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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

OFFICIAL REPORT

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The first time a Member speaks to a new piece of parliamentary business, the following abbreviations are used to show their party affiliation:

Abbreviation	Party/Group
CB	Cross Bench
Con	Conservative
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
GP	Green Party
Ind Lab	Independent Labour
Ind LD	Independent Liberal Democrat
Ind SD	Independent Social Democrat
Ind UU	Independent Ulster Unionist
Lab	Labour
LD	Liberal Democrat
LD Ind	Liberal Democrat Independent
Non-afl	Non-affiliated
PC	Plaid Cymru
UKIP	UK Independence Party
UUP	Ulster Unionist Party

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House of Lords

Monday 12 September 2016

2.30 pm

Prayers—read by the Lord Bishop of St Albans.

Introduction: Baroness Vere of Norbiton

2.38 pm

Charlotte Sarah Emily Vere, having been created Baroness Vere of Norbiton, of Norbiton in the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames, was introduced and took the oath, supported by Baroness Jenkin of Kennington and Lord Gilbert of Panteg, and signed an undertaking to abide by the Code of Conduct.

Introduction: Lord Gadhia

2.43 pm

Jitesh Kishorekumar Gadhia, Esquire, having been created Baron Gadhia, of Northwood in the County of Middlesex, was introduced and took the oath, supported by Lord Popat and Lord Fink, and signed an undertaking to abide by the Code of Conduct.

Oaths and Affirmations

2.48 pm

The Earl of Cork and Orrery took the oath, and signed an undertaking to abide by the Code of Conduct.

Immigration

Question

2.49 pm

Asked by Lord Leigh of Hurley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to determine accurately immigration into the United Kingdom.

The Minister of State, Home Office (Baroness Williams of Trafford): My Lords, immigration figures are estimates produced by the Office for National Statistics based on the International Passenger Survey. These estimates have been assessed by the UK Statistics Authority as having national statistics designation, being accurate and reliable for measuring immigration to the UK. The ONS continues to take steps to refine the survey design and to publish information on how figures relate to other sources.

Lord Leigh of Hurley (Con): I thank my noble friend the Minister for that Answer. Indeed, the ONS does rely on the International Passenger Survey, which asks less than 0.7% of arrivals of their intentions, on a voluntary basis and with no verification. As the Minister

knows, UK border officers are not allowed, under EU freedom of movement legislation, to ask arrivals whether they are immigrants or temporary visitors. Therefore, we have a situation where, over the past five years since July 2010, the ONS estimates for immigration are less than half of the national insurance numbers that have been issued to the same group. Does not the Minister agree that, given the events of the summer, the British public deserve better analysis and statistics?

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My Lords, there are various sources of statistical information and all of them useful in the round. My noble friend talked specifically of the discrepancy between national insurance numbers and the ONS figures. That is due, in the main, to large numbers of short-term migrants who stay for less than 12 months. The official figures are based on the UN international standard definition of a long-term migrant: one who changes their country of residence for a year or more.

Baroness Brinton (LD): My Lords, yesterday Amber Rudd said that there would be further restrictions on international students coming into the UK to help to reduce the immigration target. Is the Minister aware that international students currently contribute more than £7 billion a year to our economy, delivering 137,000 jobs to our universities and their communities, that student numbers are expected to double over the next 15 years, and that some of them could come to the UK? Given that, can the Minister explain why the Home Office has declared this, whereas the three Ministers for Brexit keep going on about how important it is to trade outside the EU? This seems a bit of an own goal.

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My Lords, we want students here who will contribute to this country the skills that we need. In fact, there has been an increase of more than 39% over the past few years to Russell group universities. We have taken successful steps to clamp down on some of the bogus colleges that do not provide that sort of training.

Lord Davies of Stamford (Lab): Why, oh why, are students classified as immigrants? They are not immigrants unless they stay here beyond their courses. When they stay beyond their degree or other qualification, they could and should be classified as immigrants. The present artificial classification is causing all sorts of quite unnecessary problems, not least, as has already been said, for our universities.

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My Lords, they are classified as students because when they come here they use our services and they generally come here for more than a year. That falls within the definition.

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean (Con): My Lords, can my noble friend explain? In her Answer to my noble friend Lord Leigh, she said that the discrepancy between national insurance numbers and the figures was because people were here on a short-stay basis. How does she know that?

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My Lords, people may come here to work long term or short term. If they are here to work for, say, three months, which many people are, and then go home, they will not be counted in the long-term immigration figures.

Lord Tomlinson (Lab): Is it now government policy once again to reduce the net migration figure to tens of thousands rather than hundreds of thousands? If that is the policy, as I gather it was from listening to Amber Rudd on the “Andrew Marr Show” yesterday, will she give us any compelling reason why we should believe that promise any more than the promise made by Mr Cameron?

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My Lords, I can give that assurance. As my right honourable friend the Home Secretary made clear, it will take time and we are quite clear about that.

Lord Elton (Con): My Lords, coming back to the question of students, I hope that the Government have taken on board the fact that students are quite different from other immigrants. When they go back, they bring great credit—and great profit—to this country by using the standards that we set in engineering and other disciplines and commissioning work from firms in this country, as well as establishing a network of good will around the world.

Baroness Williams of Trafford: I totally agree with my noble friend, and that is why we want not only to train but also to retain some of the brightest and best students from around the world so that they can contribute to our economy.

Baroness Hamwee (LD): My Lords, does the Minister accept the importance of accurate information that is publicly available, especially on an issue where information is often secondary to anxieties, fears and sometimes prejudice? Can she also tell us what progress is being made on determining the number of people who leave the UK?

Baroness Williams of Trafford: I certainly agree with the noble Baroness that accurate information is absolutely vital. Exit checks will tell us how many people are leaving, and the more accurate information we have, the better we will know exactly what the figures are.

Lord Rosser (Lab): Immigration is not just about knowing what the numbers are; it is also about making sure that people we do not want to see coming in are actually being stopped from doing so. The Adam Smith Institute has just produced a report saying that Britain’s Border Force has been so,

“starved of funds and neglected”,

that it is no wonder it has been stretched so thin despite the terror threat rising and passenger numbers rocketing, with the report going on to claim more specifically that more than 4,000 “high-risk” flights could be landing in the UK each year without proper

security checks. It also indicates that, while passenger numbers have risen by 20% since 2010 and are set to rise by another 43% by 2030, the funding for the Border Force has been slashed, with spending per passenger down 25% and morale at an all-time low. Can the Minister say whether the Government believe that the Adam Smith Institute analysis misrepresents the current situation?

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My Lords, I have to confess to not having read the document, but what I can say is that exit check data and so on will enhance our understanding of where people are moving to and what they are doing when they do choose to move. Exit check data will definitely enhance our understanding of overstaying over time, but the Government have always been clear that it is not possible to put a figure on the number of people who are residing illegally in the UK at any one time.

Lord Tebbit (Con): My Lords, could it be that some of the university places that are occupied by foreign students might be better occupied by some of our own young people, so that they receive the benefits of a good university education?

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My Lords, the Government have removed the cap on university places because we want a university system that is open to all but also open to the brightest and the best around the world.

South China Sea: Territorial Claims

Question

2.57 pm

Asked by Lord Teverson

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what representations they have made to the Government of the People’s Republic of China following the decision by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in favour of the Philippines in its dispute with China over territorial claims in the South China Sea.

Baroness Goldie (Con): My Lords, the UK has joined our G7 and EU partners in calling for the parties to pursue their claims in accordance with international law, including through the G7 leaders’ statement of 26 May and the EU statement of 15 July. My right honourable friend the former Foreign Secretary stressed in Parliament that the UK has urged respect for decisions arising from international tribunals, and Ministers have regularly raised the importance of respecting international law with their Chinese counterparts.

Lord Teverson (LD): My Lords, I thank the Minister for her reply and the lectures to China on international law; however, I do not see much action being taken.

Surely Britain should be the beacon for the rule of international law, not least as a Permanent Member of the United Nations Security Council. Is there not a real danger that Britain, along with the rest of the western world, risks becoming an apologist for China in international law, as Donald Trump has been for Putin?

Baroness Goldie: I thank the noble Lord for the point he makes, but our position on the South China Sea is long standing and has not changed. We have concerns about the tensions and we are committed to maintaining a peaceful maritime order under international law, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Of course, a tribunal ruling under that convention is final and binding, and we regard that as a very significant development. However, common sense and restraint have to be observed, and we look to member states to recognise the mutual benefit to all of observing international law and of abiding by the tribunal decision. If one state departs unilaterally from that, all can be prejudiced in the legitimate pursuit of navigating these seas.

Lord West of Spithead (Lab): My Lords, 71 years ago today, Mountbatten took the surrender of half a million Japanese soldiers, sailors and airmen in Singapore. Up until the mid-1970s, we had a large fleet based in Singapore. We are today the only European power that is part of the five-power defence agreement looking at security in that region. Pretty much all our trade from Japan, China and Korea goes through the South China Sea. Should we not show more support to the Americans in trying to establish security within that region, where we are also the largest European investor? This is too important to us to allow it to drift. The Chinese claim that the nine-dash line is a nonsense, and we really do have to be more forceful about this.

Baroness Goldie: I thank the noble Lord for that point. As far as the UK is concerned, the maintenance of freedom of navigation and overflight is non-negotiable. As the noble Lord will be aware, in general, Royal Navy warships and aircraft exercise their right of freedom of navigation and overflight in accordance with international law, as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. United States warships have carried out a number of freedom of navigation operations in the South China Sea, challenging Chinese, Taiwanese and Vietnamese interpretations of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. We fully respect the right of the United States to take that action.

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): My Lords, why do we continue to make joint statements with our EU partners on China, given that we declared our determination to leave the European Union and that the Minister for International Trade talks about an independent partnership with China, which in effect means we will be very dependent on China for investment and opening trade? Given that dependent relationship, it might be unwise on our own to say anything about human rights or international law.

Baroness Goldie: The noble Lord makes an important point which gets to the heart of whether our relationship with China changed following the EU referendum.

Our relationship with China is and will remain a clear priority for the Government. The UK and China remain committed to a comprehensive agenda for bilateral co-operation, and there have been good examples of how the two countries have worked together. In fact, they work better in partnership than many other countries in the G20. We are fully committed to our global strategic partnership for the 21st century, through which we are working together to solve global issues, build economies of the future and develop our strong trade, investment and people links.

Lord Boyce (CB): Following the question of the noble Lord, Lord West, the Minister's answer, and the fact that the Americans are asserting their right to freedom of navigation in the areas under dispute, will the Royal Navy be supporting our allies in that endeavour?

Baroness Goldie: The United Kingdom has been very clear about two things: we regard that arbitral finding as legal and binding, and we expect other nations to respect and observe that ruling in the same vein. This is a time for restraint: diplomatic relations and dialogue are the way forward, rather than force and coercion. A lot of diplomatic activity is taking place. As I said in my earlier response to the noble Lord, Lord West, we respect the right of the United States to do whatever it considers appropriate in that area.

Lord Collins of Highbury (Lab): My Lords, the fact is that the Chinese President made it absolutely clear that, despite the binding ruling, China will continue with its view about its sovereignty and its economic zones. Picking up the point raised by my noble friend, irrespective of whether the Royal Navy will conduct the same exercises, will the Minister reassure the House that we are in touch with the United States of America to ensure that our interests are fully aligned with theirs?

Baroness Goldie: As has already been observed, this is a very important trading route. About half the world's trade goes through the South China Sea, and all international powers are very alert to the significance of that navigation route. We are pursuing active diplomacy and have made clear our concerns to China. This is a time for restraint and responsibility, and it would not be wise to precipitate the raising of tensions, although we fully accept that China has to be sensitive to the situation. Land reclamation, construction or militarisation are not conducive to reducing these tensions.

Troubled Families Programme *Question*

3.05 pm

Asked by *Baroness Massey of Darwen*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they will respond to the unpublished report on the effectiveness of the Troubled Families programme.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government and Wales Office (Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth) (Con): My Lords, while we do not comment on leaked reports, I can inform the noble Baroness that the first troubled families programme, which finished in 2015, was successful; for example, in seeing nearly 105,000 families with children back in school for three consecutive terms.

Baroness Massey of Darwen (Lab): I thank the Minister for that reply but is he aware that this programme has been criticised by many as a failure—not successful for either children or parents—at a cost of £1.3 billion? What analysis has taken place of the methods used in the programme to develop more successful methods—ones which work—in any future programmes?

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: My Lords, I do not accept that the first programme was unsuccessful in any way. The figure the noble Baroness gave about the cost also encompasses the second phase of the programme, which has taken on board some of the lessons that we have learned. I am sure she will be very pleased that the troubled families programme has been embraced by 150 local authorities—all local authorities—and all political parties have supported it.

Baroness Eaton (Con): Can my noble friend the Minister explain to the House some of the lessons that were learned and some of the improvements that are being made in the second programme?

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: My Lords, one aspect that has been important in the second phase of the programme is that spot checks are made by people who go into local authorities to make sure that it is happening. The other very important factor that has been taken on board is that we started assessing and monitoring the programme from day one, rather than waiting until the end of the programme. Those are two of the lessons learned; we have also widened the criteria, which is very important.

Lord Shipley (LD): My Lords, the Minister said that he could not comment on a leaked report, but I wonder whether the Government plan to publish that report. Will he confirm when that will be and whether it will be published in full?

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: My Lords, successive Governments have not commented on leaked reports, so that is indeed the position. We are working on the report, which we will publish as soon as possible. As I have said, there have been many successes. All local authorities have embraced this. We have families with children back in school. We have tackled joblessness. We have spent money on ensuring that all these issues are dealt with effectively. That is why—with broad support, I think—we have taken it forward to a second phase, with wider criteria.

Baroness Howarth of Breckland (CB): My Lords, I know that local authorities have welcomed the troubled families programme because it brings extra resources

into their very difficult children's services budgets. I am sure the Minister must know what is in this leaked report. Does he not think that it might be of benefit to incorporate this work into core social work and ensure that local authorities are able to do a proper job right across children's services?

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: My Lords, I do not accept for a minute that local authorities are not doing a proper job. In the year to March 2016, £130 million has been spent on tackling deep-seated problems of substance abuse, health and truancy. All these things are being tackled very successfully. Have we learned lessons from the first programme? Yes, of course we have. Will we learn lessons during this programme? I hope so. Meanwhile, this is a programme with broad support, which is doing a lot of good up and down the country.

Lord Polak (Con): My Lords, success is always difficult to measure but improving the lives of 117,000 families, getting children back to school and reducing youth crime must be a success. Can my noble friend the Minister match the promises that we made in our manifesto to develop and increase a comprehensive range of family policies?

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: My Lords, that is certainly the intention of broadening the criteria in the second programme, which is looking at anti-social behaviour, substance abuse and a wide range of health issues. So yes, the intention is to have a much broader, holistic approach in this second phase. The evidence of the first year, which has been monitored by an independent programme supported by Ipsos MORI, is that we are having success doing just that.

Baroness Farrington of Ribblesdale (Lab): My Lords, can the Minister explain his comment that the Government will be working on the report? Surely a report is either published or not published and it is then for others to look at its conclusions. What did the Minister mean?

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: My Lords, I meant that the Government are working on the publication of the report. It is not yet ready for publication. We have to ensure that all the statistics and data are properly assessed before publishing it, which, as I say, will happen as soon as possible.

Lord Lexden (Con): How did the leak of this report occur?

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: I am not at all sure. I am afraid I cannot advise the House as to how the leak occurred.

The Lord Bishop of St Albans: My Lords, one of the successes of this programme, which I have seen in a number of places, has been to try to get proper co-ordination. With so many different silos addressing this and so many resources going to a limited number

of families, one success has been the way that progress has been made by bringing real focus and integration. Can the Minister assure us that that lesson has been learned and that we will continue to see how we can get movement on this relatively small but very problematic and difficult group, and find the way forward?

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: My Lords, the right reverend Prelate is right about the dangers of silo working. We have sought to obliterate that programme by broadening the criteria. In relation to the number of families being assisted, it is the aim of the second programme that by the end of this Parliament 400,000 additional families—on top of those in the first programme—will have been helped. In the first year, we have so far helped 145,000 families.

Lord Hunt of Kings Heath (Lab): My Lords, can the Minister assure me that his department is concerned with the accuracy of the report, rather than seeking to change either its recommendations or its conclusions?

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: My Lords, as always, government departments are minded to ensure that the report is accurate. That is true of the civil servants who are working on this. Of course that is the aim; we want the proper information in the public domain. In the meantime, we have learned some of the lessons from the first programme. I believe that the first programme was a success and the second will be even more successful.

Electoral Fraud *Question*

3.12 pm

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to amend electoral legislation as a result of the report of Sir Eric Pickles' review into electoral fraud.

Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen (Con): The Government have received Sir Eric Pickles's review and will carefully consider its findings and recommendations. We are committed to tackling any form of fraud in the UK polls and this report will help inform the debate to ensure that our elections have the highest integrity. We will look closely at the proposals set out in the report and provide a full response in due course.

Lord Rennard (LD): My Lords, does the Minister accept that a report proposing changes to the way in which we conduct our elections would have greater credibility if it was not simply the work of a former chairman of the Conservative Party? Why does she think that the report did not look into such important issues as the underregistration of voters, which distorts the outcome of our elections and the Boundary Commissions' processes?

Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen: I think there were two questions there. Sir Eric, as the anticorruption champion and as a former Minister for communities and local government, is the ideal person for the job. He has taken a close interest in election fraud for many years and noble Lords who have read the report will surely agree that it has been conducted in a completely independent way. On the second question, there are indeed vulnerable people who are not on the register; that is why the Government have funded civil society organisations to engage with groups which are known to be reluctant to register. In fact, the Cabinet Office is supporting an innovative research project in Grampian, which is looking into how trusted data sources can be used to target canvassing activity more effectively. We are also exploring ways to limit the number of frequent home movers who drop off the register, particularly those in the private rental sector, by piloting ways effectively to move your home address on to the electoral register when using local authority services, such as council tax.

Lord Cormack (Con): My Lords, I ask my noble friend yet again: what is the logical argument against compulsory registration? There are penalties for those who do not register; surely it is right to make this compulsory.

Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen: We do not plan to make registration compulsory.

Lord Campbell-Savours (Lab): My Lords, why do we not stop wasting public money on a national individual registration scheme and target the resource on those areas where there is a real problem? Is political correctness getting in the way of pursuing that approach?

Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen: I cannot agree with the noble Lord. The principle of IER was supported on a cross-party basis when it was introduced. It brings us into line with every other serious democracy in the world, and it meets the expectations of British citizens who live fast-paced digital lives and expect to be able to interact with public services digitally. It is important that we carry on with this reform.

Lord Collins of Highbury (Lab): Individual registration has been speeded up by this Government and the coalition Government. It is a principle that we can all support, but if it is being forced through at a speed that means that people will be dropped off the register, that is totally unacceptable, especially as this Government are pushing through boundary changes that will be impacted severely by the figures of this registration. Why do the Government not delay the process and give proper time to it?

Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen: The Government are currently looking at how electoral registration could be made more efficient. Officials are piloting changes to the annual canvass this year. We are concentrating on making sure that it is quick, convenient, easy to use, reaches everyone, is digital by default, data driven, transparent, more affordable and, importantly, outcome based, not process based.

Lord Robathan (Con): My Lords, is not the real problem with electoral fraud based on postal voting on demand? Should we not get rid of that? That would sort out much of the electoral fraud.

Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen: Postal voting is incredibly useful for many people. It would be disastrous to get rid of it.

Lord Maxton (Lab): My Lords—

Baroness Janke (LD): My Lords—

The Lord Privy Seal (Baroness Evans of Bowes Park) (Con): It is the turn of the Liberal Democrat Benches.

Baroness Janke: My Lords, given that the only two Members of Parliament who gave evidence to the report were Conservatives, and given the Minister's statement about the independence of the report, will she say what evidence will be taken from other parties on the incidence of electoral fraud, which is the main thrust of the report?

Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen: We are pleased that Sir Eric Pickles has produced this report. It is now up to us to look at it and decide the way forward. We will be reporting back on it soon.

Lord Maxton: My Lords, is it not the case that the most obvious way to reduce electoral fraud across the board is the compulsory introduction of an ID card with smart card technology and an identity built in—either fingertip, eye or, preferably, genetic material at birth—and then that card has to be used before you can vote? Eventually, that will lead to electronic voting as well.

Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen: This is obviously one of the things that will be looked at following the report. We will report back further on better ways of making sure of people's identity when they go to the polling station.

Lord Goodlad (Con): My Lords, why do we not do what the Australians have happily done very successfully for 90 years and make voting compulsory as a civic duty?

Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen: As I said in answer to my noble friend Lord Cormack, we have no plans for that. In fact, the Australian system has not been absolutely perfect. There are still quite a lot of people who do not vote. It is not failsafe.

Lord Harris of Haringey (Lab): My Lords, the Minister talked about the integrity of the voting system, and that is obviously something that we all want to see. Why, then, are the Government pressing ahead with boundary changes on an electoral register which they know is out of date given that so many extra people registered in time to participate in the European referendum? Would it not be better for the integrity of the voting system to use a register which is more current than the one they have chosen to use?

Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen: I do not think this is anything to do with the Question, but I am very happy to answer. Parliament has already agreed that 15 December should be used as the date for the registers for this review. Unless you have a defined date and set of registers to assess it, it is impossible to run a review. Registers used for the boundary review are necessarily a snapshot, and the registers have always continued to change while the review is taking place.

Policing and Crime Bill

Order of Consideration Motion

3.20 pm

Moved by Baroness Williams of Trafford

That it be an instruction to the Committee of the Whole House to which the Policing and Crime Bill has been committed that they consider the bill in the following order:

Clauses 1 to 6, Schedule 1, Clauses 7 to 9, Schedule 2, Clauses 10 and 11, Schedule 3, Clauses 12 and 13, Schedule 4, Clauses 14 and 15, Schedule 5, Clauses 16 to 27, Schedule 6, Clause 28, Schedule 7, Clause 29, Schedule 8, Clauses 30 to 32, Schedule 9, Clauses 33 to 37, Schedules 10 and 11, Clauses 38 to 44, Schedule 12, Clause 45, Schedule 13, Clauses 46 to 50, Schedule 14, Clauses 51 to 107, Schedule 15, Clauses 108 to 137, Schedule 16, Clauses 138 to 151, Title.

Motion agreed.

Investigatory Powers Bill

Committee (6th Day)

3.21 pm

Relevant documents: Pre-legislative scrutiny by the Joint Committee on the Draft Investigatory Powers Bill, Session 2015–16; 1st Report from the Joint Committee on Human Rights; 2nd and 4th Reports from the Delegated Powers Committee; 3rd Report from the Constitution Committee

Clause 232: Review of operation of Act

Amendment 234A

Moved by Baroness Hamwee

234A: Clause 232, page 179, line 21, leave out “5” and insert “2”

Baroness Hamwee (LD): My Lords, Amendment 234A takes us to Clause 232, which provides for a review of the operation of the Act. A lot of concern has been expressed during the course of the Bill about the speed of change of technology. Most recently, David Anderson, in his report on the operation of bulk powers, said, encapsulating this very neatly,

“nothing in this field stays still forever, or even for long”.

He also quoted Matt Tait, who told the review that,

“for the overwhelming majority of the time that the IP Bill will be law, it will be interpreted in secret by HMG lawyers, when seeking to authorise as-yet unknown operations in support of not-yet

decided policy objectives, needing to relate the provisions of the IP Bill to technologies that do not exist yet, where technological norms may be markedly different to how they are today”.

In most fields, five years would seem a reasonable time, even though quite ordinary products such as washing machines become obsolete—they are even made for obsolescence—within a shorter period than that. However, in this field five years is almost a generation. Devices manufactured five years ago are apparently now obsolete, as I have just discovered with the desktop PC which I have been using, and are not supported by the manufacturers. Enormous advances are made every year, and as all noble Lords who have spoken about this have acknowledged, it is essential that the Government and the authorities that will be acting under the powers that will be given by the Act keep abreast of those changes. I appreciate that a great many attempts have been made to future-proof the Bill, but this is not an easy project, and we may find the day after tomorrow that something new comes along to undermine that future-proofing.

We believe that five years and six months is too far into the future before the legislation is formally reviewed. Of course, the Secretary of State can arrange for a review without the formal provision in the Bill, but this is the requirement and it should itself be fit for purpose. We are not wedded to two and a half years, but five and half is too long. Two and a half would enable a report well before the end of this Parliament, assuming that the next election is in 2020. Although we are not wedded to two and a half years, we would be interested to hear the Government’s justification for the period of five and a half years and, I hope, an acknowledgment that a shorter period would be appropriate in this instance. I beg to move.

Lord Murphy of Torfaen (Lab): The purpose of the Liberal Democrats’ amendment seems to be that there is a speedier review of the legislation than was agreed in the passage of the Bill in the other place and was actually in the Bill. During the proceedings of the Joint Committee, a number of witnesses, including the Information Commissioner, argued for a sunset clause to be put into the Bill. The committee considered that; it did not agree, but at the end of the day believed that there should be,

“some form of review after five years”,

and that it should be “detailed post-legislative scrutiny”. The proposal that the Joint Committee came up with, to which I believe the Government have agreed, is that a Joint Committee of both Houses should be established within six months of the end of the fifth year after the Bill is enacted.

The difficulty with the amendment is that it refers specifically to the Secretary of State reviewing the Bill, whereas the Joint Committee was arguing that both Houses of Parliament should review it. The argument that technological change can be swifter than was thought by those of us who believe that five years was the answer is what lies behind the amendment. However, this is not simply about technology; it is also about the impact of the Act, as it will then be, upon the liberties of the people and about the nature of the various powers that we are enacting in the course of our proceedings. We therefore need some clarification: is it about the

Government reviewing, or is it about Parliament reviewing? What precisely are we reviewing? I think everyone agrees with the principle, but we have to look carefully at the way in which Parliament reviews. If the amendment is eventually accepted then, frankly, it has to be secondary to parliamentary scrutiny.

Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town (Lab): My Lords, the questions that have been asked are interesting. Times are changing, as is the nature of the threats. Who would have thought 30 years ago that we would be sitting here worrying about online grooming, ISIS terrorism and kidnapping or sophisticated cybercrime and money laundering? Who would have known that they were the challenges that would face us? Who would have talked 30 years ago about apps, internal emails—which we can get on our phones, according to some of my friends—and similar matters?

We will come back to issues of encryption. Technology is changing all the time, as is the modus operandi of those who wish us harm. Added to that, as I think my noble friend was alluding to, are the new powers in the Bill and the very welcome safeguards—the privacy measures and the double lock. These are new measures and we will want to see whether they achieve what the Government hope for them.

There are therefore two issues: first, how are the Government themselves going to monitor whether the Bill is achieving what they want; and, secondly, as alluded to by my noble friend, how will we then have formal post-legislative scrutiny to see whether they are what Parliament wants, and what is the correct time for that? The issues raised about reviewing these important powers and about the rapid change both in the technology and in the threats are ones that we want to be assured will be monitored and reported back on.

Lord Brown of Eaton-under-Heywood (CB): My Lords, I am not sure how useful this intervention will be, but it occurs to me that when the Government consider the amendment and the proposed reduction of the period allowed for a review, they should also bear in mind the sole recommendation made by David Anderson in his review published in August, which we were all discussing last week, the *Report of the Bulk Powers Review*. I know that his amendment was not accepted then, but consideration will be given to it and I would expect amendment to the Bill along the lines that David Anderson recommended:

“The Bill should be amended to provide for a Technology Advisory Panel, appointed by and reporting to the IPC”—that is, the commissioner,

“to advise the IPC and the Secretary of State on the impact of changing technology on the exercise of investigatory powers and on the availability and development of techniques to use those powers while minimising interference with privacy”.

Assuming that some effect is given to that and some such advisory panel—an altogether more elaborate advisory panel was canvassed during the debate last week by the noble Lord, Lord Carlile—that will surely bear on the appropriate period within which an overall review should take place.

Lord Strasburger (LD): My Lords, I had the privilege of sitting on the Joint Committee on the Bill and on the Joint Committee on its precursor, the Communications

[LORD STRASBURGER]

Data Bill, three years earlier. That puts me in a position to inform the House about one example of how technology has come to this area of law and the Government's attitude to it. In the earlier Committee three years ago, the subject of the problems that encryption presented to the security services and law enforcement was raised several times with senior Home Office officials, the police and security agency officers. They dismissed it at the time. "It is not a problem", they said—they were not concerned about it. In the proceedings of the Joint Committee and in this House on this Bill, the Government have repeatedly expressed their concern about the effect of encryption on their ability to protect us. That is a 180 degree change in the space of less than three years. I draw that to the House's attention in support of the notion of substantially accelerating the review of the Bill.

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Earl Howe) (Con): My Lords, as the noble Baroness, Lady Hamwee, explained, Amendment 234A deals with the review of the operation of this legislation. The amendment would reduce the length of time for which it has been in operation from five years and six months to two years and six months. It is of course good practice to conduct post-legislative scrutiny, particularly for legislation as significant as the Bill. That is what the Bill provides for. Notwithstanding any suggestion by virtue of the amendment that the House might be eager to revisit the issue within the scope of this Parliament, I suggest that reducing the time for which the legislation had been operating before the review takes place would be profoundly unhelpful in assessing its utility.

First, the timing of when the review should occur is precisely as the Joint Committee convened to scrutinise the draft Bill recommended. As the noble Lord, Lord Murphy, said, that committee considered that work on a review,

"should begin within six months of the end of the fifth year after which the Bill is enacted".

We have followed that lead.

I was asked what kind of review this would involve. As I mentioned, the Bill attempts to give effect to the recommendation of the committee. We cannot, clearly, bind Parliament in the actions that it takes, so the Bill provides for consideration of any report by a committee of Parliament. I hope that again accords with the steer that the Joint Committee gave us.

Of course, we must ensure that before such a review takes place, all the Bill's provisions have commenced and been in effect for a sufficient period so that a review is meaningful and effective. As the Joint Committee again concluded:

"The evidence of several years' operation will inform the debate".

A review after two and a half years runs the risk that processes and capabilities will not have had sufficient time to bed down before they are subject to a formal review. We need to bear in mind, in particular, that communication service providers will need to implement legislation. Surely the last thing we want is for them to turn round after a short time, if the noble Baroness's proposal gains traction, and say that it is too soon. We do not wish to create uncertainty for them at this stage.

They have to implement this, as has everybody else. The noble Lord, Lord Murphy, rightly said that it is important that the impact of the Act should be reviewed and the noble Baroness, Lady Hayter, also correctly spoke of the need to monitor how the Act was working. I do not disagree with either.

However, I would just point out that an urgent review of the Act is not necessary, given the strong oversight provided in the Bill by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner and the requirement that the commissioner should publish annual reports. The exercise of the powers provided for under the Bill will be subject to the ongoing oversight of the Investigatory Powers Commissioner, and his report will be laid before Parliament. I was grateful for the intervention of the noble and learned Lord, Lord Brown of Eaton-under-Heywood. He referred to David Anderson's recommendation to establish a technical advisory panel. I am reserving judgment on that recommendation in the light of our debates last week. David Anderson said, in paragraph 9.3, that the point of the TAP would not be to provide an alternative oversight function, or to place new regulatory burdens on the SIAs. Rather it would serve to inform the Secretary of State and enhance the work of the Investigatory Powers Commissioner by ensuring that both are kept as up-to-date as possible with the fast-moving technologies whose use they are asked to approve. There is good sense in not overlaying the oversight that the Act will have too heavily. For all those reasons, I invite the noble Baroness to withdraw her amendment. I hope that what I have said convinces her that there is some logic to the Government's position.

Baroness Hamwee: My Lords, before I respond, I wonder whether the Minister can tell the Committee when it is expected that the provisions of the Bill will commence. Does he have that information?

Earl Howe: I do not have that information. It is of course possible that different parts of the Bill will commence at different times, but I shall come back to the noble Baroness in writing and send a copy to all noble Lords who have taken part in the debate.

Baroness Hamwee: I am grateful to the Minister for his response, and I am sure he will understand the importance of the question of the extent to which the Government have decided when the provision should commence. I imagine they must have a programme in mind. He says that the timing is precisely as the Joint Committee proposed, but it is not, as we have heard, the type of review proposed by the committee, as I understand the report. Yes, of course we want to avoid uncertainty, but we would argue that a shorter period would give greater confidence to the communication service providers and others that changes in technology and the operation of the Bill will be made as soon as they reasonably should, to assist them as well as everyone else.

The Minister mentioned the IPC's report under Clause 210, but I believe the Secretary of State does not have to act on it. The Minister mentioned that the technology advisory panel is primarily about technology, although David Anderson argued forcefully that it

should comprise more than technicians. I do not want that word to sound pejorative—I am searching for a more respectful term—but I am sure the Committee will understand.

This is an important issue, and I cannot promise that we shall not return to it on Report.

Amendment 234A withdrawn

Clause 232 agreed.

Clause 233: Telecommunications definitions

Amendment 235 not moved.

Clause 233 agreed.

Clause 234 agreed.

Clause 235: General definitions

Amendment 236 not moved.

Amendment 236A

Moved by Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb

236A: Clause 235, page 184, line 36, at end insert—

““national security” means the protection of the existence of the nation and its territorial integrity, or political independence against force or the threat of force,”

Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb (GP): My Lords, the amendment seeks to put right a government oversight: there is no definition of national security under general definitions throughout the Bill. A principal statutory ground for authorising surveillance is, “in the interests of national security”.

Another is “economic well-being” as far as it relates to national security. Left undefined, national security is unnecessarily open, broad and vague and, I suggest, likely to be abused. As the decision will continue to lie with the Secretary of State, the test will be met by whatever she or he subjectively decides is in the interests of national security or the economic well-being of the UK, so that individuals cannot foresee when surveillance powers might be used, granting the Secretary of State a discretion so broad as to be arbitrary. In the past, domestic courts have responded with considerable deference to government claims of national security—and not just domestic courts but other political parties at times. They have viewed them not as a matter of law but as Executive-led policy judgments. National security as a legal test is absolutely meaningless if left without a statutory definition.

The Joint Committee on the draft Bill recommended that the Bill should include definitions of national security and economic well-being. It is confusing even to use the measure of economic well-being, which should be subsumed, as recommended by the ISC, which found it “unnecessarily confusing and complicated”, saying that the agencies and Home Office had not “provided any sensible explanation” for including the term. I look forward to the Minister supplying that sensible explanation. Therefore, the core purposes for which extraordinary powers may be used remain undefined and dangerously flexible. The undefined tests of national

security and economic well-being risk interference with political and other lawful activity that ought to be unimpeded in a democratic society. In an era when parliamentarians from both Houses have been subjected to inappropriate surveillance by security services and the police, the continued undefined use of these terms in enabling legislation is not appropriate or sustainable. I beg to move.

3.45 pm

Lord Paddick (LD): My Lords, we have a great deal of sympathy with the amendment moved by the noble Baroness, Lady Jones of Moulsecoomb. Indeed, it is a recommendation of some committees that there be a definition of “national security”. However, we believe that the definition in the amendment is too narrow. For example, it refers to, “force or the threat of force”, being necessary, but sedition can take many forms, such as propaganda and the sort of activity we have seen ISIS participate in. The phrase, “the protection of the existence of the nation”, also seems too narrow. It would be helpful if the Government produced their own definition of “national security”, rather than leaving it completely open. Although we agree in principle with the amendment, we do not agree with its substance.

Lord Lester of Herne Hill (LD): My Lords, without boring the Committee with too much about human rights, I will explain my problem with the amendment, or anything like it. The noble Earl has rightly said on the face of the Bill that he considers it to be compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights, under Section 19 of the Human Rights Act. The problem is that the Human Rights Act says—I am glad to say—that this statute, like any other, must be read and given effect, where possible, in accordance with the convention rights. Article 8 of the convention refers to national security as one of the matters to be weighed in the balance where privacy is being threatened. It is therefore very hard for Parliament to seek to give a definition that puts a gloss upon Article 8 unless it is fairly sure that it would not be struck down as being incompatible with the convention itself. As my noble friend has said, this amendment is too narrow and it would actually be better to leave the matter to be decided under the Human Rights Act—provided that the Government retreat from their foolish position of tearing up that Act and putting something else in its place. Provided they abandon that march of folly, we should leave well alone.

Lord Brown of Eaton-under-Heywood: My Lords, I very strongly support what has just been said by the noble Lord, Lord Lester. I respectfully suggest that this is not, as the noble Baroness suggested when she moved the amendment, a government oversight. This is a well-recognised term which, as the noble Lord has pointed out, is enshrined in the European convention. It was the term used, undefined and unrestricted by definition, in RIPA, which this law will effectively replace. It has a necessarily somewhat flexible meaning to cater for a great many situations. The proposal embodied within the amendment as to how it should

[LORD BROWN OF EATON-UNDER-HEYWOOD] be defined took me straight back to the celebrated case of *A v the Secretary of State* 10 years ago. That spelled the end of the Belmarsh internment system, which was then replaced by the control order regime. There were nine judges sitting in the appeal committee of this House. The noble and learned Lord, Lord Hoffmann, was the only one who questioned whether it was permissible, under the convention, to do what was done there. The internment was actually struck down by the great majority of the court—eight members—on grounds of irrationality and discrimination. However, the noble and learned Lord pointed out that what was under consideration was a really draconian power to detain people indefinitely without charge or trial. The great question, as he saw it, was whether, within Article 15 of the European convention, there existed a war or other public emergency threatening the life of the nation. He asked what was meant by threatening the life of the nation, and he suggested it was things like the Armada or, indeed, Nazi Germany in the Second World War; but the existence even of a threat of serious terrorist outrages did not, in his view, constitute such a threat.

The very narrow and restricted definition proposed in this amendment is reminiscent of that. As I say, only the noble and learned Lord, Lord Hoffmann, went down that road to say that the life of the nation was not in fact put at peril even by terrorism. However, that was a draconian power. Of course, I do not seek to devalue the right to privacy, but a right to privacy is not, I respectfully suggest, equivalent to a right not to be, as there, detained indefinitely without charge. An altogether wider view of national security is, I suggest, not merely permissible but imperative within this area of legislation. I oppose this amendment.

Lord Swinfen (Con): My Lords, what if we were to leave out the last part of the amendment, “against force or the threat of force”?

I wonder about cybersecurity—which is new to most of us. You do not need weapons to threaten a nation today: it can all be done in the ether. I think that this amendment might be a lot better if those last few words were deleted.

Baroness Butler-Sloss (CB): My Lords, I have not spoken often on this Bill but felt impelled to say that what the noble Lord, Lord Lester, and the noble and learned Lord, Lord Brown, have said is extremely good sense and the Government should follow it.

Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town (Lab): My Lords, given what has been said, I have little to add. I was born in Germany after the war, when it was so easy to define national security. It was about people coming over our border. Today, it is about our streets and about keeping people safe at home and abroad. I look forward to the noble Earl’s response. I do not think it is wise to try to define national security in the Bill, not simply because of the complications but because the definition changes. I know that it is a long time since I was born, but even over the next five years the definition will change again. We look forward to hearing the Government’s comments.

Earl Howe: My Lords, the arguments for and against a definition of national security have been considered at length both here and in the other place over the years, including in the Bill’s Committee stage in the other place. Neither House has been persuaded of the necessity of such a definition.

If the Committee will forgive me, I do not intend to rehearse previous discussions in full, but suffice it to say that it has been the policy of successive Governments not to define national security in statute. National security is one of the statutory purposes of the security and intelligence agencies. Threats to national security are, as we have heard, constantly evolving and difficult to predict, and it is vital that legislation does not constrain the security and intelligence agencies in their ability to protect the public from new and emerging threats.

The noble Lord, Lord Lester, and the noble and learned Lord, Lord Brown of Eaton-under-Heywood, made a very important point about the European convention. However, I think the key point is that to define national security in statute could have the unintended effect of constraining the ability of the security and intelligence agencies to respond to new and emerging threats to our national security.

My noble friend Lord Swinfen made an important point which was echoed by the Solicitor-General in the other place. Who could have imagined a few years ago cyberattacks of the nature and scale that now threaten us?

As I understand it, the noble Baroness, Lady Jones, is concerned with the purpose of national security being subject to too broad an interpretation in the Bill. I hope, however, that she will be reassured by the role of the judicial commissioners. They will oversee the use of these powers and will ensure that they are used only when it is necessary and proportionate to do so. The commissioners are the ultimate check against abuse. We need to remember that all the most intrusive powers in this Bill that may be used for the purpose of national security are subject to the double lock. That means that the Secretary of State and a judicial commissioner must consider whether their use is necessary and proportionate. The activities of the security and intelligence agencies will be subject to retrospective oversight by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner and, of course, the Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament. Should the Government ever treat national security as a kind of blank cheque, I have no doubt that the ISC and the IPC would make clear their position in their reports.

In view of the considerable time that Parliament has spent considering this question in the past, the conclusion it reached and the arguments advanced during this debate, I invite the noble Baroness to reconsider and not to press her amendment.

Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb: Why was the phrase “economic well-being” included as a rather loose term?

Earl Howe: I do not think I would characterise it as a loose term. The meaning of “economic well-being” is well understood. Therefore, I am not sure what the noble Baroness’s worry is in this context.

Lord Lester of Herne Hill: I hope that I am not out of order in suggesting that the words “economic well-being” are in Article 8 of the convention. That is where they come from. They were put in by British negotiators. They are very wide and do not help very much, but that is where they come from.

Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb: My point is simply that there was a recommendation that it was unnecessarily confusing. Therefore, there must be a reason for putting it in, and I would like to know the reason; that is all.

Earl Howe: It was to make it clear that economic well-being is a very distinct facet of national security.

Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb: I thank the Minister very much for those answers. I also thank noble Lords, who obviously did not agree with me, for their comments. This definition was meant to be a prompt, guidance, not something to be set in stone. Without a definition, I find it difficult to understand how we can describe anything that is necessary for the future well-being of the country. The whole Bill is based on a definition. However, if you have not described it, how can you be sure that you are doing the right thing? Nevertheless, given the explanation provided, I beg leave to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment 236A withdrawn.

Amendment 237 not moved.

Clause 235 agreed.

Clause 236: Index of defined expressions

Amendment 238

Moved by Earl Howe

238: Clause 236, page 187, line 33, at end insert “(and paragraph 4A of Schedule 9)”

Amendment 238 agreed.

Clause 236, as amended, agreed.

Clause 237 agreed.

Clause 238: Regulations

Amendments 238A to 240B not moved.

4 pm

Amendment 241

Moved by Earl Howe

241: Clause 238, page 189, line 26, at end insert—

“() regulations under section 50(3),”

Amendment 241 agreed.

Clause 238, as amended, agreed.

Clauses 239 to 241 agreed.

Schedule 9: Transitional, transitory and saving provision

Amendment 242

Moved by Earl Howe

242: Schedule 9, page 236, line 29, at end insert—

“Definitions of “other relevant crime” and “serious crime”

4A_(1) The definitions of—

(a) “other relevant crime” in section (Restrictions in relation to internet connection records)(6), and

(b) “serious crime” in section 235(1),

are to be read, until the appointed day, as if for the words “the age of 18 (or, in relation to Scotland or Northern Ireland, 21)” there were substituted “the age of 21”.

_(2) In sub-paragraph (1), “the appointed day” means the day on which the amendment made to section 81(3)(a) of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 by paragraph 211 of Schedule 7 to the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 comes into force.”

Amendment 242 agreed.

Schedule 9, as amended, agreed.

Clause 242: Minor and consequential provision

Amendment 242A not moved.

Clause 242 agreed.

Schedule 10: Minor and consequential provision

Amendment 243

Moved by Earl Howe

243: Schedule 10, page 243, line 5, at end insert—

“Immigration Act 2016

In section 7(2)(b) of the Immigration Act 2016 (information gateways: supplementary) for “Part 1 of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000” substitute “any of Parts 1 to 7 or Chapter 1 of Part 9 of the Investigatory Powers Act 2016”.

Earl Howe: My Lords, this is a minor consequential amendment to the Immigration Act 2016 regarding information gateways. The Act currently sets out that disclosures that can be made for the purposes of any exercise of any function of the director cannot authorise a disclosure that would be prohibited by Part 1 of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. This amendment simply substitutes “Part 1 of RIPA” with, “any of Parts 1 to 7 or Chapter 1 of Part 9 of the Investigatory Powers Act 2016”,

in the Immigration Act 2016 so that prohibited disclosures under these sections are not authorised by the Immigration Act. I beg to move.

Amendment 243 agreed.

Schedule 10, as amended, agreed.

Clause 243: Commencement, extent and short title

Amendments 244 to 246 not moved.

Clause 243 agreed.

House resumed.

Bill reported with amendments.

4.04 pm

Sitting suspended.

Schools

Statement

4.09 pm

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education (Lord Nash): My Lords, with the leave of the House, I will now repeat a Statement made in the other place earlier today by my right honourable friend the Secretary of State for Education. The Statement is as follows:

“With permission, Mr Speaker, I would like to make a Statement on the Government’s consultation published today, *Schools that Work for Everyone*, copies of which I have placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

As my right honourable friend the Prime Minister has said, this Government are putting the interests of ordinary working-class people first. We want this country to be truly meritocratic, where what matters most is a person’s individual talent and their capacity for hard work. So we need to build a schools system that works for everyone, not just the privileged few. The various proposals set out today in this consultation document all drive towards one simple goal: increasing the number of good school places.

Over the last six years we have made great strides forward, with over 1.4 million more children in “good” or “outstanding” schools than in 2010. The flagship academies programme has unlocked the potential in our schools. This Government are committed to helping all schools enjoy academy status freedoms and school-led system improvement through multiacademy trusts.

The reforms carried out by my right honourable friends the Member for Surrey Heath and the Member for Loughborough have had a transformational effect on education in this country. Now we need to build on the *Educational Excellence Everywhere* White Paper—our dedication to good teachers in every school, world-class qualifications and reforming school funding—and put an end to the underperformance that still exists in pockets throughout the country.

We need radically to expand the number of good school places available to all families, not just those who can afford to move into the catchment areas of the best state schools, pay for private education, or those belonging to certain faiths. We need to give all schools with a strong track record, experience and valuable expertise the incentives to expand their offer to even more pupils, driving up standards and giving parents greater choice and control. We have sought to do this already, for example, through university technical colleges and specialist subject schools.

The reality is that demand for school places only continues to grow. But too many children still do not have access to a good or outstanding school—in some

areas as many as 50% do not have one locally. In fact 1.25 million children attend schools which are not good or outstanding, in spite of all the progress that has been made, and that is unacceptable.

The Government make sure that schools have the resources to help the children most in need, for example through the pupil premium, and, of course, that will continue. But the Prime Minister is right when she says that disadvantage can be hidden in this country—it is not just about those children who receive free school meals. We have to come up with a broader definition and look at the ordinary working-class families, just managing to get by, who are too often forgotten about.

This consultation deliberately asks big, open questions about the future of education in this country. The plans set out in *Schools that Work for Everyone* focus on how we can unlock four existing parts of the educational community so that they can have a bigger impact for all children. First are the independent schools that give wealthier parents the option of an outstanding education for their children, often sending a high proportion to the best universities and guaranteeing access to the best career outcomes. Many of these schools already make a contribution to the state sector. Some even sponsor or run schools. While we recognise that work, we want independent schools to do more, so we want stronger, more demanding public benefit tests for independent schools to retain the benefits associated with charitable status. We want independent schools to offer more places to those less able to afford them and to sponsor or set up schools in the state sector. For smaller schools we will look at a proportionate approach, and are seeking views on how they can make their facilities available to state schools and share their teaching expertise.

Secondly, our world-class universities need funding in order to maintain that status and, under this Government’s approach on access agreements, we have made sure that steady investment is available while at the same time made sure that university is not out of reach for disadvantaged people. We want the huge talent base in our universities to do more to widen participation and help more children to reach their full potential. We therefore want universities to open or sponsor schools in exchange for the right to raise their fees. This will ensure they are not just pulling in the most qualified applicants, some of whom might have had an educational head start, but increasing the number of students with the GCSE and A-level grades that open doors to degree courses.

Thirdly, when we talk about selection in this country we have to acknowledge that we now have selection by house price for those able to buy houses in the catchment areas of the best schools. We know that selective schools are in high demand, as are specialist art, music and sports schools. Selective schools are good for pupils, particularly the most disadvantaged ones who attend them, and yet for most children the chance to go to a selective school simply does not exist. We want to look again at selective schools and how they can open up excellent places to more children, particularly the most disadvantaged. We will therefore look at how we can relax the rules on expanding selective schools,

allow new ones to open and non-selective schools to become selective where there is a demand. At the same time, we have to challenge ourselves and selective schools to raise attainment more broadly.

It is really important that I am clear about how we will ensure that all schools improve. We do not want to see a return to the old binary system of good schools and bad schools. Every child deserves a place in a great school. That is not just what they deserve, it is what our country deserves. What is clear is that selection should be part of the debate on how we make sure that the right number of places exists. Selective schools will be expected to guarantee places for children from disadvantaged backgrounds, and far from tainting the standards of education in the schools around them, we will explore ways for selective schools to share their expertise. We want them to raise standards in every part of the schools system, for example by opening excellent feeder primary schools or by sponsoring local non-selective schools.

Finally, let me turn to faith schools. I am sure that many colleagues will have children who go to high-quality faith schools. The current rules to promote inclusion mean that when new faith free schools are oversubscribed, they have to limit the number of pupils they admit on the basis of faith to 50%. This has not worked to combat segregation and acts as a barrier to some faiths in opening new schools. We want to remove the barrier so that new places can be created, but at the same time consult on more effective ways to ensure that all new faith free schools are truly inclusive. We will look at new requirements on the proposers of free schools to demonstrate that they are attracting applications from other faiths, to establish twinning arrangements with schools not of their faith, consider sponsoring underperforming non-faith schools and bring members of other faiths and none on to their governing bodies.

The Government want to build on the progress made over the past six years and make the schools system truly fit for purpose in the 21st century. *Schools that Work for Everyone* is about engaging with as many views as possible so we can design policies that make the most of the expertise we already have and widen access to good and outstanding school places for all. We on this side of the House believe in building a true meritocracy. We think that every child deserves a school place that will best serve their individual talents, not limited by where they live or how much their parents earn. There is so much potential in our country and the talent base needs us to ask the big questions, leaving no stone unturned, so that we can build a schools system that truly works for everyone”.

I commend this Statement to the House.

4.17 pm

Lord Watson of Invergowrie (Lab): My Lords, I thank the Minister for repeating the Statement. The former Labour Prime Minister and former Member of your Lordships’ House, Lord Wilson of Rievaulx, once opined that a week was a long time in politics. Well, rather a lot has happened in the past week in politics, particularly in the area of education, beginning with the leak, accidental or otherwise, of government plans for an expansion of grammar schools. Since then, we have had a Statement from the Secretary of

State saying that there was really nothing to say, followed a mere 24 hours later by a detailed Statement from the Prime Minister, which begs the question as to whether the two actually speak to one another. Now we have a 36-page consultation document outlining radical plans for an expansion of grammar schools, a relaxation of restrictions on faith schools, plus new demands on universities and independent schools. At this rate, we can expect a Bill tomorrow and the completion of legislation by the time Parliament rises on Thursday.

It is only natural that the Prime Minister wants to make her mark early, but the proposals contained in the consultation document are little more than a hastily put-together hotch-potch of wishful thinking. These plans will neither help to bring about an inclusive education system nor promote social mobility; in fact, they will do quite the opposite. It is all very well to reference “ordinary working-class people”—ignoring the fact that the biggest proportion of the population now regards itself as middle class, ordinary or not—but to say that these people will become the Prime Minister’s priority is simply not credible when so many schools are underfunded, there is a teacher shortage and parents are to be denied any say in the manner in which their children’s education is to be forced into the straitjacket of academies.

That begs the first question for the Minister: where do the plans announced today leave the hitherto mantra of the great drive towards academisation? Judging by her remarks on Friday, it is a question that the former Secretary of State would also like to have answered. Secondly, from where do the Government believe that they gained a mandate for such a radical change to the education landscape, breaking a consensus that has existed for 40 years? The fact is that they have none, and no legitimacy to introduce these retrograde proposals. If it is the Government’s intention to form this into legislation and attempt to get it through Parliament, can the Minister indicate the timescale that that might involve?

Baroness Pinnock (LD): My Lords, I thank the Minister for repeating the Statement but regret to say that it appears no more than a dog-whistle response by the Conservatives to the current state of the nation. How much easier it is to throw up the idea of more grammar schools than to concentrate on the real difficulties facing many working people across the country. There can be no other explanation for this situation. Earlier this year, we spent much time in this House debating and then enacting the Education and Adoption Act, which aimed to improve the quality of education in our schools through the academies route. Some of us did not support entirely the aims of that Bill, but certainly we could understand why the Government were pursuing that. Presumably, all that is now jettisoned so that we can have grammar schools brought back.

One thing on which we can agree on this side is that all children need, deserve and have a right to the opportunity of a good school. Given the figures that the Minister repeated this afternoon of more than 1 million children not having education in a good school, it seems to be a failure of this Government not to have addressed that earlier.

[BARONESS PINNOCK]

I will focus my comments on the proposals for introducing more grammar schools. One reason given is that it gives parents more choice. I cannot see, where schools are in the position to do the choosing, that parents have any choice. That is the whole problem of selection by test or examination: the school does the choosing. There is no way that we on this side can support that.

The second argument in support of bringing back a failed education policy from the 1950s and 1960s is that it will help children from deprived areas. At the same time it is argued that we currently have selection by house price. Apparently, this new proposal is to help children in working-class families. However, such families do not have a problem with selection by house price because most of them are in rented accommodation or in poor parts of the country where house prices are not an issue.

Thirdly, I have always thought that we ought to base our education policy on evidence. All the research over all the years, and currently, points to the fact that selection at 11 fails hundreds—thousands—of children. For the 80% of children who go into the non-grammar schools, but even for many of those who attend grammar schools, the statistics and evidence show that they do not necessarily thrive. I do not see how the Government propose to make the case for grammar schools based on evidence. I would have more faith in what they were doing if, instead of saying that they wanted to promote more selection, they said that they were actually going to promote more secondary modern schools, because that is precisely what they are doing. They are going to write off the 80% who are not going to get through the 11-plus—or whatever new test they have devised—and at 11 those children will feel that they are failures. No one who cares about children will be able to support such a divisive approach.

In conclusion, I am astonished that the Government have come forward with this proposal and we on this side will vigorously oppose it.

Lord Nash: My Lords, I note the criticism of our plans by the noble Lord, Lord Watson, but I do not believe I have heard any plans at all from the Opposition Benches recently in relation to education. I would be very interested to hear their thoughts. We have only just made this consultation document available so it is completely understandable that people have not had a chance to read it; it is quite long. In answer to his point about academies, paragraph 13 on page 7 says:

“These proposals complement our wider approach to school improvement and our drive to build capacity in the system through multi-academy trusts. It remains the Government’s ambition that all schools ultimately benefit from the autonomy and freedom to innovate and to meet the needs of their community that academy status brings, and we will be supporting schools to make this transition”.

As far as the timescale is concerned, as I have said before in this House on this matter, we intend to have a thorough consultation. We are asking for an open debate and when we have analysed the responses, of which I am sure there will be many, we will reflect and design the precise details of our plans and bring them forward to your Lordships’ House in due course. We believe that it will be possible to enact our plans in a way that benefits the wider school system as a whole.

With regard to the points made by the noble Baroness, Lady Pinnock, about house prices and rental accommodation, I am afraid she lost me. I do not really follow the argument so I think we had better have a private conversation about that. I would be interested to understand that better.

4.26 pm

Baroness Morris of Yardley (Lab): My Lords, the Minister will know from both his role and his close involvement in academies in London that London is the highest-performing region in our country and the best place to be poor if you want to go to a high-status university. Will the Minister explain what lessons the Government took from the success of London that led them to focus on more selective and grammar schools as a way of giving more opportunities to working-class children?

Lord Nash: The noble Baroness is absolutely right. London has been a great success story. It started under the Labour Government with the London Challenge and their academies programme, which we have sought to continue. Of course, there are quite a few schools in London that are selective in one way or another. It is also fair to say that it is much easier to attract teachers in London than in many of the areas of the country where we see these underperforming schools. Although there are many lessons to be learned from London, there are still many coastal towns and former mining villages in this country that seem to have struggled, partly because of intergenerational unemployment and partly because they struggle to attract really good teachers. It is those kinds of issues that we are really keen to focus on.

Lord Naseby (Con): Does my noble friend recognise—

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean (Con): My Lords—

Lord Naseby: This is about English schools. Does my noble friend recognise that the phrase “schools that work for everyone” applies to the majority of independent schools? I declare an interest, having been chairman of the governors of Bedford School, under the Harpur Trust, which runs three secondary schools in which well over 200 pupils receive substantial bursaries. The trust is the main financial promoter of the Bedford Academy. All the schools make their facilities available in different ways. My own school makes its planetarium available to every primary school in Bedfordshire. Against that sort of background, I have to say to my noble friend that it is not helpful to read in the papers of a quote, allegedly from the Prime Minister, that independent schools are “divorced from normal life”. They are not. Furthermore, does my noble friend recognise that every parent who goes to an independent school has already paid the cost of state education through the community charge? People who come to the independent sector make great sacrifices and come from all classes. They believe in good education and they are prepared to pay for it.

Lord Nash: My Lords, I fully recognise the contribution that independent schools make to our school system by reducing the cost to the taxpayer and providing wider support to our state system. I know, for instance, that independent schools provide more than £700 million a year in bursaryships and subsidised funding to their pupils. From my own experience, I was for many years a trustee at the Eastside Young Leaders' Academy in Newham, where at any time we look after up to 100 black boys—and now, I am glad to say, some girls—who are on the edge of exclusion from school. We have now sent 90 scholars, as we call them, on full bursaryships to schools such as Rugby and many others, so I have seen the benefits that this has had. I am also aware of the many school partnerships that take place between the independent and state sectors—an excellent one being King's College School, Wimbledon, where the pupils themselves visit primary schools on a Friday.

The Government funded the Schools Together website last year, which has more than 1,000 examples of co-operation between the independent and state sectors. We have also funded 20 independent/state school partnerships between those sectors, particularly to help the subjects being taught in primary schools. There is no doubt that many independent schools already provide a great deal of help but we feel that, in some cases, there is more that they can do. We need to encourage that to happen, so where schools have the capacity and capability to do so, we will ask them to sponsor or set up new schools, or to offer a certain proportion of places as funded bursaries, on which some may well qualify already. Where they are smaller schools, we will obviously look for a proportionate response but will still look to them to engage more widely with the state school system.

Baroness Taylor of Bolton (Lab): My Lords, the Minister has on several occasions mentioned disadvantaged children and disadvantaged families. Does he accept that the most disadvantaged children are from those families where the parents are not motivated and have no educational drive for their children? Even when entering school at the age of five, those children are well behind the rest of their cohort. Would it not be far better if the Government gave far more attention to early years education, rather than coming up with silly plans like this?

Lord Nash: I agree with the noble Baroness that the early years are very important and that sadly many parents do not engage as well as they could with the school system on behalf of their children. To me, that is why we should be very focused on primary schools. One of the things that we have said is that selective or independent schools may be able to help with primary education. Everybody gets so fixated on GCSE results but in fact the work, as we all know, has to be done in primaries. The depressing statistic is that if you do not get your required level 4 when leaving your primary school—your pass mark, effectively—then you have only a 7% chance of getting five good GCSEs.

Lord O'Shaughnessy (Con): My Lords, I welcome the Government's commitment to a meritocratic society and to increasing the number of good school places. My noble friend will know that the Government are

veering into contested territory with this Green Paper, so can he confirm two things? First, will the Government consent to an increase in academic selection only if they are totally confident that the evidence shows that it will increase and spread the number of good school places? Secondly, following any increase in academic selection, will the DfE evaluate the impact of these changes on the schools system to ensure that social mobility has indeed been improved?

Lord Nash: My noble friend makes some good points. It is our intention to ensure that the impact is favourable across the whole system and that there is a net benefit across it. We will of course continually monitor the impact of our policies.

Lord Addington (LD): My Lords, does the Minister agree that if you are to get people ready for selection you must have done some groundwork by making sure that they are properly taught? Will he give some assurance, given Stephen Munday's review and the Carter report, that special educational needs will be properly covered and implemented in all teacher training, particularly if a pupil is going up for a selection process? They will otherwise be guaranteeing that anybody with a hidden special educational need is at a massive disadvantage. This will also run counter to a lot of law. Can we make sure that it happens?

Lord Nash: The noble Lord is right that the Carter report highlighted the importance of SEN training. It is something that we are determined to improve. I will specifically discuss this matter with the Minister responsible, Nick Gibb.

Baroness Farrington of Ribblesdale (Lab): My Lords, does the Minister accept that in the Statement there are many descriptions of the problem but few of the answers? In terms of 11-plus selection, during the passage of the legislation, will he cite exactly how any relevant study justifies selection? In fact, it is not selection at the age of 11; it is rejection for the overwhelming majority of children. Attainment is being judged. The noble Lord referred to special educational needs. Yes, regard will be given to children with statemented special educational needs, but not to others. What about summer-born children who may have had a full year less than their age group by the time they reach the age of 11? Early years education was a foundation on which to build, particularly for children from deprived, working-class communities. Are the Government going to back that in future and extend it? The Minister is falling for a cheap trick by the Prime Minister. He professes to be concerned that all children should be able to reach EBacc. Now the evidence we see is based on 20%—or is it 25% or 30%?—getting through and the others being rejected.

Lord Nash: As I have said, we believe it should be possible to design plans that would benefit the wider system. We are working with the Grammar School Heads Association on a test at 11 that will be much more difficult to coach and prepare for. The noble Baroness made an extremely good point on summer-born children. This is something we are looking at very closely. I have just taken over responsibility for admissions,

[LORD NASH]

and I am looking at this extremely closely. On early years, over the past few years, we have invested significant sums in widening access to childcare for parents, particularly the less advantaged. On the EBacc, our ambition is not that all children should take the EBacc; we fully understand that there will be some for whom it is not appropriate, but we see no reason why a target of 90% taking it, if not necessarily passing it, is not achievable. We are seeing that many schools that formerly had single figures for pupils taking EBacc are now achieving 70% or 80% of pupils studying these subjects quite happily.

Lord Howell of Guildford (Con): My Lords, is it not a bit silly and outdated nowadays to depict the academic educational route to a career as in some way superior to the route through high technology and technical skills? Is it not the case that you can find the path to achievement and high success through either route and that the old idea that one is failure and one is success belongs to a past century? Does the Minister also agree that if every child and their parents are to have the choice of going down the route that suits them best on the road to the top—the road to success—it demands not merely expanded grammar schools, which is good, but a comprehensive and complete pattern of very high-quality high-technology schools and vocational schools that will enable children with that inclination to achieve and succeed just as much as if they had been to a grammar school?

Lord Nash: I entirely agree with my noble friend's point that the academic and the vocational routes should be equally valued. All pupils should have a basic grounding in academic subjects such as English, maths, science et cetera, but there is no doubt that we need to do more to improve vocational education in this country.

Lord Howarth of Newport (Lab): My Lords, at a time when, surely, the great challenge for political leadership is to unify a country which the Brexit vote exposed as being deeply divided by age, class, region, skills, income and wealth, the Prime Minister is insisting on introducing this most divisive of policies. The Government say that their concern is for ordinary, working-class people. Will the Minister acknowledge that the evidence we have indicates that although the policy could be beneficial to some of the 20% of children who may have the aptitude to qualify for grammar school education, it will clearly be to the detriment of other schools in areas where the new grammar schools are established or existing grammar schools are expanded, and to the detriment of the interests of the 80% of the nation's children who will not go to a grammar school?

Lord Nash: I invite the noble Lord to read the consultation document carefully. There are some very well thought out plans there as to how we believe we can ensure that this has a much wider benefit, particularly for less advantaged pupils. Just because something has not worked in the past does not mean that something with the same kind of principles cannot work in the future. We are determined, as I have said, not to go back to the previous, binary divide.

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: My Lords, I hope my noble friend will forgive me, in view of my noble friend Lord Naseby's injunction that this is an English matter, when I point out that when I left office as Secretary of State for Scotland in 1997, the number of children of school leaving age getting five decent passes was about 10% higher than in England. Today, it is the other way round. That is because of the reforms that have been brought in by a Conservative Government, which have been opposed by the parties opposite every step of the way. Does my noble friend not think that there is something quite bizarre about people wanting to make it against the law to have selection for intake into state schools when many of them, such as the former Deputy Prime Minister, benefited from expensive, highly selective schools giving them an excellent education themselves? Will my noble friend press ahead with these reforms and ignore the parties opposite, some of whose members wish to pull the ladder up after them?

Lord Nash: I am grateful for my noble friend's support for our policies, which have been very successful. We have created 600,000 new school places and have plans to create another 600,000. We have doubled the number of pupils passing the EBacc, we have many more competent young readers as a result of our phonics programmes and we have many more pupils leaving primary school with the necessary literacy and numeracy skills to help them achieve in secondary schools. I am delighted that my noble friend has pointed this out. Our record on this is pretty good, and I invite all noble Lords to look at our plans with an open mind. This is of course a consultation, and we welcome all contributions.

Lord Newby (LD): My Lords, the Minister has said that it is already more difficult to recruit good teachers outside London. Will his proposals today not exacerbate that problem for schools outside London that are not grammar schools, because the status of those schools in those areas will be further diminished—just as they were when we had secondary modern schools? How is he going to increase the quality of teaching for those poorer pupils in poorer-performing schools outside London which will not be grammar schools?

Lord Nash: The noble Lord is quite right to point out the difficulty of recruiting teachers in some areas. Teach First, which has been a very successful programme, has recruited 1,441 applicants, the majority of whom will be going outside London. It is having quite a lot of success at sending young teachers into certain locations such as coastal towns, particularly when they are sent together so that they feel part of a group. It is very important that they are placed in schools that welcome them and where they have good career development opportunities such as, in particular, in multiacademy trusts, where there are obviously much greater career development opportunities than in single schools. We also have plans, through the National Teaching Service, to send more teachers to what we call "cold spots".

Baroness Bakewell (Lab): My Lords, does the Minister acknowledge, when he speaks of the great support there is for an increase in grammar schools, that most

parents who support them do so in the belief that their own children will get in? How will he deal with the disappointment of the parents whose children fail?

Lord Nash: The noble Baroness makes a good point about what has happened in the past. But, as I said, we believe that although this happened in the past, if we have the strong requirements on the opening or extension of selection that we set out in our consultation document, which is to have wider access to more disadvantaged pupils and to support the wider school system, we can devise proposals that will benefit the wider system.

Lord Lingfield (Con): My Lords, noble Lords will know that independent schools that are charities receive certain fiscal advantages for so doing. Will those schools that would like to do so, and certain have indicated to me that they would, be able to opt out of charitable status and therefore demit the 3% or 4% of their income that they would lose by doing that?

Lord Nash: They will, of course, but we would hope that everybody involved in the schools system across the country feels an obligation to improve social mobility.

Lord Grocott (Lab): My Lords, I heard the Prime Minister say—this is repeated in the Statement—that there is to be no return to the “binary system”. I put it to the Minister that there is nothing more demonstrably binary than saying to 11 year-old children and their families, “About 20% of you will go to a selective school and 80% will have failed to do so”. Is the cat not let out of the bag by the sentence in the Statement that says of selective schools, once they are established:

“We want them to raise standards in every part of the schools system ... by sponsoring local non-selective schools”?

So you try to get your child into a selective school but they fail the exam; however, you then find that the selective school, out of the kindness of its heart, will give a bit of assistance to the second-division school down the road containing the 80% of pupils who failed to get in.

Lord Nash: Again, the noble Lord is harking back to the days when the choice was between a very high-performing grammar school and a secondary modern that might quite possibly not have entered many of its pupils for any exams at all. We have moved a long way since then. The choice might now be between a grammar school and a highly performing academy that might be more appropriate for that particular child—so I do not think the choice is binary at all.

Clinical Pharmacologists

Question for Short Debate

4.47 pm

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the decline in the numbers of clinical pharmacologists practising in the National Health Service and teaching in universities on treatment and research capacity.

Lord Hunt of Kings Heath (Lab): My Lords, this debate was organised at a very late stage on Wednesday evening so I am most grateful to all noble Lords who are taking part in it, and indeed to the Minister who will respond.

Most of the major advances in medicine in the past 50 years are related to the better use of better medicines. That is what makes this debate so important. Clinical pharmacology is the study and use of drugs in men, women and children. Clinical pharmacologists are to be found in hospitals and teaching settings, employed by the NHS and the university sector, with many employed by both. Clinical pharmacologists teach clinical pharmacology at undergraduate and postgraduate level, and provide training and support for other healthcare professionals in hospital settings. They practise those branches of medicine where drug treatment and the safer medicines agenda are pre-eminent. They can help other doctors who practise in other branches of medicine to learn about dose response, inter-individual differences in drug response and drug-to-drug interactions in order to improve patient care and prescribing practice.

By working with and training healthcare professionals, clinical pharmacologists can save the NHS money by stopping unnecessary drugs and using cheaper, more appropriate and equally effective alternatives. This is particularly pertinent given recent discussions about the NHS drugs bill; medicines spending accounts for around 10% of the overall NHS budget and costs in the region of £16 billion.

In addition to playing a valuable role in the NHS and teaching in medical schools, clinical pharmacologists are researching pioneering medicine in British universities and the UK biopharmaceutical industry. They are experts in experimental medicine, designing early-phase clinical trials, establishing NHS clinical research facilities and providing overarching clinical support. The specialty provides leadership in the use of medicines, and the benefit is felt across the broader NHS—in primary and secondary care and in areas such as regulation and medicines assessment.

Clinical pharmacologists hold a number of strategic posts within the UK healthcare and regulatory environment, so they can make decisions with widespread impacts. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, the Scottish Medicines Consortium and the All Wales Medicines Strategy Group have all been led by clinical pharmacologists to ensure the best use of NHS resources. They hold and have held a number of key posts within the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency as well. The MHRA's yellow card scheme, which collects information on side-effects, has centres led by clinical pharmacologists across the UK. Consultants in clinical pharmacology lead the National Poisons Information Service. They have jointly led the development of the prescribing safety assessment with the UK Medical Schools Council, an innovation in medical education that aims to increase prescribing competence among newly qualified doctors.

The past 50 years have seen a huge use of this highly specialised group of clinical doctors. Looking to the future, the question is: do we need them? Indeed we do. Thinking about personalised medicine as a new frontier, clinical pharmacologists can play a crucial

[LORD HUNT OF KINGS HEATH]

role in refining the use of currently available medicines and developing and pioneering the medicines of tomorrow. With an ageing population and many people with multiple illnesses who use multiple medicines, the potential of the clinical speciality is very great.

There can be no argument about either the past contribution of clinical pharmacologists or their potential contribution in future, but here is the rub. At a time when we need more of them, actual reductions in their numbers are taking place. This is affecting clinical posts as much as university teaching opportunities and it is producing a vicious circle. Changes in teaching at medical schools mean that many students pass through their training without ever hearing the term clinical pharmacology. In addition, the British Pharmacological Society has found that there is about one consultant in clinical pharmacology to 500 undergraduates, compared to one cardiology consultant to only 40 undergraduates. That means the specialty has low visibility among students and trainees, so there are few role models. Indeed, many medical students can go through the whole of medical school without even hearing of the specialty. Furthermore, the low number of consultant posts can be a deterrent in itself. Unsurprisingly, trainees are unwilling to start training in a specialty where local consultant jobs are at best uncertain, at worst unavailable. There is therefore compounded uncertainty, which makes it difficult to fill trainee posts.

We then come to the NHS and its employment of consultants. The problem is exacerbated by Health Education England's workforce plan approach, which is an aggregate of local plans. Inevitably, those local plans are focused on immediate pressures related to targets and waiting times, so the decision-making of Health Education England operates on a demand and supply model. It asks NHS trusts what they need, collates those requirements and that essentially becomes the strategy. As most NHS trusts do not have a clinical pharmacologist consultant, they will never ask one. Hence, Health Education England states that there is no demand and therefore no need to increase supply. This is a problem for all small specialties. What we need, above all else, is strategic thinking at national level for these very important, small-number specialties. It needs to be multifaceted because we need to increase visibility to the next generation, supporting training and securing more consultant posts.

In many cases, even more worryingly, the problem has spread to industry. A shortage in clinical pharmacological skills in the UK biopharmaceutical industry was highlighted last year as part of a call for urgent development of a skilled workforce by the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry. We have traditionally enjoyed a very high reputation in this field: we can think of eminent people, such as Sir Michael Rawlins, now the chairman of the MHRA, previously the chairman of NICE, or Sir Alasdair Breckenridge, former chairman of the MHRA. Alongside these global leaders in thinking in this area is a pharmaceutical sector that is hugely important to Britain, given the scale of R&D investment and the consequent developments that take place in the UK. That is important not just to patients but to the UK economy.

Some of this is at risk because the people who make the key decisions are essentially NHS bodies and universities who do not have the strategic picture. Indeed, at the moment there are only 72 consultants in post in the NHS, despite a recommendation from the Royal College of Physicians that there should be about 440. Over the past 10 or 15 years we have seen a huge increase in the consultant workforce, but in terms of clinical pharmacologists there was a massive increase in the last 12 years from 72 to 77. These gains have not been protected and my understanding from the British Pharmacological Society is that the number has now gone to 72 consultants.

The case I want to put to the Minister is that we need some action. The British Pharmacological Society is calling for more investment by the organisations responsible for workforce management in the four UK nations—this is a UK issue as well as an issue for England—to provide a minimum increase of 78 consultant posts to bring the total up to 150 by 2025. It also wants to provide clear career pathways with associated career support and development.

How is this to be done? I hope that this afternoon the noble Baroness will signal her support for some action to be taken. I hope she will recognise the fundamental contribution of clinical pharmacology to the NHS and the safer medicines agenda and, as importantly, its potential pivotal role in maintaining the UK's leading international academic and industrial position in the pharmaceutical sciences. I hope she will agree to meet the British Pharmacological Society with Health Education England, NHS England and the NIHR to agree workforce numbers, and to discuss what can be done in terms of a high-level strategy for clinical pharmacology. I also hope she will urge the British Pharmacological Society to work with the ABPI, the Medical Research Council and other employers and training providers on developing joined-up careers and training pathways as part of this strategy.

We are all aware of the financial pressure on the NHS at the moment, but I just point out that the clinical pharmacology specialty delivers essential cost savings. Indeed, work for the society to be published shortly by PWC estimates that for every pound invested in clinical pharmacologists, £5 can be saved through more efficient use of medicines and fewer adverse drug reactions.

This country has a pre-eminent role in the field of clinical pharmacology. It is very clearly at risk and I very much hope that the Minister will signal that the Government are prepared to take action to reverse the very worrying trend we are seeing at the moment.

4.59 pm

Baroness Gardner of Parkes (Con): My Lords, almost all my working life, I was involved in the National Health Service and in general dental practice for over 35 years; also, I had the privilege of serving as a member of various health boards. It is because the NHS means so much to me that I put my name down to speak in this debate.

Noting that the subject was "clinical pharmacologists", I realised that I did not know precisely what they were and what they did. Although I asked the party Whips'

offices of Government and Opposition to provide me with their definition, neither did so, so I had to have a good look at Wikipedia, which was a great source of information. I know that this debate happened at very short notice, so I am not blaming anyone that only the weekend intervened between the time that we heard about it and now.

Wikipedia makes it clear that clinical pharmacology, “is the science of drugs and their clinical use. It is underpinned by the basic science of pharmacology, with added focus on the application of pharmacological principles and quantitative methods in the real world. It has a broad scope, from the discovery of new target molecules, to the effects of drug usage in whole populations. Clinical pharmacology connects the gap between medical practice and laboratory science. The main objective is to promote the safety of prescription, maximise the drug effects and minimise the side effects. It is important that there be association with pharmacists skilled in areas of drug information, medication safety and other aspects of pharmacy practice related to clinical pharmacology. In fact”,

in some countries people,

“train to become clinical pharmacologists. Therefore, clinical pharmacology is not specific to medicine”.

Another point I must mention is how valuable the service is to general practitioners. They rely on the advice that comes through clinical pharmacologists to tell them which drugs are safe to put together and which drugs counteract or damage one another or create dangerous situations.

Another important factor is the role that they play in the national poisons centre. GPs have told me that when a patient presents and they have taken some sort of poison—or they believe that it is poison—they get on immediately to the national poisons centre, which assesses whether there is something available that could counter the poison that has been given or whether the person needs to be rushed immediately somewhere to be put on to a different type of treatment. The role that they play in the field of toxicology is extremely important.

Wikipedia lists the branches, which I shall mention by name. They include pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics, as well as dealing with rational prescribing, toxicology, drug interactions and drug development. So it is pretty wide-ranging—and it has been very informative. I have learned a great deal from speaking to people in the practice, who know what the position is.

However, it seems in many ways to be a very academic position, and education experts will probably know exactly what training is required. Are the facilities for training readily available? Does it require a double degree? Is the drop in numbers due to the difficulty in recruiting people wishing to be trained in this particular discipline?

From the speech of the noble Lord, Lord Hunt, it sounds as if there is a bit of a lack of interest. People may not be aware of how significant the role is and how satisfying it could be to do it well. Even the little I have found on the subject has revealed how important a part clinical pharmacology plays in the National Health Service. After listening to the speech of the noble Lord, Lord Hunt, I was better informed on that than I was just from Wikipedia, because he spoke about the very important roles that clinical pharmacologists play. But they are rather the invisible people; ordinary

members of the public probably have no idea what they are—just as even I, who have worked so much in the health service, did not know exactly what it was. So we must be sure that the role is more widely recognised.

The noble Lord expressed the wish that people would be encouraged to go into it and made to feel it is worth while, and there might be more prospect of that when the subject is aired like this—then people have more idea of what they could do and how it could be a very valuable contribution. However, it requires a special temperament, because very demanding and highly skilled science is required. Their role of helping on rulings about rational prescribing—and I understand they have a place in the preparation of any new protocols for medicine—is vitally important work.

We cannot afford to lose too many clinical pharmacologists. The Government must look at ways of ensuring a continuing stream of these essential specialists for the NHS.

5.05 pm

Baroness Thornton (Lab): My Lords, I first congratulate my noble friend on securing this short but very important debate. Like the noble Baroness, Lady Gardner, I also went to Wikipedia as well as the British Pharmacological Society. I do not think it is an academic area at all. It is a vibrant area of biomedical science that studies drug action: how medicines and other drugs work and how they are processed by the body. That affects all of us in one way or another, whether it is about taking paracetamol, the effects of alcohol and caffeine consumption, the inadvertent exposure to poisons and environmental pollutions or many other aspects of modern life, such as drug addiction and abuse and the abuse of drugs in sport.

Clinical pharmacology has added focus to the application of pharmacological principles and methodology in the clinical setting, including patient care and outcomes. It is crucial for the discovery of new medicines to help fight diseases such as cancer, depression, heart disease and infectious diseases. It is essential for improving the effectiveness and reducing the unwanted side-effects of medicines and understanding why individuals—such as women—differ in the way they respond to certain drugs. The response of children to drugs is a growing field of examination for the Pharmacological Society.

As a scientific discipline, pharmacology dates back to classical Greece and, in our country, to the Middle Ages and it lies at the heart of biomedical science. As the noble Baroness, Lady Gardner, has explained, pharmacologists work closely with a wide variety of other disciplines. Their knowledge and understanding improves the lives of millions of people across the world by providing vital answers at every stage of the discovery, testing and clinical use of new medicines. This is a unique contribution to today's science and tomorrow's medicines, in universities, government agencies, the health service and the pharmaceutical and bioscience industries.

The most recent example was an announcement made last week when Professor David Webb, president of the British Pharmacological Society and professor of therapeutics and clinical pharmacology in Edinburgh, said of the study of statins:

[BARONESS THORNTON]

“In recent years, those of us who manage the large number of patients at excess risk of heart disease and strokes have been fighting an uphill battle to persuade them to take statins, a class of medicines that have been repeatedly shown to save lives”.

He went on to say:

“This comprehensive review, by a broad group of leading international academics, of robust and unbiased evidence from randomised controlled trials and systematic reviews, confirms that statins are both effective and cost effective”.

We need pharmacologists to thrive and we need their futures to be assured—the whole of the NHS needs them. As my noble friend said, PricewaterhouseCoopers estimates that every pound invested in clinical pharmacologists could save £5 through more efficient use of medicines and fewer adverse drug reactions. This research, which is pending publication, has been commissioned by the British Pharmacological Society, and is in the very helpful briefing which it provided. Savings could be on a significant scale. Medicines spending accounts for around 10% of the overall NHS budget and now costs in the region of £16 billion, up from £14.3 billion since 2013. The Department of Health has estimated that £300 million is lost every year due to medicine wastage, at least half of which is avoidable, so savings could be felt across the NHS.

Surely those savings should at least justify a strategy to make sure there are enough clinicians and consultants and a better career pathway in this very important discipline. The noble Baroness, Lady Gardner, asked a pertinent question: why is there a problem? I think the answer is that, as with so many specialist areas in the NHS, no one has provided a strategy and picked it up and run with it. My noble friend has outlined the need for workforce planning. I hope the Minister will reassure the House that the Government are taking these concerns very seriously indeed and will bring forward solutions for us to consider. I very much look forward to her remarks.

5.10 pm

Viscount Hanworth (Lab): My Lords, I wish to speak in the gap.

Prescribing is one of the major roles and responsibilities of a doctor. It follows that a sound knowledge of pharmacology should be an important element in the training of all clinicians. We are now embarking on an era of medicine where treatments by drugs are becoming increasingly specific to individual patients. These developments and the application of such remedies is complex and demanding and it requires the oversight of experts.

Since the creation of the first academic departments of clinical pharmacology in the UK in the 1950s, the discipline has played a substantial role in studies in experimental medicine, and in large-scale clinical trials.

Concerns have been expressed in recent years that the number of clinical pharmacologists in the UK is falling; many of the individuals concerned are within 10 years of retirement, so there will be an even more critical shortage of clinical pharmacologists in the near future. The consequence of a dearth of specialist pharmacologists and a dearth of knowledge of pharmacology among the generality of clinicians is worrying.

Poor prescribing is one way in which patients can come to harm. A lack of knowledge can also make general practitioners vulnerable to the persuasions of drug companies that are intent on selling their remedies without regard to their efficacy or their dangers. It is difficult to estimate the cost to our health service of the inappropriate adoption of drugs that have been the subject of hard sales techniques, but it must be considerable.

What is lacking from our health service, and what it once possessed, is a facility for conducting exacting trials of pharmaceutical remedies. The decline in the number of specialist clinical pharmacologists in the health service and the marginalisation of pharmacology in medical training implies that there will be acute problems in the near future. These problems will be the legacy of a remarkable oversight on the part of the Department of Health and of the General Medical Council, over a period of more than 20 years. It is time for this situation to be amended.

5.13 pm

Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen (Con): My Lords, I begin by thanking the noble Lord, Lord Hunt, for securing a debate on this important subject. He has spoken today about the vital role fulfilled by clinical pharmacologists and the contribution they make to effective treatments for the population of this country.

As the noble Lord pointed out, pharmacology lies at the heart of biomedical science, linking together chemistry, physiology and pathology. Those that take up the speciality work closely with a wide variety of other disciplines, including neuroscience, molecular and cell biology, immunology and cancer biology, to name just a few. They improve the lives of millions of people globally by providing vital answers at every stage of the discovery, testing and clinical use of new medicines.

The ability to use medicines effectively, to optimise their benefit and minimise the risk of harm to people, relies on pharmacological knowledge and understanding. We hear much about new diseases such as Ebola and Zika and their emergence and also hear much about older medicines—most notably antibiotics—no longer working as well as they did, so the contribution of pharmacology to finding better and safer medicines continues to be vital.

While it is true that there has been a decline in the number of clinical pharmacologists practising in the UK, it is important that we recognise that the fall in numbers is relatively small. Data from the British Pharmacological Society and the Royal College of Physicians show that the number of CPT consultants in the UK fell from 74 in 2002 to 72 in 2013, and that 52 of the 72 consultants were based in England, but perhaps a drop of even that amount is important.

As regards the supply of the profession, as noble Lords will be aware, from being established in 2013, it has been Health Education England's responsibility to ensure that there is sufficient future supply of staff, including those needed in specialist fields such as this, to meet the workforce requirements of the English health system. It is the responsibility of the devolved Governments to ensure their health systems have the

staff they require. Each and every year, Health Education England produces a national workforce plan for England. This is built upon the needs of local employers, providers, commissioners and other stakeholders who, as members of the local education training boards, shape their local plans.

Health Education England therefore has a responsibility for ensuring an adequate supply of trainees to provide the consultant workforce of the future, but is not responsible for setting the number of consultant posts inside the NHS. As I have just set out, this is the role of trusts, commissioners and others. HEE annually reviews the number of training places in medical specialties in response to demand expressed by the NHS. It is therefore crucial that trusts have a clear view of how they wish to utilise and promote clinical pharmacology and therapeutics positions in their hospitals.

To its credit, HEE has increased the number of training posts available. However, not all of these have been filled. Clinical pharmacology and therapeutics has suffered in terms of its fill rates against other high-profile specialties. However, as my noble friend Lady Gardner of Parkes mentioned, there needs to be more recognition of the career, more involvement with related healthcare organisations and perhaps more understanding of how fascinating and interesting this career can be, as the noble Baroness, Lady Thornton, said. In an attempt to counter this, HEE has been working to make the profession more attractive to junior doctors as they begin to specialise, including making the role more flexible to trainees, offering joint training with other specialisms and actively promoting the role at careers fairs.

The noble Lord, Lord Hunt, mentioned people not coming forward because of the uncertainty of a job. That is why some clinical pharmacologists already train towards a dual CPT, which then broadens the scope of their practice, making them more desirable to employers due to increased flexibility. I am aware that HEE has also been undertaking a review of this area and will, in due course and upon completion, share these findings with stakeholders, including the British Pharmacological Society. Leading on from that, the role has also been promoted by the chair of the British Pharmacological Society and is supported by the four UK health systems.

It may be interesting to note that the supply of clinical pharmacologists is primarily domestic, with only a very small number coming from overseas. In the three years 2012 to 2015, only one of the newly appointed consultants was trained outside the UK. Both the Royal College of Physicians and the British Pharmacological Society feel that there is a need for growth in this area and assert that current and predicted supply is insufficient to support that growth, and as such are calling for more training posts. There is, though, a lack of consensus between the Royal College of Physicians and the British Pharmacological Society about the level of future demand and the numbers required. This is perhaps an indication that it is not easy to evaluate future demand or possibly indicates a lack of understanding of these roles out in the wider health system.

Given the need to spend taxpayers' money responsibly—and the difficulty filling the existing training posts—HEE is not able to increase the number of training positions until the demand is signalled by the NHS. At this stage, no significant increase in demand has been signalled in HEE's annual collection of forecast demand from providers, which forms the basis for the annual training commissions for medical specialties.

In summary, I strongly encourage professional bodies with an interest in this field of medicine to actively engage locally with NHS trusts to ensure that where there is a need for additional clinical pharmacologists, they feed this in to the HEE workforce planning process. This process is the fundamental bedrock for NHS workforce planning. HEE actively engages with its stakeholders in developing its annual workforce plan, and any change in workforce planning numbers needs to be debated and resolved through this process. It is interesting that this is obviously not only a problem in the United Kingdom, because several reports have come out of the United States which show that it is having similar difficulties.

I thank the noble Lord, Lord Hunt, for giving us the opportunity to discuss this important matter.

Lord Hunt of Kings Heath: I am most grateful to the Minister for giving way and for the eloquence of her response. From what she said, the Government's view is that this is solely a matter for Health Education England, and I understand that. However, does she accept that because HEE is concerned only with the accumulation of the local plans, it is not able to take any account of the national significance of this clinical speciality, and that there is a risk here because local employers do not see this as particularly important, although nationally we can see that it is vitally important? Is there a case for asking HEE to look at the national strategic importance of the professions? That would be one way of looking at this from a rather different viewpoint.

Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen: The noble Lord stopped me just as I was about to say that very thing. This is one of the important problems. There is not joined-up thinking—certain bodies are not aware of the importance of this—so it becomes a kind of vicious circle. I was going to say that we need joined-up thinking, and I hope that debates such as this will increase awareness and get people to think further. I will be happy to meet those bodies involved; they might well prefer to meet my noble friend Lord Prior but I will be happy to accept on his behalf.

I thank all noble Lords who have taken part in this debate.

Lifelong Learning *Question for Short Debate*

5.23 pm

Asked by Baroness Garden of Frogna

To ask Her Majesty's Government how their policies are supporting and encouraging lifelong learning.

Baroness Garden of Frognal (LD): My Lords, I make no apology for accepting the opportunity to renew the debate on lifelong learning, which has often been addressed in your Lordships' House. I thank all noble Lords who have signed up to speak at very short notice, including those who will speak in the gap. I regret that the late introduction of this debate in the business means that many champions of the subject may have missed the opportunity to take part and encourage the Government to greater efforts.

Lifelong learning has been defined as the ongoing, voluntary and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge for either personal or professional reasons. It enhances social mobility, active citizenship and personal development, all of which are surely of benefit to individuals, the community and the country. It is often considered learning that occurs after the formal education of childhood, where learning is instructor driven or pedagogical, and into adulthood, where the learning is individually driven or andragogical. I had never come across the term "andragogical" before, so my own lifelong learning has already been enhanced. This could be because without any training I drifted into teaching with just a degree. I discovered at first hand how different were the skills required to obtain a halfway decent degree from those required to engage young people in learning. As a result, I am deeply convinced of the importance—indeed, the necessity—of teacher training and will listen with interest to my noble friend Lord Storey's debate after this.

However it is perceived, lifelong learning is dependent on people developing a love of learning, being excited about acquiring knowledge and skills, and having the confidence to take the risk of tackling new challenges. I have not limited this debate to adult education—although the focus is likely to be on continuing adult education—and I should like to begin at the beginning. As was touched on in the earlier Statement, the early years are crucial. Children's learning starts in the home. We have all seen the joy on the face of a young child who takes their first step, catches their first ball or recites their first nursery rhyme. This is the sort of satisfaction that lifelong learning should continue to generate.

From the time of formal schooling, the Government have a major part to play to ensure that a love of learning forms part of education. Will the Minister tell us what importance the Government give to love of learning and fun in the curriculum? What place is there to generate enthusiasm, spontaneity and curiosity in the midst of the remorseless assessment, strict curriculum and constant competitiveness that is to be found in primary schools and, even more so, in secondary schools? In secondary schools, the dead hand of academic league tables drives teachers remorselessly to concentrate on tests and exam syllabuses.

I always feel that there is a valid analogy with carrots. You do not grow bigger and better carrots by pulling them up every day to check and measure their growth. Similarly, you do not grow better-educated youngsters by formally assessing and measuring them at every moment of their learning. With the overemphasis on formal measurement, our dedicated and hard-working teachers have little time or incentive to introduce innovation and excitement into the business of education.

As an aside, the great grammar school controversy, of which we heard more in the Statement earlier today, is an unnecessary distraction from the very real issue of engaging all young people, regardless of intelligence or aptitude, in learning.

In promoting lifelong learning, careers information, advice and guidance play a key part as a motivator, and as an introduction to the relevance of school learning to future life and work. This is especially important to those young people whose interests, talents and skills lie in practical learning. Enthusiasm for learning can be generated in the most unlikely pupil if they can see a purpose and a practical pathway, and can grow in confidence and self-respect that they too can be achievers. It is vital that the value of vocational and practical skills is given as much status and encouragement as academic achievement. Dare I ask the Minister to impress on his colleagues the immense value of good careers information at the earliest stage in education?

Schools can, and do, aim to encourage learning of all sorts, but are often held back by oft-changing government policies; what my former colleague Lady Sharp of Guildford referred to in her brilliantly insightful valedictory speech as the "churn of government". It is pernicious that incoming Secretaries of State seem to feel it imperative to enforce their own new bright ideas, regardless of the impact and unproductive workload on teachers, and regardless of the fact that these very same bright new ideas might well have been tried, tested and found wanting in previous generations. Can the Minister persuade his education colleagues to hold fire, to consult, and to undertake cost and benefit analysis before making changes that are, all too often, politically driven and have little to do with improving life chances for all young people? After all, experts are sometimes right.

I mentioned league tables. They are the public face of achievement for GCSE and A-level results. What steps are the Government taking to incentivise schools over apprenticeships and other work-based skills by celebrating pupils who achieve in those areas?

After school, further education colleges play a vital, if underappreciated, role in taking forward provision for learning. Alas, the adult skills budget has been reduced by 35% over the last seven years with the proportion of adult learners over the last 15 years dropping from 50% to 15%. Gone are so many of those life-enhancing evening classes that can broaden minds, enrich lives and promote aspiration in a wide variety of ways. It is well proven that learning as an adult, including non-accredited learning, brings benefits such as better health and well-being, greater social engagement and increased confidence, as well as better employability, and benefits to family and community life. I remember years ago teaching French to adults in a college. What a contrast it was to some of the school pupils I was faced with. How exhilarating it was to have students with a sense of achievement and enjoyment at learning something new. They had rediscovered the joy of learning that we see in the very young.

On the employment side, the country is facing acute skills shortages. There are an estimated 31 million people in the current workforce of whom 12 million

are due to retire in the next 10 years with only 7 million in the education system to replace them, so on numbers alone we need to be encouraging reskilling and retraining even before we consider the specific skills where shortages are most acute, such as science, technology, engineering, mathematics and languages.

Further education colleges are essential to this progress, with valuable contributions too from great institutions such as the Open University and Birkbeck College. The services that they provide enable adults to fulfil potential but also to contribute to the economy. All are currently too concerned about funding, qualified teachers and certainty about the future to enable them to plan their work to full benefit. Part-time learners have been heavily hit with changes to funding and colleges have struggled to keep up staffing numbers along with the wide range of courses they are expected to provide.

I flag up two issues. The first is funding for ELQs—equivalent or lower-level qualifications. Some exemptions have been made, but relaxing the rules would give great benefit in meeting shortages in the workforce. The second is individual learning accounts, where individuals contribute to their training costs alongside contributions from employers and tax exemptions from government. The scheme fell apart over fraudulent mismanagement, but the basic idea was sound and would be well worth revisiting, obviously with much tighter oversight to avoid the previous pitfalls.

We have yet to see the impact of the apprenticeship levy on adult education, but the signs are worrying. I urge the Government to consult and monitor to avoid adverse unintended consequences of this new initiative. Lifelong learning is an essential component in providing long-term flexible career prospects and for creating a more productive workforce. I hope that the Government will listen to all those who work to enhance learning and will provide more generous and more reliable funding to ensure the fulfilment of individual potential and the prosperity of the country.

5.32 pm

Lord Rees of Ludlow (CB): My Lords, one focus of this debate is the continuing upgrading that we all need if we are to adapt to a fast-evolving labour market and cope with the bewildering changes that we will encounter in the coming decades. Information technology and robotics are transforming our working environment and rendering many skills obsolete. That is well known and much bemoaned. But I want to highlight two things. The first is that the same technologies that disrupt the world of work offer more effective ways of dealing with it. That is the upside. The downside is that our tertiary education system is not flexible enough to respond optimally to these opportunities.

We are entering what is sometimes called the second machine age. Employment levels are being eroded in manufacturing. Robots will take over call centres, lorry driving and so forth. But it is wrong to conclude that blue-collar work is especially vulnerable. Some skilled manual jobs are very hard to automate—gardening and plumbing for instance. In contrast, machines plus big data will invade a whole range of traditional middle-class jobs, such as routine legal work, medical diagnostics and even surgery. There is surely a need for a massive redistribution to ensure that the money

earned by robots does not stay with the elite, but instead funds the currently unmet demand for service roles and provides carers, custodians and so on with the secure and dignified employment that has been eroded by automation.

In this fast-changing context there is a growing need for flexible part-time education, not just for young people seeking to qualify for gainful employment but also for those in later life wishing to update their skills, and for those in the third age simply wishing to follow intellectual interests. There has been a huge and welcome expansion in tertiary education since the student days of most of us in this House. However, this has mainly been in higher education, with more than 40% of each cohort now going to university. A degree has become a prerequisite for many jobs for which it was not needed in the past. In consequence, social mobility may have been impeded. Young people who have been unlucky in their schooling do not have a fair chance of university access at the age of 18, even if they have great potential. Worse still, they generally have no second chance. And, of course, many people in their 50s and upwards never had the chance because far fewer went to university in their younger days,

Universities can ameliorate this problem by being more open to mature and part-time students. For instance, why cannot our most selective universities earmark a proportion of places for students who do not enter straight from school but have gained credit through study at another institution or through part-time or online study? Moreover, we must recognise that there is nothing magic about the level achieved in three to four years. An American will say, “I had two years of college”, regarding the experience as positive. Some drop-outs may return later while others may pursue part-time distance learning. Even those who go no further should not be typecast as “wastage”. Credits, even if they are not sufficient for graduation, are worth while in themselves and should be formalised into a system that more readily allows for transfers between institutions and between part-time and full-time study. The demand for part-time and distance learning will grow, speeded of course by the high fees now imposed on students at traditional residential universities.

There is surely also a need for more diversification among universities; they should not all try to compete in the same league table. There are, for instance, no counterparts to the high-quality American liberal arts colleges. The curriculum that most universities offer is too specialised and inflexible for many students. Moreover, there is too sharp a demarcation between further and higher education, aggravating concerns about our skill levels, apprenticeship quality and so on compared with other advanced countries. As the noble Baroness has just said, that is because it is further education that has been starved of funds. In further education the proportion of mature students has also fallen. This highlights the importance of reducing the financial impediment to further study or training at any stage in people’s lives. Perhaps there should be a rethink of the so-called individual learning accounts.

We know from the Higher Education and Research Bill that the G want to encourage private providers. This could be welcome provided there is an adequate

[LORD REES OF LUDLOW]
 accreditation procedure. Realistically, however, these profit-making providers will focus on the cheaper courses, which means social science rather than STEM subjects, for which on-line material has to be supplemented by hands-on practical work. Languages may also suffer. But the overall good news is that the advent of advanced IT offers massive new opportunities for lifelong learning. I am probably not the only person who looks back on their formal education and is depressed by how little of durable value I absorbed over so many years—and I was fortunate in my teachers. Understanding how we learn now matters more than ever because it is the key to harnessing the huge potential of the IT revolution for education and training.

Top universities in the US are developing online courses. UK academics should surely seize similar opportunities to widen their impact but, rather than getting locked into an American platform such as edX or Coursera, they should contribute content to the Open University and support the further development of its FutureLearn platform. The OU is surely ideally placed to take a lead in the worldwide dissemination of online courses.

There is a huge amount of other stuff on the web, the primary aim of which is educational. A pioneer was the so-called Khan Academy, with several thousand videos, each of just five to 10 minutes, explaining key concepts in maths and other subjects. This was created by a scientifically educated financier, Salman Khan, and is an amazingly cost-effective way to enrich the regular curriculum of millions, especially in the developing world. This online material will supplement rather than replace the teacher at school level and in most of further and higher education. However, online courses are a genuine stand-alone option for mature and motivated students studying part-time at home, whether seeking vocational qualifications or studying for its own sake.

If we are living longer, and especially if we move towards Lord Keynes' nirvana of a 15-hour working week, we should not downplay the importance of lifelong learning for its own sake, as already stressed by the noble Baroness. The older among us may recall the era of the dedicated WEA lecturer, speaking to a few devotees in a village hall. The huge volume of stuff online today would generate amazement and envy in that generation. We can all freely access wonderful material on the OpenLearn website prepared jointly by the OU and the BBC, two institutions with a global reach. Of course, the personal touch has not been eroded—quite the reverse. There has been massive growth in live events, with hundreds of literary festivals around the country, the U3A et cetera.

Incidentally, another benign spin-off from the internet is the democratisation of research as well as of learning. There has been a long-standing tradition of amateur involvement in some sciences, such as botany, but the scope for citizen scientists is much wider. Many archives are now available on the web. For instance, amateurs are now studying ships' log books from the 18th and 19th centuries. These are a fascinating social history as well as containing important historical data for climate science. In my subject of astronomy, eagle-eyed amateurs can access the data from spacecraft and themselves discover new planets.

So there are huge opportunities, but to exploit them for maximum benefit our system needs a more diverse ecology: a blurring between higher and further education, between full-time and part-time, and between residential and online. We need to remove the disincentives from mature students. We can exploit the benefits of IT to offer a better second chance to young people who have been unlucky in their earlier education. We can offer new opportunities to older people who never had them when they were young, and we can promote lifelong learning for us all.

5.43 pm

Baroness Smith of Newnham (LD): My Lords, I am most grateful to my colleague and noble friend, Lady Garden of Frognal, for securing this debate. I declare an interest as an academic employed at the University of Cambridge. It might sound a little surprising, having just heard from the noble Lord, Lord Rees, that somebody from an elite university must none the less declare an interest in lifelong learning, but even at the University of Cambridge there is the possibility to engage in lifelong learning. I will come back to that in a moment.

First, I pay tribute to my own mother. I am the sort of student who went straight through school, university, a master's and then a doctorate; my mother left school at 16 with O-levels and always felt that she had not achieved her potential. When she got to 48, she stopped and thought, "What do I really want to do?". At that time you needed to apply to university before you were 50 in order to get a grant, so she gave up work and went to university aged 48. I am not sure about your Lordships, but the last thing on earth I would want to do now is stop work and start an undergraduate degree. It would be far more nerve-wracking at 48 than it was at 18 for many of us. For those people who stop in their tracks during their working life and say, "Now is the time to go into higher or further education", it is hugely important that those opportunities are there.

That was a personal anecdote, but there are so many people for whom university is not the right thing to do at 18. Yet, as the noble Lord, Lord Rees, indicated, there is a tendency now to assume that it is almost a rite of passage: people stay at school until they are 18 and then they go to university. They may or may not benefit from going to university at 18. Some people do; others do not. They may find that at 18 they want to go out and earn money, travel the world or do other things. The last thing on earth they should be doing is going to university just for the sake of saying, "I'm going to university". That would be true whether or not they were incurring £9,000 a year or more of debt in tuition fees. It is a question of what is right for people at certain times in their lives.

For many people, going back in their 20s or 30s can be far more beneficial for their self-confidence and the skills they need to engage in the workforce. There are opportunities through further education colleges to gain the sorts of skills and re-entry qualifications that might enable people to do foundation courses and then go into higher education. It would be enormously beneficial if the Government would think about ways of encouraging people back into education at certain levels, rather than assuming that if you have not done it at 18, you have stopped.

I said I had an interest to declare. That is because my day job at the University of Cambridge for many years has been teaching master's and undergraduate students who are at Cambridge full-time, but there are two other aspects that I think are of interest. One is a temporary thing that is worth mentioning, partly because it brings back the memory of Lord Garden. In Cambridge we have a link to the military and every year our master's programme in international relations has five or six students who are funded by the MoD. One of our alumni was the late Lord Garden, who came as a mid-career member of the military. Each year we have people from the Army, the Navy, the Royal Air Force and the Marines. They add hugely to the quality of the courses because they bring a different perspective, and that is true of people coming back into higher education.

If you come to university at 18 and everyone in your cohort is 18, you have an understanding of learning and you carry on as a cohort, but people who come back into higher education at a later stage bring a range of life experiences that are beneficial to the whole group—and the lecturers. Again, if all you do is go to university and become a teacher in higher education, you do not necessarily have the breadth of understanding that is brought in by people who come in from the outside world. Teachers as well as other students can benefit from people coming in mid-career.

But that is a very niche thing. From the end of September, I will be teaching a part-time master's programme, which begins to speak to the sort of thing that the noble Lord, Lord Rees, was talking about. Our part-time master's programme in international relations brings in people who may have come straight from university—or they may be high-flying bankers or businesspeople, or they might be people who have decided to take a career break or mothers who want to come back into education and then the workforce. The course, including admissions, is structured on the basis of taking into consideration not just GCSEs and A-levels but what people have been doing in the intervening five, 10 or 20 years. What you have done in the workplace or your other life experiences can be taken into consideration when it comes to admissions. For people who may not have thought about coming back into higher education—or who may have switched off—there is an opportunity to do that even at somewhere like the University of Cambridge.

In addition, there are courses run by the department for continuing education that allow people who have left education, and not thought about skills for many years, to come and do them at weekends. They get a sense of what it is like to study again and ask themselves whether someone at the age of 25, 35 or 55 could come back into education.

Those opportunities exist in many universities. Over the years, we have seen an expansion of university education right across the United Kingdom: Bedford, Chester and the Highlands, for example, all have universities. The opportunity for people in local communities to go in and work, so as to gain experience through some taster or access courses provided by universities, could be a way back into higher education. It could also be a way of learning skills which link back to the local employment environment.

Such things are hugely important, but for too long the focus has been on academic education that goes through to A-levels at 18 and straight to university. It is hugely important that we think of education as something that people can come back to at whatever stage is appropriate to them. From their personal experiences, what matters to them for their self-fulfilment? Also, what will matter in terms of jobs? Increasingly, people are not taking on jobs for life; they may need to change careers or reskill. We should think increasingly about how people can move through further and higher education, and other types of study, so that at every stage of life they are fulfilled and equipped to take on the sort of jobs that a 21st-century economy offers.

What opportunities does the Minister envisage for 21st-century lifelong learning? How far can the Government encourage people to think about going into further or higher education at a time which suits them? How does that fit into wider understandings of apprenticeships and the other training that the coalition Government, and this Government, have been dealing with very well over the last six years?

5.53 pm

Lord Shipley (LD): My Lords, I thank my noble friend Lady Garden of Frogton for enabling us to have this debate, which is important for encouraging the personal development of individuals and for identifying the skills needed by the country as a whole, which will of course change over time. She rightly pointed out that lifelong learning depends on a love of learning. For many, that love of learning is not there when they are young, so opportunities for those individuals to develop and continue to learn later in life become very important. As we have heard in this debate, too, vocational skills can be as important as academic knowledge and achievement.

For as long as I can remember, this country has had a skills shortage. There will always be one unless we can forecast better what skills we shall need a number of years ahead. If we look back 30 years, the world of work in this country was very different from now. In 30 years' time—or indeed in 10—it will be very different again. But identifying in what ways it will be different is extremely important. We need to understand better what education and training we need to put in place. For that reason, the decision of the Government Office for Science to look at what changes in technology and work could mean for education, training and lifelong learning is very welcome. Its aim, as I understand it, is to look ahead for up to 20 years, and its report will include the levels and mix of skills needed and, in particular, the kinds of digital skills that will be required. The context for that will be the critical factors that will influence learning over a lifetime.

I will talk about some of those factors in a moment and make some suggestions. First, however, a few days ago I was very pleased to receive a copy of the University Alliance report *Developing Productive Places: the Role of Universities in Skills Ecosystems*. I thought about the use of the phrase “skills ecosystems”. I rather like it. I find it helpful because it tells us that this is all about partnership working between the different levels of our education system and the large number of

[LORD SHIPLEY]

public and private bodies responsible for skills development, training and lifelong learning—and, in turn, for increasing productivity at local and regional level. The report is right to remind us that, as we have already heard in this debate, part-time study declined by 45% in the five years from 2010 to 2015. I hope the Minister will understand that that matter needs to be addressed urgently because, for those who are in work but who need to develop new skills, full-time study may be impossible. I hope the Government will look very carefully at ways of enabling everyone who wants to develop their skills to do so, be it on a part-time or full time basis, because the changing nature of work surely makes this essential.

I now go to the barriers to individuals successfully developing themselves. My noble friend Lady Garden of Frognal mentioned some of them. They relate to funding, information and support. Adults who want to learn need to be enabled to do so, and that implies personal, portable funding opportunities and easier access to advice and guidance. In this respect, I want to draw attention to union learning schemes, which provide a very positive means for individual union members to gain confidence in their learning and widen their horizons. Such schemes, of which there are a number, are based in the workplace with workplace mentoring and have demonstrated significant success in giving individuals with entry-level skills the capacity to progress further.

A few days ago, I read in my local morning paper, the *Journal*, about a report from City & Guilds which suggested that many teenagers in the north-east of England lack confidence in their future, with fewer than half expecting to be in a career they actually chose 10 years from now. I looked at this because I wanted to see the report as a whole. I hope the Minister will be able to read it because I found it extremely instructive. It is called *Great Expectations*. I shall quote three little pieces from the foreword. The report is,

“an exploration into the career aspirations of 14-19 year olds”.

City & Guilds interviewed more than 3,000 young people who were making decisions that would shape their future. It came to the conclusion:

“Rather than giving careers advice based on real local labour market intelligence, 14-19 year olds are being exposed to a narrow range of careers, with a one-size-fits-all education route to get there”.

Successive Governments have tried to address the issue of how young people can understand the routes available to them, be they routes through university, vocational routes or a combination of the two. But we have to do better at matching real local labour market intelligence with the careers advice that young people are getting. I understand that Ofsted has a role in this, and I hope that the Government will continue to pursue the issue. Otherwise, a number of young people may well end up making the wrong decision. City & Guilds reached the conclusion:

“The research backs up what we’ve been saying for some time: young people need better and more consistent exposure to employers and the workplace throughout their education”.

I subscribe to its view.

In conclusion, I think that what I have said demonstrates that investment in lifelong learning from the cradle to the grave is central to building young people’s confidence and widening their horizons, thereby helps to reduce social inequalities later in life. So I hope that the Government will look carefully at how they can expand adult education and part-time opportunities, including community learning, and will look in detail at the suggestion that my noble friend Lady Garden of Frognal made about individual learning accounts—I was going to say something similar. There were some problems with ILAs at the time, a few years ago, but the principle, as my noble friend pointed out, is still valid. So I hope very much that the Government will look at all of these issues, and understand how part-time learners have been affected by budget cuts and that for the economy to be successful, people need continued personal and professional development to be available through their lifetimes. With luck—maybe in the Bill that is coming to the House before long—we may be able to explore some of these issues in a little more detail.

6.02 pm

Baroness Greengross (CB): My Lords, I thank noble Lords for allowing me to speak in the gap. I shall be brief. This is a very important debate, and I congratulate the noble Baroness, Lady Garden, for highlighting some issues which matter so much to all of us.

I have been very inspired by the work of one or two organisations in developing these programmes and ideas which improve the opportunities for adults to take up learning, particularly in later life. One of them is United for All Ages, which aims to build stronger communities by bringing people of all ages together and promoting a Britain for all ages. This is what I want to focus on, and a key part of it is obviously lifelong education and learning. We know that employers could make much more use of older people’s experience, knowledge and skills, but often not only do they encounter ageism but there is a shortage among these people of the skills required in modern society. They need to be trained, but face many obstacles in achieving those ends. It is very important for responsible businesses, and employers generally, to create opportunities for their employees to learn throughout their careers and to take up opportunities for learning, nationally and locally.

There are of course opportunities in our society, and some are inspiring. One that inspires me is the University of the Third Age, which has been mentioned and in which I have been involved since its inception. One of the good things about it is that, locally, it is managed by older people themselves. As a result, it varies tremendously around the country, but it is a brilliant initiative.

Another initiative is Ransackers, of which I am patron. This gives opportunities to older people who missed out completely on higher education when they were young and enables them to do pieces of research. It was started at Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge, but now there are other centres as well, where people who had no opportunities in education can learn how to do a piece of research. That is an absolutely wonderful initiative.

The other one I will mention is the Second Half Centre at the St Charles Centre in London. That centre is managed by an organisation called Open Age, which is a brilliant charity offering opportunities for older people, and the range of activities provided there is phenomenal. They are not just educational; they are physical and artistic. They are everything that you could want to think about in later life, and it all happens in one magnificent centre, of which we need many more.

I would also like to pose a question to the Minister. The Government, and indeed many of us, are now looking at secondary schools with great interest. Many of them are in rural or semi-rural areas and are quite difficult for people to get to, except for local people who live around them and have very few opportunities to get the sort of educational opportunities that we are talking about. Would it not be possible for some secondary schools to be opened up to adults, particularly when learning something like modern languages? After all, you learn languages now in a language lab; you do not have to be the same age as the person next to you because you are wearing headphones and a mike and you learn your language on your own, although you can still discuss it with other people. We do not need to have age restrictions in many areas of learning nowadays, and this would be a way of opening up opportunities for adults in many schools. I think at least some schools would welcome such opportunities. I would like to know if the Minister would consider this approach, helping people of all ages to play a part in fulfilling their own destiny through education.

6.06 pm

Baroness Bakewell (Lab): My Lords, lifelong learning should be the central element of our future educational strategy. It would apply to every citizen and constitute a completely new way of rejuvenating and perpetuating knowledge in the present and bringing fulfilled lives to all our citizens.

I declare an interest as president of Birkbeck. Lifelong learning exists already in London's only specialist provider of part-time higher education. Some 13,000 of Birkbeck's 15,500 students are part-time because they have full-time jobs. Over 8,000 of those students are over 30, some are over 60 and one or two are even over 80. They manage to mix a life of work and earning with study and application. I went along to a session where a lot of young people—at least, people younger than me—were studying accounting, having come from accounting companies. The way that they learned was to interrogate the teacher as much as the teacher interrogated them, because they brought to their learning the background of their daily job. That is a wonderful way of perpetuating the skills of one generation and confronting the dilemmas of the next. This revised way of learning might well change the way that the human psyche learns and passes on information. It is only when that has happened for the whole population that it will be successful.

The people who come to Birkbeck have full-time jobs yet study for full-time degrees. The master of Birkbeck often says he wonders what other students do with their days because our students graduate with honours to full-scale university degrees. Indeed, it is a commonplace that an employer who gets a CV that says

“Birkbeck” on it will put that CV pretty near the top of the list, because Birkbeck students want to learn, are highly motivated and combine their jobs, their incomes and their working experience.

I have a vision that, in future, working life throughout the country will include regular financially supported breaks for further learning. That should be built into the expectations of today's schoolchildren and graduates as it has the potential to bring fulfilment to the whole population. What matters crucially now, not least for the Minister, is finance. It is difficult to finance these enterprises, but the Government have said that they support part-time maintenance loans. There is to be an official consultation on this, and I ask the Minister when that can begin. It cannot be too soon.

6.10 pm

Lord Watson of Invergowrie (Lab): My Lords, I congratulate the noble Baroness, Lady Garden of Frogmal, on introducing this important debate, in which we have had contributions of very high quality.

On a personal level, having the opportunity to close for the Opposition in the debate to an extent represents the wheel turning full circle. That is because my first job on leaving university in the 1970s was as a tutor/organiser with the Workers' Educational Association. The noble Lord, Lord Shipley, mentioned trade union courses. During that period with the WEA, I was a distance tutor for courses for trade unionists, many of whom went on to further study. I echo the noble Lord's remarks about how valuable they were and, in many cases, still are.

I spent three years with the WEA. They were enjoyable and, I hope, productive, years, helping people who had in many cases returned to education after a lengthy absence and were determined to begin a new phase in their lives. That may have meant a new direction in employment or simply an extension of knowledge to use for their personal benefit or that of their family or community.

Whatever the reason, often that first step into adult education was the most difficult, and the WEA has for more than a century opened such doors for millions of people. It continues to do so and last year it published the results of a survey of its students entitled *Changing Lives*. It revealed the extent to which adult learning impacts on so many areas of an individual's life. The survey found that more than half of those under the age of 60 gave improving communication skills as a specific skill developed on a WEA course. Four months after completing their course, almost one in four reported having found employment.

Also last year, the WEA felt compelled to mount the Save Adult Education campaign. A petition, signed by more than 10,000 people and calling on the Government to stop further funding cuts to adult education was presented at 10 Downing Street by the WEA chief executive Ruth Spellman. It highlighted the fact that everyone deserves a second chance and a route back to learning. As Ms Spellman stated, “it is essential for our economy and society that we continue to provide high quality education for adults”.

For many people living in low-income communities, adult education is a lifeline. It helps individuals and their families break cycles of deprivation by getting

[LORD WATSON OF INVERGOWRIE]
the skills they need to forge better lives for themselves. However, as the noble Baroness, Lady Garden, said in her opening remarks, the adult skills budget has been reduced by 35% since 2009, and funding for adults over the age of 19 on non-apprenticeship courses was cut by a further 20% in 2015-16. I ask the Minister to explain the rationale behind what is patently short-term thinking.

A report by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills published as long ago as 2011 concluded that,

“adult learning contributes to other government policies by improving health and wellbeing”—

especially that of older people, and their ability to access digital technologies—

“cultural development and active citizenship, all of which can potentially decrease the burden on public finances”.

I would not refer to public services being burdened, but I welcome official recognition of the real benefits that flow from adult education. However, the years since have not demonstrated that the Government listened to their officials in BIS, because there has been little to suggest that they really value adult learning’s contribution to the growth of the economy.

The Association of Colleges has highlighted the extent to which funding has been shifted from adult education to apprenticeships. The levy on employers has the aim of increasing the quantity and quality of apprenticeship training, but there is a real fear that some employers will offer only the lower-end apprenticeships and may even use the people filling them to replace existing staff. Why should all the burden fall on employers? The whole country will benefit from a better educated and skilled workforce, so the Government should be prepared to provide additional funding to ensure that more apprenticeships are at the higher level.

The situation in higher education is everything but as concerning, as the noble Baroness, Lady Smith of Newnham, eloquently demonstrated, speaking from her experience as an academic at Cambridge. If I may say so as a bit of an aside, I owe the noble Baroness an apology. I had not looked at her title closely enough and thought she was Baroness Smith of Newham, thereby associating her with the University of East London rather than Cambridge. I now know better and certainly found the information she imparted to noble Lords based on her experience at Cambridge invaluable.

It is a fallacy to assume that young people will learn more effectively than older people. No matter the stage they are at in their adult lives, part-time higher education is essential in delivering flexible learning for people. The Open University is one of our great institutions. Statements it has issued have often made the point that part-time higher education is a cost-effective way of raising skills levels and training so that students can earn and learn at the same time. It may surprise some to learn that 75% of Open University students come into that category, and of course the benefits of new skills are felt immediately by both the individual and their employer.

It should be a matter of great concern to noble Lords that there has been a significant fall in numbers of part-time students in recent years. The signs are

that that decline could continue for some time yet, particularly among those studying for foundation degrees, where the number of part-time students has collapsed by almost 50% since 2011. Of course, foundation degrees are the means of opening doors to higher education, so perhaps the Minister can say what the Government propose to do to counter that trend.

Les Ebdon, the head of the Office for Fair Access, has warned that if sustained action is not taken it may be too late to reverse it, meaning that many talented people who missed out on the traditional route into full-time study at 18 will find their route to a second chance at study cut off. A step change in approach by the Government is needed if the potential of lifelong learning is to be fully exploited. When success is measured, it must be done for all, not simply 18 to 20 year-olds.

The data and assumptions underpinning the Higher Education and Research Bill, currently in Committee in another place, focus primarily on young, full-time students, without taking into account the value of other flexible learning options, such as part-time, especially for mature students. It seems to have escaped the DfE’s notice that 38% of all undergraduate students from disadvantaged groups are mature, but it will need to take that statistic on board if it is to have any chance of delivering on the commitment to double the number of disadvantaged students entering higher education by 2020.

Employers and individuals could be encouraged to invest in education through personal career accounts, where public funding is used to match investment by individuals, with a bigger top-up for those on the lowest incomes. This could operate in the same manner as the Help to Buy ISA scheme. Over time, these could develop further to offer career review and development opportunities, assisting people to make informed choices to deliver training and development.

As the noble Baroness, Lady Gardner, and the noble Lord, Lord Rees, mentioned, the feasibility of a digital credit system could be examined, allowing people to bank their credits in digital accounts, should personal circumstances mean that they are required to suspend their study or skills development for any reason. A good example is the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework, which integrates work-based and lifelong learning. The benefits are widely acknowledged, from promoting social mobility and employability to supporting employer collaboration and driving up quality.

Part-time higher education could be included in the scope of the new employer levy by broadening the scope of apprenticeship levy funding. Ensuring that the levy can be used for other forms of skills training would give more flexibility to the employer, without affecting existing employer-led initiatives, such as employer-sponsored degrees. An apprenticeship, as currently defined, might not be for everyone; one size certainly does not fit all.

Education is a powerful tool for tackling economic and social disadvantage because it raises aspirations and helps people create their own life changes. Lifelong learning and adult education should inform government policy aimed at improving the country’s poor productivity and closing skills gaps, to improve competitiveness

and economic performance. Potentially it is a win-win situation, and for that reason I look forward to hearing a positive response from the Minister to the thoughtful contributions from noble Lords today.

6.19 pm

Viscount Younger of Leckie (Con): My Lords, I too am hugely grateful to the noble Baroness, Lady Garden, for securing this debate. I too wish that more notice had been given for it. The noble Baroness and I had the privilege of serving in the coalition Government together on the Front Bench, and I know that she brings much knowledge to this particular portfolio.

It is often the case in these debates that we hear of the backgrounds of noble Lords, and I was particularly interested to hear today of the work that the noble Lord, Lord Watson, did in the past for the WEA and everything else that he mentioned. I should declare my own interest in the subject of lifelong learning. My background is in industry and the City as a human resources generalist, including career management, so I have always had a great deal of enthusiasm for this subject and the contribution it can make, and I hope I come with a little knowledge.

Let me start by attempting to define what lifelong learning is; I think that the definition chimes to some extent with the comments made by the noble Lord, Lord Rees. It focuses on, first, giving people opportunities for progression and maintaining employment by upskilling; secondly, giving those who have underachieved academically earlier in life the opportunity to update their skills and increase their earnings; and, thirdly, enabling those who have been out of work to reskill and enter employment. I was interested to hear one or two anecdotes, particularly from the noble Baroness, Lady Smith, about her mother—maybe she falls into the third category or maybe it is the first; I am not entirely sure.

Like many noble Lords, I have read *Hansard* for the debate in January, when the noble Lord, Lord Hennessy, offered an apt and succinct definition of lifelong learning, calling it the “life of the mind”. I thought that was rather interesting. Lifelong learning supports people to take control of their lives in a world of rapid economic and technological change, to meet the challenges and opportunities that increasing automation brings. In the recent past, we have seen the job market change substantially in places such as Teesside, and before that Corby. In the last recession, we saw a surprising number of people moving from their financial careers to take up teaching as part of the Teach First programme. It is therefore important for government to encourage people to take up new skills—a point that the noble Baroness, Lady Smith, made in encouraging more people to come back into education, and indeed to higher education.

The noble Baroness, Lady Greengross, asked how the Government are helping students to fulfil their destiny. In reply, I would say that the Government have a number of programmes to help students to fulfil their destiny, and I shall summarise them in a moment.

This topic was the subject of a debate in January, which included Lady Williams’s valedictory speech. Lady Sharp spoke to us in this place of the Government’s

groundbreaking reforms in technical and professional education, and now I would like to update the House further on those matters. We have accepted all the recommendations made by the Independent Panel on Technical Education, chaired by the noble Lord, Lord Sainsbury, to establish routes of progression up to the highest levels of professional competence as part of a new world-class system. This represents quite a change: in the recent past in England, technical education has tended to start at lower levels and end at level 3. We know that the best systems start from the opposite end of the telescope; they ask what world class looks like and then work backwards. As a result, in the best continental systems, a young person starting has a clear line of sight through to the very highest level of technical excellence. That is something that, despite the best of intentions, previous Governments of all parties have failed to offer young people in our country, and it is a situation that all parties agree now has to change.

An example of this type of situation comes within engineering and manufacturing technologies, where there is an annual shortfall of 40,000 with level 4 skills. The noble Baroness, Lady Garden, raised that point very eloquently in her speech. Yet the proportion of adults in the workforce undertaking higher vocational training—that means beyond level 3 but not a degree—is 7% in England, while in Canada it is 34% and in Germany 20%. In England, technical education virtually stops at level 3, with all the waste of potential that that involves. These reforms take that potential further and, as the noble Lord, Lord Sainsbury, has stressed, it is vital that the new technical routes are open to learners at any age.

The noble Lord, Lord Rees, made a point about the importance of internet skills and robotics. This Government are committed to delivering a programme of national colleges and institutes of technology, which will address gaps in the high-level skills needed by employers. They will be well placed to respond to the challenges of increased levels of automation in the workforce. As I live quite close to Milton Keynes, I am well aware of the project on driverless cars taking place there, which the noble Lord, Lord Rees, may know about. A very high level of skills is needed for that project, which is just one of many. Around £80 million of government funding has been announced to support the five national colleges.

I turn to apprenticeships, which have been mentioned and which are an integral part of the new technical routes as an existing all-age programme. Noble Lords will know that we are expanding apprenticeships, with a commitment to 3 million starts in the current Parliament, and raising the quality by putting employers directly in charge of the reforms. However, noble Lords may not know that more than 3,000 people aged over 60 began an apprenticeship in 2014-15. The noble Baroness, Lady Smith, spoke about the important link between higher education, further education and apprenticeships. We are carrying out two reforms in technical education at the same time. This gives us the best opportunity to ensure that they are complementary and that young people can benefit from the changes as soon as possible. Higher and degree apprenticeships are widening access to the professions and developing the higher level

[VISCOUNT YOUNGER OF LECKIE]
 technical skills needed to improve productivity—as was mentioned earlier—and support British industry to compete internationally. This point has been much trumpeted in recent days with the move that we are making with our departure from the EU.

As noble Lords will be aware, and as the noble Baroness, Lady Bakewell, stated, finance is an important consideration at any level. The Government recently expanded advanced learner loans, so that those aged 19 and above can obtain financial support for studying qualifications at levels 3 to 6 at a college or training provider. For those wishing to study at university, we have introduced loans for postgraduate master's students, with doctoral loans to follow in 2018-19. For the first time ever, we will provide financial support to part-time students, equivalent to the support we give to full-time ones, which we will also introduce in 2018-19. I know that the noble Lord, Lord Shipley, raised this point to ensure that those who want to develop skills full time or part time can do so and I acknowledge his comments. The noble Baroness, Lady Garden, and the noble Lord, Lord Shipley, spoke about the decrease in the adult skills budget. The spending review was a good settlement for skills and the further education sector. A combination of the levy, the protection of the adult education budget, the extension of loans and the introduction of the youth obligation means that, by the end of this Parliament, the cash value of core technical education funding to support participation will be at its highest level.

However, we are, of course, considering whether there is more we can do, and the Government are currently undertaking a review into lifetime learning. Its aim is to ensure that people who wish to study part-time later on in life, or wish to retrain to change career, are able to do so. The noble Baroness, Lady Garden, and the noble Lord, Lord Shipley, spoke briefly about community learning. This makes a powerful contribution to supporting access to learning and progression in its widest sense, particularly for people who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate. It supports groups who can really benefit from lifelong learning—adults who are unemployed, low-skilled or have few qualifications and individuals, families and communities who are socially disadvantaged. The noble Lord, Lord Rees, and the noble Baroness, Lady Smith, raised the question of the ability of a student to transfer. We called for evidence and I will follow up with a letter giving more detail on that issue.

For those who fall below the basic skills, we fully fund all adults to achieve their English and maths GCSE as well as other qualifications which help them achieve that level. We are also funding English for the speakers of other languages to enable integration into society, and to support more inclusive communities and jobseeking. Jobcentre Plus work coaches provide information about programmes that help people prepare for, find and stay in work. The National Careers Service offers people of all ages free and impartial advice regarding career and training options, including advice on the local job market. Citizens Advice offers advice about learning at all ages, as does our very own GOV.UK website.

Once again, I thank noble Lords for their contributions to and expertise in this debate. It is a shame that it was laid at such short notice, because otherwise I am

sure that other Peers would have wanted to get in. In the very short response that I am able to give, I confirm that the Government are committed to providing learners with comprehensive support for their learning in an era of unprecedented job-market change and higher skill needs. As we seek to improve our country's record on social mobility, lifelong learning will have a vital part to play.

Teachers: Academies and Free Schools

Question for Short Debate

6.29 pm

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they intend to ensure that all teachers at academies and free schools are fully qualified.

Lord Storey (LD): My Lords, I thank all noble Lords who have put their name down to speak in this debate.

There was a record number of 456,000 full-time equivalent teachers in state-funded schools in 2015, but retaining working-age teachers is becoming harder. The proportion of teachers leaving for reasons other than retirement is increasing. The number of teachers entering initial teacher training has been below the Government's annual target for the past four years. In certain subjects, such as maths and physics, there has been a real problem of recruitment. The number of pupils is projected to grow by 13% between 2015 and 2024, adding another 900,000 pupils to the school system, so 50,000 new teachers will be required on top of those trainee teachers replacing leaving or retiring teachers. As I said, secondary schools face particular challenges in retaining teachers in sciences, languages and geography. However, Governments have always got it wrong on rising and falling birth rates—they have never been able to manage it properly.

Perhaps the most worrying aspect is not just recruitment and retention—it is how teachers feel about their jobs. The National Foundation for Educational Research has just published a report entitled *Engaging Teachers: NFER Analysis of Teacher Retention*. Every time we reorganise a school, bring in a new curriculum, change the exam system or alter the testing regime, it has an effect on teacher morale; it has an effect on their confidence and, actually, their well-being. It goes without saying that teachers who have had their morale knocked out of them will feel undervalued and not give of their best or be the excellent teachers that they should be. What can we do about it? Every time there is a minor change in your Lordships' House many Peers are incensed. Imagine how we would feel if we had constant change here, and imagine how teachers feel.

In its February 2016 report, *Training New Teachers*, the National Audit Office called on the Department for Education to show that arrangements for training teachers,

“are more cost-effective than alternative expenditure, for instance on improving retention”.

It is not very cost-effective to spend considerable sums on training someone to be a teacher if they resign a few years later, when there will be the additional cost of training a new teacher to replace them.

I was recollecting—which is perhaps dangerous for me—that when I first started teaching I was responsible for what were called “top juniors”, the group of young pupils who would be entered for the 11-plus. In those days, there were grammar schools, secondary moderns and technical colleges, and then comprehensives were established. Then schools and colleges were allowed to develop specialisms, whether in languages, sciences or PE. My wife’s school became a specialist PE college, and luckily for her she was a PE teacher. Then there were academies: city academies and then academies—standalone or in multi-academy chains. As we know, 70% of our non-selective or independent schools are academies. You can give schools different names or different structures but what really matters is not the type of school but the quality of the school leadership and—most important of all—the quality and professional expertise of the teachers.

I have often said in this House that if a pupil in a primary school has a poor or mediocre teacher one year, they will not be able to repeat that year. If the pupil is learning a subject in secondary school and has a poor or mediocre teacher, he or she will probably be in danger of failing that subject.

In recent years, every time the PISA tables were announced, perhaps our most radical Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove—perhaps I do him a disservice—constantly lauded the Finnish education system for its approach to education and learning. Great! In Finland, they recognise the importance of teachers. Teachers are valued and respected and, importantly, are not allowed to teach unless they have a master’s degree. By the way, in Finland there are no tests and testing regimes until pupils reach the age of 16. In this country, whether you are a pupil in an academy, a maintained school, a church school or a grammar school, the quality of the teacher really matters.

As I said, academies were first set up by the last Labour Government as an education strategy to improve educational standards, particularly in disadvantaged communities and areas of poor education, and drive up standards by replacing failing schools in struggling LAs. Originally, they were called city academies. Academies are not obliged to follow the national curriculum and are not accountable to their local community but directly to the Minister’s department via eight regional commissioners. They are not obliged to include parents or teachers as governors, can set their own salary scales and terms and conditions for staff and can employ unqualified teachers.

Pay and conditions are about not just the amount that teachers get paid but include sick pay, the structure of school holidays, starting salaries, salary structure, pay progression, chief executive salaries, probationary arrangements, teacher qualifications, rules about people taking redundancy pay and disciplinary and grievance procedures. If we do not have a nationally agreed scheme which applies to every type of school, we will end up with a free-for-all in education and—some with a particular political bent might like this—a free market economy. We have already seen that some academies are paying differential rates of pay so they can attract teachers in shortage subjects. However, if you pay more salary to one type of teacher, other teachers will

get less. Just as the coalition Government fought against regional pay, so we should fight against a divisive system in pay.

Academies’ freedom to control staff pay has resulted in many senior staff receiving bloated six-figure salaries. Indeed, chief executives of academies are on a financial wheel of fortune for their remuneration, with a salary of £300,000-plus having been paid. Perhaps those Conservative Back-Benchers in the other place who want the salaries of the BBC’s top earners to be published should insist that the salaries of the top earners in academies are published as well.

Free schools and academies have been able to employ teachers without academic or professional qualifications since 2012. Since June 2015, the number of unqualified teachers working in academies has risen by 20%. In 2012, 2,320 academies that opened had funding arrangements requiring them to employ only teachers with qualified teacher status, similar to maintained schools. However, in September 2015, *Schools Week* reported that 34 academies had been granted permission to amend their agreements so that they could take unqualified staff. Will the Minister please ensure that all new academies have funding arrangements requiring them to employ fully qualified staff, and that any chances are taken only in exceptional circumstances?

There are a variety of different routes into the teaching profession, ranging from postgraduate certificates based at universities to School Direct, which, as the name suggests, focuses on training at the chalkface, to Teach First. Making sure that you are properly trained and qualified before you step into the classroom and have responsibility for the minds of children and young people must be an essential requirement. Teaching is not something that you just drift into without fully understanding what you are doing. Like any other profession, teaching requires a bank of knowledge and skills that cannot just be picked up as you go along. If you teach young children, you need to understand child development. Every teacher needs to be able to identify different special educational needs, and to understand child behaviour management and safeguarding—the list goes on.

If I go into a hospital, I want the doctors who treat me to have completed their training before they turn their attention to me. If one of them says, “I have a great bedside manner but haven’t yet finished the section on anatomy”, that will not fill me with great confidence. To be thrown in at the deep end is a route to frustration and uncertainty. Students deserve the best we can offer. We definitely want those with natural aptitude to go into teaching, but that aptitude needs to be refined and developed through proper training. I suspect that if it was a legal requirement for academies, or indeed any school, to have to identify in their school prospectus those teachers who had not been fully trained, there would be a sharp reduction in the number of unqualified teachers.

In my remaining time I will quickly mention two other things. We also need—perhaps the Minister could address this—first-class professional development for all teachers. Once you qualify or start teaching, we need to ensure that that professional development is not left to an academy chain or individuals. We need

[LORD STOREY]

to look at a proper system of professional development for all our teachers. What happened to the idea of a royal college for teachers?

I end with a quote I picked up the other day, from a teacher, Mike Britland, who said:

“Every time the government opens its mouth about education, every teacher cringes”.

Let government open its mouth with care and consideration and in the interests of all teachers and children.

6.42 pm

Baroness Morris of Yardley (Lab): My Lords, I thank the noble Lord for bringing this debate to the House. It is important, and I start by saying that I agreed with the thrust of his arguments. Although I might quibble over a detail or two, I am basically on his side on this issue. I also look forward to the maiden speech of the noble Baroness, Lady Finn. I know that she brings a wealth of policy experience and advice to this House and I look forward to watching how she changes from being an adviser to a policymaker. I wish her well and look forward to her speech.

I will start on quite a generous note, given that I agree with the thrust of the argument of the noble Lord, Lord Storey. I understand or accept some of the assumptions and concerns that underpin this policy; I faced these things when I was in the noble Lord's position as an Education Minister. I cannot argue that there are not individuals with a set of skills, usually around subject knowledge, whom I would welcome teaching my children if I had children, or teaching in my school if I was a head teacher. Why would I not want my child to be coached by somebody who is a marvellous football coach or taught music by a marvellous musician? Why would I not assume that the skills and knowledge of a recently trained coder are probably more up to date than those of the IT technology teacher who trained 10 years ago? I accept that and I would like to think that there is a way of bringing those people's skills to our classroom. However, I fundamentally disagree with the way that the Government have brought this about by saying that teachers in academies and free schools do not need any qualifications at all.

Let us be clear what that means. If we assume that the White Paper that was launched in June is still government policy—I am not sure about that—we will in four years reach a situation where every school is an academy or every school is a free school. That means that every school, no matter whether it is good or bad, whether it has a strong or a weak head or has been rated outstanding or failing in its Ofsted inspection, will be allowed to employ people to teach any subject to any group of people, in any context and in any environment.

That is what we have; that law has been made to accommodate the wish to get a small number of people with specialist skills into the classroom. That is what I am against, and that is why this is such a dangerous policy. It is so dangerous because, whatever else we disagree on across this House, I think that we have all come to the knowledge and understanding

that the quality of teaching matters. Call a school what you like, but at the end of the day, the school leader and the school teacher will make the difference.

I have already acknowledged that subject matter is important. You can have all the pedagogical skills in the world but, if you do not know your subject, you are not going to be a good teacher. But the reverse is true as well. You can have all the knowledge in the world but, if you do not know the pedagogy, you are not going to be a good teacher. If you do not know how to keep discipline, you are not going to be a good teacher; if you do not know the skill of asking questions of children in different ways, you are not going to be a good teacher; if you do not know about special educational needs and the needs of statemented children, you are not going to be a good teacher; if you do not know how to assess and feed back, which evidence shows to be the most important thing for a teacher to do well, you will not make a good teacher.

My argument is that you can bring somebody with specialist knowledge into a school, but the other things that make them a good teacher will be things they learn through training to be a teacher. That is what you learn when you get qualified teacher status. I know very few people who could come to the classroom with both the specialist knowledge and all those sets of skills. Essentially, that is why I am so opposed to this policy.

We live in a time when the qualifications of a profession mark out the way that society views it. Many of our top professions require people to have the highest qualifications. For example, they take people from Russell group universities and want people with first-class degrees. Whether or not that makes them better at their job is irrelevant to this argument. It is a mark of the value that society places on the job that they do. Why would we not want the same for the people who teach the next generation? Why would we not want to send the message that they are so important that they need a qualification to do the job? The only senior job I can think of for which you do not need a qualification is that of politician. If this is about making all teachers as skilled, knowledgeable and good as politicians, perhaps that is another reason to think again.

In a way, the Government have acknowledged this. Chapter 2 of the White Paper published in June was particularly good: “Great teachers—everywhere they're needed”. If you look at the policies in that chapter, you will find few with which I would argue: replace qualified teacher status with a stronger, more challenging accreditation; have only excellent heads approving sign-off for people who get QTS; strengthen training providers; increase ITT content; introduce a qualification for school leaders. All that is in the Government's White Paper on what makes a good school and what makes a good teacher. If it is so important that it is in a policy document, how can the Government follow that up by saying that it is not needed by everybody who enters the teaching profession?

There are ways in which we can allow people with specialist knowledge and attributes to quickly get a QTS. I do not want to put them through slow routes that bore them and keep them out of the classroom

longer than necessary. In my day in the department, we had the graduate teacher route and the registered teacher route, both of which were abolished by the coalition Government. Those routes meant that, if you had that subject knowledge, you could go into a school straight away but would train and get your QTS at the end of one or two years. That is the debate that we should be having about how we can fast-track into the classroom people with a good level of knowledge but without teaching knowledge.

I welcome anybody who wants to come into teaching and has something to offer children. But anybody who wants to enter one of the most important professions in this country should put their hand up and say that they are prepared to get the qualification that society deems important for doing that job. So having looked at both sides—those who are becoming teachers and the Government as the safeguarder of standards—I think that no one should be allowed in our schools if they do not have QTS, or if they are not at least working towards getting it in the foreseeable future.

6.48 pm

Baroness Finn (Con) (Maiden Speech): My Lords, I begin by congratulating the noble Lord, Lord Storey, on securing this important debate and laying out the issues so clearly. I should also say how daunted I am to be speaking in the same debate as the noble Baroness, Lady Morris of Yardley, who is a hugely distinguished former Education Secretary.

I am both honoured and amazed to be here today as a Member of your Lordships' House. It is an enormous honour to have a voice in this Chamber and to contribute to its deliberations. The House plays a crucial reflective role in legislation. I have learned, from personal experience of the recent Trade Union Act, that legislation leaves this House in a far better place than it started.

My thanks go to noble Lords on all sides of the House for their kind advice and for making me feel so welcome. I also thank all the officials of the House. They have tolerated my appalling sense of geography and ignorance of the rules with good humour and unflinching politeness. I have been incredibly fortunate in having the noble Lord, Lord Gardiner, as my mentor and thank him for his bravery in taking me on. I am especially indebted to my supporters, my noble friends Lord Howell of Guildford and Lord Maude of Horsham. Both have played an important part in my life. My noble friend Lord Howell and his wife gave me shelter when I first came down from university, and it was a privilege to play a part in my noble friend Lord Maude's revolutionary reforms in the Cabinet Office. Like the good Conservative that he is, he taught me always to question the status quo—although he might now regret urging me to be more assertive.

I am amazed because my story starts far from this House. My father's family defected from communist Czechoslovakia. My mother brought us up in her native Swansea, a wonderful city whose name I now proudly bear. I hope to add my voice to make a reality of the Swansea tidal lagoon. Using ground-breaking technology, this innovative project will provide sustainable energy and bring much-needed investment and regeneration to this part of Wales.

My journey owes everything to education. Low academic attainment and low aspiration were issues raised in a recent report on why so few Welsh youngsters were applying to Oxford and Cambridge universities. But in the late 1970s and early 1980s, my Swansea comprehensive bucked this trend and got 10 to 15 pupils a year into Oxbridge. Many, including the economist Sir Andrew Dilnot and the writer Russell T Davies, reached the top of their professions. These results were down to some outstanding teachers; and one in particular, Iris Williams, made it her job to get as many of us as possible to apply to Oxbridge from a part of Swansea where there was no such tradition.

We were all Iris's children and owe her a great debt. As one former pupil recalls, "Big hair, big character. She stood out and stood up for academic excellence". Iris believed that her "children" were as good as anyone else and raised our level of aspiration and taught us to value education as a means of opening up opportunities and freedoms. She got to know admissions tutors, introduced lunch-time lectures, matched candidates to colleges and personally drove pupils to visit them. She mentored us and broke down the obstacles. Life chances are not about levelling down but creating the spaces and removing the barriers. We did not get into the best universities because they lowered their high standards to meet arbitrary quotas. We knew that we had passed on our merits.

Many years later, when seeking to increase diversity in public appointments, my noble friend Lord Maude and I applied the same principle of removing barriers rather than setting artificial targets. Working with an exceptional civil servant, Sue Gray, we examined the reasons why women too rarely secured such appointments and sought to tackle the underlying issues. We removed arcane jargon from application forms, emphasised ability as well as long experience, held events to broaden the range of capable candidates, and found people to mentor them. The results have been outstanding—the percentage of new appointments to women leapt to over 45% last year, compared with 36% five years ago. We applied the same ruthless focus backed up by rigorous research when tackling the diversity deficit in the Civil Service. The research examined the underlying problems in the Civil Service's culture to ensure that the core principle of recruitment and promotion on merit was not compromised by patronage and a narrow focus on quotas and targets.

I have no idea what formal qualifications were held by the teachers who set me on the journey that has brought me to your Lordships' House. I do know that what sets them apart, like all great teachers, is a passion for their academic subject; an insistence on excellence; empathy with the boys and girls in their charge; and a determination to raise their eyes to the far horizon and to believe that nothing is beyond their reach.

6.54 pm

Baroness Wolf of Dulwich (CB): My Lords, it is a great privilege to congratulate the noble Baroness, Lady Finn, on her excellent maiden speech. Everyone here knows how difficult it can be to get things done in government quickly and effectively given the nature of the modern governmental beast, and how central advisers

[BARONESS WOLF OF DULWICH]

are to that task. I know that every senior civil servant will agree on this. The noble Baroness brings from her government service a wealth of experience in getting things done in government that will be invaluable to the crucial role of this House of detailed legislative scrutiny. I am sure that we all look forward very much to her future contributions to our debates.

I need to declare two interests with respect to this Question for Short Debate: as a founding governor of King's College London Mathematics School, to which I will return; and as the author of a report, the *Wolf Review of Vocational Education*, which had some direct influence on current government policies on qualified teachers. I still stand by the recommendations I made in that report but, before explaining what they were and why I made them, I turn to the question of what it means to be qualified.

Of course we all want teachers to be qualified. If you do that useful trick of turning a question around and asking people how they would feel about the Government increasing the number of unqualified teachers, you would probably find them looking at you as though you were about to lose your faculties. But I wonder how many people outside the world of education understand fully what the term "qualified teacher" means. I am sure that everyone in this Chamber knows, but I have been struck by the fact that most people tend to assume that the term encapsulates within it a great deal about subject knowledge and mastery of the subject being taught. But having qualified teacher status is about whether someone has gone through training as a teacher. In our current system, someone is able to teach a subject in which they have no formal academic or professional expertise or qualifications as long as they have qualified teacher status. I think that these are very different things and that we should worry a great deal more than we appear to about how many teachers in our system are not qualified in the sense of having a full mastery of the areas in which they teach.

Perhaps I may quote in their rather turgid form the two recommendations I made in the *Review of Vocational Education*, which I submitted to the then Government in 2011 and they accepted in full. The first ran as follows:

"At present teachers with QTS can teach in FE colleges; the FE equivalent—QTLS—should be recognised in schools, which is currently not the case. This will enable schools to recruit qualified professionals to teach courses at school level ... with clear efficiency gains".

There are more than efficiency gains, but that is what I wrote. The reason I had to make that recommendation was because there had been such resistance in the schools sector to recognising the qualified teacher status of people in FE, and this is an issue to which I will return in a moment.

The second relevant qualification stated that the Government should:

"Clarify and evaluate rules relating to the teaching of vocational content by qualified professionals who are not primarily teachers/do not hold QTLS. Many schools believe that it is impossible to bring professionals in to demonstrate/teach even part of a course without requiring the presence of additional, salaried teaching staff. This further reduces the incidence of high quality vocational teaching, delivered to the standards that industries actually require".

Why was this so important? It relates to the issues raised by the noble Baroness, Lady Morris. We are systematically excluding people from classrooms who have the skills, knowledge and expertise that we need because they do not have QTS and there is no obvious way for the schools concerned to get around it. This is more of a problem in the highly specialised areas than it is in mainstream education. We have to realise that if people have to spend two years getting qualified teacher status, which is a long route, they will not come into teaching even though they have genuine and important expertise. In the vocational and technical areas, which are what interest me most, you want people in classrooms and workshops whose main occupation or career is not teaching, but who can bring with them the up-to-date, high-level skills and expertise that are needed.

That was why I made these recommendations. I must underline at this point that the schools' objections for many years to recognising any other form of QTS are not something they should be proud of. Also, this is not just about vocational skills. I mentioned that I am a founding governor of King's College London Mathematics School, which is a free school and takes highly talented young 16 to 19 year-olds from across London to give them, in our view, a high-quality mathematics education. We expect our full-time teachers to have QTS. We think that that is important to their careers and that, in the programmes we send them on, it really increases their skills and capabilities. However, it is absolutely important to us that we should also be able to bring in highly skilled and qualified mathematicians at the top of their game without having to worry that, when Ofsted comes to call, we will be told we have done something we should not. There is a major issue here and no simple way round it.

I also worry about a blanket demand for this. The evidence for such demands for qualification or licensing is not terribly encouraging. Morris Kleiner, the leading academic analyst of licensing, studied its impact on price and quality all around the world. He finds that the general result is to raise prices for ordinary people and increase salaries without any indication that you get a general improvement in quality. It tends to be promoted by practitioners. My favourite example, which is not an English one, is that in Michigan the state licensing board requires 1,460 days of training to become a licensed athletics trainer. A good number of American states also license beekeepers and ballroom dance instructors.

Obviously, there are things where you want a licence to be absolutely sure that people are actually able to do what they are doing. I doubt that anybody in this House would want people able to practise medicine who were not licensed and carefully regulated. Yet the skills they practise in medicine are the medical skills. We currently have a situation in this country—I reiterate this—in which you are allowed to teach maths without knowing anything very much about maths. That seems to be of far greater significance than the fact that, outside the academy and free school sector, you will not do it without QTS. That is the major issue.

In passing I say that, again to my great regret, the evidence on blanket requirements for further pedagogical training is somewhat depressing. It does not seem to

have any guaranteed impact. That is not to say that it cannot do so. Rather, this is a very difficult issue and not one that you can solve by demanding pedagogical training for everybody.

To finish, I make the same point once again: we at least have more information on whether teachers are qualified to teach their subjects than we did 10 years ago. However, we still take far too lightly the threat to the quality of education from the number of teachers who teach, often unhappily, in subjects where they have very limited subject knowledge at a high level. Have the Government any plans to address that serious issue, which to my mind is more important than that of QTS?

7.03 pm

Lord O'Shaughnessy (Con): My Lords, I am very grateful to the noble Lord, Lord Storey, for initiating this debate on a subject about which I care passionately. Before continuing, I bring noble Lords' attention to my registered interests, in particular my role as founder and adviser to the Floreat Education Academies Trust, which operates both a free school and, as of today, two new academies.

It is a particular pleasure to speak after the typically compelling and funny maiden speech of my noble friend Lady Finn. I had the good fortune of working with my noble friend for our former Prime Minister—who sadly today announced his departure from politics. As anyone who knows my noble friend will testify, silence is not her trademark. It is fantastic that a change in circumstance means that she has finally been unleashed as a debating force in this House.

This debate is so important because, ultimately, the most significant determinant of the quality of a school is, as my noble friend Lady Finn expressed so movingly, the quality of teaching within it. Other things matter as well—parental attitudes, the rigour of the curriculum, good behaviour and so on—but education is a fundamentally human endeavour and it is the relationship between teacher and student that really counts. It is this insight that underpins the free school and academy programme. As Tony Blair eventually admitted in his autobiography, it is wrong to separate the pursuit of school standards from the desire to change school structures because one creates the conditions for the other. The purpose of the free school and academy programme is to provide teachers with the environment in which they are most likely to be the best versions of themselves.

Research tells us that in almost every leading education system around the world the trend has been to give heads and teachers more freedom. This is based on the fundamental view, with which I do not think anyone in this House would disagree, that professionals know better how to run schools than the Government. For example, the OECD has said that,

“the creation of more autonomous schools will lead to innovations in curriculum, instruction and governance, which in turn will improve outcomes”.

Similarly, the US academic Eric Hanushek has found that autonomy reforms improve student achievement in developed countries. It is for this reason—because heads, governors and teachers should be deciding the

direction of a school, not bureaucrats and politicians—that free schools and academies have been given the freedom, if they want to use it, to employ unqualified teachers if they think that it is in the best interests of pupils.

As we can see from the useful House of Lords Library note accompanying this debate, the actual proportion of unqualified teachers in the system is fairly small—around 5% of the total—and has increased only slightly in recent years. We are hardly talking about an epidemic. I disagree with the description of this by the noble Baroness, Lady Morris, as a dangerous policy. As I can tell the House from my own experience of hiring staff for Floreat schools, it is rarely the case that free school and academy providers set out to hire unqualified staff. Before our schools opened, this was something that parents inquired about—would we employ unqualified teachers? My answer was that we would always set out to hire qualified teachers but if the best person for the job did not have a qualification, we would do what was right for pupils, hire that person and then put them through the teacher qualification process. For example, if you are recruiting someone to teach four and five year-olds in reception and the best applicant is an excellent and highly trained nursery teacher who has been looking after three and four year-olds in a childcare setting but does not yet have QTS, it would clearly be wrong to prevent schools from appointing such a person.

The current system seems to provide an entirely sensible and practical solution, which has been made easier by the Government's changes to increase the amount of teacher training that happens within schools. The School Direct and school-centred initial teacher training—SCITT—programmes mean that staff can gain their qualification while learning on the job. This must be the right approach: one that respects heads' and teachers' autonomy, and opens up non-conventional routes to would-be teachers but ensures that all staff have the right qualifications in the end. The development of this is precisely what is promised in the schools White Paper.

Of course, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. How do free schools and academies actually perform? Some 26% of free schools were rated outstanding by Ofsted, compared to 20% of other schools, and the DfE has found that secondary converter academies previously graded good were more likely to improve and to retain their Ofsted grade than previously good maintained schools.

It is early days for both those programmes and, while I care deeply about giving heads and teachers the autonomy they need to flourish, I understand there is underperformance in some parts of the sector. However, enforcing a more draconian approach to recruiting unqualified staff is likely only to reduce the ability of free schools and academies to achieve excellence, rather than enhance it.

7.09 pm

Baroness Greenfield (CB): My Lords, I join other noble Lords in welcoming the noble Baroness, Lady Finn. I enjoyed her speech, wish her well and look forward to her further contributions. I also commend the noble Lord, Lord Storey, for the opportunity to

[BARONESS GREENFIELD]

debate this important and timely issue. I declare an interest as the recipient of a research grant from what was the Centre for British Teachers and is now the not-for-profit Education Development Trust. Our goal was to explore aspects of evidence-based teaching practice. At the time it was the first large-scale multifactorial controlled trial of an educational intervention, led by a collaboration between teachers and neuroscientists.

My basic point this evening is that evidence-based education theories should be integrated into teacher training, not just in academies and free schools but as part of a teacher's qualifications wherever they practise their profession. Since 1987, funding has allowed local education authorities to train teachers. College courses have in general been reorganised to focus more on classroom strategies. This apprenticeship model has been positive overall: it stands to reason that a complex function such as teaching can be fully learned only by doing the actual job. However, there have been negative consequences, arguably such as the unintended implication that nothing can be learned from education theory.

It is completely possible nowadays to achieve qualified teacher status while employed in a school that is connected to no university, and with no coverage of learning theory or education research. It is also clear that there is a wide range of curricula on offer. Some courses take a broad view of education theory, which may include the psychology of learning integrated with the sociology of education, while others present an almost exclusively sociological view of schools and schooling. Moreover, education research in the main has been dominated by qualitative methods, with the occasional large-scale quantitative but uncontrolled analysis. To make matters worse, publicly funded education research initially appears in journals that teachers cannot readily access. In addition, little replication in education research takes place to confirm the findings in question—not least due to the tiny budgets available for projects compared to those in, say, my own area of medical research.

These challenges, together with a growth in research related to teacher effectiveness and pupil outcomes, have led to what has been called the evidence movement, or knowledge management movement, the culmination of which is exemplified by the work of the Education Endowment Foundation. It has commissioned more than 100 randomised controlled education trials in England. Then there is the initiative reported on in *Closing the Gap: Test and Learn*, which has delivered collaborative trials across nearly 1,000 schools in England. To have real value, these data surely need to be passed on to teachers—rookies and veterans alike. Perhaps one day there could be a more sophisticated teacher-training curriculum than at present, where research-informed topics would feature. For example, findings suggest that in-depth collaborations between teachers, schools and neuroscientists could yield substantial benefits in moving towards a more evidence-based culture in schools, as I have witnessed first-hand.

However, to attain this goal, specific techniques will need to be taught to teachers—be they trainees or more experienced—if they are to be effective. Continuous professional development is central to teaching as a profession but surveys suggest that it is unable to

prevent a number of myths pervading the education system that are likely to be unhelpful and certainly costly. This is most notable for findings from my own field of neuroscience, as information is lost in the translation to education. For example, almost half of teachers in the UK apparently believe that we use only 10% of our brains. Yet were that to be the case, your Lordships may consider for a moment that we could readily witness up to 90% complete brain damage in individuals with no apparent malfunction. That is clearly not the case. An even greater number of teachers, an astonishing 93%, think that children learn better when taught in their preferred learning style—visual, auditory or kinaesthetic—despite no evidence at all to support this claim. Most important of all here, there needs to be training in scientific method and critical thinking more generally, so that teachers are equipped to evaluate both established and new ideas.

In addition to the content of CPD, there are concerns about the form it takes, namely: periodic inset days; generic workshops with little continuity or opportunity for application; the transfer of knowledge from so-called experts to teachers; and pull-out strategies or add-ons rather than integrated practice. These approaches are focused on fixing problems rather than developing the teacher. This may of course be a direct consequence of the current status of initial teacher training. However, different models of CPD have been proposed which, first, focus on raising the self-awareness of existing strengths and weaknesses; secondly, promote team activity; and, thirdly, encourage and financially support attendance at events and appropriate training for specific individuals. By involving teachers in devising bespoke development plans, it could be expected that they would engage more with the development process. However, where this is in doubt other options have been shown to increase engagement. For example, financial incentives for participating in specific CPD activities, with teachers earning stipends for demonstrating certain levels of competency, have already proved effective in upskilling teachers in core IT skills.

In conclusion, this approach, incorporating in particular evidence-based education theory, could foster engagement in teachers who would in turn have higher job satisfaction and commitment to their school, higher retention, which ultimately prevents skills loss and financial outlay on recruitment, and better individual and team performance, which would in turn enhance student outcomes. Most exciting of all, it would show the highest possible levels of innovation.

7.15 pm

Lord Suri (Con): My Lords, I thank the noble Lord for securing the time for this important debate. Before I commence my speech, I express my appreciation for the valuable contribution by my noble friend Lady Finn.

Given the nature of recent events, the question of teachers in our schools is a critical one. This debate is part of a broader theme on one of the Government's flagship priorities, the devolution agenda. I am delighted to see that the new Cabinet and Prime Minister feel that this is a policy platform that deserves to be held on to, and I look forward to working with the Secretary of State for Education and the Secretary of State for

Communities and Local Government to make sure not just that this happens but that it is properly carried out.

There has been an immense amount of anger directed at the specific measure we are discussing. The National Union of Teachers has, not unsurprisingly, referred to teachers without teaching qualifications as “cheap alternatives” on its website, and the former Shadow Secretary of State for Education referred to unqualified teachers as a “policy without justification” in the other place.

I feel that such criticisms are unfounded and do not stack up with the complex reality of the new schools ecosystem that this Government have been ushering in since 2010. Pushing power down and out to governors, head teachers and parents has been an unqualified success, with 1.4 million more pupils in good and outstanding schools compared to 2010 and a 16% rise in good and outstanding schools over the same period.

When responsibility is placed in the hands of those we can trust to run our education system, hemming them into a restrictive pool of employees is not sensible. A number of new academies find that forcing prospective applicants to go through a teaching qualification can turn the brightest applicants off and cut selections down, stripping away significant numbers of applicants.

My noble friend Lord Baker has thrust forward the pioneering university technical college scheme, and his trust is to add 11 more schools by 2018, taking the total to 50. These schools are plugging the yawning skills gap that has held back economic growth in Britain since the 1980s. They are training the young engineers, scientists and researchers that Britain’s high-value service sector needs to grow. If we are to leave the EU, as the Prime Minister has said we will, these youngsters will become ever more critical to safeguarding our economic future. In order to provide the best technical education, these schools need to attract the best talent from our universities and firms. For a young graduate who may have offers from, say, Rolls-Royce or Pfizer, having to go through the route of getting another degree may turn them off the profession altogether. Surely noble Lords will see the foolishness of such a move.

I will finish on this point. I never attended school in Britain, nor did I receive my formal education here, but since coming to this country I have been fortunate enough to see the world-class education that some of our private schools offer and what makes them so attractive as a service to overseas clients. Being able to hire incredible people from the worlds of science, business and academia sets these schools apart. This Government have taken this strategy and offered it to academies with less-privileged pupils.

A crucial plank of building a country that works for everyone is making sure that all pupils can benefit from the same opportunities. Why deny a child in Etchinghill the same opportunities as a counterpart at Eton? It makes no sense if you are trying to make sure that equality of opportunity is more than a pithy soundbite. We must support the current policy of the Government because it is the real, egalitarian approach.

7.20 pm

Lord Addington (LD): My Lords, first, I thank my noble friend for raising this subject, which is one we should have a look at every now and again. I also congratulate the noble Baroness, Lady Finn, on her maiden speech. As the first person from these Benches to speak after her, I feel sure that we will have much to discuss—and will hopefully even agree occasionally. That is about as much as we can realistically hope for, but occasional agreement is something we should always strive for.

This is an interesting subject on a very interesting day for education. I notice that the noble Lord, Lord Nash, has had a fairly busy day; not quite as busy as that of the noble Lord, Lord Watson, but busy none the less. When we start to talk about what is required of a teacher, it is under the weight of expectation that we do not have qualified teachers or people who are trained to be teachers taking on some of the teaching roles in a number of our schools. The noble Lord, Lord O’Shaughnessy, said that those who are recruiting these people are not looking to have teachers who are not qualified but are merely trying to get the best person for the job.

The noble Lord, Lord Nash, said you might have somebody with a PhD—but I am afraid that when he said PhD or doctorate, I went back to my own higher education experience. There were some people who wrote brilliantly and published innovative work but whose lectures were an inducement to almost catatonic sleep. So the qualification itself is not always going to be sufficient to allow them into a classroom: a degree of knowledge on how to deliver information is also required. It is that balancing act that we have to deal with here. Certain people have these qualities naturally, but assessing that is incredibly difficult. The capacity for the cock-up school of history to establish itself becomes greater—there are no absolute guarantees, but it is always there.

I move on to a specific interest of mine. I must declare an interest here: I am dyslexic and president of the British Dyslexia Association. The fact is that at the moment special educational needs is underrepresented in any form of training. In certain places, on certain QTS courses, you get two hours. I do not know how many times I have said this, but I once described this to a friend outside as follows. “What does this mean?”, they asked. “Well, it is things like dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, autism et cetera. Those are the hidden ones you will find in very large numbers—maybe 20% of the class will have these to an extent”. They then turned round to me and said: “It would take me two hours to learn how to spell all those”. This is 20%, potentially, of a classroom.

At the moment, this is something which is not taught. You may not have not had any formal teacher training and you may get, say, three severe dyslexics in your class. They may be disruptive: a perfectly natural defensive strategy for somebody who struggles in a classroom is to disrupt that classroom so no teaching takes place and they are not exposed and vulnerable. It is a perfectly natural reaction. The other one is to go to sleep in the middle of a lesson and avoid everything. Whatever happens, the teacher has a legal obligation

[LORD ADDINGTON]

to teach those people and those around them. If you do not know how to address and engage that group because you do not understand those problems, you are guaranteeing failure, regardless of where you are.

We have talked much about selective education today. If selective education is to work, you must address that, otherwise you are consigning large numbers of groups to automatic failure when selection comes in. Unless you get some form of training for all teachers to be able to recognise these conditions, you are going to guarantee that you write off this group and possibly damage the education of those around them. Dyslexia is only the most common syndrome; there are also dyscalculia, dyspraxia and autism, particularly higher-functioning autism—a person who may not be able to socially interact with the class. If you cannot spot these conditions and, hopefully, engage with the parents, you have a problem.

I hope that we are at the right time to take action. I did some work on this issue, tabling a Private Member's Bill and finding people who agreed with it. I then discovered that those involved in the Castle report, led by Stephen Munday, largely agreed with me, either because they met me and decided that the work I was leading and helping with in a group was great, or because they were going down the same path anyway and I was simply talking to the same people they were. The reason does not really matter; there was a degree of agreement there.

I hope the Minister will take on board the fact that I am prepared to help and communicate by leading the groups who have been spoken about today to the department to say that we should get this instituted. We should get these groups in and talk to them, and we should make sure that there is an enforcement package. If we do not, those groups that we are dealing with—the 20% who can disrupt the education of others—are not going to be addressed, and they will end up not only failing themselves but damaging the work of others.

This debate will be an opportunity for the Minister to tell me what is going to be done and that the department will engage with this issue. The time is right. We have a legal duty to teach these people. They are a huge part of our system. There are some, such as myself, who struggle through the system, either through good luck or with the help of the occasional brilliant person, but that is not enough. We are wasting too many people, and we are wasting the time of teachers who are putting in effort but doing the wrong thing and, on occasion, actually making the situation worse.

Surely it is time to act. Everyone agrees that this should happen. Two years ago I described this as “the bleeding obvious”. Hopefully, now it is time to enact this. Let us do it now. Whatever else we do, this will make life a little easier.

7.27 pm

Lord Maude of Horsham (Con): My Lords, I join other noble Lords in congratulating the noble Lord, Lord Storey, on securing this important debate.

I also congratulate my noble friend Lady Finn on a most accomplished and assured maiden speech. My noble friend was my special adviser in government for

some five or six years. Too often, special advisers are dismissed as bag carriers who have little experience of the world outside politics. Leaving aside the fact that for us it was generally me carrying the bags, my noble friend has been far too modest to refer to her own professional qualifications as a practising chartered accountant, and her time as a regulator of the insurance industry and indeed as a negotiator for the UK in the European Union.

My noble friend's financial experience and expertise—she was described by some newspaper as being brilliant with numbers—was very important in the work we did in the Cabinet Office, where over a period of five years we achieved savings in excess of £50 billion towards the reduction of the deficit. At that stage Whitehall was not replete with skills in financial management. My noble friend's presence there certainly added a considerable amount to the total quantum of financial expertise, as indeed did her ability to develop important relationships of trust with senior trade union leaders as we reformed public sector pensions.

She referred to my encouragement to her to be more assertive. There is a serious point here: when people return to the workplace after a period out, and this is particularly true of mothers who take time out to look after children, their self-confidence can be seriously diminished. With hindsight, though, even I think my noble friend may have overcorrected. However, I hope that in this House she will continue to be assertive and that we will hear much more from her in the years ahead.

I attended a direct grant school. These were strange, hybrid creatures. They were independent schools but for most pupils, as for my brother and I, the fees were paid by the state. I have not yet heard any suggestion from the Government that direct grant schools are to be revived. Perhaps my noble friend will make an exciting announcement from the Dispatch Box later to complete a full hand for the day.

These schools were generally academically rigorous, and I was extremely lucky to benefit from that education. I suspect that no teachers when I was at school, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, had formal teaching qualifications. Frankly, the quality of the teaching was variable. The brilliant teachers were brilliant. They tended to be a bit quirky and eccentric but deeply passionate about their subject.

With all due deference to the noble Lord, Lord Storey, and the noble Baroness, Lady Morris, I doubt whether it is clear that there is a correlation between holding formal teaching qualifications and the quality of teaching. In my experience, the people who unerringly distinguish between good and bad teachers are the pupils—the students—who always know which teachers are doing well and which are useless. One of the great developments in the decades since I was at school has been the growth of continuous professional development. In the days when I and others of your Lordships were at school, bad teachers were allowed to carry on for far too long. There was far too little readiness to take them out of the classroom for them to refresh their skills or get skills that they did not have.

I listened carefully to the noble Lord, Lord Addington. Some years ago, I realised that when I was at school I suffered from a rather odd form of learning difficulty.

I realised that only when one of my sons was diagnosed with the same phenomenon. In those days, it was not diagnosed or recognised; we were just regarded as disruptive and lazy—probably true in my case, anyway. I absolutely take the noble Lord's point that, whether a teacher is formally qualified or not, it is vital that they know how to discern the telltale signs of a particular learning difficulty. As we know, highly intelligent, able children can be impeded by a learning difficulty.

I declare in passing a modest interest as a governor of Brighton College. I noticed the noble Lord, Lord Skidelsky, who is chairman of the governors, in the Chamber earlier. Brighton College was the sponsor of the London Academy of Excellence, which has in the space of just two or three years succeeded in getting unprecedented numbers of talented students from Newham—which is, as we know, one of the most disadvantaged areas in the country—into universities that are not only the best in Britain but among the very best in the world. It has been central to the success of the London Academy of Excellence that the independent schools that have sponsored it have been able to second brilliant teachers who may have no qualifications to teach at the LAE.

I urge on your Lordships and my noble friend that if we want to continue to break down the barriers between state education and independent schools, it is essential that teachers should be able to move freely between the sectors. I earnestly urge my noble friend to resist the blandishments to reverse the policy, which I believe has been beneficial.

7.35 pm

Lord Watson of Invergowrie (Lab): My Lords, I am pleased to offer my thanks to the noble Lord, Lord Storey, for initiating this debate. I should also say that, certainly on these Benches, he took us by surprise when he shimmied from the Bar towards his seat while beginning his speech, having been caught slightly unawares. It was rather Sinatra-esque and I half expected "Start spreading the news" to emanate from his lips. He gave us a very good tour d'horizon on teaching qualifications, particularly in academies and free schools.

I also welcome to your Lordships' House the noble Baroness, Lady Finn. I enjoyed her contribution which is clearly based on great experience, but I was slightly taken aback when she talked of her own school and said that she had no idea what the qualifications of her teachers were. Without being unkind and guessing her age, I should think that it is almost certain that at a maintained school they all had QTS. That is the point of this debate. Teachers with QTS clearly trained her very well for her subsequent career which is why people on this side of the House are very largely in favour of that remaining the case. If it ain't broke, why fix it? The noble Baroness shakes her head but it was extremely unusual not to be qualified at that time.

All children deserve to be taught by qualified teachers and all parents have the right to expect that this will be the case when their child leaves for school, no matter the type of school—maintained, academy, free school or independent school. Let us not forget that the overwhelming majority of independent schoolteachers have QTS. In 2012 the Secretary of State, Mr Gove, who I notice was with us earlier but has now departed

for dinner, allowed academies to appoint teachers without QTS. Parents and teachers saw this to some extent as a cost-cutting measure that could cause damage to children's education, at least in the short term. Head teachers' leaders were opposed to the change, and the National Association of Head Teachers described it as a significant backward step likely to damage the professionalism of teaching. Teaching is a skill and the idea of employing individuals who have not been given the tools to do a professional job flies in the face of the Government's stated aspiration of creating more high-performing schools—an aim to which I unequivocally subscribe.

That is why the remarks of the noble Lord, Lord O'Shaughnessy, took my breath away. He concluded his speech with an astonishing remark—I paraphrase because I did not note him down word for word—that restricting academies and free schools from employing unqualified staff can only prevent them becoming better schools. That is perverse. By that logic, the perfect school would have no one with qualified teacher status at all. There may be some trust chief executive whose eyes would light up at that suggestion but it is surely not anything that could be argued for. If we want to improve the equality of schools, we ought to improve the quality of the teachers, as much as other aspects of the teaching. I like the point made by the noble Lord, Lord Storey, that if non-qualified staff in each school were to be identified, it would lead to a sharp reduction in their number. I agree, but I suspect it would also result in a sharp increase in the number of parents fairly quickly knocking on the door of the head teacher or the trust executive. Most parents, as I said, expect their children to be taught by somebody who has gone through proper training.

I accept that there could be a benefit for a particularly skilled individual in a subject. It could be sport, drama or music, but if that is the case, and there is an urgent need to employ that person immediately, why not do so on the basis that they will move to qualified teacher status while teaching? There is some controversy about on-the-job training with School Direct. I am not opposed to School Direct. If it brings more teachers into the profession, that is to be welcomed. Why not say that if someone is a particularly skilled individual that it will be part of the process of becoming a qualified teacher? It seems to me that that is important.

As the number of School Direct and other on-the-job trainees increases, there has been a corresponding increase in the number of teachers who are working towards QTS, but it remains the case that there are unqualified teachers. I will not repeat the figures outlined already by noble Lords, but one figure really struck me. The noble Lord, Lord O'Shaughnessy, said there is not what he called an epidemic of unqualified teachers, but there are 22,500. If we were to stop the average man or woman in the street, far less the average parent, and ask, "How many unqualified teachers are in our schools?", we would expect people to have a very much reduced figure in mind than that, if indeed they expected that any would be unqualified. The idea that it is not a large figure and is not increasing exponentially is not the issue. An awful lot of teachers are teaching with just good will and perhaps a knowledge

[LORD WATSON OF INVERGOWRIE]

of their subject, but not necessarily the ability to put it across. As the noble Lord, Lord Maude, said, it does not matter how well an individual knows his or her subject, if they cannot put it across effectively, the children will know fairly soon and that person will be exposed. Anybody who wants to teach should be prepared to go through the process.

Surely no education system can be better than the quality of its teachers. The most successful countries, from the Far East to Scandinavia, are those where teaching has the highest status as a profession. The noble Lord, Lord Storey, talked about Finland, which Mr Gove often highlighted. These are countries where teachers have status because they are properly qualified and understood to have gone through not just the university course but detailed training to be a teacher through regular criteria.

The QTS represents a formal set of skills, qualities and professional standards that are recognised as essential aspects of an effective educator. My noble friend Lady Morris made an outstanding contribution, drawing from her experience as Secretary of State; she said that unqualified teachers may have difficulty in coping with pupils with behavioural issues and special educational needs. They may be an expert on the subject specialism but lack the crucial classroom experience and pedagogical background needed to maximise children's learning potential and properly support their educational development. That is a very important point, because it is impossible to guarantee consistency or quality of teaching unless the merits of QTS are universally recognised. That is why it is important that all schools, regardless of status, should adhere to the same criteria.

Earlier this year, the Government published a White Paper in which they proposed to replace QTS with what they described as a,

“stronger, more challenging accreditation based on a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom, as judged by great schools”.

The Government's proposals included putting head teachers in charge of accrediting new entrants into the teaching profession. That worries me with regard to academies, because it seems likely that a head teacher from another school would be likely to assess the ability of an individual teacher and there would be an interest for another head teacher from within that multiacademy trust in ensuring that the teacher got accredited status.

It is surely important that for many years teachers have had to get qualifications which everyone has understood underpins what they do in the classroom, interfacing with children. Again on the point made by my noble friend Lady Morris, nobody should teach in a state-funded school without QTS, or without working towards it. Children and their parents have the right to expect no less.

7.42 pm

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education (Lord Nash) (Con): My Lords, I am very grateful to the noble Lord, Lord Storey, for bringing this Question for Short Debate. This is a very important issue, which as the noble Baroness, Lady Wolf, has already pointed out, is often misunderstood. I thank all noble Lords for their contributions.

I start by making it absolutely clear that nothing in schools matters more than good teachers. Evidence from around the world shows that high-quality teachers are the single most important factor determining how well pupils do in school. We believe that all pupils, regardless of birth or background, should receive an excellent education wherever they are, and we cannot achieve that ambition without excellent teachers.

Academies are at the centre of our ambition to drive up standards of education. Our reforms are working. Over the past six years, we have more than 1.4 million more pupils in good and outstanding schools. In a somewhat tougher Ofsted inspection framework, the number of good and outstanding schools has gone up from 68% to 86%, as my noble friend Lord Suri pointed out. We have many more confident readers as a result of our phonics programme, and we have many more pupils leaving primary with the necessary literacy and numeracy skills that they need to succeed in secondary schools. We have doubled the number of pupils doing EBacc—and my noble friend Lord O'Shaughnessy quoted a number of other statistics in support of the academies programme. That is very much driven by the fact that we have empowered great leaders and teachers to take charge.

It is surely right that the head teacher of a school, who knows the school and its community best, should be able to employ the teachers he or she thinks will best serve the pupils of the school. That is what head teachers should be able to do. That is why, in 2012, the Government gave academies the power already enjoyed by free schools to employ teachers who do not hold qualified teacher status, where they judge it to be appropriate. The fact is that the overwhelming majority of teachers, 95.1% in state-funded schools and 94% in academies, hold QTS, and one-fifth of these are working towards QTS. Those figures suggest that heads are exercising their choice by continuing to employ a significant majority of teachers who have completed initial teacher training.

Lord Watson of Invergowrie: What the noble Lord is saying is not without merit, but the point I made earlier was that if it is deemed appropriate to appoint an individual, why would you say to him or her: “Come and work in this school. It does not matter whether you qualify or not”? Surely it should be: “Come and work with us now, give us the benefit of your experience and, while you are doing that, work towards a qualification”. What is the reason for not doing that?

Lord Nash: If the noble Lord will let me continue, I hope I will develop the answer to that question as I go on.

It is not surprising that this is happening as we have given head teachers much greater involvement in recruiting and training their own teachers, through our very popular School Direct programmes.

There is a big difference between not holding a particular qualification or status and not being accomplished in a particular field. An influential study by McKinsey suggested that teacher quality is a complex mixture of different attributes, including

personal characteristics such as commitment, resilience, perseverance, motivation and, of course, sound subject knowledge. These are qualities which the teacher Iris Williams, who inspired my noble friend Lady Finn so well, clearly had in great abundance—

Lord Watson of Invergowrie: And QTS?

Lord Nash: She may have had, but I am referring to a study on what McKinsey, based on worldwide evidence, think is most important for teachers. I pay tribute to my noble friend Lady Finn for her moving and inspiring speech. We need many more like Iris Williams.

One other way in which we are recruiting is through our Teach First programme, which brings teachers without QTS straight into the classroom. We have recruited just over 1,400 of these this year; 62% of them will be placed in schools outside London, many of them in cold spots where we have difficulty recruiting. Many Teach Firsters are helping transform our school system.

The freedoms that we have given academies and free schools around teacher qualifications are part of a broader policy of autonomy. Since 2010, we have given school leaders greater say over teachers' pay and conditions and the curriculum they offer in their schools. We have even given school leaders and teachers the opportunity to open their own schools. I am extremely encouraged when I hear of schools making use of these freedoms to improve education for their pupils. For example, an academy in Barnsley has hired a published illustrator, without QTS, to teach art very successfully.

Many of our top schools, including independent schools—whose skills we intend to harness more greatly in our school system, as we have discussed several times recently in this House—employ many teachers without QTS. I know it will interest the noble Lord, Lord Addington, that the other day I was talking to the deputy head of one of our leading independent schools, who happens to have a PhD in physics and does not have qualified teacher status. His school employs many teachers without qualified teacher status. He told me about his exam results: 90% of his pupils achieved five good GCSEs. When they talk about five good GCSEs in that school, they do not mean five A to C grades; they mean 90% achieving A* to A. I agree entirely with the points made by my noble friend Lord Maude about the importance in our reforms of freedom of movement between these two sectors.

The freedoms we have given schools over teacher qualifications were influenced by the *Review of Vocational Education* by the noble Baroness, Lady Wolf, in 2011, which she referred to. I congratulate her on her excellent speech, which was full of truisms about the issue and international evidence. In some schools, the quality of education was suffering because it was often delivered in the absence of professionals with appropriate experience and expertise. Many schools were not even considering employing professionals from industry because they believed it was too difficult to do so. That is why, in addition to the freedoms we have given to academies and free schools, we have also made it easier for maintained schools to employ instructors—a type of

teacher who has special qualifications and experience but not QTS. We also ensured that teachers qualified in the further education sector who hold QTLS are recognised as qualified teachers when they are employed in schools.

The Government recognise the enormous importance of pupils being taught by teachers who have a real depth of specialism in their subject or subjects. This point was made by the noble Baroness, Lady Wolf. It is always more challenging to recruit new teachers in some priority subjects such as maths and physics. That is why we have bursaries available of up to £30,000 in these subjects. Since 2010 we have increased the number of teachers in our schools with 2.1s or better from 63% to 75%. Some 18% of people entering teacher training now have a first, which is higher than ever, and we are putting in place support that trainees and existing teachers need to develop their subject knowledge specialism further. That includes new content for ITT that emphasises the importance of teaching a knowledge-rich curriculum, which is particularly important for pupils from a disadvantaged background who might not get that cultural capital at home, and we have designed programmes to enhance the subject knowledge of both specialist and non-specialist teachers. I hope noble Lords will be glad to hear that the latest data show that the proportion of hours recorded as taught by specialist teachers has increased in 2015 across all subjects.

The noble Baroness, Lady Morris, for whom I have the deepest respect—she is very experienced—said that we have said that teachers in academies and free schools do not need any qualification at all. We have not said that; we just trust the heads to decide what qualifications are appropriate. She also said that this would enable a free-for-all where teachers could teach any subject to any group of people in any context in any environment. Of course, that is exactly what happens in many primary schools, where teachers have a very challenging task. I pay tribute to the way in which they so often rise to the challenge, and I spoke earlier today about the importance of primary education. It also, sadly, happens in secondary schools which cannot recruit teachers with the right subject. That is why we are so keen to see more subject-specific teaching in our schools by teachers qualified in that subject.

The noble Lord, Lord Storey, talked about teacher training being a deep-end approach. I entirely agree. Far too often, that is exactly what has happened in QTS. We must remember that QTS takes nine months, that 65% happens in a school and that at the end of it there are no exams. That shows the importance we attach to training in school—which is why we have so much more training in schools. When I have interviewed newly qualified teachers and asked them, for example, where they learned about behaviour management, they have all said in schools, because that is how they learned it—except that people educated in South Africa say that they have one module in their ITT training on simulated behaviour management training and it is very important. I am delighted to see that our behaviour expert Tom Bennett and Sir Andrew Carter, in his review of ITT, have emphasised the importance of improved behaviour management in ITT.

[LORD NASH]

The noble Baroness, Lady Morris, referred to our reforms mentioned in the White Paper, as did the noble Lord, Lord Watson, who said if it ain't broke, don't fix it. Well, we don't think it's broke but we certainly believe it can be improved substantially. We believe there is more we can do to help raise the status of the teaching profession to take its place alongside other learned professions such as law and medicine. As I say, it currently takes nine months. No one realistically considers a teacher fully qualified and fully proficient after nine months—that is why it is called initial teacher training. It is recognised that becoming a highly proficient teacher takes many years. I was recently talking to a leader of one of our unions who said he thought it took at least four years.

Of course, good schools in MATs have well-developed CPD programmes. I agree with my noble friend Lord Maude about the importance of CPD in this context. My noble friend also invited me to make an announcement about the reinstatement of direct grant schools, and earlier today the noble Lord, Lord Watson, said that he would not be surprised if there were more announcements. I am afraid that I have to disappoint my noble friend about that, but I agree with him about the importance of continuous development.

Under our proposed reforms to QTS in the White Paper, successful completion of initial teacher training would no longer result in a teacher being fully qualified. Rather, teachers would be required to demonstrate sustained proficiency in the classroom, which would continue to be judged against the teachers' standards. I take the point that the noble Lord, Lord Watson, makes about the importance of the objectivity of the person who makes that judgment.

The noble Baroness, Lady Greenfield, talked about the importance of evidence-based theories of education, which are so important. Recognising that requires a significant shift in the current situation. That is why we have worked with experts to produce a new framework

of core content for initial teacher training and a new standard for teacher professional development, both of which were published earlier this year. These make it clear that trainees should be familiar with the most recent research and theories in education and view those with a critical eye, and that ongoing professional development should continue to be underpinned by the best evidence.

As well as these important developments, the Government are supporting the establishment of the College of Teaching—I am sure that the noble Lord, Lord Storey, will be pleased to hear that—expanding our network of teaching schools and working with the Education Endowment Foundation, to which the noble Baroness, Lady Greenfield, referred.

The noble Lord, Lord Addington, talked about the importance of SEN. The additional freedoms given to academies and free schools to employ teachers without QTS do not extend to special academies. All state-funded mainstream schools are required to designate a member of staff as a SENCO, who must have QTS. The new *Framework of Core Content for Initial Teacher Training* published this July includes strong emphasis on ensuring that courses equip trainee teachers with the skills they need to support SEND pupils effectively in the classroom. I would be very happy to facilitate a meeting with the groups to which the noble Lord referred to discuss the importance of this further.

I again thank all noble Lords for their contributions to this important debate. I emphasise that the Government are committed to ensuring that we have a high-quality teaching profession in which teachers and school leaders are given the respect that professionals deserve. They certainly deserve that because they do such an important job. That is why we have given heads much greater freedom to bring in the depth and breadth of teaching experience and expertise that they judge to be appropriate for the needs of their own pupils, whose needs, after all, they are surely best placed to judge.

House adjourned at 7.57 pm.