

Early Years Education and Skills

The Early Years Education and Skills Policy Commission is tasked with looking at how we can give people the tools that will enable them to reach their full potential. This means giving all children the best possible start in life, making sure young people are given fair access to higher and further education, and ensuring that all people are supported and encouraged throughout their lives to continuously learn and develop their skills.

The Tories' continued obsession with school structures, opening more academies, free schools and new grammar schools, has come at the expense of concentrating on the things that really do improve standards in education: excellent teaching and exceptional school leadership. The last six years have seen a chronic shortage of teachers, class sizes soaring, spending on schools falling, relentless chopping-and-changing to school assessment, unprecedented cuts to further education and adult skills, and a looming crisis in early years funding and provision.

Under Theresa May many of these issues are likely to get worse. But her only answer is to introduce even more unfairness into the schools system, by reintroducing grammar schools on a large scale meaning a good education for only the lucky few.

Labour cares about everyone, not just a select few. We want to harness all talents so Britain can thrive in the future. We want to build a National Education Service, open to all throughout their lives. We will work to bring about the progressive restoration of free education; and develop high-quality apprenticeships, adult skills and learning.

Early years and childcare

- What does a modern childcare system in the 21st Century look like? How can we ensure value for money, and remove barriers to women participating in the labour market?
- How can we spread excellence in early years education so that every child, regardless of their background, is given the best possible start in life?

Schools and teachers

- What should Labour's priorities be in schools policy?
- How can we close the educational attainment gap between disadvantaged children and their better-off peers that continues to grow under this government? For example what more can we do for white working-class boys who perform the worst out of every other ethnic group? And what steps we can take to support more girls to pursue STEM subjects?
- What can we do to tackle the crisis in teacher recruitment and retention? How can we raise the status of the teaching profession?

Higher Education

- What more could be done to remove barriers some people experience accessing a university education?

Further Education, apprenticeships, adult skills and learning

- Does our further education system provide for the skills we will need in a future economy?
- How can we develop apprenticeships that will provide the highly-skilled people we need for the future labour market?
- What can we do to spread and modernise workplace learning and encourage people to build on their existing skill sets?
- It is estimated that 1 in 4 of the population do not have basic numeracy skills and 1 in 6 do not have basic literacy skills – what can we do to tackle this?