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**172 Academy and School News and Resources Update, June 11-17 2022**

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**Attendance**

* **Attendance as of June 9 2022**
* Attendance in **all state-funded schools** was adjusted to exclude year 11-13 pupils who are not in attendance because they are off-site for approved purposes was 91.5% on 9 Jun, up from 89.6% on 26 May.
* Attendance in state-funded **primary** schools was 94.0% on 9 Jun, up from 92.2% on 26 May.
* Attendance adjusted to exclude year 11-13 pupils who are not in attendance because they are off-site for approved purposes in state-funded **secondary** schools was 88.5% on 9 Jun, up from 86.6% on 26 May.
* Attendance adjusted to exclude year 11-13 pupils who are not in attendance because they are off-site for approved purposes in state-funded **special** schools was 86.3% on 9 Jun, up from 85.5% on 26 May..
* Attendance adjusted to exclude year 11-13 pupils who are not in attendance because they are off-site for approved purposes in state-funded **alternativ**e provision was 54.4% on 9 Jun, up from 52.7% on 26 May.

Attendance of vulnerable children and pupils eligible for free school meals

* In state-funded **primary** schools, approximately 92% of pupils with an education, health and care plan (EHCP), 92% of pupils with a social worker, and 93% of pupils eligible for free school meals were in attendance on 9 Jun. Attendance rates are higher than on 26 May when 91% for pupils with an EHCP, 91% of pupils with a social worker, and 92% of pupils eligible for free school meals were in attendance.
* Equivalent figures for state-funded **secondary** schools are affected by some schools offering different provision for year 11-13 students and are therefore not summarised here.

Workforce absence

* The estimate is that 5.5% of **teachers and school leaders** were absent for any reason from open schools on 9 Jun, down from 5.7% on 26 May.
* The estimate is that 5.0% of **teaching assistants and other staff** were absent for any reason from open schools on 9 Jun, down from 5.3% on 26 May.
* Children need more support to get them into school full-time, as mental-health problems surge, a report says. **Schools should “obsess” about attendance** but need more support to provide counselling and intervene after exclusions, Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are among those currently being let down in England's schools, the report **by children's commissioner Rachel de Souza** says. Ms De Souza's report says reasons for missing school are often "highly individual and complex". For some, it was daunting to return to school after long periods of studying at home during the pandemic. And some parents felt they were not listened to about the needs of their children, especially those with SEND. In response to the growing mental-health issues among schoolchildren, Ms De Souza's report recommends every school in England has access to a support team - in contrast to current government plans for such teams to reach 35% of pupils by 2023. The children's commissioner sees September as a chance for a reset, "a new start, full of hopes and dreams" for pupils who want to be in school. Schools should aim for 100% attendance on the first day of the autumn term, Ms De Souza says. Other recommendations she made for reaching this level include better support for young carers and ensuring pupils who have been excluded have their needs fully assessed. See <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/cc-voices-of-englands-missing-children-june-2022.pdf> For a useful summary, see <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/schools-should-obsess-about-attendance-says-childrens-commissioner/> key recommendations.
* Ofsted should make school attendance a ‘top priority’
* Attendance to be prioritised in Parent Pledge
* Schools should provide counselling
* AP should be an ‘integral part’ of the system
* More guidance needed on supporting children post-exclusion
* All schools should have a ‘young carers’ policy’
* There should be “clear expectations regarding data sharing” between organisations responsible for safeguarding children.

**Schools Bill**

* The DfE has updated “**Schools Bill: policy statements**” Information explaining measures in the Schools Bill, which was introduced to Parliament in May 2022. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-bill-policy-statements>
* **The Education Secretary** has spoken at the Confederation of School Trusts Annual Conference. He said that **the government will not impose “any new burdens” that would restrict the “freedoms” of academies**, the education secretary will promise today, further signalling plans to **water down his controversial schools bill**; excellence was “not something that can be achieved by a list of standards, or a piece of regulation”. But Zahawi’s own draft bill sets out in its very first clause a long list of examples of standards the government may set for academies in future. The scope of the bill has prompted widespread criticism and claims of a “power grab” by Whitehall over schools in England. He said baseline requirements for trusts were needed because we “don’t want those who are failing, to damage the excellent reputation that you have all worked so hard to build”. The government will shortly begin a review of the current regulatory and accountability system for academy trusts. Zahawi said this would consider “the role of commissioning, regulation and inspection”, and said the current system “wasn’t designed for a fully trust-led system comprising thousands of schools across the country”.

**The government intends to “clarify” its school reform plans following widespread criticism of its landmark schools bill**, the academies minister has said. Baroness Barran told the House of Lords that she was “acutely aware of the strength of feeling” about the draft law, over which the government has been accused of a power grab. Barran said that peers “can be reassured that when we return to the bill at report stage, I will be able to clarify and confirm the government’s position having heard the views of the house at committee”.

* Government **plans for all schools to be in multi-academy trusts could help stop STEM teachers leaving for higher-paid private sector roles**, the schools minister has claimed. Robin Walker told the Parliamentary science and technology committee that the white paper reforms could offer “greater career progression” for teachers in families of schools.
* The Schools White Paper, published in March, said that all academy trusts should have **local governance arrangements** for their schools. But in a “clarification” to Schools Bill policy statements this week, the DfE said it would not seek to “mandate” local governing bodies. The DfE added that academy trusts could choose whether to have local governing bodies, but that its aim was for all schools to have “a voice in the governance of their academy trusts through local governance arrangements, as already happens in most trusts”. However, the National Governance Association (NGA) has said it found the wording of the clarification “slightly confusing”, and that it “weakened” the DfE’s approach. But Leora Cruddas, chief executive of the Confederation of School Trusts (CST), said that the clarification was “helpful” She said that trusts ”must be able to determine their own governance arrangements” and that how and what they delegated through local governance arrangements was “a matter for the trust board”.

**Safety, health and welfare of young people**

* The number of children being treated at paediatric **diabetes** units (PDUs) in England and Wales has increased by more than 50% amid a “perfect storm” of rising **obesity** levels and the cost of living crisis, health leaders have said. A total of 973 children with type 2 diabetes were treated in PDUs in 2020-21, up from 621 in 2015-16. Diabetes UK said alarming obesity levels among children had led to a “concerning climb” in the number diagnosed with type 2 diabetes, and predicted that the cost of living crisis could lead to further problems in the years to come. Data from NHS Digital shows that almost one in seven children start primary school obese – a rise of almost 50% in just a year. More than a quarter are obese by the time they finish primary school. See <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/jun/15/child-diabetes-referrals-england-wales-obesity-crisis>
* **Instagram owner Meta launched new parental controls** across the platform in the UK on 14 June. They include the option of setting daily time limits of between 15 minutes and 2 hours, after which a black screen appears on the app. Parents can also schedule break times and see any accounts their child reports, and why they did so. In addition, the tech giant is rolling out a parent dashboard on all Quest virtual reality headsets worldwide. Parents can now invite their children to activate the supervision tools - previously these could only be initiated by the young person. The new VR controls include purchase approval, app blocking and the option to view their child's friends' lists. Another Instagram feature being trialled is a "nudge" tool which prompts teens to look for different subjects, if they are repeatedly searching for the same thing. See <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-61796149>
* The DfE has issued “Infographic on the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.** Infographic for children and young people summarising UK government actions to protect children’s rights”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/infographic-on-the-united-nations-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child>
* The British public are **not bitterly polarised over trans- equality**, according to new research. Polling showed wide support for openness in education. In contrast to the advice last month of the attorney general, Suella Braverman, that schools do not have to accommodate pupils who want to change gender, there is also broad agreement that **schools should support young people exploring their identity**. Almost two-thirds of the public think schools should talk to pupils about trans issues, with 30% agreeing these conversations should happen at primary school and 33% during secondary school. In comparison, 37% felt primary age was appropriate to tell children that some people are gay. There was no indication from the interviews that people were worried that schools, campaigners or charities were “pushing children to transition”, as some critics have suggested. But the interviews also revealed some concerns about medical treatments for young people who were questioning their gender identity, with the majority believing physical interventions towards transition should not start before the age of 18. While almost half of the public are comfortable with the idea that someone should be able to take hormone blockers under the age of 18, they are much less likely to say the same about cross-sex hormones, and a significant minority believe that gender reassignment surgery should only be available to those aged 21 and over. See <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/jun/16/britons-not-bitterly-polarised-over-trans-equality-research-finds>
* The DfE has issued “Guidance for schools and post-16 education organisations in England on providing **free period products** for all learners”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/period-products-in-schools-and-colleges> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/period-products-scheme-impact-assessment>
* School leaders have told the **“heartbreaking” stories of pupils** living without electricity, wearing dirty clothes that are too small and withdrawing from school dinners and clubs as the cost of living crisis bites. Despite inflation wrecking school budgets, leaders are launching their own foodbanks, uniform swap shops and hubs to help parents manage their finances – with one saying: “We’re now part of the welfare state.” See <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/schools-now-part-of-the-welfare-state-as-cost-of-living-crisis-deepens/>

**SEND**

* The vast majority of school staff and leaders believe that **autistic pupils' education** is being affected by a lack of teacher training in how to support them, a survey suggests. Of nearly 300 survey respondents, nearly half (45 per cent) strongly agreed that this was the case, with a further 35 per cent agreeing. Just 6 per cent disagreed or strongly disagreed. More than a fifth - 22 per cent of respondents - said there was no, or not a lot of, provision in their school for autistic children. And more than a quarter (27 per cent) said they had not had any autism training, despite 96 per cent saying that teachers need it. The government's autism strategy (2021-2026) committed £600,000 to staff autism training and professional development in schools and colleges "but this is not funding on a scale to enable widespread training or make a difference in classrooms", according to the NEU. According to researchers at the University of Exeter, the number of autism diagnoses has increased 787 per cent in the past 20 years. Statistics from the DfE - covering the whole of the school system - show that the number of pupils with autism as their primary special educational need rose from 50,000 in 2009 to around 163,000 in 2020-21. See <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/lack-teacher-training-hitting-autistic-pupils-education>
* Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) have launched a consultation on proposals for a **new joint framework for inspecting provision for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) within a local area**. The new inspections will be introduced in early 2023. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/a-new-approach-to-area-send-inspections> There is also a dedicated young person’s consultation page, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/children-and-young-peoples-consultation-changing-the-way-we-look-into-services-for-children-and-young-people-with-send> To respond online up to Sept 11, see <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ASENDConsultation/>

Throughout the duration of the consultation period the Ofsted is planning to host **webinars and online focus groups** for parents, carers and those working in the sector. Webinar for education, health and social care professionals. See <https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/393013158417304334>

They are on **Thursday 30 June, 1:30 to 2:30 pm and Monday 18 July, 3 to 4 pm**. It will make a pre-recorded webinar available for parents and carers in early July. More information about how to register an interest in taking part in focus groups will follow.

The **documents issued to support the consultation are**:

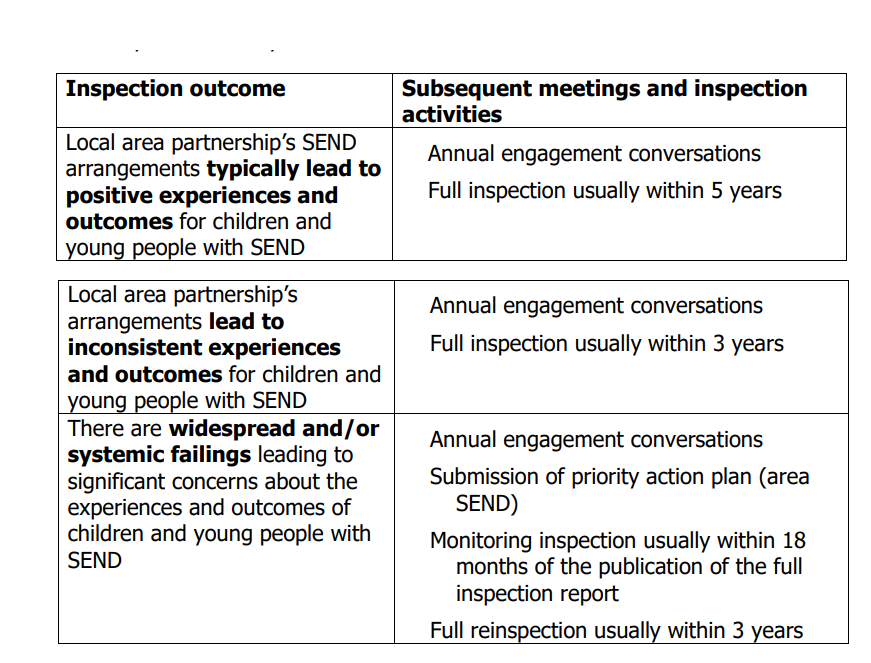
* **A new approach to area SEND inspections: consultation document**, <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/a-new-approach-to-area-send-inspections/a-new-approach-to-area-send-inspections-consultation-document>
* **A new approach to area SEND inspections: easy read**. <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1082505/Ofsted_SEND_Consultation_Easy_Read.pdf>
* **Draft Area SEND inspections: framework and handbook**, <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1081949/Area_SEND_framework_and_handbook.pdf>
* **Draft equalities impact statement**, <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/a-new-approach-to-area-send-inspections/draft-equalities-impact-statement>
* There is also a **HMCI commentary**: consulting on Ofsted's new area SEND framework, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/hmci-commentary-consulting-on-ofsteds-new-area-send-framework>

**The proposals broaden the focus of inspection** to look not only at whether local area partnerships are identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND, but also to assess the impact on their lives and outcomes.

The **new framework** aims to build on and strengthen accountability for local areas by:

* Introducing an ongoing cycle of inspections and 3 distinct inspection outcomes.
* Carrying out engagement meetings in all areas.
* Strengthening Ofsted’s response where there are concerns through monitoring inspections and/or early re-inspections.
* Promoting continuous improvement for all by requesting visible action plans following full inspections
* Inspection teams will include inspectors from education, health and care so that there can be a deeper understanding of how effective joint working is in a specific area.
* Inspections will also focus on children in alternative provision, the majority of whom have SEND, by evaluating how local authorities commission, use and oversee it. Ofsted say they are concerned AP “may sometimes be used inappropriately to supplement the SEND system
* And there will be a greater push to gather evidence from children and young people with SEND and their families directly, as well as from area leaders, practitioners, and settings, so that inspectors understand what it is like to be a child or young person with SEND in any local area in England.
* Inspectors also want to introduce “clear and succinct” recommendations on which weaknesses an area should address to “improve the lives and experiences” of children and their families. They would indicate which local services should take forward specific recommendations. Where inspectors identify widespread or systemic concerns, areas will have to submit a “priority action plan”. This would then be published by Ofsted and CQC.
* Inspectors propose that all local areas should update and publish their strategic plan for SEND following an inspection.

Currently, the SEND inspection reports don’t have an overall outcome, but they instead highlight findings. Areas have to produce statements of action if inspectors have “significant concerns”. But inspectors now want **three “distinct” inspection outcomes** including when another inspection is due



* For the latest “**Local area SEND inspections: information for families**”, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-area-send-inspections-information-for-families>
* The National Deaf Children’s Society has written to every NHS trust in England urging them to start using **transparent face masks** because standard ones create a “serious communication barrier” for deaf patients. “Transparent face masks are fully approved and they could transform the healthcare experience for deaf people. However they communicate, almost all deaf people rely on lip reading and facial expressions. Opaque face masks make these techniques much more difficult and this could seriously affect communication at a time when they might need it the most.” The charity has written to each NHS trust’s CEO saying clear masks could be considered “a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act” See <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/jun/15/national-deaf-childrens-society-urges-nhs-trusts-to-use-clear-face-masks>
* The DfE has issued “**Statistics on pupils with SEN**, including information on educational attainment, destinations, absence, exclusions, and characteristics as of Jan 2022”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-special-educational-needs-sen>
* The DfE is consulting on “**Reviews of education, health and care (EHC) plans: proposed timescales**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/reviews-of-education-health-and-care-ehc-plans-proposed-timescales>

**Food and free meals**

* The government’s **new food strategy** has been issued:
* It only offers a budget of £250 for each English state school to teach healthy eating, and ignores most of Henry Dimbleby’s plans to improve child nutrition, campaigners say. They say that with children being fed microwaved and cold meals by schools struggling with the cost of living crisis, a stronger response is needed. The white paper refers to a £5m fund for a “school cooking revolution”, but this amounts to **about £250 for each state school to teach pupils how to cook healthy food**.
* Henry Dimbleby led last year’s wide-ranging review of Britain’s food system. Dimbleby said the cost of living crisis meant there was even more **need for free school meals** than when he produced his plan, which called for up to 1.5 million more children in England to receive them by increasing the threshold for free school meals eligibility to £20,000. This would have handed 1.1-1.5 million more pupils access to free food at school. “With inflation as it is, both the amount spent on free school meals is significantly less in real terms than it was a year ago and the number of people who need it is significantly more – we need to tackle that”. There are **no proposals** in the final strategy document to do this.
* Also missing from the final strategy document is any mention of an **accreditation scheme for schools**, which was proposed in Dimbleby’s last report. He said the government should “require schools” to work with “accreditation schemes” such as Food for Life to “improve food and food education in schools”, but this did not make the final cut.
* He had also called for the reinstatement of **food A-level**, a subject lead in every school and for government to pay for pupils’ cooking ingredients. These proposals are not mentioned either.
* Dimbleby also recommended that funding for **the school fruit and vegetable scheme** be doubled. Today’s document only promises to review the” policy and delivery method” of the programme.
* There has been a pilot launched of his proposal to **inspect cookery** with ‘same rigour’ as English and maths
* He asked for an extension of the **holiday activities and food programme**, and the government has agreed to this just for three years

**The Soil Association** said, “We are approaching 1 million children in poverty that don’t get free school meals. There are gaping holes in the nutrition safety net and vulnerable children are falling through. At the moment there are mandatory food nutrition standards for both schools and hospitals but there is no monitoring of compliance. We estimate 60% of secondary schools are failing to deliver the nutritional standards that children deserve”

* The government has announced it will **increase the per-pupil funding rate for universal infant free school meals**. Approximately £18 million of new funding for universal infant free school meals will help schools provide for the 1.25 million children in reception, Year 1 and Year 2 with a free lunch, in recognition of the rising cost of living. Schools will receive the uplifted universal infant free school meals funding, backdated to 1 April 2022. This will raise the rate per meal to £2.41. Full allocations will be published later this month. This is only a rise of 7p per meal up from £2.34 last year (a rise of around 3 per cent and far less than the current rate of inflation). This works out at £457.90 per pupil per year, up from £444.60 in 2021-22. The announcement today only applies to funding for universal infant free school meals, which is paid as a specific grant, and not to means-tested meals for other pupils. Funding for means-tested meals is allocated through schools’ core budgets, and ministers confirmed last year that the amount paid out would rise to £470 per pupil in 2022-23. According to the latest DfE data, there were around 1.6 million infant pupils recorded as taking a meal on census day, of whom around 1.3 million are not eligible for means-tested meals. Around 1.9 million pupils of all ages were eligible for means-tested meals as of this January, an increase of 160,000, or 9 per cent on last year. Since the beginning of the pandemic, the number of eligible children has risen by 32 per cent.
* The DfE has been **encouraging organisations to boost their support for the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme**, mainly representatives from supermarkets and sport organisations. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/boost-in-activities-and-food-pledged-to-support-children--2>
* Soaring costs are putting the school food industry under “considerable strain”, prompting fears that **some catering firms will be forced to pull out of contracts** before the start of the next academic year. With food prices up by 20%, and staff and energy costs also rising, the sector has warned that schoolchildren will be served “**poorer quality meals**” in September as catering firms look for cheaper options to fill stomachs. Smaller firms providing catering services to schools are said to be “at breaking point” as they don’t benefit from the economies of scale that larger firms may enjoy, and are more exposed to rising costs. LACA, which represents more than 3,000 school food providers who deliver 3m lunches in 22,000 schools every day, warned that some firms will struggle to meet school food standards in September with current levels of government funding. Many schools already subsidise government funding for free school meals, taking money from other parts of their budget to make up the shortfall. Others are reluctantly planning price rises for paid-for school meals in September to pass on costs. See <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2022/jun/15/rising-costs-put-pressure-on-school-food-industry>

**School Admissions**

* **The consultation on changes to the school admission appeals code has finished**, <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1083196/20220615_ConsultationResponse_ChangesToAdmissionAppealsCode.pdf> Now the **draft school admission appeals code 2022** remains provisional until it completes the Parliamentary process. It is expected to come into force from 1 October 2022, subject to Parliamentary approval, <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1083198/20220615_SchoolAdmissionAppealsCode2022_draft_Oct22.pdf> The **current School admission appeals code** (2012) remains in force until the draft appeals code 2022 is approved. Admission appeals lodged on or before 30 September 2022 must follow the current appeals code 2012, <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/275897/school_admission_appeals_code_1_february_2012.pdf> There is presently **non-statutory advice on school admission appeals** for parents and guardians, admission authorities and clerks and panel members, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/admission-appeals-for-school-places> All the above should be read alongside the ‘**School admissions code’**, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2>

The government had proposed some changes to the Appeals Code to enable some of the flexibilities that were introduced through temporary regulations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to continue (with suitable adaptations) permanently. It consulted on:

* **Allowing appeal hearings to be held remotely or in person**; and
* **Allowing a panel of two to decide appeals** in circumstances where the third member has to withdraw

The government has **decided against allowing school admission appeals to be held by panels of just two individuals** due to concerns over the fairness of this setup - but **remote admission appeals over video or telephone have been given the green light**. Although these can be held over video or phone, the DfE said that schools would only be able to use phone conferencing when video was not possible.

**Covid**

* The UK **may be entering its third wave of coronavirus this year**, researchers warn, as official figures show infections are on the rise again in England and Northern Ireland. ONS data, which give the most reliable picture of the state of the UK outbreak, suggest that the steady fall in infections over recent months may have gone into reverse as cases are driven up by the more transmissible BA.4 and BA.5 Omicron variants. According to the ONS survey, an estimated 797,500 people in England and 27,700 in Northern Ireland would have tested positive for Covid in the week ending 2 June, up from 784,100 and 24,300 respectively in the week before. See <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/bulletins/coronaviruscovid19infectionsurveypilot/10june2022>
* Almost one in 20 secondary school pupils experienced symptoms of **long Covid,** <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/bulletins/covid19schoolsinfectionsurveyengland/march2022> following their most recent infection, and those who did are much more likely to have a probable mental health disorder, new data suggests. Data from the school infection survey, published by the Office for National Statistics, estimates that 4.8 per cent of secondary pupils and 1.8 per cent of primary pupils had symptoms that persisted for 12 or more weeks after a coronavirus infection as of March. The study, which is based on a survey of pupils, parents and headteachers, found secondary pupils who had tested positive for Covid were “significantly more likely” to have experienced systemic and cardiovascular symptoms than those who had not. Almost a quarter (22.1 per cent) of those who had Covid experienced systemic symptoms such as fever or high temperature, chills or shivers, weakness or tiredness, compared to 14.4 per cent of those who had not had the virus. And 8.5 per cent of those who had tested positive had ongoing cardiovascular symptoms, compared to 4.5 per cent of those with no reported Covid. Long Covid is also having a negative impact on pupil mental health, the study suggests. It found that 28.1 per cent of secondary pupils with long Covid had a probable mental health disorder, compared to 12.3 per cent of those without long Covid. Primary pupils with long Covid were also more likely to have a probably mental health disorder (18.9 per cent vs 11.3 per cent), but the ONS said the difference was not “statistically significant”. Overall, the survey found the proportion of primary pupils with a probably mental health disorder had increased “significantly”, from 8 per cent in December to 11.4 per cent in March. The prevalence in secondary pupils fell slightly, from 13.8 per cent to 13 per cent over the same period. A further 8.3 per cent of primary pupils and 10.7 per cent of secondary pupils had “at least one possible mental health disorder”, the study found. Of three disorders analysed, probably hyperactivity disorders had the highest prevalence for primary pupils (8.3 per cent) and secondary pupils (8.7 per cent). This was higher than probably emotional disorder prevalence (2.6 per cent and 3.4 per cent) and probably conduct disorder prevalence (3.3 per cent and 2.5 per cent).It comes as the latest government estimates for the wider population showed **those working in teaching and education** had the second highest rate of long Covid, higher than health care workers and second only to social care staff. The data suggests 4.6 per cent of education workers had long Covid as of May, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/bulletins/prevalenceofongoingsymptomsfollowingcoronaviruscovid19infectionintheuk/1june2022>

**Learning recovery**

* In new research published By GL Assessment, almost four-fifths (79 per cent) of teachers are concerned **that pupils leaving primary school this year won't be emotionally or socially ready for secondary schoo**l, while three-quarters of teachers (75 per cent) are worried that incoming Year 7 students will be unprepared academically. The survey also revealed that teachers think that disruption to the education system will affect pupil performance in this year's key stage 2 Sats with almost two-thirds (65 per cent) saying this year's Sats will be "less reliable" than in pre-pandemic years. Conversely, only one in five (19 per cent) think this year's results will be as reliable as before. However, schools are doing what they can to address this, with the survey reporting that more than seven in 10 schools (71 per cent) are taking steps to put a "programme of measures" in place to address the "gaps in learning and basic classroom skills". Meanwhile, just under half of teachers surveyed (46 per cent) said their schools are planning to offer more pastoral or emotional support, and a third (33 per cent) plan to implement a more comprehensive reading programme. And more than a quarter (26 per cent) are looking to widen the curriculum to plug any gaps in students' knowledge. See <https://reports.gl-assessment.co.uk/the-transition-conversation/>
* Research published by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) looked at **three different strategies to boost attendance within the Tuition Partners strand of the National Tutoring Programme (NTP)** - in which outside tutoring providers run sessions for pupils. Surveying tutors and pupils to find common interests - such as their favourite sporting events - could boost attendance at tutoring sessions. Tutors then used teaching strategies that incorporated their pupils’ interests to help to build a positive relationship. In one of the other strategies, reminder messages for sessions were sent directly to pupils via email and in another, tutors completed a web-based activity focused on relationship-building strategies that could be used with pupils. See <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/new-eef-research-encouraging-tutors-to-find-out-what-they-have-in-common-with-pupils-can-help-boost-attendance-at-sessions>
* After the announcement that **Oak National Academy** would become an ALB designed to provide free curriculum resources to schools across the UK in the levelling up White Paper, the DfE said it would be “fully operational” by autumn, with the first products available to teachers by September 2023. However, Oak principal Matt Hood said that he couldn’t “guarantee anything” when asked if the deadlines for the launch of the new arm’s-length body (ALB) would be met, given the complexities involved in the setting up process..

**Public examinations**

* AQA has been criticised for creating an “avoidable problem” with a geography GCSE question “inaccessible” to **colour-blind pupils**. AQA’s geography paper last month featured a question that included a coloured map and key to explain details required to answer the question. But teachers and campaigners warn such practice places pupils with a colour vision deficiency (CVD) at a disadvantage. One in 12 boys and one in 200 girls are believed to have CVD. It effects on average one child in every UK classroom.
* AQA has apologised after **a GCSE physics paper included a question on a topic that had been specifically ruled out** in advance information provided to pupils. All pupils who sat higher tier paper 1 on June 9 will all be awarded the full nine marks available for all parts of a question on energy transfers and circuits, AQA has said.
* Exam board Pearson Edexcel has apologised for the “unintentional error” after a map of the continent of Africa was labelled incorrectly in an exam. **The Pearson Edexcel GCSE Geography B paper 3**, which was sat by students this week, labelled Gabon as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in the resource pack. Following the error, the board has said it will “ensure” that students are not impacted by awarding marks for references to either country”.
* AQA has apologised to **A-level law students** for “confusion and stress” after complaints that a 30-mark question in in AQA’s A-level law paper 2 was not included in advance information. But pupils will have to wait until after the paper is marked to find out what the board will do about the issue.
* The head of Ofqual has **said recent mistakes in exam papers and advance information caused “distress**”. Meanwhile Jo Saxton warned leaders that **schools achieving higher results than in 2021 this year will be “few and far between, if any**”. On the one hand schools and pupils will see “the most generously graded series of examinations ever”, higher than in 2019, but Saxton added: “Your schools are likely to find results are lower than in 2021 when exams did not go ahead. She also made clear “**handwriting is here to stay**”. She reiterated it is a case of “when, not if we move further towards online assessment”, but warned against “throwing out the babies with the bathwater”.
* Ofqual has issued a collection, **“GCSEs (9 to 1): requirements and guidance”. Rules, regulations and guidance for all GCSEs graded 9 to 1**. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/gcses-9-to-1-requirements-and-guidance>
* **From JCQ**

**Rail strikes – Managing disruption and late arrivals to exams**

Given plans for rail strikes next week, here is a reminder of relevant guidance available, to support your contingency planning,

**Managing disruption**

Please see the [**Government joint contingency plan**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland), <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>  and the [**JCQ’s preparing for disruption to examinations**](https://www.jcq.org.uk/preparing-for-disruption-to-examinations/) document, <https://www.jcq.org.uk/preparing-for-disruption-to-examinations/>

**Starting times for examinations**

The JCQ awarding bodies allow centres in the UK to start examinations up to 30 minutes earlier, or later than the published starting time for the session, without the need to complete any paperwork.

Prior permission from an awarding body is not required. JCQ also issued

[**guidance in April 2022**](https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Guidance-for-centres-managing-exams_June22_FINAL.pdf#page=4), <https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Guidance-for-centres-managing-exams_June22_FINAL.pdf#page=4>  about flexibility in exam start times this summer: ‘if centres are not able to start an examination within 30 minutes of the published start time, the examination may start later provided that it is held on the timetabled date and candidates are supervised by a member of centre staff from no later than 30 minutes after the published start time until the examination starts (ICE paragraph 6.5).’

Candidates must always be allowed the full amount of time as specified for the examination in the awarding body’s published timetable.

Please see Section 6 (page 13) of the [**JCQ Instructions for Completing Examinations (ICE)**](https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/ICE_21-22_FINAL.pdf) for further information, <https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/ICE_21-22_FINAL.pdf>

**Candidates who arrive late/very late**

Candidates who arrive within one hour of the scheduled start of the examination are allowed (at the discretion of the centre) to enter and sit the exam. If a late arriving student is allowed to sit the exam, they must be allowed the full duration of the examination.

If a candidate arrives later than one hour of the start of the exam, they are considered “very late”. They may still be allowed to sit the exam, and this needs to be administered correctly by the centre.

Please see Section 21.1-5 (page 42) of[**JCQ ICE**](https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/ICE_21-22_FINAL.pdf) for further information, <https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/ICE_21-22_FINAL.pdf>

* A report has found **no clear link between pupils’ anxiety over assessments and grade outcomes,** with research revealing just a fifth of a GCSE grade between the most anxious and least anxious pupil groups. There was very little difference in GCSE outcomes between young people with “typical” levels of test anxiety and those who are at the top-end of the test anxiety scale. See <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03054985.2022.2079616>
* Ofqual has issued “**Missing scripts: guide to the data submission process**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/missing-scripts-guide-to-the-data-submission-process> and “**Mark or grade changes outside of reviews of marking and moderation (ROMM) and appeals**: guide to the data submission process”, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mark-or-grade-changes-outside-of-reviews-of-marking-and-moderation-romm-and-appeals-guide-to-the-data-submission-process>

**Schools and universities**

* The government will cap **student loan interest rates** for current graduate borrowers to protect them from a rise in inflation. A rise in the rate of RPI due to global economic pressures meant student loan borrowers faced a 12% interest rate in September and the government has intervened and capped interest rates to a maximum of 7.3% to protect graduates: this provide reassurance for student loan borrowers on Plan 2 (undergraduate) and Plan 3 (Postgraduate) loans. For future borrowers, student finance will be put on a more sustainable footing. As announced in February, interest rates will be reduced so from 2023/24, new graduates will not, in real terms, repay more than they borrow. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/student-loan-interest-rates-capped>
* The first post-Covid cohort of school leavers face a summer of uncertainty that “threatens to hold back a generation”, as students **compete for fewer places on popular university courses**. After A-level grade inflation during the pandemic forced universities to take on more students, institutions are now retrenching in popular subjects despite a surge in applications. Parents and report that students predicted to gain A\* grades in their A-levels, who in previous years would receive offers from many of their preferred institutions, have instead received a string of rejections. University applications are up 5% this year, partly fuelled by higher numbers of 18-year-olds – a result of the mid-2000s baby boom, and part of a trend set to continue for the next decade – and those who delayed applying because of the pandemic. Ucas said the 5% increase in the number of UK 18-year-olds applying this year, from 306,200 to 320,420, along with 6,000 more students holding deferred entry places, “will make securing a place at many universities a highly competitive process”. But members of the Russell Group of research-intensive universities over-recruited in the last two years – as a result of students being given higher teacher-assessed grades – and they now want to bring numbers back to pre-pandemic levels. Some students have applied to “insurance” universities that had then raised their offers, for example to AAA instead of ABB, making them no longer a good back-up. Students are unlikely to be able to “trade up” in clearing as the most competitive courses and universities would be full. For students considering deferring, he said next year offer-making would probably still be lower. However, fewer school-leavers in England are expected to defer or take a year out, after the government’s changes to the student loan system. Students starting courses in 2023 will make student loan repayments for 40 years after graduation, rather than 30 years for those admitted to courses this autumn. See <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2022/jun/11/first-post-covid-school-leavers-face-fight-for-fewer-university-places>
* More than 43% of the UK’s 18-year-olds **applied for university** by the January deadline. According to Ucas, 281,500 of them are holding a firm offer, up 7,000 on last year and the highest on record, of whom 117,000 are holding offers at higher-tariff providers – the second highest figure on record.
* **The offer rate for A-level students applying to leading universities** has dropped significantly, with medicine and dentistry courses even harder to get on to than in previous years, according to data from the Ucas admissions service. Higher-tariff universities, including those in the research-intensive Russell Group, have tightened up their offers, with the proportion of applications that result in an offer down from 60.5% in 2021 to 55.1% this summer. Meanwhile, fewer than 16% of applications to study medicine and dentistry – which are among the most competitive courses – resulted in an offer this year, down from 20.4% in 2021, leaving some of the country’s highest-achieving students disappointed.
* Although offer rates had declined overall, **applicants from the most disadvantaged background**s were the least affected, with a smaller reduction from 78.8% last year to 75.1%. This is likely to be determined by the type of institutions and courses students are applying for. However, the stark gap between the most and least advantaged persists, with an 18-year-old living in an advantaged area being 2.86 times as likely to hold a firm choice as their counterpart in a disadvantaged area

See <https://www.hepi.ac.uk/>

**MFL**

* The Consultation on “**Subject-level conditions and guidance for new French, German and Spanish GCSEs”**, has now concluded. For the outcome, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/subject-level-conditions-and-guidance-for-new-french-german-and-spanish-gcses/outcome/subject-level-conditions-and-guidance-for-new-gcses-in-french-german-and-spanish-consultation-decisions> In addition, see:
* **GCSE subject-level conditions and requirements for French, German and Spanish**, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-subject-level-conditions-and-requirements-for-french-german-and-spanish>
* **GCSE subject-level guidance for French, German and Spanish**, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-subject-level-guidance-for-french-german-and-spanish>

**Ofsted**

* For a **critique of Ofsted’s research report on English teaching**, see <https://www.tes.com/magazine/teaching-learning/secondary/ofsteds-research-review-english>
* For a collection of **HMCI’s commentaries**, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmcis-monthly-commentaries>
* Ofsted has issued “**State-funded school inspections and outcomes up to 31.5.22**” See <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/monthly-management-information-ofsteds-school-inspections-outcomes>
* Ofsted has issued “Guidance on writing complaint and compliance action outcome summaries. **Guidance for inspectors when writing outcome summaries**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-on-writing-complaint-and-compliance-action-outcome-summaries>
* Ofsted has updated “**Ofsted pen portraits of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs**)”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-pen-portraits-of-her-majestys-inspectors-hmis>
* For **Amanda Spielman’s speech to the Confederation of School Trusts’**, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/amanda-spielmans-speech-to-the-confederation-of-school-trusts> She said Ofsted is keen to recruit more inspectors with “senior levels of trust experience”. She added: “It is my view that there is a clear place for trust inspection in a new system.” Ms Spielman also told the conference that school leaders should not “be afraid to make curriculum changes because you’re concerned that inspectors won’t understand or might take a dim view”. She said that “significant challenges” remained when it came to helping pupils catch up from lost learning during the pandemic. “At every stage, children have lower and more variable starting points. Gaps have widened; younger children are often behind in language, communication and social skills,” she said. “We hear that more effort is having to go into teaching older children behaviour and routines and there is more work for you in managing behaviour. “There’s still too much persistent absence and many vital SEND, mental health and other support services have yet to return even to their creaking pre-pandemic levels while needs continue to be exceptionally high.”
* **School governors are “increasingly concerned” their work is becoming less visible in Ofsted inspections**. The National Governance Association has written to chief inspector Amanda Spielman to warn the implementation of the new inspection framework in 2019 has “led to the role of governance being diminished within the inspection process”. The new framework introduced new, shorter inspection reports, which are supposed to be more accessible for parents. But the NGA called for a return to a “more informative format of reports which in addition to the information for parents, would include information targeted at those responsible for school improvement, including school leaders and those governing”. Analysis by the NGA of 120 Ofsted reports published between September and December last year found almost a third (31 per cent) did not mention governance. A survey of 111 governors and trustees also found an “inconsistency between the questions inspectors ask governing boards about the curriculum and the depth the questioning goes to”. See <https://www.nga.org.uk/News/NGA-News/June-2022/NGA-calls-for-improvements-to-Ofsted-s-approach-to.aspx>

**Academies and Trusts**

* ESFA has issued a collection of **academy trust notices to improve**. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/academy-trust-notices-to-improve>
* ESFA has issued “**Estimating your academy funding allocation**”. A guide for schools opening as academies to estimate their revenue funding. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/estimating-your-academy-funding-allocation>
* **The Confederation of School Trusts has published its first national survey of school trusts report**. For a useful summary, see <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/academy-trusts-eye-expansions-but-say-its-their-biggest-challenge/>

**Free Schools**

* The DfE has issued notes on **how it calculates free school revenue:**
* **Alternative provision free school**, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision-free-school-revenue-funding>
* **Special free school**, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/special-free-school-revenue-funding>
* **16 to 19 free school**, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-free-school-revenue-funding>
* **Mainstream free school**, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mainstream-free-school-revenue-funding>
* The DfE has updated “Details of **successful applications for free schools and university technical colleges** (UTCs) in the pre-opening stage”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/free-schools-successful-applications>

**Education news for schools**

* The Education Secretary says **rail strikes** are not an excuse for schools to return to remote learning and face to face learning should continue
* The DfE has updated Lists of **qualifications that meet DfE's criteria for counting in the early years foundation stage framework staff/child ratios**. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-qualifications-achieved-in-england>
* The DfE has issued “**Parent, pupil and learner panel omnibus surveys for 2021 to 2022**”. Findings from regular surveys with school pupil’s parents or carers, secondary school pupils, and 16 to 18 learners. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parent-pupil-and-learner-panel-omnibus-surveys-for-2021-to-2022>
* One in seven **secondary school teachers experiences violence** from a student at least once a month and 5 per cent experience this at least once a week, according to the YouGov data. Almost half of the teachers in secondaries who responded (47 per cent) said they experienced “aggressive” behaviour from students at least once a month, and 69 per cent at least once a year. And more than a third (38 per cent) of the respondents to the weighted survey of more than 400 secondary teachers said that they experienced aggressive behaviour from a student’s family at least yearly. The data does not appear to show huge differences between teachers and senior leaders, with 15 per cent of both groups saying they experience violence from students at least monthly. See <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/secondary/secondary-teachers-student-violence-behaviour-school>
* **Teachers recruited to mark SATs** are threatening never to work for contractor Capita again after claiming their “soul destroying” pay has more than halved. Markers opening their first payslips this week found they were being paid as low as 4p for each batch of questions. See <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/soul-destroying-sats-markers-say-pay-slashed-under-capita/>

**Teacher recruitment and training**

* For a report from the EPI on “**The teaching workforce after the pandemic**”, see <https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/the-teaching-workforce-after-the-pandemic/> Among other things it shows that more teachers are quitting the profession before their retirement age, (1 in 8 are leaving within their first year, a quarter within three years of qualifying, and almost a third gone within five year), and in particular that the number of headteachers leaving has rocketed
* Analysis of government data by the party revealed that while more pupils than ever are taking **Stem subjects at GCSE**, under a third of trainee teachers have been recruited for these subjects. The Labour party said shortages were “particularly acute” in physics, with just one in eight target training places filled. In computing, less than a quarter of places had been filled.
* The DfE has issued a collection of documents covering “**Additional payments for teaching: eligibility and payment details**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/additional-payments-for-teaching-eligibility-and-payment-details> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teachers-claim-back-your-student-loan-repayments> For a **part summary**, see <https://www.tes.com/magazine/analysis/secondary/teacher-pay-uplift-payments-whos-eligible-and-how-apply>
* Schools in "levelling up" areas have fewer vacancies and are a **third less likely to advertise for specialist science teachers** than elsewhere, research has found. The researchers suggest this is a potential barrier to plans for attracting more specialist teachers into education investment areas (EIAs) through bonus payments. For non-EIA schools, around 30 per cent of science teacher adverts specify "biology", "chemistry" or "physics", rather than just general "science". However, this is much lower in EIA schools, at 20 per cent, the research found. This reflects the fact that schools in these areas were more likely to enter students for GCSEs in double science than in the individual science subjects, the research found. See <https://www.gatsby.org.uk/education/latest/latest-data-indicates-substantial-inequalities-in-the-nationwide-recruitment-of-specialist-science-teachers>
* The DfE has updated “**Induction for newly qualified teachers during the coronavirus** (COVID-19) pandemic”. Guidance about additional funding for those currently undertaking induction. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-induction-for-newly-qualified-teachers>
* **Teachers who also mentor school staff will be able to gain chartered status** from next academic year, the Chartered College of Teaching has announced. See <https://chartered.college/2022/06/15/mentors-recognised-for-their-accomplishments-with-new-chartered-teacher-mentor-status/>

**The Times Education Commission**

* **The Times Education Commission** has published its 96-page report today, finding the British education system is “failing on every measure”, <https://nuk-tnl-editorial-prod-staticassets.s3.amazonaws.com/2022/education-commission/Times%20Education%20Commission%20final%20report.pdf> The recommendations:
  + A British Baccalaureate offering “broader” academic and vocational qualifications at 18 and a “slimmed-down” set of exams at 16. It sounds similar to proposals by the National Baccalaureate Trust.
  + An “electives premium” for all schools to be spent on activities such as drama, music, dance and sport. This would also include a National Citizen’s Service “experience” for every pupil.
  + New “career academies” which would be “elite technical and vocational sixth forms with close links to industry”. However, these sound similar to university technical colleges, several of which have struggled in recent years.
  + A unique pupil number from birth for each child and a library in every primary school.
  + An “army” of undergraduate tutors earning credit towards their degrees
  + A laptop or tablet for every child and greater use of AI in schools, colleges and universities
  + A counsellor in every school and an “annual wellbeing survey of pupils”. Government has so far rejected MPs’ calls for all students to undergo a mental health assessment
  + Better “career development” and revalidation every five years for teachers, alongside a new category of consultant teachers and a teaching apprenticeship
  + A reformed Ofsted with a wider “school report card” with metrics such as wellbeing, school culture, inclusion and attendance
  + “Better training” for teachers to identify children with special educational needs with a greater focus on inclusion.
  + New university campuses in fifth higher education “cold-spots”
  + A 15-year strategy for education drawn up in consultation

**School management**

* The DfE has issued “**Private finance initiative (PFI) academies: model documents**. Model documents for PFI schools converting to academy status. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/private-finance-initiative-pfi-academies-model-documents>
* ESFA has issued “**Schools block funding formulae 2022 to 2023**”. Analysis of local authorities' schools block funding formula. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-block-funding-formulae-2022-to-2023>
* For the latest **Education Support newsletter**, see <https://us1.campaign-archive.com/?u=30cbf2f9b409acb0456c1869a&id=aed99ba995&e=e7e9149d14>
* For the latest **ESFA Update**, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esfa-update-15-june-2022>

**Post 16**

* The DfE has issued a list of **successful applications at stage 2 of bidding for the Further Education Capital Transformation Fund**. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-education-capital-transformation-fund-stage-2-successful-applicants>
* ESFA has issued “**16 to 19 Bursary Fund guide 2022 to 2023 academic year**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2022-to-2023-academic-year>
* The government is trialling a large number of **higher education short courses**. These short courses, starting in September 2022, will be eligible for tuition fee loans. For details see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-education-short-courses>
* The DfE has issued a collection of documents, “**FE Choices**” This provides comparable information to help learners and employers make informed choices about education and training. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fe-choices>
* The DfE has issued “**Higher education graduate outcomes survey UK: 2019 to 2020**”. Details the activities of graduates who obtained qualifications during the academic year 2019 to 2020. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/higher-education-graduate-outcomes-survey-uk-2019-to-2020>

**Tony Stephens**