

## Parliament and Public Affairs Update Week Commencing 26th July 2010

This week Parliament adjourned for the summer recess. In its final 2 sessional days the Academies Bill gained royal ascent, Michael Gove introduced a consultation on school funding and the pupil premium and the education select committee took evidence from the Secretary of State, Shadow Secretary of State and the Permanent Secretary.

### School Funding

Michael Gove and Minister of State, Sarah Teather, have introduced a consultation on the coalition proposals for school funding and the pupil premium. The written consultation documents can be downloaded on the following link: [Department for Education, July 26 2010](#).

In short, the consultation sets out the proposed methodology for allocating the premium, including options on the best deprivation indicator to use. This money will not be ring-fenced at school level. The government believes that schools are in the best position to decide how the premium should be used to support their pupils. The YPLA will be responding to the consultation.

The consultation document states:

“The intention is to allocate the funding by means of a separate specific grant and not through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The size of the premium will vary between areas to reflect current differences in funding, ensuring that more money is available for currently lower funded authorities. Over time, this will mean that the same amount of funding will be available for deprived children no matter where they are. We are seeking views on the indicator to determine which pupils should attract the premium.

Looked After Children (LAC), who generally have poor attainment, will be covered by the pupil premium using a separate process via local authorities since deprivation indicators do not generally pick them up accurately.”

In a statement to the House Michael Gove said:

“We are using this consultation to set out our proposals for possible additional support for service children, as set out in "The Coalition: our programme for government". Furthermore, I have included proposals for additional support for looked after children, who have consistently low attainment but are often not picked up by deprivation indicators and so would not benefit from the pupil premium.

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The consultation document also outlines our intentions for school funding for 2011-12. We will continue with the current methodology for the distribution of school funding to allow for a clear and transparent introduction of the pupil premium, but we also recognise that the funding system could be more reflective of pupil characteristics and so we intend to review the system for funding schools beyond 2011-12.

In addition, from April 2011 we will require all local authorities to implement the early years single funding formula, in order to improve fairness and transparency in the system and to support diversity of provision.”

### **Academies Act**

The Bill gained royal ascent on Tuesday 24th July after a late night session in the House of Commons. A full break down of the Act, debate, questions and stakeholder responses can be downloaded in the tracker attached. The Act can be downloaded on the link below and a full merged analysis provided in the Bill Trackers will be available on the intranet next week.

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/academieshl.html>

### **Education Committee**

The Education Committee sat for its first session this week. Evidence was taken from Tim Byles, Chief Executive of Partnerships for Schools and Ed Balls on the Building Schools for the Future Programme and from Michael Gove and David Bell on responsibilities of the department.

Minutes of the debate can be downloaded on the following link

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/education-committee/>

Michael Gove defended the departments decision to close the BSF programme, decisions to expand academies and introduce free schools.

The committee has also published the Government's response to the Eighth Report from the Children, Schools and Families Committee, Session 2009-10. The Eighth Report was an inquiry into young people not in education, employment or training published on 08 April 2010.

To read the report in see the link below:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmselect/cmeduc/416/41604.htm>

Also attached to this weeks report are full biographies and interests of the current committee members.

### **Consultations and reports**

#### ***Introducing a pupil premium***

As stated above the Department for Education has launched a consultation on school funding for 2011/12, and specifically on introducing a pupil premium.

The consultation sets out proposed arrangements for the operation of the pupil premium and the distribution of the dedicated schools grant to local authorities for 2011/12. Views are sought on the funding methodology.

The consultation closes on October 18 2010.

[Department for Education, July 26 2010](#)

### ***Future of skills launched***

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has launched a consultation on the government's skill strategy.

The consultation document outlines the department's vision for skills and what are expected to be the key elements of a strategy for delivering it. Views are sought on how private investment in skills can be optimised, how to give individuals and employers more support to develop skills and meet the needs of the economy and how business can be encouraged to engage in supporting local community learning.

The consultation closes on October 14 2010.

[Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, July 22 2010](#)

## **Questions and Early Day Motions**

### ***Funding***

Daniel Kawczynski:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education what his policy is on provision of funding for (a) sixth form colleges, (b) secondary schools with sixth forms and (c) other post-16 providers; and if he will make a statement. [10051]

Mr Gibb:

The total investment in 16-18 learning in 2010-11 will be £8.2 billion, which will fund around 1.6 million places. As announced at the end of May, the spending on 16-18 core participation funding for 2010-11 will be maintained and protected from any in-year

spending cuts. At present, funding is provided to all three types of provider through the 16-18 national funding formulae. The learner responsive model (for schools and colleges) is managed by the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) as one of its key roles. The Department also funds 16-18 Apprenticeships where funding is calculated through the employer responsive model (for work based learning) managed by the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS), as part of the Skills Funding Agency.

The levels of funding from 2011-12 will be determined as part of the spending review this autumn, and considerations surrounding the current funding methodology and formula will continue to form a part of that process. We have already taken steps to reduce bureaucracy in 16-18 education and simplify the 16-18 funding process by ensuring that funding follows the choices of young people. From the academic year 2011-12, core allocation budgets for school sixth forms and colleges will be based on the equivalent of lagged pupil numbers. We will also ensure that local authorities can focus on their strategic role as champions of young people, taking action where they identify significant issues in

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terms of gaps in supply or quality, particularly in ensuring access among the most vulnerable groups.

Mrs Chapman:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will provide assistance to schools affected by the reduction in the Harnessing Technology Grant to enable them to maintain their ICT commitments. [9462]

Mr Gibb:

As part of a range of savings, the Harnessing Technology Grant is to be reduced by 50% in the current financial year. ICT infrastructure is now well-embedded in schools. Local authorities have been notified of the changes and they are best placed to manage the reduction, in consultation with their Schools Forum, to support a sustainable funding model based on local circumstances.

Yvette Cooper:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether equality impact assessments will be used in determining the areas of his Department's budget in respect of which spending will be reduced. [8341]

Tim Loughton

*[holding answer 14 July 2010]:* We are considering the equality implications of potential spending decisions and equality impact assessments will be carried out as necessary.

Jack Dromey:

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills what proportion of total spending on further education colleges was allocated in respect of (a) staff costs related to teaching and (b) all staff costs in the latest period for which figures are available. [12002]

Mr Willetts:

Funding is allocated to further education (FE) colleges and other training organisations for delivery of further education and skills training.

As autonomous bodies it is for FE colleges to determine the amount of funding they spend on teaching and other staff costs in order to deliver this provision.

Each college publishes their own accounts. The Skills Funding Agency summarises information from all college accounts on their website:

[www.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk](http://www.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk)

### **Qualifications and Curriculum**

David Mowat:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education what timetable he has set for the abolition of the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency; what plans he has for the transfer of its functions; and if he will make a statement. [10936]

Mr Gibb:

We intend to introduce legislation to abolish the QCDA, and in the meantime Department Officials are working closely with the QCDA on the orderly winding down of its functions.

We are committed to ensuring that national curriculum tests continue to be delivered effectively, and therefore currently envisage that these functions would be needed after closure.

Where QCDA is presently engaged in activity that supports the administration of examinations (such as Diploma Awarding) we would wish to retain such functions until these activities are no longer required or can be transferred. Our view is that Government or its agencies should in principle not be involved in this kind of work in the future, which is properly the domain of awarding bodies.

### ***Learner Support***

John Robertson:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education what assessment he has made of the effect on the number of (a) notices of entitlement issued and (b) payments made from the education maintenance allowance of the proposed reduction in its administration budget. [10385]

Mr Gibb

*[holding answer 22 July 2010]*: Students will notice no impact as a result of savings made to the education maintenance allowance administration budget. Savings have been made as a result of the development of more efficient processing systems. Notices of entitlement and payments in 2010-11 will continue to be issued to current service standards.

### ***Academies staffing***

Mr Anderson:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education how much his Department and its agencies spent on the academies programme in the latest period for which figures are available; how many staff are employed by his Department and its agencies on the programme; how much is planned to be spent on the programme in 2010-11; and how many staff will be working on the programme in 2010-11. [9466]

Mr Gibb:

In financial year 2009-10, the revenue spent on the academies programme was £1,272.09 million. The expected revenue spend in 2010-11 is currently estimated at £1,996.0 million. This excludes any expenditure on schools converting under the Academies Bill, which will depend on the numbers of schools. The capital spend in 2009-10 was £388.6 million through grant paid by the Department for Education and £307.3 million for projects funded through Partnerships for Schools (PfS). In 2010-11 the estimated spend is £301.0 million through departmental grant and £665.0 million for projects funded through PfS.

The Department is employing 115 staff engaged directly on the academies programme. The ***Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA)*** has 47 members of staff working specifically on the academies programme; this is expected to increase to 81 during

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FY2010-11 through transfers from elsewhere in the Agency. In PfS, 17 members of staff work on the academies programme with no increase expected in 2010.