

# Young People's Education and Skills

## Briefing Note – Update 4

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**Summary**                      This paper provides an update on young people's education and skills issues.

**Recommendation**        Recipients are asked to note the content of this report and submit any comments by email.

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## 1        Introduction

1.1        This is the fourth update on Young People's Education and Skills issues in London (the previous papers are available on our dedicated webpage<sup>1</sup>). These updates provide a means of providing information to the Young People's Education and Skills Board, lead councillors and officers in London boroughs and other partners and stakeholders at a time when regular meetings are not taking place.

## 2        Context

2.1        This paper does not seek to summarise or further explain the government's general guidance on Covid-19 or the specific guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) but highlights key policies and policy proposals and considers some of the main effects on different aspects of the education and skills sector in London. Annex 1 provides a list of sources of official guidance.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/node/37307>

2.2 Two bodies have been established to ensure that London moves smoothly out of the lockdown arrangements:

- London Transition Board<sup>2</sup>
- London Recovery Board<sup>3</sup> (you can sign up to receive updates from the London Recovery Board <https://www.london.gov.uk/sign-receive-updates-london-recovery-board>)

### 3 Data

3.1 The House of Commons Library<sup>4</sup>, though primarily aimed at Members of Parliament, produces briefing papers that bring together research, data and opinions about various aspects of the country's response to Covid-19, government policies and our future emergence from the lockdown. The Library has recently compiled the guidance to Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) institutions on re-opening fully in September<sup>5</sup> and also see the Library's publication about easing lockdown restrictions in FE and HE in England<sup>6</sup>

3.2 The Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT)<sup>7</sup> produced by the DfE, is an interactive spreadsheet comparing data about children and young people across all local authorities in England and has also been updated with the latest published data.

3.3 Data specific to London is published monthly by GLA Economics<sup>8</sup> and Intelligent London<sup>9</sup> is also updated frequently with the latest available data.

3.4 This paper is in three parts: Part One covers current issues, Part Two provides a short general policy update and Part Three includes a brief performance update (the government uses the term "education settings" to

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/london-s-Covid-19-transition-board-meets-for-the-first-time>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.onlondon.co.uk/london-recovery-board-meets-for-first-time/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.parliament.uk/commons-library>

<sup>5</sup> <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8932/CBP-8932.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8932/?platform=hootsuite>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-interactive-tool-lait>

<sup>8</sup> <https://data.london.gov.uk/gla-economics/>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.intelligentlondon.org.uk/>

describe any institution in which learning takes place - for consistency, we use the same term in this paper).

## **Part One: Current Issues**

### **4 Government Announcements**

- 4.1 The Prime Minister has stated that keeping children and young people in full-time education and training is the government's top priority (the Children's Commissioner for England published a paper<sup>10</sup> urging the government to prioritise keeping schools open in the event of a resurgence of Covid-19 cases). Part Three of this paper gives more details of the level of participation since the start of the new academic year.
- 4.2 The Prime Minister announced a major expansion of post-18 education and training, paid out of the National Skills Fund<sup>11</sup>. This includes a Lifetime Skills Guarantee to give adults without a level 3 qualification the chance to take free college courses valued by employers and a new entitlement to flexible loans to allow courses to be taken in segments, boosting opportunities to retrain and thus enhancing the nation's technical skills. We will cover subsequent announcements about this policy in our October briefing.
- 4.3 The national message has shifted from a phased emergence from lockdown, required to control the spread of Covid-19 to a series of restrictions, some required at a local level, in the light of a potential second-wave of the pandemic. Consequently, plans for a full autumn budget were replaced by a Winter Economy Plan<sup>12</sup> in which the Chancellor announced fresh measures to support workers and businesses affected by the new restrictions, such as a Job Support Scheme (with a reduced government subsidy when compared

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/cco-putting-children-first-in-future-lockdowns.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/news/major-expansion-of-post-18-education-and-training-to-level-up-and-prepare-workers-for-post-covid-economy?utm\\_source=f50e5a25-d238-4662-86ef-50874a8137de&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=daily](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/major-expansion-of-post-18-education-and-training-to-level-up-and-prepare-workers-for-post-covid-economy?utm_source=f50e5a25-d238-4662-86ef-50874a8137de&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily)

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-outlines-winter-economy-plan>

to the furlough scheme), self-employment support and a package of loans and changes in taxation to help businesses.

- 4.4 The Education Secretary made several key announcements during August and September regarding the opening of educational settings (the ‘Back to school safely’ campaign<sup>13</sup>) and the award of qualifications in the absence of examinations. We wish to take this opportunity to place on record appreciation to the staff in schools, colleges and training providers for their tremendous efforts in supporting students in such difficult conditions and for doing their best to make the system work fairly. At the time of writing this paper, it has been decisions about the exams that should be sat in summer 2021 have not been announced.
- 4.5 The topic of A level results and the impact on university admissions is dealt with comprehensively in a briefing from the House of Commons Library<sup>14</sup> and a top-level analysis of the grades awarded in this year’s GCSEs, A levels and other qualifications has not yet been released by the DfE.
- 4.6 While most issues surrounding this year’s results are largely resolved, some remain outstanding:
- Those who were not able to go to their first-choice university because of the grades they were originally awarded may have to wait until next year to take up their place.
  - Home schooled children, who did not have the same rights of appeal as those in formal education settings, may be disadvantaged in their options for progression.
  - Virtual schools have suggested that Travellers and care experienced children may also have had their historic disadvantage further entrenched both by the lockdown and this year’s exam results.
  - Students taking Vocational Qualifications (VQs), whose results were delayed have been badly affected; some students waited a considerable time for the results of their VQs, including BTECs. These

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-campaign-launches-to-get-children-back-to-school-safely>

<sup>14</sup> <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8989/CBP-8989.pdf>

young people will have missed opportunities to progress in 2020 and though some may be in a position to delay advancing until later in the year or even by one whole year there will be many young people whose options may be seriously hampered without further advice and support.

- 4.7 The Minister of State for Education has written to Directors of Children’s Services to remind them of the requirement to track young people aged 16 to 18 to ensure they continue to participate in education or training.
- 4.8 The DfE announced support to educational settings providing laptops, tablets and 4G routers to those in need and new funding for local authorities to ease pressure on public transport as children return in September (although the decision to withdraw funding for free transport to people aged under 18 in London appears to still stand – this is covered further in paragraph 9.4).
- 4.9 Having announced in July that catch-up funding could be used to support extra tuition for 16 to 19 year-olds, the Education and Skills Funding Agency issued guidance in August that stipulated that the funding is restricted to those who did not achieve grade 4 in English or maths at 16 and tuition must be delivered to groups of no more than three students. Although this decision was criticised by the Sixth Form Colleges Association, the Association of Colleges felt that most students requiring catch-up tuition would remain eligible for support. Further guidance issued in September changed the minimum requirement to grade 5 in English and maths.
- 4.10 The Kickstart scheme<sup>15</sup> for young people aged 16 to 24 who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) or unemployed and in receipt of Universal Credit was launched on 2 September 2020. The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) said more action was needed to support employers, warning that urgent steps were required to prevent a “lost generation of young people”.
- 4.11 Following the first meeting of the cross-government care leave board, the Education Secretary and minister for welfare delivery Will Quince have pledged to support care leavers to take advantage of the scheme.

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/kickstart-scheme>

## **5 Parliament/Education Select Committee**

- 5.1 The Education Select Committee held a roundtable on 8 September with representatives of the post-16 sector to discuss their views on the contents on the anticipated FE White Paper<sup>16</sup>. The Committee also held a formal accountability session with the Secretary of State for Education, which majored on this year's exams (see paragraph 13.1 for his comments about special educational needs). The Education Select Committee has also launched an inquiry into home learning<sup>17</sup>. The closing date for submissions is 6 November 2020
- 5.2 The all-party parliamentary group (APPG) on youth affairs conducted an inquiry into the economic impact on young people. The call for evidence closed on 17 September and its report will be produced in due course<sup>18</sup>. The APPG for London discussed the impacts of Covid-19 on the city and hospitality industry<sup>19</sup>.
- 5.3 House of Lords Committees consulted rapidly during the summer break on several Covid-19 related inquiries. The Constitution Committee looked into how Parliament had held the government to account during the crisis, especially regarding the government's use of emergency powers (the call for evidence closed 20 August); the Covid-19 Committee looked at the long-term implications on the economy and society, particularly inequalities (this closed on 31 August); and the Economic Affairs Committee examined the effects of Covid-19 on the labour market and actions to protect jobs (closed 10 September). The committees' findings will be published in the next Parliamentary Session.

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.parliamentlive.tv/Event/Index/16e03bd1-e8de-4546-85bc-6bbec8741aa9>

<sup>17</sup> <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/620/home-education/>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.youthappg.org.uk/youth-affairs-appgs-economic-impact-inquiry-opens-call-for-evidence/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/node/37655>

## **6 Participation and the risk of young people being not in education, employment or training (NEET)**

- 6.1 *Catch them before they fall: what works in supporting vulnerable children to stay in education*<sup>20</sup> by the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) considers the most effective ways of supporting vulnerable young people to stay in education. It explains that post-lockdown there may be an increase in school exclusions and in young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) and sets out a number of recommendations to central government to improve support to vulnerable children to stay in education. The report identifies two areas where partnership working needs to be strengthened: children leaving alternative provision (AP) schools; and children at risk of entering AP education. The report examines ways of supporting the transition of children from AP to college and the possibility of establishing specialist sixth forms for the most vulnerable children. It also explores ways of stemming the flow of children into AP, including outreach and support and third sector programmes.
- 6.2 The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) has reported that schools in poor parts of England will struggle the most to help their pupils catch-up after the lockdown<sup>21</sup>. The IFS says that the last 10 years have seen real-terms cuts amounting to nine per cent per pupil, which fell hardest on schools in the poorest areas, adding that schools in poorer areas will get less of a boost from the extra £7.1 billion earmarked for schools up to 2022-23.
- 6.3 A survey by the Times Education Supplement (TES) found that 93 per cent of teachers said their students were behind where they would have expected them to be at this stage in the year<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>20</sup> <https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/core/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/CSJ-What-works-vulnerable-YP-Covid-recovery.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/15026>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.tes.com/news/GCSE-A-level-exams-2021-exclusive-93-gcse-teachers-say-pupils-are-behind>

- 6.4 The school survey company Edurio has published two reports examining the impact of Covid-19 on education. *How Have Schools Coped With Covid-19?* (Impact Report 1<sup>23</sup>) and *Lessons for School Leaders* (Impact Report 2<sup>24</sup>). These reveal that many pupils felt they had made good progress with learning regardless of whether content had been delivered via live online lessons or offline methods. The authors believe this is important, given increasing concerns regarding the digital divide between disadvantaged students and their peers. The report suggests that more accessible learning provision can be sought in the event of a return to remote learning, in the face of local lockdowns, or to facilitate learning for pupils who continue to shield. The research also discovered that recorded lessons rather than live delivery had a higher positive impact on pupils' feeling of progression and enabled families to share devices. The report recommends that technology should be used to enable work rather than fully relying on it — it believes that the internet is helpful for communication and feedback, but workbooks and drawing might work out better when technology access is limited. According to respondents, a 5 to 6-hour daily workload for pupils learning remotely led to highest learning progress and well-being levels, which the report recommends should be the target hours of learning in the event of future school closures.
- 6.5 *Living through a lockdown*<sup>25</sup>, by a coalition of charities urges local authorities to prioritise support for young people at risk of youth violence as Covid-19 restrictions tighten.

## 7 Apprenticeships

- 7.1 The DfE's Apprenticeship and Traineeship statistics<sup>26</sup> show that there have been 47,770 fewer apprenticeship opportunities during the Covid-19 lockdown compared with the same period last year, with opportunities for young people being hit hardest. The data shows that apprenticeship starts

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<sup>23</sup> <https://home.edurio.com/covid-19-impact-report1>

<sup>24</sup> <https://home.edurio.com/covid-19-impact-report2>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.redthread.org.uk/living-through-a-lockdown/>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/apprenticeships-and-traineeships-august-2020>



have fallen by 47 per cent, with 53,530 apprenticeship starts between 23 March and 31 July 2020 and 101,300 over the same period last year.

- 7.2 The government changed the law to allow the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to continue to fund apprentices who have been made redundant to complete their training if they had completed at least 75 per cent of their programme at the point of redundancy<sup>27</sup>.
- 7.3 At the beginning of August, the government started an online and telephone support service for apprentices who have lost their jobs during the Covid-19 outbreak. Called *Redundancy Support Service for Apprentices*<sup>28</sup>, it is designed to provide apprentices with access to local and national services that can provide financial, legal, health and well-being support and help them find new jobs and apprenticeship opportunities.
- 7.4 The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) launched a consultation on refined plans for a more transparent funding approach<sup>29</sup>. The consultation closed on 6 October 2020.
- 7.5 The CSJ has voiced concern that some employers are using apprenticeship levy funds to rebadge existing training or to accredit the skills that existing staff already have. The CSJ's report *Trade Secrets: how to reboot apprenticeships and kick-start the recovery*<sup>30</sup> also says that the apprenticeship system is not sufficiently focused on school leavers.
- 7.6 The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development has proposed reforms to the apprenticeship system so that it supports improved access to the labour market for all young people<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2020/9780348211696/regulation/2>

<sup>28</sup> [https://engage.apprenticeships.gov.uk/redundancy-apprentice?utm\\_source=press&utm\\_medium=story&utm\\_campaign=redund-app](https://engage.apprenticeships.gov.uk/redundancy-apprentice?utm_source=press&utm_medium=story&utm_campaign=redund-app)

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/reviews-and-consultations/consultations/consultation-on-changes-to-funding-recommendation/>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/core/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/CSJJ8393-Apprenticeships-200806-v2-final-web-version.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> [https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/apprenticeships-future-fit\\_tcm18-82228.pdf](https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/apprenticeships-future-fit_tcm18-82228.pdf)

- 7.7 The government has introduced a new package of up to £172 million for healthcare employers so that they can take on up to 2,000 nursing degree apprentices every year over the next four years. It is reported that interest in health careers has surged, with the number of people looking for information on nursing on the NHS careers website rising by 138 per cent between March and June<sup>32</sup>.
- 7.8 The Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) and Ufi VocTech Trust (Ufi) have formed a partnership to launch a new digital platform called *#SectorShare*<sup>33</sup> that will support the learning of apprentices, trainees and college students post-Covid-19. Launched in September this year, *#SectorShare*'s developers are calling for education providers and publishers to submit learning resources for possible inclusion on the site. More than 80 per cent of the resources available are free to the user and the portal itself is free to search.
- 7.9 Local authorities in London have this year increased the number of apprenticeships created directly by boroughs by 14 per cent, tripling the number of apprenticeships to 1,772 directly employed in the last financial year. This number increases to 3,693 when factoring in apprenticeships created in borough supply chains, maintained schools and through councils' brokerage schemes.<sup>34</sup>
- 7.10 Microsoft is working with the London Office of Technology and Innovation (Loti) to deliver virtual learning sessions to apprentices working across public sector local authorities. They are delivering two 60-minute sessions on the first day of each month, a soft skills session and a technical skills session, which link to their Digital Skills Learning Pathways<sup>35</sup>.
- 7.11 On the back of a huge increase in home improvements during the lockdown, FTSE 100 company HomeServe has launched the not-for profit HomeServe

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<sup>32</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-funding-to-double-nursing-apprentices-and-help-deliver-50-000-more-nurses>

<sup>33</sup> <https://sectorshare.org.uk/>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/press-release/17-august-2020/london-boroughs-triple-apprenticeship-opportunities>

<sup>35</sup> <https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/learn/>

Foundation<sup>36</sup> to plug the apprenticeship gap by helping companies create up to 25,000 new apprentices in trades over the next three years.

7.12 The National Apprenticeship Awards 2020 are now open for entries<sup>37</sup>.

7.13 The UK's team for Euroskills 2021 was announced and includes architectural stonemason Jordan Cliffe from London, who is attending the Building Crafts College<sup>38</sup>.

## **8 T Levels**

8.1 In its publication *What are the implications of Covid-19 for student recruitment to T Levels?*<sup>39</sup> the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) considers the implications of Covid-19 for the recruitment of students onto T Levels and presents the perspectives from a webinar facilitated in July 2020, supplemented by findings from pre-webinar questions. The paper discusses the current student recruitment situation regarding T Levels and awareness of the T Level brand, finding that: providers are generally feeling optimistic about recruitment for September but around a half of the providers responding to the pre-webinar questions felt ready to deliver T Levels 'to a moderate extent'.

## **9 Funding**

9.1 The Education Policy Institute (EPI) argues that the government's drive to "level up" funding will disproportionately benefit schools in better-off areas, in its analysis of the school funding allocations for 2021-22<sup>40</sup>.

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<sup>36</sup> <https://homeservefoundation.com/>

<sup>37</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-apprenticeship-awards-2020-open-for-entries?utm\\_source=1ce4a6a5-e02e-4f82-a923-a08354f40ef1&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=daily](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-apprenticeship-awards-2020-open-for-entries?utm_source=1ce4a6a5-e02e-4f82-a923-a08354f40ef1&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily)

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.worldskillsuk.org/worldskills-uk-news/team-uk-line-up-announced-for-euroskills-graz-2020>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.nfer.ac.uk/media/4104/what-are-the-implications-of-covid-19-for-student-recruitment-to-t-levels.pdf>

<sup>40</sup> <https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/school-funding-allocations-2021-22/>

- 9.2 As previously announced, the government released £200 million of the capital funds allocated to the FE sector earlier than planned<sup>41</sup>. Colleges throughout England received their allocations and London's share was approximately £33.8 million (including adult education provision and the allocations for college groups/providers with campuses outside London).
- 9.3 The DfE is providing £8 million to fund a training scheme to improve wellbeing and mental health support in schools and colleges. The scheme is designed to enable staff to identify students or colleagues who need help, provide some on-the-spot support and signpost further assistance where needed.
- 9.4 The government has said that it is pressing ahead with its plans to withdraw free travel for children and young people aged under 18 but has delayed implementation. The Department for Transport has also confirmed that children who live more than two miles from their school or college or have difficulties or needs will be exempt. London Councils, working with Transport for London and colleagues in the schools and FE sectors, is modelling the effects of this change in policy, while the campaign led by the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) is continuing to call for the proposal to be scrapped.
- 9.5 The government has allocated £560 million from its Condition Improvement Fund to 580 building projects at academies, sixth form colleges and voluntary aided schools in England, including 67 projects in London, 30 of which were secondaries, colleges or all through schools. The funding will be used to repair and upgrade school facilities and create modern, fit-for-purpose spaces that meet institutions' needs. It also allows for a small number of expansion projects to increase school capacity.
- 9.6 The National Audit Office (NAO) released a report into the *Financial sustainability of colleges in England*,<sup>42</sup> which found that the DfE has spent £726 million on bailing out and restructuring colleges and is intervening in nearly half of them.

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<sup>41</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/colleges-to-receive-200-million-to-transform-their-buildings>

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.nao.org.uk/report/financial-sustainability-of-colleges-in-england/>

9.7 *Sharing prosperity? Options and issues for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund*<sup>43</sup>

from the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) explores the issues that the government and stakeholders need to consider for the new UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) – the proposed replacement for European Structural and Investment (ESI) funding, following the UK's departure from the European Union. The report provides an overview of existing ESI funds, including their aims and main rules and the resulting allocations to different regions of the UK. It reviews the evidence on the effectiveness of these schemes in meeting their objectives of improving economic performance in disadvantaged regions. It discusses the options and issues for the proposed UKSPF, including how funding could be allocated to different regions, how funding could be spent, and how the fund will fit in with existing funding schemes. The report also sets out an assessment of the impact that different formulas for allocating funding could have on the amount allocated to different regions. It finds that a focus on areas with low productivity would see several rural areas receive the highest levels of funding per person, while a focus on low education and employment, and especially high deprivation, would channel the most funding to more urban parts of the Midlands and the North. It concludes by considering how the Covid-19 crisis may affect decisions over the introduction and design of the UKSPF. It is also worth noting that funding in London would be severely reduced in every option examined in this report as it links UKSPF with the government's levelling-up agenda.

9.8 Nesta, the innovation foundation, has launched a 12-month Rapid Recovery Challenge<sup>44</sup> which aims to “find and support tools and solutions that improve access to jobs and money for people across the UK”. It is calling on businesses, charities and organisations to submit plans for innovative solutions to be in with a chance of joining its Rapid Recovery Stream and winning £475,000 in non-partnership funding. Two winning organisations will be picked to join the stream, funded in partnership with the Money and

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<sup>43</sup> <https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/Sharing-prosperity-Options-and-issues-for-the-UK-Shared-Prosperity-Fund-IFS-Report.pdf?platform=hootsuite>

<sup>44</sup> <https://rapidrecovery.challenges.org/>

Pensions Service and the JPMorgan Chase Foundation. It will support solutions helping connect people with open job positions that match their skill sets, potentially providing tailored learning, training or advice to people seeking work “The Rapid Recovery Challenge will support innovators to develop and scale solutions through financial grants and non-financial support such as help with product and service design, and access to a wider support network of organisations, Projects must already exist in at least prototype form and have been piloted with a minimum of 1,000 users. Entries to the Rapid Recovery Challenge are now open, closing on 26 October 2020.

- 9.9 The Institute of Fiscal Studies’ (IFS) *Annual report on education spending in England*<sup>45</sup> finds that larger schools in disadvantaged areas are set to face years of challenges related to Covid-19 due to lack of funding. It suggests that these patterns run counter to the objective of levelling up poorer regions of the country and will make it harder to address the educational challenges and inequalities resulting from Covid-19. It also says that fully reversing cuts in FE since 2010–11 would cost a further £1.1 billion over and above existing plans by 2022–23 (£730 million for school sixth forms and £320 million for 16–18 colleges). This increases to about £1.4 billion to ensure that spending on T levels is additional to an unchanged level of spending per student.
- 9.10 The Evening Standard is providing £1.2 million to eight schools with a high exclusion rate to improve the life chances of pupils who may otherwise have been excluded<sup>46</sup>.

## **10 Quality and Standards**

- 10.1 The Chief Regulator of the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual), Sally Collier, left her post and was replaced by Dame Glenys Stacey, who served in the role from 2011 to 2016. Dame Glenys will take up the role again in an acting capacity until December 2020, with support and oversight from Ofsted Chief Inspector and former Ofqual Chair

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<sup>45</sup> <https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/14369>

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/education/excluded-campaign-tackling-exclusions-a4552241.html>

Amanda Spielman. In a separate move, Susan Acland-Hood has been appointed as Permanent Secretary at DfE to replace Jonathan Slater.

- 10.2 Ofsted has published new research looking at subcontractors in the further education and skills sector and raises the possibility of their direct inspection in the future<sup>47</sup>.
- 10.3 The Secretary of State has decided that Ofsted would be the single body responsible for the inspection of Apprenticeship<sup>48</sup>s. The change will take effect from 1 April 2021, and cover all apprenticeship levels, including non-degree and degree apprenticeships at levels 6 and 7. The inspectorate already inspects apprenticeship training provision at levels 2 to 5.
- 10.4 Barking and Dagenham College is one of the 20 colleges that will take part in the first year of the WorldSkills UK Centre of Excellence, which involves training up teachers in international best practices, as well as providing digital workshops featuring talks from training managers from other countries<sup>49</sup>.
- 10.5 The AoC and JISC are collaborating in a project aimed at realising the potential of technology to benefit the FE sector now and into the future<sup>50</sup>. Drawing on the experience of enforced use of technology during the lockdown, the project is looking to develop the skills of staff and improve access to on-line learning, particularly among disadvantaged students.
- 10.6 Research commissioned by the Edge Foundation over the summer<sup>51</sup> found that 62 per cent of 14 to 19-year-olds think that coronavirus has changed teaching and learning in schools forever. Many feel that their school or college needs to incorporate some of the 'lessons from lockdown' into the long term, with 84 per cent of 14 – 19-year-olds having the opinion that schooling needs to be more flexible and adapt more quickly as a result of the pandemic and 64 per cent thinking that the future of schooling should include both classroom

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<sup>47</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/918114/Subcontracting\\_in\\_further\\_education\\_and\\_skills.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/918114/Subcontracting_in_further_education_and_skills.pdf)

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gavin-williamson-education-secretary-letter-to-her-majestys-chief-inspector>

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.worldskillsuk.org/centreofexcellence>

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.jisc.ac.uk/shaping-the-digital-future-of-fe-and-skills>

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.edge.co.uk/news/edge-news/edge-survey-finds-three-quarters-of-14-19-year-olds-want-their-education-to-be>

and online learning. As the impacts of lockdown are felt in the wider economy, 70 per cent of 14 to 19-year-olds think the education system needs to catch up with the real world and 76 per cent want their education to be relevant, focused on giving them the tools and skills they will need in their career.

## **11 Progressions - the Labour Market**

11.1 The following consensus statement has been developed from the research we have analysed in our previous Briefings:

- It is likely that the country will have to adapt to cope with Covid-19 for some time and may need to adopt permanently some of the ways of working to which we are now becoming accustomed.
- Despite the support available to businesses and other employers, some enterprises may not survive, some activities may cease and some – possibly very many – redundancies may occur; and it may take a considerable amount of time before the economy and labour market stabilise.
- In the interim, the effects of recovery will not be felt equally by all industrial sectors, localities or sections of society. Concern is being expressed about families living on the breadline and young people entering the labour market, especially those with low attainment.

11.2 This core position is supported by the Centre for Economic Performance's *What can previous recessions tell us about the Covid-19 downturn?*<sup>52</sup>

11.3 Announcements of profit warnings, redundancies and business closures throughout the summer have fuelled increased uncertainty about the prospects for first-time entrants into the labour market. The effects of local lockdowns have also demonstrated the cautious nature of returning all sectors to full speed.

11.4 Official labour market statistics for July, published by the ONS, demonstrate how young people, and those aged over 50, have suffered most in job losses

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<sup>52</sup> <http://cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download/cepcovid-19-007.pdf?platform=hootsuite>



during the pandemic. The figures also show an increase in zero-hours contracts and temporary and part-time employment.

11.5 The ONS has confirmed that “the Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the UK labour market so far” (up to the end of June 2020)<sup>53</sup>. For those workers who have remained in employment during quarter 1 (January to March) and quarter 2 (April to June), there was only a slight increase in the incidence of occupational switching from the pre-pandemic period to the period covering the pandemic. The limited change in occupational switching is likely to reflect the effect of the government's job retention schemes, which encourage an attachment between individuals and a specific job. It is also unclear how many of those who switched occupations during these quarters accepted job offers made before the start of the lockdown. The ONS believes that occupational switching might become more prevalent as employment support unwinds.

11.6 The ONS' *Labour market economic analysis, quarterly: September 2020* provides an analysis of changes in labour market participation of young people over the past 10 years including the impact of Covid-19). Based on UK labour market statistics for the period April to June 2011 to May to July 2020, it finds that:

- In the year to May to July 2020, the employment rate for young people reduced by 1.9 percentage points to 52.9 per cent.
- During the lockdown, young people were more likely to be away from paid work than other age groups.
- Of all young people in employment, 9.9 per cent were on zero-hours contracts in the period April to June 2020.
- In the three months to June 2020, 11.1 per cent of all young people were not in employment, education or training. Of these, 39 per cent were unemployed and 6 per cent were economically inactive.

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<sup>53</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/coronavirus-and-occupational-switching-january-to-june-2020?utm\\_source=5458196a-8651-4f34-9daa-473a18448774&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=daily](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/coronavirus-and-occupational-switching-january-to-june-2020?utm_source=5458196a-8651-4f34-9daa-473a18448774&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily)

- 11.7 Where businesses have re-opened, they have generally reported a recovery in their trade, but the enduring effects of the lockdown and a level of uncertainty over the durability of easements announced by the government is believed to have dampened down the pace and scale of the recovery.
- 11.8 FE News<sup>54</sup> is publishing fortnightly articles by Emsi, a firm specialising in labour market insights, in which they report on trends and developments in employment, particularly those directly connected with the ongoing disruption in the economy
- 11.9 The Learning and Work Institute has reported<sup>55</sup> that low paid Londoners have borne the brunt of the coronavirus crisis and warns that the capital will be both poorer and less equal. The report – based on a survey of over 1,000 Londoners and analysis of new employment data – shows that low paid Londoners are over twice as likely to work in the ‘shutdown sectors’ that have been hit hardest by the crisis. On the eve of the crisis, one in three (33 per cent) low paid workers worked in shutdown sectors, compared to one in seven (14 per cent) of other workers. While the lockdown is slowly lifting, low paid workers remain more concerned about their job prospects; four in ten (42 per cent) are worried about keeping their job, compared to three in ten (32 per cent) other workers. Low paid workers are far more likely to have seen a hit to their income as a result of the crisis.
- 11.10 *Missing millions: Where will the jobs come from?*<sup>56</sup> also by the Learning and Work Institute, shows that employment has taken up to seven years to recover after previous recessions. Employment recovery may be slower this time with big employers like hospitality and retail facing ongoing social distancing and consumer confidence limits: It calls for investment in job

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<sup>54</sup> [https://www.fenews.co.uk/fevoices/55329-which-sectors-have-seen-the-biggest-declines-and-increases-in-job-vacancies?utm\\_source=FE+News&utm\\_campaign=46e56a704b-RSS\\_EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_a588419e08-46e56a704b-17379865](https://www.fenews.co.uk/fevoices/55329-which-sectors-have-seen-the-biggest-declines-and-increases-in-job-vacancies?utm_source=FE+News&utm_campaign=46e56a704b-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a588419e08-46e56a704b-17379865)

<sup>55</sup> <https://learningandwork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/The-impact-of-the-coronavirus-outbreak-on-Londons-low-paid-workers.pdf>

<sup>56</sup> [https://learningandwork.org.uk/resources/research-and-reports/missing-millions/?vgo\\_ee=mjzlcqa4y%2F3a3WY5MtUdAKlwrtaeqmlNH4www3aBP9IOV8PCHCW2SQhD%2BF%2Fb8KUK](https://learningandwork.org.uk/resources/research-and-reports/missing-millions/?vgo_ee=mjzlcqa4y%2F3a3WY5MtUdAKlwrtaeqmlNH4www3aBP9IOV8PCHCW2SQhD%2BF%2Fb8KUK)

creation, expansion of Kickstart to adults and protection of existing jobs through on-going wage support.

- 11.11 Engineering UK<sup>57</sup> commissioned IPSOS MORI to survey over 1,000 young people aged 11 to 19 across the UK between 30 June and 9 July 2020. The survey focused on career expectations and optimism over future prospects. It found that many respondents were concerned that going to university, becoming an apprentice, and getting a job has become more difficult as a result of the pandemic. Given this – perhaps unsurprisingly – job security and availability were factors commonly reported by young people as being more important in their career decisions since the pandemic. It also found that for some young people, particularly girls/young women, the pandemic has raised the importance of having a job that would enable them to make a positive societal contribution or help people. Engineering UK found it encouraging that the pandemic has resulted in young people being more interested in a career in STEM but observed that interest in engineering careers is lagging behind careers in science and technology.
- 11.12 The Institute of Public Policy Research<sup>58</sup> has estimated that three million of the four and a half million jobs currently still being supported by the Job Retention Scheme (JRS) may still need that support in October, because of a continued shortfall in demand; one million jobs currently being supported by the JRS could be lost permanently in the sectors most heavily affected by the crisis so far, such as hospitality, retail, entertainment, manufacturing, support services and construction; around two million of the jobs would be viable if wage subsidies were extended into the new year. It suggests that those facing the greatest disadvantages are most at risk of being made redundant, including disabled people, carers, those in the shielded group and those with caring responsibilities. It proposes a work-sharing scheme as a replacement of the JRS, which should also be accessed in the event of local lockdowns or a second wave. It further recommends that the government should

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<sup>57</sup> <https://www.engineeringuk.com/media/232314/young-people-and-covid-19.pdf?platform=hootsuite>

<sup>58</sup> <https://www.ippr.org/files/2020-08/rescue-and-recovery-august20.pdf?platform=hootsuite>

significantly scale up job creation. support reallocation of workers and reduce economic insecurity and support of incomes.

- 11.13 GLA Intelligence has published *Economic Impact of COVID-19 on London's Small and Medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)*<sup>59</sup>, which report on the economic impact of COVID-19 on London's SMEs. It presents a uniquely granular and timely analysis of the impacts on London's SMEs by sectoral, financial, employment, and risk indicators and includes deep dive case studies on the economic impact on the Night-time Economy, high streets and town centres, and the Culture and Creative Industries.
- 11.14 The Institute for Employment Studies (IES) has proposed a set of measures to support people back into employment<sup>60</sup>. It says that in May 2020 there were 2.8 million 'claimant' unemployed people and that more people are likely to become unemployed in the future, especially with the ending of the furlough scheme. It suggests that providing rapid and high-quality support for the unemployed is crucial if people are to get back into work quickly and that one-to-one support is needed, tailored where necessary, with regular reviews. This would require an extra 7,000 Jobcentre Plus Work Coaches and additional support from the private and third sectors. It further suggests that this should focus on young people, the over-50s and those who are shielding and that there should be a £1bn investment in Jobcentre Plus and skills and employment advice.
- 11.15 *On notice: estimating the impact on redundancies of the Covid-19 crisis*<sup>61</sup> by the IES analyses the potential path of job losses in the UK this year and finds that redundancy notifications by employers are running at more than double the levels seen in the 2008/2009 recession. It suggests that there is a

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<sup>59</sup> [https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/economic-impact-of-covid-19-sme?utm\\_campaign=Bloomberg%20Associates%20report%20on%20COVID-19%20and%20SMEs%20in%20London3&utm\\_source=emailCampaign&utm\\_content=&utm\\_medium=email](https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/economic-impact-of-covid-19-sme?utm_campaign=Bloomberg%20Associates%20report%20on%20COVID-19%20and%20SMEs%20in%20London3&utm_source=emailCampaign&utm_content=&utm_medium=email)

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.employment-studies.co.uk/system/files/resources/files/Help%20wanted%20-%20short-term%20unemployment.pdf?platform=hootsuite>

<sup>61</sup> <https://www.employment-studies.co.uk/system/files/resources/files/On%20Notice%20-%20estimating%20the%20impact%20on%20redundancies%20of%20the%20Covid-19%20crisis.pdf?platform=hootsuite>

correlation between notifications and actual redundancies and estimates that there may be around 450,000 redundancies in the third quarter of 2020, and a further 200,000 redundancies in the final quarter of the year. It recommends measures to minimise and respond to these job losses: a reduction in labour costs, so as to stimulate employment demand and new hiring; tightly targeted wage support for disrupted but otherwise viable industries and areas; guaranteed access to rapid, high quality employment and training support for those at risk of redundancy; increased and visible enforcement of employment and redundancy rights; and regular publishing of detailed data to enable local economic partners to respond.

- 11.16 *All together now? The impacts of the government's coronavirus income support schemes across the age distribution*<sup>62</sup> is a report from the Resolution Foundation that looks at the impact of the government's measures to protect household incomes during the pandemic (the Job Retention Scheme (JRS), the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme and the boost to social security benefits. It finds that those in their early 20s are most likely to have been furloughed on the JRS.
- 11.17 NCFE has launched *go the distance*<sup>63</sup>, a youth employment offer, targeted at 16 to 19-year-olds. It provides resources to educational settings (a curated package of qualifications, schemes of work, session plans and learning resources that can be used to provide training programmes for young people) and tips on building employability programmes.
- 11.18 Data released by talent acquisition software provider Tribepad<sup>64</sup> revealed that job seekers are flocking to roles in the public sector as the Covid-19 recession continues to bite the job market. The data shows that applications per-role jumped by 31 per cent to 74 candidates per vacancy in the six months to August 2020, compared to the same period last year. Unlike the private sector, where the number of jobs advertised has reduced, the number

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<sup>62</sup> <https://www.resolutionfoundation.org/publications/all-together-now/?platform=hootsuite>

<sup>63</sup> <https://www.ncfe.org.uk/go-the-distance>

<sup>64</sup> <https://www.tribepad.com/research-and-data/public-sector-job-applications-leap-31-due-to-covid/>

of roles advertised in local government authorities has grown by 19 per cent year-on-year.

## **12 Progression to Further and Higher Education**

- 12.1 To establish a clearer understanding of what is driving post-16 education choices and performance in the capital, the Greater London Authority (GLA) and London Councils commissioned Mime and the UCL Institute of Education to conduct research which tracked the pathways of 355,000 London residents from age 15 to 18. We previously reported that the findings from this research were launched in a webinar hosted by the GLA in July. The research publication and presentations from the day are available on the GLA website<sup>65</sup> with the recording of the webinar available on YouTube<sup>66</sup>.
- 12.2 Despite the issues surrounding the award of A levels in the summer, Universities UK reported<sup>67</sup> that more young people from disadvantaged backgrounds than ever succeeded in gaining a place in HE this year.
- 12.3 The NatWest Student Living Index 2020<sup>68</sup>, based on a survey of over 2,800 students in universities throughout the UK and conducted in June 2020, found that Covid-19 hindered a quarter of UK students from achieving their degree.
- 12.4 *A Level results and university access 2020*<sup>69</sup> by The Sutton Trust provides an overview of the attitudes and perceptions of young people applying to university towards the gradings and access to university following Covid-19. It compares the results of a survey undertaken in April 2020 with another

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<sup>65</sup> <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/skills-and-employment/skills-londoners/londons-post-16-trajectories#:~:text=To%20establish%20a%20clearer%20understanding,from%20age%2015%20to%2018>

<sup>66</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HeN\\_SzRhYo0&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HeN_SzRhYo0&feature=youtu.be)

<sup>67</sup> <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/news/Pages/Record-numbers-of-18-year-olds-and-applicants-from-disadvantaged-backgrounds-accepted-into-university-.aspx>

<sup>68</sup> <https://personal.natwest.com/personal/life-moments/students-and-graduates/student-living-index.html>

<sup>69</sup> <https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/A-Level-Results-Polling-2020.pdf?platform=hootsuite>

carried out in July. It shows continuing uncertainty about young people's plans and gives early warning that there has been a fall in the proportion of young people aged 11 to 16 who say they are likely to go to university.

### **13 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

- 13.1 The Secretary of State for Education confirmed to the Education Select Committee on 16 September that the government's review into the SEND system will not be published until early next year<sup>70</sup>.
- 13.2 The Children's Commissioner has warned that children with SEND could be at greater risk of being excluded from school unless they receive additional support upon their return<sup>71</sup>. The Commissioner said that although some children with SEND and education, health and care plans were able to attend school during the lockdown, only 18,000 were attending at the end of April and cited the Disability Children's Partnership<sup>72</sup>, which said that a third of parents (32 per cent) said their school had offered no specific home learning support in relation to their child's SEN needs. Half of children who were previously receiving help like physiotherapy, saw it stop in the pandemic. 76 per cent of families who had previously been receiving support from social services before lockdown (such as respite care and summer play schemes) saw it stop during the crisis; nearly half of parents (45 per cent) said their child's physical health had declined; and 79 per cent said their own mental health declined.
- 13.3 A coalition of disability groups, led by the National Deaf Children's Society, has warned that more than half a million disabled young people will be hit by double disadvantage as they try to move from education to employment unless urgent action is taken. The coalition has asked for changes to the government's Plan for Jobs. Among their suggestions are the expansion of the Kickstart Scheme, careers advisors trained to work with disabled people and online job searching made more accessible. They are also calling for the

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<sup>70</sup> <https://committees.parliament.uk/event/2016/formal-meeting-oral-evidence-session/>

<sup>71</sup> <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/2020/08/31/supporting-children-with-special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-to-return-to-school/>

<sup>72</sup> <https://disabledchildrenspartnership.org.uk/>

number of Disability Employment Advisors to be doubled and the £1,000 incentive for businesses taking on apprentices to be extended to all disabled young people, rather than just those with education, health and care plans.

- 13.4 Research by the National Deaf Children’s Society’s Youth Advisory Board<sup>73</sup> showed a lack of tailored advice for deaf young people and little support available when entering work.
- 13.5 A report published by the Edge Foundation<sup>74</sup> examines three case studies and how each supports young people with SEND on their journey into employment. The aim of this report is to help young people with disabilities transition into the world of work, to ensure their backgrounds do not further disadvantage their life chances.
- 13.6 The findings show that:
- In 2019 approximately half of disabled people were in employment (52 per cent) compared with just over four out of five non-disabled people (82 per cent). Additionally, people with disabilities who are in employment are more likely to be in part-time positions and in elementary roles compared to their peers without a disability.
  - Prior to the pandemic, the Youth Census Survey highlighted that young people with additional needs faced additional barriers in receiving information, advice and guidance in terms of career support; 23 per cent of those with additional needs were ‘not very confident’ or ‘not very confident at all’ in being able to move into meaningful employment.
  - There are also considerable benefits for workplaces to employ people with disabilities, and these are often not recognised. Benefits include increased diversity of the workforce which brings in, for example, more creativity and attention to detail, as well as a diverse set of unique skills and perspectives.

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<sup>73</sup> <https://www.ndcs.org.uk/media/5665/dwe-yab-report.pdf>

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.edge.co.uk/news/edge-news/new-edge-report-follows-the-journey-to-employment-for-young-people-with-additional>



- 13.7 *Left stranded: the impact of coronavirus on autistic people and their families in the UK* by the National Autistic Society<sup>75</sup> looks at the impact that Covid-19 has had on autistic people and their families, focusing on their mental health and loneliness, the care and support available and education, both in terms of the experience of providing this at home and of the return to school. It addresses the difficulties of going out of the house, which, even before the pandemic, was challenging for some autistic people due to a lack of understanding or reasonable adjustments in public places. It recommends action across the UK to protect autistic people and their families in case of a second wave covering social care, health, education, transport and shops.
- 13.8 The DfE has released a High Needs Benchmarking Tool<sup>76</sup> that local authorities can use periodically to assess their own level of need, spend and pattern of provision against those of neighbouring local authorities (both geographically and statistically) and national trends. The DfE believes that analysis of the data it has provided will help inform local authorities' plans.

## 14 Race Equality and Social Justice

- 14.1 The ONS produced a report, *Unity and division in Great Britain: 24 April to 28 June 2020*<sup>77</sup>, showing that, earlier in the national lockdown, people believed that a post-pandemic Britain would be a more united one but, over subsequent weeks this belief declined. Most people also expected that inequalities in society would remain; while there is still a belief that we will be a kind nation.
- 14.2 The Education Policy Institute (EPI) has published its Annual Report on the state of education in England, including the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers. *Education in England: Annual Report 2020*, which is published in partnership with the Fair Education Alliance

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<sup>75</sup> <https://s4.chorus-mk.thirdlight.com/file/1573224908/63117952292/width=-1/height=-1/format=-1/fit=scale/t=444295/e=never/k=da5c189a/LeftStranded%20Report.pdf?platform=hootsuite>

<sup>76</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/high-needs-benchmarking-tool>

<sup>77</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/bulletins/unityanddivisioningreatbritain/24aprilto28june2020>

(FEA) and Unbound Philanthropy, also examines the gap at a local level, across different school subjects, and among different groups of pupils – including by varying levels of disadvantage. The report shows that the learning gap between rich and poor primary age pupils in England has widened for the first time since 2007. It says that:

- The attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers has stopped closing for the first time in a decade. Policymakers have not succeeded in responding to earlier reports warning of a major loss of momentum in closing the gap.
- Disadvantaged pupils in England are 18.1 months of learning behind their peers by the time they finish their GCSEs – the same gap as five years ago.
- The gap at primary school increased for the first time since 2007 – which may signal that the gap is set to widen in the future.
- The widening of the gap occurred even before the COVID-19 pandemic had impacted the education system.
- Researchers have identified the increasing proportion of disadvantaged children in persistent poverty as a contributory cause of the lack of progress with narrowing the disadvantage gap. Pupils with SEND who have an education, health and care plan are well over three years (41.1 months) behind their peers at the end of secondary school, while those with SEND without a plan are two full years (24.4 months) behind their peers.
- Although the attainment gap has grown in London, the rate of increase in London has been smaller than the UK average.

14.3 *Low-Income Parents Relying on Child Benefits for Household Basics*<sup>78</sup> from the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) is based on a survey of 1,000 parents receiving child benefit in summer 2020. The results were compared with the results of a similar survey conducted in 2012. Among the main

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<sup>78</sup> <https://cpag.org.uk/news-blogs/news-listings/low-income-parents-relying-child-benefit-household-basics>

findings is that 28 per cent of parents receiving child benefit said they now spend it on general expenses, up from two per cent in 2012.

## **15 Social Mobility**

- 15.1 The Social Mobility Commission has undertaken a thorough examination of regional social mobility<sup>79</sup> and found that families with children entitled to free school meals who are growing up in the worst areas for social mobility “have little chance of making a better life for themselves or their children...They also earn much less than their more affluent peers”. It adds that at the age of 28, they are likely to earn just over half the amount of those from similar backgrounds in the most mobile areas. The report says that while access to good quality education is a factor contributing to such pay gaps, 33 per cent of the pay gap between the highest and lowest earners is down to non-education factors, like local labour markets and family background.
- 15.2 Anti-selection group Comprehensive Future<sup>80</sup> has said that its analysis of admissions data from 14 of the 16 schools that split the selective schools expansion fund (SSEF) shows just 77 additional pupil premium places in three years, despite the number of overall places in those school increasing by 367.
- 15.3 Research from the IFS<sup>81</sup> finds that that there are large gaps in access to postgraduate degrees noting: of those coming from the most advantaged quintile of state-educated students in England, around 18 per cent proceeded onto postgraduate study, while the equivalent share for the privately educated is 27 per cent; and for the poorest quintile of state students, just 4 per cent proceed to any postgraduate study. The research reveals that

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<sup>79</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-long-shadow-of-deprivation-differences-in-opportunities>

<sup>80</sup> <https://comprehensivefuture.org.uk/the-selective-school-expansion-fund-has-failed-as-a-policy/>

<sup>81</sup> [https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/Family-background-and-access-to-postgraduate-degrees\\_.pdf](https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/Family-background-and-access-to-postgraduate-degrees_.pdf)

almost all of the gaps can be explained by attainment in school but taking university attainment into account means poorer students are actually marginally more likely to progress onto postgraduate study.

## **16 Mental Health and Anxiety**

- 16.1 Government funding to support mental health is covered in paragraph 9. The DfE wants to build temporary educational psychologist capacity in England to support schools and colleges. Candidates will either be former educational psychologists who may be interested in temporarily returning to the profession or practising educational psychologists who may have additional capacity to offer support for a limited period<sup>82</sup>. Opportunities will last up to 13 weeks and the closing date for expressions of interest is 30 November 2020.
- 16.2 The National Youth Agency (NYA) has maintained a close focus on young people's mental health throughout the pandemic, with special emphasis on the maintenance of support to those who need it most. Its report *Inside Out*<sup>83</sup> brings together data from a variety of sources, echoes concerns from the Children's Commissioner and reminds policy-makers at all levels to ensure that responses to Covid-19 are age-sensitive, looking at the full effects of the pandemic and not just infection.
- 16.3 Evidence from the Children's Commissioner<sup>84</sup> shows that 41 per cent of children are more stressed about their schoolwork and exams since schools closed in March. Many children have felt lonely and isolated from their friends.
- 16.4 The Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition has published its first annual report<sup>85</sup> in which it found that young people's mental health has

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<sup>82</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/educational-psychologists-support-for-coronavirus-covid-19-recovery>

<sup>83</sup> <https://nya.org.uk/2020/08/inside-out-nya-brook/>

<sup>84</sup> <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/report/childhood-in-the-time-of-covid/>

<sup>85</sup> [https://cypmhc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CYPMHC\\_AnnualReport.pdf](https://cypmhc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CYPMHC_AnnualReport.pdf)

declined during the pandemic and that it is likely that youth services will be reduced in the future.

- 16.5 The coronavirus pandemic has caused a rise in mental ill health, behavioural problems and family conflict among disadvantaged children, according to research conducted by Buttle UK<sup>86</sup>. Their survey of nearly 1,000 frontline workers supporting families living in poverty found that the vast majority reported a significant deterioration in children's emotional health and wellbeing during the coronavirus lockdown.
- 16.6 School Dash has published final results of its survey on home schooling<sup>87</sup> that it conducted with Edukit (we covered the interim findings in our June Briefing<sup>88</sup>). It confirmed that feelings of loneliness were widespread and secondary pupils also felt less supported with 20 per cent of respondents saying that their school had provided little wellbeing and mental health support. The report includes analysis by year group, gender and pupil premium status.
- 16.7 Two surveys have separately concluded that about half of young people were worried ahead of returning to school. *Time to Change*<sup>89</sup> (run by Mind and Rethink Mental Illness) found that 46 per cent of 11 to 18-year-olds were concerned about the impact of returning to school on their mental health, while the YMCA<sup>90</sup> found that 54 per cent of respondents aged 11 to 16 were concerned about falling behind after months of closures. The figure rises among age groups entering exam years with three-quarters (75 per cent) of 15-year-olds and 61 per cent of 16-year-olds saying they were concerned about falling behind. "Beyond exam performance, young people are worried about their futures with two-fifths concerned about getting a job and a quarter stating that the pandemic has affected their decisions on what to do once school has finished," the *Back on Track* report states. The survey also found that almost three-quarters of all respondents feel more stressed than before

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<sup>86</sup> <https://www.buttleuk.org/research/the-state-of-child-poverty-2020>

<sup>87</sup> <https://www.schooldash.com/blog-2008.html#20200827>

<sup>88</sup> <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/download/file/fid/26549>

<sup>89</sup> <https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/news/back-to-school-half-11-18s-are-worried-about-impact-their-mental-health>

<sup>90</sup> <https://www.ymca.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/ymca-back-on-track.pdf>

lockdown and 77 per cent report feelings of loneliness and isolation. Overall, the YMCA found that 57 per cent of respondents stated their mental health has worsened and 43 per cent are worried about their wellbeing as they come out of the lockdown.

16.8 Other surveys have also highlighted the need for teachers, tutors and trainers to be adequately supported, including Institute for Public Policy Research (for Teacher Tapp)<sup>91</sup> and Edurio<sup>92</sup>.

16.9 No Isolation, an organisation committed to reduce loneliness and social isolation through technology, released the findings of their study<sup>93</sup> into the impact of Covid-19 on the emotional and educational development of British school-aged children (five to 16 year-olds) and found that:

- the report's authors expect attendance to be down when schools re-open
- perceptions of going back to school contradict the government's advice
- children with a health condition are most affected
- remote working widens the divide between rich and poor children
- mental health is suffering – an estimated 76 per cent of children have suffered from loneliness during the pandemic.

16.10 However, a survey of 1,000 young people aged 13 to 14 in south west England carried out in two waves (October 2019 and June 2020) by the University of Bristol<sup>94</sup> found that anxiety levels fell from 54 per cent to 45 per cent for girls and from 26 per cent to 18 per cent for boys. The researchers said pupils who felt least connected to school before lockdown saw a larger decrease in anxiety, raising questions about how the school environment affects some younger teenagers' mental well-being. Other small scale and anecdotal reports in the media suggest that some parents of young people with Asperger's Syndrome and on the autism spectrum have noticed a drop in their children's stress levels.

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<sup>91</sup> <https://www.ippr.org/blog/making-the-vulnerable-visible>

<sup>92</sup> <https://home.edurio.com/covid-19-impact-report1>

<sup>93</sup> <https://www.noisolation.com/uk/av1/impact-of-covid-on-school-children/>

<sup>94</sup> <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/news/2020/august/young-people-mental-health.html>

- 16.11 Incidents of violence towards parents by children and adolescents increased over the lockdown, research from Oxford University<sup>95</sup> suggested, while the NSPCC reported<sup>96</sup> that, based on records of police-reported offences, adolescents are four times more likely to be physically abused than younger children.
- 16.12 *Poverty in the pandemic: the impact of coronavirus on low-income families*<sup>97</sup> and children by the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) reports on the findings of a survey of low-income families that asked about the financial impact of Covid-19. These included a significant deterioration in living standards due to falling income and rising expenditure. Although the report explains families' financial coping strategies it also covers financial impacts, including stress, anxiety and mental health problems and impacts on children. Its recommendations include increasing children's benefits, expanding eligibility for free school meals and abolishing the benefit cap.
- 16.13 Homelessness and the threat of homelessness contribute to the level of anxiety felt by young people and their families. The eviction ban (extended to 20 September) came to an end and the possibility of losing their home hung - and continues to loom - over many Londoners. The government said it will also introduce six-month notice periods for evictions, other than in cases involving anti-social behaviour and domestic abuse, until "at least the end of March". Nationally, rent arrears are at a high level and it is estimated that 230,000 people are at risk of eviction. In response, a 'unique model' that procures accommodation for homeless Londoners and those at risk could be expanded. Not-for-profit company Capital Letters<sup>98</sup>, which is collectively owned by the boroughs and now has 17 councils signed up, plans to grow to 25 members over the next couple of years. It is focused on securing good-quality accommodation for homeless Londoners, placing them as locally as possible and providing tenancy support.

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<sup>95</sup> [https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/oxlaw/final\\_report\\_capv\\_in\\_covid-19\\_aug20.pdf](https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/oxlaw/final_report_capv_in_covid-19_aug20.pdf)

<sup>96</sup> <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/2287/how-safe-are-our-children-2020.pdf>

<sup>97</sup> <https://cpag.org.uk/sites/default/files/files/policypost/Poverty-in-the-pandemic.pdf>

<sup>98</sup> <https://capitalletters.org.uk/>

16.14 Personalised support from councils could help twice as many people stay in employment, *Employment and homelessness in the context of the new economy following Covid-19*<sup>99</sup> has argued. The Centre for Homelessness Impact is urging local authorities to provide personalised employment support to stop more people from becoming homeless. It said that this system has proved successful in the US and Europe, with people taking part being twice as likely to maintain employment.

## 17 Youth Work

17.1 The DfE established a survey of local authorities in England to help understand the impact of the Covid-19 on Children's Social Care. Local authorities are asked to report to DfE every two weeks on whether cases had been reviewed for Children Looked After (CLA), children on a Child Protection Plan (CPP) and other Children in Need (CIN) and whether they had seen or contacted children in the last two weeks or (in later waves of the survey) in the last four weeks. The DfE has published the results up to the middle of June 2020<sup>100</sup>. These show that the proportion of children who have had their cases reviewed in light of Covid-19 has been increasing over time for CLA, children on a CPP and other CIN. The percentage of children who have been contacted by their social worker in the last four weeks has remained stable across Waves 3 and 4 of the survey. In Wave 4, 72 per cent of CLA, 95 per cent of children on a CPP and 64 per cent of other CIN had been contacted by their social worker in the last four weeks.

17.2 What Works for Children's Social Care (WWCSC) announced the 21 local authorities in England that will receive funding to place social workers in their schools<sup>101</sup> to help reduce referral rates to children's social care, in an expansion of a previous pilot that showed promise. The scale-up of this project is part of a wider programme of work announced by the DfE in May of this year, to provide up to £9.9 million to fund research by WWCSC to improve the lives

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<sup>99</sup> <https://www.homelessnessimpact.org/post/employmentpp>

<sup>100</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/909199/VCYP\\_Survey\\_publication.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/909199/VCYP_Survey_publication.pdf)

<sup>101</sup> <https://whatworks-csc.org.uk/research-report/social-workers-in-schools-an-evaluation-of-a-pilot-in-three-local-authorities-in-england/>



of children and young people in England who have had a social worker. The programme initially planned to fund the evaluation in ten local authorities, but following high levels of interest, the project has been expanded to cover 21 local authorities including Croydon, Ealing, Haringey, Harrow, Lambeth, Merton, Southwark, Sutton and Tower Hamlets.

- 17.3 *The Safety Net Is Gone*<sup>102</sup> is a report by CPAG, the Association of Directors of Children's Services and the Child Welfare Inequalities Project based on a survey of social workers across the UK. The report finds that 94 per cent of those asked said the prevalence and severity of child poverty had increased in recent years. Cuts to local support services, including child and adolescent mental health services, youth services and children's centres means social workers are dealing with more severe issues due to a lack of preventative services, the report states.

## 18 London Government

- 18.1 The Mayor of London has announced a £2.3 million scheme to provide extra support for children who missed out on education during lockdown<sup>103</sup>. The Mayor said that young Londoners were left disadvantaged by months away from school at a vital time in their lives. London's Violence Reduction Unit will help deliver dedicated one-to-one mentoring support for those with complex needs at Pupil Referral Units in all 32 London boroughs.
- 18.2 The Social Switch Project<sup>104</sup> has been funded by London's Violence Reduction Unit to train 24 young people, at risk of getting involved in gangs and violent lifestyles, in digital skills. Each programme lasts three weeks and the project is funded for six months.

## 19 Local and sub-regional developments

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<sup>102</sup> <https://cpag.org.uk/sites/default/files/files/policypost/The-safety-net-is-gone.pdf>

<sup>103</sup> <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/sadiq-invests-23m-to-support-young-people#:~:text=The%20Mayor%20of%20London%2C%20Sadiq,during%20the%20Covid%2D19%20pandemic>

<sup>104</sup> <https://www.thesocialswitchproject.org.uk/>

- 19.1 The Mayor of London is commissioning research into the future challenges and opportunities facing central London and the Canary Wharf area, given the rapid reduction in footfall due to Covid-19.<sup>105</sup>
- 19.2 The Brent Poverty Commission launched its *report A fairer future: ending poverty in Brent*<sup>106</sup> makes policy recommendations to Brent Council, including the economy and access to employment.
- 19.3 *Building equal foundations: tackling the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Black, Asian and other ethnic communities in Camden*<sup>107</sup> explores ways to address the disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on black, Asian and minority ethnic communities living in the London Borough of Camden, including the effects on children and young people.
- 19.4 Here East, an innovation and technology campus in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in East London, has reported on the impact it has had on the community and local area since it was launched at the start of 2019.<sup>108</sup>
- 19.5 The Centre for London has proposed *A recovery plan for the West End*<sup>109</sup> in the face of its almost desertion during the pandemic and the consequent effects on small businesses and entertainment-based industries.
- 19.6 The West London Alliance has launched its *West London Build and Recover Strategy*<sup>110</sup> to protect and create tens of thousands of jobs in west London, help communities and businesses recover from the colossal economic impacts of Covid-19 and help the estimated 280,000 people in west London who have been furloughed during the pandemic, many of whom have been affected by the impact on Heathrow Airport.

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<sup>105</sup> <https://www.smartcitiesworld.net/news/news/london-mayor-commissions-research-into-future-challenges-and-opportunities-5676>

<sup>106</sup> <https://www.brent.gov.uk/media/16416717/poverty-commission-report-launched-17-august-2020.pdf?platform=hootsuite>

<sup>107</sup> [https://www.camden.gov.uk/documents/20142/0/Building+equal+foundations+report+\(1\).pdf/7fef673a-e633-5245-1eec-a9d34e4c72e7?t=1596793536140](https://www.camden.gov.uk/documents/20142/0/Building+equal+foundations+report+(1).pdf/7fef673a-e633-5245-1eec-a9d34e4c72e7?t=1596793536140)

<sup>108</sup> <https://hereeast.com/news/here-east-launches-impact-report-20/?platform=hootsuite>

<sup>109</sup> <https://www.centreforlondon.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Centre-for-London-West-End-Sep-2020-digital.pdf?platform=hootsuite>

<sup>110</sup> <https://wla.london/west-london-build-and-recover-strategy-launch/>

## **20 Summary: the key issues for the recovery of Young People's Education and Skills in London**

20.1 The vast evidence base we have reviewed during the lockdown and the research we conducted before the Covid-19 crisis suggest that those children and young people who fared less well in education before the emergence of Covid-19 are most likely to need support during the recovery. For example:

- White British young people have the lowest rate of participation in post-16 learning of all of London's ethnic groups. These young people may therefore need greater encouragement to return to and stay in their education setting.
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller and Black Caribbean children and young people have high rates of permanent exclusion and there is a strong correlation between exclusion and both low attainment and poor progression outcomes, short-term and long-term. This could mean that considering the most suitable provision for these young people may be essential if all young people are to return to and remain in their education setting.
- Children and young people from low income families, those from troubled families and those in large family groups will have found it more difficult than most to participate in on-line and distance learning and may be in greater need of support on their return to learning.
- Attainment by young people with special educational needs and disabilities, those entitled to free school meals and those in care or who have left care, though much improved in recent years, is still lower than average. Moreover, the progression rates for young people with these characteristics are still much lower than those without.

20.2 There remains great uncertainty about the short-to-medium-term shape of the economy and, consequently, the prospects for young people. Sectors that tend to offer young people their first job are among the worst affected by the pandemic and the jobs that require fewest qualifications and are lowest paid have experienced more redundancies than jobs requiring higher qualifications. Many commentators have suggested that when we fully emerge from the

pandemic, we should not aspire to return to what existed prior to March 2020. The government is looking for a green recovery and for greater social equality across the country, aspirations shared by many, including the TUC<sup>111</sup>.

20.3 London borough leaders have also signalled their ambition to deliver a green, sustainable and inclusive recovery from Covid-19 by unanimously agreeing eight proposals for tackling the climate emergency and safeguarding London's environmental future. The proposals include improving the energy efficiency of London's homes and public buildings, growing London's green economy, working via the planning system to prioritise net zero developments and developing innovative funding and financing proposals to tackle the climate emergency<sup>112</sup>. The Local Government Association has also added weight to the issue<sup>113</sup>.

20.4 At the time of drafting this paper, it has been reported that many office-workers in central London are continuing to work from home, which has led to significant decline in use of transport and in the trade in shops, including international shopping destinations, that are dependent on both business and tourist customers. At the same time, shopping centres in outer London are reporting increased footfall - and yet outer London has witnessed the greatest increase in the number of people claiming unemployment benefits. This suggests that within London – and possibly even within boroughs – a more nuanced approach may need to be taken as many neighbourhoods, groups of people and economic sectors in London have been hit just as hard (or even harder) than anywhere else in the UK.

20.5 The move to on-line teaching and learning had positive and negative effects:

- Positively, many more young people than would normally be the case have become accustomed to self-directed learning and will have begun to develop time management skills that will prove a great asset as they

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<sup>111</sup> [https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/TUC%20Report%20%27A%20Better%20Recovery%27%20\(2\).pdf?platform=hootsuite](https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/TUC%20Report%20%27A%20Better%20Recovery%27%20(2).pdf?platform=hootsuite)

<sup>112</sup> [https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/node/37459?utm\\_campaign=11700102\\_Key%20Issues%2029%20July%202020&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=London%20Councils&dm\\_i=192K,6YRUU,71JL3B,S1C84,1](https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/node/37459?utm_campaign=11700102_Key%20Issues%2029%20July%202020&utm_medium=email&utm_source=London%20Councils&dm_i=192K,6YRUU,71JL3B,S1C84,1)

<sup>113</sup> [https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/5.84\\_Charging\\_up\\_the\\_green\\_recovery%20WEB.pdf](https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/5.84_Charging_up_the_green_recovery%20WEB.pdf)

continue learning and into their adult life. The availability of high-quality resources on-line increased tremendously during the lockdown and many more teachers and tutors have become adept in the use of technology. The increased take-up of on-line learning by adults, particularly those on furlough, suggests that blended learning will become a permanent feature of lifelong learning and continuing development. Young people who have been exposed to a new pedagogy will be in a strong position to continue to learn new skills throughout their lives.

- Many disadvantaged young people did not have access to on-line teaching and learning, either because they did not have the equipment or because their home setting was not conducive to learning. Young people whose learning required additional support, especially where support was delivered face-to-face, may not have been helped adequately during the lockdown.
- Expressing concern that children in England are three months behind in their studies after lockdown, a survey of teachers by the National Foundation for Educational Research<sup>114</sup> has found that the learning gap between rich and poor pupils grew by almost half between March and July - with boys and poor pupils worst hit - and quick catch-up is unlikely.

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<sup>114</sup> <https://www.nfer.ac.uk/schools-responses-to-covid-19-the-challenges-facing-schools-and-pupils-in-september-2020/>

## **Part Two: Policy Update**

This part of the Briefing Note covers policies and reports that have been received in July 2020.

### **21 Skills and Productivity Board**

21.1 Nearly a year after the Secretary of State first announced its establishment, the DfE has advertised applications to join the Skills and Productivity Board. The board, which is intended to comprise “leading labour market economists”, “will undertake expert analysis of which skills and training add the most value to the economy and give the best earnings for learners,” using both technical analysis of data sources such as earnings, as well as stakeholder interviews, policy reviews, and academic research. The board will also make policy recommendations. The DfE says that the Board’s evidence will help the government to identify the training which “best equips young people for work in the future” and will be used by education ministers to inform policy decisions which will “help the system to deliver more of the most valuable skills”. The Board will be chaired by a business leader appointed by the Education Secretary.

### **22 DfE Board**

22.1 The DfE<sup>115</sup> has published its first set of board minutes since February 2018.

### **23 Course Directory<sup>116</sup>**

23.1 The ESFA has published a directory that contains information on courses offered by learning providers with which it has funding agreements.

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<sup>115</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dfe-senior-management-meetings?utm\\_source=72fc13e0-a502-4285-adf0-d90c713d8f2a&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dfe-senior-management-meetings?utm_source=72fc13e0-a502-4285-adf0-d90c713d8f2a&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)

<sup>116</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sfa-course-directory?utm\\_source=cb96b28d-b33b-4c62-9d3d-1d86bc6718ee&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=daily](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sfa-course-directory?utm_source=cb96b28d-b33b-4c62-9d3d-1d86bc6718ee&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily)

## **24 Homeless young people in London**

- 24.1 The Combined Homelessness and Information Network (Chain) published its report for quarter one (January to March 2020<sup>117</sup> – this includes two weeks when rough sleepers were provided with emergency accommodation through the government’s ‘Everyone In’ initiative), which shows that there were 449 children and young people aged under 25 sleeping rough in the capital. This is 81 per cent higher than for the same period in 2019 (248) and 48 per cent higher than in the previous quarter (304). The increase in the number of under-25’s sleeping rough is higher than the figure for all age groups – amongst all rough sleepers the rise was 33 per cent on a year ago and 14 per cent compared to the final quarter of 2019.

## **25 London Futures: Building a new vision for London to 2050 and beyond<sup>118</sup>**

- 25.1 The Centre for London, an independent think-tank, is seeking contributions to a multi-year strategic review to shape London’s future to 2050 and beyond. Working with senior leaders from across the city including the Mayor, London’s boroughs, national government, businesses, charities and universities, the review will examine the state of London today, explore different scenarios for London’s future and involve Londoners in creating a new shared vision for the city. The London Futures review is being presented as a once in a generation opportunity to take a long term, strategic approach to the city. The last review of this scale, the 1991 London, World City report, was also the first to benchmark London as a global city and set in train significant reforms to the capital’s governance, reputation and economy.
- 25.2 The first report of the London’s Futures review, *London at a Crossroads*<sup>119</sup>, has been published. It looks at the strengths and challenges facing London as a leading world-class city. It found that pollution, long commute times, high cost of living, wealth inequality, low wage growth and overall concerns over

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<sup>117</sup> <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports>

<sup>118</sup> <https://www.centreforlondon.org/project/london-futures/>

<sup>119</sup> <https://www.centreforlondon.org/publication/london-at-a-crossroads/>

"wellbeing and inclusion" have meant that London's global standing has been faltering. It also argues the Covid-19 pandemic has further exposed the capital's vulnerabilities and that a green recovery is vital to future success

## 26 Education at a Glance 2020<sup>120</sup>

26.1 *Education at a Glance 2020* by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is regarded as the authoritative source of information on the state of education around the world. It stresses that education is critical to build a more resilient society and points out that the global Covid-19 crisis has exposed the many inadequacies and inequalities in education systems around the world. While acknowledging that governments face difficult decisions on spending during a time of great uncertainty, it urges governments to prioritise investment in education as they rebuild economies and people's livelihoods. Launching the report, Angel Garia (the Secretary General of the OECD) said "The current crisis has tested our ability to deal with large scale disruptions. It is now up to us to build as its legacy a more resilient society". Key points from the report include:

- Vocational Education and Training (VET) has been hit particularly hard during the crisis. This it sees as a major problem, as many professions that form the backbone of economic and social life during the lockdown hinge on Vocational Qualifications.
- On average across all countries, young adults today are less likely to follow a post-16 (or 'upper secondary' as it referred to in the report) vocational path than their parents and more likely to pursue an academic university degree. There is little difference between earnings for young people who have attained the equivalent of level 3 in vocational or academic qualifications but they earn approximately a third less university (or 'tertiary') educated adults.

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<sup>120</sup> <http://www.oecd.org/education/education-critical-to-build-a-more-resilient-society.htm>



- Governments should step-up efforts to make VET more attractive to young people through enhancing work-based learning and strengthening ties with the private sector
- Improve pathways from post-16 VET into tertiary education and progression to level 4 and upwards

26.2 The report has country-specific findings and for the UK these include:

- Compared to other countries, there is no employment premium for young adults with upper secondary vocational education and upper secondary general education.
- The earnings premium from a degree is lower in the UK than the OECD average.
- The UK is one of only a few OECD countries where spending in upper secondary VET programmes (USD 8,978) is lower than in general ones (USD 13,429).

## **27 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)**

27.1 The OECD published the latest volume of the results of the 2018 PISA, a worldwide study that evaluates educational systems by measuring 15-year-old school pupils' scholastic performance on mathematics, science, and reading. *Effective Policies, Successful Schools*<sup>121</sup> has been published during the COVID-19 and shows disparities both between and within countries in the availability of technology. The UK ranks in the middle of most of the indicators used in the report.

## **28 Young people in the time of COVID-19: fear and hope study of 16-24-year olds**<sup>122</sup>

28.1 This report by HOPE Not Hate Educational looks at how fear and hope shaped the attitudes and behaviours of young people, aged 16-24, in Britain during the Covid-19 outbreak. It highlights the main problems facing the

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<sup>121</sup> <http://www.oecd.org/education/pisa-2018-results-volume-v-ca768d40-en.htm>

<sup>122</sup> <https://www.hopenothate.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/youth-fear-and-hope-2020-07-v2final.pdf?platform=hootsuite>

country identified by young people (in particular coronavirus, the economy, unemployment, Brexit, climate change and health) and examines the impact of the coronavirus outbreak on inequalities, personal finances, social life, mental wellbeing, education, and jobs. Discusses young people's attitudes towards social issues such as immigration, multiculturalism, race, hate crime, religion, prejudice and gender equality. It finds that, on the whole, young people hold more progressive social attitudes than older cohorts, but mental health is a big concern for many young people and emphasises the need for a recovery plan to support young people through the coronavirus pandemic and its consequences and to make sure that young people's voices are heard.

## **29 Artificial Intelligence Based Learning Technologies<sup>123</sup>**

- 29.1 A task force of the G20 research and policy advice network, Think20 (T20), has identified artificial intelligence (AI) based learning technologies as the recommended approach to overcoming current educational challenges and ensuring existing and future employees are prepared to be a member of the workforce of today and tomorrow.
- 29.2 T20 research has identified that it is not only the transition from education to employment that must be reformed but also that the skills of those already within employment that no longer meet evolving market requirements.
- 29.3 Recommendations laid out within twelve research-based T20 Policy Briefs outline how G20 member countries can address their individual challenges to ensure economies can recover and achieve sustained growth, as the increased use of AI changes the employment landscape in the digital age.

## **30 Excluded, exploited, forgotten: Childhood criminal exploitation and school exclusions<sup>124</sup>**

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<sup>123</sup> <https://t20saudiArabia.org.sa/en/About/Pages/whats.aspx>

<sup>124</sup> [https://justforkidslaw.org/sites/default/files/fields/download/JfKL%20school%20exclusion%20and%20CCE\\_0.pdf](https://justforkidslaw.org/sites/default/files/fields/download/JfKL%20school%20exclusion%20and%20CCE_0.pdf)

30.1 In this report, children’s legal charity Just for Kids Law is calling for schools to change their approach to child criminal exploitation so that it “always focuses on doing everything possible to safeguard and protect a child” amid fears of a spike in exclusions. The report states that not only are children outside of mainstream education, often due to exclusion, more vulnerable to criminal gangs but children who have experienced exploitation will be more vulnerable to exclusion and may be disproportionately impacted by exclusion. It adds that this is particularly important at present, as most children have not been in school due to Covid-1 because the lack of protection that normally comes with being in school could mean some children have been experiencing exploitation during lockdown. There is a risk that these and other adverse experiences, and a lack of SEND support in lockdown may result in challenging behaviour which could lead to a spike in exclusions when schools reopen if children are not reintegrated and supported effectively. It also says that evidence collected from Just for Kids Law’s casework suggests that some behaviour that leads to exclusion can be orchestrated by criminal actors as a part of furthering that child’s exploitation. The most recent data from HMI Inspectors of Prisons shows that more than eight in 10 children in custody have been excluded from school.

## **31 College of the Future**

31.1 The Independent Commission on the College of the Future and NHS Confederation publish a joint report, *Creating the workforce of the future: a new collaborative approach for the NHS and colleges in England*,<sup>125</sup> which explores what future stronger partnerships and systems between English colleges and the NHS could look like to meet critical NHS workforce needs, boost local jobs and improve population health.

## **32 Further consideration: Creating a new role, purpose and direction for the FE sector<sup>126</sup>**

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<sup>125</sup> <https://www.collegecommission.co.uk/nhs-workforce-future>

<sup>126</sup> <https://www.edsk.org/publications/further-consideration/>

32.1 Think tank EDSK, the director of which is a former ministerial adviser, has published this paper, which says new FE directors should arrange provision in line with local social and economic needs, as well as eliminating duplication of courses and promoting specialisation among nearby colleges. It proposes that colleges would retain responsibility for their day-to-day running, but would have to hand FE directors, based in every local enterprise partnership or mayoral combined authority, final say on important strategic decisions such as the courses and specialisms that each college offers. The directors would also decide how the adult education budget is distributed among their colleges. The paper also proposes splitting colleges into three separate institutions (community, sixth-form and technology colleges), increasing the base rate of funding for 16 to 19-year-olds to £5,000 by 2024/25, and giving learners a new “lifetime loan limit” of £75,000 to spend on education and training.

### **33 Open University Business Barometer<sup>127</sup>**

33.1 This year’s Open University Business Barometer has provided detailed insights into the UK skills landscape, looking at the impacts across regions, nations and sectors. This year’s report, which is released in a new business context, is based on a survey of 1,000 business leaders representing organisations of all sizes. The report found that even though the pool of job candidates has grown significantly in size, employers are still struggling to find the right people, with management and leadership, and digital skills most difficult to find.

### **34 GCSEs**

34.1 The Guardian reported that a coalition of private and state schools is poised to form a campaign group (Rethinking Assessments) aiming to end GCSEs<sup>128</sup>.

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<sup>127</sup> <http://www.open.ac.uk/business/barometer-2020>

<sup>128</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2020/sep/20/private-and-state-schools-bid-to-kill-off-gcse>

## **35 Industrial Strategy<sup>129</sup>**

35.1 The Industrial Strategy Council asked Universities UK to undertake a data exploration project to better understand the contribution of further and higher education to the UK's Industrial Strategy. Universities and Colleges and the Industrial Strategy: Exploring data on knowledge exchange, research and skills considers what we can learn from looking at more granular data on knowledge exchange, research and innovation and skills development. Given the role of the Industrial Strategy Council it focuses specifically on how universities and colleges support the business environment as well as funding distribution that meets national and local priorities.

## **36 Reforms for a Revolutionary Post-16 White Paper<sup>130</sup>**

36.1 The Campaign for Learning has launched this new pamphlet, the second release in the Revolutionary Forces series. Commissioned by the Campaign for Learning, it brings together different perspectives and proposed reforms for the post-16 education and training system in a series of expert articles by stakeholders, think-tanks and educational professionals. Building on the recommendations outlined in the first paper for flexible reforms that support economic and social renewal, the new paper takes a deeper look at which areas need to be addressed including:

- Devolution and 16-19 funding
- Sustainable apprenticeship funding
- Universal Credit and maintenance support to support adult training and retraining
- New full and part-time Level 4-5 technical education pathways

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<sup>129</sup> <https://industrialstrategyCouncil.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/Universities%20and%20Colleges%20and%20the%20Industrial%20Strategy%20Exploring%20data%20on%20knowledge%20exchange,%20research%20and%20skills.pdf>

<sup>130</sup> <https://www.campaign-for-learning.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=f7b361a0-5a8e-40c5-8523-6ea96dbeba4e>

- More technical degrees and Level 6 First degrees
- Improving Level 3 provision for learners post-16
- A strategy for lifelong learning to support wellbeing and employability
- FE workforce development

### **37 Civil Service Care Leaver Internships<sup>131</sup>**

37.1 Applications for the 2020 Civil Service Care Leaver Internship Programme closed on 5 October 2020. The internships are paid and are at Administrative Officer and Executive Officer levels.

### **38 Behaviour Hubs<sup>132</sup>**

38.1 The DfE has invited schools that 'require improvement' to join Behaviour Hubs to work with and learn from schools with exemplary behaviour. Applications must be made by 30 October 2020.

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<sup>131</sup> <https://www.careleaverinternship.co.uk/>

<sup>132</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/behaviour-hubs>

## Part Three: Performance Update

This part of the Briefing Note includes the latest data on performance.

### 39 Participation

- 39.1 The education settings survey reopened on 1 September following the summer break. Schools in England have different term dates, and many have inset days on the first day or two of term. By Thursday 10 September, all schools were expected to have started term and inset days were reported by fewer than one per cent of responding schools (all figures are for state-funded schools - primary, secondary, special schools and alternative provision; FE colleges, post-16 special institutions and independent schools are not included in these figures).
- 39.2 Over 99.9 per cent of state-funded schools were open on 10 September. Of the small proportion of schools (less than 0.1 per cent) that were closed, this was due to both Covid-19 and non-Covid-19 related reasons.
- It is estimated that 92 per cent of state-funded schools were fully open on 10 September. Schools are considered fully open if they are able to provide face-to-face teaching for all pupils on roll for the whole school day and they have not asked a group of pupils to self-isolate. Responses indicate that, for most schools that reported they were not fully open, this was due to non-Covid-19 related reasons. Of all schools that responded, one per cent said they were not fully open due to suspected or confirmed cases of Covid-19.
  - Approximately 88 per cent of pupils on roll in state-funded schools were in attendance on 10 September. Attendance was higher in fully open schools - an estimate 90 per cent of all pupils on roll in fully open state-funded schools were in attendance on 10 September. Attendance estimates include pupils absent for Covid-19 and non-Covid-19 related reasons.

39.3 99.9 per cent of state-funded schools were open on 17 September. Of the small proportion (0.1%) of schools that were closed, this was mostly due to COVID-19 related reasons.

- It is estimated that 94 per cent of state-funded schools were fully open on 17 September (schools are considered fully open if they are able to provide face-to-face teaching for all pupils on roll for the whole school day and they have not asked a group of pupils to self-isolate).
- Responses from schools indicate that most were not fully open due to COVID-19 related reasons. Of all schools that responded, 4 per cent said they were not fully open due to suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- Approximately 87 per cent of pupils on roll in state-funded schools were in attendance on 17 September and an estimated 88 per cent of all pupils on roll in fully open state-funded schools were in attendance on 17 September

39.4 99.8 per cent of state-funded schools were open on 24 September. Of the small proportion (0.2 per cent) of schools that were closed, this was mostly due to COVID-19 related reasons.

- Approximately 88% of all children on roll in all state-funded schools were in attendance on 24 September.
- Approximately 93 per cent of state-funded schools were fully open on 24 September. Responses from schools indicate that most were not fully open due to COVID-19 related reasons. Of all schools that responded to the survey, 6 per cent said they were not fully open due to suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 on 24 September.
- Approximately 84 per cent of state-funded secondary schools were fully open on 24 September. Of those not fully open, this was mostly due to COVID-19 related reasons.
- Attendance in state-funded secondary schools was 84 per cent on 24 September.



39.5 The national statistics of young people who are NEET and unemployed published for April to June 2020<sup>133</sup> show that:

- there were an estimated 765,000 young people (aged 16 to 24 years) in the UK who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) in April to June 2020; this was a decrease of 28,000 compared with April to June 2019 and was down by 6,000 compared with January to March 2020. It is estimated that 59,000 young people aged 16 and 17 were NEET, representing 4.2 per cent of the population for that age group and an increase of 4,000 people (0.2 percentage point) from the same period in 2019.
- The percentage of all young people aged 16 to 24 in the UK who were NEET in April to June 2020 was estimated at 11.1 per cent; the proportion was down by 0.3 percentage points compared with April to June 2019 and down by 0.1 percentage points compared with January to March 2020.
- Of all young people in the UK who were NEET in April to June 2020, an estimated 39 per cent were looking for, and available for, work and therefore classified as unemployed; the remainder were either not looking for work and/or not available for work and were classified as economically inactive.

39.6 The DfE's *Young people NEET or activity unknown: comparative data scorecard*<sup>134</sup> has been updated. It is an interactive system that provides data about young people's education, employment or training status in each local authority in England.

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<sup>133</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peoplenotinwork/unemployment/bulletins/youngpeoplenotineducationemploymentortrainingneet/august2020/pdf>

<sup>134</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-people-neet-comparative-data-scorecard?utm\\_source=af7bad5d-3ab6-4b05-9d5c-0512bf34e9da&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=daily](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-people-neet-comparative-data-scorecard?utm_source=af7bad5d-3ab6-4b05-9d5c-0512bf34e9da&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily)

## **40 Achievement**

40.1 Revised figures for exam entries and achievement after key stage 4 in 2019 have been published. The statistics show that, compared with 2018 revised data for state funded schools in England:

- EBacc (English Baccalaureate) entry rate increased by 1.6 percentage points to 40 per cent, the highest entry rate since the introduction of the EBacc measure in 2010.
- The percentage of pupils at the end of key stage 4 who achieved grade 5 or above in English and mathematics remained stable.
- Average Attainment 8 score per pupil was stable.
- The EBacc average point score (EBacc APS) remained stable.
- The gap between disadvantaged pupils and all other pupils increased slightly.

(We will provide detailed analysis of the position in London in late October)

40.2 Headline results for 2020 are not yet available.

## **41 Intelligent London**

41.1 Intelligent London<sup>135</sup> is updated frequently with the latest available data. The latest updates to both the London and borough reports include recently published data covering:

- Exclusions - Fixed Term (Secondary) 2018/19
- Exclusions - Permanent (Secondary) 2018/19
- Schools, Pupils and Characteristics (January 2020)
- Special Educational Needs (January 2020)
- Age 16 and 17 participation data 2020

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<sup>135</sup> <http://www.intelligentlondon.org.uk/>

- NEET data 2020
- Indices of Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) based on the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

## **42 Recommendation**

- 42.1 Recipients are asked to note the content of this report and submit any comments by email: [peter.obrien@londoncouncils.gov.uk](mailto:peter.obrien@londoncouncils.gov.uk).

## Annex: Sources of Official Guidance

- General guidance on Covid-19 and the government's response<sup>136</sup>
- Specific guidance on education<sup>137</sup>
- The Office for National Statistics (ONS), which supports government at all levels with relevant data and intelligence<sup>138</sup>
- NHS information on coronavirus<sup>139</sup>
- Q&A from Public Health England on coronavirus<sup>140</sup>

**Please note:** The National Institute for Health Protection (NIHP) has been set up to bring together Public Health England (PHE), NHS Test and Trace and the analytical capability of the Joint Biosecurity Centre (JBC) under a single leadership team. This is the first step towards becoming a single organisation focused on tackling COVID-19 and protecting the nation's health.

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<sup>136</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

<sup>137</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-Covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings>

<sup>138</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/search/research-and-statistics>

<sup>139</sup> <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

<sup>140</sup> <https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/01/23/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-what-you-need-to-know/>