

DfES Five Year Strategy: Summary

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The Journey of Reform since 1997:

Education and childcare are improving

Children and all those who learn are our future. That is why this Government has invested in extra nurseries and childcare places, teachers and schools, books and computers and colleges and universities.

This investment has gone hand in hand with reform and together they are producing results. Since 1997 we have:

- given every 3 and 4 year-old an entitlement to a free part time nursery place;
- 28,500 extra teachers paid around 25% more, and 105,000 more support staff;
- smaller class sizes;
- the best ever results at age 11, 14, 16 and 18;
- increased spending per pupil by 27%; invested £3 billion in school buildings and connected 99% of schools to the internet;
- raised the number of Apprenticeships from 75,800 to 255,500 today – the highest ever level;
- Helped over 550,000 adults have improved their basic skills since 2001;
- A record number of students now going to university.

Key challenges

- **Under 5s** – disadvantage starts early in life and children who get a poor start tend to fall further behind as they go through the education system. And despite our improvements we are still not providing enough childcare places in a flexible way that meets parents' needs.
- **School age years** – there are still too few excellent secondary schools for parents and pupils. While standards have risen, they are not yet high enough for all. Parents and teachers worry about truancy and bad behaviour.
- **14-19 year olds** – too many pupils drift, become disenchanted with school or get into trouble and drop out at 16. Vocational learning is still seen as second best. And pupils leave school insufficiently prepared for the world of work.
- **The world of work** – the UK lags behind other countries in terms of output and skills. A large number of adults lack vital skills in literacy and numeracy. Too often the training system does not give employers the sort of courses and qualifications that suit their business.

Five key principles of reform

- **Greater personalisation and choice**, with the wishes and needs of children, parents and learners centre-stage.
- **Opening up services** to new and different providers and ways of delivering services.

- **Freedom and independence** for frontline headteachers, governors and managers with clear simple accountabilities and more secure, streamlined funding arrangements.
- **A major commitment to staff development** with high quality support and training to improve assessment, care and teaching.
- **Partnerships** with parents, employers, volunteers and voluntary organisations to maximise the life chances of children, young people and adults.

An Independent, Specialist System

Excellent Schools in every community enabling every pupil to achieve

Every pupil to have an education tailored to their needs with more choice over what they study, backed by extra help in subjects where they struggle and extra stretch to develop faster where they excel.

Every parent to choose from a range of modernised specialist schools or academies, offering a well disciplined environment and good involvement in their child's learning.

Every school to be an independent, specialist school, with new freedoms to run their own affairs, backed by the security of 3 year budgets so they can achieve the highest standards for every single pupil.

Every teacher given professional support to develop their specialism, and to improve their teaching; and given backing to deal with truants and disruptive pupils.

Pupil Guarantee

Better transition between primary and secondary so that pupils don't fall back in moving to a 'big' school – with better information about pupils passed between schools and more 'house systems' so pupils don't feel lost.

Better teaching and a more interesting curriculum, with a review of the National Curriculum for 11-14 year olds and more out-of-hours opportunities, including more school sport.

Transformed 14-19 education which offers world class academic study alongside vocational and work-based routes developed with employers.

Flexible choices that combine school, college and work-based training.

Parent Guarantee

Excellent Schools in every community enabling every pupil to achieve.

More places in popular and successful schools with cash for schools to expand and a 12 week fast track process. There is no surplus places rule.

Improved attendance and behaviour: we will expect every school to have a uniform, have clear rules and codes of conduct, and to crack down on bullying by signing the anti-bullying Charter; we will take disruptive kids out of the classroom, have truancy sweeps, and use parenting orders to put power in the hands of heads.

Schools will use pupil and parent surveys to improve, and we will encourage schools to communicate with parents via websites and e-mail.

Partnerships with parents and the community will be supported by **extended schools open from 8 till 6 and at weekends**, offering a range of out of school clubs, study support and family learning.

Every secondary school refurbished or rebuilt through Building Schools for the Future.

Guarantee for all schools

Three-year budgets for every school geared to pupil numbers, linked to a minimum per pupil guarantee – with a new Schools Budget that means education money that is promised by Government is given to schools.

New freedoms for all schools to own their own land and buildings, manage their assets, employ their own staff, put together their own governing bodies, and forge partnerships with sponsors and educational foundations

Less red tape, with single annual reviews backed by a single improvement grant, new shorter, more frequent, short-notice Ofsted inspections and fewer demands on schools for the same information from different organisations

Hard to place or disruptive pupils - we will ensure no school is obliged to take an unmanageable number of disruptive pupils though local agreements.

Local Education Authorities with a reshaped role as champions of pupils and parents, and a key strategic role in education and children's services.

Guarantee for high-performing schools

The chance to take on a **second specialism**.

Three year reviews instead of yearly reviews.

Extra funding to become **training schools or leaders of partnerships**.

Those without 6th forms will have **new opportunities to develop 6th form provision** in areas where there are not enough places.

Guarantee that the worst schools will be closed or turned around

Poor schools will **close, amalgamate or be replaced** and **200 Academies** will be set up in the most deprived areas by 2010.

New school providers: active encouragement for new providers to start new schools; and where there are failing schools, new providers to get the first option of taking them over.

Teacher Guarantee

Excellent **professional development** for all teachers, with **teacher appraisals refocused** on good training and development, backed by **enhanced career progression and financial rewards**.

Defend teachers from false allegations, with new proposals in Autumn.

"Teachers TV," made by teachers for teachers, live from January 2005.

A new role for Local Authorities

Far from undermining Local Authorities, our plans give Local Authorities a central role in an independent specialist system.

A key strategic role

Under our plans, Local Authorities will still have a key strategic role:

- (1) Championing steadily higher standards on behalf of all parents;
- (2) Ensuring services spanning under-fives, social services and post-16 provision, alongside schools, are brought together to serve the best interests of parents and pupils (through Children's Trusts);
- (3) Deciding the local funding formula within the overall budget so that disadvantage and other needs are properly targeted.

The powers of Local Authorities will remain wide-ranging and influential. They will retain statutory responsibility for:

- The welfare and education of every child
- Special Educational Needs
- School transport
- Securing sufficient school places locally
- Implementing the refurbishment or rebuilding of every secondary school over the next 10 to 15 years through 'Building Schools for the Future'.

Champions of the pupil and the parent

Local Authorities will continue to act as the champion of the interests of parents and pupils in their localities. This will be vital where radical change is needed to ensure every parent has the choice of a good school and no pupil is failed by a poor education.

School budgets

The introduction of dedicated schools budgets ends the annual wrangle over the quantum of resources for schools between central and local government.

We have already introduced two-year budgets for schools with enforced passporting through to schools. We have already said that we want to go further and guarantee schools an unprecedented three-year budget, with clear rules that mean the money we spend on schools gets to the frontline and isn't held up in the system.

With funding guaranteed over three years under this plan, and an end to the annual wrangles over school funding between central and local government, Local Authorities can get on with the job of quality assurance and raising standards.

Local Authorities will also be free to spend more on education locally beyond the national allocation where they wish to do so.

Local Authorities will work with a range of local partners as part of the new Children's Trusts that bring together education, social care, health Connexions, Sure Start, Youth Offending teams and the voluntary and community sector to better meet the needs of children, young people and families. In this way local government will play an enhanced role in the development of services for all children and young people.

The Local Authority function will shift from service delivery to commissioning services from local agencies - strategist, rather than provider - but only where an Authority is judged by Ofsted to be persistently failing in its duties will we seek to replace it, inviting others to compete to take on the whole role, or parts of it. That might be another Local Authority, a partnership of local schools, or a private or voluntary sector body.

Far from diminishing the power of Local Authorities to promote the educational welfare of their localities, this new role enhances it - making it more powerful in supporting parents and pupils.

Under 5s

Family guarantee

Give all parents and families one-stop-support at Sure Start Children's Centres – with childcare and education, health and employment advice and parenting support within easy reach of every parent.

From birth to two, more opportunities for parents to stay at home with their children if they want to, and a wide range of accessible, affordable high quality early learning and childcare for parents to choose from, with payment according to means supported by tax credits.

For 3 year olds, and for 4 year olds before they start school, **12½ hours a week of free 'educare' – integrated education and childcare – which can be used flexibly** across the week for a minimum of 33 weeks a year according to children and families' needs.

Greater flexibility for parents to choose how they use the free offer, with **better joining up between the free hours and the hours that parents pay for**, and more Children's Centres, nurseries, schools and childminder networks offering integrated education and care from 8am to 6pm, for 48 weeks of the year – so parents can increasingly use the free hours as part of a seamless package that suits them and their children.

From age 5, 'wrap-around' childcare available before and after school (8am to 6pm), and in school holidays, combined with extra enrichment activities like art and sports.

Guarantee for Local Authorities, providers, employers and schools

Children's Trusts will plan and co-ordinate the arrangements to make more integrated 'educare' available. We will explore enabling Children's Trusts to fund places with extra hours for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable children.

We will engage employers in providing support and funding for their employees to add 'educare' hours. Measures being introduced in April 2005 will enable employers to provide childcare support for their staff - up to £50 per week will be exempt from tax and NI Contributions.

We will **enable schools to develop and deliver partnerships with the private and voluntary sectors**, and with local employers, and where appropriate, integrate this offer with study support and activities such as sports clubs, extra art, maths clubs, or music.

1000 primary schools will offer this model by 2008 - providing places for 50,000 children. Over time every primary school will either make this offer itself, or to be part of a network of schools who provide it between them. **Over time, we want to extend this kind of offer to secondary schools as well.**

PRIMARY

Pupil Guarantee

Literacy and Numeracy – Improving standards of reading, writing and maths remains our top priority.

Personalised approach – better and easier-to-use information will be available about pupils' progress through the Pupil Achievement Tracker.

Extending and enriching the Primary Curriculum – every child to have two hours of PE and sport each week and the chance to learn a foreign language and play a musical instrument.

Parent Guarantee

Partnership with parents and the community – new School Profile will bring together the key information about a school's performance.

Extended Schools – increasing numbers of primary schools who make the 8am to 6pm wrap-around childcare offer rising to 1,000 by 2008. One "full service" extended schools in each LEA by 2006.

Healthy and sustainable schools – we will tackle levels of obesity in children, stopping its growth among under-11s by 2010. Every school should have a transport plan that encourages walking and cycling.

Teacher Guarantee

Building workforce capacity – by September 2005 every primary teacher will be able to spend 10% of their time preparing lessons and assessing work.

Building capacity and supporting primary leadership – we are into the second year of the biggest leadership programme run anywhere in the world.

School Guarantee

ICT support – all primary schools to have broadband access by 2006.

More freedom from bureaucracy –piloting a programme for improving the way we and Local Authorities work with primary schools.

Financial stability – 3 year budgets to plan ahead

Recognising the differences between schools – support provided by primary school improvement partners to be lighter touch for good schools but tougher for weak ones, and to reduce by 30% by 2008 the proportion of schools in which fewer than 65% of children reach the expected level.

Networks of primary schools – schools to work together in networks to improve standards and give pupils wider opportunities.

14-19 Education and Training

Student Guarantee

A vision for a reformed and personalised system – a significant contribution to this vision should come from the work of the independent group led by Mike Tomlinson which is due to report in the Autumn.

Academic Excellence – introduce greater breadth in the curriculum while maintaining the quality and rigour of the A-Level and continuing to support the modernisation of the exam system.

A wider choice of stronger vocational routes – this will include increasing the number of 14-16 year olds studying vocational subjects to just over 180,000 by 2007-08 and increasing the numbers completing apprenticeships by three-quarters, with real employer involvement. Young Apprenticeships will start at 14.

Employability and a stronger partnership with employers – from autumn this year work related learning will become a statutory requirement for all pupils.

A new, integrated Youth Offer – we propose to publish a Green Paper on Youth this autumn to pull together all the various support on offer to young people.

Young people leaving care – we will build on improvements following the Children (Leaving Care) Act by developing an improved mentoring system and encouraging more participation in education, employment and training.

Financial incentives – the Education Maintenance Allowance – these will be introduced nationally for 16 year olds from September 2004. The pilots project an overall increase in participation of 3.8 percentage points in Year 12.

Schools and Colleges Guarantee

Partnership between schools, colleges and workplaces – increasingly we expect to see specialist schools, colleges and training providers forming partnerships to deliver a broad and flexible choice of courses.

Choice of place to learn – we will make it easier for schools without a sixth form to establish one in areas where they are in short supply. Where a great deal of new provision is required we will legislate to hold competitions to improve choice.

Building Workforce Capacity – once Mike Tomlinson and his working group have reported, there will need to be a carefully planned programme of work to train those who work with 14-19 year olds to support their new role.

Adult Skills

Employers able to recruit people with the right skills and individuals able to get the skills they need for employment and development

Individual Guarantee

Targeted support for those learners who need the most help through free tuition for everyone wishing to get the equivalent of 5 good GCSEs from 2005-6, and further Union Learning Fund projects.

Cash incentives to bring people back to learning. Adult Learner Grants of up to £30 per week for full time learners studying for their first full Level 2 qualification and EMAs for 16-19 year olds.

Better advice and guidance for all those who need it. From August 2004, information, guidance and advice will be brought together through Learndirect's national learning advice helpline and website. There will also be more Union Learning Representatives.

Flexible and transferable qualifications. A simpler, credit based qualifications framework so every adult can build up a portfolio of skills.

Employer Guarantee

Employers in the lead, using **Sector Skills Councils** to identify priorities and make sure training is designed to tackle the skills gaps in every sector.

Employer Training Pilots are testing a range of measures to encourage employers to invest in skills and training, by putting them in the driving seat and giving them the kind of training they really want.

Apprenticeships for Adults being developed, in line with employer needs.

Provider Guarantee

Create more Centres of Vocational Excellence – which are further education colleges and training providers with excellence or expertise in particular vocational areas.

Invest greater public funds in those colleges and training providers that offer **high quality programmes**.

Create a single, more integrated annual planning process with a lighter burden on colleges and training providers, and lighter touch inspections

Work towards a **fully qualified further education teaching workforce**

Develop leading edge management training for leaders and managers across the sector through the Centre for Excellence in Leadership.

Higher Education

Student Guarantee

Upfront fees will be abolished.

Repayments will be linked to graduate wages, with no repayments until graduates earn £15,000 or more, paid through the tax system.

The **poorest 30% of full time students** to be guaranteed a minimum **£3000** package of non repayable support each year

Student loans will rise to meet the average basic living cost

Any **outstanding graduate debt will be written off** after 25 years

There will be **better information** about **good teaching** in universities, with published student ratings and figures showing average salaries for different courses

University Guarantee

Independent and secure funding. All money raised through variable fees will go directly to universities.

We will **sustain the excellent quality of our university research.**

We will **build the capacity of leaders in HE.** The new Leadership Foundation will help the sector to strengthen its leadership and management, investing in the leaders of tomorrow and today.

Develop endowments we believe that the development of new independent sources of charitable and philanthropic income is a high priority for our universities, and will respond formally to the report later in the year.

Employer Guarantee

We will build broader and deeper links between higher education and employers. The **Higher Education Innovation Fund** draws together support for reach out from higher education to business and the community. Second round funding will rise to a total of £187m over the period 2004-06

Foundation Degrees help strengthen links between universities and employers, as employers take an increasingly active role in the development and delivery of courses. Numbers of students have grown from 12,000 in 2002/03 to 24,000 in 2003/04. We are supporting the growth of Foundation Degrees by making 10,000 extra funded places available to institutions for these degrees over the next two years