



# Pearson

## Policy Tracker – Keeping track of what happened in the world of education in May 2018



### Main talking points

A month which has seen the test and exam season in full swing, the government support the expansion of existing grammar schools, the Education Secretary start to tackle teacher workload and school accountability, T Level, Institute of Technology and maths centre development move up a gear, Oxbridge student intake come under scrutiny and new missions set for the Industrial Strategy

### Key headlines from the month

- SATs. This summer's schedule complete, results due 10 July
- Early Years. Education Committee launches new Inquiry
- Science practicals. Ofqual finds no evidence that changes have made things worse
- Exam entries. Ofqual publishes this summer's provisional exam entry figures
- School places. Government commits to continued diversity including expanding existing grammars
- Grammar schools. New research questions the benefits for young people
- School accountability. DfE outlines major changes ahead of wider consultation
- Teacher Workload. DfE announces new panel and remit
- National Centre for Computing Education. Government invites bids for operators
- Post 16 maths premium. Government announces pilot to assess impact
- Centres of Excellence. Government invites bids for new post-16 maths centres
- T levels. Government issues detailed response to earlier consultation
- Centre based assessment. Ofqual issues call for evidence on how AOs oversee this
- Institutes of Technology. DfE approves 16 proposals for next stage
- Apprenticeship starts. Latest (provisional) figures for up to Feb 2018 still low
- Apprenticeship funding bands. Institute for Apprenticeships begins review
- Industrial Strategy. PM sets out four new missions
- HE funding. OfS confirms 2018/19 funding allocations
- 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution. Education Committee launches new Inquiry
- National Numeracy Day. Wide range of organizations support first ever one
- Social Mobility. Government moves to reconvene the Commission

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## Reports/Publications of the month (in order of publication)

- **Strengthening Qualified Teacher status and improving career progression.** The DfE confirms its commitment to developing an early career framework as it responds to earlier consultation
- **High Needs Funding.** The NAHT analyses the issues around high needs funding listing seven factors causing concern
- **Principles for a clear and simple accountability system.** The DfE sets out its initial principles ahead of wider consultation due this autumn
- **Skill Shortages in the UK Economy.** The Edge Foundation launches the first of what's intended to be a series of bulletins bringing together data and updates about key economic sectors
- **Supporting mental health in schools and colleges.** The DfE publishes a range of case studies showing how schools and colleges tackle mental health issues
- **A New Generational Contract.** The Resolution Foundation publishes the outcomes of its report into intergenerational fairness calling for a new generational contract in areas like housing and education
- **The government's Green Paper on mental health.** The Education and Health Committees condemn the government for a lack of progress and ambition
- **School resource management.** The DfE publishes a 10-point checklist for governors to check on whether a school is managing finances and resources efficiently
- **A manifesto for the new Director of Fair Access and Participation.** The HE Policy Institute (HEPI) brings together a range of proposals to help widen access to HE
- **Post-16 levels of achievement by age 25.** The DfE examines different pathways taken by learners in England and how these panned out in terms of achievement and returns by age 25
- **Investigation into oversight of the Student Loans Company's governance.** The National Audit Office (NAO) criticizes the government for a lack of oversight in the past as further review continues
- **Student Loans.** The government responds to criticisms about interest rates and other matters raised in an earlier Treasury Committee report by saying it'll all come under the current post-18 review
- **Schools that work for everyone.** The DfE responds to its earlier (2016) consultation confirming plans for continued diversity in the school system including expanding existing grammar school places
- **Memorandum of understanding between DfE and Grammar School Heads Association.** The DfE outlines future working arrangements that include success measures for expansion of current places
- **Joint understanding between DfE and Independent Schools Council.** The DfE lists ways in which the independent sector can build up partner activity with state schools
- **Minding our future.** University UK's Student Mental Health Task Group publishes new guidance aimed at helping universities and the NHS work together on student welfare
- **Student spending habits.** The online student community, the Student website, surveys prospective uni students on their spending habits with the student loan counting as the main income source
- **Taking Training Seriously.** The Gatsby Foundation reports on off-the-job training in apprenticeships arguing that it needs to be taken more seriously in England

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- **Labour Market Outlook.** The CIPD and Adecco publish their latest assessment of the labour market showing an increase in the number of employers looking to recruit more staff
- **Finding Potential.** The University of Sheffield reports on its project looking into alternative routes into HE such as BTECs, calling for greater partnership working and teaching support to ease the transition
- **Building the UKRI Strategy.** The UK's new Research and Innovation (UKRI) sets out its initial strategy intended to help the UK become a global leader in research and innovation
- **Charging for school activities.** The DfE issues guidance on what schools and local authorities can and cannot charge for when it comes to school visits, resources and so on
- **Grammar schools.** The House of Commons Library Service publishes a briefing paper setting out the arguments for and against grammar schools with latest policy developments
- **Areas of research interest.** The DfE outlines areas of interest ranging from early years to higher ed where it's keen to commission more evidence and work
- **Keeping children safe in education.** The DfE responds to its earlier consultation confirming that revised guidance will follow in the next few months
- **Why not physics?** The Institute of Physics considers why so few girls take A' level Physics and calls for better monitoring and a single route through KS4 science to help remedy things
- **Apprenticeship funding in England.** The DfE sets out the guidelines to apply from August 2018 which will see the funding bands increased to 30 and bursary support for 16-24 apprenticeship carers
- **Apprenticeship reform programme.** The DfE reports on progress towards the 3m target and other developments in the period up to July 2017
- **Internet Safety Strategy Green Paper.** The government issues its response confirming that it will produce a White Paper later in the year with legislation soon after
- **Social cohesion.** Bristol University and LSE report on social cohesion in English secondary schools suggesting that the greater the ethnic diversity the stronger the bonds of social cohesion
- **Six models of lesson observation.** Ofsted reports on its recent seminar looking at international approaches to lesson observation as a prelude to further working up their own approach
- **Grammar school outcomes.** UCL's Institute of Education examines a range of formal and non-formal evidence and finds 14 yr olds from grammar schools no further ahead of their state school peers
- **Annual Admission report.** Oxford publishes its latest set of admissions stats showing some progress in attracting more disadvantaged and diverse students but with demands to do more
- **Government response on the Social Mobility Commission.** The government rejects proposals to change the Commission's name and powers as it puts forward its preferred candidate as Chair
- **Entries for summer 2018 exams.** Ofqual publishes provisional data on exam entries for GCSE/GCE this summer showing a big drop in AS entries and increase in EBacc subject entries
- **Ofsted's inspection of schools.** The National Audit Office (NAO) points to cuts to staffing and resources hampering Ofsted's ability to meet targets
- **How different is Oxbridge?** The HE Policy Institute (HEPI) examines student survey data to suggest that students work harder and are more satisfied but also enjoy greater resources and opportunities

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- **Implementation of T level programmes.** The DfE publishes its long awaited response to its earlier consultation on how the government intends to proceed in the immediate future
- **Outline content for first new T Levels.** The Institute for Apprenticeships invites rapid response comments on the outline content for the first three T Levels
- **How to build a 21<sup>st</sup> c school system.** The OECD's Director Education and Skills, Andreas Schleicher sets out in a massive but thoughtful tome on how to build a school system for the future
- **Centres for Excellence.** The DfE invites bids (by 10 July 2018) from centres to become sponsored providers under its programme of improving maths levels for low-achieving post-16 learners
- **National Collaborative Outreach Programme.** The Office for Students reports on the first year of the programme helping young people in underrepresented areas consider higher education
- **Free for All?** The Sutton Trust and NFER report on the Free School programme finding many performing well in areas of need but increasingly being developed by academy trusts not parents
- **Strategic Guidance to the Institute for Apprenticeships.** The government issues its sets of instructions for the Institute for Apprenticeships for 2018/19 which now include technical education

## Speeches of the month

- General Secretary Paul Whiteman's **4 May NAHT Annual Conference speech** calls on the Association to work together on such issues as school accountability and funding
- Damian Hinds' **4 May NAHT Annual Conference speech** outlines some significant changes to school accountability with the promise of major consultation to follow
- The Prime Minister's **21 May Industrial Challenge speech** confirms financial commitment to science and R/D and post-Brexit collaboration, and sets out new ambitions for each of the 4 Grand Challenges
- The Prime Minister's **21 May High Performing Teachers Reception speech** recognizes the value of teachers and promises to support them as far as possible in the future
- The Chancellor's **22 May CBI Annual Dinner speech** outlines action on full-fibre connectivity, business productivity and skills development

## Quotes of the month

- "This is an exciting time to be alive – and rich in possibility for the curious, the inventive and the determined; the children in schools studying STEM subjects in record numbers thanks to our education reforms" – the PM on why she thinks it's a good time to be alive and in education
- "Apprenticeships have had a bad press but we are turning things round" – the Skills Minister remains positive
- "These more rigorous, gold-standard GCSEs are helping to nurture the next generation of scientists, linguists and historians" – the Schools Standards Minister heralds the start of the 2018 summer exam season
- "Today the world no longer rewards you for what you know – Google knows everything – but for what you can do with what you know" the OECD's Andreas Schleicher reflects in a new book on building a modern school system

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- “Gaining entry into a grammar school may actually not be as important as many assume” – London Institute researchers point out a simple truth
- “Ofsted inspectors are the only people who should be inspecting schools – the clue is in the name” – the Education Secretary cuts through the current school accountability system
- “The group will be action orientated and produce recommendations by the end of the summer term” – A new Teacher Workload Group springs into action
- “Give me a human every time” – sixth formers respond to an HMC survey about robots as teachers
- “There remains an eerie silence when it comes to any educational justification for GCSE” – the director of innovation and learning at the Girls’ Day School Trust, Kevin Stannard, opens the annual debate about the value of GCSE exams
- “It will not define who you are, you are worth more and are better than that” – one primary school head puts SATs in perspective for his pupils
- “Visa arrangements must enable straightforward international visits and exchanges, rather than school children visiting Boulogne for the day having to apply for visas” – The British Council and teacher unions outline concerns about school trips post Brexit

## Word or phrase of the month

- ‘Robust civility.’ Respecting the views of others while staying true to our own values; a concept developed by the former correspondent now academic Timothy Garton-Ash and promoted as justifying free speech in universities, schools and elsewhere

## Steve Besley

Head of Policy @SteveBesley