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## Policy Eye



### Highlights of week ending Friday 22 November 2019

(Welcome to Policy Eye, a weekly service from Policy Watch offering a regular round up of UK education headlines and stories from over the previous 7 days.)

#### The week summed up.

Lots more on education and skills this week as party leaders set out their respective stalls to business leaders at the start of the week and the big party manifestos started to thud through later in the week. Here's a quick run through some of the main education-related headlines from those manifestos.

The Green Party was first out of the stalls with a [manifesto](#) built around five aspirations including a £1bn a year Green New Deal, changes to taxes, spending and public services and life under a 'transformed' EU. On education specifically, the party promised to increase school funding by at least £4bn a year, scrap national tests and Ofsted, end the academies programme, remove the charitable status from private schools, scrap tuition fees, raise the funding rate for 16/17 year olds and invest £2bn a year in training and skills. Quite a package, to be funded through tax reforms and government borrowing.

Next up were the Lib-Dems with a [90+ page manifesto](#) crafted around eight sub plans for creating among other things a Green Society, a Fair Society, +even a Better World, all under the strapline 'Stop Brexit: Build a Better Future.' The education and skills plans come in the first two chapters and focus on schools and early years, apprenticeship levy reform, National Colleges, Skills Wallets and increased R/D funding.

Much of this, including plans to scrap national tests, performance tables the EBacc and Ofsted, had been pre-announced while others like an independent body of experts to oversee curriculum change have been carried through from previous manifestos. The promises for free childcare, to employ an extra 20,000 teachers, raise the starting salary of teachers, invest an 'Augar' billion in FE, set up a review of HE finance and introduce a wellbeing budget are among the standouts from this manifesto.

Then came the Labour Party, with a [100+ page document](#), plus an accompanying £83bn [costing paper](#), providing, according to Jeremy Corbyn, 'a manifesto of hope.' That hope was to come among other things from increased spending on the NHS, free broadband, new social homes, funded public transport, 'radical' policies on the environment and a significant shift in tax and spending generally

For education, earlier pledges such as those on reining back in free and academy schools, bringing back the schools 'Challenge' model, supporting young people's mental health, re-introducing Education Maintenance Allowances, offering free L3 and 4/5 training, scrapping tuition fees and introducing a system of post-qualification admissions, still stand. Others remain to be worked up. These include the 'new body' to replace Ofsted, the system to replace SATs and the new funding formula for HE while the new Social Justice Commission has been left with the task of resolving the private schools question.



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## Top headlines this week

- 'Labour pledges 80k 'climate apprenticeships' per year.' ([Monday](#))
- 'Emojis now a serious area of academic study.' ([Tuesday](#))
- 'Lib-Dems pledge £10bn schools spending rise and 20,000 extra teachers.' ([Wednesday](#))
- 'Labour promises to raise the FE funding rate and reform the apprenticeship levy.' ([Thursday](#))
- 'England opts out of new PISA creativity test.' ([Friday](#))

## People/organisations in the news this week

### General Policy

- [Labour Party 2019 election manifesto](#). The Labour Party set out its proposals for government in a 100+ page manifesto with a lot on housing, a green revolution, workers' rights and public sector investment including free university and lifelong learning in education along with changes to the school system including ending high stakes testing, Ofsted and tax 'loopholes' for private schools
- [Manifesto costings](#). The Labour Party published an accompanying document setting out how it intended to pay for its manifesto proposals, pointing to additional higher rate income tax, increased corporation tax and a number of other tax measures
- [Lib-Dem 2019 election manifesto](#). The Lib-Dems published their 2019 election manifesto with plans for a fairer and a greener society and with a large chunk dedicated to education and skills proposing improved investment in schools and colleges, more teachers and reform of much of the current accountability system for schools
- [Green Party manifesto](#). The Green Party launched its 2019 election manifesto pledging a £1bn pa Green New Deal, a 'revolution' in tax and spend and savings and for in education, the scrapping of Ofsted, national testing and tuition fees with an extra £4bn a year for schools and writing off accrued student debt
- [Johnson CBI speech](#). Boris Johnson addressed the CBI Annual Conference where he re-iterated claims that a future Conservative government would focus on three areas to help unlock potential: better infrastructure, better education, and technology
- [Corbyn CBI speech](#). Jeremy Corbyn also addressed the CBI Annual Conference claiming to support business and promising also reform of the apprenticeship levy, a new breed of climate apprentices and a higher skilled workforce
- [CBI manifesto](#). The CBI launched its business vision for the next government outlining four steps intended to increase prosperity for all with a number of proposals on education and skills, including reviewing the purpose of GCSEs, reforming the apprenticeship levy and ensuring funding for F and HE
- [Adult education](#). The Centenary Commission, which has been examining the progress of adult ed a century after an earlier landmark report, published a new report presenting adult ed as 'a national necessity' and calling among other things for a dedicated minister to champion a new national strategy, delivered through a system of Adult Learning Partnerships
- [Never had it so bad?](#) The Sutton Trust published the results of its latest youth survey undertaken by YouGov and indicating that almost half of the British public think that today's young people will have it harder than their parents with over half seeing a good education as a key to improvement



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## HE

- [Take 5](#). The HE Policy Institute (HEPI) reflected on five issues that remain unanswered so far in this election but which could determine much of the future of HE including: undergraduate fees and funding, participation and access, R/D, internationalism and the student vote
- [I, Vice Chancellor](#). Wonkhe and Minerva explored the issue of higher ed leadership and in particular the changing and demanding role of the V.C. through a number of in-depth interviews, highlighting the personal as well as professional qualities needed in what appears to be now a complex role
- [Student Support data](#). The Student Loans Co and DfE published its latest data on student funding support paid out in England in 2018/19 showing that the amount awarded across all modes of study had risen to an average £12,710 per student
- [View from here](#). Universities UK and the University and Colleges Employers Association published a joint open letter to university staff, outlining action taken to try and avert a proposed strike on pay and pensions due to start next week

## FE/Skills

- [Climate apprenticeships](#). Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn promised that in its first term in office a Labour government would launch a new scheme of climate apprenticeships, funded by diverting 25% of the current levy and with the aim of developing 80,000 people a year skilled in aspects of the green economy
- [T levels and Technical Education](#). The Collab Group of Colleges published an election statement on technical education calling for both T levels and applied general qualifications like BTECs to be properly funded and for any transition to T levels to take into account employer and learner need
- [AoC Conference](#). The Association of Colleges hosted its latest annual big gathering for the FE and skills sector with important keynotes on funding, strategy, leadership, mental health and sector diversity
- [Six of the best](#). Sir Frank McLoughlin and colleagues from the Oxford Saïd Business School reported on their work on College leadership, listing six features such as adaptive leadership and balance and creative tension, that go into making a great FE leader

## Schools

- [Headteachers' manifesto](#). The Headteachers' Roundtable, a headteachers think tank group, published its election manifesto, listing five asks covering teacher recruitment and retention, long-term financial investment, support for high needs, reform of the accountability system and the need for increased trust
- [Chartered College manifesto](#). The Chartered College of Teaching launched its election manifesto highlighting four goals including improved teacher CPD and job satisfaction, clearer career paths and greater use of research evidence
- [Teach First manifesto](#). Teach First added its election manifesto calling for increased five-year funding plans, starting salaries for teachers of £30,000 and fair access to schools among other things
- [Teachers' pay](#). Teacher professional associations got together to submit a joint letter to the School Teachers Review Body setting out their collective view that 'significant, above inflation pay increases' were needed for all teachers and leaders not just some



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- **Exam data 2019.** Ofqual published data on access arrangements and late entries for 2018/19 GCSE and A' level exams showing a drop in the number of late entries and increase in approved access arrangements
- **PISA Update.** The OECD published a brief update on its 2018 PISA (Programme in International Student Assessment) test results due to be published on December 3
- **Financial literacy.** The London Institute of Banking and Finance published its latest annual Index report into how young people (15-18 year olds) learn about money suggesting that despite financial education being on the curriculum, the majority of young people still claim to get most of their financial knowledge out of school, from parents or online
- **Reaching out.** The Children's Society reported on where young people (10 -17 year olds) turn for help when they have worries or anxieties with most reporting that it's generally to members of the family

## Tweets(s) of the week.

- "A Shanghai classroom, all classrooms have seating and a door at the back so teachers can drop in and observe lessons without disturbing the class" - [@MatrixMathsHub](#)
- "A poll of 16-24 year olds found that 28% had never heard of Stalin, almost half had never heard of Lenin and 70% had never heard of Mao Tse Tung" - [@Telegraph](#)
- "For most of those in business today, jobs will be different in 10 years' time. We can't afford to ever stop learning says [@cbicarolyn](#), talking about the importance of reskilling #CBI2019" - [@CBItweets](#)
- "Office workers spend 75% of their waking hours sitting" - [@EdExec](#)
- "Secret Santa at work causes millennials too much 'anxiety,' psychologist says" - [@Independent](#)

## Other stories of the week

- The new age norms? There's been much interest this week in a report from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on different age norms. One of the suggestions is that given many people are now working beyond 65 let alone living longer, the official retirement age of 65 is largely out of date. Is 70 the new 65 it asks, with perhaps 48 the new benchmark for middle age and 30 the age when you stop being young...if you ever do. A link to the report is [here](#)
- Ban Secret Santas? It's often one of the most difficult things...going round a school, an office or wherever with an envelope and asking for contributions for a colleague who is leaving, had a baby, has a birthday or perhaps a personal tragedy. The issue crops up sharply around this time of year with collections for office parties, secret santas and so on. According to a survey by Jobsite, employees can spend £99 a year on gifts for fellow workers and some people are calling for a halt to traditions like secret santas accordingly. A link to the story and survey from Jobsite can be found [here](#)

## Quote(s) of the week

- "You're going to have the best educated workforce you've ever hoped for" – Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn tells the CBI Annual Conference that they have much to gain from a Labour government



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- “We will increase teacher numbers by 20,000 and let them get on with their jobs, instead of worrying about budgeting for the basics” – the Lib-Dems introduce their education plans in their election manifesto
- “Economic worry is the new normal for millions of people in this country” – the RSA’s Matthew Taylor makes economic insecurity the theme of his Annual RSA Lecture
- “Higher education leadership is having a difficult moment” – Wonkhe and Minerva reflect on the demands, both personal and professional, placed on university Vice Chancellors these days
- “Adult education must not be regarded as a luxury for a few exceptional persons here and there”- the 1919 Final Report on Adult Education quoted at the start of a new report on adult ed released 100 years on
- “ We must enable young people to understand how they can be manipulated, not by the rhetoric of speeches or written passages – which they study already in their English language lessons – but by the medium of algorithms and automated scripts” – the president of the Girls Schools Association highlights the challenges schools face in encouraging young people to be more discerning in their use of the internet

## Number(s) of the week

- 47%. The number of people surveyed who believe that today’s young people will be worse off than their parents, according to a survey conducted by YouGov for the Sutton Trust
- 78%. How many people reckon workers face more uncertainty and anxiety about their jobs than they did a generation ago, according to research conducted by Populus for the RSA
- £17.1bn. The figure for student funding support for students in England in 2018/19, according to latest figures from the Student loans Company
- 37%. The number of new professorships in digitalisation being recruited by technical universities in Germany according to an article in the Times Higher
- 18. The number of recommendations in the Centenary Commission’s report on adult learning
- £10.5bn. The additional funding for schools being promised by Labour over the next three years, according to the Labour Party manifesto
- 20,000. How many more teachers in England the Lib-Dems are promising to employ, according to the Lib-Dem 2019 election manifesto
- 86%. How many young people claim to get most of their knowledge about money either from their parents or online, according to the latest Young Persons’ Money Index survey report
- 70. The new age 65, according to a report from the Office for National Statistics (ONS)
- £99. How much on average workers fork out each year on gifts for fellow workers for birthdays, anniversaries, Secret Santas and so on, according to a survey by Jobsite

## What to look out for next week

- Launch of the 2019 CBI/Pearson Employer Skills Survey. The launch will include a summary of the headline messages from the report and a panel commentary. Places are available to attend this



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important launch which takes place next Friday morning (November 29) starting at 10.00 at Pearson Strand offices in London, and completing at 12.00. A link to the event and registration is [here](#)