

POLICY BRIEF

Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny

17 November 2021



The information within this Brief is correct at the time of approval for publication and contains relevant announcements made by Government and its departments and regulators.

Consultations and Calls for Evidence

1. [Reforming how local authority school improvement functions are funded](#)

The local authority role in school improvement has changed significantly in recent years, with the growth of school-led approaches, such as multi-academy trusts, putting school improvement in the hands of the strongest schools and school leaders.

In turn, the local authority role in school improvement in maintained schools is increasingly focused on helping their schools access the support they need from the school system. Given these changes in respective roles and responsibilities, the DfE believe now is the right time to revisit local authorities' school improvement functions and how they are funded.

Plymouth City Council will be responding to this consultation which closes on 26 November 2021.

2. [Ofsted launches consultation for children's homes and residential holiday schemes](#)

Ofsted have launched a consultation on new arrangements for interim children's home inspections and inspections of residential holiday schemes for disabled children (RHSDCs). This consultation closes on 24 January 2022.

3. [Ofqual seeks views on accessible assessments for students](#)

A [consultation](#) has been launched on draft guidance for awarding organisations. The proposed updated guidance will support awarding organisations to design and develop assessments that meet rules on accessibility. This consultation closes on 24 January 2022.

2021 Spending Review Headline announcements – 27 October 2021

Children and Young People

SR21 announces £201 million in 2024-25 to transform Start for Life and family help services by creating a network of Family Hubs, investing in infant and parent mental health, breastfeeding support, parenting programmes, and expanding the Supporting Families programme, delivering on key recommendations from the Early Years Healthy Development Review. Some specifics include:

- An extra £200m investment in the Supporting Families Programme,
- £170 million by 2024-25 to increase the hourly rate to be paid to early years providers, to deliver the government's free hours offers. This builds on the £44 million increase confirmed at SR20.
- £250 million for Early Years training and development,
- £200 million a year until 2024/25 for the Holidays and Activities fund.
- £560 million new funding for youth services in England over the next three years, enough to fund 300 youth clubs.
- £18 million in 2024-25 to create a network of family hubs to improve access to services for families, and £20 million in 2024-25 for parenting support.
- Reaffirming £150 million over the SR21 period for training of early years staff to support children's learning and development, as part of the £1.4 billion announced in June 2021 to help children catch up on lost learning.
- SR21 provides £104m by 2024-25 for reforms to unregulated children's social care, and £7m by 2024-25 to improve access to services and support for adopted children and their families.
- SR21 also maintains and increases capacity in secure and open residential children's homes by making available £259m over the SR period.

Education and Skills

- Government confirms an additional £4.7 billion by 2024-25 for the core schools' budget in England - equivalent to £1,500 per pupil and returning to 2010 real term spending levels, as well as £2.6 billion of capital funding for new school places for children with special educational needs and disabilities, and £1.8 billion of additional money for education recovery.
- SR21 provides a new package of £1.8 billion over the SR period for education recovery. This includes a £1 billion Recovery Premium for the next two academic years to help schools to deliver evidence-based approaches to support the most disadvantaged pupils. It also provides £324 million in 2024-25 for additional learning hours for 16-19 year-olds.
- Skills spending will increase by over £3.8 billion over the course of the parliament. £1.6 billion is dedicated over three years to rolling out T-levels for 16–19-year-olds - designed to provide additional classroom hours for up to 100,000 young people. £550m is being invested in adult skills through the Skills Fund by 2024-25. This fund offers short courses and so-called 'skills boot camps' for adults who have no qualifications beyond GCSE level.
- The new £560 million UK-wide Multiply programme, delivered by UKSPF, will support up to half a million adults improve their numeracy.
- £170 million has been set aside for apprenticeships and training - increasing funding in England to £2.7 billion in 2024-25.
- Funding confirmed for the Restart scheme in England and Wales - to provide intensive and tailored support to long-term unemployed people to help them find work.
- £90 million to extend the Job Entry Targeted Support Scheme to the end of September 2022 - helping those unemployed for between three and twelve months across Great Britain find work.

Date of publication	Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee
All relevant guidance relating to schools, early years and childcare providers, further education and colleges and Children's Social Care providers continues to be updated in line with the government's roadmap for easing of restrictions.	
Published 13 Sept 2021	<p>1. Young people aged 12 to 15 to be offered a COVID-19 vaccine People aged 12 to 15 in England will be offered one dose of the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, following advice from the four UK Chief Medical Officers (CMOs), the Health and Social Care Secretary has announced today (Monday 13 September). In line with the recommendation of the independent Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), the government sought the views of the four UK CMOs on the wider issues that are relevant to the health of children.</p> <p>Parental, guardian or carer consent will be sought by vaccination healthcare staff prior to vaccination in line with existing school vaccination programmes. Healthy school-aged children aged 12 to 15 will primarily receive their COVID-19 vaccination in their school with alternative provision for those who are home schooled, in secure services or specialist mental health settings.</p> <p>Update: 12 – 15yr old vaccination programme is managed by NHS England but we work closely with them to promote and ensure data accuracy. Take up rate before half term was around 7%, however half term walk in centres were made available and this has boosted the take up rate by 20%. Vaccination rate for 12 – 15yr olds is 27% as of 03 November. We are continuing to work with NHS England to promote the vaccination programme to young people and their parents.</p>

<p>Published 13 Sept 2021</p>	<p>2. Funding boost for councils as new Afghan resettlement plans set out Councils who support people through the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) or Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) scheme will receive £20,520 per person, over 3 years, for resettlement and integration costs. This is based on the previous Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme, but over 3 rather than 5 years, with more money provided in the crucial early period to help people settle and become part of their new communities.</p> <p>The full package will cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £20,520 to cover the local authority welcome, integration offer and provision of services • Up to £4,500 per child to cover education provision, subject to their age (year one only) • £850 to cover English language provision, for adults requiring this support (year one only) • £2,600 to cover health provision (year one only) <p>Update: It has been agreed in principle that Plymouth City Council will support the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) and commit to resettling up to 60 people in the first year of the programme (September 2021 –September 2022).</p> <p>It has also been agreed in principle that Plymouth City Council will resettle up to 50 people per year for the duration of the Schemes to support the Home Office to meet its target of 20,000 Afghans across a 5 year period. This will be reviewed annually to ensure that we are not placing too greater pressure on the local housing market.</p> <p>The funding for children and young people is used to commission the refugee Integration Service (RIS) and through this we have been able to support ODILS Learning Foundation to provide women’s only English classes with a crèche for children below school age as sometimes the women are anxious to place their children in mainstream nursery provision. It has also built confidence and generated pathways for women to then place their children into mainstream provision once they are able to claim the free hours.</p> <p>Funding from previous refugee resettlement schemes has allowed us to begin the process of recruiting a mental health worker with specific experience of working with families and young people who have experienced trauma. This role will work across services to develop a culturally appropriate service.</p> <p>As in previous settlement/relocation schemes the Ethnic Minority Achievement (EMA) Team leader will liaise with colleagues in START and Admissions to support suitable, swift school placements for children and will be responsible for actioning funding to schools with Home Office guidance shared. The EMA Team will support children’s early learning and provide training for teachers in schools on inclusion, English as an Additional Language learning provision etc. and act as a point of contact for school leaders should concerns arise. Children’s progress will be tracked and summary reports provided.</p>
<p>Published 16 Sept 2021</p>	<p>3. New review investigates babies harmed by fathers and stepfathers A new report investigating the death or serious harm of 23 babies is calling for midwives, health visitors and social workers to provide more support to fathers.</p>

	<p>The independent Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel reviews serious child safeguarding cases – when a child dies or suffers serious harm, and abuse or neglect is known or suspected. The panel’s latest review looks at the lives of babies who were known or suspected to have been seriously harmed or killed by their father, step-father or male carer. The aim is to understand what led the perpetrators to harm their children, and what could be done to prevent similar incidents.</p>
<p>Published 21 Sept 2021</p>	<p>4. Training launched for mental health leads in schools and colleges Schools and colleges to benefit from a trained senior mental health lead for those who need support. Pupils in up to 7,800 schools and colleges will benefit from a trained senior mental health lead tasked with identifying those who need support and improving access to specialist services. Eligible schools and colleges will be able to apply for a grant of £1,200, which can be used to enable senior leaders to gain the knowledge and skills they need to roll out an effective ‘whole school or college approach’ to mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Backed by a total of £9.5 million, announced in May, this grant funding includes training on how to use existing mental health resources more effectively, identify students who need mental health support, and on how to improve working with local mental health services. The government remains committed to offering this training to all state schools and colleges by 2025.</p> <p>Update: Two Local Authority practitioners have received training and have access to all resources required to deliver the courses.</p> <p>All courses are being held at the Jan Cutting Healthy Living Centre in Plymouth and are being delivered by PCC Educational Psychologists.</p> <p>Course dates are advertised on the www.mentalhealthlead.com website including all logistics for participants to book on the course and claim the appropriate grant from the DfE.</p> <p>Schools have received local and national advertising and have started booking on to courses which will run on various dates until July 2022 - 15 participants have booked so far. Courses are designed for Middle Leaders, Senior Leaders and Head Teachers.</p>
<p>Published 30 Sept 2021</p>	<p>5. Proposed changes to the assessment of GCSEs, AS and A levels in 2022 A joint consultation published by Ofqual and the Department for Education on proposed changes to the assessment of GCSEs, AS and A levels in 2022. Outcome and analysis documents added to conclude this consultation. Students will sit GCSE, A and AS level exams next year with adaptations to recognise the disruption to their education.</p>
<p>Published 30 Sept 2021</p>	<p>6. Government launches £500m support for vulnerable households over winter The Government has announced the launch of the £500m Household Support Fund, which will support vulnerable households with essentials, such as food, clothing and utilities, over the coming months as the country continues its recovery from the pandemic. The new funding comes as the Job Retention Scheme ends. The Fund will support millions of households and will be</p>

	<p>distributed by councils in England. The money will be made available to councils in October.</p> <p>Update: See attached Household Support Grant briefing.</p>
<p>Published 06 Oct 2021</p>	<p>7. Salary boosts for new maths, science and computing teachers Teachers in the early years of their careers will be able to get a salary boost of up to £3,000 tax-free to teach maths, physics, chemistry and computing. This will support recruitment and retention of specialist teachers in these subjects and in the schools and areas that need them most.</p> <p>Update: New DfE arrangements for induction/support for Early Career Teachers (ECTs) in the Early Career Framework (ECF) has shifted responsibility away from LAs to private consultancies and teaching school hubs; this means that going forward we will not hold city wide information on ECTs. School leaders will now hold this information.</p> <p>However, the South West Institute for Teaching, who are the major provider in the South West, have convened a stakeholder group to which Plymouth, Torbay and Devon councils are members. Through this forum we will be able to ask questions about recruitment and retention of teachers in Plymouth.</p>
<p>Published 06 Oct 2021</p>	<p>8. Recovery premium funding Additional funding in the 2021 to 2022 academic year to support schools with education recovery following COVID-19. The link to the guidance has been added. This guidance is for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school leaders and teachers • governors and academy trustees • virtual school heads <p>It applies to local-authority-maintained schools, academies, non-maintained special schools and independent special schools.</p> <p>Update: Academies received their first payment in October 2021. Plymouth maintained schools will receive payments via the Local Authority on their January 22 and July 22 Income Allocation Notifications.</p> <p>Schools should spend this premium on evidence-based approaches to support pupils. In line with the Education Endowment Foundation’s pupil premium guide, activities should include those that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support the quality of teaching, such as staff professional development • provide targeted academic support, such as tutoring • deal with non-academic barriers to success in school, such as attendance, behaviour and social and emotional support <p>School level allocations and more information can be found below; https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-recovery-premium-funding-allocations</p>
<p>Published 06 Oct 2021</p>	<p>9. Implementing the early years foundation stage reforms Case study videos for practitioners assessing children’s development at the end of the early years foundation stage (EYFS).</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 1: curriculum and the EYFS Profile under the new EYFS - A summary of the reforms and the new expectations for early years curriculum and assessment. • Chapter 2: implementing the new EYFS as a school - School leaders from early adopter schools share their experiences of the EYFS reforms and how they implemented the reforms in their school. • Chapter 3: assessment under the new EYFS - Reception teachers from early adopter schools share how the reforms have impacted their assessment practices and what has been important in their assessments during the early adopter year. <p>Update: The reforms came into force on 01 September 2021. The Early Years Team, in conjunction with Ofsted HMIs have briefed the private and voluntary sector as well as schools on how the new reforms will impact on their delivery of the EYFS. The key message is that good early years practice remains the same however, expectations about assessment and curriculum design have changed.</p> <p>There is now a new assessment (reception baseline) and the council are no longer expected to moderate early year's foundation stage profile (EYFSP). The EYFSP from 2021 will be different from previous years and therefore not comparable.</p>
Published 14 Oct 2021	<p>10. Widening participation in higher education: 2021 Annual statistics on young people's participation in higher education, including their background characteristics.</p> <p>The publication includes geographic breakdowns to enable comparisons of HE progression rates between local authorities and regions by personal characteristics.</p>
Published 19 Oct 2021	<p>11. Condition Improvement Fund: 2021 to 2022 outcome Information for academies, sixth-form colleges and voluntary aided schools about the outcome of the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) 2021 to 2022.</p> <p>Update: A mix of 23 secondary and primary schools across Plymouth will receive funding to improve the condition of their schools - from refurbishing kitchen facilities to improving heating systems.</p>
Published 22 Oct 2021	<p>12. Care leavers and disadvantaged pupils to benefit from £126 million investment in new laptops and tablets Care leavers, children with a social worker and children arriving from Afghanistan will receive devices to enable them to access education and support.</p>
Published 27 Oct 2021	<p>13. All schools and colleges to receive extra funding for catch up Every school and college in England will have more money to support young people's recovery from the impact of the pandemic, as the government confirms billions of pounds of additional investment in education.</p> <p>This will give schools and colleges the tools they need to help get pupils back on track – from raising teachers' salaries, to recovery cash for schools, to increased learning time in colleges.</p>

	Schools will receive an additional £4.7 billion in core funding in 2024-25, including £1.6 billion in 2022-23 on top of already planned increases from the 2019 Spending Review, and meaning a total cash increase of £1,500 per pupil between 2019-20 and 2024-25.
Published 02 Nov 2021	14. Children's Minister address to National Centre for Family Hubs Minister Will Quince speaks to family hubs conference to launch £12 million Transformation Fund.
Ofsted Announcements	
Published 14 Sept 2021	15. Ofsted launches updated guidance for summary evaluations of multi-academy trusts Ofsted has launched updated guidance for summary evaluations of multi-academy trusts (MATs) . Summary evaluations look at the extent to which a MAT is delivering high quality education and improving pupils' outcomes. The updates to this guidance ensure that summary evaluations will mirror the education inspection framework , introduced in 2019, to focus on the quality of education as seen through the curriculum. It will also allow us to increase the volume of summary evaluations, and the breadth of MATs inspected, so that we gain better insight into the role of multi-academy trusts.
Published 22 Sept 2021	16. Ofsted to review two education catch-up reforms Ofsted has been asked by the government to carry out an independent review of two key catch-up reforms: tutoring and teachers' professional development. The reviews will investigate how the government's policies are working on the ground, through a mixture of research visits, evidence from our inspections and other methods. They will assess the progress and, where possible, the effectiveness of the government's education recovery plans.
Published 28 Oct 2021	17. Ofsted calls for stronger oversight of early years multiple providers and social care groups Ofsted has published two research reports looking at early years multiple providers and providers that own more than one children's home.

ECSC Scrutiny updates from previous meeting

Updates were requested in the previous meeting which was held on 08 September 2021 in respect of the following government announcements and how they translate for Plymouth.

[£50 million to deliver world-class facilities for T Level students](#)

- £50 million to be invested in colleges, schools and sixth forms delivering T levels across England from 2022.
- Funding is to improve and expand teaching spaces and facilities which will support up to six million pupils over the next three years.
- With the intention of transforming the provision of technical education to help fill local skills gaps and level up opportunities across the country.

Update: This is not information that the LA collects specifically, however feedback from schools and the MATs is that, as of yet they aren't offering the T-level option to their students. In Plymouth only

City College Plymouth are offering the T-level option. Local intelligence also suggests that there is a low level of take up in neighbouring authorities.

Tutoring revolution builds as students return to class

- Announcement in relation to the expansion of tutoring which is intended to support up to six million pupils over the next three years.
- New [guidance](#) has been published to support schools to offer their own teacher-led tuition.
- Academic mentors are being placed in selected schools across the country to work in small groups with over 250,000 students most in need of support this year.

Update: The number of schools participating or the impact that the programme is having is not information that the LA collects specifically, however feedback from schools and the MATs is that there has been very low take up of the national tutoring programme in Plymouth schools. Local intelligence also suggests that there is a low level of take up in neighbouring authorities.

We do know that some primary schools are planning to begin using the programme in the upcoming terms and we have had feedback from two primary schools who have taken advantage of the programme, both report a positive impact with a high level of progress for the pupils involved.

Testimony from one Plymouth primary school: *The NTP tutoring has enabled some of our most disadvantaged children to make accelerated progress in English and maths. All pupils have maintained and made expected progress, despite the disruption to their learning across the academic year 2020-2021. The data shows that NTP made a positive impact on maintaining and accelerating progress for each of our disadvantaged children in years 2-6.*

New recovery fund to tackle harms facing vulnerable children

£24 million regional fund for children's social care, including funding to support unaccompanied minors. The new fund will support projects tackling the issues facing the most vulnerable children in society in 2021-22, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) abuse, care for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, preventing adolescents from being caught up in harms outside the home such as gangs and reducing the pressure on the system by reducing court backlogs or improving technology.

Funding will be distributed through England's network of nine Regional Improvement and Innovation Alliances according to plans based on local priorities.

Update: Exploring what we can access for Plymouth via our Regional network. Awaiting update from the Regional group. Verbal update to be provided at the Committee if available.

Families across England to receive better support to adopt

Backed by a £48 million investment, the new National Adoption Strategy has been launched to improve adoption services in England. This will be done by putting in place better recruitment across the country and removing any unnecessary delays, providing more training for front line staff, improving approval processes, and funding for targeted recruitment campaigns.

Update: Plymouth are part of the Regional Adoption Agency for the South West – it is the agency that will be able to access this funding. Awaiting update for how much we can access and how we will use this locally. Verbal update to be provided at the Committee if available.

£20m to provide more early help for vulnerable families

Vulnerable or low-income families in England will benefit from a multi-million-pound investment to improve access to early education, health, and care services.

The £20 million, awarded from the Treasury's Shared Outcomes Fund, will include:

- £10 million for the Family Hubs 'Transformation Fund', which will support local authorities to open family hubs in approximately 10 new areas of England. Family Hubs are already operating in several areas of England, providing vital support services to vulnerable families; and

- £10 million to expand the 'Growing Up Well' digital project, designed to level up outcomes for vulnerable and disadvantaged families. This involves improving how information is shared between professionals working with families and children in these Hubs.

Update: Plymouth were unsuccessful in the bid for funding to support a 'Growing up Well' digital project – the grants were awarded to Salford City Council, Suffolk County Council and Tower Hamlets Council.

Cornwall has agreed to lead the Family Hub strand of Strand I of the Regional Recovery and Building Back Better Fund for the South West. Plymouth will be attending South West Family Hub workshop at the end of November led by Cornwall.

The Family Hubs Transformation Fund has opened – Plymouth will be bidding as it is highly relevant in relation to the timing and position of the work that we have been doing. The deadline for submissions is 17 December 2021. We are also at the evaluation stage of our Early Help Partnership tender which will drive our Family Hubs forward, with presentations from the bidders on the 15 November 2021 and contract award in December 2021.