



House of Commons
Education Committee

Is the Catch-up Programme fit for purpose?

Fourth Report of Session 2021–22

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Fourth Report of Session 2021–22

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to the report*

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The Education Committee

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Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk of the Education Committee, House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 2370; the Committee's email address is educom@parliament.uk.

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Summary

Unprecedented school closures and national lockdowns over the last two years have had a devastating impact on our children and young people, many of whom are now facing an epidemic of educational inequality, a worsening mental health crisis, increased safeguarding risks and an adverse effect on their long-term life chances. The Committee notes that schools did remain open for children of key workers and vulnerable children (although many did not attend) and we would like to extend our gratitude to the teachers and support staff who did everything possible to keep children learning. One 2020 study found that children locked down at home in the UK spent an average of only 2.5 hours each day doing schoolwork, and one fifth of pupils did no schoolwork at home, or less than one hour a day. School closures have been nothing short of a national disaster for children and young people. Equally alarmingly, even though schools have now re-opened, absence remains high. As of 10 February, 182,000 pupils were absent for Covid-related reasons.

The Government has made some welcome efforts to tackle these issues and help children catch up. The Department's catch-up efforts have included a series of funding announcements for catch-up premiums and tuition programmes, totalling nearly £5 billion. However, current plans do not go far enough. The Department's own 2020/21 annual account rated it a "critical/very likely" risk that the Department's measures to address lost learning and the "implementation of education recovery, digital strategy, and remote education, at school/college level may be insufficient to adequately respond to the lost learning".

The Government must re-focus its catch-up efforts if it wants to ensure pupils recover from the effects of the pandemic.

The impact of the pandemic on children and young people

While there is some uncertainty over the exact extent of learning loss, it is clear that school closures have had a disastrous impact on children's academic progress, with disadvantaged children and those living in disadvantage areas the worse hit.

- By the summer term 2021, primary pupils had lost around 0.9 months in reading and 2.2 months in mathematics. Secondary-aged pupils were around 1.2 months behind in reading
- By the summer term 2021, the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their more affluent peers in reading was around "0.4 months for primary aged pupils and around 1.6 months for secondary pupils"

However, the Education Policy Institute (EPI) told us that in our most challenging communities, disadvantaged pupils could be "five, six, seven—in the worst-case scenarios eight—months behind in some of their learning".

We are also concerned about the regional variations in learning loss. Pupils in the North-East and Yorkshire and the Humber experienced the greatest learning loss in the first half of the autumn term 2020/21 (around 2.4 months and 2.3 months respectively in

primary, and around 1.6 and 2.5 months respectively in secondary). The same areas also experienced the greatest loss in mathematics (around 5.1 and 5.7 months respectively). This was more than double the loss experienced in the South West and London.

The National Tutoring Programme itself—the Government’s flagship Catch-up programme—also appears to be failing the most disadvantaged. By March 2021 the NTP had reached 100% of its target numbers of schools in the south-west of England and 96.1% in the south-east, but just 58.8% in the north-east, 58.9% in Yorkshire and the Humber and 59.3% in the north-west.

We do not yet know whether this regional inequality has improved or declined further during the 2021/22 academic year. Neither Randstad (the NTP’s current provider) or the Department have been able to tell us if targets for delivering tuition to disadvantaged children are being met. What we do know is that as of 12 December 2021 just 52,000 courses had been started by pupils through the tuition partners pillar—10% of Randstad’s target for this year. Witnesses who gave evidence also told us that the programme was a “bureaucratic nightmare” and that Randstad’s online tuition hub was “dysfunctional”.

We have also heard that Children and young people are now facing what amounts to a mental health crisis, exacerbated by the pandemic, with around one in six 6-to-16-year-olds now having a probable mental health disorder. Witnesses told us that one of the biggest issues facing schools is children accessing social media. Research has found that heavy social media use is associated with worse mental health outcomes, such as low self-esteem, and Barnardo’s have reported that 78% of practitioners said that they had worked with children aged 11–15 who had accessed unsuitable or harmful content.

What should be done?

End the spaghetti junction of funding

While the Department’s series of funding announcements and catch-up premiums, which have amounted to nearly £5 billion, are welcome, we believe that these current efforts amount to a ‘spaghetti junction of funding’, which has at times been challenging for schools to navigate or use to their best advantage. Future investment in education recovery must be directed to schools, who know their pupils and their needs the best. Any future catch-up initiatives should direct funding to schools using existing mechanisms for identifying disadvantage, such as pupil premium eligibility and the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index, to ensure schools in the most disadvantaged regions receive more.

Hold the National Tutoring Programme to account

The NTP is missing its overall target to deliver tuition to 2 million children. When Randstad appeared before us, they were unable to provide us with figures setting out who was accessing the NTP and what take up was like in different parts of the country. The lack of transparency regarding the availability of this data is a huge concern. We recommend that the Department should publish half termly information about how many children are accessing the programme, including information on pupil characteristics and regional breakdowns. If the NTP is not meeting its targets, the Department should terminate its contract with Randstad.

Give children more time in school to boost their wellbeing

We heard about the enormous benefits extra-curricular enrichment activities—such as sports, music and drama—can provide to boost academic attainment and improve young people’s mental health and wellbeing. A study commissioned by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport found that underachieving young people who took part in extra-curricular sporting activities improved their numeracy by 29% above those who did not participate in sport. The Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) has also highlighted an evaluation of 1,500 schools which extended their days, 97% of which offered activities such as sport, music, arts and study support as part of this. 71% of these schools reported that this helped them engage with disadvantage families and 69% of schools found it had at least some influence in raising attainment. The CSJ has called for all secondary pupils to do “at least 5 hours of extra-curricular enrichment every school week”.

Ensuring all pupils have access to extra-curricular activities and more time in school could be beneficial for pupils. The Department must introduce a pilot of optional extra-curricular activities for children to help improve academic attainment and wellbeing. The pilot should be trialled in areas of disadvantage across the country. If this pilot proves effective, the Department should include the necessary funding to support a wider provision in the next spending review.

Mental health lead in every school

Even before the pandemic, the mental health situation facing our young people was alarming. In 2019–20 the number of children being referred for mental health help rose to 538,564, an increase of 35% from 2018–19 and up nearly 60% from 2017–18. Analysis by the Office of the former Children’s Commissioner found that despite this 35% increase in referrals, the number of children accessing treatment increased by just 4%.

With around one in six 6-to-16-year-olds now having a probable mental health disorder, we need the Government to move faster on its commitment to make sure all schools have a senior mental health lead and access to mental support teams. We also heard about the importance of developing mental health resilience in children through “micro” tools in lessons, such as a “no hands-up policy” when answering questions in the classroom.

We recommend that all children should undergo a mental health and wellbeing assessment to understand the scale of the problem, and schools may wish to direct some of the recovery funding to address mental health difficulties. Given the resource constraints facing mental health services even before the pandemic, we recognise that this would be challenging—and that schools know their pupils best. We know that Ofsted inspectors will be looking at how subject leaders and teachers have identified and responded to pupils’ learning gaps as a result of the pandemic. Ofsted should make it clear in their guidance that they will also look for evidence that schools have sought to identify and respond to the mental health and wellbeing needs of their students.

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1 The pandemic and learning loss

School closures

1. During the Covid-19 pandemic, schools in England have faced unprecedented closures and disruption.

- March 2020: Schools in England were closed to most children, remaining open for children of critical workers and vulnerable children.¹
- Summer term 2020: Some pupils in priority year groups were encouraged to return to in-person schooling.
- August/September 2020: Most pupils returned to in-person schooling.
- January 2021: Primary and secondary schools and colleges closed to most pupils, with vulnerable children and children of critical workers able to attend. Special schools and alternative provision remained open.
- March 2021: Pupils began returning to schools.²

2. The National Audit Office (NAO)'s report, *Support for children's education during the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic*, found that the "Department had no pre-existing plan for managing mass disruption to schooling on the scale caused by COVID-19", and that in the early stages of the pandemic the Department "set no requirements for in-school and remote learning".³ It was wrong that the Department did not make it immediately clear to schools that they had a responsibility to provide remote learning. The NAO notes that it was only in October 2020 that the Department "placed a legal duty on schools [to provide remote learning], which came into force on 22 October".⁴ This was seven months after the first school closures. It should have happened much sooner.

3. While pupils were not attending school there were concerns about variability in learning experiences and a potential rise in "hidden harms".⁵ In early 2020, Ofcom's Technology Tracker estimated that "between 1.14 million and 1.78 million children under the age of 18 lived in households without access to a laptop, desktop or tablet in the UK", and that between 227,000 and 559,000 children lived in homes with no access to the internet.⁶ In June 2020 the University College London Institute of Education found that "children locked down at home in the UK spent an average of only 2.5 hours each day doing schoolwork", and that "one fifth of pupils ... did no schoolwork at home, or less than one hour a day".⁷

1 For more information on the children and young people who would be considered vulnerable, and the professions which qualify parents as critical workers, please see: Department for Education, [Guidance: Children of critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educational settings](#), 2 January 2022

2 House of Commons Library, [Coronavirus and schools \(Number 08915\)](#), 13 January 2022, pp9–10

3 National Audit Office, [Support for children's education during the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic](#), 17 March 2021, p7

4 Ibid., p7

5 Ibid., p9

6 House of Commons Library, [Coronavirus and schools \(Number 08915\)](#), 13 January 2022, p22

7 UCL Institute of Education, [Schoolwork in lockdown: new evidence on the epidemic of educational poverty](#), 15 June 2020, p2

4. In September 2020, the former Children's Commissioner found that before the pandemic, there were "2.2 million children in England living in households affected by any of the so-called 'toxic trio' of family issues: domestic abuse, parental drug and/or alcohol dependency, and severe parental mental health issues".⁸ Another report from the former Children's Commissioner, published in January 2021, revealed that 1 in 6 children aged 5 to 19 had a probable mental health condition in 2020 (up from 1 in 9 in 2017).⁹ We look at the mental health impact of schools closures in Chapter 5.

5. In February 2021, the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) estimated that the long-term economic consequences of school closures could lead to a possible loss of between £90 billion and £350 billion of "lifetime earnings across the 8.7 million school children in the UK".¹⁰

6. Disruption to classroom learning is ongoing. As of 10 February 2022, Covid-19-related pupil absence in state-funded schools was 2.2% (down from 3.9% on 3 February) – with the Department **estimating that 182,00 pupils were absent from school for this reason**. On-site attendance in state-funded schools was 90.3% on 10 February, up from 89.1% on 3 February, and the Department estimated that 7.5% of teachers and school leaders were absent from open schools on 10 February, down from 9.1% on 3 February.¹¹

The extent of the learning loss

7. Despite efforts to provide remote education, through the provision of laptops and initiatives such as the Oak National Academy,¹² many children missed out on hours of schooling. Despite the total number of laptops and tablets (1.35 million) and routers (77,000) provided by September 2021, the Department was initially slow to react and had only delivered 212,900 laptops and tablets, and 49,700 routers, by 13 July 2020.¹³ The NAO notes that the Department did not provide laptops for all those who lacked them, choosing instead to provide equipment for all children with a social worker and care leavers, and disadvantaged pupils in year 10 only.¹⁴

Primary aged children

8. In January 2022 the Department published a report on school recovery strategies highlighting some of the challenges facing schools as children returned in the autumn term of 2020. In this research, two-fifths of primary and secondary schools reported that pupils' mental health and wellbeing was a main challenge. In primary schools, a common challenge was parental engagement and variation in academic progress between "schools, year groups, individual pupils and subjects".¹⁵

8 Children's Commissioner, [Childhood in the time of Covid](#), September 2020, p2

9 Children's Commissioner, [The state of children's mental health services 2019/20](#), 28 January 2021

10 Institute for Fiscal Studies, [The crisis in lost learning calls for a massive national policy response](#), 1 February 2021

11 Department for Education, [Attendance in education and early years settings during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#), 22 February 2022

12 National Audit Office, [Support for children's education during the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic](#), 17 March 2021, pp9–10

13 [PQ47004](#) (20 September 2021)

14 National Audit Office, [Support for children's education during the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic](#), 17 March 2021, p30

15 Department for Education, [School recovery strategies: Year 1 findings](#), January 2022, pp12–13

9. Research by the Education Policy Institute (EPI) and Renaissance Learning for the Department evaluated pupils' academic progress over the pandemic. Their findings were that by the summer term 2020/21, primary-aged pupils had lost 0.9 months learning in reading and 2.2 months in mathematics.¹⁶

10. Ofsted also reported in November 2020 that some of the hardest hit children impacted by school closures had even "forgotten how to eat with a knife and fork, or lost their early progress in numbers and words".¹⁷ Ofsted also found that many pupils returning to school after the first lockdown had not only lost learning but in some instances actually "regressed" in their progress.¹⁸ Primary school leaders told Ofsted that many pupils had fallen behind in mathematics.¹⁹

Secondary-aged pupils

11. The EPI and Renaissance Learning also evaluated learning loss for secondary-aged pupils, although this analysis was more limited due to sample sizes. By the summer term 2020/21, secondary-aged pupils had experienced a learning loss of around 1.2 months in reading.²⁰

Disadvantaged children

12. By the summer term, the gap in learning loss between disadvantaged pupils and their peers in reading was "around 0.4 months for primary aged pupils and around 1.6 months for secondary aged pupils". The gap in mathematics for primary pupils was half a month.²¹

13. The NAO has also highlighted research from the Education Endowment Foundation which estimates that the progress made since 2011 in narrowing the attainment gap had likely been reversed, with the gap widening between disadvantaged children and their peers by between 11 and 75 percent as a result of school closures in the 2019/20 academic year.²²

Regional variation

14. In reading, pupils in the North-East and Yorkshire and the Humber experienced the greatest learning loss in the first half of the autumn term 2020/21 (around 2.4 and 2.3 months respectively in primary, and around 1.6 and 2.5 months respectively in secondary).²³ Additionally, the North-East and Yorkshire and the Humber experienced the greatest learning loss (around 5.1 and 5.7 months respectively). This was more than "double the loss experienced in the South West and London".²⁴

16 Department for Education, [Understanding Progress in the 2020/21 Academic Year](#), October 2021, p9

17 HMCI Ofsted, [Ofsted: Children hardest hit by Covid-19 pandemic are regressing in basic skills and learning](#), 10 November 2020

18 HMCI Ofsted, [COVID-19 Series: briefing on schools, October 2020](#), 10 November 2020, p10

19 Ibid., p10

20 [Understanding Progress in the 2020/21 Academic Year](#), p10

21 Ibid., p11

22 National Audit Office, [Initial learning from the government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic](#), 19 MAY 2021

23 [Understanding Progress in the 2020/21 Academic Year](#), p12

24 [Understanding Progress in the 2020/21 Academic Year](#), p12

15. David Laws, Executive Chairman of the EPI, told us in December 2021 that in our most challenging communities disadvantaged youngsters could be “five, six, seven—in the worst-case scenarios eight—months behind in some of their learning. That is what is coming across from some of our regional data”.²⁵ David Laws also said:

What we are not able to do due to sample size is robustly measure whether there is a town versus city versus rural aspect to this. What we see is that the north and the Midlands are doing worse than the south and disadvantaged pupils are doing worse than non-disadvantaged pupils, but very notably all pupils in more disadvantaged areas have a high likelihood of suffering severe learning loss. It is not only poor children; it is non-poor children in disadvantaged areas.²⁶

Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) pupils

16. The Race Equality Foundation noted in June 2021 that schools with higher levels of disadvantaged students have experienced higher levels of learning loss than other schools, particularly in secondary schools, and that a higher proportion of ethnic minority students are eligible for Free School Meals (a key measure of disadvantage), except Indian and Chinese groups.²⁷ The Foundation concluded that it “can be inferred that BAME pupils may represent a substantial number of those students in the COVID learning gap”.²⁸ An National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) report from 2020 also showed that schools with a high proportion of BAME students reported a greater need for intensive catch-up.²⁹

Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

17. By the summer term 2021, secondary-aged pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) experienced on average a learning loss of 3.1 months compared with around 1.5 months for their peers in reading. Primary-aged pupils with SEND experienced on average around 2.1 months learning loss compared with approximately 2.9 months for their peers in mathematics.³⁰ Ofsted also reported in November 2020 that leaders in many schools were particularly concerned about forgotten and lost learning for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), especially in literacy. School leaders said that some pupils with SEND had “struggled” and have “fallen further” behind than those without SEND.³¹

18. **There is no doubt that school closures have had a devastating effect on children’s education. One 2020 study found that children locked down at home in the UK spent an average of only 2.5 hours each day doing schoolwork, and one fifth of pupils did no schoolwork at home, or less than one hour a day. Primary-aged pupils had lost 0.9 months learning in reading and 2.2 months in mathematics by the summer of 2020/21, and secondary-aged pupils had experienced a learning loss of around 1.2 months in**

25 [Q46](#)

26 [Q6](#)

27 Race Equality Foundation, [Education Briefing Paper](#), June 2021, p5

28 Race Equality Foundation, [Education Briefing Paper](#), June 2021, p5

29 National Foundation for Educational Research, [The challenges facing schools and pupils in September 2020](#), p5

30 [Understanding Progress in the 2020/21 Academic Year](#), pp28–30

31 *Ibid.*, p10

reading. School closures have also impacted on children's mental health, with 1 in 6 children having a probable mental health condition in 2020, up from 1 in 9 in 2017. We believe that school closures have been nothing short of a national disaster for children.

19. *The Department must continue to establish the full effect of the pandemic on children and young people. This must consider the impacts felt by children from disadvantaged backgrounds and on the regional disparities of support offered. This must not be confined to solely academic factors but should also focus on understanding how children and young people's mental health and wellbeing have been affected, as this is critical to academic attainment. All data should seek to identify where pupils with particular characteristics (including ethnicity, free school meals eligibility, or those with special educational needs) have been differentially impacted. The Department should utilise real-time data and the results of school and local authority assessments of pupils' lost learning to better target catch-up and mental health support immediately, so education recovery is not 'on hold' or delayed while the latest data is being collated. Funding must be committed by the Government to tackle the digital divide and boost broadband infrastructure to ensure that all children have the support they need to catch up on lost learning. Where data already exists, significant funding must be committed to targeted catch-up interventions to tackle the growing educational inequalities that are leaving some children with worsening academic outcomes and life chances.*

2 A spaghetti junction of funding

What is the Government's Catch-up programme?

20. Since June 2020 the Government have announced several funding streams with the aim of supporting educational catch-up, totalling around £5 billion.³²

Table 1: Catch-up funding in England

Catch-up funding in England As of 14 February 2022	
Use of funding	Amount of funding
June 2020	£1.0 billion
A universal catch-up premium, allocated on a per-pupil basis	£650 million
The National Tutoring Programme (NTP), including:	£350 million
A schools' programme for 5–16 year olds	
A ring-fenced 16–19 tuition fund	
An oral language intervention programme for reception-aged children	
February 2021	£0.7 billion
A one-off Recovery Premium, building on the pupil premium.	£302 million
Expanding the NTP for children aged 5–16	£83 million
Extending the 16–19 tuition fund	£102 million
Supporting language development in the early years	£18 million
Delivering face-to-face summer schools in secondary schools	£200 million
June 2021	£1.4 billion
Expanding the NTP and the 16–19 Tuition Fund	£1 billion
Professional development for early years practitioners	£153 million
Also used to give some year 13 students the chance to repeat their final year	
Expanding teacher training and development	£253 million
Also used to give some year 13 students the chance to repeat their final year	
October 2021	£1.8 billion
A Recovery Premium covering the next two academic years, building on the Recovery Premium announced in February 2021	£1 billion
All 16–19 year old students to benefit from an additional 40 hours of education across the academic year	£800 million
Total	£4.9 billion

Source: Department for Education, [Catch-up premium](#), 27 April 2021; Department for Education, [New education recovery package for children and young people](#), 24 February 2021; Department for Education, [Huge expansion of tutoring in next step of education recovery](#), 2 June 2021; HM Treasury, [Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021: A stronger economy for the British people](#), 27 October 2021, p52; Department for Education, [All schools and colleges to receive extra funding for catch up](#), 27 October 2021

32 The Department has invested in a number of funding streams relating to Covid-19 support for schools aside from the above which explicitly target the catch-up effort. This includes funding for digital devices and 4G routers, £40 million for local authorities to support school transport in the autumn 2020 term, and a Covid-19 workforce fund to cover the second half of the autumn 2020 term. See *Coronavirus and schools*, [Number 08915](#), House of Commons Library, 13 January 2022, p.17

Has the Government invested enough in its Catch-up Programme?

21. The amounts which stakeholders have said is required for education recovery has varied but consideration must be given to ensure it is sufficient, and is wisely spent. Sir Kevan Collins, the Government's former Education Recovery Commissioner, told us in March 2021 that the "proposals that came forward [...] was not enough to deliver the kind of recovery we need".³³ Following the Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021, the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) said that while "there is at least some progress in the right direction", the "additional funding for education recovery following the Covid pandemic is nowhere near what is needed".³⁴ In August 2021 the ASCL, along with seven organisations including the Association of Colleges and the United Learning Trust, outlined a proposal for an additional £5.8 billion recovery package over three years as "the minimum required".³⁵

22. The EPI also responded to the Autumn Budget and Spending Review, finding that "government funding to support education recovery from the pandemic falls short of the level required to address pupil learning losses".³⁶ The EPI have set out a proposal for a recovery plan, which found that "£10–15 billion would represent a useful benchmark [...] for the required scale of an education recovery package".³⁷

23. The Department's own 2020/21 Annual Report included a list of significant risks. One of the critical/very likely risks was that the Department's measures to address lost learning and the "implementation of education recovery, digital strategy, and remote education, at school/college level may be insufficient to adequately respond to the lost learning".³⁸

24. Stakeholders have expressed concerns over the sufficiency of the Government's investment in the Catch-up Programme. The Department's own annual report from 2020/21 rated the risk of its measures to address lost learning being insufficient as "critical/very likely". The sector needs assurance of ongoing support to address the challenges of the pandemic and the long-term impact on children and young people. The education recovery programme is needed for the long-term, not for just two or three years.

A spaghetti junction of funding

25. We welcome the investment which has been announced by the Department, but we are concerned about the spaghetti junction approach to funding that has been adopted. Headteachers and school leaders have told us that "one of the complications around the catch-up is the complication around getting that funding. It would be easier for it to go

33 Education Recovery, HC 452, Q11

34 Association of School and College Leaders, [ASCL comment on Budget announcement](#), 27 October 2021

35 Association of School and College Leaders, [A proposal for education recovery](#), 31 August 2021

36 Education Policy Institute, [EPI response to Spending Review](#), 27 October 2021

37 Education Policy Institute, [Education recovery and resilience in England](#), 14 May 2021, p15

38 Department for Education, [Consolidated annual report and accounts](#), 16 December 2021, p81

directly to schools”,³⁹ and that schools “know our children best”.⁴⁰ Sir Kevan Collins told us in June 2021 that: he would “wrap a whole load of funding pots and channel them through a single kind of pupil premium mechanism”.⁴¹

26. David Laws, Chair of the EPI, told us that catch-up funding should not only target pupils who are eligible for free school meals (FSM), but should also have a regional and local element:

we must not miss the fact that we not only need to target the pupil premium and free school meal children; there needs to be a regional and local element to the targeting to recognise that those young people who are not categorised as poor and are not in receipt of the pupil premium but who are in areas deeply impacted by Covid cannot afford to miss out, otherwise we could be targeting it quite badly.⁴²

The EPI found that a “combination of individual and area-based recovery funding may reach the pupils that need it most”.⁴³ Pupils who are FSM-eligible or living in areas of high deprivation would attract the most funding, with the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) informing how area-based catch-up funding should be allocated.⁴⁴

27. **We welcome the funding the Government has already committed to help pupils catch up, but we believe the existing funding arrangements for catch-up amount to a spaghetti junction of funding, piling more work on teachers and support staff who have needed to navigate multiple funding processes to access different streams of funding**

28. *Teachers and school staff know their pupils and know what interventions are likely to bring the most benefit. The Catch-up Programme to date has been fragmented, and a complex bureaucratic system for applications may have hampered some schools’ ability to access some elements of the Government’s support as effectively as possible. The funding schemes should be simplified and merged into one pot for schools to access and spend where the recovery need is greatest. and any future catch-up initiatives should direct funding to schools using existing mechanisms for identifying disadvantage such as pupil premium eligibility and the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI), to ensure schools in the most disadvantaged regions receive more. Schools should also be held accountable for how they spend their catch-up funding. When carrying out inspections, Ofsted should be looking for evidence that catch-up activity has been effective. When inspecting school leadership and management, Ofsted should check that effective governance and scrutiny of resource allocation extends to catch-up funding.*

39 [Q94](#), Orienne Langley-Sadler

40 [Q103](#), Jill Thompson

41 Education Committee, [Education recovery](#), Q45, Sir Kevan Collins

42 [Q11](#), David Laws

43 Education Policy Institute, [Education recovery and resilience in England: Phase two report](#), 21 October 2021, pp25–27

44 The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) “measures the proportion of all children aged 0 to 15 living in income deprived families” and is a “subset of the Income Deprivation Domain which measures the proportion of the population in an area experiencing deprivation relating to low income”. See: Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, [Open Data: i. Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index \(IDACI\)](#), accessed 28 May 2021

3 Disadvantaged pupils and regional variations in learning loss

A widening attainment gap

29. According to the Department, “between 2011 and 2019, the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils narrowed by 13% at age 11 and 9% at age 16,⁴⁵ although the EPI highlight that since 2017 progress on closing this further has “stalled”.⁴⁶ The impact of school closures and the pandemic means that much of the progress has now been reversed.

30. Research commissioned by the Department from January 2021 found that schools with high levels of disadvantage experienced higher levels of loss than other schools, particularly in secondary “(2.2 months in schools with high free school meal eligibility and 1.5 months in schools with low free school meal eligibility)”.⁴⁷ The EPI also concluded in October 2021 that pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds have “been amongst the biggest losers from the pandemic [...] disadvantaged pupils have fallen behind even further and are catching up at a slower rate to their peers”.⁴⁸ As noted in Chapter 1, the EEF estimated the attainment gap widened by between 11 and 75 percent as a result of school closures in the 2019/20 academic year.⁴⁹

Regional variations in learning loss and catch-up

31. We are also concerned at the wide variations of learning loss at a regional level. By the second half of the autumn 2020 term, average learning loss for maths for primary pupils ranged from:

- 0.5 months in the South West;
- 0.9 months in London;
- 4 months in the North East;
- 5.3 months in Yorkshire and the Humber.⁵⁰

In February 2022 the EPI published a report on Covid-19 and the disadvantage gap in 2020, which found a “marked geographic variation in the disadvantage gap”.⁵¹ The five local authorities with the largest grade gaps in 2020 were: Knowsley (poorer students are 1.76 GCSE grades behind); Blackpool (1.69); Salford (1.66); Derby (1.65) and Sheffield (1.61). By

45 [PQ 22179](#)

46 EPI, [Covid-19 and the Disadvantage Gap in England in 2020](#), February 2022, p17

47 Department for Education, [Understanding progress in the 2020/21 academic year: Interim findings, January 2021](#), p36

48 Education Policy Institute, [Education recovery and resilience in England: Phase two report](#), 21 October 2021, pp7–8

49 National Audit Office, [Initial learning from the government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic](#), 19 May 2021, p28

50 Education Policy Institute, [Education recovery and resilience in England: Phase two report](#), 21 October 2021, p15

51 EPI, [Covid-19 and the Disadvantage Gap in England in 2020](#), February 2022, p10

contrast, the smallest grade gaps were Kensington and Chelsea (0.10); Westminster (0.29); Newham (0.33); Tower Hamlets (0.34); and Barnet (0.36). The EPI note that “only three of the local authorities with the smallest disadvantage gaps in 2020 are outside the capital”.⁵²

32. Figures published in March 2021 for the National Tutoring Programme - the Department’s flagship programme aimed at helping children catch-up - show that this had reached 100% of its target numbers of schools in the south-west of England and 96.1% in the south-east, but just 58.8% in the north-east, 58.9% in Yorkshire and the Humber and 59.3% in the north-west.⁵³ The EPI, reporting in October 2021, commented on this “marked disparity in take-up of the NTP” between the North and South, noting that this was “especially concerning given the higher rates of disadvantage and learning loss in the North”.⁵⁴ In an evidence session with the Committee on 7 December, the EEF’s Becky Francis told the Committee that in the first year of the programme (which was delivered by the EEF):

[...] our experience was that some regional areas were much more familiar with tutoring than others. With some areas, you were really building on what was already in place and existing practice. In other areas, you were going from a standing start and that was more representative of the north. Then, of course, that was compounded by inequalities with capacity from the prevalence of the pandemic in different areas. Some regions were much more affected than others.⁵⁵

33. **The impact of school closures and the pandemic has resulted in a reversal of the progress made in narrowing the attainment gap, with children in the North disproportionately affected. It is also alarming that children and young people in the North, particularly the North-East and Yorkshire and the Humber, have suffered greater learning loss during the last two years compared to many in the South. Nor is it acceptable that such striking variations exist between young people in the North who were able to take up the support offered by the National Tutoring Programme in its first year (59% of schools compared with upwards of 96% schools in the South). We discuss the performance of the NTP and its current provider Randstad in the next Chapter.**

Persistent absence

34. Children need to be in school if they are to catch up with lost learning. We therefore remain deeply concerned about the number of pupils who are still experiencing high levels of absence from school. Persistent absence (‘ghost children’) is when a pupil enrolment’s overall absence equates to 10% or more of their possible sessions.⁵⁶ In December 2021, the Department announced that persistent absence increased to 16.3% in secondary schools in autumn 2020, compared with 15.0% in 2019, not including non-attendance in Covid-19 circumstances.⁵⁷ This equates to 501,642 persistently absent pupils of over 3 million secondary-aged pupils.⁵⁸

52 Ibid., p10

53 Schools Week, [Data reveals scale of National Tutoring Programme’s northern challenge](#), 5 March 2021

54 Ibid., p40

55 [Q7](#)

56 Department for Education, [A guide to absence statistics](#), March 2019, p7

57 Department for Education, [Education Secretary launches new attendance alliance](#), 9 December 2021

58 Office for National Statistics, [Pupil absence in schools in England: autumn and spring terms](#), October 2021

35. In November 2021, *Schools Week* reported that the Department had deployed five Government attendance advisers across local authorities and multi-academy trusts (MATs) to reduce pupil absences.⁵⁹ In December 2021, the Education Secretary launched an attendance alliance to reduce absence, which includes Schools Minister Robin Walker, Ofsted Chief Inspector Amanda Spielman, and the Children's Commissioner Dame Rachel de Souza.⁶⁰

36. The CSJ's report, *Kids can't catch up if they don't show up*, found that 93,514 pupils were "severely absent" in Autumn 2020.⁶¹ In January 2022, another CSJ report found that in addition to the 93,514 "severely absent" pupils in mainstream and special schools in autumn 2020, there were an additional 6,000 severely absent pupils in alternative provision.⁶² The CSJ note that schools with the most disadvantaged intake are "10 times as likely to have a class-worth of severely absent pupils" and that over 13,000 pupils are missing in critical exam years.⁶³ Their report recommends that the Government "reallocate the forecasted underspend from the National Tutoring Programme [...] into school attendance practitioners who can address the underlying causes of school absence", spending around £80 million on appointing 2,000 school attendance advisers.⁶⁴

37. On 25 January the Department launched a consultation on proposals requiring schools to have an attendance policy and the proposal to create a more consistent national framework for the use of attendance legal intervention.⁶⁵ The Children's Commissioner has launched an inquiry on pupil absence, which will audit a "cross-section of ten local authorities to find best practice—to find out the drivers for both high attendance and persistent absence".⁶⁶

38. Rates of persistent absence remain concerning, and the number of 'ghost children' who are experiencing severe levels of absence from school remains far too high. The Government needs to do much more to get these children back in school, which is the best place to ensure they will be safe and reach their potential. The Department should also be publishing more regular, up-to-date data, on the number of persistently absent children, including data on children with special educational needs and disabilities.

39. *The Department must take steps to address the issue of persistent absence and ensure no more children become 'ghost children'. We welcome the Department's formation of an 'attendance alliance' and its consultation on reducing avoidable absence in schools, however these children need tangible action now. The Department must urgently set out proactive measures, working with schools and local authorities, to get these pupils back into school. The Government should also implement, as a matter of urgency, a national register of children not in school, as recommended in our previous report Strengthening Home Education.*

59 Schools Week, [DfE appoints just 5 attendance advisers \(after years of council cuts\)](#), 26 November 2021

60 Department for Education, [Education Secretary launches new attendance alliance](#), 9 December 2021

61 Centre for Social Justice, [Kids can't catch up if they don't show up: Driving school attendance through the National Tutoring Programme](#), 28 June 2021

62 Centre for Social Justice, [Lost but not forgotten: the reality of severe absence in schools post-lockdown](#), January 2022, p3

63 Ibid., p2, p11

64 Ibid., p19

65 Department for Education, [School attendance: Improving consistency of support](#), 25 January 2022

66 Children's Commissioner, [Dame Rachel de Souza DBE outlines why school attendance is not just vital for helping children recover from the pandemic, it's what they said they wanted in The Big Ask survey](#), 13 December 2021

4 The National Tutoring Programme and Randstad

Regaining lost learning

40. Research by the EPI and Renaissance Learning for the Department suggests that the 2020/21 academic year might “be characterised as involving some catch-up, further losses, and further catch-up”.⁶⁷

Primary-aged children

41. The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) conducted research in 2020/21 on the impact of school closures on pupil outcomes in Key Stage 1 (KS1), funded by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF).⁶⁸ The research found that although by summer 2021 “children had not yet recovered from the learning they had missed during 2020 and 2021” there had been some learning recovery:

- Children in Year 1 were 3 months behind expected levels in reading, but there was some recovery in maths with children only 1 month behind.
- Children in Year 2 remained 2 months behind in reading by the end of the summer term but had recovered to above expected standards in maths.
- There remained a “substantial gap in attainment between disadvantaged children and their peers”, equivalent to “around seven months’ progress in the spring of 2021”. This gap increased or remained stable for children in Year 2 and closed slightly for children in Year 1 between the spring and summer terms of 2021.

42. Separate research by the EPI and Renaissance Learning for the Department found that in the summer term of 2021, “there was notable catch-up for primary-aged pupils in reading”, with the learning loss improving by around 1.3 months on average, and by around 1.2 months in mathematics.⁶⁹

Secondary aged pupils

43. The EPI and Renaissance Learning’s research found that by summer term 2021, “secondary aged pupils had caught up only slightly, resulting in an estimate of learning loss by summer term of around 1.2 months”.⁷⁰

67 Department for Education, [Understanding progress in the 2020/21 academic year: Findings from the summer term and summary of all previous findings](#), October 2021, p9

68 Education Endowment Foundation, [Impact of Covid-19 school closures and subsequent support strategies on attainment and socioemotional wellbeing in Key Stage 1](#), December 2021

69 Department for Education, [Understanding progress in the 2020/21 academic year: Findings from the summer term and summary of all previous findings](#), October 2021, p9

70 Department for Education, [Understanding progress in the 2020/21 academic year: Findings from the summer term and summary of all previous findings](#), October 2021, p10

Uncertainty around learning loss and recovery

44. The EPI's notes that there is "lots of uncertainty" around lost learning figures and "We still know very little about lost learning amongst older pupils (particularly those in Key Stage 4)". Moreover, there is "not a comprehensive dataset that would allow targeting funding towards individuals, particular institutions or even particular local areas based on their degree of learning loss".⁷¹ The NFER also found that due to changes in free school meal eligibility in England, "it will become increasingly hard to tell whether apparent changes to the attainment gap are being driven by changes to the composition of the disadvantaged group, economic conditions or genuine attainment changes".⁷²

45. The lack of a comprehensive dataset underlines the need for the Government to adopt our earlier recommendation, calling for more data into the extent of the learning loss that pupils have experienced. All pupils will need to be assessed for lost learning, especially those in exam years. We appreciate that teachers and support staff are already doing this in classrooms up and down the country, but the Department must continue to establish the full extent of the learning loss. This data should be made publicly available so tutoring and catch-up can be better targeted.

The National Tutoring Programme

46. The National Tutoring Programme (NTP) launched in November 2020 and was run in its first year by the EEF. State-maintained primary and secondary schools could access subsidised tuition for 5- to 16-year-olds using tuition partners or academic mentors.⁷³ In its second year, schools can choose between three pillars, or routes:⁷⁴

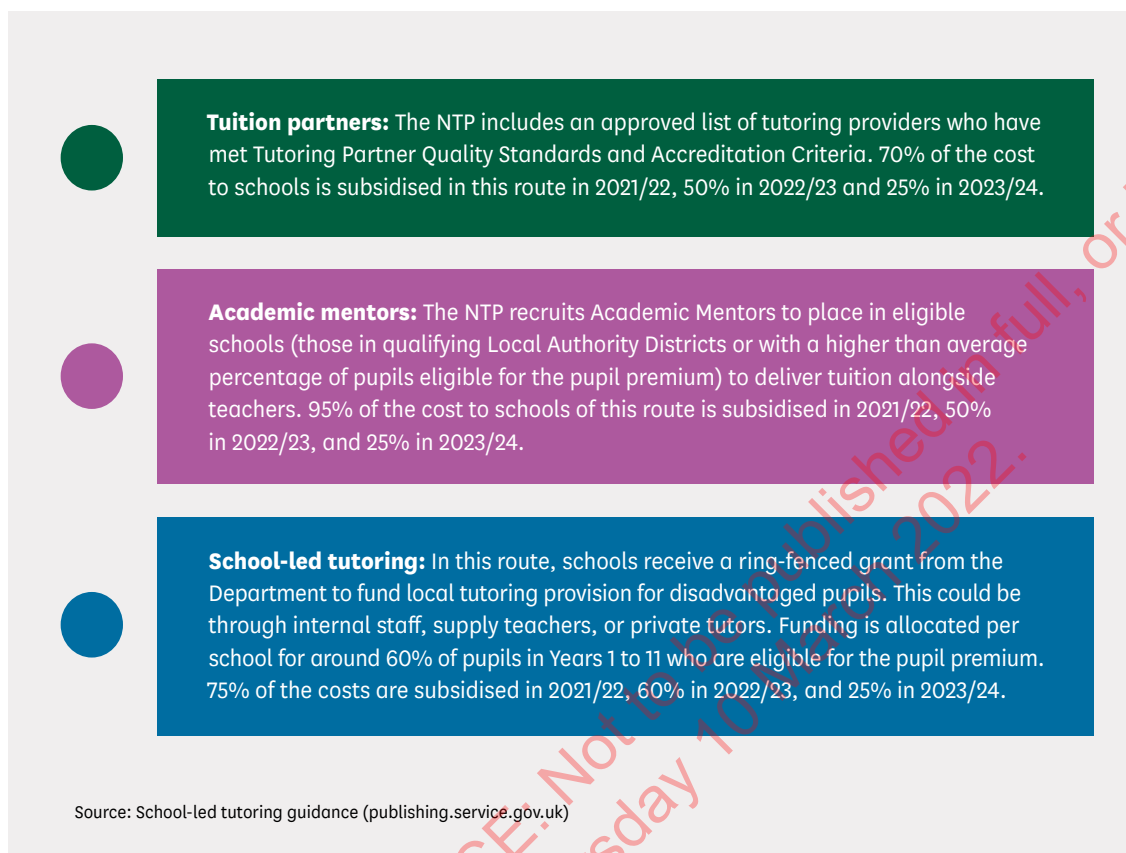
71 Education Policy Institute, [Education recovery and resilience in England: Phase two report](#), 21 October 2021, pp17–25

72 National Foundation for Educational Research, [Investigating the changing landscape of pupil disadvantage](#), 18 January 2022

73 Department for Education, [National Tutoring Programme: Policy Paper](#), 8 September 2021

74 Department for Education, [School-Led Tutoring Guidance: The National Tutoring Programme](#), November 2021, pp7–9

The three pillars of the National Tutoring Programme:



Randstad

47. Randstad have been delivering the first two pillars of the NTP since September 2021. On 11 January 2022 the Department published details of how many tutoring courses pupils have started on the NTP. The Department intends to “routinely publish data for each term shortly after the end of the term”. The total number of starts for each pillar of the NTP were:

- School-led tutoring: an estimated 230,000 starts as of 1 December 2021.
- Tuition partners: an estimated 52,000 starts as of 12 December 2021.
- Academic mentors: an estimated 20,000 starts as of 12 December 2021.⁷⁵

48. On 11 January *Schools Week* calculated that the NTP has so far reached 15% of its overall target. Currently, around 10% of the target for the tuition partners pillar of the NTP have been met (52,000 starts against a target of 524,000).⁷⁶

49. Schools and tutoring providers told us that there are issues with Randstad’s systems which make it challenging for schools to access tutoring. Nick Bent of the Tutor Trust told us that “some [tutoring providers] are refusing to use that tuition hub because it is so dysfunctional”, and there is a “lack of communication” with schools about the

75 Department for Education, [National Tutoring Programme: Ad-hoc statistics](#), January 2022, pp6–9

76 *Schools Week*, [Flagship tutor scheme ‘scandalously’ short of targets - with just 8% of mentoring provided](#), 11 Jan 2022 (access 3 February 2022)

programme.⁷⁷ Ruth Holden, Executive Headteacher at Mulberry Academy Shoreditch, told us that it was a “bureaucratic nightmare filling in everything that we had to in advance with the National Tutoring Programme”.⁷⁸ Jill Thompson, Headteacher at Kelvin Grove Primary School, added that:

What we found challenging about it, though, is the very tight guidelines about how much you could use, what you could use it for and the number of children. If we had been able to have that money straight into schools to employ somebody ourselves, we could have impacted a lot more children.⁷⁹

50. We found in the previous Chapter that there was considerable regional variation of take-up of the NTP in the academic year 2020/21, when the EEF delivered the programme. During our evidence session on 12 January, we asked Karen Guthrie, Programme Director of the NTP at Randstad, about Randstad’s performance delivering the NTP in the 2021/22 academic year. She did not agree that the statistics showing that there had been 52,000 starts against a target of 524,000 were “scandalously poor”.⁸⁰

51. During our evidence session, we asked Randstad about the number of children accessing the NTP who had SEND or who were receiving pupil premium, for the number of tutoring providers in the North compared with the South, and for a regional breakdown of those accessing the NTP. Randstad undertook to provide this information to the Committee. They also committed to providing us with regular updates of the number of pupils accessing the NTP.⁸¹ To date, we have not received any further statistics or data on the performance of the NTP. Randstad or the Department should immediately provide this data or make it publicly available. Furthermore, Schools Week reported on 2 March 2022 that Randstad have since removed the requirement of reaching 65% pupil premium children from the tutoring contracts with providers.⁸²

52. Without further data, it remains unclear whether the NTP will reach the children and young people who are most in need of it. In March 2021 the NAO found that the NTP “may not reach the most disadvantaged children”, noting the Department had not set targets for the proportion of disadvantaged children that should be using the scheme.⁸³ As noted, neither Randstad nor the Department could provide us with further statistics on who is accessing the NTP.⁸⁴ The Department’s first release of statistics about starts on the NTP did not provide any indication as to the number of disadvantaged learners accessing the programme, or regional differences in take-up.⁸⁵ We heard from the headteacher of a special school that she was “dissatisfied” with the NTP’s provision for learners with SEND. Orienne Langley-Sadler, Headteacher, Elms Bank School and College, said that there “isn’t a pool of [SEND] experts. The experts are in schools currently, and there is no pool of experts sat out there waiting for us to redirect them to gaps within our children’s learning”.⁸⁶

77 [Q4](#), Nick Bent

78 [Q94](#), Ruth Holden

79 [Q96](#), Jill Thompson

80 [Q53](#)

81 [Q54](#), [Q62](#), [Q68](#), [Q72](#), [Q79](#)

82 Schools Week, [National Tutoring Programme target for poorer pupils ditched](#), 2 March 2022

83 National Audit Office, [Support for children’s education during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic](#), 17 March 2021, p12

84 [Q1230](#), Accountability hearings, HC82 12 January 2022 - Graham Archer; [Q61](#), Karen Guthrie

85 Department for Education, [National Tutoring Programme: Ad-hoc statistics](#), January 2022

86 [Q102](#), Orienne Langley-Sadler

53. The school-led tutoring pillar of the NTP has been more popular in terms of the number of starts to date, although Nick Bent pointed out that while that pillar allows “more autonomy for schools about which tutors to use”, it lacks the “strong quality control around who is able to provide that tuition”.⁸⁷ David Laws agreed that a “kitemark” might be useful to ensure that the only providers who can access public funding (for example, through the NTP), are those who “are delivering a quality solution”.⁸⁸

54. While we have statistics on the number of starts under the programme, there is no data available on the impact it has had on pupils’ learning to date. David Laws told us that “we cannot link access to the National Tutoring Programme to individual results”.⁸⁹ Karen Guthrie said that the NFER will publish an overarching review of the impact of the programme in July, although Randstad are also doing “impact and feedback in real time” through focus groups with schools.⁹⁰ Despite this, the DfE’s own annual report, published in December 2021 for the period up to March 2021 rated it “critical/very likely” that the measures to address lost learning will be insufficient. This remains a sustained risk, with the report noting the in-year direction was “worsening”.⁹¹

55. We are also concerned about the Department’s decision to taper the subsidies which schools received for the NTP, which would mean schools themselves having to pay for more. This could “skew provision away from the most disadvantaged schools.”⁹² Nick Bent told us that the tapering off of these subsidies was a “real concern”.⁹³

56. **It is not clear that the National Tutoring Programme will deliver for the pupils that need it most. We expect full transparency about the operation of the National Tutoring Programme, including information on how many pupils are benefitting from the programme, and what the characteristics of those pupils are (for example, whether they are disadvantaged or have a special educational need or disability). It is crucially important that the Government ensures tutoring is working effectively in terms of catch-up, and that it measures and publishes statistics on the improvements in children’s attainment achieved by the tutoring programme. We expect these to be published and will continue to hold Randstad and the Department to account for this. This data is essential if we are to ensure that tutoring support is heavily targeted toward disadvantaged pupils and areas.**

57. *The Department must commit to publishing statistics on a half-termly basis on the number of starts under the National Tutoring Programme with a greater degree of granularity. This must include information on the proportion of children accessing the programme on a regional basis, and the data should be published in a way that has regard to disadvantage and special educational needs. This information should also be broken down for each tutoring provider. If the National Tutoring Programme fails to*

87 [Q18](#), Nick Bent

88 [Q26](#), David Laws

89 [Q8](#), David Laws

90 [QQ77–78](#), Karen Guthrie

91 Department for Education, [Consolidated annual report and accounts](#), 16 December 2021, p81

92 Schools Week, [National Tutoring Programme: Schools could pay 90% of session costs within three years as DfE ‘tapers’ subsidies](#), 25 February 2021. The costs of [getting support from Tuition Partners or employing Academic Mentors](#) are subsidised for schools (70% and 95% of the cost, respectively). Schools with pupil premium eligible pupils receive a [ring-fenced grant for school-led tutoring](#), covering 75% of the cost of tutoring, to fund locally-sourced tuition support for disadvantaged pupils

93 [Q12](#)

meet its targets for the number of pupils receiving tuition, and the proportion of these who are disadvantaged, by Spring, the Department should terminate its contract with Randstad and re-run the tendering process.

58. Currently it appears that the school-led tutoring pillar is more attractive than tuition partners or academic mentors (with 230,000 starts as of 1 December, compared to 52,000 and 20,000 respectively), although we have heard concerns about the quality assurance underpinning that part of the programme. The Department should ensure that all resources are focused on the school-led pillar to ensure more schools are able to access the National Tutoring Programme. The Department should also assess the accessibility of tutoring across the regions and create a quality assurance framework to enable schools to make informed decisions about the tutoring organisations or individuals they employ.

59. We heard that the Department's plans to taper the subsidies for the National Tutoring Programme are a "real concern", which may inhibit school take up in some of the most disadvantaged areas. Therefore, to ensure that it does not unfairly prevent schools in more disadvantaged areas from taking up the tutoring offer, the Department must also review the plans to reduce the subsidies to the three tutoring pillars and consider maintaining the existing subsidy rates in the most disadvantaged areas, until the data suggests these children have caught up with their learning.

60. The Department should commit to undertaking a review of the impact that Covid-19 has had on children with special educational needs and disabilities.

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5 Mental health resilience and an extended school day

Enrichment and extra-curricular activities: giving children more time to catch-up

61. On 4 November 2021 the Department's review of the time in school and 16–19 settings found that any “change to the length of the school day would involve significant delivery considerations”.⁹⁴ The review added that an increase in hours for 16–19 settings is “more feasible”. It also found that:

- Pre-pandemic, the average school day in England was around 6 hours 30 minutes and that almost all schools (98%) offer after- or before-school extracurricular activities or clubs.
- There is evidence suggesting a “positive relationship between the quantity of instructional time and outcomes”, although studies also show that quantity of time is only one relevant factor.⁹⁵

62. The EEF's review of the evidence on extending school time found that it offers “moderate impact for moderate cost, based on limited evidence”, with evidence of particular benefit for disadvantaged pupils.⁹⁶ It adds that schools should “secure engagement and attendance among those from disadvantaged backgrounds”.

63. The Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) has also called for an ‘enrichment requirement’ in secondary schools whereby all secondary pupils would do “at least 5 hours of extra-curricular enrichment every school week”.⁹⁷ The CSJ drew on the findings of the 2003–2010 ‘extended services in schools’ programme, an evaluation of 1,500 schools which extended their days, 97% of which offered activities such as sport, music, arts and study support as part of this. 71% of schools reported this helped them engage with disadvantaged families and 69% of schools found it had at least some influence in raising attainment.⁹⁸

64. In an evidence session on 8 February, Lord Layard agreed that extending the school day would be a “great idea, if it is strongly linked to the introduction of wellbeing as an objective to schools”.⁹⁹ A study commissioned by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport also found that underachieving young people who took part in extra-curricular sporting activities improved their numeracy skills on average by 29% above those who did not participate in sport.¹⁰⁰

65. Mouhssin Ismail, Principal at Newham Collegiate Sixth Form Centre, reminded us that many schools already provide enrichment activities through after-school clubs, and key barrier to schools doing this more is funding. However, he also felt that there was a:

94 Department for Education, [Review of time in school and 16 to 19 settings](#), 4 November 2021, p4

95 Department for Education, [Review of time in school and 16 to 19 settings](#), 4 November 2021, pp2–3

96 Education Endowment Foundation, [Extending school time](#), July 2021

97 Centre for Social Justice, [A level playing field](#), May 2021, p2

98 Centre for Social Justice, [A level playing field](#), May 2021, p1

99 Education Committee, Mental health and wellbeing, [q12](#) - Lord Layard

100 Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, [The Culture and Sport Evidence Programme \(CASE\): Understanding the drivers, impact and value of engagement culture in sport: An over-arching summary of the research](#), July 2010, pp27–28

missed opportunity in secondary schools to utilise youth centres [...] Using and utilising the sports facilities and sport coaches around to have extended days would remove some of the burden that schools are facing in workload and finances.¹⁰¹

Lord O'Donnell, former Cabinet Secretary and former Permanent Secretary at HM Treasury, agreed that the cost benefits of extra-curricular enrichment activities are “massively high [...] These things are great fiscally because they save you lots of money down the track”.¹⁰²

66. On 9 December 2021 the Welsh Government announced a trial with 14 schools to provide additional hours for learners during a 10-week programme. The Welsh Government are making up to £2 million available in support of the trial, which involves primary and secondary schools providing an extra “five hours of bespoke activities each week for groups of learners, with sessions such as art, music and sport, as well as core academic sessions”.¹⁰³

67. **We are conscious that any extension to the school day would need to be carefully balanced so that staff workload and pupils' energy are not negatively impacted. However, we are also persuaded that there is merit in extending opportunities for additional time spent on extra-curricular activities, including exercise and creative pursuits, to those children who may otherwise not enjoy those opportunities.**

68. *The Department must introduce a pilot of optional extra-curricular activities for children to help improve academic attainment and wellbeing. The pilot should be trialled in areas of disadvantage across the country. If this pilot proves effective, the Department should include the necessary funding to support a wider provision in the next spending review bid.*

69. *There are some examples of positive collaboration between local private and state schools in terms of offering the use of sports centres or theatres to support enrichment activities which should be further encouraged. Primary and secondary state schools should also be encouraged to utilise local youth centres, local community groups and charities to help support schools in providing enrichment activities, so hardworking teachers and school staff are not impacted where possible.*

Mental health in schools

70. In 2019–20 the number of children being referred for mental health help rose to 538,564, an increase of 35% from 2018–19 and up nearly 60% from 2017–18. Analysis by the Office of the former Children's Commissioner found that despite this 35% increase in referrals, the number of children accessing treatment increased by just 4%.¹⁰⁴

101 HC 1114, 8 February 2022, [Q10](#)

102 HC 1114, 8 February 2022, [Q10](#)

103 Welsh Government, [Written statement: reform of the school day and year](#), 9 December 2021

104 Children's Commissioner, [Damage to children's mental health caused by Covid crisis could last for years without a large-scale increase for children's mental health services](#), 28 January 2021

71. In September 2021, NHS Digital published an update to the 2017 survey on the Mental Health of Children and Young People in England, which found that:

- In 2021, 16.7% of 11- to 16-year-olds using social media agreed that the number of likes, comments and shares they received had an impact on their mood, and half (50.7%) agreed that they spent more time on social media than they meant to. Girls were more likely to agree with both statements than boys. Responses were similar in 2017 and 2021.¹⁰⁵

72. In March 2021 we wrote to the previous Secretary of State for Education about children's mental health. We raised concerns about the insufficiency of data on children's mental health and wellbeing, the need for urgent investment across the whole system of mental health support for children and young people, and we called for an NHS-funded counsellor to be placed in every school.¹⁰⁶

73. We realise that the Government has announced several initiatives and funding streams to support children and young people's mental health. These have included £8 million for the Department for Education's Wellbeing for Education Return scheme, announced in August 2020,¹⁰⁷ with a further £7 million for the programme in 2021/22.¹⁰⁸ In March 2021 the Department of Health and Social Care announced £79 million to help grow the number of Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs) in schools and colleges from 59 to 400 by April 2023.¹⁰⁹ In 2017, a Department of Health Green Paper committed to rolling out Designated Senior Leads for Mental Health and MHSTs from a fifth to a quarter of the country by the end of 2022/23.¹¹⁰ In our recent report, *The Forgotten: how White working-class pupils were left behind and how to change it*,¹¹¹ we called for the Department to "fast-track" its commitment under the Children and Young People's Mental Health Green Paper to have a designated lead for mental health in every school.¹¹²

74. We are particularly concerned about the impact of social media on young people's mental health and have discussed possible solutions to this with witnesses, including the introduction of a social media levy. 2021 research from the EPI and The Prince's Trust found that heavy social media use is associated with worse mental health outcomes such as negative wellbeing and low self-esteem. Around one in seven girls report being unhappy with the way they look at the end of primary school, rising to almost one in three by age 14.¹¹³ The children's charity Barnardo's have also reported that 78% of practitioners said that they had worked with children aged 11–15 who had accessed unsuitable/harmful

¹⁰⁵ NHS Digital, [Mental health of Children and Young People in England, 2021: Wave 2 follow up to the 2017 survey](#), 30 September 2021

¹⁰⁶ Education Committee correspondence to the Secretary of State, [Children and young people's mental health](#), 31 March 2021

¹⁰⁷ Department for Education, [£8m programme to boost pupil and teacher wellbeing](#), 25 August 2020

¹⁰⁸ Department for Education, [Wellbeing for education recovery: grant determination letter for 2021 to 2022](#), 26 May 2021

¹⁰⁹ Department for Health and Social Care, [£79 million to boost mental health support for children and young people](#), 5 March 2021

¹¹⁰ Department of Health and Department for Education, [Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: a Green Paper](#), December 2017

¹¹¹ Education Committee, First Report of Session 2021–22, [The forgotten: how White working-class pupils have been let down, and how to change it](#), HC 85, 22 June 2021

¹¹² Department for Education and Department of Health & Social Care, [Government Response to the Consultation on Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: A Green Paper and Next Steps](#), July 2018

¹¹³ EPI and The Prince's Trust, [Young People's Mental and Emotional Health: Trajectories and drivers in childhood adolescence](#), January 2021, p8

content.¹¹⁴ Mouhssin Ismail told us on 8 February that the “biggest issue that we are seeing in schools is to do with social media and parents not having awareness of what their children are up to with social media until 2 or 3 o’clock in the morning”.¹¹⁵

75. Before the pandemic there were serious concerns about the mental health of our children and young people. The pandemic has exacerbated an existing crisis in mental health, with as many as 1 in 6 children aged 6–16 years old now suffering from a probable mental health condition. It is vital that swift action is taken to support all children and young people to build their resilience and ensure they get the support they need, when they need it.

76. *The Department must fast-track its commitments to ensuring all schools have a designated mental health lead. All catch-up plans, including enrichment activities and longer school days, must include a specific role for activities that focus on mental health and wellbeing.*

77. *Throughout our inquiry, we have heard that pupils’ wellbeing and mental health have been one of the greatest challenges as schools return. All pupils should undergo a mental health and wellbeing assessment to understand the scale of the problem and schools may wish to direct some of the recovery funding to address mental health difficulties. They should be supported to invest in evidence informed interventions to help pupils. We know that Ofsted inspectors will be looking at how subject leaders and teachers have identified and responded to pupils’ learning gaps as a result of the pandemic. We would like Ofsted to make it clear in their guidance that they will also look for evidence that schools have sought to identify and respond to the mental health and wellbeing needs of their students.*

78. *The Government should introduce a levy on the profits of social media companies, and use the revenue derived from this to fund online harms and resilience training for pupils which could be distributed through schools.*

114 Barnardo’s, [Left to their own devices: children’s social media and mental health](#), June 2019, p5

115 Education Committee, Mental health and wellbeing, [q27](#) - Mouhssin Ismail

6 Conclusion: A long-term funding plan

79. This report posed the question as to whether the catch-up programme is fit for purpose. Throughout our inquiry, we heard that catch-up is not reaching the most disadvantaged pupils, that there are continual regional disparities with take-up of the NTP, that there is disparity between academic and mental health recovery, and that there have been significant failures by Randstad to deliver the NTP. The previous Education Committee's report, *A ten-year plan for school and college funding*, recommended that "the Department needs to take political short-termism out of school and college funding by developing an ambitious ten-year plan".¹¹⁶ That report took the NHS's Long Term Plan as an "example of matching funding to long-term objectives".¹¹⁷ The IFS's 2021 annual report on education spending in England also found that "spending and policy choices by successive governments [...] have tended to favour health spending over education spending over time", and that "thirty years ago in the early 1990s, education and health spending were very similar levels. By the late 2000s, health spending was about 30% greater than education spending and then nearly 80% greater by 2019–20".¹¹⁸ Finally, we also note that in 2019–20 compared to 2011–12:

- Total public education expenditure in the UK increased by 4% in cash terms and declined by 10% in real terms.¹¹⁹
- Total public health expenditure in the UK increased by 35% in cash terms and increased by 17% in real terms.¹²⁰

80. Both the NHS and the Ministry of Defence have long-term plans and secure funding settlements. It is time for education to have one too.

116 Education Committee, Tenth Report of Session 2017–19, *A ten-year plan for school and college funding*, HC 969, July 2019, pp46–47

117 NHS, *The NHS Long Term Plan*, 21 August 2019

118 Institute for Fiscal Studies, *2021 annual report on education spending in England*, November 2021, p16

119 This means it is adjusted for inflation in 2021–22 prices

120 Adjusted for inflation to 2020–21 prices using HM Treasury GDP deflators from December 2021. The 2020–21 deflator is derived from the OBR's forecast for 2020–21 and 2021–22, averaged across the two years to smooth the distortions caused by pandemic-related factors. Total public education expenditure also includes some spending on training. Sources: *HM Treasury, PESA 2021, and earlier editions* (Table 4.2); *ONS series YBHA*; *HM Treasury GDP deflators*

Conclusions and recommendations

The pandemic and learning loss

1. There is no doubt that school closures have had a devastating effect on children's education. One 2020 study found that children locked down at home in the UK spent an average of only 2.5 hours each day doing schoolwork, and one fifth of pupils did no schoolwork at home, or less than one hour a day. Primary-aged pupils had lost 0.9 months learning in reading and 2.2 months in mathematics by the summer of 2020/21, and secondary-aged pupils had experienced a learning loss of around 1.2 months in reading. School closures have also impacted on children's mental health, with 1 in 6 children having a probable mental health condition in 2020, up from 1 in 9 in 2017. We believe that school closures have been nothing short of a national disaster for children. (Paragraph 18)
2. *The Department must continue to establish the full effect of the pandemic on children and young people. This must consider the impacts felt by children from disadvantaged backgrounds and on the regional disparities of support offered. This must not be confined to solely academic factors but should also focus on understanding how children and young people's mental health and wellbeing have been affected, as this is critical to academic attainment. All data should seek to identify where pupils with particular characteristics (including ethnicity, free school meals eligibility, or those with special educational needs) have been differentially impacted. The Department should utilise real-time data and the results of school and local authority assessments of pupils' lost learning to better target catch-up and mental health support immediately, so education recovery is not 'on hold' or delayed while the latest data is being collated. Funding must be committed by the Government to tackle the digital divide and boost broadband infrastructure to ensure that all children have the support they need to catch up on lost learning. Where data already exists, significant funding must be committed to targeted catch-up interventions to tackle the growing educational inequalities that are leaving some children with worsening academic outcomes and life chances.* (Paragraph 19)

A spaghetti junction of funding

3. Stakeholders have expressed concerns over the sufficiency of the Government's investment in the Catch-up Programme. The Department's own annual report from 2020/21 rated the risk of its measures to address lost learning being insufficient as "critical/very likely". The sector needs assurance of ongoing support to address the challenges of the pandemic and the long-term impact on children and young people. The education recovery programme is needed for the long-term, not for just two or three years. (Paragraph 24)
4. We welcome the funding the Government has already committed to help pupils catch up, but we believe the existing funding arrangements for catch-up amount to a spaghetti junction of funding, piling more work on teachers and support staff who have needed to navigate multiple funding processes to access different streams of funding (Paragraph 27)

5. *Teachers and school staff know their pupils and know what interventions are likely to bring the most benefit. The Catch-up Programme to date has been fragmented, and a complex bureaucratic system for applications may have hampered some schools' ability to access some elements of the Government's support as effectively as possible. The funding schemes should be simplified and merged into one pot for schools to access and spend where the recovery need is greatest. and any future catch-up initiatives should direct funding to schools using existing mechanisms for identifying disadvantage such as pupil premium eligibility and the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI), to ensure schools in the most disadvantaged regions receive more. Schools should also be held accountable for how they spend their catch-up funding. When carrying out inspections, Ofsted should be looking for evidence that catch-up activity has been effective. When inspecting school leadership and management, Ofsted should check that effective governance and scrutiny of resource allocation extends to catch-up funding. (Paragraph 28)*

Disadvantaged pupils and regional variations in learning loss

6. The impact of school closures and the pandemic has resulted in a reversal of the progress made in narrowing the attainment gap, with children in the North disproportionately affected. It is also alarming that children and young people in the North, particularly the North-East and Yorkshire and the Humber, have suffered greater learning loss during the last two years compared to many in the South. Nor is it acceptable that such striking variations exist between young people in the North who were able to take up the support offered by the National Tutoring Programme in its first year (59% of schools compared with upwards of 96% schools in the South). We discuss the performance of the NTP and its current provider Randstad in the next Chapter. (Paragraph 33)
7. Rates of persistent absence remain concerning, and the number of 'ghost children' who are experiencing severe levels of absence from school remains far too high. The Government needs to do much more to get these children back in school, which is the best place to ensure they will be safe and reach their potential. The Department should also be publishing more regular, up-to-date data, on the number of persistently absent children, including data on children with special educational needs and disabilities. (Paragraph 38)
8. *The Department must take steps to address the issue of persistent absence and ensure no more children become 'ghost children'. We welcome the Department's formation of an 'attendance alliance' and its consultation on reducing avoidable absence in schools, however these children need tangible action now. The Department must urgently set out proactive measures, working with schools and local authorities, to get these pupils back into school. The Government should also implement, as a matter of urgency, a national register of children not in school, as recommended in our previous report Strengthening Home Education. (Paragraph 39)*

The National Tutoring Programme and Randstad

9. It is not clear that the National Tutoring Programme will deliver for the pupils that need it most. We expect full transparency about the operation of the National

Tutoring Programme, including information on how many pupils are benefitting from the programme, and what the characteristics of those pupils are (for example, whether they are disadvantaged or have a special educational need or disability). It is crucially important that the Government ensures tutoring is working effectively in terms of catch-up, and that it measures and publishes statistics on the improvements in children's attainment achieved by the tutoring programme. We expect these to be published and will continue to hold Randstad and the Department to account for this. This data is essential if we are to ensure that tutoring support is heavily targeted toward disadvantaged pupils and areas. (Paragraph 56)

10. *The Department must commit to publishing statistics on a half-termly basis on the number of starts under the National Tutoring Programme with a greater degree of granularity. This must include information on the proportion of children accessing the programme on a regional basis, and the data should be published in a way that has regard to disadvantage and special educational needs. This information should also be broken down for each tutoring provider. If the National Tutoring Programme fails to meet its targets for the number of pupils receiving tuition, and the proportion of these who are disadvantaged, by Spring, the Department should terminate its contract with Randstad and re-run the tendering process. (Paragraph 57)*
11. *Currently it appears that the school-led tutoring pillar is more attractive than tuition partners or academic mentors (with 230,000 starts as of 1 December, compared to 52,000 and 20,000 respectively), although we have heard concerns about the quality assurance underpinning that part of the programme. The Department should ensure that all resources are focused on the school-led pillar to ensure more schools are able to access the National Tutoring Programme. The Department should also assess the accessibility of tutoring across the regions and create a quality assurance framework to enable schools to make informed decisions about the tutoring organisations or individuals they employ. (Paragraph 58)*
12. *We heard that the Department's plans to taper the subsidies for the National Tutoring Programme are a "real concern", which may inhibit school take up in some of the most disadvantaged areas. Therefore, to ensure that it does not unfairly prevent schools in more disadvantaged areas from taking up the tutoring offer, the Department must also review the plans to reduce the subsidies to the three tutoring pillars and consider maintaining the existing subsidy rates in the most disadvantaged areas, until the data suggests these children have caught up with their learning. (Paragraph 59)*
13. *The Department should commit to undertaking a review of the impact that Covid-19 has had on children with special educational needs and disabilities. (Paragraph 60)*

Mental health resilience and an extended school day

14. We are conscious that any extension to the school day would need to be carefully balanced so that staff workload and pupils' energy are not negatively impacted. However, we are also persuaded that there is merit in extending opportunities for additional time spent on extra-curricular activities, including exercise and creative pursuits, to those children who may otherwise not enjoy those opportunities. (Paragraph 67)

15. *The Department must introduce a pilot of optional extra-curricular activities for children to help improve academic attainment and wellbeing. The pilot should be trialled in areas of disadvantage across the country. If this pilot proves effective, the Department should include the necessary funding to support a wider provision in the next spending review bid. (Paragraph 68)*
16. *There are some examples of positive collaboration between local private and state schools in terms of offering the use of sports centres or theatres to support enrichment activities which should be further encouraged. Primary and secondary state schools should also be encouraged to utilise local youth centres, local community groups and charities to help support schools in providing enrichment activities, so hardworking teachers and school staff are not impacted where possible. (Paragraph 69)*
17. *Before the pandemic there were serious concerns about the mental health of our children and young people. The pandemic has exacerbated an existing crisis in mental health, with as many as 1 in 6 children aged 6–16 years old now suffering from a probable mental health condition. It is vital that swift action is taken to support all children and young people to build their resilience and ensure they get the support they need, when they need it. (Paragraph 75)*
18. *The Department must fast-track its commitments to ensuring all schools have a designated mental health lead. All catch-up plans, including enrichment activities and longer school days, must include a specific role for activities that focus on mental health and wellbeing. (Paragraph 76)*
19. *Throughout our inquiry, we have heard that pupils' wellbeing and mental health have been one of the greatest challenges as schools return. All pupils should undergo a mental health and wellbeing assessment to understand the scale of the problem and schools may wish to direct some of the recovery funding to address mental health difficulties. They should be supported to invest in evidence informed interventions to help pupils. We know that Ofsted inspectors will be looking at how subject leaders and teachers have identified and responded to pupils' learning gaps as a result of the pandemic. We would like Ofsted to make it clear in their guidance that they will also look for evidence that schools have sought to identify and respond to the mental health and wellbeing needs of their students. (Paragraph 77)*
20. *The Government should introduce a levy on the profits of social media companies, and use the revenue derived from this to fund online harms and resilience training for pupils which could be distributed through schools. (Paragraph 78)*

Formal minutes

Tuesday 8 March 2022

Members present:

Robert Halfon, in the Chair

Apsana Begum

Miriam Cates

Brendan Clarke-Smith

Tom Hunt

Dr Caroline Johnson

Kim Johnson

Kate Osborne

Draft Report (*Is the Catch-up Programme fit for purpose?*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 23 read and agreed to.

Paragraph 24 read.

Amendment proposed, in line 24, after “programme.” insert, “The Government needs to come forward with an immediate funding proposal in the realm of £15 billion recommended by the Government’s own Catch Up Tsar to ensure that these children are given the support they deserve, inequalities are challenged instead of widening as they currently are, and their futures are secured.”.—(*Kim Johnson*).

Question put, That the amendment be made.

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 3

Apsana Begum

Kim Johnson

Kate Osborne

Noes, 4

Miriam Cates

Brendan Clarke-Smith

Tom Hunt

Dr Caroline Johnson

Question negatived.

Paragraph 24 agreed to.

Paragraph 25 to 55 read and agreed to.

With the leave of the Committee, a single Question was put in relation to paragraphs 56 to 59.

Paragraphs 56 to 59 read.

Motion made, to leave out paragraphs 56 to 59 and insert the following new paragraph:

It is clear that the National Tutoring Programme has failed dismally to meet its targets and will not deliver for pupils, especially the most disadvantaged who need it most. We recommend that the Department terminates its contract with Randstad and examines the case to recoup its losses. We also call on the Government to come forward with a funding plan for pupil catch up in the realm of the £15 billion that Sir Kevan Collins called for, taking heed of international comparisons, and making this funding directly available to schools with a streamlined process for applying for the funds, and flexibility for schools – who know their pupils best – to decide how to use the money. The Department must abandon its plans to taper the subsidies for the NTP, and instead consider uplifting subsidy rates in the most disadvantaged areas to encourage take up.—(*Kim Johnson*).

Question put, That the new paragraph be read a second time.

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 3	Noes, 4
Apsana Begum	Miriam Cates
Kim Johnson	Brendan Clarke-Smith
Kate Osborne	Tom Hunt
	Dr Caroline Johnson

Question negatived.

Paragraphs 56 to 59 agreed to.

Paragraph 60 to 76 read and agreed to.

Paragraph 77 read.

Amendment proposed, in line 15, leave out from “All pupils” to end, and insert:

Significant funding needs to be provided by the Government to face up to the scale of the mental health crisis in schools. This must be sufficient to respond to the pressures of the pandemic on top of a decade of cuts to mental health support in schools, endemic capacity problems and a rigorous culture of testing and academic pressure. The funding must ensure, at a bare minimum, that: pastoral support is significantly strengthened and levelled up across the country, including a school counsellor in every school; a wider vision of education is provided, that supports social

and emotional development as well as academic; and that there are real reductions on teacher workload and funding for extra staff, especially for SEND support.—(*Kim Johnson*).

Question put, That the amendment be made.

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 3	Noes, 4
Apsana Begum	Miriam Cates
Kim Johnson	Brendan Clarke-Smith
Kate Osborne	Tom Hunt
	Dr Caroline Johnson

Question negatived.

Paragraph 77 agreed to.

Paragraphs 78 to 80 read and agreed to.

Summary read.

Amendment proposed, paragraph 10, line 25, to leave out from “While the Department’s” to “advantage” and insert, “While the funding allocated is welcome, at a total of under £5 billion it is merely a third of what the Government’s own Catch-up Tsar (Sir Kevan Collins) recommended, and pales by comparison on the international stage, which places the future of this generation of children in severe jeopardy. It is regrettable that his resignation did not result in a drastic change of direction by this Government, who must wake up to the crisis of funding our schools are facing and immediately commit to providing funding in the realm of the £15 billion outlined by Sir Kevan Collins.”.—(*Kim Johnson*).

Question put, That the amendment be made.

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 3	Noes, 4
Apsana Begum	Miriam Cates
Kim Johnson	Brendan Clarke-Smith
Kate Osborne	Tom Hunt
	Dr Caroline Johnson

Question negatived.

Amendment proposed, paragraph 11, line 41, to leave out from “If the NTP” to the end and insert: “We recommend that the Department should terminate its contract with Randstad due to its scandalously low and poor outcomes.”.—(*Kim Johnson*).

Question put, That the amendment be made.

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 3	Noes, 4
Apsana Begum	Miriam Cates
Kim Johnson	Brendan Clarke-Smith
Kate Osborne	Tom Hunt
	Dr Caroline Johnson

Question negated.

Amendment proposed, paragraph 16, line 33, leave out from “We recommend” to the end and insert: “We recognise that the scale of the mental health crisis is at breaking point due to the pressures of the pandemic on top of a decade of cuts to mental health support in schools, endemic capacity problems, and a rigorous culture of testing and academic pressure. Given the resource constraints facing mental health services even before the pandemic, we recognise that this would be challenging - and that schools know their pupils best. We urgently need significant funding to respond to this crisis, and ensure that: pastoral support is significantly strengthened and levelled up across the country, including a school counsellor in every school; a wider vision of education is provided, that supports social and emotional development as well as academic; and that there is real reductions on teacher workload via funding for extra staff, especially for SEND support.”.—(Kim Johnson).

Question put, That the amendment be made.

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 3	Noes, 4
Apsana Begum	Miriam Cates
Kim Johnson	Brendan Clarke-Smith
Kate Osborne	Tom Hunt
	Dr Caroline Johnson

Question negated.

Question put, That the Summary be agreed to.

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 4	Noes, 3
Miriam Cates	Apsana Begum
Brendan Clarke-Smith	Kim Johnson
Tom Hunt	Kate Osborne
Dr Caroline Johnson	

Summary agreed to.

Motion made, and Question put, That the Report be the Fourth Report of the Committee to the House.

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 4

Miriam Cates

Brendan Clarke-Smith

Tom Hunt

Dr Caroline Johnson

Noes, 2

Kim Johnson

Kate Osborne

Question accordingly agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Fourth Report of the Committee to the House

Ordered, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

[Adjourned till Tuesday 15 March at 9.30 am]

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Witnesses

The following witnesses gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

Tuesday 7 December 2021

Professor Becky Francis, Chief Executive, Education Endowment Foundation; **David Laws**, Executive Chairman, Education Policy Institute; **Nick Bent**, Co-Founder and Chief Executive, The Tutor Trust

[Q1–47](#)

Wednesday 12 January 2022

Karen Guthrie, Programme Director - National Tutoring Programme, Randstad

[Q48–84](#)

Mr Robin Walker MP, Minister of State for School Standards, Department for Education; **Graham Archer**, Director for Education Recovery, Department for Education

[Q1202–1218](#)

Tuesday 25 January 2022

Orienne Langley-Sadler, Headteacher, Elms Bank School and College; **John Blaney**, Executive Headteacher, BMAT STEM; **Jo Coton**, CEO/Executive Headteacher, NET Academies Trust; **Andy Green**, Principal, Copleston High School; **Nicola Shipman**, Chief Executive Officer, Steel City Schools Partnership; **Jill Thompson**, Headteacher, Kelvin Grove Primary School; **Ruth Holden**, Executive Headteacher, Mulberry Academy Shoreditch

[Q85–116](#)

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Published written evidence

The following written evidence was received and can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

GCP numbers are generated by the evidence processing system and so may not be complete.

- 1 Equality and Human Rights Commission ([GCP0004](#))
- 2 Randstad ([GCP0001](#)), ([GCP0002](#))
- 3 The National Deaf Children's Society ([GCP0003](#))

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List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

All publications from the Committee are available on the publications page of the Committee's website.

Session 2021–22

Number	Title	Reference
1st Report	The forgotten: how White working-class pupils have been let down, and how to change it	HC 85
2nd Report	Appointment of the Chief Regulator of Ofqual	HC 512
3rd Report	Strengthening Home Education	HC 84
1st Special Report	Strengthening Home Education: Government Response to the Committee's Third Report	HC 823

Session 2019–21

Number	Title	Reference
1st Report	Getting the grades they've earned: Covid-19: the cancellation of exams and 'calculated' grades	HC 617
2nd Report	Appointment of the Children's Commissioner for England	HC 1030
3rd Report	A plan for an adult skills and lifelong learning revolution	HC 278
4th Report	Appointment of the Chair of the Office for Students	HC 1143
1st Special Report	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities: Government Response to the Committee's First Report of Session 2019	HC 668
2nd Special Report	Getting the grades they've earned: COVID-19: the cancellation of exams and 'calculated' grades: Response to the Committee's First Report	HC 812
3rd Special Report	A plan for an adult skills and lifelong learning revolution: Government Response to the Committee's Third Report	HC 1310