

Policy Update November 2021

Introduction

We hope that the changes we have made in the format of our Policy Updates has improved our readers' access to the information you need and that the depth of coverage that we provide supports you in your vital work in the interests of young Londoners.

The contents table includes hyperlinks to the different sections of the Policy Update so that you can find the part of greatest interest to you more easily and the cross-references will take you directly to related parts of the document.

This Update includes a feature on Climate Change and the implications of the recent COP 26 on the education and training system in London, together with our usual coverage of research and statistics relating to the education and training of Londoners aged 16 to 19.

We are always very keen to report on issues of concern to the sector. Please let us know if there are topics that you would like us to cover in future Policy Updates or if you have any

suggestions on how to improve its format or content.

As our next issue will appear in January, the Young People's Education and Skills Board and team at London Councils offer our readers and their families Seasonal Greetings and best wishes for the New Year!

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Contents

Overview	1
Deadlines	1
COP 26	1
Parliament	2
Skills and Post-16 Education Bill	4
Recovery	4
Themes	5
Effective Participation	5
Achievement.....	6
Progression	6
SEND	8
Funding	8
Social Mobility	9
Youth Justice/working with YOTs	9
Youth Work & Looked After Children ...	9
Statistics	10
Attendance	10
Achievement.....	10
Progression to Higher Education	10

Overview

1. In this month's Policy Update we reflect on COP26 and the various responses within the sector. During the month a new variant of Covid-19 has come to prominence and we hope that the various mechanisms in place help to control its spread. There has been a great deal of activity in Parliament in the last month that has an impact on education and skills, including further progress on the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill. We have also covered various statistics and reports on the labour market and youth employment and some developments on London's recovery.

Deadlines

2. Trust for London has now [opened applications for its next funding round](#) in February 2022. It is funding organisations in London tackling the root causes of poverty and inequality. Potential applicants can also book a 30-minute slot with a Grants Manager ahead of the deadline. The deadline is **Tuesday 1 February**.
3. The Education Select Committee has issued a [call for evidence](#) to support its inquiry into the future of post-16 qualifications. Responses have to be submitted by **20 January**.

COP 26

4. The UK hosted the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties ([COP26](#)) in Glasgow on 31 October to 13 November 2021. There have been various interpretations on the outcomes of the conference, but we are focusing here on its relevance to London's education and training system.
5. In a [speech](#) to the conference, the Secretary of State for Education set out his plans to put climate change at the heart of education and followed this up with the publication of [Sustainability and Climate Change: A draft strategy for the education and children's services systems](#).
6. During COP26, London Councils, in partnership with Core Cities UK and Connected Cities Catapult, promoted the [UK Cities Climate Investment Commission](#) (UKCCIC).

7. [Research](#) commissioned by the four borough sub-regional partnerships (Central London Forward, West London Alliance, South London Partnership and Local London) has been published to coincide with COP 26, focusing on the impact of decarbonizing our economy on the capital's labour market. It finds that the transition to net zero represents an unprecedented opportunity - with the number of green jobs set to double to over 505,000 by 2030.
8. In Parliament, Lord Knight of Weymouth introduced a private [Bill](#) in the House of Lords to make provision in the national curriculum regarding sustainable citizenship and protection of the environment; while in the Commons Nadia Whittome MP (Labour, Nottingham East) raised a [Ten Minute Rule Motion](#) on Climate Education, which resulted in leave to bring forward a Bill in January 2022.
9. At the end of COP 26, The Edge Foundation set out its view on the [key lessons for education professionals](#).
10. The Association of Colleges (AoC) has published the [Green College Commitment](#) in which it sets out a role for colleges in achieving net zero and biodiversity ambitions.
11. Pearson's [Global Learner Survey](#) found a "Climate Education Gap" (that is, people who think they did not learn enough about climate change when they were in school) and a desire to include climate change in the primary school (or earlier) curriculum.
12. The Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA) published [Decarbonisation dynamics: mapping the UK transition to net zero](#), which outlined the main labour market changes needed to achieve a just transition to net zero carbon.

Parliament

13. Education ministers answered [questions from the Commons](#) on 1 November. Main topics of interest were the level 3 review, the National Tutoring Programme and when the response to Augar will be published.
14. The Secretary of State appeared before the [Education Select Committee on 3 November](#). In a wide-ranging session the discussions on the length of the

school day (see also paragraph [28](#) for related research) and delays to the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) review were of particular note. (Note: On 10 November the relevant Minister of State sent an [open letter](#) to parents and carers of young people with SEND promising that the review would be published in the first quarter of 2022).

15. Children's Minister, Will Quince MP, [told the Commons Public Services Committee](#) that the government wants Family Hubs to replace children's centres in all local authorities to remould family support services in England. He said that Tower Hamlets Council is one of those with which the Department for Education (DfE) is currently working to identify problems in establishing a network of family hubs and how these can be overcome.
16. The Education Select Committee [published](#) the government's response to the Committee's report on home education. The government has committed to establishing statutory registration of children not in school. The government has also said that the responses to its own [Children Not In School consultation](#) will be published in the coming months (see also paragraph [35](#) for the Association of Directors of Children's Services' report on Elective Home Education).
17. The House of Lords' Youth Unemployment Committee published the [report](#) from its inquiry into youth unemployment, education and skills. In particular, it called for changes to the Apprenticeship Levy and funding for Degree Apprenticeships.
18. Robert Halfon MP, Chair of the Education Committee, introduced a [Ten-Minute Rule Bill](#) aimed at redefining schools as 'essential infrastructure' and introducing a "triple lock" of protections to ensure that any possible school closures would have to be approved by Parliament.
19. The [Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill](#) continues to receive line by line scrutiny at its Committee Stage in the House of Lords. Lord German (Liberal Democrat) tabled an amendment to the Bill which would permit councils to apply to run secure academies.
20. The House of Commons Library produced a briefing for the [Education \(Careers Guidance in Schools\) Bill](#), a private members Bill introduced by Mark Jenkinson

MP (Conservative, Workington). The Bill is at report stage in the Commons and is due to report to the House on 22 January 2022.

Skills and Post-16 Education Bill

21. The House of Commons Library Service published a section by section [briefing](#) report on the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill with commentary and coverage of the Lord's amendments. The Bill's progress and record of debates are available on the [Parliament website](#).
22. The Skills and Post-16 Education Bill received its second reading in the House of Commons with widespread cross-party support for its principles, though some MPs – including the Opposition – said they would seek to strengthen some of its measures.
23. During the second reading of the Bill in the Commons, the Secretary of State announced changes to T Levels, removing the maths and English qualification from the T Level exit requirements, to make them more accessible. He also announced that the removal of funding for Applied General and BTEC qualifications would be extended by one year. Members from across the House supported close involvement of local authorities in Local Skills Improvement Plans, though the government wants the legislation to reinforce the central role of employers in their approval.
24. In the Committee Stage in the House of Commons, the government reversed some of the amendments to the Bill that were introduced in the Lords and that were not government policy.

Recovery

25. London Councils and the Mayor of London have developed an [Economic Recovery Framework](#) for London, working closely with London boroughs and Sub-Regional Partnerships. It sets out a framework for action for dealing with the structural changes to London's economy and fostering economic recovery. There are five pillars to the framework – Jobs, Business, Thriving Neighbourhoods, Connected City and Global London.
26. Unicef's [Changing Childhood Project](#) reflects an optimistic outlook of children across the world. However, [research](#) from The Prince's Trust and Censuswide

found that half of 16 to 25 year-olds from low-income backgrounds say they don't know how they'll get their life "back on track", following the Covid-19 pandemic.

27. The Education Policy Institute (EPI)'s [Education recovery and resilience: phase two report](#) examines the impact of the pandemic on future earnings for current school pupil and stresses the need for the government to take action now to prevent long-term problems arising.
28. The education charity [Impetus](#) reported that it found insufficient evidence that lengthening the school day would improve results.
29. The DfE published [Review of time in school and 16-19 settings](#), which outlines the scale and nature of lost learning, the current use of time in schools and 16 to 19 settings in England, international comparisons and impact and deliverability. It looks at the impact this could have on helping children and young people to catch up.

Themes

Effective Participation

30. The DfE has appointed [attendance advisors](#) to help local areas and school trusts to reduce absence.

Learning landscape

31. The Local Government Association, in partnership with Research Matters has launched an [interactive map](#) that displays national employment and skills provision available in each local authority area.
32. The Education and Skills Funding Agency has published its [annual report and accounts](#) for 2020 to 2021.
33. The Further Education Trust for Leadership (FETL) has issued [Honourable Histories](#) - a timeline of 30 years of policy in Further Education.
34. [Research](#) published by the DfE shows that the vast majority of maintained schools do not want to convert to academies.

35. The Association of Directors of Children's Services' [Elective Home Education Survey 2021](#) reports a marked increase in Elective Home Education, with children's mental health a prominent factor in this trend.

Apprenticeships

36. The winners in this year's [National Apprenticeship Awards](#) have been announced.

T Levels and Applied General

37. See paragraph 24 for a policy announcement made during the debate on the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill.

Quality Improvement

38. Ofsted published information about [schools](#) and [Further Education & Skills](#) inspections carried out in the year ending 31 August 2021.
39. Ofsted has been [asked by government](#) to inspect all schools and further education (FE) providers by summer 2025, to give a quicker assessment of how well education is recovering from the pandemic.
40. The [Centre for Education and Youth](#) (CfEY) has commented on the success of Lewisham Learning, the borough's school improvement service, in improving race equality in its schools.

Achievement

41. Ofqual and the DfE confirmed [contingency plans](#) in the event that exams are unable to take place next summer.

Progression

Labour Market

42. London Councils and the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry have issued the latest [London Business 1000 Survey](#), which outlines recruitment, skills and labour problems in London.
43. The latest edition of The Edge's [Skills Shortage Bulletin](#) points to a gap between the skills people need to thrive and the education and careers opportunities available to them.

44. Youth Employment UK's [Youth Voice Census](#) captured data from 14 to 24 year olds across the UK earlier this year. Over 3,400 young people shared their views on a range of issues across education, work, job hunting, the impacts of Covid-19 and much more.
45. The Institute of Employment Studies has issued [Not just any job, good jobs! Youth voices from across the UK](#), which suggests a re-think of journeys from education to work and improving literacy and mental health support.
46. The Department for Work and Pension (DWP)'s [statistics](#) show the number of households claiming Universal Credit (UC) in October and compare levels with the start of the pandemic. While there was an average of 54,000 claims for UC per week in the year before lockdown, claims rose to over 550,000 each week at the end of March and start of April 2020. In the five weeks to 14 October this year, the average number of claims was 41,000.
47. The National Audit Office (NAO)'s [report](#) into the Kickstart Scheme noted that Ministers could not know for certain whether or not it is creating genuinely new jobs and that, even though the Scheme was introduced quickly, the government increased the risks associated with Kickstart by excluding councils from much of its administration.
48. The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions [announced](#) on 16 November that over 100,000 young people nationally have started jobs through Kickstart.
49. The [DWP has said](#) that 47,750 jobs have been made available through Kickstart in London (of these 21,550 have started).
50. The DWP has [confirmed](#) the deadlines for completing Kickstart Scheme tasks ahead of its closure at the end of March 2022.

Further and Higher Education

51. [Best Laid Plans: London's 'Covid Cohort' and Progression to Higher Education](#) is based on a survey of Londoners aged between 16 and 18 and recommends the creation of a young Londoner Higher Education (HE) progression committee to help instigate pan-London conversations between students, providers, schools and colleges.

52. [Research from The Sutton Trust and Institute of Fiscal Studies](#) demonstrated that Universities overall are important engines of social mobility, with the most selective institutions levelling the playing field the most amongst their graduates. London's Universities are rated among the best in the country for their contribution to social mobility.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

53. The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) [reported](#) on the effects of the Covid-19 on special schools and colleges in England and sets out what needs to happen next to support their students.

Funding

54. The NAO has [reported](#) on the financial sustainability of mainstream schools in England.
55. The Institute of Fiscal Studies' [2021 annual report on education spending in England](#) finds that current spending on education represents a lower proportion of total government spending than in 2010, that spending on 16 to 18 year-olds has experienced the greatest reduction and the most disadvantaged fifth of secondary schools have faced the biggest cuts in this period.
56. The government announced the successful [Community Renewal Fund](#) bids, six of which are in London. The Community Renewal Fund is intended to inform the design of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
57. The DfE announced the successful applications for the [Post-16 Capacity Fund 2021 to 2022](#). Christ the King Sixth Form, Lewisham and St Francis Xavier Sixth Form College, Wandsworth were the successful applicants from London.
58. The House of Commons Library's [Education Spending in the UK](#) examines public expenditure on education since 1979 and includes international comparisons. The publication has been updated to take into account announcements on spending plans announced in the Spending Review.
59. London's Violence Reduction Unit has received £6.72million from the [Youth Endowment Fund](#) to train children's professionals, including social workers and teachers, and to provide cognitive behavioural therapy to children at risk of becoming involved in violence.

Social Mobility

60. The Nuffield Foundation has reported on [the role of early childhood education and care in shaping life chances](#).
61. Sutton Trust's [Going Further: Further Education, Disadvantage and Social Mobility](#) looks at the achievements of past cohorts of students to demonstrate the success of the Further Education Sector in facilitating access to HE and progression to well-paid employment.
62. The Institute of Fiscal Studies [reported](#) on HE Institutions' contribution to social mobility, with London institutions among the highest ranking in the report.

Youth Justice/working with Youth Offending Teams

63. [Youth Custody data](#) shows that in September 2021 there were 138 under-18 year-olds in custody whose home Youth Offending Team is in London. This is the lowest number since April 2015 when the current range of data began.

Youth Work and Looked After Children

64. [Official figures](#) show that the number of children looked after by their local authority is at an all-time high and on a continuing upward trajectory.
65. The National Youth Agency (NYA)'s [Census](#) finds that children in affluent areas of England are twice as likely to have access to youth clubs and other out-of-school activities as those in more deprived locations, including parts of London.
66. [CYP Now](#) has compiled a guide to tracking outcomes for looked-after children in partnership with Halliwell Homes.
67. The [Youth Futures Foundation](#) has launched a new £6.1m fund to connect local services supporting vulnerable young people.
68. Westminster City Council's dedicated youth team, [City Lions](#), is recruiting its next cohort of the council's mentoring programme after positive evaluation of its pilot.
69. NatWest has teamed up with organisations across the UK providing youth services to support young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), including [Inspire](#) in London.

70. A multi-million pound [partnership](#) with McDonald's UK has been announced by BBC Children in Need to support youth work services across the country.

Statistics

71. The official [Education and training statistics for the UK 2021](#) is a compendium of data on schools, attainment, qualifications gained, education expenditure, further education and higher education in the UK.

Attendance

72. The [data on attendance](#) is available on the DfE's website:
- On 28 October (excluding holidays), the proportion of educational settings open was 99.9 per cent and the proportion of students attending on-site was 88.2 per cent.
 - On 11 November, the proportion of educational settings open was 99.9 per cent and the proportion of students attending was 91.5 per cent
 - On 25 November 2021, the proportion of educational settings open was 99.9 per cent and the proportion of students attending was 89.3 per cent.

Achievement

73. Provisional achievement data for [key stage 4](#) and [A levels and other level 3 qualifications](#) were published on 4 November 2021.

Progression to Higher Education

74. The national statistics on [HE participation](#) show that 53.4 per cent of the 17 to 30 year-old population and 30.6 per cent of the 18 year-old population were initial entrants to HE