

SESLIP Education Network

Update: 20th May 2022



In Today's Update:

1. DfE: Ofsted research review on teaching computing, progress check guidance, materials to support decisions about flexible working in school, qualifications eligible for EBacc.
2. National reports: Value of having a school focus on belonging, costs of child care shows how many families of under 4s are struggling.
3. Research: Review of mental health interventions gives pointers to effective approaches, negative impact of pandemic on under 5s.
4. News: DfE to correct inaccurate claim about MATs, analysis of MAT profiles across English regions, fuel costs & school transport, reflections on national online exams, spurious GCSE info claims on YouTube.

1. DfE:

- Ofsted research review about teaching computing. As a foundation subject for pupils there are concerns about the lack of subject specialist teachers in schools or being trained and that quality learning and teaching is patchy across schools. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-review-series-computing>
- Guide for early years practitioners about the progress check at age 2 and how to approach reviewing a child's development and identify areas of concern. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/progress-check-at-age-2>
- Webinars and other support resources for senior leaders looking to enable flexible working in their school / MAT. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/flexible-working-resources-for-teachers-and-schools>
- Updated list of qualifications that are eligible for the EBacc. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-baccalaureate-eligible-qualifications#full-publication-update-history>

2. National reports:

- The value of schools having a focus on belonging and ways to implement this. Evidence-based analysis and practical examples in (free to download) this book. <https://www.uclpress.co.uk/products/171324>
- Survey about early years and childcare, of providers and parents. Key findings include providers being largely negative about the idea of changing staff to child ratios, that 1 in 5 families struggle to pay for childcare for under 4s and that too many parents are unaware of the option for tax-free childcare and find its criteria confusing. <https://ifs.org.uk/publications/16060>

3. Research:

- Rapid review of evidence of effectiveness of mental health and well-being interventions. Among the more impactful were programmes such as CBT, mixed groups involving arts activities and family interventions. <https://whatworkswellbeing.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/WWW-Briefing-Evaluation-Deep-Dive-6.pdf>
- EEF review finds that the progress of under 5s has been adversely affected by the response to the pandemic, across all developmental areas. This effect is even more marked among children from socially disadvantaged families. <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/new-pandemic-adversely-affected-young-childrens-development-with-fewer-reaching-expected-levels-by-the-end-of-reception-class>

4. News:

- Statistical regulator criticises DfE for its evidence claims about the greater effectiveness of MATs. Lack of information about methodology led them to conclude it was an unreliable claim and the DfE has agreed to correct this. <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/dfe-to-correct-academy-claims-after-stats-watchdog-slapdown/>
- Analysis of the profile of schools and academy trusts. How far from the DfE preferred system arrangements are we? Currently about 20% of schools are in a MAT of at least 10 schools. The average size of MATs has increased from 5 to 7 since 2018. While primaries are less likely to be an academy than secondaries, those that are likely to be in larger MATs. <https://ffteducationdatalab.org.uk/2022/05/the-size-of-multi-academy-trusts/>
- The rising cost of fuel is putting additional pressures on school transport budgets with LAs facing significant increases in costs when re-tendering services. <https://www.themj.co.uk/Delivering-school-transport-services-during-a-fuel-crisis/223319#>
- Reflections on the challenge of moving to national online exams. It's when, not if, but will need to be trialled (probably with lower stakes exams) and the role of the National Reference Tests will be even more important. <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/secondary/call-national-trial-mocks-avoid-online-gcse-disaster>
- Warnings about spurious social media offerings of information about exam grade boundaries and links to exam essays. <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/secondary/gcses-2022-exam-board-warning-over-clickbait-grades-videos>
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