

# Young People's Education and Skills Operational Sub-Group

## Policy Update

Item No: 5

**Date:** 15 July 2014

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**Summary** This paper outlines the key changes affecting 14-19 policy since the last OSG meeting.

**Recommendation** OSG members are asked to note the information in this paper.

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## 1 Background

1.1 This paper outlines the key policy statements, consultations, changes and interest items in relation to 14-19 education and training which have occurred since the last OSG meeting.

## 2 Lessons from London schools: investigating the success<sup>1</sup>

2.1 A recent research report from CfBT and Centre for London demonstrated that London schools have improved dramatically since 2000, at a faster rate than anywhere else in the country.

2.2 Pupils living in the most deprived neighbourhoods in London were more likely to achieve 5+ A\*-Cs at GCSE (including English and mathematics) compared to their peers in the nearby South-East region. Schools serving disadvantaged pupils in London were more likely to have 'Outstanding' teaching and leadership than elsewhere in the country.

2.3 The report found four interventions that provided the impetus for improvement - London Challenge, Teach First, the academies programme and improved support from local authorities. It concluded seven lessons from the success of London's schools which could be applied throughout the UK and internationally:

2.3.1 Ensure that policy is based on hard evidence of effectiveness

2.3.2 Maintain a sustained and consistent policy momentum for change over time

2.3.3 Use performance data systematically to make the case for change

2.3.4 Transform underperforming schools through well-managed, sector-led school improvement activities

2.3.5 Develop an effective 'middle tier' to support sector-led improvement activity

2.3.6 Ensure that teaching is a career of choice for talented and idealistic recruits

- 2.3.7 Apply pressure for change through allowing market entry to new providers of education services
- 2.4 London Councils welcomes the report's findings that local authorities are one of key the four strands that have supported London's schools deliver improvements in performance. However, the advantage young Londoner's have over their peers from other regions at key stage 4 does not continue to age 18, where London is below the national average on a number of level 3 attainment measures.
- 2.5 London Councils Young People's Education and Skills has commissioned the Institute of Education (IoE) to gather and analyse data to provide evidence on this dip in performance at 17-plus compared to what might be expected as the result of relatively high pre-16 levels of attainment.
- 2.6 The IoE will report later this year on their findings which will include both school and college data.

### **3 Education Services Grant Consultation<sup>2</sup>**

- 3.1 The Department for Education (DfE) recently consulted on making savings to the Education Services Grant (ESG) for 2015-16. It follows on from the announcement made during the June 2013 Spending Review that ESG funding needed to be reduced by £200 million, approximately 20 per cent, from 2015-16.
- 3.2 London Councils analysis has shown that should a 20 per cent cut be applied, London would lose up to £24 million towards providing education services. The government outlined that a significant proportion of these savings can be achieved through a more focused role by the local authority in the delivery of education services. This approach by government is underpinned by the growth of academies and free schools which has resulted in a mixed economy of schools. In London, academies now account for 8 per cent of primary schools and 58 per cent of secondary schools.
- 3.3 London Councils submitted a joint response with the Association of London's Directors of Children's Services (ALDCS) to the DfE consultation. It outlined that a reduction to the ESG would create significant challenges for London boroughs and to their ability to continue to support schools and meet the needs of local communities. Within the response, there were five asks for government:
  - 3.3.1 recognise the key role that local authorities play in the oversight of all schools in the local area, and ensure they receive appropriate levels of funding in order to fulfil this role
  - 3.3.2 include an Area Cost Adjust for the standard ESG and retained duties element in recognition of the higher labour market costs in London
  - 3.3.3 ensure retained duties funding is not reduced from £15 per pupil
  - 3.3.4 conduct a detailed research project to evidence different Education Welfare Service (EWS) models and their impact on children's outcomes before services are reviewed nationally
  - 3.3.5 remove protections for academies at the earliest opportunity to ensure ESG allocations are the same for all children, irrespective of where they receive their education.
- 3.4 The DfE is currently analysing responses and an official response is expected in the Autumn/Winter of 2014.

#### **4 Draft programmes of study for English and mathematics for key stage 4: consultation**

- 4.1 On 2 December 2013, the DfE published a consultation on proposed programmes of study for English and mathematics for key stage 4. The Secretary of State for education has considered the responses received and published new programmes of study that will be taught from September 2015
- 4.2 Based on the 61 responses the consultation attracted, there very were mixed views as to whether the proposed programmes provided an appropriate progression from key stage 3. For English programmes of study there was an even split on whether there was appropriate progression. However, for mathematics, more respondents indicated they did not feel the proposed programmes were appropriate.
- 4.3 The consultation also asked for views on potential equality implications of the proposed programmes of study for English and mathematics. There were 32 responses to this question. 69 per cent of responses considered that the proposals would have a negative impact upon particular groups, compared to 25 per cent who were not sure, and to 6 per cent who thought there would be a positive impact.
- 4.4 The majority of responses to this question raised concern about the impact that the proposed programmes of study changes would have on low attainers and those with special needs. They were of the opinion that the changes were overly complex and would adversely affect pupils in these groups.
- 4.5 The government intends to publish a full equalities impact assessment after the programmes of study have been finalised. A scrutiny of the impact assessment will be undertaken to gauge any disproportionate impact on London.

#### **5 Vocational qualifications for 14- to 19-year-olds<sup>3</sup>**

- 5.1 From 2016, 16 to 19 performance tables will report academic, Tech Level and Applied General qualifications separately. The intention of separate reporting is to help parents and students make meaningful judgements about schools and colleges that offer different kinds of courses.
- 5.2 The DfE has published the latest list of non-GCSE qualifications that will count in the key stage 4 performance tables. The list applies to courses taught from September 2014 and is the first to include new vocation qualifications for 14 to 16 year olds. Additionally, the first lists of Tech Levels and Applied General qualifications for 16 to 19 year olds have been published.

#### **6 Further Education - Future Development Of Loans<sup>4</sup>**

- 6.1 On 19 June the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) published a consultation *Further Education - Future Development of Loans* seeking views on expanding the scope of loans to cover 19 to 23 year olds and making loans available for level 2 qualifications where learners are not entitled to full grant funding.
- 6.2 It also explores ideas which may help to simplify the loans funding framework, and create greater coherence between the Further Education and Higher Education loans systems, including:
  - 6.2.1 considering whether the administrative rules of the Advanced Learning Loans system could be simplified
  - 6.2.2 highlighting a consultation published on 3 April by BIS, on Sharia-compliant student finance

- 6.2.3 consulting on the idea of moving certain qualifications from Higher Education funding to Advanced Learning Loans - the transfer of Higher National Certificates and Diplomas
- 6.2.4 seeking feedback on the effectiveness of the Advanced Learning Loans system.
- 6.3 London Councils is of the view that extending learning loans to 19 to 23 year olds carries the risk of deterring young people from education, particularly those who are less clear on their career options, or those considering re-training and will need to take a second level 2 or 3.
- 6.4 Responses to the consultation are due 21 August 2014. The department is also holding a series of workshops for providers and sector representatives and will be running learner focus groups; the London event will be held on London 17 July.

## **7 Traineeships funding in England<sup>5</sup>**

- 7.1 The DfE and BIS have launched a joint consultation for Traineeships Funding Reform.
- 7.2 Currently the funding comes through two separate Agencies depending on the age of the trainee. The government hopes that by defining the learning and outcomes of Traineeship programmes much more clearly, a greater and more consistent focus on achievement and outcomes can be generated
- 7.3 The government is seeking views on alternative funding models with payments spread on programme and on outcome in different ways. It is their intention to fund Traineeships as a single programme that rewards providers that are focused on achieving positive outcomes for young people.
- 7.4 As part of the consultation, the government states its intention to extend English and mathematics funding conditionality for trainees without a level 2 up to the age of 24 from 2015/16 as well as providing the option of a Traineeship for a 19 to 24 year old even if they already have a level 2.
- 7.5 London Councils welcomes the general principle of the reform to increase the flexibility and use of Traineeships. A move towards greater consistency in funding for 16 to 24 Traineeships through standard funding rate per Traineeship is likely to deliver simplicity but could act as a disincentive for those offering Traineeships to 16 to 18 year olds, particularly if payment is based on outcomes such as progression onto Apprenticeships and other employment.
- 7.6 The closing date for consultation responses is 14 August 2014.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.cfbt.com/en-GB/Research/Research-library/2014/r-london-schools-2014>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/321286/Consultation\\_Document.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/321286/Consultation_Document.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/326071/2016\\_L3\\_16-19\\_Tech\\_Level\\_list.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/326071/2016_L3_16-19_Tech_Level_list.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/321921/bis-14-861-future-development-of-loans-in-further-education-consultation-v2.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/321921/bis-14-861-future-development-of-loans-in-further-education-consultation-v2.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/321498/bis-14-856-traineeships-funding-in-england-funding-reform-technical-consultation.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/321498/bis-14-856-traineeships-funding-in-england-funding-reform-technical-consultation.pdf)