

## EDUCATION POLICY MOTION 2018

Conference endorses policy paper 128, Every Child Empowered: education for a changing world, as a statement of Liberal Democrat policy to meet these challenges. Conference particularly calls for:

1. An end to Conservative cuts to education including:

Working towards parity of per-pupil funding between post-16 and 5-16 funding, and commit to at least protect per-pupil funding in real terms from 5-19.

Protection of the pupil premium.

2. Support for early years education including

- a) Increasing the early years pupil premium from £300 per year to £1000.
- b) Ensuring all early years settings have a training programme for staff, with the majority of staff who are working with children to either have a relevant qualification or be working towards one; each setting should be Graduate-led.

3. Boosting the readiness of children to learn and supporting household budgets by extending free school meals to all primary-age children.

4. Action to improve the quality of teaching and boost the morale of teachers by:

Supporting the Chartered College of Teaching.

Requiring all teachers in state schools to be Qualified Teachers (or be working towards Qualified Teacher Status).

Providing 50 hours per year of high quality Continuing Professional Development.

5. Delivering a more coherent and accountable structure for state schools in England by:

Giving local authorities with responsibility for education the remit and resources to act as Strategic Education Authorities for their area, including responsibility for places planning, exclusions, admissions including in-year admissions, and SEND functions.

Abolishing Regional Schools Commissioners and give local authorities with responsibility for education the task of promoting high standards across the state sector.

Creating a level playing field by requiring MATs to undergo external inspection and allowing local authorities to open new Community Schools where needed.

Introducing a new 'duty of candour' on all schools, including academies, free schools and Multi-Academy Trusts, similar to that which applies to suppliers of services in the NHS.

#### 6. Modernising the curriculum by:

Requiring all state schools including academy and free schools to teach a revised national curriculum.

Including a 'curriculum for life' (eg. RSE, Citizenship, First Aid, Financial Literacy) and ensuring every child has access to high quality, independent careers advice.

Scrapping mandatory SAT tests at KS2 and replacing them with a combination of a moderated teacher assessment at the end of each phase and a lighter touch standardised test to ensure consistency.

#### 7. Maintaining high standards while reducing unnecessary distortions in the system arising from the current accountability framework by:

Replacing the existing Ofsted with a reformed independent inspection system which should focus on judging whether school leaders are capable of leading improvement and an assessment of the long term success of the whole school, looking at pupil and teacher well-being as well as results.

Replacing existing government performance tables ('league tables') of schools with a broader set of indicators including more qualitative data about pupil well-being.

Scrapping existing broad mandatory SATs tests at KS2, and replacing them with a combination of moderated teacher assessment at the end of each phase and a lighter-touch standardised test to ensure consistency.

Have decisions to intervene in schools or change their governance arrangements normally be made by the Local Authority or MAT, ending the presumption that a temporary dip in results will trigger academisation or re-brokering of schools already functioning as academies.

#### 8. Improving the way the system treats pupils with Special Education Needs and Disabilities by:

Screening for children to identify trauma and neglect in early years, and proactively provide early and evidence-based interventions to stop the trauma becoming entrenched.

Supporting measures to reduce the number of children with special educational needs who are excluded from school – these children are six times more likely to be excluded than children with no SEN.

Emphasising SEND provision in inspections.

9. Giving greater support to the mental health of pupils by:

Developing a mental health care pathway beginning in schools that links with local mental health services.

Establishing a specific individual responsible for mental health in schools, who would provide a link to expertise and support for children experiencing problems and would also take a lead on developing whole school approaches to mental well-being.

Conference also calls for schools to be required to provide inclusive, non prescriptive, gender-neutral school uniform policies and for adequate training for school staff on how to review and improve their school uniform policies.

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Nigel Jones, Chair LDEA