

**Westminster Education Forum policy conference:
Next steps for raising attainment in England's schools**

Timing: Morning, Monday, 25th January 2027

*****Taking Place Online*****



Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 9.05 **Raising attainment across England's schools - considerations for reform and implementation**
Senior commentator
- 9.15 **Disadvantage funding, attendance and early intervention**
proposed reform to disadvantage funding / recognising the depth and duration of disadvantage / place-sensitive funding approaches / expanded free school meal eligibility and relationship with pupil premium funding / latest thinking on improving attendance and addressing persistent absence, including differing issues affecting primary and secondary pupils / pupil engagement and barriers to learning / working with families and local services to address barriers to attendance / early identification and intervention for pupils at risk of falling behind, including literacy, numeracy and transition to secondary school / early use of the Inclusive Mainstream Fund for identifying and meeting needs in mainstream classrooms / support for pupils with SEND and low prior attainment
Senior representative, school
Senior representative, local authority
Senior representative, charity
Senior commentator
- 9.35 Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.05 **Curriculum progression, teaching quality and workforce capacity**
curriculum sequencing and continuity between primary and secondary education / supporting pupils entering secondary school with low prior attainment and progression through KS3 / implementing the revised national curriculum from 2028 / teacher recruitment, retention and deployment / subject expertise and non-specialist teaching, including differences in access to specialist teaching and subject provision / professional development and support for early career teachers / use of educational technology and AI-enabled tools to support teaching and learning, including evidence of impact, implementation challenges and workforce readiness / leadership development and professional learning for schools and trusts / evidence-informed teaching and targeted intervention / the role of Teaching School Hubs and professional networks in sharing effective practice
Senior representative, school
Senior representative, teaching profession
Senior representative, teacher training
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.40 **Chair's closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 10.45 Break
- 10.55 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 11.00 **Policy priorities for reducing regional disparities in attainment**
Dr Tim Coulson, Director General, Regions Group, Department for Education
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.30 **Place-based school improvement, regional collaboration and local capacity**
priorities for Mission North East and Mission Coastal and what can be learnt / RISE support in practice and early evaluation findings / collaboration between schools, trusts and local authorities / potential impact of the proposed move towards all schools joining trusts, including the capacity of trusts to support teaching and school improvement / implications for school autonomy, governance and local authority responsibilities / responding to regional variation in attainment and local barriers to improvement / local improvement capacity, regional partnerships and sharing effective practice / sustaining improvement in coastal, rural and disadvantaged communities
Senior representative, school
Senior representative, local authority
Senior representative, RISE adviser
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.05 **Assessment, performance measures and accountability for school improvement**
implications of the 2026 KS2 results and the planned return of progress measures / next steps for KS4 performance measures, including Progress 8 and Attainment 8 / recognising progress among pupils with low prior attainment / effects of performance measures on curriculum breadth, subject choices and inclusion / early findings from IFF Research's interim Evaluation of Ofsted's renewed approach to education inspection - implications for school improvement / report cards, benchmarking and proportionate data use / identifying schools for RISE intervention and the proposed extension to low-attaining schools / the relationship between accountability, school autonomy and capacity for sustained improvement
Senior representative, school
Senior representative, multi-academy trust
Senior representative, local authority
Senior commentator
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 **Chair's and Westminster Education Forum closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
Sean Cudmore, Westminster Education Forum