

Press release: Thousands of new school places in underperforming areas

Thousands more pupils will have the opportunity to study in new free schools, as the Education Secretary approves applications across the country.

Damian Hinds will today confirm that 22 applications to create a new free school have been successful – creating an extra 19,000 places in the areas that need them most and taking the government a step closer to delivering on its pledge to create one million new school places by 2020, the fastest growth for two generations.

There are more than 440 free schools nationwide, with 285 more set to open in the coming years. Of those inspected by Ofsted, 84% have been rated good or outstanding, with 30% rated outstanding – and in 2018, four of the top 10 Progress 8 scores for state-funded schools in England were achieved by free schools.

The latest approvals are targeted in areas of the country most in need – with 18 of the new schools set to open in local authorities identified by the Department for Education as having the lowest educational performance and insufficient capacity to improve – and areas that have not yet benefitted from the free schools programme.

Education Secretary Damian Hinds said:

Free Schools have revolutionised education in this country – through their innovation and a different way of thinking about teaching and learning they are a fantastic addition to our education system.

Many parts of the country have already taken advantage of the Free School Programme and have reaped the benefits. A great education is the key to unlocking every child's potential so today we are announcing 22 new free schools so more young people – often in the most disadvantaged areas of the country – can benefit from a great free school opening in their area.

I look forward to seeing the schools as they are built, and how the young people studying there flourish and go on to succeed.

Luke Tryl, Director of New Schools Network said:

Today's announcement is great news for families across the country. These approvals mean that some of the areas most desperately in need of greater educational opportunity will soon have innovative and successful new schools opening their doors to the community.

The range of different schools approved today demonstrates that the free schools policy continues to lead the way in driving innovation across education in England. We congratulate all the approved schools and look forward to helping them through the pre-opening process.

Successful applications include:

- BOA Stage and Screen Production – an exciting new 16-19 specialist college in central Birmingham, set up by the Birmingham Ormiston Academy, offering a range of vocational and high level technical qualifications for students wishing to enter TV, Film or Theatre professions.
- Callerton Academy – a 11-16 mixed secondary school in Newcastle- Upon- Tyne, led by Gosforth Federated Academies trust, which since 2010 has run the popular and over-subscribed Gosforth Academy, rated ‘outstanding’ by Ofsted. Callerton Academy will bring the benefits of this existing offer to the Callerton area of the city.
- The Shireland CBSO Music School – a new specialist music school, serving the Black Country and West Midlands – the Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust are working in collaboration with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra to provide young people from diverse backgrounds the opportunity to achieve musically at an elite level.
- Michaela Community School Stevenage- a mixed, non-faith secondary providing 1260 school places for 11-18 year old pupils and will be part of a newly formed multi-academy trust, including Michaela Community School in Brent, judged Outstanding by Ofsted in 2017.

Today’s announcement includes confirmation that two new maths schools will proceed to the next stage of development to tap into the expertise of the country’s top universities to increase the number of young people studying maths, giving them opportunities to secure good jobs and helping to boost the UK economy.

Ofsted has found that maths schools excel in recruiting students from disadvantaged or under-represented background to fulfil their potential – the new schools will try to emulate the successes of maths schools in Exeter and London in putting talented mathematicians on the path to a course at top universities and supporting them towards advanced mathematics studies. They are:

- A partnership between Lancaster University and Cardinal Newman College.
- A partnership between Guildford Education Partnership and the University of Surrey.

Alongside this the Education Secretary has approved, in principle, a bid for funding to open Hampton Waters Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided School in Peterborough to meet demand from parents in the city – the department is working with proposers to identify suitable sites for a further two bids.

Leora Cruddas, Confederation of School Trusts Chief Executive said:

The Free Schools programme has provided thousands of much-needed school places across England. Free schools have driven innovation in the system and many have embraced cutting-edge quality informed by the best research, almost unheard of 20 years ago.

Hamid Patel, Chief Executive of Star Academies said:

Free schools are in the unique position of shaping their own destinies through innovation, giving school leaders the opportunities to unite pupils, families and staff in the pursuit of goals that go beyond first-class examination results.

A clear focus on character-building in Star Academies gives pupils the confidence and resilience to compete on an international stage with young people from more advantaged backgrounds and free schools relish the challenge of improving pupils' life chances by equipping them with the social and cultural capital to make a positive difference.

Today's news follows a reception to celebrate the free schools programme hosted by the Prime Minister and Education Secretary at Downing Street on 30 May – with both paying tribute to the programme's successes in empowering high-performing institutions to take a more innovative approach to teaching to create a diverse range of schools and more choice for parents.

It also follows the announcement in March of 37 new special free schools, and two alternative provision free schools, creating 3,500 extra school places for pupils facing challenges in their education.

Applicants will be able to register their interest for the next round of free schools shortly, and will again target areas with low standards and demographic need for the new school places.

[Three new general licences announced](#)

Three new [general licences for the killing or taking of wild birds in England](#) were issued on Friday 14 June.

The recent [call for evidence](#) demonstrated a range of impacts that individuals and groups experienced as a result of the revocation of licences GL04, 05 and 06, including crow attacks on lambs and ewes during lambing, the risk of predation for eggs and fledglings of birds of conservation concern, and public health issues caused by pigeons in urban areas. A [summary of the evidence and the government response](#) was published on 11 July.

The new licences will allow users to control certain species of wild birds in order to:

The decision to issue the new licences follows analysis of information provided to Defra's formal open evidence-gathering exercise which allowed all concerned parties to explain the impact that Natural England's withdrawal of its three general licences GL04, 05 and 06 had on the management of wild birds.

The call for evidence Use of general licences for the management of certain wild birds closed on Monday 13 May, with over 4,000 responses submitted. Having also sought the views of user groups on the usability of different potential licensing options, the three new general licences seek to protect wild birds whilst recognising the legitimate needs of people and other wildlife.

The three new general licences cover species and specified purposes that Defra considers appropriate in light of the information gathered through that exercise and other relevant evidence, including statutory advice from Natural England. At this stage, the new licences will not apply to European protected sites (more information below).

The licences will be valid until 29 February 2020. In the meantime, Defra will lead a review of the longer-term general licensing arrangements. We intend to launch an initial public consultation by the end of the summer, with further details to follow. Defra will work closely on this review with Natural England, who have already indicated the need to examine a wider range of general and class licences.

Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

I recognise the scale of interest and concern that was generated by Natural England's decision to revoke three general licences and I am grateful to those thousands of individuals and groups who shared their experiences in responding to the call for evidence.

The three new general licences announced today seek to minimise some of the negative impacts that the withdrawal of the previous licences had. But this is a temporary way forward and does not cover European protected sites, where the law is more complicated and we continue to engage with stakeholders.

We will shortly set out details of a wider review of general licences, to provide a long term licensing solution which balances the needs of users and wildlife.

Natural England's Chair, Tony Juniper CBE, said:

I welcome the Environment Secretary's announcement today, which follows a great deal of work between Defra and Natural England to

tackle an exceptionally complex situation.

I am immensely grateful for the efforts of my colleagues at Natural England in putting in place alternatives for users affected by the recent changes to general licences.

Our aim has always been to ensure that there is a robust licensing system in place which takes into account the needs of people and wildlife. We look forward to working closely with Defra on a review of general licences later this year to help achieve this.

Natural England revoked three general licences (GL04, 05 and 06) in April following a legal challenge and subsequent legal advice which concluded that the three licences were unlawful. For many users, Defra's new licences will be the appropriate option. Beyond these, Natural England recently issued three general licences GL26, GL28 and GL31 to cover some of the species and purposes covered by the original licences that were revoked. These remain in place, since they allow for specified activity on European protected sites which are not covered by Defra's new licences.

Natural England also introduced an interim system for issuing individual licences whilst the replacement general licences were being developed. Users who have received one of these individual licences can continue to operate under them should they wish. Whichever licence a user chooses to rely on, they will need to ensure they comply with the conditions and requirements of that licence. Natural England will be contacting all applicants who have made one of these individual licence applications where a licence has not yet been issued to determine whether they need to continue to with any part of their application.

New Licences

General licence to kill or take certain species of wild birds to conserve wild birds and flora or fauna (GL34)

Species covered: Carrion Crow, jackdaw, jay, magpie, rook, Canada goose, Egyptian goose, monk parakeet, ring-necked parakeet, sacred ibis and Indian house-crow

General licence to kill or take certain species of wild birds to preserve public health or public safety (GL35)

Species covered: Carrion crow, jackdaw, magpie, feral pigeon, rook, Canada goose and monk parakeet

General licence to kill or take certain species of wild birds to prevent serious damage to livestock, foodstuffs for livestock, crops, vegetables, fruit, growing timber, fisheries or inland

waters (GL36)

Species covered: Carrion crow, jackdaw, magpie, feral pigeon, rook, woodpigeon, Canada goose, Egyptian goose, monk parakeet and ring-necked parakeet

Gulls

Users can [continue to apply to Natural England for an individual licence](#) for control of herring gulls, and now for lesser black-backed gulls. Due to their poorer conservation status, these species have not been included in the new general licences. In terms of control of nests and eggs, their breeding season for this year is largely complete, so Natural England is developing a new class licence for these species to be ready in good time for next year's breeding season.

Protected sites

European protected sites are subject to specific EU law requirements given their particular importance to conservation. These include a process for ensuring that any impacts on the site are properly considered before any plan or project can be undertaken, known as a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). There are a number of ways in which people can continue to carry out control on European protected sites – which include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) – as well as Ramsar sites. For instance, they can apply to Natural England for an individual licence if they are not already covered by an existing individual licence or the specific circumstances provided for by Natural England's three recent general licences (carrion crow, Canada goose and woodpigeon). Users who already have an individual licence issued since 25 April 2019 can continue to operate under that should they wish.

At this stage the three new general licences will not apply to European protected sites, or to land within 300 metres of those sites. Defra will continue to work closely with conservationists, farmers, landowners, pest controllers, gamekeepers and all interested stakeholders in order to develop solutions that may be available for activity on protected sites.

As in the previous system, users will need to ensure they have consent from Natural England for any activity on Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

Background

Speech: Leading the world in developing innovative technologies for patients

Good morning – it is brilliant to be here with you all today.

I know over recent days we've all been inundated by politicians' speeches.

But let me give you some reassurance: I'm not here to announce that I'm running to be Prime Minister, nor to dwell on the consumption of pharmaceuticals that, shall we say, were not produced in line with MHRA GMP guidelines.

I'm instead here to talk about something we actually all care about: healthtech.

Because I know you all share my ambition for the UK to be the world's leading health tech ecosystem – where we pair our formidable expertise in research and development with an NHS that supports and drives the take-up and spread of the most innovative new products.

An ecosystem that does not rest on our laurels, but builds on being a global life sciences hub that:

- received the highest level of foreign direct investment in life science projects in Europe
- has a booming biotech sector, with companies raising £1 billion more than last year's £2.2 billion, with a strong digital sector emerging

Underpinning this performance has been your hard work, ingenuity and innovation. We have also built increasingly strong links between government, industry, the NHS, patients and charities.

The very fact that the industry-led life sciences industrial strategy has been followed by not one but 2 genuinely ambitious sector deals, stands testament to the effectiveness of the UK life sciences ecosystem.

Frankly, when I go to cross-government ministerial meetings, other ministers look enviously on at what the life sciences industry has achieved – and our potential in the years to come.

The opportunity...and the challenge

However, we all know this is no time to get complacent. Working in a hyper-competitive global industry, you all know an important truth: if you do not

relentlessly push for progress, you are finished.

And let me be very clear: I recognise how globally mobile this industry is. If the UK does not remain competitive, you will move to Boston or Singapore, and we will lose jobs and investment.

This is why the work we have done through the sector deals to strengthen our ecosystem is so vital.

Over the last 3 years, the government has invested over £100 million to support healthtech development and adoption, including:

- over £30 million invested in the Digital Health Technology Catalyst to develop the best new digital health solutions
- and over £39 million to strengthen the academic health science networks (AHSNs). Putting boots on the ground to improve local adoption and ensuring the best innovations become available to patients quicker than ever before

And this is making a difference.

Over 200 projects which have received support through the Digital Health Technology Catalyst, and thousands of companies and innovations have been supported by the AHSNs.

This represents good progress, but we must be relentless in our drive to ensure that the UK maintains its place at the cutting edge of health innovation.

And this means ensuring our life science sector continues to support innovative healthtech SMEs to grow into scale companies – to benefit the NHS, patients and the wider UK economy.

To achieve this, we are looking at how healthtech companies can access the finances they need and creating a finance innovation ecosystem which promotes collaboration between the NHS and industry, to ensure new technologies meet NHS priorities and therefore have a ready-made market within the UK.

My ambition is for the NHS to build genuine, deep, trusting partnerships with industry that create long term value – and not to just rely on antiquated buyer-seller relationships.

Remaining at the forefront of innovation

We want the UK to be the best place in the world to develop, test and launch innovative technologies, helping NHS patients to get faster access to new treatments.

It starts with research.

In the 13 years since the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) was created, there has been a transformation in the environment for health research, including supporting research funded by the life sciences industry.

We have taken a 3-pronged approach:

1. We have built the research infrastructure in the NHS required to develop new technologies through investment in developing the medtech and in vitro diagnostic co-operatives, part of a record investment of more than £800 million in NIHR centres and facilities over 5 years from April 2017.
2. Our Clinical Research Network has supported the recruitment of over 725,000 patients – a record number and one we are committed to growing.
3. Once we have the data that shows something works, we support its continued research and development to help it get to market. Our NIHR invention for innovation (i4i) programme has been crucial, supporting more than 240 healthtech projects so far.

And we know how difficult it can be for SMEs to find the funds to develop their product and that is why we have recently added the i4i Connect scheme that specifically supports SMEs with funding boosts of up to £150,000.

We also recognise that good research needs good data. Last week we launched the competition to identify 5 new digital innovation hubs – making globally leading datasets more easily available, bringing clinical trials into the 21st century, and stimulating a new wave of innovation to benefit the UK healthcare system.

A slick and flexible innovation ecosystem

To collaborate and innovate effectively, the UK regulatory framework must also remain slick and easy to navigate for all types of innovators.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has a global reputation for innovation and leadership, and we are determined that this will be maintained in the year ahead. We will also shortly be announcing the appointment of a very exciting new chief executive to take over from the excellent Ian Hudson.

As it reaches its 20th anniversary, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is rightly recognised as a world leader in its field. It has remained so by continuously evolving its approach alongside breakthroughs in science, healthcare and the life sciences sector.

I know, however, that there is more to be done. That's why NICE is undertaking a review of its methods, in consultation with industry. And let me be clear, where the review demonstrates that substantive reform is

required, NICE will have unflinching political support to deliver it.

We are also introducing a new funding mandate for healthtech from 2020, combined with an increase in the number of NICE appraisals. This will make sure that the best new products make it to patients who need them, no matter where they live.

A co-ordinated and joined-up system

Finally, we need to improve and speed up the way the NHS adopts innovation.

There is little point in having a world-leading research infrastructure if those same products are not used and rapidly spread across the NHS.

Our response to the Accelerated Access Review made clear our ambition for NHS patients to be among the first in world to receive life-changing treatments.

This would be good for patients, good for the NHS and good for industry.

In the past year, we have made real progress.

We've launched NHSX, who are already working hard to develop more open data standards, improve procurement practices and ensure the NHS has the digital skills it needs for the future.

We've recruited Matthew Gould, the former British Ambassador to Israel, to head up NHSX, and use the negotiating skills he honed working on the Middle East peace process to bridge organisation divides within the NHS.

We have also brought together key government, NHS and industry partners to form the Accelerated Access Collaborative (AAC).

Many of you will have seen my recent announcement to expand the AAC. And you will be hearing from Dr Sam Roberts, the new Chief Executive, on her plans for the future, later this afternoon.

Now, the AAC may sound like just another bureaucratic acronym, but I believe that through acting as a single umbrella organisation across the UK health innovation eco-system, it will genuinely drive change in the NHS.

But how will this work in practice? The AAC will:

- create a system that works together to identify the best new innovations and signal the needs of patients and clinicians to industry. For example, HealthTech Connect identifies the best health technologies during development, so that the NHS is ready to make use of them as soon as they come to market
- develop a seamless and efficient testing and approvals process for new innovations, so that gaps and inconsistencies are removed as products move across the system

- support early and flexible engagement on commercial arrangements, to align innovation policy with trusts and clinical commissioning groups (CCGs)

Testing is particularly important for healthtech. By testing a product in a real-world setting, innovators can generate the evidence they need to convince commissioners to adopt it.

This is why we have committed to develop a globally leading testing infrastructure within the UK in both the Long-Term Plan and the life science sector deals.

The combination of a healthtech funding mandate and a globally leading testing infrastructure will ensure the best new innovations get into the NHS, and to patients, faster.

It is a big challenge – but one that we can deliver.

As well as improving the internal plumbing of the NHS, the AAC is also continuing to directly support the best new products.

You may have seen the recent media coverage on the increased NHS support to make pre-eclampsia tests more widely available.

This represents just one of the 7 high-performing technologies already receiving specialist, targeted support. Just these 7 innovations have the potential to improve the lives of half a million patients, and save the NHS up to £30 million.

And just last week NHS England also announced the latest tests, procedures and treatments to be supported with £19 million in funding through the Innovative Technology Programme (ITP).

Over 300,000 patients have already benefited from access to treatments through the programme and these exciting new technologies will benefit over 400,000 more.

A great example is Heartflow, a device used to treat coronary heart disease without invasive surgery, which is being supported by both the AAC and the ITP.

Not only does Heartflow save the NHS £214 per patient, but, more importantly, it puts patients back in control of their condition, providing peace of mind through improved diagnosis.

Fundamentally, both the Secretary of State and I are committed to a simple goal: supporting healthtech innovators to spread the use of the most exciting new products in the NHS.

Closing message

In closing, I want to leave you all with a simple message: both the Secretary of State and I are committed to supporting healthtech innovators, and using your products to improve the health and wellbeing of patients right across the country.

I am more confident than ever that together we are creating one of the most pro-innovation health innovation systems in the world.

An innovative ecosystem that ensures:

- clinicians have access to the best new innovations, which are tailored to meet their key healthcare needs
- innovators better understand these needs and have the support they need to demonstrate how their innovations can address them
- more patients have access to more innovations which offer them improved prevention, earlier diagnosis, and more targeted treatment

All that I ask is for your continued close partnership as we deliver this vision together.

[Speech: Speech by FCO Minister for Asia and the Pacific at the City of London Singapore Bicentennial Business Summit](#)

Senior Minister, Mr Tharman Shanmugartanam, Ministers, Lord Mayor, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.

As Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific, the Member of Parliament for the Cities of London and Westminster, and the son of parents who married in Singapore, it is a particular pleasure for me to be here and to reflect on the abiding relationship between our two nations in this, Singapore's bicentennial year.

We may be separated by 7000 miles, but we are close in so many ways: among them, our shared values and perspectives on many issues, our shared

commitment to peace and prosperity, the rule of law, and free trade; our use of the English language, and our membership of the Commonwealth, whose seventieth anniversary we also celebrate this year.

Crucially, we are also connected in many personal ways, as I am – through family, friends, or time spent living in each other's country.

In fact I am told that around 1 in 100 Singaporeans are in the UK at any one time, and I am pleased to say that 8,000 Singaporeans are studying at our excellent universities.

Likewise, the 45,000 Brits in Singapore make up a substantial part of your expatriate population.

These ties between our people not only mean we have a deeper understanding of each other's culture and values; they also underpin and strengthen our close economic relationship.

The UK's total trade with Singapore is worth £15 billion – we export more to Singapore than to the whole of India.

Our economic ties go far beyond trade. Our collaboration in science, technology and innovation is also prospering, and genuinely changing the world.

Last year we launched a £10 million space programme, to build and fly a quantum key distribution test bed – I won't try to pretend I fully understand the science but suffice to say it's about using quantum mechanics in cutting-edge secure communications.

We have established the world's first FinTech Bridge, to help UK firms and investors access Asian markets and vice versa.

We are also working together to deliver on the Commonwealth Cybersecurity declaration – the world's largest inter-governmental cybersecurity agreement.

Together, we are promoting international standards and boosting the capacity of Commonwealth countries to respond to cyber security incidents.

Of course, in addition to our trading links and our collaboration in science and technology, the UK and Singapore remain close security partners as parties to the Five Power Defence Arrangements.

I think you would agree that this impressive range of cooperation demonstrates a close and thriving bilateral relationship.

However, we are not resting on our laurels. We know that we can and should do even more together.

That is why, in January, our respective Foreign Ministers launched the Singapore-UK Partnership for the Future, an exciting new framework that will guide and stimulate our ongoing cooperation in four key areas:

- The Digital Economy
- Sustainable Business and Innovation
- Security and Defence
- Education, Culture and Youth.

We are very much looking forward to the opportunities this will bring to expand and deepen our bilateral cooperation with Singapore, across a wide range of sectors.

At the same time, we are also continuing to develop and strengthen our relationships right across South East Asia, and to build on our cooperation with ASEAN.

That cooperation already ranges from scientific research to counter terrorism, and from climate change to economic reform.

As we prepare to leave the EU, we look forward to strengthening these ties even further.

I know that Her Majesty's first Trade Commissioner for Asia Pacific, Natalie Black, will be at the forefront of this work, together with our new UK Mission to ASEAN in Jakarta, the latest addition to our network of diplomatic missions in every ASEAN country.

In conclusion, Senior Minister, ours is a partnership of equals, rooted in a shared history and the trust and understanding that come with true friendship.

Your bicentennial year is an opportunity to celebrate and strengthen those bonds of friendship.

And it is an opportunity to build our Partnership for the Future – a partnership that makes the most of our mutual strengths – in education, in science and in technology – to position us as leaders in the economy of the 21st Century.

It's an exciting prospect, and one I look forward to pursuing with you. In the meantime, I offer my warmest congratulations, to all our Singaporean friends, on your anniversary.

[News story: Minister for the Cabinet Office appoints two new Members of the Boundary Commission for England](#)

The Rt Hon David Lidington MP, the Minister for the Cabinet Office, has

approved the appointment of Colin Byrne and Sarah Hamilton as Members of the [Boundary Commission for England](#), both with effect from 1 July 2019 for a period of five years.

Colin Byrne worked for over 30 years in the Civil Service in a number of roles. These included Divisional Manager, Health and Safety Executive; Director, Town and Country Planning, Department of Communities and Local Government; and Director, Government Office for the South East. He was the Lead Assistant Commissioner for the South East of England in the 2018 Boundary Review. He was a Governor of the Guildford College Group for eight years and is currently a Trustee of Citizens Advice Guildford and a local specialist housing association.

Sarah Hamilton qualified as a solicitor in 1995 and practised as a professional legal advisor for over 20 years. Following her retirement as a solicitor in 2016, she was the Lead Assistant Commissioner for the East of England in the 2018 Boundary Review. Sarah Hamilton is currently a Non-Executive Director of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust. She also acts as Deputy Chair of the General Pharmaceutical Council's Fitness to Practise Committee, and Chair of the Fitness to Practise Committee, Health and Care Professions Tribunal Service.