

CES Parliamentary Monitor – June 2021

This month the easing of lockdown restricts was delayed by [four weeks](#) in England. [In Wales](#), First Minister Mark Drakeford confirmed that a further easing of lockdown restrictions will be delayed by at least four weeks amidst an increase in cases of the Delta variant.

In both England and Wales there have been concerns around the different coronavirus variants and the way in which they may affect the easing of restrictions. Public Health Wales [confirmed](#) that the Delta variant, first identified in India, is now the most common strain of new Covid-19 cases in Wales, with case numbers involving the variant rising more than 70 percent in four days since 10 June. The First Minister for Wales, [Mark Drakeford](#), has accused the Prime Minister of "aggressively" ignoring Wales. UK Ministers have cautioned that focusing on constitutional affairs was an "irresponsible" distraction from the pandemic.

In England, school isolation rules for Covid could end in Autumn, the [BBC](#) has reported. At present, if one student tests positive with Covid all peers in their bubble must isolate too. A pilot scheme is assessing the efficacy of replacing this system with daily on-site testing for pupils. It has also been reported that the school day will be [extended](#) by half an hour under a £15bn Covid rescue plan to help Britain's children to catch up after months of disrupted education. Tutoring sessions for pupils in England are also being [promised](#) in school catch-up plans that will cost £1.4bn over three years. At the G7 Summit in Cornwall, the Prime Minister called on [G7](#) to help educate every child in the world.

People Moves this month:

- Department of Health and Social Care – SoS for Health and Social Care Matt Hancock resigned and was replaced by Sajid Javid.
- Education and Skills Funding Agency – Warwick Sharp appointed as Director, Academies and Maintained Schools, having been in the role on an interim basis.
- Student Loans Company Ltd – Chris Larmer appointed as Executive Director, Operations
- Ofqual – Jo Saxton named as preferred candidate to be Chief Regulator.

Please do not hesitate to contact Molly if you have any queries on: molly.conrad@cbcew.org.uk

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DFE Written Statements

7 June 2021 – [HCWS70](#) – Education Update.

10 June 2021 – [HCWS82](#) – Prevailing Market Rates.

14 June 2021 – [HCWS89](#) – Update on Teacher Training Application System.

23 June 2021 – [HCWS116](#) – Condition Improvement Fund Update.

Other DFE Announcements

27 May 2021 – The DfE has opened a [consultation](#) on a revised version of the Building Bulletin 100 design guide for fire safety in schools. (Closes 17 August 2021)

2 June 2021 - Prime Minister Boris Johnson has made an announcement on [an expansion of tutoring in the next step of the education recovery](#)

2 June 2021 – [Department for Education](#): Huge Expansion of tutoring in next step of education.

10 June 2021 – [Department for Education](#): Schools to be encouraged to dedicate staff training to handling sexual abuse and harassment

10 June 2021 - The Department for Education publishes [statistics](#) on Graduate labour market statistics: 2020.

11 June 2021 – [Department for Education](#): More high-quality degree alternatives to boost adult skills and job prospects.

17 June 2021 – The DfE has published [statistics](#) on Secondary and Primary School Applications and Offers: 2021.

17 June 2021 – The DfE has published [statistics](#) on Schools, pupils and their characteristics: January 2021.

17 June 2021 – The DfE has published [statistics](#) on School workforce.

18 June 2021 – [Department for Education](#): New £9.5 million FE Professional Development Grants available.

22 June 2021 - Speaking at the [Festival of Education 2021](#), Gavin Williamson set out his commitment to levelling up opportunities across the country for young people.

22 June 2021 - Minister for the School System, Baroness Berridge addresses [Sixth Form Colleges Association](#) Annual Conference on the vision for all sixth forms to be part of a multi-academy trust.

23 June 2021 - Schools Minister Baroness Berridge has made an announcement on [a £483 million investment to boost and improve school buildings](#).

24 June 2021 - Gavin Williamson spoke to the HEPI [conference](#) on the importance of learning from the pandemic, and higher education reform.

24 June 2021 – The DfE has published [statistics](#) on Special Educational Needs in England: January 2021.

24 June 2021 – The DfE has published [statistics](#) on Apprenticeships and Traineeships: June 2021.

24 June 2021 – The DfE has published [statistics](#) on Participation in education, training and employment: 2020.

24 June 2021 – The DfE has published [statistics](#) on Student loan forecasts, England: 2020 to 2021.

24 June 2021 – The DfE has published [statistics](#) on Graduate Outcomes (LEO): subject by provider 2018 to 2019.

29 June 2021 – The Department for Education has published [statistics](#) on Attendance in Education and Early Years settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak (23 March-24 June 2021).

29 June 2021 - Education Secretary Gavin Williamson has made an announcement on [a call for evidence on behaviour in schools](#).

29 June 2021 - The Department for Education has opened a [consultation](#) on Behaviour management strategies, in-school units and managed moves: call for evidence. The Department are seeking to understand how schools utilise their behaviour strategies.

Select Committees

10 June 2021 - The Education Secretary Gavin Williamson has [written](#) to chair of the Education Committee, Robert Halfon, with an update on the Department for Education's response to COVID-19, dated 25 May 2021.

15 June 2021 – Education Select Committee, [Formal Meeting \(Oral Evidence Session\)](#) – Accountability Hearing: Safeguarding in Schools.

15 June 2021 - The Minister for School Standards, Nick Gibb, has [written](#) to the chair of the Education Committee, Robert Halfon, providing additional information regarding the medical and scientific evidence underpinning the Department for Education's decision to recommend face coverings in secondary and further education (FE) classrooms.

22 June 2021 – The Education Select Committee has published a [report](#) on Left Behind White Pupils from Disadvantaged Backgrounds.

23 June 2021 – Education Select Committee, [Formal Meeting \(Oral Evidence Session\)](#) – Accountability Hearings

23 June 2021 - The Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson, has [written](#) to the chair of the Education Committee, Robert Halfon, with an update on the Department for Education's response to the coronavirus outbreak between 19 May and 8 June 2021.

28 June 2021 – Work and Pensions Select Committee, [Formal Meeting \(Oral Evidence Session\)](#) – Children in Poverty: Measurement and Targets, HC 188.

29 June 2021 – Education Select Committee, [Formal Meeting \(Oral Evidence Session\)](#) – Education Recovery

29 June 2021 - The Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson, has [written](#) to the chair of the Education Committee, Robert Halfon (Con, Harlow), providing an update on the Department for Education's response to the coronavirus outbreak between 8 and 15 June 2021.

SI's and Legislation

14 June 2021 - [Childcare \(Early Years Provision Free of Charge\) \(Extended Entitlement\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2021](#) (Negative resolution)

14 June 2021 - [Education \(Student Loans\) \(Repayment\) \(Amendment\) \(No. 2\) Regulations 2021](#) (Negative Resolution)

18 June 2021 - The latest list of [Amendments](#) to be moved in Committee of the Whole House for the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill has been published.

Debates and Oral Statements

9 June 2021 - [PMQ's](#) - Scott Benton (Con, Blackpool South) welcomed plans from the Education Secretary which will oversee the roll out of the tutoring programme and asked the PM whether this was just one part of the plan to ensure no child misses out. Johnson assured him that the tutoring programme was evidence-based. He added that every tutoring programme was equivalent to 3 to 6 months in the classroom and added that the Government were also looking at increasing time spent in schools.

9 June 2021 – [House of Commons Debate](#) – Investing in Children and Young People.

9 June 2021 – The Higher Education Policy Institute has published a [report](#) on student finance.

10 June 2021 – [House of Commons Debate](#) – Ofsted Review of Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges.

15 June 2021 – [House of Lords Debate](#) – Skills and Post-16 Education Bill.

21 June 2021 – [House of Lords Debate](#) – Education: Recovery Package and Catch-Up Programme.

21 June 2021 – [House of Commons Debate](#) – School Transport Costs.

22 June 2021 – [House of Commons Debate](#) – Educational Catch-Up Provision Funding.

28 June 2021 – [House of Lords Debate](#) – Skills and Post-16 Education Bill.

29 June 2021 – [House of Commons Debate](#) – Education Recovery

Stakeholder Publications

2 June 2021 – The Labour Party has published its [Children's Recovery Plan](#).

3 June 2021 - The Local Government Association has published a report on [children's social care budgets](#).

3 June 2021 - The Centre for Policy Studies has published a report on [lost learning](#).

8 June 2021 - The Education and Training Foundation (ETF) has released its first annual Impact [Report](#) for the 2019–2020 financial year.

9 June 2021 – Labour's Shadow Education Secretary Kate Green opens Labour's Opposition Day [Debate](#) on Investing in Children and Young People.

9 June 2021 – Universities UK has published a collection of [case studies](#) on the support offered by universities to equip new undergraduates with the skills they need to thrive ahead of and during university.

10 June 2021 – Ofsted has published a [review](#) of sexual abuse in schools and college.

14 June 2021 – Humanists UK has [reported](#) that the UK Government has condemned a Catholic relationships and sex education (RSE) resource, arguing it should not be used in schools.

16 June 2021 – [Ofqual](#): Changes agreed for non-exam assessment and fieldwork in 2021 will be carried forward for another year.

16 June 2021 - NAHT has released the [results](#) of a snap poll of its members on which areas they think should be the highest priority for education recovery.

17 June 2021 – UCAS has published a [report](#) on student mental health.

22 June 2021 – The Centre for Education and Youth has published a [report](#) on access to higher education for young people with insecure or unresolved immigration status.

22 June 2021 – The Association of Colleges published an [article](#) on the second reading of the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill.

25 June 2021 - Thinktank Onward has [published](#) a report on lost learning, which finds that there are vast geographical inequalities in children's access to a good education, and calls for the Government to take sustained action to turn around failing schools in many of the poorest parts of England.

28 June 2021 – Kate Green’s Festival of Education [Speech](#).

28 June 2021 - Ofsted has published updated education inspection [handbooks](#), clarifying how inspectors will assess how schools and colleges confront sexual harassment, abuse and violence among children and young people.

29 June 2021 - The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills publishes [statistics](#) on State-funded schools inspections and outcomes as at 31 March 2021.

29 June 2021 – Labour used an [urgent question](#) in the House of Commons to call on the Government to keep children in school and prevent further disruption in September after new data shows one in twenty children were out of school last week.

30 June 2021 - The [Student Loans Company](#) (SLC) is asking part-time and postgraduate students in England to apply now for student finance.

[Wales: Reports, Plenary, Estyn etc...](#)

Welsh Government

9 June 2021 - The Welsh Government will provide £33m to support learners in colleges and sixth forms across Wales, as part of the £150m it has committed to the education response to Covid-19.

16 June 2021 - Jeremy Miles, the Minister for Education and Welsh Language, published the Welsh Government's Renew and Reform [plan](#) for education.

21 June 2021 – Jeremy Miles has set out a series of [measures](#) to create more capacity and ease potential pressures within the Welsh education system.

30 June 2021 – Jeremy Miles has outlined further [plans](#) to introduce contact groups for adult learners in Higher and Further Education.

Ministerial Statements

21 June 2021 – Education Minister, Jeremy Miles, [Written Statement](#): School information, improvement and inspection arrangements – supporting renewal and reform,

30 June 2021 – Education Minister, Jeremy Miles, [Written Statement](#): Autumn term planning for Higher Education and adult learners in Further Education Colleges, work based and community learning.

Stakeholders

10 June 2021 – NAHT Cymru has published a [blueprint](#) for education recovery.

11 June 2021 – [Higher Education Funding Council for Wales](#): Funding for higher education in 2021/22.

21 June 2021 - The [NASUWT](#)-The Teachers' Union will be lobbying the Welsh Government for a fairer mechanism for the funding schools across local authorities in Wales.

Relevant Written Questions (Commons and Lords)

Commons

7 June 2021 – 7894 – Sarah Olney (Richmond Park)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department plans to take steps in response to the recommendations of the National Secular Society's report entitled *Religiosity inspections: the case against faith-based reviews of state schools*, including repeal of section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

Answered by Nik Gibb

Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 places a duty on the governing body of maintained schools that are designated as having a religious character, to arrange for the inspection of any denominational education and collective worship. This requirement applies to maintained faith schools and academies (via the funding agreement). In arranging the inspection, the school must consult with the appropriate religious body, specified in regulations. This approach brings a consistency of approach and oversight to the inspections.

The Government greatly values the contribution that faith schools make to the education sector by providing high quality school places and choice for parents. Section 48 inspections provide assurance in relation to the religious education and collective worship provided in these schools. There are no plans to change the current arrangements for the inspection of designated faith schools.

10 June 2021 – 7726 – Gareth Thomas (Harrow West)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will exempt Catholic sixth form colleges from paying VAT; and if he will make a statement.

Answered by Jesse Norman (Hereford and South Herefordshire)

Under the current VAT rules, the supply of education by an eligible body, including sixth form colleges, without a charge is outside the scope of VAT. Where a charge is applied, it is exempt from VAT. In either case, this means that no VAT is charged on these services. The Government has no plans to review these provisions.

11 June 2021 – 8733 – Luke Pollard (Plymouth, Sutton and Devonport)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether schools are required to include the teaching of RE in the education recovery plans of pupils that have lost learning during the covid-19 outbreak; and if he will make a statement.

Answered by Nick Gibb

Religious education (RE) is not an optional subject for state funded schools. They must teach RE to all pupils throughout all Key Stages up to age 18. Teaching a broad and balanced curriculum is important to the academic, social, and personal development of young people. These requirements have not changed because of the COVID-19 outbreak.

The Department is working with a broad range of stakeholders to develop a range of short, medium, and long term options to ensure all young people recover their education over the term of this Government.

14 June 2021 – 13147 – Peter Kyle (Hove)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many covid-19 lateral flow tests have been (a) distributed to schools for pupil use and (b) formally completed by pupils since March 2021.

Answered by Nick Gibb

The number of COVID-19 lateral flow tests that have been distributed to schools and further education colleges since 1 March 2021 is 192,931,671, of which 135,452,570 are for pupils. This includes 126,705,245 COVID-19 lateral flow self-test kits for testing at home.

The number of lateral flow tests that have been completed by pupils in secondary schools, excluding colleges, between 4 March and 2 June is 21.9 million.

The number of lateral flow tests that have been completed in total since 4 March and up to 2 June for all education settings, including higher education, is 47.7 million. This includes testing of pupils, staff, school household bubble testing, and school support bubble testing. Testing figures have been derived from the Department of Health and Social Care NHS Test and Trace published statistics which can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/weekly-statistics-for-nhs-test-and-trace-england-27-may-to-2-june-2021> .

14 June 2021 – 10631 – Luke Pollard (Plymouth, Sutton and Devonport)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department has received representations on the adequacy of funding for Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education; and if he will make a statement.

Answered by Nick Gibb

The Department has received a copy of a report produced by the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (NASACRE). The report presents a summary of responses received from local authorities to Freedom of Information requests relating to funding of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACREs).

Local authorities are allocated funding through the central school services block (CSSB) for a range of duties that they must meet for all pupils in maintained schools and academies, such as establishing and

maintaining a SACRE. In financial year 2021/22, the total funding for ongoing responsibilities in the CSSB is £257 million, a 3.8% increase compared to 2020/21, to keep up with inflation and pupil numbers.

The Department does not specify what proportion of this money should be attributed to different services or duties. It is up to each local authority to decide this for itself. We expect that a SACRE should be sufficiently resourced to meet its statutory duties. If a SACRE is unable to do this, it should first raise a complaint locally about the issue. If it has done this unsuccessfully, the issue can be escalated to the Department's School Complaints Unit.

21 June 2021 – 16780 – Dr Julian Lewis (New Forest East)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of whether the recent teaching materials issued to primary schools by the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education is in breach of the prohibition on political propaganda in the classroom; and if he will make a statement.

Answered by Nick Gibb

The law is clear that schools must remain politically impartial. Head teachers and staff have a responsibility to ensure that they act appropriately, particularly in the political views they express. When political issues are discussed, schools must offer pupils a balanced presentation of opposing views and should not present materials in a politically biased or one sided way.

Schools should not teach contested theory or opinions as fact and must ensure they uphold their duties with regard to political impartiality. Schools should be mindful of the need to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views as well as the age appropriateness of teaching, given that balanced treatment of such issues may not be possible with younger pupils.

Political impartiality in our education system is an important principle to uphold. The Department is developing further guidance to support schools to understand and meet their duties in this area.

Lords

16 June 2021 – HL729 – Baroness Eaton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress has been made on the Department for Education's work to tackle child sexual abuse following the publication of the Government's Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy.

Answered by Baroness Berridge

The department is working closely with the Home Office and other government departments on delivering the Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy. Work is well underway with the rollout of statutory Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) in schools, the appointment of national facilitators to support safeguarding partners to embed effective local practice and the launch of the online resource Together We Can Stop Sexual Abuse to build public awareness and signpost access to support.

On 10 June, the department went further in its commitment to tackling child sexual abuse, announcing a range of measures in response to Ofsted's recommendations following their review of sexual abuse in schools. Measures include better supporting teachers and school leaders to recognise sexual harassment and abuse and teach confidently about issues of consent, online pornography and healthy relationships, encouraging schools to dedicate inset day time to help train staff on how to deal with sexual abuse and harassment among pupils and how to deliver the government's new RSHE curriculum, strengthening safeguarding guidance to boost teacher confidence in identifying and responding to these issues and providing supervision to dedicated members of school and college staff in up to 10 more local authorities, whose role it is to identify safeguarding concerns among pupils.