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HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Chief Whip
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Lord Benyon	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist	Whip
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Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen	Whip
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Lord Frost	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
Baroness Goldie	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park	Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Greenhalgh	Minister of State, Home Office and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Lord Grimstone of Boscobel	Minister of State, Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Department for International Trade
Lord Kamall	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
Baroness Penn	Whip
Baroness Scott of Bybrook	Whip
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Written Statements

Friday, 22 October 2021

Further Electronic Devices: Disadvantaged Children and Young People

[HLWS338]

Baroness Barran: My Right Honourable Friend the Secretary of State for Education (Nadhim Zahawi) has made the following announcement.

Today I am announcing that the government is providing a further 500,000 laptops and tablets. These devices will be available to disadvantaged children and young people via their school and college, to care leavers and young people supported by a social worker and to recently arrived children from Afghanistan. This is on top of the significant investment of over 1.3 million devices we have already provided and will support schools, colleges and local authorities in ensuring that all children and young people, regardless of their background, can achieve their potential. Providing more devices now will also increase our capacity to mitigate the effect of any disruption this winter.

Laptops and tablets distributed by the DfE are owned by schools, academy trusts, local authorities or further education providers. The majority of devices will be delivered to schools, colleges and trusts, which will lend them to children and young people who need them the most. Up to 10,000 devices will be available to local authorities for children and young people supported by a social worker and care leavers, which will allow them to stay in touch with their social workers and personal advisors. Up to 6,000 devices will be available for children from Afghanistan.

Devices will be delivered to organisations via the Get Help With Technology service, which reopens on Friday 29 October. My Department will send 'invitation to order' emails to schools, colleges, trusts and local authorities throughout November and December. Full guidance on the new offer and wider support available will be available when the service reopens on 29 October. We are also making grant funding available to contribute towards the technical support costs of setting up or resetting

devices received through this scheme. This is to ensure that devices remain safe for children and young people to use.

Our provision of laptops and tablets – which comes to a commitment of 1.85 million following today's announcement – is on top of an estimated 2.9 million already owned by schools before the start of the pandemic.

The government has also supported families get online through a number of initiatives. We recently announced new funding to support schools and colleges in providing internet access during the autumn term for disadvantaged pupils whose face-to-face education is disrupted. Schools and colleges will be able to claim this funding from January 2022. We are also continuing to provide 4G wireless routers for pupils without internet access.

Government investment has also helped more than a thousand schools with the slowest speeds access gigabit broadband. It means teachers can make use of the most cutting-edge learning tech benefitting thousands of children. Further information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/1000-schools-connected-to-top-of-the-class-full-fibre-broadband>.

In addition, our EdTech Demonstrator network provides free peer to peer training and advice to state-funded schools and further education institutions, further information can be found here: <https://edtechdemo.ucst.uk/>. EdTech Demonstrators can help schools and further education institutions make the best use of technology for classroom teaching and for remote education where pupils or students need to self-isolate in line with public health advice or government guidance.

The Government continues to fund expert technical support to help schools and colleges set up secure user accounts for Google and Microsoft's education platforms. Schools still have until 30 November 2021 to apply for Government funded support to get set up on either Google Workspace for Education or Microsoft Office 365 Education. Since April 2020, almost 7,000 schools have applied to the programme and over 2.34 million accounts have been created.

Written Answers

Friday, 22 October 2021

Arms Trade: Turkey

Asked by **Baroness Hodgson of Abinger**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are currently granting licences for arms exports to Turkey; and what plans they have, if any, to suspend the issue of new licences. [[HL3157](#)]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: Licences for arms exports continue to be issued to Turkey, but only where they are consistent with the [Oral Statement to Parliament](#) on 15th October 2019 made by my right hon. Friend the then Foreign Secretary, which clarifies that no export licences are currently being issued to Turkey for items that might be used in military operations in Syria.

All export licence applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis against the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria, taking into account all Relevant factors at the time of the application, including how the goods will be used.

HM Government publishes official statistics (on a quarterly and annual basis) about export licences on GOV.UK including detailed information on the type of export licences issued, refused or revoked, by destination, type (e.g. military, other) and a summary of the items covered by these licences.

Disability: Children

Asked by **Lord Alton of Liverpool**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the economic benefits of increasing the funding given to disabled children's health and social care services, and (2) the level of unmet need for disabled children's health and social care services. [[HL3091](#)]

Lord Kamall: Although no specific assessments have been made, we are working with the Department for Education and NHS England and NHS Improvement to improve the provision of health and care services for disabled children.

On 6 September, we announced an additional £5.4 billion for the National Health Service over the next six months, bringing the total Government support for health services in response to Covid-19 to over £34 billion in 2021/22. This includes £2 billion to reduce waiting times for patients, including disabled children. Councils have access to £51.3 billion to deliver core services, including a £1.7 billion grant for social care. To support local areas, we have provided over £6 billion in un-ringfenced funding directly to councils for the immediate and longer-term impacts of Covid-19 spending pressures, including for children's social care.

Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Military Aid

Asked by **Lord Tunnicliffe**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many military personnel are currently deployed as HGV drivers. [[HL2980](#)]

Baroness Goldie: Under Military Aid to Civilian Authority, Defence has made available approximately 250 military fuel tanker drivers and a similar number of support staff, to assist the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy with ensuring the continuity of fuel supplies around Great Britain.

Liothyronine

Asked by **Lord Hunt of Kings Heath**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bethell on 17 March (HL14040), what assessment they have made as to whether the fall in the price of Liothyronine (T3) is related to increased competition from marketing authorisations granted since 2016. [[HL3158](#)]

Asked by **Lord Hunt of Kings Heath**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bethell on 17 March (HL14040), what plans they have to encourage further marketing authorisations for Liothyronine (T3). [[HL3159](#)]

Asked by **Lord Hunt of Kings Heath**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bethell on 17 March (HL14040), what assessment they have made of the reduction in cost of Liothyronine (T3) in the UK, compared to the cost of the medication in other parts of Europe. [[HL3160](#)]

Lord Kamall: We have made no further assessment of the price of Liothyronine relative to increased competition from marketing authorisations or the cost of medicines in other parts of Europe. Further marketing authorisation applications remain at the discretion of pharmaceutical companies.

Ministry of Defence: Artificial Intelligence

Asked by **Lord Coaker**

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the Ministry of Defence will publish its artificial intelligence strategy. [[HL3057](#)]

Baroness Goldie: The Ministry of Defence will publish the first Defence Artificial Intelligence (AI) Strategy later this year.

Ministry of Defence: Energy Supply

Asked by Lord Coaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government what involvement the Ministry of Defence has in securing and protecting the UK's energy supplies; and what is their strategy for that role. [HL3056]

Baroness Goldie: The Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy is responsible for the overall operation and resilience of the UK's domestic energy market. In parallel, defence of the UK and its overseas territories from the malicious intent of our adversaries is the first task of the Ministry of Defence. This extends to being prepared to defend against and counter external hostile threats to our way of life and the delivery of critical services. Our strategy for this is set out in the Defence Command Paper, published on 22 March 2021.

Navy: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Tunncliffe

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many personnel who are part of the UK's carrier strike group have tested positive for Covid-19. [HL2975]

Baroness Goldie: As of 15 October 2021, 710 UK Armed Forces Personnel were reported as having tested positive to Covid-19 since the UK Carrier Strike Group deployed in May 2021.

NHS: Military Aid

Asked by Lord Tunncliffe

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many military personnel are currently deployed to help support the NHS. [HL2979]

Baroness Goldie: As of 14 October 2021, 559 military personnel were deployed to support the NHS.

Peers: Workplace Pensions

Asked by Baroness Deech

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker to explain the justification for the exemption from registration of EU pensions to which are attached conditions that a

reasonable member of the public might regard as likely to influence their conduct as parliamentarians, as set out in paragraph 68 of the 10th edition of the Guide to the Code of Conduct for Members of the House of Lords (September 2021). [HL2917]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: Members are not required to register their pension arrangements. The Committee for Privileges and Conduct (as it then was) has considered several times over a number of years whether EU pensions should be singled out for registration, most recently after the 2016 referendum on European Union membership. The Committee did not recommend such a change to the rules, noting that (a) declaration of EU pensions would be required if the House debated liability for those pensions during exit negotiations, and (b) the perception that support of the EU is a condition of receipt of a pension from an EU institution results from a selective reading of Article 245 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

Primary Health Care

Asked by Baroness Merron

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made, if any, of the benefits of a national strategy which fully integrates self-care for minor ailments into the NHS. [HL3117]

Asked by Baroness Merron

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to promote self-care for minor ailments in order to reduce pressure on GPs and A&E departments. [HL3119]

Lord Kamall: No assessment has been made of a separate strategy for the integration of self-care for minor ailments, as supported self-management and self-care for short term and ongoing physical and mental health conditions is an integral part of the NHS Long Term Plan.

Community pharmacies in England delivering NHS services provide support for self-care as part of their essential services. The Community Pharmacist Consultation Advanced Service enables NHS111 and general practitioners to refer patients with a minor illness to a pharmacist for a consultation to reduce pressure on primary care and accident and emergency departments.

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