



Education Committee

House of Commons London SW1A 0AA

Tel: 020 7219 2370 Fax 020 7219 2370 Email: educom@parliament.uk

Website: www.parliament.uk/education-committee Twitter: [@CommonsEd](https://twitter.com/CommonsEd)

From Robert Halfon MP, Chair

Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP
Secretary of State for Education
Department for Education
London
SW1P 3BT

29 June 2021

Department for Education Main Estimate 2021-22: Estimates memorandum

Dear Gavin,

The Committee has taken note of the details provided in the DfE's Main Estimate memorandum on the DfE's planned spending in 2021-22 and have prepared a number of questions. We would be grateful if you could provide a response to the Committee on the questions below by Tuesday 13 July.

Catch-up funding

Q1. The Government has variously announced education catch-up funding of £1 billion (Summer 2020), £0.7 billion (Budget 2021) and £1.4 billion (June 2021). So far only £369.416 million extra has been provided from the Reserve specifically for education catch up in the 2020-21 Supplementary Estimate, and £122 million in the 2021-22 Main Estimate.

As a result, we have difficulty reconciling the amounts so far included in Estimates to the funding announcements made by Ministers. It is unclear whether all of the money provided has been additional monies, or if some has been derived from DfE savings elsewhere. We therefore ask that you provide a table showing:

- How much of the total £3.1 billion so far announced has come from savings in other areas of DfE spending, rather than as additional funding from HM Treasury?
- How much is expected to be added in 2021-22 DfE Supplementary Estimate?
- How much of the announced catch up funding was spent in 2020-21?
- How much additional funding over and above the non-Covid-19 SR baseline has been included in the 2021-22 Main Estimate?
- How much is planned for financial year 2022-23 and beyond?
- Is any of this funding ring fenced - either within the DfE, or within schools' budgets - to prevent it being used to fund other pressures?

In each case, please provide a breakdown between centrally provided funding (such as the National Tutoring Programme) and amounts allocated directly to schools.

Q2. In the light of the assessments by the Education Policy Institute and Sir Kevan Collins, that the amounts so far provided for education catch-up are insufficient, what evaluation does the DfE intend

to carry out regarding the effectiveness of the catch up spending already announced and being spent?

Q3. What is the DfE's assessment of the amount of further catch up funds needed as part of the forthcoming Spending Review for 2022-23 and beyond?

Q4. Are local authority-maintained nurseries eligible for the package of £18 million for Early Years language catch-up funding announced by the Government in February 2021? If they are not, why is this?

Costs of school assessments

Q5. What additional funding has been provided in the 2021-22 financial year to support schools to conduct the teacher assessed grades which replaced Summer 2021 external exams?

Teacher turnover and pension costs

Q6. At NASUWT's annual teaching union conference in April 2021, you stated that "far too many teachers leave within the first five years of joining the profession". What information is this based upon? Does the DfE regularly gather data on the age and experience profile of teachers leaving the profession?

Q7. 35, 871 teachers were reported as moving from active to deferred pension status in 2018-19.¹ We would like to know whether this has increased or reduced in 2019-20? Do numbers and benefits of teachers' pension scheme joiners and leavers reveal any trends?

Q8. What analysis, if any, has been done on the reasons why teachers leave the profession early?

Q9. What is being done to reduce the proportion of early departures from teaching and to encourage teachers to stay in the profession?

Q10. In relation to the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) Estimate, can the DfE explain what impact the change to employer contribution rates and the academies pooling arrangement is having on the actual costs faced by schools, compared to past years?

Q11. We are aware that a past increase to TPS employer contribution rates was supported by additional funds from DfE, but even though that may have meant that, overall, schools' extra costs were covered, did it mean that *individual* schools were fully funded for all of these extra costs? Finally, do the increases to amounts spent per pupil following this change partly reflect the increased employer TPS pension costs faced by schools, as well as other more routine inflationary costs such as increases to teachers' salaries?

School deficits and surpluses

Q12. The DfE's published statistics² show that the percentage of local authority maintained schools in deficit has grown from 5.4% in 2014-15 to 12% in 2019-20, with the average size of school deficits for those in deficit increasing, and average surpluses for those schools in surplus decreasing, even before

¹ [Teachers' Pension Scheme \(England and Wales\) Annual report and accounts \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#), membership statistics, page 5, TPS annual reports and accounts 2019-20

² [LA and school expenditure, Financial Year 2019-20 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](#)

the pandemic struck. What is the DfE doing to assist an ever- growing share of schools going into deficit, or to prevent deficits from occurring in the first place? What is the DfE's assessment of the impact of the pandemic upon school balances during 2020-21?

Q13. Has the DfE undertaken any work to establish the impact of Covid-19 and school lockdowns on the financial health of schools - for instance the size and scale of schools' deficits and the extent to which Covid-19 has contributed to this?

Further Education

Q14. What additional financial support has been or is being provided by the DfE for the extra operating costs faced by Further Education (FE) institutions as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, including funding for safety measures, social distancing, remote learning and catch-up?

Q15. When are FE institutions likely to see the benefit of the additional capital funding?

Q16. What proportion of FE institutions are likely to benefit from the Capital Transformation Fund and what are the Fund's priorities?

Q17. Following the passing of the March deadline for the submission of applications from FE institutions for capital funding under the Capital Transformation Fund, what are the next stages in the process?

Higher Education

Q18. What assessment has been made of the financial impact on the Higher Education(HE) sector of Covid-19 and lockdowns, for instance on income foregone from international students?

Q19. What additional financial support has the DfE made available to universities and other HE institutions as a result of the financial impact of Covid-19?

Q20. How has any funding for universities and other HE institutions so far been allocated and distributed?

Yours sincerely,



Robert Halfon MP
Chair of the Education Committee