

## In the News – 27 November 2017

### Featured news: Reactions to the Chancellor's Budget.

[Budget: No pay rise for teachers](#) – A breakdown of the budget by the TES. It is noted that as well as a lack of a pay-rise, no funding for schools is mentioned, save a boost of cash for maths and computing. (TES, 22 November 2017)

[Head teachers' leaders "extremely disappointed" by Budget's failure to address "urgent" school funding shortages in England](#) – Geoff Barton, leader of the ASCL heads' union, said extra cash for maths was a "drop in the ocean" and schools would still face real-terms cuts. Maths A-level will be encouraged, with £600 for schools for each pupil taking the subject above current numbers. The Chancellor said maths skills were needed for "cutting edge" jobs. Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn criticised the lack of movement on student debt and warned that schools in England would be "5% worse off by 2019". (BBC, 22 November 2017)

[Budget in detail: Computer science teachers to be trebled, Chancellor announces](#) – Philip Hammond pledged £84 million to train up another 8,000 GCSE teachers for computer science, a relatively new subject that only became part of the national curriculum three years ago. (The Telegraph, 22 November 2017)

[Council calls for police inquiry over trust finances](#) – Councillors have called for a police investigation into the financial running of collapsed academy chain Wakefield City Academies Trust. With it feared that the trust moved millions of pounds of school reserves into its centralised accounts before declaring that it was giving up its 21 schools, Wakefield Council leader Peter Box said he would be talking to police about the concerns. (BBC, 22 November 2017)

## Leading Support Services

### Health and safety

[School sickness bug infects 130 pupils](#) – About 130 children have been kept at home from the same primary school following an outbreak of a sickness and diarrhoea bug. Hawkedon Primary School in Reading said a "deep clean" was under way after a fifth of the pupils and some staff were off sick with the bug – but said it would remain open despite the "high levels" of children affected. (BBC, 20 November 2017)

### Equality and social mobility

[Northern cities lose out to 12 schools on Oxbridge places](#) – Twelve private schools in London and the Home Counties secure more places at Oxford and Cambridge universities than Birmingham and all the major cities in the north combined. According to research by the Times using the most recent figures provided, the schools, including Westminster School, King's College School and St Paul's Girls School, secured 483 places – an estimated one in 14 of those available – at the two universities. Spokesmen for both Oxford and Cambridge said success rates for northern applicants were good – but "what we need are more applications." (The Times, 21 November 2017)

[700% rise in children seeking support on gender issues](#) – Rising numbers of children are seeking help from a charity over confusion about their gender. Mermaids, Britain's only nationwide charity for “gender diverse” children, says it has seen a nearly 700% rise in calls and emails in three years to more than 1,700, and 2,200 a year respectively, the charity says. A Mermaids spokesman said the increase could be attributed to a number of factors, including “increased media coverage, availability of information, and society becoming more accepting of gender non-conforming”. (The Mail, 20 November 2017)

[Pupils ‘constantly reminded of their gender’](#) – Natasha Devon, the DfE’s former mental health champion for schools, says teachers should not refer to pupils as boys or girls because it means they are “constantly reminded of their gender” and “all the stereotypes that go with it”. Speaking at the Girls’ School Association’s annual conference, she added that she would never address pupils in a girls’ school as girls or ladies because it was “patronising”. She advised staff to refrain from calling youngsters boys or girls, suggesting gender-neutral terms such as pupils, students or people. (The Telegraph, 21 November 2017)

## **Finance**

Education funding and finance – national and international level reports

[Google to invest £1m in computer science](#) – Google has announced that it will add £1m to the Government’s £100m initiative to improve computer science education. With the Government hoping to train 8,000 new teachers and utilise a new National Centre for Computing, Google is to offer grants to several computer-based learning initiatives including the Raspberry pi Foundation, the British Computer Society and the National STEM Learning Centre. The tech firm’s Obum Ekeke said its staff “care deeply about helping to develop our future computer scientists,” adding that a team of engineers will volunteer to ensure that teachers are able to access online resources and courses. (The Mirror, 21 November 2017)

## **HR**

Recruitment, training, pay and conditions

[Spielman: ‘Culture of fear’ has developed around Ofsted ratings](#) – Ofsted chief accuses headteacher bloggers of writing “blogs that spin up levels of anxiety”. (TES, 25 November 2017)

Disciplinary, legal and trade union action

[Council's legal threat stops teachers' strike](#) – The 24-hour strike planned for this Thursday by the NASUWT has been cancelled after legal threats by Glasgow City Council. St Andrew's Secondary School, Eastbank Academy and All Saints Secondary School were the three schools to be involved and the NASUWT has accused the council of acting “unreasonably and aggressively”. (BBC, 21 November 2017)

[Teacher struck off over comments](#) – History teacher David McGhee has been struck off the teaching register by the General Teaching Council for Scotland after it was found that he had made lewd remarks to students and asked a pupil if he was a terrorist. The incidents occurred between 2011 and 2013, with cases at Hazlehead Academy in Aberdeen and the city’s Harlaw Academy. (The Mail, 22 November 2017)

## **Infrastructure**

### New schools, expansions, mergers and closures

[Closure consultation begins](#) – Scottish Borders Council has started the process which could lead to the closure of St Margaret's Primary in Hawick. The authority says any closure decision was not "taken lightly" but notes that there are currently only 14 pupils attending the school. (BBC, 22 November 2017)

### **Government announcements, guidance, consultations and funding**

[Guidance – High needs funding arrangements: 2018 to 2019](#). (ESFA, updated 27 November 2017)

[Letter sent from Peter Lauener, chief executive of the Education Funding Agency, to academy trust accounting officers in November 2017](#). (ESFA, 27 November 2017)

[Research & Analysis – British public attitudes to education and children's services: part of NatCen's British Social Attitudes \(BSA\) Survey 2016](#). (DfE, 27 November 2017)

