

Summary of policy notes on The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill

The **Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill**, introduced in December 2024, aims to enhance child protection and elevate educational standards across England. The policy summary notes outline several key measures:

1. Strengthening Child Safeguarding and Family Support

Family Group Decision-Making: Promotes collaborative approaches to family welfare decisions.

Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams: Establishes teams to ensure coordinated responses to child protection.

Information Sharing and Consistent Identifiers: Improves data sharing among agencies for better child tracking.

Kinship Local Offer Requirement: Mandates local authorities to support kinship carers.

Virtual School Head: Expands the role to advocate for children with a social worker.

Staying Close: Provides support for young people leaving care.

Local Offer for Care Leavers: Ensures comprehensive support for care leavers.

2. Enhancing Educational Standards and Accessibility

Free Breakfast Club Provision: Introduces free breakfast clubs in primary schools to support child nutrition and learning.

School Uniforms: Limits the number of branded items to reduce costs for families.

Children Not in School: Establishes a register for children not in school to ensure their educational needs are met.

Expanding Scope of Regulation: Extends regulatory oversight to various educational settings to ensure quality and safety.

Teacher Misconduct and Qualifications: Strengthens regulations around teacher conduct and qualifications to maintain high teaching standards.

Academy Schools: Introduces measures to align academies with national curriculum standards and extends statutory pay and conditions to academy teachers.

Admissions and Place Planning: Enhances cooperation on school admissions and planning to ensure fair access to education.

3. Financial Oversight and Regulation

Provider Oversight Regime: Implements measures to oversee financial practices in children's social care.

Ofsted Powers: Grants Ofsted authority to issue monetary penalties and enhances its investigative powers.

Financial Oversight Scheme: Establishes a scheme to monitor financial activities within educational institutions.

Future Profit Cap: Introduces a cap on profits in children's social care to prevent excessive profit-making.

4. Employment and Workforce Regulations

Children's Social Care Agency Workers: Regulates the use of agency workers in children's social care to ensure consistency and quality.

Ill-Treatment or Wilful Neglect: Introduces measures to address ill-treatment or neglect by individuals responsible for child care.

Employment of Children: Updates regulations regarding the employment of children to ensure their safety and well-being.

These measures collectively aim to create a more cohesive and supportive environment for children's development and education, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to thrive.