

### Editorial

- 4 The final lockdown**  
The Government's highly successful vaccines policy has now led to pressure to open up the economy. Yet that will lead to increasing the spread of the COVID virus again. And the more it spreads the larger the number of variants which eventually may be resistant to existing vaccines, which will land us back to square one. If schools are to be the priority in easing restrictions, other areas of society, like the economy, will have to remain in lockdown for longer.

### News

- 1 Over three million rapid COVID tests in schools and colleges**
- 5 New Teaching School hubs**
- 6 Leading academics call for scrutiny of grammar school tests**
- 7 COVID-19 infographic for Scotland**
- 8 Reaction to speculation about extending school days and summer term**

**Scottish schools start to go back next Monday**

### Research

- 9 Wider lockdown key to preventing COVID-19 surge if schools reopen**  
Wider restrictions must remain in place if schools reopen in March, to keep the epidemic's R number below 1 in the UK, according to a UCL-led modelling study.
- 10 Analysis of wellbeing of 15-year-olds reveals strength of personal relationships and a sense of belonging is key**  
The National Foundation for Educational Research has published two reports, based on further analysis of the PISA 2018 study, looking at the wellbeing of 15-year-old pupils in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and exploring the differences between disadvantaged pupils who do well in reading, maths and science and those who do not.
- 11 10% of teenagers have tried hard drugs by 17**  
A study by UCL Institute of Education has revealed that almost a third of 17-year-olds have tried cannabis and one in 10 have tried harder drugs, such as cocaine, ecstasy and ketamine, with similar rates of experimentation regardless of parents' education level.
- 13 Online tuition can support disadvantaged pupils**  
Delivering online tuition can be an effective way to support the learning of disadvantaged pupils during partial school closures, if supportive measures are in place, according to a report published by the Education Endowment Foundation.
- 14 New SARS-CoV-2 virus variants a concern**  
The emergence of a number of new COVID Variants of Concern is worrying Ministers and scientists.
- 16 COVID-19 round-up**  
A round-up of news on COVID-19.

## People

- 18** **Chairman of the Office for Students**  
Lord Wharton has been appointed the new chairman of the Office for Students.

## Document reviews

- 19** **Children's Commissioner on gangs**  
*Still Not Safe: The public health response to youth violence*, from the Children's Commissioner for England.

## International

- 22** **Reopening America's schools**  
The new Biden Administration and the CDC have both published documents to help reopen America's schools.

## Opinion

- 24** **Thought experiment and time travel**  
Professor Jan Willam de Graaf of Saxion University of Applied Sciences, Deventer, Netherlands, theorises about thought and time travel.

## COVID-19 announcements

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

## Policy papers

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

## Consultations

- 29** **Consultations**  
There was one new education consultation published last week.

## Delegated legislation

- 30** **Statutory instruments issued last week**  
There was one new relevant statutory instrument on education issued last week.

## Parliament - Committee

- 31** **Left behind White working class children**  
The Education Select Committee takes more evidence on left-behind white working-class boys and girls from disadvantaged backgrounds. Ministers Nick Gibb and Vicky Ford give evidence.

## Parliament - Debates

- 32** **Essay Mills (Prohibition) Bill**  
Chris Skidmore (Con, Kingswood), a former Minister of State for Universities between 2018 and 2020, introduced a Private Members' Bill to prohibit the operation and advertising of essay mill services.

## Schools and online teaching

- 33** **Schools and online teaching**  
The former Education Secretary, Lord Blunkett (Lab) asked that Government what estimate it had made of the number of children who were not eligible for face-to-face teaching who had not been able to access online teaching for more than 80 per cent of the normal timetable in primary, and secondary, schools in England since 5 January 2021.

## Parliament - Questions

- 34** **Answers to written questions**  
Answers to written parliamentary questions from the Department for Education, the Department of Health and Social Care, H M Treasury, the Department for Work and Pensions and the House of Lords.

## Publisher information

- 46** **Subscription rates**  
Writers and subscription details.