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**266 Academy and School News and Resources Update, April 26-May 3 2024**

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**Attendance**

* **Attendance**. **The attendance rate (proportion of possible sessions attended) was 93.3% across all schools in the week commencing 15 April 2024**. The absence rate was, therefore, 6.7% across all schools. **By school type**, the absence rates across the week commencing 15 April 2024 were:
	+ 5.1% in state-funded **primary** schools (3.1% authorised and 2.0% unauthorised)
	+ 8.5% in state-funded **secondary** schools (4.5% authorised and 4.0% unauthorised)
	+ 12.2% in state-funded **special** schools (8.6% authorised and 3.6% unauthorised)

**The data shows that the attendance rate across the academic year to date was 93.0%.** The absence rate was, therefore, 7.0% across all schools. **By school type**, the absence rates across the academic year 2023/24 to date were:

* 5.4% in state-funded **primary** schools (4.0% authorised and 1.4% unauthorised)
* 8.8% in state-funded **secondary** schools (5.4% authorised and 3.3% unauthorised)
* 12.9% in state-funded **specia**l schools (9.8% authorised and 3.1% unauthorised)

**Persistent Absence** for academic year to date, 20.2%. By school type

* **Primary**, 15.5%
* **Secondary**, 25.4%
* **Specia**l. 37.1%

See <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/pupil-attendance-in-schools>

**Ofsted**

* For **Ofsted statement for schools affected by RAAC**, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ofsted-statement-for-schools-affected-by-raac> This summer term, a school that has confirmed RAAC in some of their buildings will be eligible for Ofsted inspection, however this will be sufficient grounds to defer the inspection, should the school wish to. For schools that do not have confirmed RAAC but may still be impacted by RAAC, for example where a school is hosting pupils from schools that have RAAC, it will carefully consider any requests for a deferral of an inspection
* **Sir Martyn Oliver has said he wants Ofsted inspection to feel like a “peer-review system**”. He also said he is “really concerned” about **orphan schools** and warned that there should not be a system where trusts “are afraid to take on schools because of anything to do with Ofsted”. He did not think a school should be graded as “good” if it is **off-rolling** and “a school that off-rolls should be inadequate”. The chief inspector argued that a school needed to **meet the needs of local children**. Sir Martyn once again pointed to concerns over **the funding of the inspectorate**, claiming that its funding has dropped by 29 per cent in real terms since 2009-2010 despite a growing remit. See <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/sir-martyn-ofsted-should-not-make-trusts-afraid-orphan-schools>
* **An alternative consultation on Ofsted is being launched today by former inspectors who think the watchdog’s Big Listen has avoided asking important questions about the future of school inspection**. The Alternative Big Listen, <https://thealternativebiglisten.co.uk/> , will ask people whether they think single-word judgements should be handed out to schools and whether they think Ofsted is fit for purpose. The Alternative Big Listen asks respondents whether they agree or disagree with the following statements and questions:
	+ Should Ofsted use one- and two-word judgements to characterise the overall effectiveness of schools?
	+ There should be a moratorium on school inspections until a fundamental review has been undertaken.
	+ Overall, Ofsted is fit for purpose.
	+ The number of schools graded “good” and “outstanding” in England gives you a strong indication of the overall quality of the schools’ system.
	+ Ofsted should be able to inspect groups that schools may be a part of, such as multi-academy trusts, local authorities, dioceses or owners of large private independent school providers, in order to understand their overall impact on children and learners.

In response, Ofsted has said schools can “expect” Ofsted’s Big Listen consultation to address single-word inspection judgements. Although the one-word grading system was not specifically referenced in Ofsted’s sector-wide survey, it was “inevitable” that people would refer to the issue of whether this is the best way to grade schools’ performance.

* Ofsted has issued “**IDSR: news and updates**”, see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/idsr-news-and-updates> and the latest **School inspection data summary report (IDSR) guide**, see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-inspection-data-summary-report-idsr-guide>
* Ofsted has issued these podcasts or blogs:
	+ **Ofsted's English subject report: telling this story**, <https://ofstedtalks.podbean.com/e/ofsteds-english-subject-report-telling-this-story/>
	+ **Our approach to inspecting small schools**, <https://educationinspection.blog.gov.uk/2024/04/30/our-approach-to-inspecting-small-schools/>
	+ **Alternative route: what's the picture of alternative provision**?, <https://ofstedtalks.podbean.com/e/alternative-route-whats-the-picture-of-alternative-provision/>

**Faith free schools**

* **A consultation on lifting the 50% cap, which applies to new faith free schools, will be launched alongside proposals on opening special faith-based academies.** The 50% faith cap means that if a new free school with religious character is oversubscribed, it can only prioritise pupils based on faith for 50% of places. At least half of the school’s available places must be allocated without reference to faith-based admissions criteria. The DfE says that with the change faith school providers will be able to create more good school places and also create strong multi-academy trusts around the country where there is demand. The consultation will also explore how to improve provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) by opening special faith-based academies. It is currently not possible for special schools to open as academies and be designated with faith status. The consultation is on these two proposals:
* to remove the 50% cap on faith admissions, with the aim of enabling all faith groups to apply to open new faith free schools
* to allow new special academies and existing special academies with a recognised faith ethos to apply to be designated as having a religious character

The announcement refers only to new free schools schools, but the consultation document reveals plans to let some existing schools apply for the freedoms, in that existing free schools designated with a religious character who wish to remove the cap “could apply to vary their funding agreement to affect the change”.

See <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/faith-school-designation-reforms>

**Protective security and preparedness for education settings**

* DfE has issued “**Protective security and preparedness for education settings**. How education settings should prepare for and respond to terrorism and other major incidents”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protective-security-and-preparedness-for-education-settings> The non-statutory guidance does not appear to outline new responsibilities on schools. It is more that it “adapts principles from the National Counter-Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) into more sector-specific advice”
* Schools should devise response plans “to reduce the risk of terrorist incidents and other incidents by making it difficult for someone intending to cause harm to target their sites”. “Bomb threat checklists” should also be created.
* Schools should appoint a “security lead”. They will be charged with developing and maintaining emergency plans and policies. They will also be expected to ensure their colleagues “are aware of their roles and responsibilities” and liaise with external agencies, like the police.
* The guidance says it is “relatively uncommon” for practice drills to involve early years and primary school children. These settings are advised to hold the exercises on occasions when youngsters are not present. In secondary schools, drills work best “as part of a wider plan to share security awareness and incident response plans in an age-appropriate way”. Children with SEND should not be excluded. It is also advised that councils, academy trusts and the police are contacted “to either take an active part in your practice drill … or to help evaluate it”.
* Any bomb threats should be reported to the police. The guidance tells staff to “record and retain all evidence and make this available to” officers in these cases. This can involve dialling 1471 following calls to identify the number used to make the threat and keeping hold of any menacing messages or voicemails. To help identify suspicious packages, schools are told to “keep clutter to a minimum”. They are advised to assess whether the item is hidden, “obviously suspicious” and typical of what you expect to find in that part of the school when deciding if further action is required. Areas should be cordoned off and the police called when suspicious items are identified. Radios and phones should not be used within 15 metres of the item. If an evacuation is necessary, children and staff should move to a location 100 metres away if the item is small, like a rucksack, 200 metres away if it is a small vehicle or large item, such as a car or wheelie bin, or 400 metres away if it a van or lorry.
* Any communication methods, including any code words and signals, should be planned in advance. Initial alerts to staff about potential incidents can include the use of existing alarms, internal phone systems, a tannoy or silent broadcasts or messages to staff devices. Coded messages can also “convey a message to staff without scaring learners”. During an incident leads and staff “need one or more communication methods to exchange information and instructions with one … until the police and emergency responders arrive”. These should “silent and invisible” to those wanting to cause harm, allow for two-way communication and not be “dependant on your normal WiFi and wired connections”. Initial messages to parents – chosen from “a selection of holding statements” – should be sent by the school. They should “be clear that parents and carers should temporarily stay away from the site”.
* Schools have also been told to compile “grab kits” filled with “key items that can assist during an incident”. The packages, which should be dotted around schools, can contain first aid kits, communication equipment – including phones and notepads and pens – and key information, medication lists and site plans.

**Teaching Assistants**

* **Two in five teaching assistants are now covering classes for the equivalent of at least a day a week**, Unison warns. More than one in four teaching assistants said they are having to cover classes because of teacher shortages at their school, according to a major staff survey. The poll also reveals that two out of five TAs cover for class teachers for at least five hours per week The survey suggests the vast majority of TAs (85 per cent) are covering lessons for more than an hour a week. The findings also suggest that this is a growing issue in many schools, as almost half of TAs (45 per cent) said they are covering classes more than they did last year. Four in five TAs (81 per cent) reported being concerned that this cover work negatively impacts provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). 85 per cent of TAs said covering classes has a negative impact on their workload, while more than four in five (82 per cent) said it has an impact on their health and wellbeing. The most common reasons for TAs to be covering lessons are staff sickness and teachers using planning, preparation and assessment time, which were cited by more than two-thirds of respondents. But about one in four said they cover lessons because of teacher shortages and a similar proportion said they are doing so because their school has been unable to get supply teachers in. See <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2024/apr/26/teaching-assistants-deployed-to-routinely-cover-lessons-in-england-and-wales>

**Music**

* **Almost a quarter of secondary schools are not meeting a new government expectation for key stage 3 pupils to be taught an hour of classroom music a week**, new survey data suggests. The expectation was introduced in September as part of the government’s national plan for music, which promised to help “unleash the creativity of children” with a “renewed emphasis on opportunities for all”. A similar expectation was also introduced for key stages 1 and 2. But a Teacher Tapp survey of 1,256 senior leaders in state secondary schools this month found that 16 per cent were teaching for less than an hour a week, with 2 per cent not teaching it at all. A further 5 per cent used a “carousel” system, which usually means teaching pupils for only part of the year. Overall, two-thirds said they met the weekly commitment of one hour, with 7 per cent saying that they taught for more than an hour. Just 27 per cent of the required number of music teachers were recruited last year, down from 80 per cent in 2019-20. The DfE said its national network of music hubs would continue to provide support for schools. But there are plans to slash the number of music hubs from 118 to 43 from September.

**T levels and BTECs**

* **Government officials are now undertaking a “route-by-route” review of T-level content and assessment in a bid to boost recruitment and retention** on the qualifications. Every T-level will be reviewed by DfE agencies over the next 12 months following complaints from providers over “volume of content” and “unduly burdensome” assessment. The DfE said “breadth of content” and “burden of assessment” could be changed as a result of the reviews, but “without compromising the rigour” of T-levels. The government will also explore allowing awarding organisations to plan for core exams to be taken at different times over the two years. Just 16,000 young people started a T-level in the fourth year of their rollout, according to new government data that also confirms a “worrying” dropout rate. Pupil numbers for the qualifications, designed as the new technical equivalent to A-levels, grew by 58 per cent from 10,200 in September 2022. Close to £1.8 billion has been spent on the qualifications to date, yet they have reached less than 3 per cent of the 16-to-19 pupil population. Government officials are now taking steps to make T-levels “more commercially attractive” to exam boards by introducing higher entry fees for providers if numbers are low. Figures released alongside the action plan confirm that one in three T-level students in wave two dropped out. These students enrolled on a T-level in 2021 and were due to complete in 2023. Of the 5,321 students in the cohort, 3,510 – 66 per cent – completed the course and assessment. But 1,086 dropped T-levels for another course and a further 682 withdrew from education altogether. **Despite the low recruitment, the government is ploughing ahead with controversial plans to remove funding for competing level-3 applied general qualifications from August**. Around 280,000 students are studying applied general qualifications, compared to around 26,000 studying a T-level. Both the Labour Party and Liberal Democrats have made a commitment to pause and review the plan to scrap most BTECs if either wins the next general election.

**Public examinations**

* Ofqual has updated “**VTQ information hub 2023 to 2024: key dates and deadline**s. For Level 3, Level 1/2 and Level 2 vocational and technical qualifications (VTQs) used for progression and taken alongside or in place of A-levels and GCSEs”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/vtq-information-hub-2023-to-2024-key-dates-and-deadlines>
* Ofqual has updated “**Ofqual guide for schools and colleges 2024**. Guidance for schools, colleges and other exam or assessment centres on qualifications arrangements for 2024”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofqual-guide-for-schools-and-colleges-2024>
* For the **Ofqual Handbook: Technical Qualifications**, see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook-technical-qualifications>
* For the **Ofqual Handbook: Essential Digital Skills Qualifications**, see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook-essential-digital-skills-qualifications>
* For the **Ofqual Handbook: Performance Table Qualifications**, see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook-performance-table-qualifications>
* Ofqual has issued “**Appeals in VTQ: guide to the data submission process**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/appeals-in-vocational-and-technical-qualifications-guide-to-the-data-submission-process>
* Ofqual has issued a collection of documents, “**Submitting vocational and technical qualifications data**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/submitting-vocational-and-technical-qualifications-data>
* Ofqual has issued:
* **Qualification-level conditions for functional skills qualifications**, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/qualification-level-conditions-for-functional-skills-qualifications>
* **Functional Skills mathematics conditions and requirements**, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/functional-skills-mathematics-conditions-and-requirements>
* **Functional Skills English conditions and requirements**, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/functional-skills-english-conditions-and-requirements>
* For **Ofqual’s response to the Department for Education’s consultation on the approach for the Advanced British Standard** (ABS), see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofquals-response-to-the-department-for-educations-consultation-on-the-approach-for-the-advanced-british-standard-abs> . It is very detailed with arrange of concerns expressed, but it is only worth reading if you think it likely that ABS will ever happen. Ofqual has warned that the scale of change needed to introduce the Advanced British Standard (ABS) is “unprecedented” and it would require “significant investment”. There is a **summary** at <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/change-on-an-unprecedented-scale-ofqual-responds-to-abs-plans/>
* Ofqual has issued a collection of resources to help support **exams officers** in their roles. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/resources-to-help-support-exams-officers-in-their-roles>

**Academies and trusts**

* A 16-school academy trust has defended the decision to **provide six of its central team staff with £40,000 Tesla company cars.** Aspirations Academies Trust has paid around £90,000 over three years for the leased vehicles. See <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/academy-trust-defends-40k-teslas-for-central-team-staff/>
* The DfE’s **Trust Capacity Fund** aims to encourage trusts to take on challenging schools. For a detailed look at how this works, see <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/dfe-trust-capacity-fund-where-it-goes>
* **Small academy trusts have been warned against asking for government-backed reviews** after one chair said the results were used against them to force a merger. See <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/small-academy-trusts-warned-over-asking-for-government-advice/>
* ESFA has issued “**Information for academies funded on estimated pupil numbers**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academies-funded-on-estimates>
* ESFA has updated “**Academies chart of accounts and automating the accounts return**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academies-chart-of-accounts>
* DfE says that the number of schools that are academies had passed 50 per cent. For an article on the **future of academies**, see <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/warning-over-creeping-centralisation-trust-system-academisation>
* The DfE is considering drawing up **GAG pooling guidance** following controversies over the amounts trusts take from school budgets. See <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/dfe-considers-drawing-up-gag-pooling-guidance/>
* The system of **regional directors** (RDs) that governs school academisation conversions is “a black box” and their decisions lack “visibility”, a former schools minister has warned. His comments come as trust and education system leaders’ frustration ramps up over the transparency of the system set up to make local decisions over the academisation of schools. One leader said that decisions made by RDs are “all smoke and mirrors. See <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/robin-walker-slams-black-box-school-dfe-regional-director-system>

**Early years and primary**

* DfE has issued “**Phonics screening check data collection**: guide to submitting data. How local authorities should collect phonics screening check data from all local-authority-maintained schools, academies and free schools”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/phonics-screening-check-data-collection>
* STA has issued “**Non-statutory teacher assessment frameworks at the end of key stage 1**. Frameworks for teachers who wish to make non-statutory teacher assessment judgements for pupils at the end of key stage 1 (KS1)”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-assessment-frameworks-at-the-end-of-key-stage-1>
* STA has issued “**2024 reception baseline assessment: assessment and reporting arrangements (ARA)**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2024-reception-baseline-assessment-assessment-and-reporting-arrangements-ara>
* DfE has updated “**Early years education recovery programme**. Information on new continuing professional development, qualifications, and support and guidance for the early years sector, funded by the Department for Education”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-education-recovery-programme>
* DfE has updated its **Early years census manual**. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-early-years-census>

**School buildings**

* **Nearly 4 in 10 (37 per cent) heads reported that they’ve been forced to find external sources of funds to fix school buildings** amid a “crisis of capital investment”, according to the NAHT. The majority of school leaders (83 per cent) also told the union that they lack the funding needed to maintain their school buildings. A further 6 in 10 heads (62 per cent) told NAHT they are either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the state of their school buildings. And nearly a fifth (18 per cent) of survey respondents reported that parts of their school estate, including specialist classrooms, laboratories, playgrounds, kitchens and toilets, can’t be maintained. Nearly all school leaders (94 per cent) reported that the cost of building work had risen owing to inflation, with just five per cent of heads feeling that they had enough money to ensure buildings met pupils’ needs. **One in six schools said they could no longer afford to employ a caretaker**, while nearly half of schools that did have cut their hours. As a result, 75% of school leaders said they had to “frequently” carry out jobs that would normally have been done by a caretaker. See <https://www.naht.org.uk/News/Latest-comments/Press-room/ArtMID/558/ArticleID/2403/Schools-falling-into-disrepair-because-of-government-funding-failure> <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2024/apr/28/headteachers-schools-england-caretakers-budget-cuts>
* Kemi Badenoch has claimed **that girls at a school who did not have access to single-sex toilets** developed urinary tract infections (UTI) because they did not want to use gender-neutral toilets. She did not name the school or further substantiate the claim. The equalities minister has launched a call for input, asking people to report public bodies that fail to provide single-sex spaces or have policies not in accordance with the Equality Act. See <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2024/may/01/kemi-badenoch-school-single-sex-toilets-claims>
* **The Net Capacity Assessment (NCA) pilot, which got under way in 2022, warned of “growing disparities” between the capacity numbers provided** by academies and local authorities (LAs) and those found by the government’s property assessors. A summary of the DfE pilot said it found 19,700 additional places in 150 schools. Of those additional places, 9,000 were found in schools in areas with forecast shortfalls of places. See <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/dfe-finds-9k-more-pupil-places-shortfall-schools>

**Teacher recruitment**

* The DfE has axed funding for a recruitment programme aimed at persuading high-flying professionals to change career and retrain as teachers. **Now Teach** said its £4.4 million ‘career changer programme’ contract will not be retendered by the DfE for the 2025 recruitment cycle. A final cohort, with 118 trainees signed up so far, starts in September and will complete their two-year programme as planned before the contract expires in October 2026.
* **More than one in three Teach First recruits are now either career changers or school support staff nominated to join the scheme**, as the charity shifts its focus away from targeting elite university graduates. The teacher trainer’s new strategy also outlines a push into professional development to help its alumni into school leadership. It says that recruiting “the top talent in the country who maybe are not convinced of a career in teaching” is still Teach First’s unique selling point, but while the new strategy document setting Teach First’s direction for the next six years continues to refer to recruiting “high potential future teachers”, it makes no reference of graduate recruitment, Narrowing the attainment gap remains its core mission. See <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/its-not-just-about-top-graduates-teach-first-changes-tack-in-2030-strategy/>
* DfE has issued “**Apply for qualified teacher status (QTS) if you teach outside the UK**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-qualified-teacher-status-qts-if-you-teach-outside-the-uk>
* DfE has issued “**Manage School Experience service**: information for schools”. Schools can offer people who want to become teachers an experience in their school. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/manage-school-experience-service-information-for-schools>
* DfE has issued “**International relocation payments: guidance for ITT providers**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-relocation-payments>
* DfE has updates “**Subject knowledge enhancement (SKE): course directory**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/subject-knowledge-enhancement-course-directory>

**SEND**

The DfE previously announced the “change programme” would test its proposed reforms to the support systems for children with special educational needs and disabilities over a period of two to three years. That meant reforms – including new national standards – were already potentially not going to be rolled out until 2026. Nine change programme partnerships, each made up of several councils, are trialling the changes. Proposals put forward by the government include plans for controversial “tailored lists” of schools for parents of SEND children to choose from, as well as digitised education, health and care (EHC) plans and mandatory mediation when parents dispute a council’s decision. But **those involved say that the programme to pilot the SEND and alternative provision reforms is “about nine months” behind schedule**, and concerns have arisen about some of the proposals See <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/specialist-sector/dfe-send-reform-testing-plan-months-behind-schedule>

* For an article on “**Academy trust leaders pioneering new state-run, independent special schools**”, see <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/meet-the-trusts-pioneering-state-run-private-special-schools/>

**Health and welfare of children and young people**

* **Children aged 16 to 17 are entering care in greater numbers than any other age group**, often with complex needs, and experts say many councils in England now have nowhere to put them. They are increasingly resorting to budget hotels, with no adult support, as a way of cutting costs and keeping teenagers off the streets. See <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2024/apr/28/vulnerable-teenagers-dumped-and-abandoned-in-hotels-by-councils-in-england>
* Teachers are being urged to warn children about the risk of being targeted by “callous” organised criminals through **s\*xtortion scams**. Criminals using s\*xtortion threaten to release n\*de or semi-n\*de photos of someone - either real or fake - unless the victim pays them. The National Crime Agency’s (NCA) Child Exploitation and Online Protection education team has today issued guidance to teachers about spotting the signs of this type of abuse, supporting young people and encouraging them to seek help. It has also provided guidance for parents and carers on how to talk to children about s\*xtortion and how to support them if they become a victim, with the aim of taking away the stigma. See <https://thinkuknow.co.uk/globalassets/professional/guidance/nca_financially_motivated_sexual_extortion_alert_education_eng.pdf> Incidents should be reported to the police or Child Exploitation and Online Protection, <https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/>
* The number of young people receiving their **MMR jab** is up nearly a quarter from last year, official figures show. The first dose of the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine is typically given to one-year-olds, with the second coming between the ages of three and a half and five. The new campaign encourages parents and carers of children aged from six to 11 to make an appointment with their child’s GP practice so they can receive missed MMR vaccinations. In order to keep measles at bay, more than 95% of children should be vaccinated, but NHS figures from December suggest England is only at about 85%, with an estimated 3.4 million under-16s at risk of getting the virus. But measles cases continue to rise. According to UKHSA figures released last week, there were 103 new cases in the past week. The number of laboratory confirmed cases since 1 October 2023 rose to 1,212 , an increase of 40% on March’s figures . In October 2023, there were just 17. Nearly two-thirds (64%) of the cases were in children under 10
* DfE has updated “**Guidance on information sharing for people who provide safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>
* DFE has issued “Good practice advice to support local authorities to meet the **accommodation needs of care leavers**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/joint-housing-protocols-for-care-leavers>

**Education and domestic abuse**

* **Operation Encompass**, <https://www.operationencompass.org/> , is a partnership between police and schools, and it is now in place in all 43 police forces in England and Wales. It is a police and education early information-sharing partnership enabling schools to offer immediate support to children and young people experiencing domestic abuse. Operation Encompass ensures there is a phone call or notification to a trained member of school staff before the start of the next school day after an incident of police-attended domestic abuse where there are children related to either of the adult parties involved. The Operation Encompass website provides **free training for key adults**, <https://www.operationencompass.org/operation-encompass-on-line-key-adult-briefing> You can also find **resources to support schools**, <https://www.operationencompass.org/educational-settings/resources-for-educational-settings> including a number of **handbook**s covering topics such as the following:
	+ Guide to implementing Operation Encompass – exploring how Operation Encompass works between a police force and schools, <https://www.operationencompass.org/SM4/Mutable/Uploads/resource_file/OE-Booklet---Guide-to-Implementing-Operation-Encompass-FV-April-2024.pdf>
	+ Supporting children experiencing domestic abuse – highlighting a number of simple ways in which school staff can support children experiencing domestic abuse, <https://www.operationencompass.org/SM4/Mutable/Uploads/resource_file/Supporting-chn-experiencing-DA-2024.pdf>
	+ Recognising children experiencing domestic abuse as vulnerable groups within schools – supported by the Home Office, the Department for Education and NASEN, this handbook explains why we should recognise children experiencing domestic abuse as a vulnerable group in schools, <https://www.operationencompass.org/SM4/Mutable/Uploads/resource_file/Recognising-children-experiencing-DA-as-a-vulnerable-group.-2024pdf.pdf>
	+ Working to break the cycle of Domestic Abuse – exploring how schools can teach the domestic abuse aspect of the RE/RSE/HE curriculum., <https://www.operationencompass.org/SM4/Mutable/Uploads/resource_file/DA-curriculum-in-schools-2024.pdf>

Operation Encompass has also provided a review of **helpful books for use in the curriculum**, <https://www.operationencompass.org/SM4/Mutable/Uploads/medialibrary/OE-Booklet-Book-Review-1.pdf> , and produced a **template statement** that schools can add to their safeguarding policy to highlight their participation in Operation Encompass, **see appendix**. In addition, there's a new **handbook** by Operation Encompass in response to children being recently recognised as victims of domestic violence in their own right, <https://www.operationencompass.org/SM4/Mutable/Uploads/resource_file/Children-as-Victims-2024.pdf> . This booklet also sets out the **Child's Victim Support Code**, <https://www.operationencompass.org/SM4/Mutable/Uploads/medialibrary/OE-Booklet---Childs-Victim-Code-1.pdf> If you have received an Operation Encompass call about a child in your school or are concerned about a child or children in your school who are experiencing domestic abuse, Operation Encompass provides a helpline for school staff. For **free advice** from an education psychologist about how best to support a child, call the Operation Encompass teachers' national helpline on 020 4513 9990, open Monday to Friday from 8am to 1pm

Thanks are due to the **NAHT** for providing this information

**School management**

* DfE has updated **“School uniforms**: guidance for schools”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-uniform>
* ESFA has issued “**Payments made to institutions for claims made to ESFA for various grants including, but not exclusively, coronavirus (COVID-19) support grants**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-data-on-funding-claims-by-institutions>
* The DfE has updated “**School census 2023 to 2024**: technical information”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-census-2023-to-2024-technical-information>
* ESFA has updated “**National Tutoring Programme (NTP) allocations for 2023 to 2024 academic year**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-tutoring-programme-ntp-allocations-for-2023-to-2024-academic-year>
* For the latest **ESFA Updates**, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esfa-update-1-may-2024>
* NGA has issued for governors, “**Empowering leadership: safeguarding headteachers' wellbeing**”. See <https://www.nga.org.uk/news-views/directory/safeguarding-headteacher-wellbeing/>
* Seventy schools have been granted exemptions from **the legal requirement to provide Christian worshi**p since 2018. Many councils did not hold this data, suggesting the true number is likely higher. Local authority-maintained schools and academies can opt out of the requirement by applying to their town hall’s SACRE or regional directorate, respectively. “Determinations” last for five years, but schools must still provide an alternative form of collective daily worship. These cannot be “non-religious assemblies”. Parents have the right to remove under 16s from collective worship. Older pupils can withdraw themselves. Ofsted stopped inspecting collective worship in 2004 after 76 per cent of schools were non-compliant. It is said that if schools don’t follow the law, it’s “unlikely anybody is going to do anything”. A 2022 Teacher Tapp survey of 8,234 respondents found 57 per cent said they did not hold a daily act of collective worship. The DfE has “no plans to review its policy on collective worship”. See <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/schools-swap-christian-worship-for-mindfulness/>

**Post 16**

* DfE has updated “**Further education corporations and sixth-form college corporations: governance guide**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-education-corporations-and-sixth-form-college-corporations-governance-guide--2>
* DfE has issued “Guidance on how further education providers can register for **Taking Teaching Further (TTF) 2024**”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/taking-teaching-further-programme>
* The DfE explains how the tuition fee limits at colleges and universities will work from 2025 as part of the **Lifelong Learning Entitlement**. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lifelong-learning-entitlement-tuition-fee-limits>
* Ofsted has issued “**Inspecting further education and skills**: guide for providers”. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/inspecting-further-education-and-skills-guide-for-providers>
* ESFA has issued guidance for sixth-form and further education colleges on preparing and submitting their **College Financial Forecasting Return (CFFR**) and supporting commentary. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/financial-planning-handbook>
* ESFA has updated information about how **16 to 19 funding** is allocated to colleges, providers, schools and academies. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-education-funding-allocations>

**Appendix**

Operation Encompass Safeguarding Statement

Our school/college/nursery/setting is part of Operation Encompass.

Operation Encompass is a national police and education early intervention safeguarding partnership which supports children who experience Domestic Abuse.

Operation Encompass is in place in every police force in England and Wales, the Isle of Man, Jersey, Guernsey, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Gibraltar.

Children were recognised as victims of domestic abuse in their own right in the 2021 Domestic Abuse Act.

Operation Encompass means that the police will share information with our school/college/nursery/setting about **all** police attended Domestic Abuse incidents which involve any of our children PRIOR to the start of the next school day. The notification informs us about the context of the incident and includes the Voice of the Child.

Once a Key Adult (DSL) and their deputy/ies (DDSLs) have attended either an Operation Encompass briefing or have completed the free National Online Operation Encompass Key Adult training they will cascade the principles of Operation Encompass to all other staff. All staff are encouraged undertake the online training.

Our DSL undertook training on XXXXX (date including year)

Our DDSLs undertook training on XXXXX (date including year)

Our Safeguarding Governor undertook training on XXXX (date including year)

 X (number) of staff have completed the training (dates including year).

Our parents are fully aware that we are an Operation Encompass school/college/nursery/setting and we ensure that when a new child joins our school/college/nursery/setting the parents/carers are informed about Operation Encompass.

The Operation Encompass notification is stored in line with all other confidential safeguarding and child protection information.

The Key Adult /s have led training for all staff and Governors about Operation Encompass, the prevalence of Domestic Abuse and the impact of this abuse on children.

As a school/college/nursery/setting we have also discussed how we can support our children who are experiencing Domestic Abuse on a day-to-day basis and particularly following the Operation Encompass notification.

We have used the free Operation Encompass Handbooks to inform our thinking.

We are aware that we must do nothing that puts the child/ren or the non-abusing adult at risk.

The Safeguarding Governor will report on Operation Encompass in the termly report to Governors. All information is anonymised for these reports.

We have used the Operation Encompass Key Adult Responsibilities checklist to ensure that all appropriate actions have been taken by the school/college/nursery/setting.

When the Head Teacher, DSL or DDSLs leave the school/college/nursery/setting and other staff are appointed, they will ensure that all Operation Encompass log in details are shared with the new Head Teacher /Key Adults and that the new member of staff will undertake the Operation Encompass online training.

**Tony Stephens**