

Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

10 March 2020

DfE Changes – Update January 2020 – February 2020.

Confirmation of portfolios

1. The Department for Education has confirmed the below ministerial portfolios:
 - Education Secretary Gavin Williamson will continue to have overall responsibility for the Department for Education
 - Nick Gibb will continue as Minister of State for School Standards
 - Michelle Donelan takes on a new portfolio and has been appointed as Minister of State for Universities
 - Vicky Ford has been appointed as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families
 - Gillian Keegan has been appointed as the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Apprenticeships and Skills
 - Baroness Berridge has been appointed as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the School System

Ofsted annual report 2018/19

2. Ofsted has published its latest annual report on education, children's services and skills. A commentary from HMCI sits alongside the main report, in this she notes the growing number of local authority children's services judged to be good or outstanding.

Other key points include:

- In total, 54 LAs received an ILACS inspection in 2018/19, with half improving their overall judgement and just over a quarter remaining the same. Eleven LAs previously judged inadequate all improved following a re-inspection and the overall proportion of LAs judged as inadequate has decreased considerably, from 22% to 12%. 61 focused visits were carried out across different LAs during this period, the most common theme was the front door.
- There was a 6% (131) increase in the number of children's homes and a 1% (176) increase in the number of beds from August 2018, however, these increases are not spread evenly across the country. For example, 60 new homes opened in the North West during this period but nine homes closed in the South East

- The number of approved fostering households in 2018/19 has increased by 2%, to 44,500. The number of places has also increased, to 88,370 as at 31 March 2019, up 1%.
- On 31 August 2019, there were 35 large children's homes providers, which owned 47% of all private or voluntary-run homes. The largest six IFA providers also own a large portion of that market (38% of all IFA places, or 13,000 places, down from 44% in 2018).
- In 2018/19, Ofsted investigated more than 150 potentially unregistered children's homes, finding around 100 of them should have been registered (although many were short-term and ended naturally). Enquiries are continuing.
- In terms of education, 86% of all schools were judged good or outstanding at their most recent graded inspection. This is unchanged from August 2018. A clear relationship between median Progress 8 scores and inspection grades is apparent; the median scores for outstanding schools is +0.5, compared with -0.6 for inadequate schools.
- Last year 390 of the 3,810 outstanding schools were inspected in 2018/19. Of this number, only 16% of those we inspected this year remained outstanding. A higher proportion of exempt primary schools declined than secondary schools: 87% versus 76%.
- In August 2019, there were 8,700 academies and free schools, up 800 on August 2018. Four out of 10 schools (40%) are now an academy or free school (76% of secondary schools and 34% of primaries). Further, 47 LAs now have more academies than maintained schools and in 15 LAs, all secondary schools are academies.
- In August 2019, there were 1,180 MATs that ran two or more schools. There are now 110 MATs with 13 or more schools compared with 75 last year.
- A 'stuck' school is a school that has not been judged to be good since September 2006 and has had between four and seven full inspections since then. At the end of August 2019, there were 415 stuck schools.
- Last year's Annual Report tracked pupil movements between Years 10 and 11. This analysis has been repeated and around 340 schools with exceptional levels of movement have been identified. On average, 13 pupils left each of these schools

- In January 2019, there were over 1.3 million school-age pupils with SEND. This represents 15% of all pupils. Just over one million pupils were receiving SEN support and 270,000 pupils had an EHC plan, an increase on 2018.
 - In 2018/19 SEND inspections were completed in 33 areas, 21 of these areas inspected required a WSoA, 11 areas were also revisited in this period, five were found to be not making sufficient progress in addressing actions identified in earlier inspections.
3. The report provides additional information about regulatory activity in the early years, secure training centres, FE settings, apprenticeships and other skills providers. The report and commentary can be found [here](#).

Changing the dedicated schools grant

4. The government has released the outcome of the consultation on the specific grant and ring-fenced status of the dedicated schools grant, including their planned next steps. The consultation proposed that future arrangements for dealing with DSG overspends would be worded as follows: the local authority must carry forward the whole of the overspend to the schools budget in future years; and the local authority may not fund any part of the overspend from its general resources, unless it applies for and receives permission from the Secretary of State to do so.
5. The overall response to the consultation was positive, so consequently the Government intends to proceed with implementing the proposals. The Department will amend the DSG conditions of grant for both 2019-20 and 2020-21 to bring them into line with the new end-year arrangements for carrying forward DSG deficits. Full details can be found [here](#)
6. This change will have considerable impact on the accounting treatment of the DSG balance for the end of the 2019/20 financial year that is forecast to be in deficit in Wiltshire. In effect, the total deficit will be removed from the whole schools budget in the 2021-22 financial year. Schools are anticipating year 2 of 3 additional funding from central government in 2021-22 financial year and this change in legislation will earmark the majority of this anticipated increase to fund the deficit, driven by the pressure on the high needs block. Officers are taking this forward with heads and governors at Schools Forum at the March 2020 meeting.

Pupil Premium

7. The DfE has announced that pupil premium and service premium rates will increase in line with inflation for the year 2020 - 2021 in April 2020. The new rates for each type of pupil premium have now been published and can be found [here](#).

Academies Update

8. Number in Wiltshire at the end of February 2020:

Academies	105
-----------	-----

9. There are no new academies in this period.

Music education hubs

10. The Department for Education is seeking views on music education, to inform its proposals for the refresh of the National Plan for Music Education. The consultation closes on 13 March 2020 and can be accessed [here](#).
11. The government has also announced a further £80 million in funding for music hubs as well as investment in film, dance, theatre and design for school children. The related press release can be found [here](#).

Removal of qualifications

12. More than 5,000 qualifications which are being studied by fewer than 100 students each year may lose government funding under new plans announced by the Secretary of State. The government believes the current system is confusing and this move is the latest step in the government's wider review of post-16 qualifications at level 3 or below, including GCSEs and A Levels. The news story can be accessed [here](#).

Inspection of outstanding schools: removal of exemption

13. The Secretary of State for Education has confirmed plans to allow Ofsted to re-visit all schools currently judged to be outstanding within the next five academic years under government proposals, bringing an end to the era of some schools going over a decade without inspection.
14. The exemption from inspection, which has been in place since 2012, currently applies to around 3,600 outstanding schools and around 604 outstanding colleges and other organisations delivering publicly-funded education and training.
A consultation on these plans is open until 24 February and is available [here](#).

Regulating independent educational institutions

15. The government has confirmed that an additional £400,000 will be given to Ofsted as part of the continued crack down on illegal schools to make sure children are safe and not exposed to risky practices or extreme influences. The additional funding is to be used to help investigate unregistered independent schools and support the regulator in bringing together evidence for prosecution. The press release is available [here](#).

16. In order to make sure Ofsted has the legal powers it needs to tackle unregistered schools, the government has launched a new consultation on legislation which will require any setting attended full-time by children of compulsory school age to be registered with the Department for Education and meet the independent school standards. The consultation closes on 8 May 2020 and can be accessed [here](#).

‘Stuck’ schools

17. Ofsted has published a report looking at why around 400 schools, often located in isolated areas, are ‘stuck’ whilst others have managed to improve. In some pockets of the country, 2 whole cohorts of children have gone through all their primary or all their secondary school life without ever attending a good school. A solution put forward in the report included the inspectorate providing a more detailed diagnostic via an ungraded report following a more in-depth inspection. The report can be found [here](#).

Period poverty

18. State schools and colleges in England can now order free period products for students as part of a government scheme to tackle period poverty. This means learners at all state-maintained schools and 16 to 19 education organisations in England will have access to free period products in their place of study. Guidance is available [here](#).

Troubled Families Programme

19. The Troubled Families programme was originally set to run for 5 years from 2015 to 2020 but was extended by a year in Spending Round 2019. The government has now confirmed a one-year funding extension of £165 million for 2020 to 2021. The corresponding press release can be accessed [here](#).

Return to Social Work

20. The Return to Social Work programme, developed by the LGA and Government Equalities Office, designed to support councils with social worker recruitment has been formally launched. The scheme will run a national recruitment drive on behalf of councils to retrain and support 200 former social workers return to the profession. The deadline for councils to sign up to the programme, in order to offer placements and/or vacant roles, is 30 April 2020. More information can be found [here](#).

Unregulated provision for children in care and care leavers

21. The DfE has opened a consultation seeking views on the proposed reforms for independent and semi-independent accommodation for children’s social care. Proposals include:
 - banning using independent and semi-independent provision for under 16s;
 - introducing national quality standards;

- ensuring Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) represent young people's interests;
- requiring local authorities and policy forces to liaise; and
- new legal powers for Ofsted to take action against illegal providers

The consultation closes on 8 April 2020 and can be found [here](#).

22. Alongside the consultation a research report on the use of unregulated and unregistered provision for children in care (available [here](#)) and transparency data on looked-after children in independent or semi-independent placements (available [here](#)) have also been published.

£7 million for youth projects announced

23. Youth projects across the country will receive a share of £7 million from the Youth Accelerator Fund to address urgent needs in the youth sector and expand existing successful projects run by Sport England, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Arts Council England and British Film Institute. Over £2 million of the funding will go towards setting up new Local Partnerships across the country, designed to effectively coordinate and sustain local youth activities. Areas will be encouraged to bid for a Local Partnership, that will bring together existing providers, statutory partners and the private sector to deliver programmes for young people. The press release can be accessed [here](#)

Children and Young People's Mental Health

24. The Education Policy Institute has published its annual report on access to CAMHS in England. The research is based on data from freedom of information requests made to mental health providers and local authorities. Key findings from the research include: 26% of referrals to specialist children's mental health services were rejected in 2018/19 and the most common reason given by providers for rejection included 'children's conditions not being suitable for treatment' or 'conditions did not meet eligibility criteria'. The full report can be found [here](#).

Code of practice to protect children's privacy online

25. The Information Commissioner's Office recently published a statutory code of practice, which includes a list of 15 standards that companies behind online services likely to be accessed by children in the UK are expected to comply with to protect children's privacy. The code would apply to toys connected to the internet, apps, social media platforms, online games, educational websites and streaming services. The code is expected to come into force by Autumn 2021, following Parliamentary approval, and can be read [here](#).

Latest Joint Targeted Area Inspections (JTAI) report published

26. Ofsted has published its latest thematic report, which draws together the findings of six local area inspections carried out between and September 2018

and May 2019, with the latest research on sexual abuse in the family environment.

27. The report notes that this issue remains taboo in families, in communities and amongst frontline professionals working with children and families. This needs to change. Key findings from the report include: Professionals require greater training on this issue to improve their confidence in both recognising and responding to sexual abuse in the home; preventative work is too focused on known offenders; we rely too heavily on children to verbally disclose abuse; practice is too police-led and not sufficiently child-centred; and, children and non-perpetrating family members are not supported well enough.
28. The report concludes that a national strategy on sexual abuse in the family home is required as is better inter-agency information sharing with health, probation and school nursing staff often holding key information and insights. The report can be found [here](#).

TERENCE HERBERT
Executive Director

Report author: Nicola McCann, EY Information and Co-ordination Manager,
Children's Services. 21/02/2020

Largely taken from the DfE website 01 January 2020 – 21 February 2020.