
DfE Changes – Update December 2017 – January 2018

Ministerial Reshuffle

1. The Prime Minister has carried out a reshuffle and reorganisation across government. At the Department of Education, Damian Hinds has replaced Justine Greening as the Secretary of State for Education. Robert Goodwill has lost his post as Minister of State for Children and Families – to be replaced by Nadhim Zahawi.
2. Elsewhere, the Department of Health has been renamed as the Department of Health and Social Care and the Department of Communities and Local Government has had housing added to its remit and has been renamed the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Full details of Ministerial appointments can be found [here](#).

Improving social mobility through education

3. In December, the government launched its new national policy paper for dealing with social mobility through education. The plan – ‘Unlocking Talent, Fulfilling Potential’ - sets out how the government will remove obstacles that could stop people from achieving their potential. There are 5 core ambitions: closing the word gap in early years; closing the attainment gap in school while raising standards for all; creating high-quality post-16 choices for all; helping everyone achieve their potential in rewarding careers; and no community left behind. Full details of the plan can be accessed [here](#).

Schools causing concern

4. Statutory guidance on local authorities' and regional schools commissioners' responsibilities relating to schools and PRUs causing concern has been updated to describe new process for schools that meet the coasting definition. The guidance can be found [here](#).

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges.

5. The DfE has published new advice for schools and colleges on how to prevent and respond to reports of sexual violence and harassment between children. It covers: what sexual violence and harassment is; schools' and colleges' legal responsibilities; a whole school or college approach to safeguarding and child

protection; and how to respond to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment The advice can be found [here](#).

Searching, screening and confiscation: guidance for schools

6. The DfE has recently published new guidance outlining the powers schools have to screen and search pupils, and to confiscate items they find. The guidance covers: powers to search without consent; prohibited items schools can search for; and powers to confiscate items found during searches. Full details can be found [here](#).

Careers guidance and access for education and training providers

7. Statutory guidance for schools on providing careers guidance. This statutory guidance replaces the version issued in March 2015 (and re-issued in April 2017 with a minor update). It explains what support will be made available to schools between now and 2020, reflecting policy changes announced in the Government's careers strategy published on 4 Dec 2017.

Keeping children safe in education: proposed revisions

8. This consultation seeks views on proposed changes to the statutory guidance "*Keeping children safe in education*" and a new departmental non-statutory advice document covering sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges. Following this consultation, the government proposes to update and replace the current statutory guidance 'Keeping children safe in education 2016'. The government will also consider revising the advice on sexual violence and sexual harassment. The [consultation](#) closes on 18 February 2018.

Academies Update

9. Number in Wiltshire at the end of January 2018:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Sponsored academies | 20 |
| Non-sponsored converter academies | 69 |

There are no new academies in this period.

Government response to the National Assessment and Accreditation System consultation (NAAS)

10. The national assessment and accreditation system will introduce a new practice-focused methodology to establish the knowledge and skills that child and family social workers need for statutory child and family social work. The government

has published its response to consultation about the system. The full report can be found [here](#), brief highlights include:

- Assessment and accreditation remains a voluntary system; this is not a mandatory qualification
- There will be a phased approach to roll out – phase one (Bury, Leeds, Manchester, Oldham and Wigan) with assessment to begin mid-2018, and subject to successful completion of this phase, phase two will be 12 – 15 LAs with assessment beginning in early 2019. This will cover practitioners and practice supervisors, who are employed by the local authority (individual local authorities will decide if they want to include agency social workers)
- Implementation will be supported by real-time analysis and evaluation carried out by an independent research partner – the findings will help to refine the model
- Phase one and two will be funded, consideration of future funding will be subject to research findings
- There will be four stages in the assessment: practice endorsement, online assessment of knowledge, observed practice simulation, and a written assessment
- Throughout phase one and two there will a focus on equalities, DfE will work with the assessment provider to address issues identified in the proof of concept phase. During the development of questions, particular attention has been given to reducing bias for older social workers and those from BAME backgrounds.

SEND single route of redress national trial – regulations

11. In March 2017, the government committed to introduce a two-year national trial to expand the powers of the First-tier Tribunal (SEND) to make **non-binding** recommendations on the health and social care aspects of LA decisions concerning Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans as part of a special educational appeal. The [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(First-tier Tribunal Recommendations Power\) Regulations 2017](#) were laid on 20 December and will come into force on 3 April 2018.

Transforming children and young people’s mental health provision: a green paper

12. The government is asking for views by 2 March 2018 on a green paper setting out measures to improve mental health support for children and young people. The green paper focuses on earlier intervention and prevention, especially in and linked to schools and colleges. The [proposals](#) include:

- Creating a new mental health workforce of community-based mental health support teams

- Every school and college will be encouraged to appoint a designated lead for mental health
- A new 4-week waiting time for NHS children and young people's mental health services to be piloted in some areas.

Evaluation of the Troubled Families programme: emerging findings

13. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) recently published a series of reports outlining emerging findings from the evaluation of the *Troubled families programme 2015-2020*. The programme is rooted in a holistic approach to supporting families facing multiple adversities. Researchers found the programme is changing structures and processes in local authorities, strengthening partnership working and promoting 'whole-family' working. Families appreciate the way keyworkers took time to understand the family and build trust.

Update to joint targeted area inspections and arrangements for 2018

14. Ofsted has re-published guidance on joint targeted area inspections (JTAs). In 2018, Ofsted will carry out a further sample of inspections on themes inspected earlier in the programme, which will aim to identify whether agencies have made further progress since JTAs carried out in 2016.
15. Ofsted has made minor revisions to the core JTA framework and guidance on 'children living with domestic abuse' so that the documents are up to date and reflect current inspection practice.
16. In addition, the scope of the child exploitation 'deep dive' investigation has been widened to include children who are at risk of other forms of exploitation through gang association and the current guidance now reflects this. The scope of this inspection will include children associated with gangs and who are being sexually exploited, as well as children who are at risk of other forms of exploitation through gang association. This is in response to the increasing awareness of the risk to children from criminal exploitation by gangs, in particular the risk of involvement in 'county lines' gang activity and the recognised relationship in some cases between risk of child sexual exploitation and gang association.
17. These themes will be the focus of JTAs taking place between February and July 2018.

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