

Prime Minister boosts schools with £14 billion package

Schools across England are set for a giant cash boost as the Prime Minister announces he will invest over £14 billion in primary and secondary education between now and 2022/23.

The funding package for 5-16 schools includes £2.6 billion for 2020/21, £4.8 billion for 21/22, and £7.1 billion for 22/23 compared to 19/20. This will bring the schools budget to £52.2bn in 22/23.

This delivers on the Prime Minister's pledge when entering Downing Street to increase school funding by £4.6bn above inflation, levelling up education funding and giving all young people the same opportunities to succeed – regardless of where they grow up or go to school.

As part of this, every secondary school will receive a minimum of £5,000 per pupil next year, with every primary school getting a minimum of £4,000 from 2021/22.

The deal includes £780 million extra for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in 2020/21, so every pupil can access the education that is right for them, and none are held back from reaching their potential.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

When I became Prime Minister at the start of the summer, I promised to make sure every child receives a superb education – regardless of which school they attend, or where they grew up.

Today I can announce the first step in delivering on that pledge – funding per pupil in primary and secondary schools will increase, and be levelled up across the entire country.

We should not accept the idea that there can be “winners or losers” when it comes to our children's futures. That's why we are providing additional funding now and for the future for every school, with those historically underfunded receiving the greatest increase.

My government will ensure all young people get the best possible start in life. That means the right funding, but also giving schools the powers they need to deal with bad behaviour and bullying so pupils continue to learn effectively.

The additional funding comes ahead of next week's Spending Round, and gives schools the certainty they need to plan their budgets.

It will:

- ensure that per-pupil funding for all schools can rise at least in line with inflation
- progress the implementation of our National Funding Formula, delivering promised gains in full for areas which have been historically under-funded

Today's funding boost comes on top of a near £1.5 billion each year to continue to fund additional pension costs for teachers.

The Chancellor Sajid Javid said:

We said our priorities were police, healthcare and education, and that's what we are delivering at next week's Spending Round. Because of the hard work of the British people to put our finances in order, we can now invest in their priorities.

As I know from my own experience, nothing is more important to a child's future than their education. That's why we are putting in place the funding that helps them realise their potential, to the benefit of us all.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

We owe it to the next generation to ensure our education system is world class, and that nothing stands in the way of our young people having the best choices in life, whatever course they take.

This £14 billion funding increase – the largest cash boost in a generation – means our schools can continue to raise standards and build an education system that boosts productivity, improves social mobility and equips children with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the bright future that lies ahead.

In addition to this package, schools will receive £4.4 billion over three years to cover rising pension costs and ensure they can focus their resources on the front line.

Schools will also continue to benefit from government support to ensure they can make the most of every pound of their budgets, following the launch of the Department for Education's School Resource Management Strategy last year.

This ranges from a free-to-use vacancy service to recruit teachers, to expert advisers who provide tailored support to individual schools that need it.

Since 2010, education standards in England have rocketed. Government reforms have seen more primary school children on track to become fluent readers, more 19-year-olds leaving education with English and Maths GCSEs, and almost

one million school places created.

LLWR names its first Menopause Champion

Gill Bragg has been appointed LLW Repository Ltd's first 'Menopause Champion' and is planning a series of improvements to raise the profile of an issue that is still considered taboo in many workplaces.

Just a few days after announcing her appointment, as part of LLWR's Mental Health and Wellbeing initiative, she was overwhelmed by the response from colleagues.

"The response has been phenomenal," she said. "People have been contacting me left, right and centre for advice, or just for someone to initially talk to.

"We are going to form a working group and a private support network and we're also looking into purchasing some hand fans for those who need them, as a minimum – something small but simple and effective.

"Research suggests that, by 2020, 80% of the female workforce across the UK will be going through some stage of the menopause as people as young as 30 unfortunately can commence their 'journey' very early."

Gill, who is also LLWR's Head of Internal Audit, plans to conduct a series of workshops to inform colleagues, aimed at those going through the menopause, in addition to younger people, line managers and anyone who wishes to learn more.

"We want to make sure that our risk assessments, processes and procedures support women in the workforce who are going through the menopause and reasonable adjustment made when required," she said.

"We also want to educate the younger generation to not be afraid of something that is purely natural for all women.

"Medical professionals will also be invited in to talk about issues such as HRT and natural remedies whilst trying to dispel any myths around menopause and replace them with facts."

HMS Queen Elizabeth sails to US for fighter jet trials

For the first time, UK fighter jets will join this state-of-the-art ship in a significant milestone for the programme.

The deployment, known as 'WESTLANT 19,' will see the carrier conduct 'Operational Testing', with British F-35B Lightning jets embarking for the first time as she moves closer to her first operational deployment in 2021. The carrier will also spend time in Canada during her four-month travels.

Operational Testing is designed to put the jets, ship and supporting units through their paces. The tests allow the equipment and crew to operate under realistic warfighting scenarios to ready them for their first operational deployment.

From planning campaigns, briefing, preparing and arming the jets and pilots, to flying and sustaining them on their 'mission,' the trials ensure that the units can fight as one.

Defence Minister Anne-Marie Trevelyan said:

HMS Queen Elizabeth is symbolic of the UK's global reach and power. As she enters this stage of the programme, she will demonstrate her immense engineering, capability and battle readiness.

As she makes her second voyage across the Atlantic, HMS Queen Elizabeth will also strengthen our special relationship with the US and Canada. Our naval forces will visit Canada then spend the coming months working and training side by side with the US to ensure the UK's carrier strike is ready for operations in 2021.

HMS Queen Elizabeth set sail from Portsmouth today. Crown copyright.

The deployment represents the continued positive relationship between the UK and US. Units from the United States Navy, US Air Force and US Marine Corps will all take part in the 'WESTLANT 19' deployment, further demonstrating the close partnership between the two NATO allies.

While at sea, HMS Queen Elizabeth is accompanied by other units of the Commander UK Carrier Strike Group (COMUKCSG) including a Type-45 destroyer, a Type-23 frigate and air assets from the Carrier Air Wing. This provides vital warfighting skills and training for each element to the Royal Navy's potent carrier strike capabilities.

RFA Tideforce is providing tanker support to the Strike Group, which will be

joined by ships and air assets from other nations throughout the deployment. Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines based in Plymouth and a Role 2 Medical Team Afloat are also embarked on the carrier.

HMS Queen Elizabeth's Commanding Officer, Capt Steve Moorhouse said:

To command any warship is a privilege but to be able to command HMS Queen Elizabeth during this pivotal phase of her capability development is a real honour. In addition to my core ship's company, the fixed and rotary wing air assets, enhanced medical capability, Royal Marines and other force elements from across Defence will enhance HMS Queen Elizabeth and the UK's Carrier Strike capability on this deployment.

WESTLANT 19 is a hugely exciting deployment and as we increase the scale and complexity of our training and testing, so the potency of this extraordinary ship continues to grow.

Commander of UKCSG, Cdre Mike Utley said:

The success of last years' deployment during which we embarked and operated the F-35B for the very first time put us ahead of the curve in terms of developmental testing between the jets and ship. We have a significant switch in focus this year, towards operationalising this national defence capability; turning this ship, the jets for which it has been built and all supporting units into a cohesive, agile, efficient force.

Whether that's warfighting at one end of the scale, peacekeeping at the other end or delivering humanitarian support across the globe. Our first operational deployment in 2021 is not far away and we will be ready for any eventuality.

HMS Queen Elizabeth will also host the second Atlantic Future Forum during her time in the US, following on from the inaugural forum held last year in New York. The forum provides a platform for innovators, business leaders and tech entrepreneurs across government and industry to explore emerging cyber, artificial intelligence and space trends, technologies and threats.

The 'WESTLANT 19' Strike Group will return to the UK at the end of the year. HMS Queen Elizabeth's sister ship HMS Prince of Wales is in her final stages of build at Rosyth Dockyard. She is expected to commence her sea trials in the coming weeks.

Detailed guide: Controls of fish and shellfish diseases in England and Wales

Reduce the risk of disease, find out where notifiable diseases have been confirmed in England and Wales.

Push to better understand sources affecting Bridlington water quality

Environment Agency starts weekly spot sampling to help inform improvements