

Parliament and Public Affairs Update Wk Commencing 4th October 2010

This week the Conservative Party held its annual conference in Birmingham. The theme of the conference, 'Together in the National Interest'. The Chancellor announced plans to scrap child benefit for higher rate tax payers whilst the Prime Minister re-emphasised his commitment to the Big Society. In his speech to conference Michael Gove announced plans to reintroduce the prominence of history and the study of classic literature in the school curriculum. He reiterated conservative commitment to drive up standards for pupils from all backgrounds and announced a 'new deal' for teachers on standards and discipline. He reiterated support for greater freedoms for schools and teachers in the academies and free school programmes.

During the education session the Secretary of State was joined by Head Teachers who addressed members on the failings of previous educational policies and the importance of freedom and autonomy for schools.

Fringe Meetings and events

A full account of educational fringe meetings is attached.

The future of teaching; Responsibility or regulation

Speakers; Nick Gibb, minister for schools, Department for Education; Professor John Bangs, visiting professor, Institute of Education; Philippa Cordingley, chief executive, Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE)

The discussion focussed on greater autonomy for schools and teachers and professional development. Schools minister, Nick Gibb, set out the government's position and intentions. Policy under the coalition, said Gibb, would be driven by "freedom, fairness and responsibility." Giving schools greater autonomy, would help raise standards and the coalition is determined, he said, to tackle bad behaviour in order to raise standards.

England's schools: A free for all?

Speakers; Michael Gove, secretary of state for education, Department for Education; Andy Brown, president, Association of Teachers and Lecturers; Fiona Millar, writer and journalist specialising in education and parenting issues; Professor Becky Francis, director of education, RSA

ATL, NASUWT and NUT fringe in which education secretary Michael Gove responded to criticism that free schools would lead to a two-tier education system in which the most disadvantaged pupils would lose out. Education secretary, Michael Gove began by saying that teachers across the country felt that their freedoms had been 'chipped away' when it came to class discipline, shaping the curriculum and designing lesson plans. Gove said that talented and highly qualified graduates who went into teaching were bursting with creativity and they 'should be given more freedom to harness that creativity'. The education secretary said that the Academies Act would allow professionals to decide for themselves if they wanted to set up free schools.

Who should pay for skills?

Speakers: John Hayes MP, minister for further education and lifelong learning Lord Digby Jones John Stone, chief executive, Learning Skills Network Chris Bank, chairman, Independent Review of Further Education

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The debate focussed on funding for skills and lifelong learning. The Minister discussed the draft skills strategy paper which was closely linked to the growth White Paper. Hayes said that the age of; "Bureaucratic micro-management" was finished.

There must also be a better learning market, driven to a greater extent by the learners themselves. Hayes also reiterated that, if someone is told something is free, they will place no value upon it and it is ultimately detrimental. Providers must be trained, Hayes also argued, in providing more freedom and flexibility and there must be a more credible overall vocational system. Hayes also argued that the system must be sufficiently responsive to the changing needs of the economy and employers.

A manufacturing led economic recovery; what is the government's role?

Speakers: Andrew McCall, director, global government affairs, Jaguar Land Rover; [John Hayes](#) MP, minister of state for further education, skills and lifelong learning; Danielle Chapman, head of government relations, General Motors

A discussion on the need to 'rebalance the economy' in favour of manufacturing. Speaking for the government, John Hayes said that we had to be a highly skilled, high technology economy in order to compete in the future and that the government was fully committed to ensuring that our skills agenda was taken care of. The premise that the only career path which should be pursued is the traditional academic route was a premise which should be "challenged at every turn" before discussing the issue of funding and whether government or industry should pay to ramp up the country's skills agenda.

The skills minister also criticised the former government's Train to Gain programme, which he said was a "blunt instrument" which the Audit Commission had reported on as carrying "an immense dead weight" in terms of investment.

Hayes sought to reassure the audience that the skills agenda was being taken very seriously by this government, that it was at the heart of its policy-thinking.

Consultations and Reports

Developing new frameworks for apprenticeships

SkillsActive is seeking views on its new apprenticeship frameworks.

The frameworks are to meet the requirements of the specification of apprenticeship standards for England (SASE), and for Wales the specification of apprenticeship standards for Wales (SASW), so that they are more flexible and better meet the needs of individuals and employers.

The survey seeks views around the type of qualifications contained within the frameworks and whether they are relevant to employment in your workplace and in the wider sector.

The consultation closes on October 2010 and December 2010- January 2011.

[SkillsActive, October 4 2010](#)

Business Innovation and Skills

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The fifth release of the department's statistics on student support applications for higher education in England 2010/11 is published on 7 October 2010 and shows the status of applications for maintenance and tuition fee support as of 30 September 2010 as well as the status of applications for disabled students' allowance as of 1 October 2010. In addition it shows a breakdown of applications prepared for payment as of 30 September.

To view the publication please click here:

<http://www.slc.co.uk/pdf/SLCOSP112010.pdf>

Questions, Early Day Motions and Back Bench Debates

Funding

Mr Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Education pursuant to the answer of 7 July 2010, *Official Report*, column 260W, on departmental public expenditure, from which youth budgets the savings will be made. [12302]

Mr Gibb: In a letter to the right hon. Member for Morley and Outwood (Ed Balls) placed in the House Libraries in June 2010, the Secretary of State laid out further details of the £670 million of savings that are the Department's contribution to the £6.2 billion savings package previously announced by the Chancellor and Chief Secretary to the Treasury.

The Department will save £59.9 million across the 14-19 programme budgets. This saving breaks down as follows:

	<i>£ million</i>
Ending Activity Agreement and Entry to Learning pilots now as lessons have been learned	2.7
Savings from unallocated funding previously earmarked for enterprise education	7
14-19 efficiencies and stopping lower priority projects	4.1
Savings from lower than anticipated take up of the Diploma	9
Scaling back support for delivery of Diplomas	13.2

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Stop funding the development of the Diploma and related qualifications	9
Reducing centrally provided workforce development activity including ending a number of field forces	14
Ending the role of the 14-19 Regional Advisers from September.	0.9
Total	59.9

Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what processes his Department has established for the award of grant agreements; and whether such awards are subject to competitive tendering. [15962]

Tim Loughton: The Department uses a range of processes for administering grants, consistent with HM Treasury guidance. The main types are:

- Grant in Aid (sometimes called "through funding"), which is the main method used to support the Department's arm's length bodies
- Formula funded grants, such as the Dedicated Schools Grant, where the amount due is calculated using agreed formulae
- Biddable grants, in which potential applicants are invited to bid against funds from a limited pot and the Department makes decisions which bids to support against agreed criteria
- Competed grants, in which the Department will invite a number of organisations to submit proposals against the Department's specification before selecting a preferred provider
- Direct awards, where the Department will approach a provider directly.

The Department's internal guidance makes it clear that, to ensure the best value for money, some form of competition in the award process is desirable.

HC Deb 04 October 2010 cc1283W-1284W

Lord Morris of Manchester: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the provision of private school transport for children under the age of 18 with special needs will continue to be funded in full by local authorities.[HL2163] [HL2163]

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Lord Morris of Manchester: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will safeguard local authority funding for private school transport for children under the age of 18 with special needs in the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review.[HL2164] [HL2164]

Lord Hill of Oareford: Current legislation requires local authorities to make arrangements for those children who: are unable to walk to school because of their special educational needs, disability or mobility problems; or are attending their nearest suitable school (including independent schools, if appropriate) and who live beyond statutory walking distance. Where local authorities consider transport to be necessary, it must be provided free of charge. All funding decisions from 2011 are subject to the outcome of the spending review which will be announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Lord Corbett of Castle Vale: To ask Her Majesty's Government what criteria schools must meet to qualify for the pupil premium.[HL2051] [HL2051]

Lord Hill of Oareford: The criteria pupils must meet to qualify for the pupil premium will be determined following the outcome of the public consultation entitled Consultation on School Funding 2011-12: Introducing a Pupil Premium, which is due to end on Monday 18 October 2010. This is available at www.education.gov.uk/consultations. It consults on the following possible qualifying criteria: eligibility for free school meals, both current and previous; tax credit indicator; and commercial packages such as Mosaic or Acorn. The consultation also outlines proposals to extend the premium to include looked-after children and the children of service personnel.

05 October 2010

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Education (1) how many pupils who received free school meals in year 11, went on to (a) study A-Levels, (b) undertake an apprenticeship and (c) participate in other forms of education or training in each of the last five years; [13942]

Jon Trickett: (2) how many pupils who received free school meals in year 11 continued to (a) sixth form college, (b) a further education college, (c) employment-based training, (d) full-time employment, (e) part-time employment, (f) part-time education or training and (g) unemployment in each of the last five years. [13943]

Mr Gibb: Estimates of the activities of young people who had been in receipt of free school meals (FSM) in year 11 are shown in the following table. The information is based on what they were doing in the first year after completing compulsory education. The source of these estimates is the Department for Education's matched administrative data. This source cannot provide information on the employment status of young people.

<i>Activities at academic age 16 of young people who had been in receipt of free school meals in year 11</i>					
	<i>2004/05</i>	<i>2005/06</i>	<i>2006/07</i>	<i>2007/08</i>	<i>2008/09</i>
<i>Qualification type</i>					
A/AS-levels (%)	21	21	23	24	24

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Apprenticeships (%)	6	5	5	5	5
Other education and training (%)	52	53	54	58	59
No recorded education or training ⁽¹⁾ (%)	22	20	18	14	13
Total (=100%)	83,000	81,000	79,000	78,000	75,000
<i>Mode of study and institution type</i>					
Full time education (%)	60	61	65	69	70
<i>of which:</i>					
Sixth Form College (%)	8	9	8	9	9
Other Further Education College (%)	32	34	36	37	39
Maintained mainstream school (%)	18	18	20	21	20
Other (%)	2	1	1	2	2
Work Based Learning (%)	6	5	5	5	5
Part time education or training (%)	12	13	12	13	12
No recorded education or training (%)	22	20	18	14	13
Total (=100%)	83,000	81,000	79,000	78,000	75,000

⁽¹⁾The participation data only includes education or training involving formal qualifications. The "No recorded education or training" category will also include young people who have migrated outside of England since the year 11 spring school census and also any instances where the participation of young people at 16 could not be matched with their earlier FSM receipt in year 11.

HC Deb 04 October 2010 c1296W

Qualifications and standards

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Lord Moonie: To ask Her Majesty's Government how many students in England and Wales took (a) two or more A-level examinations this year, and (b) five or more GCSE examinations in 2008; and how many first-year places at English and Welsh Universities they are funding for the academic year 2010-11. [HL2004] [HL2004]

Lord Hill of Oareford: Statistics on how many students in England entered two or more A-level examinations at the end of their key stage 5 studies in 2010 will be published on 21 October 2010. Statistics on how many students in Wales entered two or more A-level examinations at age 17 in 2010 will be published on 29 September 2010. In 2008, 612,821 pupils at the end of key stage 4 in England entered the equivalent of five or more GCSEs.

In the same year, 34,495 pupils in Wales aged 15 on 31 August 2007 entered the equivalent of five or more GCSEs. The Higher Education Funding Council England (HEFCE) teaching grant funding is allocated on a total full-time equivalent basis and does not distinguish between different course years. It is therefore not possible to give a figure relating to first-year places only. The December 2009 HEFCE Grant Letter funded, for the 2010-11 academic year, an additional 10,000 full-time equivalent places compared to 2009-10 (covering students in all years of study). In addition to this, the University Modernisation Fund has provided teaching grant funding for 10,000 new full-time equivalent entrant places, of which we estimate 8,000 will be full-time and 2,000 part-time.

The Higher Education Funding Council Wales (HEFCW) teaching grant funding is allocated on a credit value basis and does not distinguish between different course years. It is therefore not possible to give a figure relating to first-year places only. The 2010-11 HEFCW recurrent grant circular estimates an overall 58,994 funded full-time and sandwich places.

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Education (1) what A-Level courses are offered by each

(a) sixth form college and (b) further education college in each (i) constituency and (ii) local authority area for academic year 2010-11; [13946]

Jon Trickett: (2) what A-Level courses are available in educational institutions in each constituency in academic year 2010-11. [13947]

Mr Gibb: The information requested is not held centrally by the Department.

HC Deb 04 October 2010 cc1289W-1290W

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what proportion of young people in the 10 local authority areas with the (a) highest and (b) lowest scores on the 2007 Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index achieved five A* to C grades at GCSE in each year since 1992. [15414]

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what proportion of pupils achieved at least five GCSEs, including English and mathematics (a) in total, (b) in schools where fewer than 5 per cent. of children were eligible for free school meals and (c) in schools where more than 50 per cent. of children were eligible for free school meals in each of the last five years. [15415]

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Detailed answers can be found on:

http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101004/text/101004w0001.htm#qn_59

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what proportion of pupils in (a) all schools and (b) schools rated outstanding in their most recent Ofsted inspection received free school meals in the latest period for which figures are available. [12530]

Mr Gibb: The average percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals in schools generally is 17.4. The average for schools rated outstanding by Ofsted at their last inspection up to the end of March 2010 is 13.4%.

HC Deb 04 October 2010 c1302W

Tom Blenkinsop: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what recent assessment he has made of the contribution to support for educational activities of information and communication technology and broadband. [10348]

Mr Gibb: The international 'Study of the Impact of Technology in Primary Schools' (STEPS) funded by the European Community (EC) investigated the primary education systems of 30 countries, measuring the impact of ICT on learning. Schools which make use of broadband connectivity are found to have improved academic results and increased learner motivation compared to those which do not make use of this technology.

However technology does not on its own guarantee educational success. Evidence shows that technology has a positive impact on learning and broader outcomes when it is used as part of good teaching practice.

HC Deb 04 October 2010 c1301W

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Elizabeth Truss: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many students in each socio-economic group were entered for (a) diploma, (b) A-level and (c) GCSE qualifications in the latest period for which figures are available. [13618]

Mr Gibb: [*holding answer 8 September 2010*]: The information on qualification entries by socio-economic group is not held by the Department.

However, some information from the Youth Cohort Study and Longitudinal Study of Young People in England on the achievement of GCSEs and A levels by socio-economic group is available from the following links:

- <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SBU/b000795/index.shtml>
- Table 4.1.1 and 4.1.2
- <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SBU/b000937/index.shtml>
- Table 2.2.1 and 2.2.2

Information on GCSE and A level attainment by Income Deprivation Affecting Children Indices (IDACI) is available from the following links:

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- <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000909/index.shtml>
- Table 18
- <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000906/index.shtml>
- Table 11.

HC Deb 04 October 2010 c1286W

Andrew Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will make it his policy to ensure full-time provision for 16 to 18 year olds in (a) level 1, (b) level 2 and (c) level 3 plumbing qualifications from September 2010; and if he will make a statement. [13687]

Mr Gibb: [*holding answer 9 September 2010*]: A number of colleges and employers are concerned that changes proposed to the content and funding arrangements for sector-endorsed plumbing qualifications risk excluding full-time students and, that in many cases the full-time offer for 16 to 18-year-olds does not properly prepare them for employment. The Government take these concerns seriously. The regulator, Ofqual, the funding agencies and the Sector Skills Council 'Summit Skills' have agreed to defer the date of the proposed changes from September 2010 to spring 2011. Officials from the Department for Education and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills will use the autumn term to work with all key partners, including colleges, to look more closely at the issues and I will be happy to make a statement once this work has concluded.

HC Deb 04 October 2010 c1299W

Academies

Lord Beecham: To ask Her Majesty's Government how many academies have, as members of their governing bodies, (a) local councillors from the local authority in which they are situated, (b) parents of pupils attending the school, indicating in how many cases they have been (1) elected, and (2) appointed, and (c) other residents of the relevant local authority area; and, in each case, what is this number as a proportion of the total number of academies.[HL1984] [HL1984]

Lord Hill of Oareford: Information on members of academies' governing bodies is not held centrally.

05 October 2010

Luciana Berger: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether he has made an assessment of the merits of requiring academies to cap the pay of (a) the principal and (b) other members of staff at the salary level of the Prime Minister. [12044]

Mr Gibb: [*holding answer 23 September 2010*]: Academies are free to set their own staff pay and conditions and invest their allocated budget in pupils' education as they see fit. Academies value this freedom and we intend to retain it. However, academies receive broadly the same funding as maintained schools, so they will clearly have to set staff pay in the light of significantly tighter public finances over coming years.

HC Deb 04 October 2010 c1275W

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Lisa Nandy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education (1) how many (a) primary and (b) secondary schools have (i) expressed interest in and (ii) applied for academy status; [10250]

Lisa Nandy: (2) which schools have applied for academy status. [10251]

Mr Gibb: On 26 May 2010, the Secretary of State invited schools to register their interest in becoming an academy. As of the 27 August 2010, 898 primary and

nursery schools and 979 secondary schools had registered an interest. As of 31 August 2010, 170 schools have applied for academy status. A list of the schools that have applied has been published on the Department's website at:

- www.education.gov.uk/academies

HC Deb 04 October 2010 c1274W

School funding and health

Dr Whiteford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) which (a) Ministers, (b) officials and (c) special advisers formulated plans to end the nursery milk scheme; [13507]

Dr Whiteford: (2) whether (a) HM Treasury and (b) No. 10 Downing street were informed of his Department's proposals to end the nursery milk scheme before the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health wrote to the devolved administrations on the subject; [13508]

Dr Whiteford: (3) whether the letter from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health to the devolved administrations on proposals to end the nursery milk scheme was copied to (a) Ministers and (b) officials in (i) HM Treasury and (ii) 10 Downing street (A) prior to and (B) at the time of issue; [13591]

Dr Whiteford: (4) what the cost to the public purse of the nursery milk scheme was in each of the last five years; and what estimate he has made of its cost in each of the next five years. [13592]

Anne Milton: It is customary for Ministers, officials and special advisers to work together on the development of all policies as appropriate.

Letters seeking views on a draft proposal were sent by myself to my right. hon. Friend the Prime Minister, the Home Affairs committee and the devolved Administrations at the same time.

The following table shows the cost of the scheme in the last five financial years.

<i>Financial year</i>	<i>Cost £ (million) GB total</i>
2005-06 ⁽¹⁾	22.8
2006-07 ⁽¹⁾	23.3
2007-08 ⁽¹⁾	27.1

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2008-09 ⁽¹⁾	31.2
2009-10 ⁽¹⁾	42.5
2010-11 ⁽²⁾	52.8
⁽¹⁾ Actual ⁽²⁾ Estimated	

HC Deb 04 October 2010 c1328W

Mrs Hodgson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has to bring forward proposals to repeal or amend the provisions of the Education (Nutritional Standards for School Lunches) (England) Regulations 2006. [14570]

Mr Gibb: The Government take the matter of healthy school meals very seriously. We recognise that healthy school food can help to improve children's readiness to learn and their behaviour at school, and that it can also help to establish healthy eating habits for life.

Statutory nutritional standards for school lunches became fully implemented in September 2009 and need to be given time to settle in. We are considering when it would be timely to review the standards but at present, we have no plans to repeal or amend the standards.

HC Deb 04 October 2010 c1299W

NPDB's

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what proportion of invoices from suppliers his Department paid within 10 days of receipt in July and August 2010. [13277]

Tim Loughton: The proportions of invoices paid within 10 days of receipt by DFE during July and August 2010 are: July - 94.37% and August - 95.04%.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many payments to suppliers were made by (a) his Department and (b) its non-departmental public bodies (i) within 30 days of, (ii) over 30 days after, (iii) over 60 days after and (iv) over 90 days after the date of invoice in the latest period for which figures are available. [13937]

Tim Loughton: As shown in the following table, the total number of payments made by the Department for Education (DfE) in this financial year within 30 days is 21,804 and represents 98.82% of all payments. Please note that our shared services provider does not monitor payments over 60 and 90 days.

<i>Number/percentage</i>	
Total payments	22,065
Within 30 days	21,804
Percentage	98.82

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For non-departmental public bodies, the table shown as follows provides a breakdown of payments made within 30 days and over 30, 60 and 90 days of receipt of invoice.

Please note that the figures for payments over the 60 and 90 thresholds are not available from Becta.

<i>Number</i>				
<i>NDPBs</i>	<i>Within 30 days of receipt of invoice</i>	<i>After 30 days of receipt of invoice</i>	<i>After 60 days of receipt of invoice</i>	<i>After 90 days of receipt of invoice</i>
BECTA	7,017	3,514	(1)-	(1)-
CAFCASS	20,302	4,818	1,244	1,542
CWDC	5,426	762	201	135
National College	12,525	731	123	88
OCC	194	77	3	1
PfS	1,018	112	41	26
QCDA	31,453	657	136	80
SFT	1,136	43	7	2
TDA	12,085	768	181	142
YPLA	617	105	54	54

(1) Unavailable.

HC Deb 04 October 2010 cc1280W-1281W