

## **Coalition Changes – Update September to November 2012**

### **Key Stage 4 Exam Reform**

1. The Education Secretary, Michael Gove has outlined plans to reform Key Stage 4 examinations. Key headlines include:
  - Removal of module based learning.
  - Removal of controlled assessment and coursework from core subjects.
  - Ending of two-tier division of exams into foundation and higher tiers.
  - Ending competition between exam boards.
  - Exam Boards to be invited to offer wholly new qualifications in the core subject areas of English, mathematics, the sciences, history, geography and languages. Only one exam board per subject area.
  - New qualifications in core academic subjects to be called English Baccalaureate Certificates (EBacc).
  - Success in English, mathematics, the sciences, a humanities subject and a language will mean that a student has achieved the full English Baccalaureate.
  - Everyone who now sits a GCSE will be expected to sit this new qualification.
  - Special and enhanced provision for students who will find it difficult to sit these new exams will be developed. For these students schools will be expected to produce a detailed record of their achievement in each curriculum area which will help them make progress. It is expected that some of these students will secure the EBacc Certificates at the age of 17 or 18.
2. The Department has stated that it will consult widely on these reforms and it proposes that the first teaching of the new certificates in English, mathematics and the sciences will commence in September 2015 with other subjects following.
3. As part of these reforms the Department will consider how to hold schools accountable. This will include consulting on replacements for existing league tables and exploring better ways of recognising schools which add value and help the most disadvantaged. It will also involve seeking to ensure the best vocational and academic qualifications are recognised in a fair and rigorous way.

## Focus on Computer Science Teaching in Schools

4. The Government has announced a number of measures to support schools to focus more strongly on Computer Science:
- A scholarship programme (£20k per scholarship) supported by industry has been developed for top graduates to train as Computer Science Teachers.
  - A new Computer Science Teacher Training Course will replace Information and Communications Technology (ICT). Funding for ICT teacher training courses will soon come to an end and Computer Science Courses will be available from September 2013.
  - Current teachers will be up skilled as experts in Computer Science.

## Disadvantaged school children get cash boost

5. The Pupil Premium will rise to £900 per pupil next year. Schools receive additional funding through the premium for every child registered as eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) at any point in the past six years and children in care who have been looked after for six months. The funding aims to help schools provide the extra support children and young people need to reach their full potential.

## 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

1 5	The Holy Trinity School	Great Cheverell	September 2011
1 6	Saint Edmund's Catholic Academy	Calne	September 2011
1 7	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School	Devizes	September 2011
1 8	St Augustine's Catholic School	Trowbridge	September 2011
1 9	Springfields School	Calne	September 2011
2 0	The John Bentley	Calne	November 2011
2 1	St Edmunds CE Girls School	Salisbury	February 2012
2 2	The John of Gaunt School	Trowbridge	April 2012
2 3	The Mead Academy Trust	Trowbridge	May 2012
2 4	Holy Trinity School,	Calne	May 2012
2 5	By Brook Valley Primary	Nr Chippenham	May 2012
2 6	Woodford Valley	Nr Salisbury	June 2012
2 7	Easton Royal Primary	Nr Pewsey	September 2012
2 8	Devizes School	Devizes	September 2012
2 9	St John's School Marlborough	Marlborough	September 2012
3 0	The Manor Primary	Melksham	September 2012

### Measures to improve adoption and fostering

6. A number of changes are being proposed to make the adoption and fostering process timelier, more efficient and user friendly. Following consultation some of these changes are set to take effect next year. The Government is currently seeking views on measures that aim to allow foster carers to make everyday decisions about the children they look after and simplify the approval process to encourage more people to come forward to foster.
7. Two draft clauses were laid before Parliament on 7<sup>th</sup> November for pre-legislative scrutiny by the Select Committee on Adoption legislation. The draft clauses:
  - I. Place a duty on Local Authorities to give preference to a '*Fostering for Adoption*' placement. This will enable adopters to be approved rapidly as temporary foster carers. It is expected that this will result in more children being placed with their

potential permanent carers on a fostering basis while the council seeks a placement order from the courts.

- II. Remove the express duty on adoption agencies to give due consideration to religious persuasion, racial origin and cultural and linguistic background when matching children with prospective adopters. The Government take the view that this change will reinforce the existing emphasis on the welfare of the child and the impact of any delay.
8. Comments on the draft clauses can be made to the Departments adoption team at [ruth.wilson@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ruth.wilson@education.gsi.gov.uk) by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2012. The Select Committee on Adoption legislation will present its views on the clauses and existing legislation in due course. It is expected that these reforms will become law in two years time.
  9. Other measures being introduced to encourage councils to do more to enable children in care to be placed more quickly include:
    - Bringing in a new two-stage approval process for adopters, as well as a new fast track procedure for approved foster carers and previous adopters who wish to adopt.
    - Requiring councils to refer looked after children for whom adoption is the plan to the Adoption Register within three months so that they are matched with adopters as soon as possible.
    - Requiring all adoption agencies to refer prospective adopters to the Adoption Register no later than three months after approval.
    - Making it a legal requirement that councils ensure that the child details on the Adoption Register are kept up to date.
    - Removing the requirement to interview personal referees when a person has been an approved foster carer in the last year and a reference is available from their last fostering service.
  10. The Government is also seeking views on reducing the size of adoption and fostering panels and is making available £8m funding this year to help adoption services. Funding will be used to develop the necessary skills, tools, and working arrangements to deliver the programme of adoption reform, of which the above measures form a significant part.
  11. Recently published statistics on adoption show a rise in the number of adoptions and adoption placement orders. The Government has welcomed this news but still recognises the need to improve the time it takes for those who want to adopt and foster to be approved. An additional measure to is being explored which encourages councils to make use of adopters in other parts of the country.
  12. The Government has called for more people to adopt children following the publication of figures which show that nationally there are more than 4200 children ready for adoption but have not yet been able to move in with a family. This figure has grown by 650 in each of the last two years and data shows that it still takes on average 2.5 years from a child going into care to being adopted. The Government has developed

scorecards that show the difference in delay for children in different councils.

13. First4adoption, a consortium of Coram, Coram Children's Legal Centre and Adoption UK has won the contract for the National Gateway for Adoption. From next year this will provide a first point of contact for anyone who is interested in adoption through a telephone helpline and a website.

### **Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children's Board Review of Multi-Agency Responses to the Sexual Exploitation of Children**

14. Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children's Board has announced that it intends to carry out a future, in depth Serious Case Review to learn lessons and strengthen local child protection arrangements. This is part of an overhaul of how abused young people are protected.
15. The government has put in place a national action plan with the courts, police and social services to prosecute and jail perpetrators of sexual abuse and exploitation, protect young people at risk and help victims to recover. The government is also taking urgent action to strengthen protection for children living in care homes and those who are most vulnerable to abuse. The DfE will report back on the latter by the end of the year.
16. In responding to the Rochdale Review the Children's Minister Edward Timpson has stated the need for agencies to ensure that allegations are taken seriously and that young people who make such allegations are treated as victims.

### **New Grants programme for Voluntary and Community Sector launched**

17. The Department for Education has published a National Prospectus which launches a new Grants Programme for 2013-15. The Prospectus outlines a number of additional key services and activities that the Department will be investing in for the benefit of children, young people and families over the course of the next two years. The package will be worth up to an estimated £60m made up of £30m of grant funding and £30m of contracts, in both 2013-14 and 2014-15.
18. It is anticipated that the National Prospectus Grants Programme will lead to new, innovative proposals and will inform national policy. The programme will focus on delivering the following five priorities:
  - I. Promote excellence in early education and childcare, so enabling all children to achieve success in their early years and later education.
  - II. Develop and reform safeguarding services that protect and support children at risk of harm.
  - III. Develop and reform the care system and speed up the process of adoption.

- IV. Develop and reform services that support children with SEN, disabilities and other health needs.
  - V. Focus and develop local services to support improved outcomes for young people, particularly the most disadvantaged and vulnerable.
19. Applications are being invited from voluntary and community sector organisations, social enterprises and other organisations bidding on a “*not for profit*” basis. Funding will be available for two years from 1 April 2013. The application process is now open and will close on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2012.
20. In addition to the Grants Programme brief details of a number of contracted services which the Department expects to procure in the coming months are included in the [Prospectus](#). Announcements about contracts for a range of new relationship support services will be made later this year. Funding will also continue for a number of online and telephone family support services.

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