

Young People's Education and Skills

Policy Update, October 2021

Introduction

At the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, when our meetings were not taking place regularly, we provided our Board, lead Councillors, borough officers and other partners and stakeholders with monthly Policy Updates. These provided detailed summaries of policy development, research and statistics on education and training in London and recipients have told us that these updates were particularly valuable as a substitute for meetings.

We have now completed a full year of scheduled meetings – albeit online – and are planning a further programme of meetings for 2022 to 2023. The need for such detailed coverage of developments in our sector is therefore no longer necessary.

We are therefore introducing this new format for our Policy Updates. They will continue to provide coverage of the main issues affecting young Londoners' education and skills and

encourage discussion among our authorities, partners and stakeholders, but will include less detailed summaries and commentary.

We hope that our readers find that this change continues to meet your needs and maintains a focus of the 16 to 18 phase of learning.

As ever, we welcome feedback on the content of our Policy Updates, contributions for future issues and ideas for improvement. To let us know what you think, please email peter.obrien@londoncouncils.gov.uk

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Overview

1. The Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021 commanded a great deal of attention during October. Ahead of the Chancellor's statement, which we cover below as the major topic of the month, the sector provided submissions and published research to support the case for investment in education and skills.
2. Elsewhere in Parliament, the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill passed to the House of Commons having been amended in the Lords.

Activities of interest

3. The Reading Agency and Partnership for Young London are looking for young people (11 to 18 years-old) from England and Wales to help shape their new national project supporting young people's mental health. This will be part of [Reading Well](#), a programme that supports people to understand and manage their health and wellbeing using helpful reading. Please contact Troy.Norbert@cityoflondon.gov.uk if you or someone you know would be interested.

Deadlines

4. The Department for Education (DfE) is consulting on [reforming how local authorities' school improvement functions are funded](#). The closing date for submissions is 26 November.
5. All Party Parliamentary Group for Youth Employment is conducting an inquiry into [The Impact Of Vocational Qualifications On Young People's Employability and Labour Market Outcomes](#). This inquiry will run between October 2021 - January 2022. Deadline for submissions – 5:00pm on 3 December 2021.

Spending Review

6. Although the Chancellor made his formal statement on the Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021 (ABSR) on 27 October 2021, many measures had been announced in advance (see paragraph 11 below). The Chancellor's speech and its supporting documents were delivered to the House of Commons in the context of the government's determination to pursue a pathway to economic recovery, while still taking steps to contain and manage the Covid-19 pandemic and to ameliorate its effects.
7. The Chancellor took the opportunity to set a trajectory for some of the themes in the government's election manifesto to return to prominence in its agenda (for example, levelling-up, advancing Global Britain, seizing the opportunities of Brexit) and building back greener, which reinforces the government's commitment to tackling climate change – with the Conference of the Parties (COP) 26 providing a backdrop to its proposals.
8. ABSR provides for additional funding for local authorities, particularly to address budget pressures relating to social care and the need to recompense councils for both the costs of the pandemic and their continuing efforts in recovery.
9. In the broader children and young people, ABSR makes additional provisions for family support, early years, youth work and youth justice.
 - With regard to education and training, ASBR confirmed a new package of £1.8bn over three years to support education recovery in schools and colleges (with every school and college receiving an allocation).
 - £2.6bn for 30,000 new school places for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in England.
 - £4.7bn by 2024/25 for core schools funding in England.
 - an increase in 16 to 18 funding specifically earmarked for the introduction of T levels.
10. On jobs, training and skills, the measures provided for include:
 - £60m over the next three years to help 16- to 24-year-old jobseekers gain new skills, build confidence and find lasting work through the extension of the Youth Offer to 2025.
 - Funding to extend the Kickstart scheme to March 2022.

11. Among the announcements made before ABSR and confirmed within it were:
- As the government's furlough scheme came to an end, a new [Infrastructure Pipeline](#) was launched with £650 billion investment and supporting 425,000 jobs a year. This came alongside the publication of the government's latest Plan for Jobs Progress Update.
 - The Chancellor [announced](#) that Apprenticeship incentives, first introduced in August 2020 and that have been worth £3,000 per new apprentice since April 2021, have been extended for a further four months beyond their originally planned end date of 30 September 2021. The Chancellor also confirmed that Kickstart would be extended until March 2022. As part of this extension, government will continue to accept applications from employers and gateway providers until 17 December 2021.
 - Care leavers, children with a social worker and children arriving from Afghanistan are set to receive laptops and tablets to enable them to access education and support following the [provision of an additional £126 million by the DfE](#).
 - The National Living Wage for people aged over 23 will increase from £8.91 to £9.50 an hour. There will also be a rise for people aged 21 to 22 as the National Minimum Wage rate will increase to £9.18 an hour. The minimum hourly wage for an apprentice will also see a boost next year, with an 18 year old apprentice in an industry like construction seeing their minimum hourly pay increase by nearly 12 per cent, going from £4.30 to £4.81 an hour.

Government Policy Announcements

12. The government's [Global trade outlook](#) sets out some of the long-term trends that the government thinks are likely to shape the global economy and international trade in coming decades.
13. In his keynote speech to the Conservative Party Conference, the Education Secretary announced his intention to publish a White Paper on illiteracy and innumeracy in the new year.
14. Speaking at the conference of the National Association of Head Teachers, the [Education Secretary](#) thanked school leaders for their work throughout the pandemic and their continued dedication to improving the life chances of young people. He also pledged to work tirelessly to close the disadvantage gap and boost the education outcomes for vulnerable groups of children.
15. The [government has responded](#) to the Education Select Committee's report *The forgotten: how White working class pupils have been let down, and how to change it*.
16. The government has [appointed](#) Nigel Huddleston as the new youth and civil society minister in the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

Parliament

17. **Legislation:** The [Skills and Post-16 Education Bill](#) has progressed through the House of Lords and has now passed to the Commons. The Lords agreed a number of amendments to the original Bill, many proposed by or agreed with the government. Among the amendments in which the government position was defeated include:
 - a requirement to involve councils in drawing up local skills and employment plans.
 - a requirement for secondary pupils to experience mandatory encounters with technical training providers.
 - preventing benefit rules causing problems for adults seeking education and training opportunities.
 - requiring special educational needs training to be included within FE teacher training programmes.

- employers to spend two-thirds of “apprenticeship funding” on level 2 and 3 apprenticeships for under-25s.
 - government amendments to outlaw essay mills and allow for the conversion of 16-to-19 sixth forms with religious character to academies were passed without opposition.
18. The House of Commons Public Accounts Committee has [found](#) that education funding reforms have resulted in less money for the most deprived schools and more for the better off.

Themes

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

19. The DfE has published new research on the extent of learning loss among pupils in England during the summer and spring terms.
20. The DfE has also issued [guidance](#) to help those in alternative provision (AP) settings to support their year 11 students as they transition into post-16 destinations and avoid becoming NEET.
21. The government has reported on the seventh (July 2021) wave of the [School Snapshot Panel](#), a panel run by IFF Research on behalf of the DfE. It covers key issues affecting schools during the COVID-19 pandemic including, rapid asymptomatic testing in schools; mental health of staff and pupils; and individual and small group tuition. The [pupils and their parents or carers omnibus survey](#) has also been published and provides data and commentary on, for example, parental involvement in pupils’ learning, changes to the school day – or at school – and impacts of the early pandemic on pupils and parents.

Participation – Apprenticeships

22. See paragraph 11 for government announcements on Apprenticeship funding and incentives.
23. London’s winners in the [2021 National Apprenticeship Awards](#) have been announced.

Participation – Quality and Standards

24. The Association of Colleges (AoC) has launched a new [Research Unit](#) that will coordinate, commission and utilise high quality research to support informed Post-16 teaching practice and policy development.
25. Derby University is working with the AoC and NCFE to conduct [a longitudinal study into college enrichment](#).

Achievement

26. The DfE published a report on [pupils' progress in the 2020 to 2021 academic year](#). It also issued a series of publications that offered an analysis on statistics derived from – or linked to - the study of early education and development (SEED), which, although not directly covering the 16 to 18 phase provides a useful indicator of how early education can affect the inputs into the 16 to 18 phase of learning:
 - [findings from the Covid-19 follow-up](#).
 - [developing alternative quality scales for early childhood education and care \(ECEC\)](#).
 - [early education use and child outcomes up to age 7](#).

Progression – labour market

27. The latest [official statistics](#) show that London had the highest estimated unemployment rate (5.8 per cent) of all England's regions. Around one in five 18 to 24 year-olds are unemployed and the level of long-term unemployed in the age group is increasing.
28. As of 11 October 2021, 43,500 jobs had been made available through [Kickstart](#) in London, resulting in 18,560 total jobs started.
29. The latest release of the [Annual Survey for Hours and Earnings](#) (ASHE) carried out by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) showed London wages fell slightly faster than the UK national average.
30. The Learning and Work Institute published [Better work audit: job quality in London over the last decade](#).
31. The [Institute for Employment Studies](#) has suggested that the government should link up its policies on recovering from Covid-19, levelling-up and

developing a green and clean economy to transform jobs and skills for young people.

32. City & Guilds' [Skills Index 2021](#) urges employers to address the current mismatch between the skills that people have and the skills that businesses will need if they are to be competitive in the future.
33. According to The Open University's annual [Business Barometer](#), published in partnership with the Institute of Directors, UK employers are facing a skills shortage when it comes to hiring specialist, entry level talent.
34. The latest KPMG and REC, UK [Report on Jobs](#) says that the trends that started following the opening of the economy post-lockdown have continued, with little sign of the situation easing for employers. This prolonged period of imbalance between demand for workers and availability of candidates means that starting pay is at record high as candidate availability continues to plummet, which is affecting employers who have typically recruited at the national minimum wage.
35. [Large Employers and the Youth Labour Market](#) by the Youth Futures Foundation urges the leaders of big businesses to see employing young people to be a key part of their companies' Covid-19 recovery plans.

Careers Guidance

36. The DfE has published [Young people's experiences of careers information, advice and guidance](#), which uses data from the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England 2 (LSYPE2) – carried out in 2018. – and compares them with the equivalent study carried out nine years earlier.
37. The [Big Career Conversation](#) with Young People (in Years 7,9 and 11 in England) concludes that Britain's young talent pipeline has to be well equipped and able to contribute to future skills and economic growth.
38. [Research from Youth Employment UK](#) show that 32.6 per cent of young people 'Disagree' or 'Strongly Disagree' that they have the skills and knowledge to write a good covering letter to their CV when applying for jobs.
39. See paragraph 49 for social mobility and careers guidance.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

40. London South East Colleges is one of eight Further Education providers to be included in the Education and Training Foundation's [Centres for Excellence in Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(CfESSEND\)](#) programme. The College's outstanding SEND provision will become one of the new employer spokes across the country – maximising existing employer relationships and creating new ones to support learners into fulfilling jobs.
41. [Ambitious about Autism](#) has launched its recovery strategy to help children and young people with autism overcome the impact of the pandemic, economic uncertainty and inadequate support.
42. The social mobility charity [Speakers for Schools](#) has partnered with disability organisations such as Mencap, to provide work experience to 2,000 young people across the UK who have SEND.

Funding

43. In addition to the Budget announcement, the government separately published a list of successful bidders for round 1 of the [Levelling Up Fund](#).
44. The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) produced an [analysis](#) showing the growing gap in spending between private and state schools.
45. The [Education Policy Institute](#) has estimated that a £13.5bn cash injection is needed over the next three years to help pupils recover from lost learning.

Race equality and social justice

46. Linking London has launched its [Educational Deprivation Dashboard](#) for London, which provides an overview of the make-up of deprivation in London's schools and colleges.
47. Loughborough University has updated its [assessment of the cost of child poverty](#) (it estimates that child poverty costs the country almost £38bn a year).
48. The Centre for Progressive Policy issued [Re-examination: expanding educational opportunities for every child](#), which explores how social disadvantage affects educational outcomes.

Social mobility

- 49. The Social Mobility Commission published [Pathways to Success](#), a report that examines how to improve young people's engagement with formal careers advice, especially online.
- 50. Disadvantaged students in FE colleges are more likely to progress to university than their disadvantaged peers in similar sixth forms according to research published by [The Sutton Trust](#).

Mental health and anxiety

- 51. The Local Government Association has [called for school-based counselling](#) to be made available to all children to tackle rising child mental health issues.

Housing/homelessness

- 52. [Research](#) shows that most younger Londoners do not want to move out of the capital to afford a home, but current property prices remain the biggest obstacle to being a homeowner for more than half of them.
- 53. The charity [Centrepoin](#)t has said that youth homelessness in England has increased from an estimated 86,000 young people who presented themselves to their local authority as homeless or at risk in 2016/17 to 121,000 in 2019/20. Coverage in the Guardian presented analysis showing disproportionate representation of Black households receiving homelessness prevention or homelessness relief from local authorities in London.

Youth work

- 54. The number of older children and teenagers involved in care proceedings in England has more than doubled over the last 10 years, analysis by [Nuffield Family Justice Observatory](#) has found.
- 55. The [Nuffield Foundation](#) has awarded £2.8m to a research project aimed at better understanding the needs and experiences of vulnerable children and families.
- 56. The [Care Leaver Friendly Employer Charter](#) has been launched with the support of the Secretary of State for Education.

Engaging young people

57. The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)has published the list of youth organisations to win a [Youth Engagement Grant](#), whose aim is to support young people across England to participate in the development of policy affecting them, enabling more young people to have their voices heard and participate in decision making on a national policy level.

Youth justice

58. The [monthly figures for August 2021](#) published by the Youth Custody Service show that there were 147 young people aged 18 or younger in Youth Custody whose home Youth Offending Team is located in London. This compares with 140 in July and 191 in August 2020.
59. The London Assembly Police and Crime Committee has published the [first part of its report into violent crime](#). The report highlights the high rate of teenage homicides this year, particularly young Black males, and makes recommendations including that the Violence Reduction Unit expands its ENGAGE pilot programme which works with young people in custody centres, helping them into education, employment and training, and that community engagement work should be embedded in the work of the Violence Suppression Units.

Qualification reform

60. A cross-party group of 118 MPs and Lords have called on the Education Secretary to [rethink the government's plans to scrap the majority of BTECs](#).
61. The [Lifelong Education Commission](#) published its recommendations to reform the UK skills system.
62. The awarding body Pearson published its [Workforce Skills Report](#), which proposed relaxing rules on equivalent and lower qualifications and giving employers and educational settings more flexibility on the use of funds.

Statistics

63. Participation - [attendance](#): In the week commencing 11 October (with the measurement date of 14 October), 100.0 per cent of educational settings were open and 90.0 per cent of students were attending.

64. Local Authorities' annual [NEET Scorecards](#) have been published – these provide official rankings of each local authority.
65. In line with previously announced policy, the [school and college performance tables](#) for both key stages 4 and 5 that have been published by the DfE do not include attainment data. For this year, data will only include GCSE exam subject entries by pupils at the end of KS4 in 2021, destinations of students after completing KS4, exam subject entries by 16 to 18 year olds in 2021 level 3 qualifications including A levels, academic, tech level and applied general, exam subject entries by 16 to 18 year olds in 2021 technical certificates at level 2 and the destinations of students after completing 16 to 18 study (2018 and 2019 leavers).
66. Further detailed analysis on statistics is available on Intelligent London <http://www.intelligentlondon.org.uk/>.