



# Pearson

## Policy Watch

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



### The week in a nutshell

This week has seen a wealth of **statistics** published by the **Department for Education**, covering all parts of the education journey, including: the number of pupils in English schools hitting 9 million; a rise in those pupils receiving free school meals; 4,400 more full time teachers are in post; advanced apprenticeship accounting for 44% of starts in the first half of the academic year; a widening of the gap between the employment rates of working-age graduates and postgraduates and non-graduates (first time since 2013).

Two big announcements were saved until the end of the week with plans for a new system to bring **international teachers to England** and up to **75 new free schools** being built in England (including sixth forms and alternative provision). The latter formed part of this year's education White Paper.

The big ministerial speech this week was provided by **Michelle Donelan**, HE and FE minister, at the HEPI annual conference. As part of it she announced the appointment of **Professor Edward Peck**, the vice-chancellor of Nottingham Trent, as the first Student Support Champion. The role is to provide sectoral leadership to share best practice and promote new initiatives for how to ensure students remain supported and engaged with their course.

### Top stories

#### DfE: New system to bring international teachers to England

- The Department for Education has [launched the plans](#) for their new approach to awarding qualified teacher status (QTS) to people from overseas who want to teach in England from 2023. The plans come at a time when the country's teaching profession is facing a shortage.
- International teachers wanting to teach in English schools will need to meet a new set of consistent standards, rather than their eligibility being dictated by the country they qualified in.
- Teachers arriving in England from overseas who are early on in their career will get the same induction period as teachers in England, such as reduced timetables and access to a mentor and development.

#### Department for Education announce creation of [up to 75 new free schools](#)

- This number includes sixth forms, specialist and alternative provision (AP) settings to be set up in England.
- The Government's 55 Education Investment Areas, established in the Levelling Up White paper, will be prioritised for **up to 15 new mainstream free schools**. This will include a targeted number of high-quality, standalone sixth forms – also announced in the white paper earlier this year.
- The first of the new wave of up to 60 special and AP free schools will begin opening from September 2025, creating approximately 4,500 new places. The new special and AP free school waves build upon the 60 schools already in the pipeline, from waves launched in 2018, which launched 37 special and 2 AP free schools.

## Department for Education publishes latest graduate labour market statistics for 2021

- This data provides information on graduate, postgraduate and non-graduate employment rates and earnings for England. Headline findings are:
  - Working-age graduates and postgraduates continue to have higher employment rates than non-graduates. The employment rates for working-age graduates and postgraduates increased in 2021 while it fell for working-age non-graduates, widening the gap between these groups.
  - In 2021, the employment rate for working-age graduates (those aged 16 – 64) was 86.7%, an increase of 0.4 percentage points on 2020 (86.3%). For working-age postgraduates the employment rate was 88.2%, an increase of 0.1 percentage points on 2020 (88.1%). For working-age non-graduates the employment rate was 70.2%, a decrease of 0.9 percentage points on 2020 (71.1%).
  - In 2021, 65.2% of working-age graduates were in high-skilled employment, compared to 77.4% of postgraduates and 24.3% of non-graduates.
  - In 2021, the median salary for working-age graduates was £36,000. This was £10,000 more than working-age non-graduates (£26,000) but £6,000 less than working-age postgraduates (£42,000).

## DfE publish findings into Future opportunities for education technology in England

- In December 2021, DfE appointed Ecorys UK to undertake a research project: Future opportunities for education technology in England. The findings of that research have now been published.
- A number of central themes emerge from the research, which form the basis of potential areas of focus to DfE for future policy action in the EdTech space. They include: a focus on inclusion, a whole system approach, investment in digital leadership, building digital skills and confidence, and the importance of winning hearts and minds.

## Latest report from Lifelong Education Commission (LEC) published: Microcredentials in modular learning

- The Commission, chaired by former universities minister Chris Skidmore, has published a report exploring the emerging role of microcredentials in modular learning and how a common understanding can enable alternative pathways to higher level qualifications in the UK.
- Key recommendations of the report include: DfE should undertake a mapping exercise of all micro-learning courses in the UK to gather evidence and inform future policy making and funding for this form of learning; consider a regional pilot to test ideas; the creation of a common definition of the term; better promotion to foster understanding amongst careers advisers and learners; and tax incentives for employers to invest in this form of workforce training.

## EPI/loE: 'Stuck' schools in a cycle of underperformance - report

- The Education Policy Institute (EPI) and UCL Institute of Education (IoE), funded by the Nuffield Foundation, have published a new report revealing schools that have received a series of below good Ofsted grades often end up in a cycle of challenging circumstances and limited improvement, even when placed in academy trusts.
- The report outlines the challenging circumstances faced by stuck schools and makes a number of recommendations to the DfE and Ofsted, including: consideration of whether there is adequate funding to help such schools and ensure that inspectors are properly trained to understand the significance and implications of schools working in very challenging circumstances.

## Pearson news

**Taking action on belonging and inclusion** We are partnering with Wonkhe to deliver an online event on the 15th June to hear the latest on our belonging and inclusion research and to gain practical insight from across the sector. [Register here](#)



## Pearson tweets of the week



## Other news

### Parliamentary

- Commons: Children's Education Recovery and Childcare Costs
- Commons: Online Safety Bill (Fifth sitting) – committee stage
- Commons: Online Safety Bill (Sixth sitting) – committee stage
- Westminster Hall: Ofsted: Accountability
- Commons: Online Safety Bill (Seventh sitting) – committee stage
- Lords: Schools Bill [HL] – committee (1<sup>st</sup> day)
- Education Committee: Committee to question Universities Minister on discrimination in universities, reforms to the student loan system and several other key issues
- Women and Equalities Committee: MPs to scrutinise sexism in educational settings and music industry as Committee broadens work on Violence Against Women and Girls

### Regulatory and funding bodies

- Ofqual: Awarding organisations: scope of recognition (updated for June)
- ESFA Update: 8 June 2022
- ESFA: Adult education budget (AEB): funding rates and formula 2022 to 2023
- ESFA: No recourse to public funds: free school meals
- ESFA: Teaching Vacancies helps save time and money on recruitment (Case study)
- ESFA: DfE's benchmarking tools for schools improve financial management (Case study)
- ESFA: Schools save money with DfE IT frameworks (Case study)

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- ESFA: Schools save time and money with DfE cleaning frameworks
- ESFA: Schools able to buy more with the DfE furniture framework
- ESFA: The school resource management advisers (SRMA) programme
- QAA: New Characteristics Statement for micro-credentials now available
- OfS announces £1.4 billion funding for higher education
- OfS responds to ONS statistics on student deaths by suicide
- UKRI budget allocation confirmed

## Schools

- England opens doors to world's best teachers
- Thousands more school and sixth form places to be created
- Collection: International qualified teacher status
- Schools, pupils and their characteristics (Statistics)
- School workforce in England: November 2021 (Statistics)
- Continuity grant for social workers in schools and designated safeguarding lead supervision
- Levelling up push sees more than 5,000 public buildings plugged into high-speed broadband
- Children's sector calls on government to adopt essential amendments to the Online Safety Bill so that it delivers for kids
- EPI: 'Stuck' schools: Can below good Ofsted inspections prevent sustainable improvement?
- NAHT: Education and Union leaders representing a million teachers and education specialists demand action on free school meals

## Further Education & Skills

- Qualification achievement rates 2021 to 2022
- Ofqual: Vocational and other qualifications quarterly: January to March 2022
- ESFA: Apprenticeships and traineeships: June 2022
- Future opportunities for education technology in England (Research)
- ONS: Young people in the labour market by socio-economic background, UK: 2014 to 2021
- Lifelong Education Commission: The Role of Microcredentials in Modular Learning
- HMIP: A joint inspection of education, training and employment services in youth offending teams in England and Wales

## Higher Education

- Higher and Further Education Minister speaks to HEPI annual conference
- Graduate labour market statistics, 2021
- Academic progression programme pilot: expression of interest
- HESA: Higher Education Provider Data: Business and Community Interaction
- ONS: Estimating suicide among higher education students, England and Wales: Experimental Statistics: 2017 to 2020

## Scotland

- Scotland leads UK on university students from deprived areas

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## Wales

- Written Statement: New Chair of the Youth Work Strategy Implementation Board
- Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Priority Subject incentive scheme 2022 (No. WG22-23)
- A vision for Higher Education
- Oral Statement: Supporting an Anti-Racist education system

## Consultation Watch

### New consultations

- Implementing the direct national funding formula Closes: 9 September 2022

### Ongoing consultations

- Children, Young People and Education Committee (Senedd Cymru): Pupil absence Closes: 20 June 2022
- Scotland: Children's Care and Justice Bill - consultation on policy proposals Closes: 22 June 2022
- Changes to the MCA Code of Practice and implementation of the LPS Closes: 7 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
- Scottish Government: School uniforms in Scotland Closes: 14 October 2022

## What's happening in Parliament next week

### Monday 13 June

#### *House of Commons*

- Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill – remaining stages

#### *House of Lords*

- Schools Bill – committee (2<sup>nd</sup> day)

#### *Lords Committees*

- Children and Families Act 2014 Committee

#### *All-Party Parliamentary Groups*

- APPG on Special Education Needs and Disabilities (AGM)

### Tuesday 14 June

#### *Public Bill Committees*

- Online Safety Bill

#### *All-Party Parliamentary Groups*

- APPG on Apprenticeships
- APPG for Penal Affairs. Topic: youth justice.

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## Wednesday 15 June

### *House of Commons*

- Presentation of Private Members' Bills

### *Commons Committees*

- Science and Technology Committee: Diversity and inclusion in STEM (with Schools Minister Robin Walker and Science Minister George Freeman)
- Education Committee: Accountability hearings (with Universities Minister Michelle Donelan)

### *House of Lords*

- Oral questions: Lord Aberdare (Crossbench) to ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to widen the availability of defibrillators in both public and private settings, including schools
- Schools Bill – committee (3<sup>rd</sup> day)

### *All-Party Parliamentary Groups*

- APPG on No Recourse to Public Funds (Evidence session to explore new report on Children in Poverty from the Work and Pensions Committee)

## Thursday 16 June

### *Public Bill Committees:*

- Online Safety Bill

### *House of Lords*

- Oral questions: Lord Haskel (Lab) to ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the survey by the British Retail Consortium, published on 17 May, which concluded that the apprenticeship levy scheme was “not fit for purpose”; and what steps they intend to take to modify that scheme.

### *All-Party Parliamentary Groups*

- APPG for Dyslexia and Other Specific Learning Difficulties. Topic: the SEND Green Paper and Schools White Paper.