

14-19 Learning & Skills Bulletin, No. 361

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Editorial

- 4 **PAC throws a bucket of water over FE plans** 16
The Public Accounts Committee report on FE finances pours a bucket of cold water over the Government's well-received plans for the sector, outlined in the White Paper published only a week earlier. It is a necessary dose of reality.

News

- 1 **Confusion over school reopening**
- 5 **Education attendance restrictions to remain in place**
- 6 **NEU launches plan for education return**
- 7 **Remote education motivation, a significant concern for parents and school leaders**
- 8 **Price-fixing warning issued to suppliers of goods and services to disabled students**
- 9 **EPI proposals for awarding grades in summer 2021**
- 12 **ASCL's proposals for grading GCSEs and A-levels**
- 13 **Serious failures at Croydon Council**
- Scotland's COVID-19 Education Recovery Group**
- 14 **COVID-19 infographic for Scotland**

Conference

- 15 **Remote learning**
Gavin Williamson addresses EPI conference on remote learning

Research

- 16 **SARS-CoV-2 Variants of Concern**
A paper from NERVTAG: *Brief Note on SARS-CoV-2 Variants*.
- 18 **Mitigating new variants of concern**
Application of Physical Distancing and Fabric Face Coverings in Mitigating the B.1.1.7 Variant SARS-CoV-2 Virus in Public, Workplace and Community Settings, paper prepared by the Environmental Modelling Group (EMG) for the Scientific Advisory Group on Emergencies (SAGE).
- 26 **The impact of COVID-19 on attainment**
The Education Endowment Foundation has published interim findings from a study on the extent to which Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment in reading and maths had been impacted by partial school closures during the first national COVID-19 lockdown.
- 27 **Social mobility and vulnerable learners**
The Education Policy Institute and The Prince's Trust have published a study on the mental health and wellbeing of young people in Generation Z, based on data from the Millennium Cohort Study.
- 28 **Education inequalities linked to increased cognitive ageing in women**
Improvements in access to education for girls over the last century in the UK were likely to have reduced differences in cognitive ageing between men and women, potentially reducing sex disparities in dementia risk, according to a large cohort study led by UCL.
- 29 **The financial cost to children of closing schools**
In IFS report suggested that as a result of the pandemic, children across the UK are likely to lose at least half a year of normal, in person schooling, but in the absence of a massive policy response, the long-run effects of the learning loss are likely to be substantial.

30 Ofsted research into remote learning
The Ofsted research paper, *Remote Education Research*, finds pupil motivation around remote education is a significant concern for parents and school leaders.

44 COVID-19 round-up
A round-up of news on COVID-19.

International

45 OECD supplement: What can schools do to develop positive, high-achieving students? Insights from PISA and TALIS
The latest report from the OECD, launched at a seminar yesterday, brings together the PISA and TALIS research. We review the report and report from the seminar.

Opinion

50 What I don't understand
Professor Jan Willam de Graaf of Saxion University of Applied Sciences, Deventer, Netherlands, discovers that even doctors can be seriously wrong about COVID-19.

Document reviews

51 How to move beyond GCSEs
Re-assessing the Future. Part 1 - How to Move Beyond GCSEs, from EDSK.

52 Managing FE college financial sustainability
Managing Colleges' Financial Sustainability, from the Public Accounts Committee.

COVID-19 announcements

54 Government advice on COVID-19
Details of all new documents on COVID-19 issued by governments across the UK.

Policy papers

58 Policy papers published last week
Details of policy papers from government, parliament and think tanks.

Consultations

59 Consultations
There were no new education consultations published last week, and one consultation outcome.

Delegated legislation

60 Statutory instruments issued last week
There was one new statutory instrument on education issued last week.

Parliament - Debates

61 Reopening education settings
The Shadow Secretary of State for Education, Kate Green (Lab, Stretford and Urmston) in an Urgent Question in the Commons, asked the Secretary of State for Education to make a statement on the Government's plan for the reopening of educational settings.

62 Starmer and the reopening of education
The Leader of the Opposition, Sir Keir Starmer (Lab, Holborn and St Pancras) raised the reopening of education settings at PMQs.

COVID-19 up-date

During his Statement on the COVID-19 Update, the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson (Con, Uxbridge and South Ruislip) said that reopening schools must be a national priority, as the first sign of normality beginning to return should be pupils going back to their classrooms.

Parliament - Questions

64 Answers to written questions
Answers to written parliamentary questions from the Department for Education, the Department for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs, the Government Equalities Office, the Department of Health and Social Care, H M Treasury, the Department for Work and Pensions and the House of Lords.

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