

Young People's Education and Skills Operational Sub-Group

Policy Update May 2021

Item 5

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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 to peter.obrien@londoncouncils.gov.uk.

1 Introduction

1.1 This paper provides an overview of policy developments and research in Post-16 education and skills. It has primarily been prepared for the Young People's Education and Skills Operational Sub-Group meeting on 10 June 2021 but is also circulated widely to the Young People's Education and Skills Board, leading councillors, borough officers and other stakeholders and partner organisations in London. Other briefings and updates that we have provided since the Covid-19 pandemic can be found on our dedicated webpage¹.

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 considers some of the main effects on different

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

aspects of the education and skills sector in London. Annex 1 provides a list of sources of official guidance.

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

- London Transition Board²
- London Recovery Board³ (you can sign up to [receive updates from the London Recovery Board](#)). The London Recovery Board aims to: reverse the pattern of rising unemployment and lost economic growth caused by the economic scarring of Covid-19; support our communities, including those most impacted by the virus; help young people to flourish with access to support and opportunities; narrow social, economic and health inequalities; accelerate delivery of a cleaner, greener London. The Board has committed to taking a missions-based approach to the Recovery Programme⁴.

3 Data

3.1 The House of Commons Library⁵, 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.

3.2 The Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT)⁶ 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.

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

³ <https://www.london.gov.uk/coronavirus/londons-recovery-coronavirus-crisis/london-recovery-board>

⁴ <https://www.london.gov.uk/coronavirus/londons-recovery-coronavirus-crisis/recovery-context>

⁵ <https://www.parliament.uk/commons-library>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-interactive-tool-lait>

- 3.3 During the pandemic, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has published a wide variety of data and analysis across various themes and topics on a dedicated Covid-19 web page. It has introduced new surveys, developed new insight, used new data sources and published new cross-cutting analysis in response to demands for high quality, trustworthy and up-to-date statistics throughout the pandemic, while maintaining and developing existing statistics to assess the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. It has launched a web page that brings together information on the pandemic by theme⁷, from which individual reports can be downloaded. Each theme provides an overall narrative on the subject matter based on what has been published to date and provides links to more detailed data and analysis along with the relevant contact points.
- 3.4 Data specific to London is published monthly by Greater London Authority (GLA) Economics⁸ and Intelligent London⁹ is also updated frequently with the latest available data. The GLA's City Intelligence Unit has been publishing a series of digests of external research that offer short summaries of major research reports and a deep dive into one or two topics¹⁰.
- 3.5 The GLA's Datastore has published a new report that provides an assessment of the evidence about how London's population has changed since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic¹¹. The report acknowledges that there is currently a great deal of uncertainty about population trends in London. The pandemic has not only had a huge impact on the patterns of births, deaths and migration that shape the city's population, but it has also

⁷ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/articles/coronaviruscovid19reviewdataandanalysisfromtooctober2020/2020-10-28>

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

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

¹⁰ <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/bc4f5f36-95a2-4a02-b13d-ef8e18ab0ffb/summaries-of-external-research-on-covid-19>

¹¹ https://data.london.gov.uk/blog/understanding-recent-population-trends-in-london/?utm_campaign=Population%20change%20in%20London%20during%20the%20COVID-19%20pandemic%20-%20May%202021&utm_source=emailCampaign&utm_content=&utm_medium=email

greatly disrupted analysts' ability to measure these impacts. Key findings from the report include:

- Once under-reporting at the start of the pandemic is accounted for, Covid-19 has likely been directly responsible for almost 20 thousand deaths in London.
- Births have continued to decline over the last year, but it still remains unclear whether this trend has been significantly influenced by the pandemic.
- Inflows to London have dropped sharply since the first lockdown, but outflows are unlikely to have been affected to the same extent. This will almost certainly have resulted in a net outflow from London over the last year.
- Together these trends in births, deaths and migration are likely to have led to a fall in London's population since the start of the pandemic. However, the scale of this fall is likely to be far smaller than that suggested by some other commentators.
- More important than the absolute size of any immediate drop in population will be the extent to which changes persist as restrictions are eased and the city begins to recover.

3.6 This report will be periodically updated with new data and evidence as it becomes available. An accompanying blog post provides more background to this work.

3.7 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 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 A Skills and Post-16 Education Bill was included in this year's Queen's Speech¹², when the government's programme for the year was set before Parliament. The Bill, which introduces in Law the reforms that were included in the Skills for Jobs White Paper in January, was subsequently published in first draft¹³ and received its first reading in the House of Lords on 18 May. Its second reading is scheduled for 15 June. The DfE has also published supporting information¹⁴. We will be reporting on the Bill's progress through the legislative process in future updates.
- 4.2 Alongside the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill, the government also published details of three funding programmes to boost education for young people in the most deprived areas:
- Post-16 Capacity Fund¹⁵ (£83 m) is to ensure that post-16 providers can accommodate the expected demographic increase in 16 to 19-year-olds.
 - Extension of Opportunity Area Funding (£18 m)
 - Fund to improve teaching quality (£10m) – this will be allocated to areas outside London.
- 4.3 The Prime Minister has appointed Neil O'Brien to oversee the government's "levelling-up" agenda. He also announced that a White Paper will be published to add substance to this policy later this year¹⁶. The Prime Minister outlined plans for better high streets, stronger schools and more jobs outside

¹² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/986770/Queen_s_Speech_2021_-_Background_Briefing_Notes..pdf

¹³ <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2868>

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-and-post-16-education-bill-impact-assessment-and-jchr-memorandum>

¹⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/post-16-capacity-fund>

¹⁶ https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-to-publish-levelling-up-white-paper?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=6864f159-bf52-465f-906f-e328472440b8&utm_content=daily

London in a package of new policies as part of the government's levelling up agenda. He also committed to publishing a White Paper later in the year¹⁷.

5 Parliament/Education Select Committee

- 5.1 A Westminster Hall debate, initiated by Catherine West MP (Labour, Hornsey and Wood Green), on *Support for children entitled to free school meals* took place on Wednesday 26 May 2021¹⁸. The House of Commons Library provided a briefing for the session¹⁹.
- 5.2 Parliament's Public Accounts Committee (PAC) reported²⁰ that, despite being involved in a 2016 cross-government exercise on dealing with a pandemic, the DfE had 'no plan' and was 'unprepared' for the challenges of Covid-19. It says that, when closing schools in 2020, the DfE 'set no standards for in-school or remote learning'. Meg Hillier MP, Chair of the PAC, said that the pandemic 'has further exposed the ugly truth about the children living in poverty and disadvantage'.
- 5.3 The National Audit Office has published initial learning from the government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic²¹. It says;
- Covid-19 has stress-tested the government's ability to deal with unforeseen events and extreme shocks. Like many countries, the UK was not as prepared for the pandemic as it could have been, and

¹⁷ https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prime-minister-hails-levelling-up-in-action-as-government-unveils-raft-of-new-policies?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=cd9c557b-2d74-407e-9160-cc1cd240db9b&utm_content=daily

¹⁸ <https://www.theyworkforyou.com/whall/?id=2021-05-26a.144.0&p=10381>

¹⁹ https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cdp-2021-0073/?utm_source=HOC+Library+-+Research+alerts&utm_campaign=d6eb5a5802-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2021_05_25_08_00&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a9da1c9b17-d6eb5a5802-102517489&mc_cid=d6eb5a5802&mc_eid=d34cbf25d7

²⁰ <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/127/public-accounts-committee/news/155438/no-covid-plan-department-for-education-surprisingly-resistant-to-lessonslearned-exercise-amid-concerns-over-catchup-offer-and-scale-of-hidden-harm/>

²¹ <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Initial-learning-from-the-governments-response-to-the-COVID-19-pandemic.pdf>

government lacked detailed contingency plans to manage the unfolding situation. To deal with the crisis, government has had to streamline decision-making and coordinate efforts across multiple departments, public and private sector bodies. There are many examples of impressive national and local responses to the urgent need for healthcare and economic support on an unprecedented scale.

- The response to the pandemic has provided a vast amount of new learning, both from what has worked well and what has not. It has highlighted the importance of government adopting a more systematic approach to preparing for crises, improving the resilience of key services and making better use of data. Working at pace naturally introduces greater levels of risk, but being transparent, properly documenting decisions and managing conflicts of interest is essential if government is to maintain public trust that taxpayers' money is being spent appropriately and fairly.
- Covid-19 has also laid bare existing fault lines within society and has exacerbated inequalities. An unreformed adult social care system, workforce shortages, issues caused by legacy IT systems, and the financial pressure felt by central and local government all require long-term solutions.

5.4 The NAO will continue to monitor events and report regularly to Parliament.

5.5 The Education Select Committee held an accountability hearing with Gillian Keegan MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Apprenticeships and Skills on 18 May²².

5.6 The Education Committee also held an evidence session on 19 May as part of its inquiry into left behind white pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds²³. Giving evidence were Dr Tony Sewell CBE, Chair at Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities; Martyn Oliver, Commissioner at Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities; and Professor Steve Strand, Professor of Education at University of Oxford.

²² <https://committees.parliament.uk/event/4537/formal-meeting-oral-evidence-session/>

²³ <https://committees.parliament.uk/event/4397/formal-meeting-oral-evidence-session/>

- 5.7 The House of Lords Youth Unemployment Committee held an evidence session on 18 May with Sir Kevan Collins (DfE's Education Recovery Commissioner) and Baroness Wolf of Dulwich CBE (Adviser, No 10 Policy Unit)²⁴.
- 5.8 The House of Lords Public Services Committee, as part of its inquiry into the role of public services in addressing child vulnerability, held formal evidence sessions on 12 May²⁵, taking evidence from specialist think-tanks and local government leaders. The Committee heard calls for local councils to have the power to prevent exclusions and off-rolling of vulnerable children from schools. The Committee has also called on the government to refocus its overall approach to levelling-up, including its investment²⁶.
- 5.9 The Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) has published a research brief that provides an overview of current trends in distance learning (DL)²⁷, setting out the evidence on key challenges, opportunities and potential future developments. It points out that before the pandemic the use of DL was increasing in higher education but uncommon in schools. It explains that assessing the effectiveness of DL is challenging and that most available evidence comes from higher education settings. It also reports that the quality of learning design and teaching is more important than the mode of delivery in achieving learning outcomes. The paper states that, in schools and colleges, engaging all learners in DL is challenging, and requires parental support, integrated student-teacher and peer-to-peer communication and access to hardware and study spaces. It argues that DL and education technology could improve accessibility and inclusion in education if the digital divide is addressed and concludes that, for DL to be effective, teachers need adequate support and training in education technology use and DL design.
- 5.10 An inquiry into the economic impact of Covid-19 launched by the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Youth Affairs²⁸ has found that young people

²⁴ <https://parliamentlive.tv/event/index/9b2b0cf4-da57-43e5-a7a6-caead4f29d27>

²⁵ <https://committees.parliament.uk/event/4502/formal-meeting-oral-evidence-session/>

²⁶ <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/5952/documents/67603/default/>

²⁷ <https://post.parliament.uk/research-briefings/post-pn-0639/?platform=hootsuite>

²⁸ <http://www.youthappg.org.uk/report-generation-covid-the-economic-impact-of-covid-19-on-young-people-in-the-united-kingdom/>

have had their financial, emotional and vocational wellbeing inordinately affected by the pandemic, and that a holistic approach is needed in order to aid their recovery. The Committee said that initiatives including the Kickstart Jobs scheme and the £20 Universal Credit uplift must be extended to support young people “disproportionately” affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

- 5.11 On 25 May, the Health and Social Care Select Committee held three evidence sessions as part of its inquiry into children and young people's mental health.²⁹

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

- 6.1 Phase one of a new report published by the Education Policy Institute (EPI)³⁰, finds that a three-year funding package totalling £13.5bn will be required by the government to reverse the damage to pupils' learning as a result of the pandemic.
- 6.2 The independent analysis, which is the first study to model the impact of lost learning and set out a series of fully costed, evidence-based, proposals for government, shows that significant investment will be required to deliver on the Prime Minister's promise to the nation that “no child is left behind.” This study builds on earlier work (please see our April 2021 Policy Update) and among the policies that EPI is calling on the government to implement include extended school hours for social and academic activities, additional Pupil Premium funding, summer wellbeing programmes, more incentives for teachers to work in “challenging areas”, further mental health support in schools and an option for some pupils to retake the year. The series of education interventions total £13.5billion over the course of this Parliament and, taken together, would seek to reverse the lost learning seen by pupils since March 2020. The package compares with the DfE's annual schools budget for England of £48billion.

²⁹ <https://committees.parliament.uk/event/4658/formal-meeting-oral-evidence-session/>

³⁰ https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Education-Recovery_EPI.pdf

7 Apprenticeships

- 7.1 The Quality Alliance, which is overseen by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education, has published new guidance³¹ to support apprentices back into work and training after Covid-19 breaks. The Quality Alliance brings together a wide variety of partners including Education and Skills Funding Agency, DfE, Ofsted, Ofqual, Office for Students, Quality Assurance Agency, Universities UK, WorldSkills UK, Association of Colleges, Association of Employment and Learning Providers, and Federation of Awarding Bodies.
- 7.2 Nominations for the eleventh *London Borough Apprenticeship Awards* are now open³². London boroughs are invited to nominate entries for any (or all) of the award categories:
- Best contribution by a new apprentice > Best progression by an apprentice
 - Best apprentice working in the supply chain or in schools
 - The Andy Scott award for best manager or mentor
 - Best work with supply chains and local businesses to create new apprenticeships.
- 7.3 The nominations must be made by the local authority, and each London borough will have the chance to nominate one apprentice per category. An Apprentice of the Year will be selected from the first two categories. Last year's London Borough's Apprenticeship Awards were held virtually. Nominations will be accepted up until midnight on **Friday 11 June 2021**. Shortlisted entries will be announced in July and an awards ceremony is planned for 1 September. Further details are available in a nomination pack.

³¹ <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/covid-19/recent-announcements/apprentices-returning-to-work-and-training/>

³² <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/our-key-themes/economic-development/apprenticeships-0/2021-london-borough-apprenticeship-awards-open>

8 T Levels

- 8.1 Employers are now eligible to claim £1,000 for every T Level student placement in a bid to help employers recover from pandemic³³.

9 Quality and Standards

- 9.1 The government has confirmed that Amanda Spielman will remain in post as the Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills for a new term of two years starting 1 January 2022³⁴.
- 9.2 Ofsted's annual parents' survey shows deep appreciation of how well schools have coped during the pandemic (Close to nine in ten parents believe their child's school has handled Covid-19 well) as well as high levels of awareness of Ofsted and trust in its findings³⁵.
- 9.3 The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) has developed a free cyber security training package to help improve schools' cyber resilience³⁶.
- 9.4 British Educational Suppliers Association (BESA)'s *Catch-up Challenge School Support Scheme*³⁷, brings together over 50 trusted UK education suppliers who have pledged to offer free advice to schools, empowering them with the tools they need to support their students right now. It is designed to help teachers identify the best ways of supporting students during this critical time. School and trust leaders, subject coordinators and classroom teachers are invited to browse the curated list of suppliers to find bespoke support for their setting. They can book a call directly with the suppliers of their choice, filtering by the Ofsted inspection framework categories.
- 9.5 The Education Policy Institute has reported on teacher pay and retention³⁸, saying that the pandemic has boosted teacher numbers, but longstanding

³³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/cash-boost-for-t-levels>

³⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/amanda-spielman-to-continue-as-ofsted-chief-inspector>

³⁵ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/987970/Ofsted_Parents_Annual_Survey_2021.pdf

³⁶ <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/information/cyber-security-training-schools>

³⁷ <https://www.lended.org.uk/catchup-challenge/>

³⁸ <https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/local-pay-and-teacher-retention-in-england/>

recruitment and retention problems are likely to return. The report also claims that despite acknowledging the risk of a shortfall of teachers after the pandemic, the government has recently abolished policies which are highly likely to encourage retention. It adds that large local pay gaps are impeding efforts to recruit and retain teachers, which the report says should also be addressed to prevent teacher supply problems returning.

10 Achievement

- 10.1 The DfE has issued an interactive GCSE, AS and A level visualisation tool showing statistical information in a range of different topic areas³⁹.
- 10.2 Ofqual has confirmed that students who receive a teacher assessed grade this summer in GCSE, AS or A-Level will be able to sit exams in the same subject in the autumn with no adaptations to exam papers to account for learning loss⁴⁰. The qualifications offered to any pupil that sits exams in the autumn will be determined by performance in an exam with no teacher assessment involved in the calculation.
- 10.3 Ofqual is consulting on arrangements for non-exam assessment (NEA) and fieldwork requirements for some GCSE, AS and A level qualifications in 2022⁴¹.
- 10.4 The ONS has published an update in its approach to measuring education output in the UK during the Covid-19 pandemic⁴². Its main points are:
 - Repeated changes to schooling policies during the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic and the need to measure education output as

³⁹ https://www.gov.uk/government/news/interactive-gcse-as-and-a-level-data-visualisation-tool-launched?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=44cd6415-e1bb-4b01-8000-dd0d0fa6d17a&utm_content=daily

⁴⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ofqual-confirms-autumn-assessment-arrangements>

⁴¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/2022-non-exam-assessment-and-fieldwork-requirements-consultation>

⁴² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/grossdomesticproductgdp/articles/coronavirusandtheimpactonmeasuresofukgovernmenteducationoutput/march2020tofebruary2021>

consistently as possible have required us to keep innovating to ensure measurement keeps up with developments in schools.

- Following several policy regimes, we have reviewed and aligned our measurement approaches to provide consistent accounting for remote learning during 2020; this has reduced the extent to which remote learning was an effective substitute for in-person teaching at the start of the pandemic relative to during Autumn term 2020.
- As a consequence of these changes, the fall in education output between Quarter 1 (January to March) 2020 and Quarter 2 (April to June) 2020 has increased, indicating that the impact of the first lockdown on education output was larger than initial estimates suggested.
- Following the alignment of statistical methods, education output for Quarter 2 2020 in volume terms is now estimated to have fallen 36.7 per cent and gross domestic product (GDP) 19.5 per cent, a downwards revision of 13.6 and 0.5 percentage points respectively from the previous estimate.
- The ONS has also adapted its measurement for the further school closures and change in policy regime in the first few months of 2021, to enable comparisons on a consistent basis.
- Under its approach remote learning as a substitute for in-person teaching has generally improved throughout the pandemic, which is contributing to education output.

11 Progressions - the Labour Market

- 11.1 An in-depth analysis of young people's (aged 16 to 24 years) labour market outcomes in 2020 has been produced by the ONS⁴³. It shows how the young people were impacted by the coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19) and some of

⁴³<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/labourmarketeconomicanalysisquarterly/march2021#main-points>

the drivers of such outcomes, using labour market flows and quarterly labour force survey data. Its main points are:

- Young people's employment rate saw a large decline in 2020 compared with 2019, while their unemployment and economic inactivity rates increased.
- After an initial fall in young people in full-time education in the first few months of the pandemic, the proportion of young people in full-time education increased in the second half of 2020, reaching a new high of 46.8 per cent in Quarter 3 (July to September) 2020.
- The number of young people employed in the accommodation and food services industry who moved to unemployment or economic inactivity increased by more than 50 per cent in Quarter 2 (April to June) 2020 compared with Quarter 2 2019.
- Young people who worked part-time moved from employment to economic inactivity at a faster rate than they moved to unemployment in 2020.
- Young people's labour mobility (job-to-job moves) declined more during the pandemic than for older age groups.

11.2 The labour market statistics for May⁴⁴ show that the jobs market has been broadly stable in recent months, with some early signs of recovery. The number of payroll employees has increased for the fifth consecutive month but remains 772,000 below pre-coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic levels. Since February 2020, the largest falls in payrolled employment have been in the hospitality sector, among those aged under 25 years, and those living in London. Following a period of employment growth and low unemployment, since the start of the pandemic, employment has generally been decreasing and unemployment increasing. However, the latest estimates for January to March 2021 show signs of recovery, with a quarterly increase in the employment rate. Meanwhile, there was a quarterly decrease in the unemployment rate and the economic inactivity rate increased on the quarter.

⁴⁴ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/uklabourmarketmay2021>

With the reintroduction of many coronavirus restrictions, total hours worked decreased on the quarter.

- 11.3 Young people (those aged 16 to 24 years) have been particularly affected by the pandemic. Over the last quarter there was a decrease in the employment and unemployment rates for young people, particularly amongst 16- to 17-year-olds. This suggests that more young people are staying in education and not looking for work, which is supported by the record economic inactivity rate of young people in full-time education.
- 11.4 In recent months, the number of people temporarily away from work has fallen including both those away from work because of the pandemic receiving no pay and those on full pay. Those receiving partial pay while away from work has remained stable over the period.
- 11.5 In February to April 2021, the number of vacancies reached its highest level since January to March 2020, with most industries displaying increases over the quarter, most notably, accommodation and food service activities.
- 11.6 GLA Economics' spring 2021 economic outlook suggests that employment levels in London may not return to pre-pandemic levels until 2023, despite Gross Value Added increasing quickly for the next two years before moderating in 2023⁴⁵.
- 11.7 The Local Government Association (LGA)'s local employment and skills recovery learning hub is now live and provides resources designed to share learning across local government (Hounslow and Waltham Forest are included in the case studies showcased)⁴⁶. It also includes material produced by the Learning and Work Institute that sets out what the sector can do to ensure jobs and skills are at the heart of local recovery. The LGA has also launched a report⁴⁷ capturing action learning to support local authorities identify barriers, challenges and solutions in fulfilling their statutory duties for young people.

⁴⁵ <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/leo-spring-2021-final.pdf>

⁴⁶ <https://www.local.gov.uk/employment-skills-recovery-hub>

⁴⁷ <https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/education-employment-supporting-youth-participation>

- 11.8 Impetus has produced a dedicated webpage collating its *Youth Jobs Gap* research⁴⁸. The research investigates the link between education and employment outcomes and was the product of joint analysis of the government's Longitudinal Educational Outcomes (LEO) dataset with the National Institute for Social and Economic Research (NIESR). The collated research provides a picture of employment outcomes for young people. Impetus has now compiled the Youth Jobs Gap findings into two dashboards, making the research tailorable and more easily accessible. Users can filter the contents of the dashboards to suit their needs⁴⁹.
- 11.9 *Double Trouble: Exploring the labour market and mental health impact of Covid-19 on young people*⁵⁰ marks the beginning of a three-year research programme at the Resolution Foundation investigating the links between the labour market and mental health outcomes of young people. In this launch paper, they examine how young people have fared on both accounts through the pandemic period. The research looks back, showing that a number of structural changes over the past 20 years made young people especially vulnerable to the current crisis; and looks forward, identifying the risks young people could face in the wake of the monumental shock that has been Covid-19.
- 11.10 The research finds that young people have been hard hit compared to other age groups during the pandemic when it comes to both economic security and mental health. But in both respects, the last year has exaggerated longer-term trends. Pre-crisis, young people were more likely to be in an insecure job, and substantially more likely to have a mental health problem, than ten years ago. Without policy action, the labour market and mental health impacts of the pandemic could persist, driving down young people's living standards in the process. The main findings in this report are:
- In 2000, 24 per cent of 18 to 24-year-olds had a common mental disorder (CMD), the lowest rate of any age group. By 2018-2019, that

⁴⁸ <https://www.impetus.org.uk/policy/youth-jobs-gap>

⁴⁹ <https://www.impetus.org.uk/neet-dashboards>

⁵⁰ <https://www.resolutionfoundation.org/publications/double-trouble/>

figure had grown to 30 per cent, with young people the age group most likely to have a mental health problem.

- On the eve of the crisis, four-in-ten (40 per cent) 18 to 24-year-olds who were unemployed had a CMD, compared to three-in-ten (30 per cent) in insecure work and 27 per cent in secure forms of employment. In January 2021, one-in-five (19 per cent) 18 to 24-year-olds who were in work before the crisis were no longer working, compared to four per cent of 25 to 54-year-olds and 11 per cent of 55 to 65-year-olds. And among those young people in insecure work pre-crisis, the share no longer working by January rose to 36 per cent.
- Half (51 per cent) of 18 to 24-year-olds had mental health problems in April 2020, up from the 30 per cent in the pre-crisis period and the highest rate for any age group at the outset of the pandemic.
- In January 2021, more than one-in-four (26 per cent) 18 to 24-year-olds who had not had a mental health condition before the crisis had a 'new' CMD. For 18-21-year-olds, the figure stood at three-in-ten (30 per cent).
- Young people with a mental health condition in 2010-2011 (when unemployment was high following the financial crisis) were more likely to be out of work four years on than those without, at 14 per cent and eight per cent, respectively.

11.11 A report⁵¹ from The Work Foundation and Totaljobs finds that despite social care's challenges being exacerbated by Covid-19 and Brexit, the pandemic has given Brits a new-found appreciation of the sector. The number of people applying for social care roles has increased by 39 per cent, with one in four (25 per cent) 16 to 25-year-olds reporting they are likely to pursue a career in the sector soon. However, existing high turnover within care roles could mean new hires quickly leave the sector if significant changes are not made.

11.12 A report⁵² by OKdo, a global technology company from Electrocomponents plc, warns that the supply of computer science skills is currently failing to meet demand in this surging sector and there are still not enough young

⁵¹ <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/work-foundation/publications/social-care>

⁵² <https://www.okdo.com/computer-science-in-the-classroom-report/>

adults choosing this as a career at school or university. Through analysis of GCSE results data from the Joint Council for Qualifications, OKdo discovered that the number of students taking the Computer Science course in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland has steadily increased since it was launched: 16,773 sat the examinations and were awarded a grade in 2014 versus 78,459 in 2020 (up 367 per cent). However, this still only represents 1.4 per cent of all students.

11.13 Labour market experts EMSI's continuing series of articles on the labour market in FE Week⁵³ identifies the five fastest growing hard skills during the pandemic. The skills are listed under the broad occupational classifications of:

- High skilled (Standard Occupation Classification (SOC 1-3)
- Middle skilled (SOC 4-5)
- Service-oriented (SOC 6-7)
- Labour intensive (SOC 8-9).

11.14 As part of the same series, EMSI produced an interactive feature on identifying local labour market demand⁵⁴. They have analysed the changing employer-demand for occupations during the pandemic and its various lockdowns and focus on job postings for skilled construction and building trades and customer service occupations, showing the different pattern of employment across the country.

11.15 The independent Covid Recovery Commission has put forward policy proposals⁵⁵ for a new collaborative approach between business, central government and civic leaders to develop a prosperity plan to deliver economic growth and improved living standards in the recovery from Covid-

⁵³ <https://www.fenews.co.uk/fevoices/67882-fastest-growing-hard-skills-during-the-covid-crisis>

⁵⁴ https://www.fenews.co.uk/fevoices/68899-the-importance-of-identifying-labour-market-demand-at-the-local-level?utm_source=FE+News&utm_campaign=cc19d0a6dd-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a588419e08-cc19d0a6dd-17379865

⁵⁵ <https://covidrecoverycommission.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/CRC-Ambition-2030.pdf>

19. Its vision is of a fairer and more resilient economy by 2020 based on: creating the conditions for innovation and value-added growth; investing in the skills of the future; delivering world-class infrastructure; decarbonising energy demand to deliver net zero; building personal and community resilience.

12 Progression to Further and Higher Education

12.1 The Collab Group of leading FE Colleges has released a document⁵⁶ showing how colleges have responded to Covid-19. The paper is based on a series of interviews with college leaders, including Young People's Education and Skills Board member Dr Sam Parrett OBE, Chief Executive Officer & Group Principal, London South East Colleges. The report finds that:

- The pandemic has accelerated colleges plans for digital transformation both in how they deliver education and training but also in how they have adapted their systems and processes.
- Support from local government proved essential for colleges as they navigated the uncertainty of the pandemic. Central Government did provide meaningful support, but at times contradictory policy messages created confusion.
- The pandemic exposed the extent of the digital divide and how inequality manifests itself in an increasingly connected world. Urgent action is needed from policymakers to address inequalities in access to digital equipment and how this has a corresponding impact on inclusion and life chances.
- Local economies have been changed dramatically due to the pandemic, many areas have seen rising youth unemployment and significant disruption to industries like retail, hospitality and tourism.

⁵⁶ <https://www.collabgroup.co.uk/documents/collab-group-principals-and-ceos-reflect-on-covid-19>

- 12.2 The DfE has published official statistics on the employment and earnings outcomes of postgraduates⁵⁷.
- 12.3 The Office for Students has published a new measure that projects new students' likelihood of finding professional level employment or embarking on further study in the year after they graduate⁵⁸.
- 12.4 The Institute for Fiscal Studies reported⁵⁹ that even high-achieving pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds miss out on some university opportunities – but mentoring programmes can help. It also reported⁶⁰ that, while there is broad agreement in the UK on the importance of social mobility, current evidence suggests that social background is more strongly related to outcomes in the UK than in many other developed countries.

13 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

- 13.1 The DfE has produced Special educational needs: analysis and summary of data sources⁶¹, a compendium of the available statistics on children and young people with SEND in England and details of the data sources used in its analysis.
- 13.2 The DfE has also published the accompanying data⁶². The headline statistics for England are:
- there were 430,697 Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP), an annual increase of approximately 10 per cent.
 - there were 60, 097 new EHCPs, an annual increase of 11 per cent.

⁵⁷ https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/graduate-outcomes-leo-postgraduate-outcomes-in-2018-to-2019?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=8580fea5-8168-40f0-b3a6-7e0a98b3715a&utm_content=daily

⁵⁸ <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/proceed-updated-methodology-and-results/>

⁵⁹ <https://ifs.org.uk/publications/15460>

⁶⁰ <https://ifs.org.uk/publications/15461>

⁶¹ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/985162/Special_educational_needs_Publication_May21_final.pdf

⁶² <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/education-health-and-care-plans>

- 58.0 per cent of EHCPs (excluding exceptions) were issued within 20 weeks, a reduction of 2.4 percentage points on the previous year.
- 13.3 Some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in mainstream schools are not getting enough help to support their learning and development, even when external services are involved, according to a new research report by Ofsted⁶³.
- 13.4 In response to the official figures on SEND published on 13 May, the LGA urged the government to complete its review of the SEND system to ensure that councils have long-term funding to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND⁶⁴.
- 13.5 The LGA also commented⁶⁵ on Ofsted's report on SEND saying that it welcomed the recognition of the support provided to pupils with SEND but the continued rise in demand for overall and new EHCPs remains a pressing issue for councils as they strive to provide every child with the best possible support to meet their needs.
- 13.6 Natspec has issued a toolkit developed by therapists from across its member colleges⁶⁶. The toolkit will help therapists working in the specialist FE sector to develop and improve practice and demonstrate the value of therapy. Orchard Hill College played a major part in the development of the toolkit.
- 13.7 The *Employ Me London (Genius Within) Programme*⁶⁷ aims to support young people with a learning difficulty and/or a learning disability, to achieve sustained employment, education or training. The programme jointly funded by GLA and European Social Fund (ESF) runs from April 2021 to June 2023. To join the programme young people must be aged 16 to 24, live in London,

⁶³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-send/supporting-send>

⁶⁴ <https://local.gov.uk/about/news/lga-responds-new-figures-children-and-young-people-education-health-and-care-plans>

⁶⁵ <https://local.gov.uk/about/news/lga-responds-ofsted-report-supporting-send-mainstream-schools>

⁶⁶ <https://natspec.org.uk/therapy/>

⁶⁷ https://mcusercontent.com/dca34d06ea32e6e4229821ceb/files/def67a8e-fca8-2946-765f-085bc2a8d8fc/Employ_Me_London_Programme_Overview.pdf

have a learning difficulty and/or a learning disability or autism and be NEET. Participants can be referred or refer themselves.

14 Funding

- 14.1 The DfE has announced a further £8million as part of the Alternative Provision Transition Fund for 2021/22 to support up to 11,400 Year 11 pupils as they move into the next stage of their education, work or training after they leave school⁶⁸. The money – up to £750 per pupil – will help Alternative Provision settings pay for one-to-one support such as mentors or specialist transition coaches to help young people make decisions about their options after they finish school, helping guide them into further education, post-16 training routes or directly into employment.
- 14.2 The Condition of Schools Building Survey finds that schools in England face a repair bill of more than £11billion⁶⁹.
- 14.3 The government has announced £166million investment in green technology and development as part of Green Industrial Revolution that will create 60,000 new jobs⁷⁰.
- 14.4 A briefing from the Institute of Fiscal Studies (IFS)⁷¹ estimates that approximately a third of the extra Covid-19 related education spending announced by the government is funded through existing budgets or underspending.

⁶⁸ https://www.gov.uk/government/news/funding-boost-for-pupils-leaving-alternative-provision?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=86c55983-51ec-40aa-b456-9ceb99dd56b7&utm_content=daily

⁶⁹ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/989912/Condition_of_School_Buildings_Survey_CDC1_-_key_findings_report.pdf

⁷⁰ https://www.gov.uk/government/news/166-million-cash-injection-for-green-technology-and-60000-uk-jobs?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=ede56262-1eda-4070-aab6-d528ce83b22c&utm_content=daily

⁷¹ <https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/15442>

- 14.5 A total of £118million for disadvantaged pupils could be lost from school budgets in England this year due to a government change in how Pupil Premium funding is calculated, a new survey by the Local Government Association (LGA) reveals⁷².

15 Race Equality and Social Justice

- 15.1 The Traveller Movement is accepting applications for its Functional Skills for NEET Programme for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) young people. The Programme offers 16 to 25 year-olds one-to-one professional tuition in levels 1 or 2 English and maths. Further details can be obtained from youth@travellermovement.org.uk.
- 15.2 The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) has published a report⁷³ revealing that the poverty rate among working households has hit a record high this century, with one in six working households now facing poverty. Working poverty rates among families with three or more children have also reached 42 per cent, up more than two thirds over the past decade. It says that our welfare system is built on the notion that work is the main route out of poverty. Yet for increasing numbers of working families around the country, the promise of social mobility through 'hard work' as a route out of poverty alone is failing to deliver. The report lists four factors behind the growth in poverty: spiralling housing costs among low-income households; low wages; a social security system that has failed to keep up with rental costs; and a lack of flexible and affordable childcare. It identifies the economy's over-dependence on house price growth as a key factor in driving poverty higher, as more families have to rely on renting privately.

⁷² <https://local.gov.uk/about/news/lga-survey-ps118m-disadvantaged-pupils-could-be-lost-school-budgets-year>

⁷³ https://www.ippr.org/research/publications/no-longer-managing-the-rise-of-working-poverty-and-fixing-britain-s-broken-social-settlement?mc_cid=b8b5c22e54&mc_eid=60b9781fa0

16 Mental Health

- 16.1 The Education Secretary announced that £17million would be allocated to improve mental health and wellbeing support in schools and colleges. This new funding is intended to train thousands of senior mental health leads and provide helpful resources⁷⁴.
- 16.2 Stop.Breathe.Think⁷⁵ is a new mental health service run by national youth charity Snow-Camp. Unlike other free mental health services, Stop.Breathe.Think offers young people, aged 21 or under, up to 12 weekly one-hour counselling sessions. If young people need support in between their counselling sessions, Stop.Breathe.Think also offer a free 24/7 text support service. Alarmingly, the average age of young people getting in touch is 14, and some of the most common issues they are facing include anxiety, self-harm and suicidal thoughts. Furthermore, research conducted by Stop.Breathe.Think reveals that the pandemic has made 82 per cent of the younger generation feel anxious or worried, and 3 out of 4 feel overwhelmed.
- 16.3 The Anna Freud Centre is running its Link Programme for 2021/22⁷⁶ and welcoming applicants. This programme brings together schools, FE colleges, councils, mental health services and clinical commissioning groups to map and understand local services. Anna Freud, with the UK Trauma Council, have also published bereavement resources for children and young people⁷⁷.

⁷⁴ https://www.gov.uk/government/news/schools-and-colleges-to-benefit-from-boost-in-expert-mental-health-support?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=b5759ae9-0178-491c-b388-c331f2384347&utm_content=daily

⁷⁵ <https://www.stopbreathethink.com/learn/>

⁷⁶ <https://www.annafreud.org/linkprogramme/>

⁷⁷ <https://uktraumacouncil.org/resources/traumatic-bereavement?cn-reloaded=1>

17 Housing/Homelessness

- 17.1 London Councils has warned of a ‘summer of soaring homelessness’ fuelled by high unemployment and rent arrears; the eviction ban lifting on 31 May; and uncertainty over homelessness funding⁷⁸.
- 17.2 Just for Kids Law and Homeless Link have published a useful new resource⁷⁹ for front-line professionals in the voluntary sector who support 16- and 17-year-olds faced with homelessness. The guidance was developed after research published last year by Just for Kids Law found that every year thousands of children facing homelessness who approach their local authority for help are being turned away or not given the support to which they are entitled. The guidance includes information on the legal entitlements of these children, provides practical advice based on experience of how professionals can advocate for them, as well as information on communicating effectively with them about their choices, and respecting their agency.
- 17.3 Shelter has launched a report⁸⁰ that shows the scale of the national housing emergency. Built upon a comprehensive survey of 13,000 people throughout the UK, it looks at just how many people are trapped in the housing emergency and the different way it affects them. New-born babies are breathing in toxic mould from unfit houses. Younger people are struggling to make ends meet in dangerous flats. People are denied a place to rent simply because they are gay, disabled or Black. And there are many others who’ve been forced to sleep on the streets – with no place to go to, no one to turn to and no hope for the future.

⁷⁸ <https://beta.londoncouncils.gov.uk/news/2021/boroughs-fear-summer-soaring-homelessness>

⁷⁹ <https://justforkidslaw.org/what-we-do/fighting-change/campaigning/housing-and-social-care/supporting-homeless-16-and-17-year-olds-guidance-voluntary-and-community-sector-organisations>

⁸⁰ <https://blog.shelter.org.uk/2021/05/now-is-the-time-to-fight-for-home/>

18 Youth Work

- 18.1 The National Youth Agency (NYA)'s *National Youth Sector Census*, which asks for information about a local authority's youth provision, remains open until 30 June 2021⁸¹. The NYA also want to hear from charities, community groups and others providing much needed support and out of school activities for young people. This will help inform policymakers and service providers as part of Covid-19 recovery and the government's Spending Review, over the long term.
- 18.2 The DfE has announced £51million in funding for various schemes supporting young people leaving care⁸², including:
- £33million continued investment in 'Staying Put', which helps looked after children stay with their foster carers after their 18th birthday if they wish to;
 - £3.6million to extend the 'Staying Close' pilot which gives extra support for young people leaving residential care, and £12m for councils to continue to provide Personal Advisors to support care leavers up to the age of 25; and
 - £2.7million to provide intensive support to care leavers at high risk of homelessness, as part of the Government's Rough Sleeping strategy.
- 18.3 The Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) has issued a Position Statement *What is care for?*⁸³. It highlights the priorities to address this year, including an increased use of kinship care and special guardianship arrangements.

⁸¹ <https://nya.org.uk/national-youth-sector-census/>

⁸² <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/50-million-for-councils-to-support-care-leavers>

⁸³ https://adcs.org.uk/assets/documentation/ADCS_What_is_care_for_2021_FINAL.pdf

19 London

- 19.1 Sadiq Khan was re-elected as Mayor of London in elections held on 6 May 2021⁸⁴. In his election manifesto⁸⁵, The Mayor recommitted himself to the London Recovery Board's Programme, including a range of measures to support the next generation of Londoners.
- 19.2 The Mayor of London has launched 'Let's Do London' – a new £6million campaign to attract domestic visitors into the capital and bring central London's economy back to life⁸⁶. The campaign and events programme, backed by industry to kick-start London's economy, will bring together the capital's world-leading hospitality, culture, nightlife and retail venues to promote all London has to offer. These are industries which have offered considerable employment opportunities to young people in the past but have been particularly badly affected during the pandemic.
- 19.3 South Thames Colleges Group, the largest provider of college-based HE in London, has been granted the use of University Centre title by the DfE⁸⁷.
- 19.4 Congratulations to London South East Colleges, which won three categories in the TES FE Awards 2021 including Overall FE Provider of the Year, Contribution to the Local Community and FE College of the Year⁸⁸. The Colleges also took part in the Royal Borough of Greenwich's Project Hope campaign as its Hair and Beauty students provided complimentary pampering sessions to staff at Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust.

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

- 20.1 As the country makes the next steps to ease the restrictions necessary to contain the spread of Covid-19, continued concern about the prospects of young people in the labour market are again coming to the fore. Following

⁸⁴ <https://www.londonelects.org.uk/>

⁸⁵ <https://sadiq.london/sadiqs-manifesto-for-london/>

⁸⁶ <https://www.visitlondon.com/things-to-do/lets-do-london>

⁸⁷ <https://stcg.ac.uk/news/south-thames-colleges-group-granted-university-centre-title>

⁸⁸ <https://www.tesfeawards.co.uk/tesfeawards2021/en/page/home>

May's elections, continuity in London's Recovery Programme is expected, while central government is continuing with its approach of making targeted investment in issues within the education and training that are of specific concern to ministers.

20.2 The introduction of the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill, which was highly anticipated, brings the possibility of significant reform in the system, though the full benefits of this reform will be achieved if the government accepts some changes in its proposals during the legislative process.

20.3 London's local authorities are asked to respond to the NYA's Youth Census (see paragraph 18.1) and consider applying for the London Borough Apprenticeship Awards (see paragraph 7.2).

Part Two: Policy Update

This part of the Briefing Note covers policies and reports that have been received in May 2021.

21 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMMS) and Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)

21.1 The DfE has published a research brief⁸⁹ in which the key lessons that can be learned from reading policy in the Republic of Ireland and trends in the PISA 2018 data are summarised (the Republic of Ireland consistently has high scores in PISA). The report draws on a number of data sources, including policy analysis, surveys of policy experts in the four UK nations and the Republic of Ireland, interviews with policy experts in the Republic of Ireland and analysis of PISA data.

22 Measuring the Net Present Value of Further Education in England⁹⁰

22.1 The DfE has published a report on the net present value of FE in England 2018 to 2019 in which strong economic returns to a range of publicly-funded vocational qualifications delivered in the FE sector are shown.

23 British Chambers of Commerce Workforce Training and Development Commission⁹¹

23.1 The British Chambers of Commerce's Workforce Training and Development Commission published its final report, which calls for a more agile skills system and identifies the following five priorities:

⁸⁹ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/985610/Using_PISA_2018_to_inform_policy_learning_from_the_republic_of_Ireland_research_brief.pdf

⁹⁰ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/986649/Measuring_the_Net_Present_Value_of_Further_Education_in_England_2018_to_2019.pdf

⁹¹ <https://www.britishchambers.org.uk/media/get/Workplace%20Training%20and%20Development%20Commission%20Report.pdf>

- Building High Performance Learning Cultures - Supporting businesses to identify, plan, articulate and invest in workplace training and development needs.
- Digital skills and innovation - Equipping the workforce with the digital skills needed for businesses to grow and innovate.
- Using the skills system - A stable and coherent employer-led skills system, with prestigious technical and vocational qualifications together with flexible, bite-sized accredited training.
- Place-based solutions - Giving employers a strong voice and appropriate influence over the skills system for their area.
- Enabling Employees - Supporting individuals to develop their own skills.

24 Research College Group⁹²

24.1 A new Research College Group was founded by 10 educational settings (General FE Colleges and Sixth Form Colleges) to bring practitioners and other forms of post-16 education and training research into the heart of sector organisations.

25 Times Education Commission⁹³

25.1 The Times Education Commission has been launched with the intention of reporting back on fundamental questions about the education system in June 2022.

⁹² <https://www.researchcollegigroup.co.uk/>

⁹³ <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/times-education-commission-how-it-will-work-935vd9qvk>

Part Three: Performance Update

This part of the Briefing Note includes the latest data on performance. The DfE is trialling a new service to enable its statistical data to be viewed and used⁹⁴.

26 Participation

Attendance

26.1 The figures on schools and colleges attendance published by DfE⁹⁵ are as follows:

- In the week commencing 3 May 2021, 100.0 per cent of educational settings were open and 92.3 per cent of students attended (note: the measurement date was moved to 5 May as some schools were used as polling stations on Thursday 6 May).
- In the week commencing 10 May 2021, 99.9 per cent of educational settings were open and 91.9 per cent of students were in attendance.
- In the week commencing 17 May the proportion of educational settings open was 100.0 per cent and the proportion of students attending was 91.0 per cent.
- KEPT FOR FORMATTING In the week commencing XXX: YYY per cent of state schools were open and attendance was ZZZ per cent.
(Thursday is the 'spot' day on which weekly attendance is counted)

Young people not in education, employment or training

26.2 The official estimates of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), using the Labour Force Survey, were published on 27 May⁹⁶. These showed:

⁹⁴ <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/neet-statistics-annual-brief>

⁹⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/attendance-in-education-and-early-years-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

⁹⁶ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peoplenotinwork/unemployment/bulletins/youngpeoplenotineducationemploymentortrainingneet/may2021>

- The percentage of all young people (aged 16 to 24 years) in the UK who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) in January to March 2021 was estimated at 10.6 per cent, which is a record low; the proportion was down 1.0 percentage points compared with October to December 2020 and down 0.4 percentage points compared with pre-pandemic estimates in October to December 2019.
- Of all young people in the UK who were NEET in January to March 2021, an estimated 43.9 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.
- There were an estimated 728,000 young people in the UK who were NEET in January to March 2021, which is a record low; the number had decreased by 69,000 compared with October to December 2020 and was down 35,000 compared with October to December 2019.
- The estimated number of people who were NEET and economically inactive in January to March 2021 was 408,000, which is a record low.
- Sub-national breakdowns of these figures are not published.

Absence

26.3 The national statistics on pupil absence were published on 27 May⁹⁷. Persistent absence in secondary schools in England in autumn term 2020 to 21 was 16.3 per cent compared with 15.0 per cent in the same term a year earlier. These figures are only available at a national level.

⁹⁷ https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-pupil-absence?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=0223ca44-21a3-4f0c-b921-f92f4dd5a8e3&utm_content=daily

27 Achievement

2020 Results

27.1 Key Stage 5 Results for 2020

27.2 The DfE has supplemented the provisional A level and other Post-16 results for 2019 to 2020 by publishing data showing that the headline A level retention rate was 92.1 per cent⁹⁸.

2021 Entries

27.3 The main trends in provisional entries for GCSE and GCE (AS and A level) for the summer 2021 series were published by Ofqual on 27 May. The headlines are:

- Overall, GCSE entries remain stable (approximately 5.3m) this year (increasing by 0.4 per cent), though an increase in entries from year 11 students masks decreases in entries from candidates in other year groups.
- There are small increases in the proportion of entries for the higher tier in most tiered GCSEs.
- A level entries for the summer 2021 increased by three per cent (756,230 in 2021 compared to 731,855 in 2020) overall.
- The overall entry for AS in summer 2021 decreased by 33 per cent (58,300 in 2021 compared to 86,970 in 2020).

28 Progression

Destinations after Key Stages 4 and 5 2018/19

28.1 Experimental statistics on longer-term destinations of key stage 4 students⁹⁹ published on 20 May show that the proportion of pupils in a sustained destination one year after completing key stage 4 was 94 per cent, up two

⁹⁸ <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/a-level-and-other-16-to-18-results/2019-20>

⁹⁹ <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/longer-term-destinations>

percentage points from the previous year's cohort (2012/13). However, this is likely due to the introduction of better employment data (the Longitudinal Education Outcomes data) in 2014, which featured greater coverage of employment activity. The three-year sustained destination proportion remained at 83 per cent, while the five-year figure fell marginally from 82 per cent to 81 per cent.

28.2 The DfE has also published Post-16 education and labour activities, pathways and outcomes (LEO)¹⁰⁰ The DfE has published Post-16 education and labour activities, pathways and outcomes (LEO). In summary, its key findings are:

- Post 16 Education and labour market pathways are incredibly diverse.
- Post 16 Education and labour market activities, pathways and outcomes differ based on individual characteristics.
- Higher levels of education lead to better labour market outcomes.
- For most sub-groups achieving a higher education level leads to better labour market outcomes than their comparators (with different characteristics).
- Even with similar levels of education, there are different labour market outcomes based on individual characteristics.
- However, for a few select sub-groups a higher education level does not always lead to better labour market outcomes than their peers.
- The report concludes that there may be societal, economic or psychological factors affecting outcomes that cannot be identified readily by statistical analysis alone and its authors commit to further research into these areas that will be made available in the near future.

¹⁰⁰ https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/post-16-education-and-labour-market-activities-pathways-and-outcomes-leo?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=db2cd755-9efd-4521-a3d3-91bffe70a1e&utm_content=daily

29 Intelligent London¹⁰¹

29.1 Intelligent London makes the very best of data analysis and visualisation techniques so that those with an interest in supporting and promoting the interests of young people can easily access reliable and up-to-date data.

30 Recommendation

30.1 Recipients are asked to note the content of this report and submit any comments by email: peter.obrien@londoncouncils.gov.uk.

¹⁰¹ <http://www.intelligentlondon.org.uk/>

Annex: Sources of Official Guidance

The general guidance on Covid-19 and the government's response¹⁰²

Specific guidance on education¹⁰³

The Office for National Statistics (ONS), which supports government at all levels with relevant data and intelligence¹⁰⁴.

NHS information on coronavirus: ¹⁰⁵

Q&A from Public Health England on coronavirus: ¹⁰⁶. **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.

¹⁰² <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

¹⁰³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-Covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings>

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/search/research-and-statistics>

¹⁰⁵ <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

¹⁰⁶ <https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/01/23/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-what-you-need-to-know/>