**Table 2 Brief timeline of key policy shifts in English education**

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| **Dates** | **Policy** | **Notes** |
| July 1988 | Education Reform Act | The basis for a number of subsequent changes, including:  ***Basic curriculum*** to be taught in all maintained schools, comprising National Curriculum and Religious Education (RE):   1. National Curriculum   Attainment targets (ATs) set out in National Curriculum, identifying knowledge, skills and understanding pupils are expected to have by the end of each key stage. Pupils assessed against ATs to ascertain progress. National Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) introduced at the end of key stages 1, 2 & 3 to measure student progress and school performance.  Key stages defined as:   * key stage 1: ages 5-7 years (year groups 1-2) * key stage 2: ages 8-11 years (year groups 3-6) * key stage 3: ages 12-14 years (year groups 7-9) * key stage 4: 15-16 years (year groups 10-11)  1. New rules on RE  * Schools required to provide a daily act of broadly Christian collective worship. * Local Education Authorities (LEAs) required to set up a standing advisory council on religious education (SACRE), comprising representatives of religious groups, Church of England teachers and LEA. * RE syllabuses to reflect Christian traditions and take into account other main religions.   ***Local management of schools (LMS)***  Pre-1988, schools had control of ‘capitation’, for expenditure on books and resources. Other financial matters, including staffing and buildings, were the responsibility of the LEA. The 1988 ERA gave school governors control of the majority of the budget, under LMS. School budgets were allocated based on the number and ages of the pupils in the school, plus the number of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN).  Hiring and dismissal of staff transferred from LEA to school governing bodies.  ***Grant maintained (GM) schools***  GM schools were to be independent of LEAs, with funding from central government, deducted from the LEA budget. Decisions about which schools should seek GM status were based on parental ballots.  ***Open enrolment***  Introducing parental choice in selection of school.  Schools’ SATs and GCSE results published in ‘league tables’ to enable parents to choose a suitable school. |
| September 1989 | National Curriculum | Roll out starts in maintained schools in England and Wales |
| 1991 | Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) start | The first Key Stage 1 tests conducted in summer term.  Rolled out to subsequent cohorts in following years. |
| March 1992 | Education (Schools) Act | Provided for the creation of a new system of school inspection in England and Wales: Ofsted introduced |
| April 1992 | Department For Education established | The Department for Education and Science renamed Department for Education (DFE) |
| September 1992 | Her Majesty’s Inspectorate ceases to exist | Replaced by Ofsted |
| 1996 | National Numeracy Strategy | Strategy outlined expected teaching in primary school Mathematics, covering all years from reception to year 6 |
| 1997 | National Literacy Strategy | Intended to raise standards in English primary schools, prescriptive guidance on teaching literacy |
| 1997 | The Education Act | Reinforcing the 1988 ERA, schools were required to ensure state schools provided children with a curriculum that:   * was broad and balanced * promoted spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development * prepared children for adult life * included RE and sex education |
| September 2002 | First, sponsored academies open in England | Academies are state-funded, independent, non-selective schools that run outside of the control of LEAs. The sponsoring body of each academy was required to set up a charitable trust and sign a contract with the DfE. At this stage, most academies were pre-existing schools that converted to academy status having failed Ofsted inspections. Governors appoint staff, set pay and conditions and decide policies. |
| 2004 | The Children Act | The ‘Every Child Matters’ policy came into being. Multi-agency approach to supporting children up to age 19. Functions of education and children’s social services combined.  The term ‘LEA’ becomes obsolete (although it continued to appear in legislation). |
| 2008 | Key Stage 3 SATs abolished | Key Stage 1 and 2 SATs retained |
| 2010 | The Academies Act | Made it possible for all maintained schools to convert, or be forced, to become academies. Schools graded ‘outstanding’ by Ofsted are pre-approved. Academies continue to be state funded but enjoy increased autonomy in decisions about curriculum and teachers’ pay and conditions |
| September 2014 | National Curriculum levels of attainment removed |  |

(adapted from Gillard, 2018 & Watson, 2001)