



Pearson

Policy Watch

Your guide to what's happening in the world of education



The week in a nutshell

Education has featured prominently in this week's parliamentary business. The new **ministerial team at DfE** faced MPs at **education questions** for the first time. Topics covered included the level 3 review, the National Tutoring Programme and when the response to Augar will be published. This was followed by the **Secretary of State's** appearance in front of the **Education Committee**. This was a wide-ranging session covering the length of the school day (DfE published findings on this), the cost of the National Insurance rise on schools, and delays to the SEND review. Although it is still early days of Nadhim Zahawi's tenure, he revealed some of his priorities - he is not sold on longer school day for all and wants all mainstream schools to be SEN schools. And at the end of the week, Mr Zahawi set out plans to put **climate change at the heart of education**.

Robert Halfon introduced a Bill aimed at redefining schools as 'essential infrastructure' and introducing a "triple lock" of protections to ensure that any possible school closures would have to be approved by Parliament. Teaching unions believe the Bill "misses the point".

We've also seen a flurry of consultations with **Ofqual** consulting accessible assessments and **QAA** on subject benchmark statements.

As well as including all previous editions of Policy Watch, our **Policy Hub** includes our latest **policy blogs**.

Top stories

Nadhim Zawahi gives evidence to **Education Select Committee**

- Robert Halfon and committee questioned Education Secretary Nadhim Zahawi on a variety of issues related to his new role. Permanent Secretary, Susan Acland-Hood also gave evidence.
- The session focused on SEND issues, Covid recovery and levelling up-related work (e.g. attainment gaps).
- BTECs & T Levels, and Home Education were also covered in a wide ranging session.

Review of **time in school** and **16 to 19 settings**

- DfE has published its findings into time spent in school and 16 to 19 settings and the impact this could have on helping children and young people to catch up from the effects of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.
- The review considered: the scale and nature of lost learning, the current use of time in schools and 16 to 19 settings in England, international comparisons, impact and deliverability.
- **Impetus** also published its findings into the [impact of the length of the school day on attainment](#).

IFATE launches **employer-centred strategic plan**

- The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education launched its new 'Employer Centred – Future Facing' strategic plan, setting out key priorities for support a high-skilled and adaptable workforce to 2024.

- Priorities are: delivering for employers; building a more integrated skills system; Securing continuous improvement.

Wales: New “national steward” to fund, regulate and support all post-16 education

- The Welsh Government has set out its vision to radically reform post-16 education, for the first time ever enshrining in law nine national strategic purposes for the post-compulsory education system.
- To ensure learners have the support of a coherent sector, focused on widening access and increasing opportunities, the Welsh Government will establish a new Commission for Tertiary Education and Research.
- As a result all elements of post-16 education – including colleges, universities, adult education, apprenticeships and sixth forms – will come under the one body.

ESFA: Guidance on Higher Technical Qualifications

- The guidance covers a national [opt-in approval scheme](#) for new and existing qualifications, which will recognise prestigious HTQs that provide the skills that employers want. Awarding bodies can submit qualifications to be approved against the Institute’s occupational standards at levels 4-5.
- The first approvals cycle for Digital qualifications concluded in Summer 2021, with the first approved qualifications available to be taught from September 2022. Cycle 2 will launch on 5 July 2021 for submissions of qualifications for Health & Science and Construction, with a further opportunity for Digital qualifications.

Pearson news

Global Learner Survey & HE The Pearson Global Learner Survey has found that 82% of UK university students believe that universities will fundamentally change because of the pandemic. Read about more findings [here](#).

Pearson tweets of the week



Other news

Parliamentary

- Climate change to be put at heart of education
- Education Oral Questions (1 November 2021)
- Education Committee: Accountability hearings (Secretary of State)
- Attendance in education and early years settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic
- DfE: Pupils' progress in the 2020 to 2021 academic year
- DfE: Education Secretary puts climate change at the heart of education
- DfE: Review of time in school and 16 to 19 settings
- DfE: Children's Minister address to National Centre for Family Hubs
- Elective home education: Education Committee publishes Government response to report
- Budget Resolutions (led by Education Secretary) (2 November 2021)
- Ten Minute Rule: Schools and Educational Settings (Essential Infrastructure and Opening During Emergencies) (Robert Halfon, Con, Harlow)
- Westminster Hall debate: Tackling the Digital Divide (Stephen Timms, Lab, East Ham)
- Education Committee: Prison education

Regulatory and funding bodies

- QAA: Consultation on 13 Subject Benchmark Statements
- Ofsted launches consultation for children's homes and residential holiday schemes
- Ofqual: Consultation on designing and developing accessible assessments
- IfATE: 2021 stakeholder survey now open
- IfATE: Institute leading way with green skills in drive to net zero
- ESFA Update: 3 November 2021
- ESFA: Higher technical qualifications (HTQs) guidance
- OfS: 'Left-behind' areas missing out on university access and graduate jobs

Schools

- Impetus: Examining the impact of the length of the school day on attainment
- DfE: CO2 monitors: cumulative delivery statistics
- ONS: Key stage 4 performance 2021

Further Education & Skills

- ONS: A level and other 16 to 18 results: 2021 (provisional)
- DfE: Review of time in school and 16 to 19 settings
- DfE: Opportunity area grant: S31 determination letter for 2021 to 2022, October 2021

Higher Education

- QAA: New consultation on 13 Subject Benchmark Statements

Scotland

- [Scottish Government: Assessment of wellbeing - draft statutory guidance: consultation](#)

Wales

- [Welsh Government: Tertiary Education & Research \(Wales\) Bill](#)
- [Welsh Government: All new schools and colleges in Wales to be net zero carbon](#)
- [Written Statement: Introduction of Tertiary Education and Research \(Wales\) Bill](#)
- [Wales to have new “national steward” to fund, regulate and support all post-16 education](#)

Northern Ireland

- [Department of Education: Launch of £5million ‘Healthy Happy Minds’ pilot for primary schools](#)

Consultation Watch

New consultations

- [Reforming how local authority school improvement functions are funded](#) Closes: 26 November 2021
- [QAA: Consultation on 13 Subject Benchmark Statements](#) Closes: 09 December 2021
- [Ofqual: Consultation on designing and developing accessible assessments](#) Closes: 24 January 2022
- [Scotland: Assessment of wellbeing - draft statutory guidance: consultation](#) Closes: 04 February 2022

Ongoing consultations

- [Education reform consultation on behalf of Professor Ken Muir, University of the West of Scotland and Independent Advisor to the Scottish Government](#) Closes: 26 November 2021

What’s happening in Parliament next week

Tuesday 09 November

House of Commons

- [Backbench Business: Provision of school-based counselling services](#)

House of Lords

- [Legislation: Professional Qualifications Bill – report stage](#)

Wednesday 10 November

House of Lords

- [Legislation: Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill – committee stage](#)
- [Legislation: Education \(Assemblies\) Bill – committee stage](#)

The Commons rises for recess at the end of the day on Tuesday 9 November. The Lords rises for recess at the end of the day on Wednesday 10 November. Both will return on Monday 15 November.

Policy Watch

Week ending Friday 05 November 2021