



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

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FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mike Pattison Esq
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23 December 1981

Dear Mike,

... Thank you for your letter of 17 December. I enclose as requested notes covering the three topics referred to in your letter.

I am asked to record by my Secretary of State that he was surprised that more notice was not given about this request.

Copies of this letter go to the recipients
of yours

Yours sincerely
Peter Shaw

P A SHAW
Private Secretary

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

A. MAIN DEPARTMENTAL ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN 1981

1. The Education Act 1981, which reforms the law on the education of handicapped children to bring it in line with modern practice and to confer new rights on their parents.

2. A new statement of Government policies in relation to the school curriculum, emphasising breadth and preparation for working life.

3. The Assisted Places Scheme began in September 1981.

4. Work with the LEAs to try to secure that necessary contraction of teacher force is managed selectively in the interest of preserving quality so far as possible.

5. Larger numbers of graduates in mathematics and science are applying for teacher-training courses; priority is being given to try to get them into the limited training places and limited jobs available;

6. Within general constraints on public expenditure, working for an efficient planned contraction of higher education. (This has involved much assessment, calculation, work with the University Grants Committee, consultation with local authorities, and treatment of objections from institutions, their representatives and various pressure groups.)

7. Development of new arrangements for the management of Public Sector Higher Education in England. (A Green Paper on alternative long-term approaches was published in July. An interim body for Local Authority Higher Education is now in process of being established).

8. Handling a range of issues within the field of non-advanced further education and in relation to activities centred primarily elsewhere on "training".

9. Completion, under the auspices of the Advisory Board for the Research Councils, of a report on postgraduate education.

10. Launch of review of the Social Science Research Council.

11. Publication of a Report on the legal basis for further education.

B. OUTLOOK FOR 1982

12. Introduction in September 1982 of the new regime for giving effect to parental preference for schools, and much more information about schools. thus implementing the major provisions of the Education Act 1980.
13. Announcement of a detailed scheme for a new national pre-vocational examination certificate at 17+ in schools and colleges.
14. Continuation of work to ensure efficient contraction of the teaching force.
15. Important review of the pattern and scale of initial teacher training to match the prospective needs of the 1980s.
16. Attention will also increasingly focus on the need to foster more and more purposive in-service training, as the teacher force contracts,
17. Both the Burnham and the university pay settlements in April will be important to the financing of those respective services.
18. Continuation of contraction of higher education,
19. The Review of the SSRC should be completed by the Spring of 1982 and will lead to decisions.
20. The report of the Review Group on the Youth Service is due during the Summer.

C. OTHER MAJOR OUTSTANDING ISSUES

21. Review of Schools Council.
22. Publication of the report on Support of University Scientific Research;
23. Re-consideration of student loans;
24. More activity on student behaviour;
25. Continued promotion of post-experience education;
26. Contribution to developing a new pattern of engineering education;
27. Evolution of policies on overseas students;
28. Conduct of a review of sandwich course provision.