

Comments on the SEA Manifesto Process

I am very much interested in the proposals for a Policy Update as outlined in the recent newsletter so can I make some observations on these:

I hope that SEA doesn't put all its energies into combatting grammar school selection to the exclusion of other important matters. I would want to offer a creative, radical manifesto for educational change that puts the emphasis on providing solutions rather than harping on current problems. We should question current assumptions and not fall into the trap of being Tory-lite and following their agenda of league tables, data-driven targeting. Education is not just about providing fodder for the workplace.

We should consider education from primary to adult learning as a progression.

The planning should perhaps group topics into 4 broad themes and explore the connections between them:

1. Relationships between central and local government and communities
2. Developing the teaching profession
3. A new manifesto for teaching and learning
4. Appropriate management models for schools

Under these headings I would want to look at themes like:

- Developing a deep sense of pupils engagement in the learning process
- Addressing the balance between skills and knowledge
- Connecting learning from primary to the age of retirement
- Reviewing suitable management models for schools
- A critical review and rejection of the academy model and offering alternative proposals
- Developing an alternative model for OFSTED
- Making schools places of dynamic and creative learning
- Developing a non-hierarchical model for curriculum subjects
- Actively encouraging cross-cultural learning and local partnerships
- Challenging the utilitarian, work focused purpose for education
- Ensuring that education robustly challenges the status quo
- Nurturing teachers
- Developing strategies for gifted and talented learners
- Ensuring that primary education provides the foundations of engaging and fruitful learning
- Making schools places of intellectual curiosity, robust questioning and fun.
- Constructively challenging developments in digital learning.

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