

**Wiltshire Council**

**Children's Select Committee**

**19 January 2022**

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## **DfE Changes – Updates**

**November 2021 - December 2021**

### **School Governance Update**

1. Important news and communications from the Department for Education (DfE) relating to governance in maintained schools and academy trust in England. [Link](#)
2. Wiltshire's position: The updates have been disseminated via Governor Services.

### **New teaching facilities as more people enter post-16 education**

3. Teaching facilities across England will be extended and transformed for 16–19-year-olds as part of a new £83 million investment in post-16 providers. Thirty-nine post-16 providers have been awarded a share of the multi-million-pound fund, which will be used to build new classrooms, science labs, and extend teaching facilities. This builds on the extensive action under way, as set out in the Skills for Jobs White Paper. [Link](#)
4. Wiltshire's position: Wiltshire have not benefitted from this offer.

### **Contingency plans confirmed for GCSEs, AS and A levels**

5. The Department for Education and Ofqual have confirmed on 11 November contingency plans to support students in the unlikely event that exams in England cannot go ahead next year due to the pandemic.
6. The government intends for exams to take place next summer. But if they cannot go ahead safely or due to the pandemic, contingency arrangements will be in place to ensure that schools and colleges are well prepared to enable students to achieve their qualifications. [Link](#)
7. Wiltshire's position: The latest information continues to be shared with all schools.

### **New rules to drive down cost of school uniform for families**

8. Families will save money on school uniforms from next year, following new legally binding guidance published on 19 November requiring schools to make

uniform affordable for all. The Department for Education (DfE) cost of school uniform guidance means schools in England must ensure that school uniform costs are reasonable, and parents get the best value for money. [Link](#)

9. Wiltshire's position: Schools are expected to have taken steps to adhere to the new guidance before parents buy uniform for the academic year beginning in September 2022. Governing Boards will be ensuring schools consider the statutory guidance.

### **Plans to develop world class teachers through high-quality training and support**

10. The government has confirmed reforms to initial teacher training (ITT) courses, following consultation feedback from the sector, to drive up standards and ensure every child and young person can be taught by a brilliant teacher.
11. The reforms are backed by £35.7 million, with £25 million allocated to ensure trainees can receive high-quality mentoring support from experienced teachers and other experts – a key requirement of the new course standards. [Link](#)
12. Wiltshire's position:

**Recommendation 10:** teaching school hubs should partner with an accredited provider to play a role in the delivery of ITT (unless they are operating at accredited provider level). DfE should place a requirement on teaching school hubs to support local ITT delivery in specific strategic ways as required, for example through building school capacity for ITT by building an active mentor network in the local area, providing specific support for schools serving disadvantaged communities to enable them to engage with ITT, or modelling high-quality intensive practice placements for other schools undertaking this aspect of ITT for the first time.

Glenmoor Teaching School Hub is recruiting trainee teachers.

### **Free period product scheme for schools and colleges extended**

13. The Government has today extended its fully funded scheme providing tampons, pads, and menstrual cups and other environmentally friendly products until the end of the academic year.
14. The programme, which launched in January 2020, aims to make sure girls can access period products when they are needed, reducing stigma, and keeping young people attending school and college and engaged in education, when they might have otherwise missed out. [Link](#)
15. Wiltshire's position: Wiltshire is fully supportive of this scheme.

## **New measures to reduce pupil absence**

16. New expert attendance advisers with decades of first-hand experience are to begin work to reduce pupil absence. They will work with local authorities and multi-academy trusts who have been identified as having potential to benefit from the support and who want to use the expertise of the advisers to help re-engage persistently absent pupils. [Link](#)
17. Wiltshire's position: Wiltshire has had a strong focus on school attendance throughout the pandemic. Wiltshire is not in scope to receive this support.

## **Support for vulnerable young people in serious violence hotspots**

18. The targeted support, backed by £30 million, is a part of a rollout of 10 'SAFE' (Support, Attend, Fulfil, Exceed) taskforces in 'hotspot' areas, where incidents of serious youth violence are highest. These will be led by local schools, bringing headteachers together to support vulnerable young people, and avoid them becoming involved in county lines and criminal activity.
19. The investment will help focus on improving pupils' attendance, reducing the likelihood of young people being permanently excluded from school, keeping young people focused on their education. [Link](#)
20. Wiltshire's position: Wiltshire is not in scope for this support.

## **Education Secretary launches new attendance alliance**

21. The Education Secretary on 09 December, hosted the first meeting of leading experts working with children to improve school attendance. All members of the new attendance alliance pledged to engage with their members, stakeholders, and the professionals they represent to make sure they are following best practice in improving attendance within their day-to-day work. [Link](#)
22. Wiltshire's position: Wiltshire has had a strong focus on school attendance throughout the pandemic.