

2015/11

27 Nov 2015

## Policy Tracker - Keeping track of what happened in the world of education in November 2015

### Main talking points

Some significant developments this month with the launch of a new Green Paper for HE, consultation on the EBacc for schools and further area reviews for FE, all topped off with the Chancellor's spending announcements for the remainder of this Parliament.

### Key headlines from the month

- Primary. Further research links proper breakfast to improved performance
- School textbooks. Publishers draft new best practice guidelines
- Special Considerations. Requests up but number approved remains small
- Late exam entries. Up at GCSE, down at A level
- 2017 GCSEs and A levels. Consultation launched on a further batch
- EBacc. Government consults on six core proposals
- Unregistered schools. Ofsted calls on government to take action
- Mental health. Youth Select Committee highlights concerns
- Regional Schools Commissioners. Education Committee continues its inquiry
- School governors. Ofsted to look into a more professional model
- School funding. Government to consult on a new fair formula next year
- Inspections. Ofsted survey reveals how far parents use inspection ratings
- Sixth Form Colleges. Encouraged to join the Academy trail
- NEETs. Further drop in latest quarterly figures
- Apprenticeship Trailblazers. Latest guidance signals couple of changes to approval process
- Special Apprenticeship Adviser. Nadhim Zahawi picks up the mantle for government
- Apprenticeship levy. Government response sets out how it will work
- FE Loans. Chancellor extends to 19-23 year olds
- Learning and Work Institute. New name for the joining in matrimony of NIACE and CESI
- Devo deals. Liverpool and West Midlands sign up
- Colleges. Mergers in Shrewsbury and East London under consideration
- HE. Extensive Green Paper from government sets out latest vision

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

- **Teachers and Literacy.** The National Literacy Trust surveys teachers and finds nearly a quarter concerned about their ability to teach the new curriculum requirements
- **Consulting on implementing the English Bacc.** The government launches consultation on the EBacc with 10 questions on how best to implement it
- **Supporting the attainment of disadvantaged pupils.** The NFER reports on some of the strategies used and identifies seven core building blocks around needs, evidence and leadership
- **Education, skills and productivity.** The two Education Committees meet up to compare and contrast the effectiveness of vocational training systems in the UK, US, France and Germany
- **Socio-economic, ethnic and gender differences in HE participation.** The BIS Dept's latest research highlights a trend of disadvantaged white males missing out on higher education
- **The Science Budget.** The House of Commons Science and Technology Committee publishes its report calling for 3% of GDP to be given over to science spending
- **Fulfilling our potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice.** The government's latest vision for HE is partly conveyed in the title but still leaves a lot to be sorted
- **Financial health of the HE sector.** HEFCE looks at the data and finds a sector managing budgets as best it can but with some worrying signs of gaps emerging
- **Devolving responsibilities to cities in England.** The Public Accounts Committee reports on the first wave of City Deals and highlights concerns about a lack of accountability arrangements
- **Background to Success.** The Sutton Trust's latest commissioned report on the impact of social background on attainment finds disadvantaged young people missing out on further study
- **Beginning teaching: best in class?** The Advisory Committee on Maths education reflects on maths teacher training and concludes it's going to be a long haul to reach world-class
- **Process evaluation of the Apprenticeship Trailblazers.** BIS's final commissioned report on the Trailblazer system of developing standards accentuates the positives

- **Ensuring a successful UK research endeavour.** Sir Paul Nurse completes his review of Research Councils and future funding calling for the creation of a new overarching body
- **School leaders survey 2015.** ASCL and brownejacobson publish the results of their latest annual survey of school leaders with budgets, exam results and qual reform, the top priorities
- **Media Use and Attitudes Report.** Ofcom publishes its latest report on media use and attitudes among children over the last decade highlighting the growing impact of social and digital media
- **Annual parents survey 2015.** Ofsted surveys parents and finds wide usage among them of its reports and ratings system for schools
- **European Jobs and Skills.** The think tank IPPR publishes its second annual review of European trends highlighting five current challenges including increasing voc training and skills outcomes
- **Education at a Glance 2015.** The OECD publishes its latest hefty compendium of education indicators across its member countries with tuition fees and teaching salaries big talking points
- **Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015.** The Chancellor sets out the spending details for the remainder of this Parliament leaving education breathing slightly more calmly
- **Apprenticeship levy.** The government issues the response to its recent consultation confirming that the levy will come in from April 2017 at 0.5% of pay bill, payable alongside tax and NI

## Speeches of the month

- Nicky Morgan's 3 November Policy Exchange **speech** focuses on monitoring the progress of 7 yr olds, the EBacc and a new National Teacher Service as she seeks to push educational excellence
- John Cridland's 9 November CBI Conference **speech** sees the Director-General depart the CBI stage continuing to call for GCSEs to go and for stronger skills pathways in the school curriculum
- Nicky Morgan's 9 November CBI Conference **speech** explains how the government is attempting to transform education and calls on business to join in and work with schools in the future
- Nick Gibb's 17 November Publishers' Association **speech** continues to extol the virtues of text books as a valuable tool in learning and praises publishers for helping revive their use
- Nick Boles' 17 November AoC **speech** challenges FE to be quicker off the mark and seize a piece of the action especially around apprenticeships
- Sam Gyimah's 19 November **speech** at the National Association of School Business Managers Conference helps launch a new framework of prof standards for school business managers
- George Osborne's 25 November Autumn Statement **speech** mixes clever footwork with headline announcements as it sets out the government's future spending plans

## Quotes of the month

- *"And quite frankly, if we're not into surplus after 10 years of full economic growth when will we ever be?"* The Chancellor asks the question
- *"Students should come out of their university years feeling they've got value for money for their time there. Unfortunately too many are coming out feeling they haven't and I want to address that."* The HE Minister on one of the principles behind the latest Green Paper
- *"As your friend I have to ask you why on earth are you letting these guys nick your lunch?"* The Skills Minister with a friendly warning to colleges about being quicker off the mark
- *"I want to see at least 90% of students entering the EBacc."* The Secretary of State makes clear her expectations on the EBacc
- *"At root, it's not autonomy that really matters, it's what autonomy allows you to do differently that counts."* The Schools Minister on 'it ain't what you do, it's the way that you do it'
- *"We need multiple learning pathways, vocational and academic, from 14-18, with GCSEs retired and a full range of A' levels, technical and academic at 18."* The departing CBI DG on 14-19

## Word or phrase of the month

- *'Waithood.'* The stage between childhood and adulthood (which some teenagers want to skip)

## Steve Besley

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