guidance is intended to support local authorities in putting in place lawful policies which are easy for parents to understand. The full consultation can be found [here](#). The closing date for responses is 31 October 2019.

Update on T-Levels

10. T-Levels are due to be introduced in the 2020/21 academic year. Detailed guidance, containing information about T-Level grading, certification and UCAS points, has been added to the DfE website and can be accessed [here](#).

Academies Update

11. Number in Wiltshire at the end of August 2019:

Academies	101
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12. There are no new academies in this period.

Multi-academy trusts (MATs)

13. Ofsted has published a report entitled *Multi-academy trusts: benefits, challenges and functions*. The report looks at MATs' influence on day-to-day practice in their schools and the extent of their impact on teachers and leaders. Currently, Ofsted can only carry out summary evaluations of the quality of education provided by a MAT by inspecting a sample of their schools. It cannot inspect the trust itself nor make graded judgements. The report recommends that Ofsted should be empowered to inspect trusts in order to strengthen their accountability. The full report can be accessed [here](#).

Regulating independent schools

14. The DfE has published updated information about how it regulates and intervenes in independent schools, and details of when legal action may be taken against unregistered schools. The 'Prosecuting unregistered independent schools' statement has been updated to reflect current policy, and can be found [here](#).

SWE Rules and Standards

15. The final version of Social Work England's (SWE) rules and standards for social work have now been published having been signed off by the Secretary of State following a consultation earlier this year on draft rules and standards. They can be accessed [here](#).
16. SWE has also published the full consultation report, accessible [here](#). SWE is due to take over from the HCPC as the sector's regulator on 2 December 2019.

IICSA progress update

17. The Home Office has published an update on the government's progress in implementing recommendations from the interim report of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA). The interim report can be access [here](#) and the progress update [here](#).

Domestic Abuse Bill introduced to Parliament

18. The Domestic Abuse Bill has been introduced to the House of Commons. Alongside the Bill a series of factsheets have been published, expanding on specific measures or proposals contained within it. e.g. on the Domestic Abuse Commissioner and how new Orders will work in practice. Full details can be found [here](#).
19. The government also published its response to the recent Joint Committee report on the draft bill. The response can be found [here](#).

Serious youth violence

20. The Home Affairs Select Committee has published a report detailing the findings and recommendations of its recent inquiry into serious youth violence. The Committee calls for additional funding for local authority youth services.
Key recommendations made include:
 - The government must make it a central priority to keep young people safe, and the new Prime Minister should take personal responsibility for reducing serious youth violence and driving activity in this area, tasking Cabinet ministers with taking ownership for key actions
 - By the end of September, the government should provide the committee with a list of named accountable leaders in every region or county of England and Wales, identifiable locally as the individual reporting directly to 10 Downing Street, and responsible for convening those who need to work together to drive down serious youth violence
 - The Ministerial Taskforce and the Serious Violence Taskforce should be monitoring progress across a common dataset, collected consistently across the country; this should be driving and informing local action to tackle serious youth violence.
21. The full report can be found [here](#).

Offensive Weapons Act (2019)

22. The Home Office recently opened a consultation on draft statutory guidance for *The Offensive Weapons Act (2019)*, which applies in England, Scotland and Wales. The guidance sets out how the legislation should be implemented and applied, including what considerations need to be taken when responding to incidents

involving children and young people. This consultation closes on the 9 October 2019 and can be accessed [here](#).

23. A consultation on guidance for the new Knife Crime Prevention Orders, which are a preventative tool to help steer young people away from knife crime, is also open. This consultation closes on 25 September 2019 and can be found [here](#).

New legal duty to support multi-agency action on serious violence

24. Earlier this year the Home Office consulted on ways of preventing and tackling serious violence as part of a new public health approach to addressing this complex issue. Of the three options put forward - a new statutory duty placed on specific organisations; a revised role for Community Safety Partnerships; or renewed voluntary arrangements - the Home Office has decided to legislate at a future date to amend Community Safety Partnerships to ensure they have a strategy for preventing and tackling serious violence. The consultation outcome and government response can be found [here](#).

Home Office relaunches County Lines campaign

25. The Home Office has relaunched its campaign to raise awareness of County Lines among staff working in children's services. The signs to spot include:
- Persistently going missing from school or home, or being found out-of-area
 - Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes, or mobile phones
 - Excessive receipt of texts or phone calls
 - Relationships with controlling, older individuals or gang association
 - Leaving home or care without explanation
 - Suspicion of self-harm, physical assault or unexplained injuries
 - Parental concerns
 - Significant decline in school performance
 - Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

26. The Home Office has produced a campaign pack which has resources, including a guidance booklet and posters, which can be accessed [here](#).

Evaluation of Regional Adoption Agencies

27. The DfE has published an evaluation of Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) progress to date. Relatively few RAAs have been in operation long enough to see real benefits, however, researchers found anecdotal evidence of positive impacts on the speed of matching, recruiting adopters, adopter support, processes and timeliness. Common challenges cited by participants included: securing the necessary buy-in and consensus from contributing LAs, budget setting, leadership recruitment and retention and the development of shared systems. The 2018-2019 Report can be found [here](#).

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