



# Pearson

## Policy Tracker – Keeping track of what happened in the world of education in September 2019



### Main talking points

A hugely busy month with government 2020/21 spending plans, Party Conference proposals and a range of announcements and reports, over 50 listed here, all released this month

### Key headlines from the month

- Reception baseline assessment. Piloted for the first time this month
- SATs results. Government publishes this year's provisional SATs results
- School behaviour. Government promises greater support for head teachers
- Online schools. Government consults on voluntary accreditation scheme
- Inspections. Labour proposes new two-phase inspection system
- National Reference Test. NFER outline arrangements for next year's test
- Qualification pricing. Ofqual launches a new pricing index
- English Language GCSE. ASCL Commission recommends creation of a more practical alternative
- Exam malpractice. Independent Commission issues report and recommendations
- Free Schools. Government launches latest wave of applications
- Private Schools. Labour proposes integrating them into the state sector
- School funding. Chancellor promises a 3-year package potentially worth £14.5bn
- Teachers' pay. Government sets out its thoughts on 2020/21 pay
- High Needs funding. Chancellor promises extra £700m for 2020/21
- High needs support. Government announces new review to look into support arrangements
- 16-19 funding. Chancellor promises a one-year settlement worth £400m
- Apprenticeships. CBI calls for annual government top-up for the levy
- Widening access plans. The Office for Students publishes the latest set of institutional plans
- Discover Uni. The Office for Students launches a new site to help inform prospective students
- Uni entry. UCAS confirms increase in numbers accepted this year
- UK Visas. Government extends to two years for foreign graduates
- Latest priorities. The new Education Secretary issues the OfS with an updated list of priorities
- World University Rankings. The Times Higher publishes its latest annual rankings

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

- **What's changing at Ofsted in autumn 2019?** Ofsted outlines the changes to inspection procedures for schools and colleges coming in from the start of this month
- **Keeping children safe in education.** The DfE updates its statutory guidance for schools and colleges on keeping children safe with some small changes to the wording and working arrangements
- **Primary school accountability in 2019.** The DfE updates its guidance on primary school accountability to reflect the removal of floor/coasting standards and some pre-key stage standards
- **Academies financial handbook 2019.** The DfE updates its handbook on financial management for Academies with greater clarification on executive pay, ESFA approval and risk among other things
- **Trust issues.** The EDSK think tank publishes a report on the school system in England calling for the state and academy trust systems to be merged into one high-performing system
- **Tackling online harassment.** Universities UK offers a set of guiding principles to help universities deal with issues of online harassment between students
- **Reception baseline assessment.** The campaign group 'More Than a Score' reports on its latest commissioned survey into reception baseline assessment finding most views critical
- **Digital experience survey 2019.** JISC publishes its latest survey findings from students in FE and HE
- **Spending Round 2019.** The Treasury publishes the full details of the government's spending plans for 2020/21 as announced by the Chancellor in his Spending Round speech
- **Rounding Up.** The Resolution Foundation offers its assessment of the government's spending plans suggesting that while austerity has been brought to a close, it hasn't been reversed
- **The soft-power benefits of educating the world's leaders.** The Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI) reports on how many current world leaders had undertaken higher education in the UK
- **Exploring Teaching Assistants' appetite to become teachers.** The DfE reports on its commissioned research showing many TAs keen on becoming a teacher but wary of workloads
- **National curriculum assessment results.** The government publishes the provisional results for this year's SATs showing a slight increase in the % reaching the expected standard in all 3 areas
- **Online schools accreditation scheme.** The government launches consultation on a new, voluntary accreditation scheme for the growing number of online schools which are currently unregulated
- **Qualifications Price Index 2019.** Ofqual publishes its Qualification Price Index (QPI) report, an annual report that tracks price movement for regulated qualifications
- **Adult Participation in Learning Survey.** The Learning and Work Institute publishes its latest annual survey showing a noticeable drop in adult learning participation
- **Area review: end of programme report.** The government issues its initial report of the FE area review process enumerating changes to the number of colleges and size of the overall sector debt
- **The impact of college merges in FE.** The government issues a further report into FE college mergers concluding that they have had little material impact on college performance in general
- **FE reform case studies.** The government issues further commissioned research into the area review process suggesting that among other things the focus on financial efficiency restricted wider views

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- **Commission on exam malpractice.** The independent Commission looking into exam malpractice calls for a ban on watches in exam rooms and a single definition of malpractice among its proposals
- **Free schools: how to apply.** The government launches wave 14 of applications for Free Schools calling, with support from the Prime Minister, for at least another 30 in areas of need
- **A manifesto for children.** The Children's Commissioner for England sets out six pledges on helping children for politicians to adopt in the event of a general election
- **16-19 Discretionary Bursary Fund.** The government reports on its recent consultation on 16-19 bursaries confirming it will adopt a more responsive system of allocations
- **Implementing mandatory minimum per pupil funding levels.** The government consults on the mechanism to be used for determining the minimum per pupil funding levels
- **Education at a Glance 2019.** The OECD publishes its latest annual report on how education systems are performing with the UK strong in early years, tertiary education and some funding
- **The Forgotten Third.** ASCL's Commission looking into the 30% or so of young people who don't manage a grade 4 in GCSE English recommends the creation of a more practical alternative
- **National Reference Test 2020.** The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER,) the managing agent for the National Reference Test sets out the arrangements for next year's test
- **Support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.** The National Audit Office reports on support available for SEND pupils and finds a system under growing pressure
- **Managing behavior.** Ofsted reports on its latest initial research into how schools are managing challenging behavior outlining a number of principles that best schools use
- **World University Rankings 2020.** The Times Higher reports on its latest ranking of global universities with Oxford still top and other UK universities performing strongly
- **Strategic Guidance to the Office for Students.** The new Education Secretary issues the Office for Students with an updated list of strategic priorities for the next 6 months or so
- **SEND analysis.** The Education Policy Institute examines the issues around special educational needs and alternative provision following the announcement by the government of a new review
- **Improving the apprenticeship levy.** The CBI publishes a new report on the apprenticeship system setting out 4 steps including a government top-up and a levy review, for improving things
- **The social mobility impact of apprenticeships.** The skills provider QA.com calls for better data, career guidance and post-programme dashboards to help boost social mobility within apprenticeships
- **The New Realists.** Unite Students working with HEPI and YouthSight report on a new generation of more realistic students, keen to see uni as bridge to a more secure future
- **Global Learner Survey.** Pearson publishes the results of a major survey of learners in 19 countries highlighting eight trends emerging to characterize learning in the future
- **Opportunity for higher education.** Pearson reports on the picture of higher education emerging out of its Global Learner Survey where new determinants include a focus on skills and lifelong learning
- **New evidence on teachers' working hours in England.** UCL publishes new research, funded by the Nuffield Foundation, showing that teachers working hours remain high despite workload initiatives

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- **Automation and the future of work.** The Commons Business Committee reports on its inquiry into automation and the future of work calling on the government to come up with a clear strategy by 2021
- **English language tests for overseas students.** The Commons Public Accounts Committee reports on issues raised five years ago and calls on the Home Office to remedy any injustices to individuals
- **School policies.** The DfE publishes the list of statutory policies that schools and academy trusts are expected to have in place
- **Understanding school revenue expenditure.** The Education Policy Institute publishes the first in an intended series on school income and expenditure and how far it's changing
- **100 things we've learned from PISA.** The OECD marks the 100<sup>th</sup> edition of the PISA in Focus bulletins by listing a hundred things learned from the PISA exercise
- **The white elephant in the room.** The HE Policy Institute (HEPI) publishes a collection of essays on how best to reduce racial inequality in higher education
- **2019 annual report on education spending in England.** The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) publishes its 2<sup>nd</sup> annual report on the latest spending round announcement and other trends
- **Reform options for Britain's private schools.** The newly formed Private School Policy Reform organization proposes six options for reforming the country's private school system
- **Centre assessments.** Ofqual reports on its recent consultation on centre assessment regulations and confirms the introduction in 2021 by Awarding Organisations of a new Standards Scrutiny process
- **Leaving school with nothing.** The Children's Commissioner for England reports an increase in the number of children, particularly the most disadvantaged, leaving school with few qualifications
- **State of the Nation 2019.** The Careers and Enterprise Company publishes its latest progress report showing more Hubs, more use of the Gatsby benchmarks, and more contact with employers
- **Initiations at UK universities.** Universities UK and Newcastle University where a student died following an initiation event, combine to offer guidance on how to avoid excesses
- **Transforming the education workforce.** The Education Commission reports on how many children globally still don't have access to regular schooling and the need for more teachers accordingly

## Speeches of the month

- The Chancellor's **4 September Spending Round speech** spells out a notable increase in public spending for 2020/21 including money directed towards schools and 16-19 provision
- The Education Secretary's **12 September Universities UK Conference speech** praises the university sector but urges it to continue raising standards and widening access for all
- Chris Skidmore's **12 September Universities UK Conference speech** picks up on his previous agenda as universities Minister with an emphasis on science, innovation and research
- Jo Swinson's **17 September Conference speech** confirms that the Party will set out a wellbeing budget this autumn with proposals on areas like education
- Angela Rayner's **22 September Conference speech** sets out some leading policies on the future of inspection, free nursery education and social justice for all

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- Jeremy Corbyn's **24 September Conference speech** pledges Party commitment to free childcare and technical training and an end to university tuition fees

## Quotes of the month

- "I've set out today a big increase in public spending" – the Chancellor rounds off his Spending Round speech
- "Not a single penny has been promised until next April but the school cuts are happening right now" – the National Education Union reacts to the Chancellor's promise of more money for schools
- "Free education for everyone as a right, throughout life, not a privilege" – Jeremy Corbyn spells out a promise for education as part of his leader's Conference speech
- "I would endorse the proposal to use the (admissions) review to consider the pros and cons of potential models of Post Qualification Application" – the (new) Education Secretary puts his weight behind a review of PQA
- "My father told me that time spent in reconnaissance is seldom wasted, so that's what I'm doing" – Anne Milton the last Skills Minister reflects on her future
- "At last Godot has arrived" – HE Policy Institute director Nick Hillman on the news that visas for foreign graduates are to be extended
- "Finally we're seeing wider media recognition that A levels aren't for everyone and that for many students, BTECs and other vocational qualifications represent the best progression path for them" – two college principals blog about the importance of applied general qualifications
- "The third who we consign to this fate are left utterly dejected and with reduced chances for progression in education and careers"- ASCL considers the fate of the 30% of students who don't manage to achieve required grades in GCSE English and maths
- "The complexities could make building HS2 look like adding a stop to a branch line" – BBC education correspondent Sean Coughlan on Labour proposals to merge private schools into the state sector
- "A total ban on all types of watches, as well as other internet devices, removes any possibility of candidates having non-sanctioned internet access during exams"- the Commission on Exam Malpractice recommends a ban on watches in exam rooms
- "We're trying to create something really based on everything we know about how humans learn best" – Charlotte Church announces plans to open a new school in her home

## Word or phrase of the month

- 'The New Realists.' Not an 80's rock band but the moniker used in a new report to characterize students today

## Steve Besley

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