

Press release: Foreign Secretary: Message for Rosh Hashanah



Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said:

As we enter the High Holidays, I wish a happy and sweet New Year to all Jewish communities in Britain and around the world.

For our Jewish friends in Israel, this has been a year of landmarks, including the centenary of the Balfour Declaration, the 70th Anniversary of Israel's statehood, and the first British royal visit, made by HRH The Duke of Cambridge in June.

This is also a special occasion for the UK's Jewish community. At a time when many worry about the corrosive impact of anti-Semitism, I want to reiterate our rejection of such ugly intolerance. We are proud of Britain's Jewish community, who make such a positive contribution to all aspects of our society and to public life. Long may that continue.

So I wish all those celebrating in the UK, and beyond, Shana Tova and Chatima Tova. Here's to a prosperous and healthy year!

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News story: Green number plates for clean vehicles

Clean cars, vans, and taxis could be equipped with green number plates under new plans to promote awareness of ultra-low emission vehicles.

The special plates, which are already used by countries like Norway, Canada, and China, could be available on green vehicles like electric and hydrogen cars, and are thought to encourage take-up among drivers.

As well as promoting zero emission vehicles, green number plates could help support local incentives for electric vehicles such as access to bus or low emission vehicle lanes, electric charging bays or ultra-low-emission-zones.

The plans are part of a forthcoming government consultation announced today (9 September 2018) which will seek views on whether green plates could work in the UK, and if so, what they should look like.

The consultation could pave the way for the addition of the eye-catching plates to UK vehicles in the next few years.

It comes ahead of the UK hosting the world's first [Zero Emission Vehicle Summit](#) this week, where nations from around the world will come together to agree to support the development of and acceleration in uptake of green vehicles

Chris Grayling, Transport Secretary, said:

The UK has a proud history of leading the world in technological advances and that is no different for ultra low emission vehicles, where we are at the forefront of innovation and testing.

This new cleaner, greener transport has the potential to bring with it cleaner air, a better environment and stronger economies for countries around the world.

Adding a green badge of honour to these new clean vehicles is a brilliant way of helping increase awareness of their growing popularity in the UK, and might just encourage people to think about how one could fit into their own travel routine.

Elisabeth Costa, Director at The Behavioural Insights Team, said:

We support efforts to increase awareness of the numbers of clean vehicles on our roads. Simple changes based on behavioural science can have a big impact.

Green plates would be more noticeable to road users, and this increased attraction can help normalise the idea of clean vehicles, highlighting the changing social norms around vehicle ownership.

The consultation will consider potential designs for the plates, which could include entirely green on the front, back or both sides of the vehicle, or a green symbol.

The [Prime Minister originally announced that the UK would host the Zero](#)

[Emission Vehicle Summit earlier this year](#) and Theresa May will deliver an address at the event on Tuesday (11 September 2018).

The summit will be taking place in Birmingham and Buckinghamshire on 11 and 12 September, bringing together nations from across the globe to pledge collective action towards zero emission journeys and showcase how the UK is one of the best places in the world for zero-emission innovation.

The work is all part of the government's [Future of Mobility Grand Challenge](#), outlined in its modern Industrial Strategy, aiming to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, make travel safer, improve accessibility, and present enormous economic opportunities for the UK.

The Zero Emission Vehicle Summit follows the [Road to Zero strategy](#) which was published earlier this summer and outlines the government's ambition to lead the world in the development and manufacturing of zero emission vehicles.

Press release: Justice Secretary announces victim compensation scheme review, scraps unfair rule

- Government to abolish rule which denied compensation for some victims of violent crime
- First ever cross-government Victims Strategy to be unveiled on 10 September

The Justice Secretary has today announced a full review of the [Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme](#) to ensure it reflects the changing nature of crime and can better support victims. The plans are set out in the first ever cross-government Victims Strategy, which will be launched tomorrow (10 September). The strategy will coordinate the already extensive government support for victims of crime to focus support and services around the individual.

Ministers have ordered this review of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme (CICS) to improve access to compensation, and to consider how the scheme might better serve victims – especially victims of child sexual abuse and terrorism. The review will begin immediately and is expected to report in 2019 with recommendations for reform.

The CICS awards taxpayer-funded payments to victims injured as a result of violent crime, and paid out more than £150 million to victims in 2017/18. This scheme is just one way in which victims are supported, with other ways including rehabilitation, psychological care, and outreach support.

More victims of violent crime will be able to receive the compensation to which they are entitled and ministers also committed to abolishing the pre-1979 'same-roof' rule of the CICS. This is especially relevant for victims of historic child abuse.

Justice Secretary David Gauke said:

Whilst no amount of compensation can make up for the immense suffering endured by victims of violent crime, it is vital they receive the help and support needed to rebuild their lives.

Today I'm announcing that we will review the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme to ensure it reflects the changing nature of crime and can better support victims, especially of historic and current child abuse. Over the years we've seen more prosecutions for sexual offences and sadly experienced the horror of terrorism. We need to make sure these victims get the awards they're due so we will be looking to ensure the criteria are appropriate.

We will also scrap the pre-1979 'same roof rule' which unfairly blocked some victims from compensation.

These two measures will ensure that victims of violent crime will get the compensation to which they are entitled.

The review will look at concerns around the eligibility rules of the scheme, the sustainability of the scheme and the affordability of any changes to be made.

The review will also enable the government to take full account of recommendations made by the [Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse](#).

The review will look at issues in CICS, including:

- time limits for applications – the scheme's time limit requires that applications be made by a person over 18 as soon as practicable and no later than 2 years after the date of the incident. It is suggested that victims of child sex abuse disproportionately delay reporting such crimes and applications for compensation, and therefore miss out on compensation.
- the 'same roof' rule – we will remove the pre-1979 rule and we will consider further changes to the remaining 'same roof' rule and previous failed applications. In July 2018, the Court of Appeal decided that the pre-1979 'same roof' rule had unfairly denied a claimant who was abused as a child by her stepfather the right to compensation. The government agreed with the judgement and has decided to abolish the pre-1979 'same roof' rule and will not appeal the decision.
- unspent convictions – the scheme automatically excludes an award if the applicant has an unspent conviction which resulted in a specified sentence (custodial sentence, community order or youth rehabilitation order). It is suggested the rules disproportionately impact vulnerable

victims of child sex abuse who may have offended in response to being abused/exploited/groomed.

- crime of violence– the scheme sets out what constitutes a crime of violence for the purposes of assessing entitlement to compensation. It is suggested that this definition should be broadened to include sexual exploitative behaviour, such as grooming.
- terrorism – the terrorist attacks of last year left people with serious life changing injuries and brought to light questions about the suitability of the scheme in providing support to victims of terrorism. The review will consider and clarify the eligibility, entitlement and amount of compensation to be awarded. This will build on the roll-out of the ground-breaking Victims of Terrorism Unit last year, to help ensure the best possible support.

‘Same roof rule’

- The so-called ‘same roof rule’ was part of the original (non-statutory) compensation scheme introduced in 1964.
 - The rule was changed in 1979, but was not made retrospective.
 - The pre-1979 same roof rule applies to adults and children. Under the rule applicants are not entitled to compensation if they were living with their assailant as members of the same family at the time of the incident.
 - The reasons for the rule were, broadly, difficulties with evidence in such cases, and a wish to ensure that offenders did not benefit from compensation paid to the victim who they were living with.
 - The rule applies to all victims of abuse inflicted by a family member living under the same roof; this includes physical as well as sexual abuse.
 - The rule was amended in 1979 to apply to adults only. Under the rule applicants can still be refused compensation if at the time of the incident they were adults living with the assailant as members of the same family, unless they no longer live together and are unlikely to do so again.
 - The amended rule gives CICA discretion to consider what has happened post the incident taking place, which has significantly reduced the number of applicants who are refused under this amended rule.
 - In July the Court of Appeal found that the pre-1979 rule unlawfully discriminated against the applicant. The government decided to not appeal this ruling and confirmed it would consult on changes to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme.
 - Abolishing the rule will require secondary legislation. Further details on this and the review of the scheme will be announced in due course.
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Speech: School Standards Minister at ResearchED

Thank you.

It is a pleasure to be back at the ResearchED National Conference once again. This teacher-led movement for a better understanding and use of evidence in education continues to go from strength to strength, and from country to country and also from continent to continent.

From Scandinavia to South Africa, Australia to North America, ResearchED is a global movement of teachers seizing back control of their profession.

And wherever conferences are held, it is the plurality of voices afforded a platform that defines ResearchED. Today, for example, attendees face the unenviable task of selecting between sessions. From Ben White's evidence about reducing teacher workload and improving retention, to Cat Scutt's whistle-stop summary of the evidence for what makes a highly effective teacher.

Today – as with all ResearchED conferences – teachers will share the stage with world-leading academics at the cutting edge of their field. Teacher, PhD student and prolific-blogger Greg Ashman, who has flown in from Australia, will be taking a challenging look at the practice of differentiation. Professor Becky Francis will be discussing issues of equity in the context of the Institute for Education's work on ability grouping.

Stephen Tierney – Chair of the Headteachers' Round Table – will be sharing his experience of building an evidence-informed school. And Mark Lehain – Director of the New Schools Network and Parents and Teachers for Excellence – will be sharing his expertise on implementing a knowledge rich curriculum. And Professor Daniel Muijs will be sharing the extensive work that Ofsted has been doing on how to improve the validity and reliability of school inspections.

The diversity of viewpoints and research interests means that ResearchED lends evidence-informed and nuanced voices to the great debates of education.

One such debate is the 'knowledge vs skills' debate. This important debate is decades old, but – somewhat paradoxically – as our understanding of how children learn has improved, the debate has become more polarised.

There is no doubt that in our ever more globalised world, one of the key purposes of education is to prepare the next generation to thrive in the 21st century. We must ensure that pupils are equipped with both powerful knowledge and the skills needed for this century.

And yet, the new technologies and seemingly ever changing world of the new millennium – now commonly referred to as the '4th Industrial Revolution' – shouldn't be an excuse to give way to romantic notions that education needs

overhauling.

All around the world, the desire to react to the unprecedented pace of technological change has led to many experts and commentators proclaiming knowledge-rich education redundant. Here is one example from a commentator in the Guardian:

‘In the future, if you want a job, you must be as unlike a machine as possible: creative, critical and socially skilled. So why are children being taught to behave like machines? Children learn best when teaching aligns with their natural exuberance, energy and curiosity. So why are they dragooned into rows and made to sit still while they are stuffed with facts?’

George Monbiot went on to repeat the trope, comparing schools to factories:

‘Our schools were designed to produce the workforce required by 19th-century factories. The desired product was workers who would sit silently at their benches all day, behaving identically, to produce identical products, submitting to punishment if they failed to achieve the requisite standards. Collaboration and critical thinking were just what the factory owners wished to discourage.’

Sir Ken Robinson is possibly the most famous modern proponent of this critique of schools, which – in his view – too often fail to prepare children for the world of today because of their rigidity, traditional focus on knowledge and discrete subjects and their standardised approach. But the image of children as passive recipients of education is actually centuries old, with its roots in the romantic Rousseauian notion that:

‘Man was born free, and he is everywhere in chains.’

There is concern that the type of education provided by schools will not only fail to prepare children for the future, but will actively hinder their chances of thriving in the 21st century. The words of Jean Jacques Rousseau echo through the writing of Sir Ken Robinson when he wrote:

‘We are all born with extraordinary powers of imagination, intelligence, feeling, intuition, spirituality, and of physical and sensory awareness.’

Implicitly – but powerfully – these statements provide the emotional underpinning for centuries of opposition to schooling that prioritises powerful knowledge being passed from subject-expert teachers to novice pupils.

Sir Ken Robinson makes this argument explicit in his proposals for the future of schooling:

‘The world is changing faster than ever in our history. Our best hope for the future is to develop a new paradigm of human capacity to meet a new era of human existence. We need to evolve a new appreciation of the importance of nurturing human talent along with an understanding of how talent expresses itself differently in every individual.’

But – just as with the romantic notion underlying these arguments – the idea that education must change to equip children to cope with the future is not new either. At international education conferences and in newspaper columns, it is not uncommon to hear the following argument advanced:

‘We find ourselves in a rapidly changing and unpredictable culture. It seems almost impossible to foresee the particular ways in which it will change in the near future or the particular problems which will be paramount in five or ten years. Under these conditions, much emphasis must be placed in the schools on the development of generalized ways of attacking problems and on knowledge which can be applied to a wide range of new situations.’

But this was written by the educationalist Benjamin Bloom in 1956.

Similarly, we are told that having google perpetually at the tip of our fingers means knowledge no longer matters as it once did. It is not unfamiliar to hear therefore that, and I quote:

‘Educated people are not those who know everything, but rather those who know where to find, at a moment’s notice, the information they desire.’

But this was written in 1914.

So lamentations about out-dated approaches to schooling might not be new, but they are believed widely. These ideas have been repeated throughout the 20th century and are no less popular now.

ResearchED therefore has a vital role to play in promoting evidence-informed voices and adding nuance to the polarised debates that often obscure the way forward in education.

In the ‘knowledge vs skills’ debate, whatever side of the debate you are on, and whatever other purposes you believe education should serve, we all share some common aims. It is our shared goal to ensure that the next generation is best prepared to work collaboratively on, think critically about, and solve difficult problems.

To this extent, the debate is not a debate about ends. It is about means. How do we prepare the next generation to solve the great problems of the future? How do we ensure that all pupils – whatever their background – are equipped to thrive in the wide variety of jobs they will enter?

We all seek the answers to these questions. And differences of opinion of course should be expected. But we should also expect opinions to be evidence-informed, which is where ResearchED plays such an important role.

But even on the question of means, there is much shared common ground. Take literacy, for example. Today is International Literacy Day. Whilst all teachers want to ensure that pupils learn to read early in primary school, debate has raged for decades as to how best to achieve this end.

Since 2010, the government has focused relentlessly on ensuring teachers use evidence-based systematic synthetic phonics programmes, resulting in a

revolution in the success of literacy teaching in primary schools. In 2012, just 58% of 6 year olds were on track to be fluent readers. Last year, that figure stood at 81% – with the number rising to 92% for 7 year olds.

By ensuring that children know the letter-sound correspondences of the English alphabetical code and teaching children the skill of ‘blending’, evidence based phonics programmes have transformed the success of early reading instruction.

The overwhelming evidence in favour of using a systematic phonics programme irrevocably changed the debate about literacy. No longer is the question whether to use a ‘whole word’ approach or a phonics approach. Instead, the question is which phonics programme is most effective. The evidence – and teachers’ application of it – means that the debate has evolved. Better-informed and more research-inclined teachers have left behind the small number of commentators who continue to bemoan the use of phonics and continue to promote ‘look and say’.

And a similar process is underway in the ‘knowledge vs skills’ debate. This debate must consider the implications of decades of cognitive science research. There are two cognitive scientists – closely associated with ResearchED – who have helped to shape and sharpen my thoughts in this debate.

Professor Daniel Willingham adorns the front cover of my copy of the ResearchED magazine. He has written extensively and authoritatively about critical thinking and the difficulties faced by teachers trying to teach it discretely. Describing these difficulties, he wrote:

‘Knowing that one should think critically is not the same as being able to do so. That requires domain knowledge and practise.’

The challenge to proponents of a radical overhaul of schooling, which prioritises skills in place of powerful knowledge, is how to reconcile this view with the cognitive science research pointing to the importance of knowledge. Critical thinking relies on deep reserves of domain-specific knowledge. Using an example from an American history curriculum, Willingham exemplifies this point. He says:

‘Knowing that a letter was written by a Confederate private to his wife in New Orleans just after the Battle of Vicksburg won’t help the student interpret the letter– unless he knows something of Civil War history.’

The ‘knowledge vs skills’ debate is concerned with how we best prepare pupils to think critically about problems, not whether we want children to think critically – whatever the image of ‘factory schools’ might imply.

Professor Paul Kirschner – who is speaking today – is a world-leading cognitive science researcher whose contributions to our understanding of education include the seminal paper ‘Why minimal guidance during instruction does not work’ – written with John Sweller and Richard Clark.

Writing about the importance of domain-specific knowledge and the differences between experts and novices– again with John Sweller – he emphasises the

importance of knowledge. And I quote:

‘When given a problem to solve, novices’ only resource is their very constrained working memory while experts have both their working-memory and all the relevant knowledge and skill stored in long-term memory.’

If we want pupils to become the great critical thinkers and problem solvers of the future, it is incumbent upon schools to ensure children are endowed with the powerful knowledge which best equips them to approach problems as experts.

This knowledge-rich approach guided our reform of all the subjects in the National Curriculum in 2014, and we plan to build on this success through the Curriculum Fund, where we are making £7.7 million available over the next five years to encourage greater use of well-sequenced, high quality, knowledge rich curriculum programmes in classrooms.

But the reliance of skills on domain-specific knowledge stored in long term memory is not the final word in the ‘knowledge vs skills’ debate. What knowledge leverages the greatest reward? How often do we need to update or redefine the knowledge future generations will need? How do we help children to use and apply their knowledge to think critically about a problem?

These questions, concerned with the detail that underlies the ‘knowledge vs skills’ debate, affect pedagogy, and they affect policy. Consider, for example, the change in the national curriculum towards a focus on computer science and away from ICT.

This curriculum change reflects how the knowledge needed to thrive can and does evolve. Just as touch-typing and word processing were – and are – important, it is crucial that the next generation leaves school with an understanding of the principles of programming. And early indications are that, this year, there have been huge increases in the number of pupils taking computer science at GCSE and A level.

Just as proponents of a greater focus on skills must have regard to the evidence on the importance of domain-specific knowledge, we must also understand the detail and the nuances in the arguments about the vital role of knowledge in education.

Evidence-informed debates foster that nuance and advance our understanding. ResearchED provides a platform for a plurality of evidence-informed voices, so that teachers and researchers can share their knowledge and move beyond the tribalism that too often attracts headlines and blights progress.

ResearchED doesn’t have the power to stop lamentations about factory schools turning out identikit pupils ready for 19th century factory labour. But it has helped to advance an understanding of evidence, inoculating teachers from ideological headwinds and helping to inform better teaching – and, I have to say, better policy.

For that reason, it is a pleasure to be back again.

Thank you.

News story: Monkeypox case in England

Latest update

Public Health England (PHE) can confirm that there have been no further cases of monkeypox following the 3 individuals diagnosed in the UK between the 8 and 26 September 2018.

All known close contacts were followed up after their last contact with the individuals, and no one else went on to develop the disease themselves, so we can be confident that there has been no further onward transmission of the virus.

Dr Nick Phin, Deputy Director of the National Infection Service at PHE, said:

While this was an unusual event in the UK, we have tried and tested protocols and procedures in place to ensure that we can respond rapidly to such incidents.

Through this response, which was delivered with colleagues from across the NHS, we have been able to follow up with all those people who had close contact with the individuals involved. We are pleased that we have seen no further transmission of monkeypox in the UK linked to these cases.

We would like to thank all staff for their hard work supporting this incident and we will continue to remain vigilant to the threat of infectious disease.

Previous updates

26 September 2018

PHE can confirm that a third individual has been diagnosed with [monkeypox](#) in England.

This person was involved in the care of the case in Blackpool Victoria Hospital before monkeypox was diagnosed.

This third case is now isolated to minimise the risk of onward transmission to others. They are being looked after in the specialist unit at Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle.

We are following up with close contacts of this new case to provide advice and monitor their health. We are adopting a highly precautionary approach to minimise the risk of additional cases and are tracing anyone who had contact with this individual 24 hours before they noticed a rash.

Dr Nick Phin, Deputy Director of the National Infection Service at PHE, said:

This healthcare worker cared for the patient before a diagnosis of monkeypox was made. We have been actively monitoring contacts for 21 days after exposure to detect anyone presenting with an illness so that they can be assessed quickly. It is therefore not wholly unexpected that a case has been identified.

This person has been isolated and we are taking a highly precautionary approach to ensure that all contacts are traced.

11 September 2018

Public Health England (PHE) can confirm that a second individual has been diagnosed with monkeypox in England.

There is no UK link to the patient diagnosed last week in Cornwall who is currently receiving care at the Royal Free in London. This second patient had travelled to Nigeria where they are believed to have acquired the infection. The second case first presented at Blackpool Victoria Hospital and following a positive test result was transferred to Royal Liverpool University Hospital, an expert respiratory infectious disease centre, where they are receiving appropriate care.

Dr Nick Phin, Deputy Director, National Infection Service at PHE:

We know that in September 2017 Nigeria experienced a large sustained outbreak of monkeypox and since then sporadic cases have continued to be reported. It is likely that monkeypox continues to circulate in Nigeria and could, therefore, affect travellers who are returning from this part of the world.

However, it is very unusual to see 2 cases in such a relatively short space of time. We are working hard to contact individuals, including healthcare workers, that might have come into contact with the individual to provide information and health advice.

Dr Mike Beadsworth, Clinical Director of the Tropical and Infectious Diseases Unit said:

We are treating a patient who has tested positive for monkeypox. The patient is being cared for on our specialist infectious and tropical diseases unit, by highly trained staff who are experienced

in dealing with a variety of infectious diseases.

All necessary precautions are being taken by specialist staff and there is currently no risk to other staff, patients or visitors.

We ask that people continue to use our services as normal and that people only come to our emergency department if their condition is serious and/or an emergency.

8 September 2018

PHE can confirm an individual has been diagnosed with [monkeypox](#) in England. This is the first time this infection has been diagnosed in the United Kingdom (UK).

Monkeypox is a rare viral infection that does not spread easily between people. It is usually a mild self-limiting illness and most people recover within a few weeks. However, severe illness can occur in some individuals.

The infection can be spread when someone is in close contact with an infected person; however, there is a very low risk of transmission to the general population.

The patient was staying at a naval base in Cornwall prior to transfer to the expert infectious disease unit at the Royal Free Hospital, London where they are now receiving appropriate care.

The patient is a resident of Nigeria, which is where they are believed to have contracted the infection, before travelling to the UK.

As a precautionary measure, PHE experts are working closely with NHS colleagues and will be contacting people who might have been in close contact with the individual to provide information and health advice.

This includes contacting a number of passengers who travelled in close proximity to the patient on the same flight to the UK. People without symptoms are not considered infectious but, as a precaution, those who have been in close proximity are being contacted to ensure that if they do become unwell they can be treated quickly. If passengers are not contacted then there is no action they should take.

Initial symptoms include fever, headache, muscle aches, backache, swollen lymph nodes, chills and exhaustion. A rash can develop, often beginning on the face, then spreading to other parts of the body. The rash changes and goes through different stages before finally forming a scab, which later falls off.

Dr Michael Jacobs, clinical director of infection at the Royal Free Hospital, said:

Monkeypox is, in most cases, a mild condition which will resolve on

its own and have no long-term effects on a person's health. Most people recover within several weeks.

It is a rare disease caused by monkeypox virus and has been reported mainly in central and west African countries.

It does not spread easily between people and the risk of transmission to the wider public is very low. We are using strict isolation procedures in hospital to protect our staff and patients.

Dr Nick Phin, Deputy Director, National Infection Service at PHE, said:

It is important to emphasise that monkeypox does not spread easily between people and the overall risk to the general public is very low.

Public Health England is following up those who have had close contact with the patient to offer advice and to monitor them as necessary.

PHE and the NHS have well established and robust infection control procedures for dealing with cases of imported infectious disease and these will be strictly followed to minimise the risk of transmission.