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**Tuesday  
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**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

# **HOUSE OF LORDS**

## **WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS**

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<b>Lord Agnew of Oulton</b>	Minister of State, Treasury and Cabinet Office
<b>Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon</b>	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
<b>Lord Ashton of Hyde</b>	Chief Whip
<b>Baroness Barran</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
<b>Baroness Berridge</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education and Department for International Trade
<b>Lord Bethell</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care and Whip
<b>Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist</b>	Whip
<b>Lord Callanan</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
<b>Earl of Courtown</b>	Deputy Chief Whip
<b>Lord Gardiner of Kimble</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
<b>Baroness Goldie</b>	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
<b>Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park</b>	Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
<b>Lord Greenhalgh</b>	Minister of State, Home Office and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
<b>Lord Grimstone of Boscobel</b>	Minister of State, Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Department for International Trade
<b>Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Penn</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Scott of Bybrook</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Stedman-Scott</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
<b>Lord Stewart of Direleton</b>	Advocate-General for Scotland
<b>Lord True</b>	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
<b>Baroness Vere of Norbiton</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
<b>Baroness Williams of Trafford</b>	Minister of State, Home Office
<b>Viscount Younger of Leckie</b>	Whip

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# Written Statements

*Tuesday, 8 December 2020*

## Avian Influenza: Housing Measures for Kept Birds

[HLWS621]

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** My Hon Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Farming, Fisheries and Food) (Victoria Prentis) has today made the following statement.

Further to my statement of 12 November, High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza continues to circulate in the UK and Europe. There are now eight confirmed cases in England in kept birds and a large number of findings in wild birds across 19 counties.

Public Health England advises that the risk to public health is very low and the Food Standards Agency has said there is no food safety risk for UK consumers.

Given the high risk of incursion to captive birds we are adding a housing measure to the Avian Influenza Prevention Zone (AIPZ). This will take effect from 14 December. It will require all keepers to house their birds or otherwise keep them separate from wild birds. Keepers have until 14 December to ready their birds for housing.

The addition of the housing measure has been co-ordinated with the Devolved Administrations and Scottish and Welsh Governments are introducing a similar measure. In practical terms, this means the additional requirement to house birds applies to the whole of Great Britain. In Northern Ireland, as in GB, there is an Avian Influenza Prevention Zone in place and the case for further measures on housing is kept under review.

There are rules covering the free range sector in these circumstances. Eggs may continue to be marketed as free range providing the birds are not housed continuously for more than 16 weeks. There are similar rules for poultry meat for 12 weeks. Eggs or poultry can continue to be marketed as organic regardless of this additional housing requirement.

The key to protecting the sector and reducing the risk of further increase in cases is for all keepers to adopt the highest possible standard of biosecurity.

We continue to urge bird keepers to be vigilant for any signs of disease, ensure they maintain their biosecurity, seek prompt advice from their vet and report suspect disease to the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), as they must do by law.

We strongly advise keepers to register on the Poultry Register so as to receive notifications and disease alerts. This is mandatory for all those with flocks over 50 birds. Registration is easy and can be found at: [www.gov.uk/guidance/bird-gatherings-licences](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/bird-gatherings-licences).

Officials examine the evidence about the risk on a daily basis and review their risk assessment at least once a

month. The need to keep the housing requirement in place will therefore be continually under review.

## Covid-19 Roll-out: Contingent Liability

[HLWS622]

**Lord Bethell:** My Hon Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Covid Vaccine Deployment) (Nadhim Zahawi) has made the following written statement:

I am tabling this statement for the benefit of Honourable and Right Honourable members to bring to their attention the contingent liabilities relating to the contract signed between HMG and Pfizer/BioNTech for their Covid-19 vaccine.

On 2 December, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Authority (MHRA) gave their authorisation for use of the Covid-19 vaccine being manufactured by Pfizer/BioNTech. With deployment of this vaccine beginning this week, I am now updating the House on the liabilities HMG has taken on in relation to this vaccine via this statement and Departmental Minute laid today.

The agreement to provide an indemnity as part of the contract between HMT and Pfizer/BioNTech creates a contingent liability on the Covid-19 vaccination programme, and I have laid a Departmental Minute today containing a description of the liability undertaken.

It has been and is the Government's strategy to manage Covid-19 until an effective vaccine/s can be deployed at scale. Willingness to accept appropriate indemnities has helped to secure access to vaccines with the expected benefits to public health and the economy alike much sooner than may have been the case otherwise.

Given the exceptional circumstances we are in, and the terms on which developers are willing to supply a Covid-19 vaccine, we have taken a broader approach to indemnification than we usually would. Global approaches differ, but we are aware that many other nation states are offering indemnities as part of their contractual arrangements, or other means e.g., the US PREP Act, which provides immunity from liability to vaccine developers.

Even though the Covid-19 vaccines have been developed at pace, at no point and at no stage of development has safety been bypassed. The independent Medicine and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency's (MHRA) approval for use of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine clearly demonstrates that this vaccine has satisfied, in full, all the necessary requirements for safety, effectiveness, and quality. We are providing indemnities in the very unexpected event of any adverse reactions that could not have been foreseen through the robust checks and procedures that have been put in place.

Developing a vaccination against Covid-19 has been an extraordinary feat which has been delivered at great pace. Given the pace of vaccine development and our ambition to deploy the vaccine as soon as it has been authorised, it

has not been possible to provide you with normal 14 sitting days to consider this issue of contingent liabilities.

I will update the House in a similar manner as and when other Covid-19 vaccines are deployed.

### **Spending Review: Local Government Finance**

[HLWS619]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** My Rt Hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (Robert Jenrick) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

The Spending Review, announced by the Chancellor on 25 November, contained significant announcements for local government. The Government confirmed that councils' core spending power would rise by an estimated 4.5 per cent in cash terms in 2021-22 – worth £2.2 billion – a real terms increase. This will support the services that the public relies on, including children's and adult social care.

Alongside this, we announced a package of measures to support local government in their response to the pandemic. For 2020-21, government has delivered on its commitment to apportion irrecoverable tax losses from this year, by confirming that it will compensate councils for 75 per cent of such losses. For 2021-22 we will provide unringfenced grant funding of £1.55 billion; £670 million in recognition of the additional costs of providing local council tax support resulting from increased unemployment, and we will extend the existing sales, fees and charges scheme to include the first three months of 2021-22. We have good reasons to be optimistic about overcoming the spread of the virus. Nevertheless, we will continue to keep the Covid-19 package under review.

I intend to bring forward proposals for the allocation of this funding in the provisional local government finance settlement, before the Christmas Recess.

### **Taxation (Post-transition Period) Bill**

[HLWS623]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** My right honourable friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Jesse Norman) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

The Government has today tabled resolutions for the Taxation (Post-transition Period) Bill as part of its preparations for the end of the Transition Period.

The Bill will take forward changes to the tax system to support the smooth continuation of business across the UK. It will ensure legislation required for the purposes of VAT and customs and excise duties to support the practical implementation of the Northern Ireland Protocol is in place by the end of the Transition Period. It will also implement further changes to the tax system which are required ahead of the end of the Transition Period, including the introduction of a new system for collecting VAT on cross-border goods.

The Government will introduce Finance Bill legislation in the spring, following the next Budget in the usual way.

### **Unacceptable Behaviours Progress Review**

[HLWS620]

**Baroness Goldie:** My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence (The Rt Hon Ben Wallace MP) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

Today the Ministry of Defence is publishing the Unacceptable Behaviours Progress Review and its response, a copy of which has been placed in the Library of the House.

The Progress Review was conducted by Danuta Gray, Non-Executive Member of the Defence Board and Chair of the People Committee. The Review assessed progress made implementing the Wigston Review's 36 recommendations in the single Services, UK Strategic Command and Head Office.

The Review found that good progress was made over the past year. To further accelerate progress, it made an additional 13 recommendations, many of which build upon Wigston recommendations. I welcome the report and accept the recommendations in full. We will be considering how to best take the recommendations forward. We remain committed to preventing and reducing instances of unacceptable behaviour and supporting our people when instances do occur.

Whilst there is clearly work still to do, over the past year we have issued new policy guidance on unacceptable behaviours, introduced a new whole-force bullying harassment and discrimination helpline, introduced active bystander training and ensured our personnel have access to professional mediation services. We are also making reforms to the Service Complaints System and will be rolling out the first changes in the New Year.

# Written Answers

Tuesday, 8 December 2020

## Accident and Emergency Departments: Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis

Asked by *Baroness Masham of Ilton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many patients have been admitted into accident and emergency departments with (1) Crohn's disease, and (2) ulcerative colitis, in the last 12 months. [[HL10832](#)]

**Lord Bethell:** The data is not collected in the format requested.

## Armed Conflict: Chemical Weapons

Asked by *Baroness Cox*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons about (1) an investigation into whether chemical weapons have been used by Azerbaijan in the Nagorno-Karabakh region, and (2) securing assistance to protect civilians against the effects of such an attack. [[HL10747](#)]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK Government has had no such discussions with the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. We have seen no evidence that chemical weapons have been used in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. We continue to monitor the situation closely.

## Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis: Medical Treatments

Asked by *Baroness Masham of Ilton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment has been made, if any, of the average cost of treating Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis patients in England. [[HL10775](#)]

**Lord Bethell:** No assessment has been made.

## Developing Countries: Family Planning and Genito-urinary Medicine

Asked by *Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much they spent on overseas aid for (1) family planning services, and (2) sexual and reproductive health services, in each of the last three years, as calculated using (a) their usual reporting methodology, and (b) the Muskoka 2.0 methodology. [[HL11055](#)]

**Baroness Sugg:** A) Using our usual reporting methodologies, we estimate FCDO spent:

1) On family planning services:

£231 million in 2017.

£265 million in 2018.

£326 million in 2019.

2) On sexual reproductive health services:

£1.221 billion in 2017.

£1.215 billion in 2018.

£1.202 billion in 2019.

B) The Muskoka 2.0 report shows FCDO spent:

1) On family planning services:

£246 million in 2017 (2018 and 2019 not available).

2) On sexual reproductive health services:

£1.629 billion in 2017 (2018 and 2019 not available).

## Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency: Prosecutions

Asked by *Lord Browne of Belmont*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many successful prosecutions have resulted from the activities of Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency enforcement officers in (1) 2019, and (2) 2020 to date. [[HL10951](#)]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The following table shows the total number of successful prosecutions resulting from enforcement activity by Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) officers.

2019 (January to December)	160,623
2020 (January to November)	53,390

## Education: Finance

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to extend the provision of loans and grants for (1) further, and (2) higher, education to all regardless of age, background or circumstance. [[HL10675](#)]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** The government provides a comprehensive support package for students in further and higher education and reviews this support on an annual basis.

All eligible students, regardless of age and income, who are studying on undergraduate higher education courses qualify for up-front loans to meet the full costs of their tuition.

Likewise, eligible students aged 19 and over on further education courses qualify for Advanced Learner Loans to meet course fees. Those students can get help for other costs associated with study, such as childcare and travel, from the loans bursary fund which is administered by training providers. The loans bursary fund also provides learning support for those with disabilities.

Students who are attending full-time undergraduate courses and part-time degree level courses, and who are



under the age of 60 on the first day of the first academic year of their course, qualify for partially means-tested loans as a contribution towards their living costs while studying. Those attending full-time courses who are aged 60 or over qualify for fully means-tested loans for living costs.

The current system of loans for living costs targets the greatest level of support at students from the lowest income families.

Full-time undergraduate students with adult or child dependants can apply for additional means-tested grant support. Full-time and part-time undergraduate and postgraduate students with disabilities can apply for non-means-tested disabled students' allowances.

Students undertaking postgraduate masters and doctoral degree courses who are under the age of 60 on the first day of the first academic year of their course can apply for loans towards fee and course costs for the duration of their courses.

Maximum grants and loans for living and other costs, as well as postgraduate loans, have been increased by 2.9% for the current (2020/21) academic year. There will be a further 3.1% increase to undergraduate and postgraduate loans and undergraduate dependants' grants in 2021/22 – taking these to record levels in cash terms.

For 2021/22, the undergraduate disabled students' allowance, which is currently structured as four separate sub-allowances, is being simplified into one £25,000 allowance in line with the postgraduate disabled students' allowance. This change introduces greater flexibility for disabled students in accessing the support that they need.

### Electric Vehicles: Charging Points

*Asked by Lord Truscott*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Ministerial Statement by Lord Callanan on 18 November (HLWS580), what is the period over which they will invest the "£1.3 billion to accelerate the rollout of chargepoints for electric vehicles in homes, streets and on motorways" in order to meet their target to end the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2030. [HL10681]

**Lord Callanan:** The Government will provide £1.3 billion over the next four years to support the continued roll-out of chargepoints on motorways and major A roads, in homes and businesses and on-street.

*Asked by Lord Truscott*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Ministerial Statement by Lord Callanan on 18 November (HLWS580), what they estimate to be the total costs, including the costs of the infrastructure required to support electric vehicles, involved in meeting their target to end the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2030. [HL10682]

**Lord Callanan:** The Government has backed the new phase out dates with a £2.8 billion package of investment to reduce the cost of vehicles, accelerate the roll out of infrastructure and support industry to electrify their supply chains.

*Asked by Lord Truscott*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Ministerial Statement by Lord Callanan on 18 November (HLWS580), how many chargepoints for electric vehicles they estimate will be required to support their target to end the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2030. [HL10683]

**Lord Callanan:** The UK is a global front-runner in the provision of charging infrastructure. We want chargepoints to be accessible, affordable and secure wherever people live. While we expect the majority of EV charges will be done at home, charging provision on motorways and A-roads is needed to ensure that consumers can be confident in making the switch to electric vehicles. By 2030, we are planning for there to be around 2,500 high powered chargepoints across England's motorways and major A roads. The Ten Point Plan confirmed £1.3 billion in funding to support the rapid expansion of the charging network in the 2020s, which includes £950 million in future proofing grid capacity along the Strategic Road Network.

We also need to ensure that sufficient charging infrastructure is provided for households that do not have access to off-street parking. This must meet the needs of current and future EV users using a mix of charging types that can be cost-effectively supported by the future electricity network. We are working with stakeholders to ensure an evidence based transition to a charging network that fulfils these objectives.

*Asked by Lord Truscott*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Ministerial Statement by Lord Callanan on 18 November (HLWS580), what estimate they have made of the additional power required from the National Grid to support their plans to increase the use of electric vehicles and to end the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2030. [HL10684]

**Lord Callanan:** Each year BEIS publishes updated energy projections (UEPs), analysing and projecting future energy use and greenhouse gas emissions in the UK. The most recently published assessment (EEP 2019) included assumptions on the transition to electric vehicles and accounted for policies which were considered firm and funded by autumn 2019. Forthcoming energy projections will be updated to account for the latest policy decisions, including ending the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans from 2030.

We expect the transition to electric vehicles to create significant new demand for electricity but also offer opportunities for flexible management of the electricity system. Smart charging during off-peak periods, when electricity demand is low, can reduce peak demand and

avoid triggering unnecessary network reinforcement. It can also maximise use of renewable electricity and can benefit consumers with cheaper electricity.

### **Ethiopia: Armed Conflict**

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Baroness Sugg on 24 November (HC Deb, cols 134–9), why the UN Security Council meeting to consider the conflict in Tigray due to occur on 24 November was cancelled and rescheduled for later that day; what was the outcome of that meeting; and what assessment they have made of reports that people were killed and injured as a result of an attack on the camp for Eritrean refugees in Adi Harush. [HL10689]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** On 24 November, the UN Security Council discussed the conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray region in closed consultations. The UK continues to support mediation efforts, and call for de-escalation of the conflict and a political solution. We are concerned by many reports, including those in Adi Harush, that civilians have been impacted by this conflict. We have been consistent in our message that civilians must be protected and humanitarian access to be granted. On 25 November, the Foreign Secretary expressed this to Ethiopia's Deputy Prime Minister in person.

### **Ethiopia: South Sudan**

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that (1) South Sudan diplomats have been expelled from Addis Ababa, and (2) Ethiopian diplomats have been expelled from Juba; what assessment they have made of how those expulsions relate to military action in Tigray; and what discussions they have had with the government (a) of South Sudan, and (b) of Ethiopia, following those expulsions. [HL10845]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Reports of diplomatic expulsions by Ethiopia and South Sudan have been categorically denied by both governments. We are not aware of any such actions being taken by either country.

We are in touch with a range of partners to encourage Ethiopia to de-escalate and engage in a political process. We will continue to do so alongside South Sudan who have a shared interest in stability in Ethiopia.

### **Ethnic Groups: Social Mobility**

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the Social Mobility Commission *Changing gears: Understanding downward social mobility*, published on 18 November; and what steps they are taking to increase the social mobility of

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals. [HL10674]

**Baroness Berridge:** The government welcomes the Social Mobility Commission's recent report, *Changing gears: understanding downward social mobility*. Spreading opportunity is a top priority right across the department, every child should have the same opportunity to express their talents and make the most of their lives.

The report highlights the key role education plays in securing social mobility. The government's approach to social mobility has been to increase opportunity and support higher standards for all pupils, regardless of their ethnic background or race. That ambition has underpinned all of the department's reforms to education since 2010, which have demonstrated that it is possible to achieve the highest standards for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. A world-class education system that works for everyone is the surest way to spread opportunity across the country. That is why we are investing over £7 billion more in our schools by the 2022-23 financial year. This means schools around the country can continue to raise standards to give all children the skills and knowledge they need to succeed. Moreover, pupil premium funding, worth around £2.4 billion annually, continues to benefit the most disadvantaged pupils.

The government has recently launched a commission on race and ethnic disparities, which will review inequality in the UK. We will carefully review the findings of this commission to make sure we continue to tackle the injustice of educational inequality.

### **Gibraltar: UK Relations with EU**

*Asked by Baroness Harris of Richmond*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to include the government of Gibraltar in their future relationship negotiations with the EU. [HL10754]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK continues to negotiate for the whole UK family, which includes Gibraltar. We remain fully committed to finding a solution that supports Gibraltar, its people and its economy.

The UK and the Government of Gibraltar have held a number of constructive discussions with Spain on this issue. It is clearly in all parties' interests to find a solution, to ensure ongoing well-being and prosperity in the region.

### **Giulio Regeni**

*Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made, if any, to the government of Egypt about the murder of Giulio Regeni in Cairo in 2016. [HL10694]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We have the deepest sympathy for Giulio Regeni's family and their quest for

justice for his appalling murder. As Mr Regeni was an Italian citizen, the Italian Government is taking the lead role on his case. We continue to follow the investigation into his death and to work closely with the Italian Government. We last discussed this at an official level with the Italian authorities on 23 November. We have also raised with the Egyptian authorities at a senior level the need for a transparent and impartial investigation, in full co-operation with Italy, so that Mr Regeni's killers can be brought to justice.

### Home Education

*Asked by Lord Beecham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of children in England being educated at home; whether they are taking steps they to reduce that number; if not, why not; and what additional support they intend to provide to local authority children services to assist with the costs of home education. [HL10664]

**Baroness Berridge:** The information you requested is not held centrally by this department. The department does not currently collect data on numbers of home educated children.

Parents are not required to register if they are home educating their children and, therefore, there is not a robust basis on which the department can reliably collect statistics on home education.

In relation to the Covid-19 outbreak, the department is working closely with local authorities to encourage a return to full attendance in school and is monitoring the situation. Initial conversations with local authorities indicate that the majority have noticed an increase in enquiries from parents about home education. Where parents are anxious about the safety of their children returning to school, local authorities and school leaders are reinforcing that it is in the best interests of pupils to return to school.

Over March and April 2020, the government provided £3.2 billion of emergency grant funding and over £5 billion of cashflow support to assist local authorities through the Covid-19 outbreak.

On 22 October 2020, my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, announced allocations of a further £919 million of un-ringfenced funding to respond to spending pressures. This is part of a package of further support for councils, worth over £1 billion.

*Asked by Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they estimate that they will publish their response to the consultation held by the Department for Education about establishing a local authority registration system for children who do not attend state-funded or registered independent schools Children not in school, which closed on 24 June 2019. [HL10670]

*Asked by Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how home-schooled children are safeguarded. [HL10672]

**Baroness Berridge:** In the spring of 2019, a consultation was held on proposals for a mandatory register of children not attending state or registered independent schools to help local authorities carry out their responsibilities in relation to children not in school. The consultation closed in June 2019. Responses to the consultation have been considered, and a formal Government response document setting out next steps is expected later this year.

The current legal system around Elective Home Education is a system for identifying and dealing with children who, for any reason and in any circumstances, are not receiving an efficient suitable full-time education. A situation in which a child is not receiving a suitable full-time education requires action by a local authority under education law.

Local authorities' duties in respect of safeguarding children (set out in the Children Act 1989) apply to all the children in their area, no matter how they are educated. The provision of home education itself does not constitute a safeguarding risk. However, it is important to remember that a failure to provide suitable home education can constitute a safeguarding risk, because unsuitable or inadequate education can also impair a child's intellectual, emotional, social, or behavioural development. The Government's guidance to local authorities, issued in April 2019, explains how a local authority's safeguarding duties may be engaged in these circumstances, and what steps they can take. This guidance is available here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/791527/Elective\\_home\\_education\\_guidance\\_for\\_LAv2.0.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/791527/Elective_home_education_guidance_for_LAv2.0.pdf).

*Asked by Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that home-schooled children and young people do not become radicalised. [HL10671]

**Baroness Berridge:** Educating children at home can be a positive choice when carried out with proper regard for the needs of the child. Local authorities are responsible for taking action when it appears that the Elective Home Education provision is unsuitable. This will include assessing if the provision conflicts with 'Fundamental British Values' as defined in Government guidance. This includes, for example, seeking to promote terrorism, or advocating violence towards people on the basis of race, religion or sex.

The provision of home education itself does not constitute a safeguarding risk. However, it is important to bear in mind that a failure to provide suitable home education can constitute a safeguarding risk, because unsuitable or inadequate education can also impair a child's intellectual, emotional, social, or behavioural development.



The Government's guidance to local authorities, issued in April 2019, explains how a local authority's safeguarding duties may be engaged in these circumstances, and what steps they can take.

The Department works closely with the Home Office and Counter-Terrorism Policing to support local authorities at the highest risk of radicalisation, to fulfil their duty and prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This includes jointly funding Prevent Education Officers, who provide expertise and support to the education sector and relevant local authority services. The Department and partners also provide a range of advice and support for parents to help them protect children and young people from extremism and radicalisation, including through both the Educate Against Hate and the Counter-Terrorism Policing 'Act Early' websites.

To support home education, we know that children may also attend a range of out-of-school settings. The Department has invested £3 million in a pilot scheme aimed at enhancing the safeguarding of children in out-of-school settings to protect children from all forms of harm, including radicalisation.

### Home Education: Standards

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the number of students who are home educated, and (2) the quality of home education. [HL10673]

**Baroness Berridge:** The information requested is not held centrally. The department does not collect data on numbers of home educated children nor on the nature of the provision made for them.

Parents are not under a duty to register if they are home educating their children. Therefore, there is not a robust basis on which the department can reliably collect statistics on home education.

Local authorities are under a duty to take action if it appears to them that the home education provided to a child is unsuitable. The department issued revised and strengthened guidance to local authorities in April 2019, setting out how they can exercise their powers in this regard.

In relation to the Covid-19 outbreak, the department is working closely with local authorities to encourage a return to full attendance in school and is monitoring the situation. Initial conversations with local authorities indicate that the majority have noticed an increase in enquiries from parents about home education. Where parents are anxious about the safety of their children returning to school, local authorities and school leaders are reinforcing that it is in the best interests of pupils to return to school.

### Hong Kong: China

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Six-monthly Report on Hong Kong 1 January to 30 June 2020, published on 23 November, and the three breaches of the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration by the government of China, what steps they are taking to work with international partners to implement coordinated sanctions against those responsible for such breaches. [HL10654]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We continue to bring together our international partners to stand up for the people of Hong Kong, to call out the violation of their freedoms, and to hold China to their international obligations. As the Foreign Secretary made clear in his foreword to the Six-monthly Report on Hong Kong, the international community has been vocal in setting out its concerns about Hong Kong. On 6 October at the UN General Assembly Third Committee, the UK worked with 38 countries to issue a statement urging the relevant authorities to guarantee the rights protected under the Sino-British Joint Declaration. On 18 November, the Foreign Secretary released a statement with his Australian, Canadian, New Zealand and US counterparts, urging the Chinese central authorities to re-consider their actions against Hong Kong's elected legislature.

On 6 July, the Government established the Global Human Rights ('Magnitsky') sanctions regime. It would not be appropriate to speculate who may be designated as to do so could risk the impact of future designations. To list someone under this regime involves building an evidence base to identify accurately and responsibly those involved, and that can be a long and complex process.

### Local Government: Borrowing

*Asked by Lord Myners*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of requiring local authority borrowers to obtain independent credit ratings on the management of local authority borrowing. [HL10668]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** Local authorities borrow and invest under the Prudential Framework, and are free to borrow from any source provided it is in UK Sterling, without having to seek Government approval. Local authorities are free to pursue sources of financing that require the authority to obtain a credit rating. However, other options remain available including the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb) which, subject to conditions to prevent local authorities borrowing to invest primarily for yield, requires only that authorities confirm the borrowing is affordable.

## Nagorno-Karabakh: Armed Conflict

*Asked by Baroness Cox*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the statement of the United Nations working group on the use of mercenaries on 11 November that “the Government of Azerbaijan, with Turkey’s assistance, relied on Syrian fighters to shore-up and sustain its military operations in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone, including on the frontline”; and what assessment they have made of the participation of Syrian fighters in the conflict in the Nagorno-Karabakh region. [HL10745]

*Asked by Baroness Cox*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of President Macron's statement on 1 October that “we have information today that indicates with certainty that Syrian fighters from jihadist groups have transited through Gaziantep to reach the theatre of operations in Nagorno-Karabakh.” [HL10746]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK Government noted the 11 November statement of the UN Working Group on the use of mercenaries, in which the Group said it had received reports that both Azerbaijan and Armenia had deployed foreign fighters in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. While the Government is also aware of such reports, we have not yet seen solid evidence to substantiate the claims. The UK Government has made no assessment of President Macron's 1 October statement and is not aware of the specific information to which he referred.

*Asked by Baroness Cox*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Sugg on 19 November (HL10161), what steps they have taken to prevent the Azerbaijani Armed Forces (1) abusing, and (2) killing, prisoners captured during the ceasefire evacuation of the Nagorno-Karabakh region. [HL10748]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK Government is deeply concerned by the allegations from both sides that war crimes have been committed. Where it is possible to verify footage and reports, we will raise our concerns with the relevant Governments. It is for those governments to ensure that their armed forces do not commit war crimes and to investigate any such allegations. The Minister for the European Neighbourhood and the Americas emphasised these points during her recent calls with the Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan.

*Asked by Baroness Cox*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what proportion of the £1 million Nagorno-Karabakh aid package they announced on 31 October will go to displaced Armenians; and what steps they have taken to enable displaced Armenians to return to their homes. [HL10749]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The funds provided to the ICRC are intended for the support of all people affected by the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh region, according to need. The UK Government does not dictate what percentage of funds should be allocated to either party. The Minister for the European Neighbourhood and the Americas highlighted the importance of protecting all civilians, including displaced persons in her recent calls with the Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan.

*Asked by Baroness Cox*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made (1) to NATO, (2) to the Collective Security Treaty Organization, and (3) to the government of Israel, about immediately suspending the provision of all (a) lethal military supplies, (b) non-lethal military supplies, and (c) technical assistance to Azerbaijan until the government of Azerbaijan renounces the use of violence against Armenian Christians in the Nagorno-Karabakh region. [HL10750]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK Government has made no representations to NATO, the CSTO or the Government of Israel on these topics. We have repeatedly condemned the shelling of civilian areas by both sides in the conflict.

## Navy: Recruitment

*Asked by Lord West of Spithead*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the reasons behind the recent increase in the number of applications to join the Royal Navy; and whether this rise reflects an increase in that service's overall personnel capacity. [HL10938]

**Baroness Goldie:** The Royal Navy (RN) does not collect information on the reasons behind individual applications to join the Service.

There has been an increase in initial training capacity during 2020/21 and the RN is currently on track to deliver approximately 95% of its regular recruiting target. This will facilitate full crewing of all current and future operational platforms and the Future Commando Force. Recruiting targets for 2021/22 are more ambitious and the RN will draw upon the increased interest in joining to meet those higher targets.

## Nurses: Students

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to reintroduce paid contracts for student nurses on placements in NHS hospitals. [HL10647]

**Lord Bethell:** The Government has no current plans to reintroduce paid placements for students during the current Covid-19 outbreak.

Eligible nursing students will continue to receive payments from the student loans company and also access

the Learning Support Fund from the NHS Business Services Authority, which includes a non-repayable grant of at least £5,000 and further travel, dual accommodation expenses and parental support.

### **Palestinians: Migrant Camps**

*Asked by **The Earl of Sandwich***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports of the demolition of Humsah Al-Baqai'a on 3 November; and what representations they have made, if any, to the government of Israel about the support being provided to any children left without accommodation. [[HL10669](#)]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are seriously concerned by increasing rates of demolition of Palestinian property by the Israeli authorities. In all but the most exceptional of circumstances demolitions are contrary to International Humanitarian Law. The Minister for the Middle East and North Africa raised our concern about demolitions with the Israeli Ambassador to the UK on 29 October, and issued a statement outlining the UK's concern about the demolitions of structures in Humsa Al-Baqai'a on 6 November. Officials from the British Consulate General Jerusalem visited Humsa Al-Baqai'a on 6 November to reiterate UK support for the community. The UK provides funding to the West Bank Protection Consortium, which is coordinating with the Palestinian Red Cross and the United Nations to provide emergency shelter to the community of Humsa Al-Baqai'a, and determine the community's long-term needs. The UK is focused on preventing demolitions and evictions from happening in the first place through our legal aid programme, which supports Bedouin communities and Palestinians facing demolition or home eviction in both the West Bank and East Jerusalem. We continue to urge the Government of Israel to develop improved mechanisms for zoning, planning and permitting in Area C for the benefit of the Palestinian population, including by facilitating local Palestinian participation in such processes.

### **Public Expenditure: Coronavirus**

*Asked by **Lord Dodds of Duncairn***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much they have allocated (1) to Northern Ireland, (2) to Wales, and (3) to Scotland, under the Barnett formula for expenditure related to the Covid-19 pandemic to date. [[HL10667](#)]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** To give the devolved administrations the upfront certainty to plan and deliver their coronavirus response, the UK Government guaranteed they would receive at least £16 billion in additional resource funding this year on top of their Spring Budget 20 funding. This provides at least £2.8 billion of additional funding for the Northern Ireland Executive, £5.0 billion for the Welsh Government, and £8.2 billion for the Scottish Government.

Spending Review 2020 is providing the devolved administrations with £2.6 billion of Covid funding through the Barnett formula in 21-22. This allocates £540 million for the Northern Ireland Executive, £770 million for the Welsh Government, and £1.3 billion for the Scottish Government.

### **Scabies**

*Asked by **Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to make scabies a notifiable disease. [[HL10268](#)]

**Lord Bethell:** There are no plans to make scabies a notifiable disease.

### **Seasonal Workers: Brexit**

*Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the EU about ensuring the continued provision of seasonal jobs in the EU for British citizens after 31 December. [[HL10676](#)]

**Lord True:** The precise range of activities and documentation that will be needed after the transition period will be subject to negotiations with the EU. But any agreement will be without prejudice to the UK's future points-based immigration system.

The Government is committed to ensuring that businesses and workers have all the information they need to get ready for 1 January 2021. We will continue to review and update the guidance we have published to help ensure businesses are as prepared as possible for the changes and opportunities the end of the year will bring.

Now is the time for businesses to get ready. They should go to [www.GOV.UK/TRANSITION](http://www.GOV.UK/TRANSITION) for more details.

### **Sri Lanka: BBC World Service**

*Asked by **Lord Collins of Highbury***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the decision to bring forward the termination of the BBC World Service Sinhalese service; and whether they plan to make representations to prevent its termination. [[HL10742](#)]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The BBC announced in September 2020 their decision to close the Sinhala radio service, and we understand that plans for the closure are proceeding on the planned schedule. The BBC are maintaining their newsgathering presence in Sri Lanka and will focus on developing digital output. The BBC are operationally and editorially independent from Government, and the FCDO cannot dictate where changes to services may fall. The Sinhala service is also outside of the FCDO-funded World2020 programme.

## Unemployment

*Asked by Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is (1) the number of people, and (2) the percentage of the total workforce, registered as unemployed in the (a) Suffolk Coastal, (b) South Staffordshire, (c) Cambourne and Redruth, (d) Newark, (e) Welwyn Hatfield, (f) Great Yarmouth, (g) Hertsmere, (h) Berwick-upon-Tweed, (i) Cannock Chase, and (j) Wolverhampton South West, Parliamentary constituencies. [HL10655]

*Asked by Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is (1) the number of people, and (2) the percentage of the total workforce, registered as unemployed in the (a) Richmond (Yorkshire), (b) Uxbridge and Ruislip, (c) Esher and Walton, (d) Witham, (e) Surrey Heath, (f) Swindon South, (g) Wyre and Preston, (h) West Suffolk, (i) Reading West, and (j) South West Norfolk, Parliamentary constituencies. [HL10657]

*Asked by Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is (1) the number of people, and (2) the percentage of the total workforce, registered as unemployed in the (a) Rother Valley, (b) Newcastle-under-Lyme, (c) Leigh, (d) Don Valley, (e) Wakefield, (f) Bishop Auckland, (g) Sedgefield, (h) North West Durham, (i) Bassetlaw, and (j) Great Grimsby, Parliamentary constituencies. [HL10658]

*Asked by Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is (1) the number of people, and (2) the percentage of the total workforce, registered as unemployed in the (a) Bolsover, (b) Redcar, (c) Darlington, (d) Blyth, (e) Wolverhampton North East, (f) Bury South, (g) Bolton North East, (h) Heywood and Middleton, and (i) Ashfield, Parliamentary constituencies. [HL10659]

**Baroness Stedman-Scott:** Estimates of the level and rate of unemployment are compiled by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) using the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and Annual Population Survey (APS). The LFS provides national and regional unemployment estimates whilst the APS, which boosts the sample of the LFS, allows more local analysis.

Estimates are based on a sample of cases and therefore subject to sampling uncertainty. Unemployment estimates at geographies below regions, such as local authorities and parliamentary constituencies, can be more statistically uncertain. The confidence intervals given in Table 2 in the Annex reflect the level of uncertainty around the rates given, with confidence intervals (and therefore uncertainty in the figure) generally increasing as the underlying sample size decreases.

The Annex sets out the constituency level information asked for. All estimates of unemployment and the claimant count used the Annex are also publicly available on the NOMIS website (<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>).

Table 1 of the Annex gives the latest figures from the LFS on the unemployment levels and rates for the relevant regions for the named constituencies.

Table 2 of the Annex gives the latest estimate from the APS on the levels and rates of unemployment for the named constituencies. These figures, where available, should be treated as indicative, rather than precise, due to the heightened level of sample variability of estimates at this level of geography due to the small sample of people the estimate is based upon. Where the sample is too small to derive an estimate, figures are not given. The rates given express the proportion of the economically active population (those in work plus those seeking and available to work) who are unemployed, in line with the International Labour Organization definition of unemployment.

Table 3 of the Annex gives the latest figures on the Claimant Count for the named constituencies. The Claimant Count is based on administrative data and can be broken down robustly to constituency level, and as such, there are no confidence intervals around the figures. The Claimant Count is the number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance plus those who claim Universal Credit who are out of work. The rates given express the number of claimants as a percentage of the population aged 16-64.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Tables for PQ HL10655, HL10657, HL10658 & HL10659  
[Unemployment Levels and Claimant Count Levels.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-11-24/HL10655>

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