

Ward Hadaway – Lawyers for Education

## Insight: Education

# Your monthly education sector news roundup

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# Insight: Education

Round up

## Welcome

Welcome to the September edition of our newsletter for those working in the education sector. We hope you will find this a useful summary of latest developments in schools, further and higher education and the training and apprenticeships arena. If you have any comments on the format or want more detail about a particular subject, [please do not hesitate to contact any of us](#).

### Department for Education announce languages boost to provide UK businesses with a skilled workforce

School Standards Minister Nick Gibb has announced a new drive which aims to deliver a nation of confident linguists and ensure businesses have the skilled workers that they need. A national language centre will be created with nine leading schools across the country acting as regional language hubs to improve the teaching of French, Spanish and German.

The creation of the Centre of Excellence for Modern languages will be supported by £4.8 million over the next four years and it is hoped that it will raise and improve the standards of pupils' modern foreign language skills throughout the UK.

Furthermore, the announcement has been backed by the Confederation of British Industries (CBI) after its previous survey of employers found that almost two thirds of the respondents recognised foreign language skills as being important among their employees.

In this regard, Matthew Fell CBI Policy Director stressed:

"Studying foreign languages, developing cultural awareness and understanding global business is vital if the UK is to maintain a competitive edge on the international stage. The launch of a Centre of Excellence for Modern Languages and regional hubs should play a big part in delivering this."

However, headteacher and linguist, Ian Bauckham CBE, who chaired the Teaching Schools Council's recent Modern Foreign Languages Pedagogy review proposed a number of additional recommendations which should be implemented in order to promote languages success. These include:

- » Ensuring that the content taught through the new language is stimulating and widens a pupil's knowledge of the culture, history and literature of speakers of the new language without compromising the necessary sequencing of vocabulary and grammar;
- » Ensuring that pupils are taught to pay attention to the details of meaning through translation and should extend the range of their vocabulary and understanding through reading short texts and literature; and
- » Secondary schools should know about the modern languages taught at their feeder primary schools. Accordingly, and wherever possible, they should support language learning in primary schools and plan to build on pupils' primary school language knowledge.

For more information please [click here](#).

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## Statistics suggest a significant increase in the number of grammar school pupils

An analysis of recently published data has shown that there are 11,000 more grammar school pupils now than there were in 2010. Furthermore, should the increase in places remain at its current rate, the figures suggest that by 2021 the number of extra places will be equivalent to there being 24 new grammar schools when compared with the figures eight years ago.

Despite the Prime Minister revoking her previous proposals to overturn the current ban which applies to the creation of new grammar schools, the expansion of the existing selective schools has been encouraged through initiatives such as the £50m growth fund which was unveiled in May.

However, the increase is somewhat controversial given the suggestions that the selection process favours those from more 'well-off' backgrounds who are able to afford tuition to assist with preparations for the entrance exam. Similarly, critics of grammar schools have also argued that they remove students who are performing well from other state schools and academies meaning that it is more difficult for these institutions to achieve impressive exam results.

Nonetheless, in seeking to address some of these concerns, a Department for Education representative explained:

"Any good school – whether it is a comprehensive, academy or selective school – is able to expand if there is a need and a parental demand. By 2020 this government will have created a million new school places, so it's no surprise that grammars, some of the highest performing schools in the country are part of that.

The criteria for grants from the Selective School Expansion Fund is clear. If applicants cannot show how they will increase access, they will not be eligible for funding."

For more information, please [click here](#).

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## Government announces new investment for the North Yorkshire Coast

The Government has announced a new investment worth £1.6 million directed at supporting young people and their families living on the North Yorkshire Coast, an area which has been identified as part of the Opportunity Area programme. The investment will take the form of a number of new projects with the aim of helping to boost early education at home as well as improving access to extra-curricular activities.

Education Secretary Damian Hinds launched his £72 million Opportunity Area programme which offered 12 Opportunity Areas a share of the fund for a tailored plan to help improve social mobility for children and young people in the designated area.

The investment in the North Yorkshire area will be used in a number of projects, including:

- » An £800,000 scheme to help parents who struggle to help their young children develop reading, writing and language skills, there will be support such as community workshops with early years experts.
- » Strengthened speech and language provisions with the creation of 40 speech and language 'champions' to work with nurseries and preschools in the area, with the aim of identifying earlier if some children need enhanced support before starting school. These 'champions' will hopefully result in more children arriving at school ready to learn. The investment will also be used to provide support to more than 20 primary schools to help improve the speech, language and communication skills of pupils.
- » Access to free extra-curricular activities for some of the area's most deprived young people, including an out-of-schools Life Skills Club with performing arts and dance, computer gaming and digital workshops as well as sports sessions through North Yorkshire Sport. These projects are aimed at giving young people in the area the opportunity to develop lifelong skills in leadership and teamwork, character, resilience and confidence.

Commenting on the news, a senior spokesman from the area, said:

"I'm delighted that the Secretary of State is visiting the North Yorkshire Coast Opportunity Area to see the efforts we are making to improve social mobility along the coast.

"I know that improving social mobility has long been a priority for this Education Secretary, and I want him to see the encouraging progress we are making."

For more information, please [click here](#).

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## Briefing paper considers the policy developments relating to school meals in England

The House of Commons Library has published a briefing paper examining the recent policy developments relating to the provision of school meals in England.

The paper considers various aspects of the requirements which apply to schools, including funding related issues in addition to the specific standards which must be satisfied by the meals themselves.

With regard to the specific nutritional standards which apply to the meals offered by schools, the paper clarifies that:

"Nutritional standards are in place for school meals in England, aimed at ensuring that the food provided to pupils in school is nutritious and of high quality, and at promoting good health and eating behaviour amongst pupils... The standards apply to:

- » All local authority maintained schools;
- » Pupil referral units;
- » Academies that opened prior to 2010;
- » Academies and free schools with agreed funding from June 2014; and
- » Non-maintained special schools."

Commenting on these standards, one spokesman explained:

"We know that children are continuing to eat too much saturated fat, sugar and salt. It is vital that the food children are offered in schools is nutritious and helps them to learn about the basics of a healthy diet... The standards and supporting guidance include clear information on appropriate portion sizes to help achieve similar results and promote good practice across all school."

For more information, please [click here](#).

# Insight: Education

Quick read

## Need to know – your policy and guidance quick read

### [Education and Skills Funding Agency provides guidance on post-16 funding provision](#)

The Education and Skills Funding Agency has published a detailed guide to institutions providing education to those aged between 16 and 19 providing advice about the use of funds for the upcoming academic years. The guidance includes a number of updates and stresses that all institutions that receive young people's funding from the Agency must comply with the requirements set out within.

### [Guidance looks to increase children's safety in educational establishments \(KCSIE\)](#)

The Department for Education has published statutory guidance for schools and colleges on safeguarding children and safer recruitment. The guidance is applicable to all forms of school and explains the legal duties they must follow to promote the welfare of children and young people under the age of 18. Furthermore, the paper emphasises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of everyone who comes into contact with children and their families.

### [Guidance published on the safeguarding of children \(Working Together to Safeguard Children\)](#)

The Department for Education has updated its statutory guidance on working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, in doing so, emphasising its view that "nothing is more important than children's welfare". In line with this, the document further clarifies that it applies to "all organisations and agencies which have functions relating to children" and "it applies, in its entirety, to all schools".

### [Data protection guidance looks to support schools](#)

The Department for Education has published a data protection toolkit for schools which sets out nine steps which are hoped can help schools efficiently develop the culture, processes and documentation required to be compliant with the new requirements introduced by the General Data Protection Regulations. With regard to this, the guidance stresses the fact that schools and / or Multi-Academy Trusts are data controllers in their own right and should ensure that they have the appropriate registration with the regulator.

### [Department for Education looks to support disadvantaged pupils](#)

Further to the safeguarding guidance referred to above, the Department for Education has produced a qualitative study providing evidence on cultures and practices seen in schools that perform well and not so well for their disadvantaged pupils. It is hoped that by comparing the differing cultures and practices in higher and lower-performing schools successful strategies can be identified and utilised more effectively.

# Insight: Education

Meet the team

## Meet the Education Team

As the evolving educational landscape continues to open up new opportunities and present challenges, you need to be confident that you are getting the right legal advice, at the right time and, of course, at the right price. Ward Hadaway's Education Team is recognised as a leading national player. Our friendly, commercial and pragmatic approach allows you to be reassured that you are in safe hands.

Whether you are a maintained school, academy, multi academy trust, free school, studio school or UTC, our team have an in-depth, up-to-date knowledge of the sector, making us ideally placed to offer the best possible advice to all those involved in the delivery of educational excellence for pupils, students and their communities. [Click here](#) to read about how we can work with you.

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