

Wiltshire Council

Children Select Committee

21 October 2021

DfE Changes – Updates September 2021 - October 2021

Tutoring revolution builds as students return to class

1. Schools will have greater flexibility to offer high-quality, 15-hour tutoring courses that meet the needs of their pupils, in a major expansion of the National Tutoring Programme backed by £1 billion.
2. The programme is expected to reach up to six million pupils across the country in total over the next three years to make sure students that need it receive quality catch up support. More information can be found here: [Link](#)

Training launched for mental health leads in schools and colleges

3. Eligible schools and colleges will be able to apply for a grant of £1,200, which can be used to enable senior leaders to gain the knowledge and skills they need to roll out an effective 'whole school or college approach' to mental health and wellbeing, embedding it into their culture and making it a priority alongside academic recovery.
4. Backed by a total of £9.5 million, announced in May, this grant funding includes training on how to use existing mental health resources more effectively, identify students who need mental health support, and on how to improve working with local mental health services so that children and young people who need specialist help, get this as soon as possible. Full details can be found here: [Link](#)

Free glasses to tackle poor eyesight and boost literacy

5. Thousands of pupils will benefit from an expanded programme that provides two free pairs of glasses to improve reading and writing by tackling poor eyesight. The 'Glasses in Classes' scheme aims to level up outcomes and will be adapted for five disadvantaged areas in England, under the Opportunity Area programme. This will reach more than 9,000 pupils in at least 225 schools. More information can be found here: [Link](#)

Adaptations in 2022 summer exams to ensure fairness for students

6. Students will sit GCSE, A and AS level exams next year with adaptations to recognise the disruption to their education.
7. Following a [public consultation](#), the government and Ofqual on 30 September have confirmed changes such as a choice of topics in some GCSE exams like English literature and history; advance information on the focus of exams to focus students' revision in subjects, where there is not a choice of topics; and support materials like formulae sheets in maths. More details can be found here: [Link](#)

Over £300 million to attract and develop world-class teachers and leaders

8. A total of £129 million is available for trainee teachers starting in 2022/23, which includes increased bursaries of £15,000 for languages, geography and design and technology, and £10,000 for biology – in addition to the existing £24,000 bursary or £26,000 scholarship for maths, physics, chemistry, and computing.
9. This follows an announcement by the Prime Minister that teachers of maths, physics, chemistry, and computing in the first five years of their careers will receive salary boosts of up to £3,000 – to support the recruitment and retention of specialist teachers in these subjects. More details can be found here: [Link](#)

1,000 schools connected to top-of-the-class full fibre broadband

10. Full fibre networks stretching for thousands of kilometres are now supplying lightning-fast gigabit broadband to 1,084 schools and thousands of other public buildings previously stuck with slow speeds.
11. It means teachers can make use of the most cutting-edge learning tech - such as video conferencing platforms to host joint classes and assemblies with schools anywhere in the world and online tools that bring lessons to life such as films and learning games. It will also support teachers to spend more time planning and delivering lessons and less time staring at loading screens. The work is part of the government's national mission to level up internet access across the UK by investing in blisteringly fast gigabit broadband and busting barriers to speed up commercial roll out. Full details can be found: [Link](#)

Case studies on post-16 transition

12. This guidance has been developed to help those in alternative provision (AP) settings to support their year 11 students as they transition into post-16 destinations and avoid becoming not in education, employment, or training (NEET).
13. These best practice examples are provided by alternative provision settings that supported their year 11 students using the 2020 Alternative Provision Transition Fund. References to particular courses, assessments or platforms do not indicate that these are approved or recommended by the Department for Education (DfE). Full guidance can be found here: [Link](#)