



Pearson

Policy Watch

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



The week in a nutshell

Ministers and DfE have had a busy week making announcements, and publishing research, statistics, and consultations. The biggest news was the changes to the **Schools Bill**, currently being scrutinised by Peers in the House of Lords. Following opposition to the plans to give Whitehall greater powers over academies, large sections of the Bill will be removed. In addition, DfE is reviewing how it works with academy trusts. In more welcome news for ministers, respondents to the consultation on another **Schools White Paper policy**, bringing schools with two consecutive judgements below 'Good' in scope for intervention, agreed that such schools should be better supported to improve.

The latest stage of the review of level 3 qualifications was published, with consultations from **Ofqual and IfATE**. These relate to the so-called alternative qualifications (such as BTEC and applied general qualifications). Respondents have until the 10 of August to provide their views. Related to this, the **Association of Colleges** has warned against defunding qualifications too quickly as it could lead to a rise in NEETs.

UCAS released research, supported by Pearson, recommending earlier support for disabled students entering higher education.

Pearson published its analysis of over educators' views in **School Report: Schools Today, Schools Tomorrow**. The report sets out the current challenges, recommendations, and hopes of teachers in England. For more, see below.

Top stories

Government removes large chunks of Schools Bill following opposition from Peers

- The Minister for the School System, **Baroness Barran**, has [written to Peers](#) to inform them that the Government will be removing large parts of the Schools Bill. This follows opposition from Peers, including Conservative former ministers.
- The Government will be removing Clauses 1-4 and Schedule 1, which establish Academy Trust Standards, from the Bill. The Government will be supporting amendments already tabled to remove Clauses 5-18 and Schedule 2, relating to Academy Trust Termination and Intervention powers. Revised proposals will be brought forward when the Bill reaches House of Commons committee stage.
- The **Department for Education** also [launched a regulatory review](#) of how it works with academy trusts. The review will look at the standards trusts are held to, and the thresholds at which the government uses its powers to intervene in cases of underperformance.

DfE: Supporting schools that are not making necessary improvements

- The **Department for Education** (DfE) has [published its response](#) to feedback from its recent consultation on bringing schools with two consecutive judgements below 'Good' in scope for intervention. This move was [announced as part of the Schools White Paper](#).
- **Main findings** from the consultation included:
 - Most parties are supportive of the idea that schools not making necessary improvements should be better supported to do so.
 - A great number of respondents do not think a school with two Ofsted judgements of less than Good but that is on an upward trajectory and making improvements should be in scope, especially if there is confidence that the right leadership is in place.
- In a [written ministerial statement](#) published alongside the consultation response, **Schools Minister Robin Walker** has confirmed that they will be amending the definition of a school which is 'coasting', via statutory instrument.

UCAS report: Students With Disabilities Need Earlier Support To Enter Higher Education

- Following research supported by Pearson and the Disabled Students Commission, UCAS is calling for the journey of disabled students to higher education and apprenticeships to be made easier and earlier through the extension of Adjustment Passports, and earlier engagement with university and student support, including the Disabled Students' Allowance.
- The recommendations come in the UCAS report '[Next Steps: What is the experience of disabled students in education?](#)'. The report includes a detailed analysis of the record number of applications (83,220) made by people with disabilities between September 2020 and the start of the academic year in Autumn 2021 and the results of a survey of almost 5,000 UK people who applied to UCAS by its January 2022 deadline and shared details of a disability on their application.

Skills Minister writes to providers on apprenticeship standards achievement rates

- Skills Minister **Alex Burghart** has [written to all apprenticeship providers](#), outlining his vision for the next steps on apprenticeship quality.
- This includes setting an ambition for apprenticeship standards achievements to reach 67% by 2025. It also explains plans to launch a new exit feedback tool for non-completion apprentices, to give a richer understanding of the reasons for non-completion.

New consultations: Post 16 qualifications that sit alongside A and T levels (Ofqual & IfATE)

- **Ofqual** has [launched a consultation](#) on its proposed conditions, requirements and statutory guidance for regulation alternative academic qualifications and alternative technical qualifications, operating in conjunction with the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) and the DfE.
- These qualifications will be part of the future level 3 landscape, as part of the Department's 'Review of post-16 qualifications at level 3 in England'.
- **IfATE** is [also currently consulting on proposals](#) for its approval of level 3 alternative technical qualifications. Both consultations close on 10 August.

DfE: Evaluation of the assistive technology training pilot

- The **Department for Education** has [published a research report](#) summarising an evaluation of an assistive technology (AT) training pilot, run by the Department from January to March 2022.
- Overall, the Assistive Technology Training Pilot has been well received. The majority (87%) of AT Champions were very or quite satisfied with the training and support they received, and the expertise and approach of the trainers was praised (80% very satisfied).

Sport & music announcement

- The Government has [published a new national plan for music education](#). Schools will be asked to offer at least one hour of music curriculum a week as part of the launch of the new plan and a **further £79m will also be made available every year until 2025** for the 'Music Hubs' programme.
- **The PE and Sport Premium, will deliver £320m to** schools in 2022/23 as well as £11m to support the continuation of the School Games programme.

Pearson news

Pearson School Report As part of supporting every learning journey and innovating for the future, we've just launched our first Pearson School Report. It reveals what more than 6,500 teachers in England and sector experts think about education in 2022, as well as their challenges and hopes for the future.

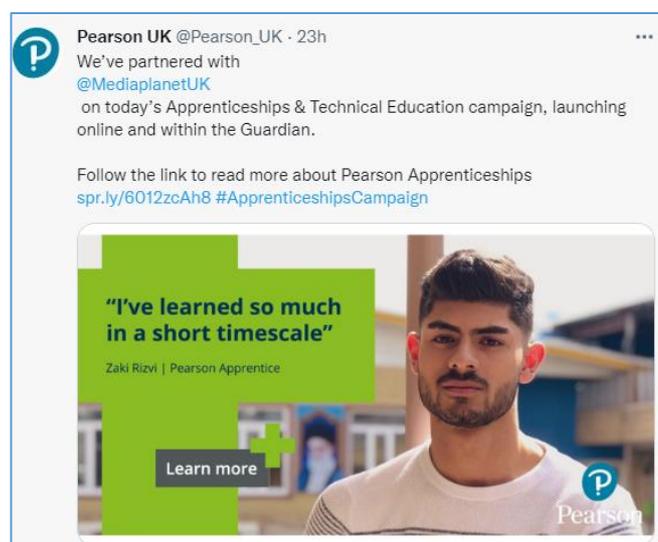
Whether it's educators taking steps to be more sustainable or creating curricula with wellbeing and life skills at their core, the findings offer plenty to reflect on and discuss when it comes to schools today and tomorrow.

[See what teachers and school leaders had to say.](#)

You can also get in touch with your comments and experiences by tagging us on social media with the hashtag #PearsonSchoolReport.



Pearson tweets of the week



Other news

Parliamentary

- Westminster Hall: School Week
- Westminster Hall: NDAs: Universities
- Westminster Hall: Relationship and Sex Education Materials in Schools
- WMS: UK Covid-19 Inquiry
- Lords: Schools Bill [HL] – committee (day 6)
- Lords: Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill – second reading
- Lords: Schools: Citizenship Education

Regulatory and funding bodies

- Ofsted: Further education and skills inspections and outcomes as at 28 February 2022
- Ofsted: Amanda Spielman at the AELP National Conference 2022
- ESFA Update: 29 June 2022
- Ofqual: Regulating academic and technical qualifications at level 3 (consultation outcome)
- Ofqual: Draft Alternative Academic and Alternative Technical Qualifications Qualification Level Conditions, Requirements and Guidance (regulation)
- Ofqual: Dr Jo Saxton at AELP national conference 2022
- Ofqual: New tender for National Reference Test
- OfS: Financial sustainability of higher education providers in England - 2022 update
- OfS: Annual report and accounts 2021-22
- IfATE: Quality assurance strengthened for Degree Apprenticeships in England
- IfATE: Have your say on plans to transform technical qualifications
- QAA: Quality assurance method for integrated Higher and Degree-level Apprenticeships launches (England)

Schools

- Education Secretary addresses LGA annual conference
- Review launches to future proof role of academy trusts
- DfE: Supporting schools that are not making necessary improvements (consultation outcome)
- School and college panel: omnibus surveys for 2021 to 2022 (research)
- DfE: Capital advisers programme: pilot evaluation (research)
- Local authority school places scorecards 2021
- Assistive technology training pilot evaluation (research)
- Sport and music education championed with new investment
- The power of music to change lives: a national plan for music education (policy paper)

Further Education & Skills

- Apprenticeship standards achievement rate ambition (correspondence)
- Post-16 education outcomes by ethnicity in England (research)
- Participation in education, training and employment: 2021
- Top apprenticeship employers for 2022 announced
- AoC: Hasty defunding of technical qualifications could lead to rise in NEETs

Policy Watch

Week ending Friday 1 July 2022

Higher Education

- OfS: Universities have managed finances well during pandemic but risks remain
- Migration Watch UK: Student immigration to the UK
- Advance HE: Response to the Universities Minister on the Race Equality Charter
- University of Cambridge: Faculty of Education statement on Initial Teacher Education
- UCAS: Students with disabilities need earlier support to enter higher education

Wales

- New framework for school improvement to focus on learner progression
- Direction relating to developing and maintaining a shared understanding of progression
- Bevan Foundation: high standards and aspirations for all
- Oral Statement: Evaluating and Improving Education and Learning in Wales
- Written Statement: Exploring Reform of the School Year
- Exploring reform of the school year Beaufort Research report: attitudes towards school year reform in Wales

Consultation Watch

New consultations

- Ofqual: Regulating alternative academic and alternative technical qualifications at level 3 Closes: 10 August
- Institute for Apprenticeships and Higher Education: Post-16 consultation Closes: 10 August 2022

Closing consultations

- Changes to the MCA Code of Practice and implementation of the LPS Closes: 7 July 2022

Ongoing consultations

- Higher Education Statistics Agency: de-designation Closes: 10 July 2022
- Scotland: Home education guidance Closes 13 July 2022
- Scottish Government: Education - National Improvement Framework - A consultation on enhanced data collection for improvement Closes: 18 July 2022
- Appropriate body reform and induction assessment Closes: 21 July 2022
- Access to schools for education and training providers Closes: 25 July 2022
- School registers and national threshold for legal intervention Closes: 29 July 2022
- Reviews of education, health and care (EHC) plans: proposed timescales Closes: 12 August 2022
- Implementing the direct national funding formula Closes: 9 September 2022
- Ofsted/CQC: A new approach to area SEND inspections Closes: 11 September 2022
- Consultation on functions currently delivered by the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI) Closes: 30 September 2022

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What's happening in Parliament next week

Monday 4 July

House of Commons

- Education Oral Questions
- Adjournment Debate: Teaching of medieval history in schools (Alexander Stafford, Con, Rother Valley)

Tuesday 5 July

Commons Committees

- Education Committee: Accountability hearing (with Children's Commissioner Dame Rachel de Souza)

All-Party Parliamentary Groups

- APPG on Digital Skills (with Digital Minister Chris Philp)
- APPG for the East of England. Topic: Employment and skills challenges for the region
- APPG on Youth Employment. AGM and election.

Wednesday 6 July

House of Commons

- Estimates Day debate relating to the Department for Education

Commons Committees

- Liaison Committee: The work of the Prime Minister

All-Party Parliamentary Groups

- APPG on Parental Participation in Education
- APPG on Social Media. Topic: Protecting children online (with Minister Philp)