

A Manifesto for Education.

Part 1

1. The Way Forward: Breaking Down Barriers to Opportunity

The SEA believes that education is a universal right not a privilege and that all educational institutions should share knowledge and skills. They should also assist in enlightening and interacting with their local communities. These communities are best served by inclusive democratic structures which enhance accountability to students, parents and carers, staff and trade unions. These socialist principles should apply to all sectors of the service from Early Years through to primary and secondary schools, FE colleges, Universities and Youth Services.

What follows is a series of actions on curriculum, assessment, structures, funding mechanisms, teacher education and accountability. An immediate response might well be that the education service has had enough of initiatives and that radical reform now will increase teacher workload just at a time we should be looking to reduce it. In reality though, teachers are tired of top down initiatives over which they have no say. This is a major factor in the teacher shortage crisis. Teachers have lost professional respect and the responsibilities which go with that. We are asking Labour to look seriously at successful jurisdictions such as Finland and Canadian provinces. England (less so Scotland and Wales) has become addicted to imposed curricula and pedagogy. As Sally Tomlinson points out in her new book *Ignorance*, the right, through the Black Papers in the seventies, did everything they could to undermine and denigrate the emergent and newly flourishing comprehensive era. Teachers were devising their own curricula and even their own qualifications. This came to an end when the 1988 Act imposed a detailed National Curriculum for the first time dressed up as 'entitlement'. New Labour followed with the micro-management of teaching by means of its series of 'strategies'. Now teachers are being further constrained by being required to a narrow fact-based curriculum in a prescribed way.

What Labour should be doing is, not thinking of more initiatives, but liberating teachers from the yoke of centrally-imposed bureaucracy and the dead hand of Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) imposing their corporate ways of doing things. The most successful jurisdictions highly respect their teachers and hand over to them and university education departments, responsibility for curriculum development and pedagogy through extensive professional development programmes. Yes, it will cost more in teacher time but rewards will be substantial.

Labour need not worry either about replacing the current rubric with a more open curriculum framework similar to that in Scotland and Wales. Academics, teacher unions, local authority advisers and others have all been shut out of contributing their expertise for the past 12 years and are champing at the bit. Teachers will still be able to refer to and use materials developed under this government. The major difference would be that it is their choice.

We need look no further for guidance than Gordon Brown whose recommendations on devolution and decision-making apply equally well to the treatment of the teaching profession over two decades.

'In no comparable democracy do so few people at the centre make decisions so far away from so many. Other countries of similar size to the UK spread political and economic power across different levels of government. With multiple centres of power, initiative and influence across the whole country, communities can see administrations more responsive to their needs'

Brown Commission 2022

Our education system is becoming even more centralised than the old French and Soviet systems, so it is surprising that Brown hardly mentions it. Having liberated teachers, Labour should liberate communities, parents, education staff and students and give them all back a voice in the running of schools and curriculum initiatives. Again, this is the case in successful jurisdictions. In Scotland and Wales local communities retain a voice in their schools. Under the current academized system where large MATS run schools across the country and are often entirely disconnected from local communities, local democratic oversight cannot take place effectively, if at all. The SEA recognises that bringing schools back under local democratic control will require complex legislation but has researched a way forward in its paper '[Restoring a Democratically Accountable Schools System](#)'.

The biggest barriers to opportunity are poverty and deprivation. They cannot be removed by even the strongest education service, acting on its own. Current education provision is a barrier for many. It labels children as failures, excluding some altogether; it imposes an increasingly irrelevant curriculum and there are few second chances. The SEA welcomes Labour policies announced so far on Early Years expansion and increased teacher recruitment funded by receipts from extra taxes on private education. However, a radically reformed education service, designed as part of a socialist programme to redistribute wealth, rejuvenate public services and tackle discrimination, is required to break down the barriers that increasing numbers of children, young people and adults face.

2. Tackling Child Poverty

- As part of a national effort to tackle child poverty, Labour must ensure nourishing free school meals are available to all primary school pupils as a first step, with the aim of offering free school meals for all pupils in compulsory education.
- All secondary pupils should be given devices to access school on-line resources, the internet and store their work.

3. Restoring Funding

Labour should

- aim to bring education spending back to 6% of GDP in order to rejuvenate the service and upskill learners so they can participate in Labour's green growth agenda.
- pay teachers and support staff salaries in line with 2010 levels.

- fund local authorities to pay for central education services
- devise a new funding formula which allocates more funding to local authorities in poorer areas to spend on their provision and which does not penalise schools with higher than average numbers of pupils with SEND. Pupil numbers should be a much smaller element of the formula and actual staffing costs be taken into account.
- There should be a continued commitment to a Schools Building Programme – devolving finance to local authorities.

4. Early Years

The SEA welcomes the proposed increased investment in childcare for parents. It sees Early Years provision as not just child care but the start of building education opportunities for children. By education we do not mean the start of formal teaching. Instead structured play, building confidence, communication and social skills should be the main focus.

Labour should:

- move towards a universal early years service from 6 months old.
- ensure that as children get older, education should play an increasing role in provision with early years teachers working alongside child care workers.
- reintroduce a career and qualification structure for Early Years practitioners up to degree level and ensure they are paid well.
- move away from funding profit-making private sector providers to local authority run provision integrated into the rest of the education service.

5. Overhauling the National Curriculum

Labour should:-

- explicitly reject the ‘knowledge rich’ approach of the current education establishment which emphasises learning facts and procedures at the expense of deep understanding. Factual knowledge can be learnt inside and outside of formal education. The role of education is not just to teach it but to enable understanding, build connections and ensure learners have the skills they need to thrive in the world.
- replace the current national curriculum in England as soon as possible with a new national framework, similar to those in the highest performing jurisdictions and the rest of the UK. The framework should leave room for both local communities and individual schools to customise the curriculum for their learners.
- conduct an unbiased research informed review into synthetic phonics as the only permissible approach to the teaching of reading and act on its findings.
- recognise that education is a partnership between teachers and learners and that learners are not empty vessels to just be filled with what the state deems is permissible. They come to schools and colleges with their own cultural experiences as well as their own creativity and aptitudes
- ensure the new curriculum integrates the climate emergency, its impact and potential solutions, across the curriculum. Labour must support the Climate Change Education Bill put forward by young people in the ‘Teach the Future’ campaign which will ensure this happens.
- ensure that new curriculum features the history and achievements of our diverse communities including strong representation of artists, writers and scientists from

the black and minority ethnic community, women, people with disabilities and the LGBT+ community. It should affirm the experiences of pupils from all backgrounds. ensure it covers the impact of the British Empire on those colonised. To this end Labour should build upon the Diverse Curriculum Charter initiated by Afzul Kahn MP in Manchester and promote initiatives such as the Black Curriculum developed in Hackney schools as a model. Broaden the history curriculum to include more World History and end the current narrow focus on British and European History.

- Include in history and PSHE (or equivalent) an understanding of historic struggles for different causes including workers rights, and the struggle for rights of all marginalised peoples, to instil democratic engagement and exercise of power amongst children – slowly advancing to discuss the political theory of these matters. Set up an Emancipation Education Trust which helps pursue such education as above and allows schools to be supported with resources and engagement on these matters
- support the inclusion of digital literacy which is a vital skill missing from the current curriculum. Young people are in the process of developing their own role models and sources of knowledge through social media and this cannot be ignored. Learning to distinguish truth from fiction and understanding in whose interests internet content is promoted, should be included.
- abolish the EBAC which acts to maintain the primacy of some forms of academic knowledge over the Arts and vocational/technical skills thereby creating a barrier to those learners from less affluent backgrounds. Arts education must be an entitlement for all learners, not just consigned to after school activities. Labour must ensure that technical and vocational courses from age 14 are seen as equivalent to academic ones
- introduce a post-16 entitlement curriculum covering sports, arts, personal and relationships education, citizenship, preparation for work etc.
- must legislate to ensure an incoming secretary of state for education cannot rewrite the new curriculum on a whim as occurred in 2010 and that changes to the agreed curriculum have to be approved by parliament in future
- abolish the requirement for collective daily worship and for compulsory religious education post-14.
- Include private schools within the national curriculum framework
- Create a panel of leading educationalists to advise on the national curriculum with powers to review and, if necessary, reference back proposals for further consideration. To ensure excellence, neutrality and independence from political influence, the panel should be experts in their field chosen from amongst peers rather than selected by government.
- Ensure that any review of the national curriculum includes representatives of the teaching profession and the relevant trades unions.

For more on a possible curriculum framework see the [the SEA's model](#).

6. Introducing Fair Assessment and New Qualifications

- The current Primary School SATs distort the curriculum in years 5 and 6 where test practice dominates. SATs prevent the development of a new, more fluid and exciting primary curriculum. Labour should endorse the More than a Score Campaign and abolish primary SATs together with the phonics and multiplication tables check. Moderated teacher assessment with use of standardised tests where appropriate should replace them.
- The SEA endorses the work done by 'Rethinking Assessment', the NEU and others. There should be a model of assessment that serves the whole curriculum and is no longer separated from the learning process. This will involve a wider range of assessment methods as is common in most other jurisdictions. These should include an online learner profile. Labour should establish an 'Assessment Reform Working Group' made up of personnel from Rethink Assessment et al to implement changes.
- Norm referencing which rations higher grades is another barrier to opportunity. It has no place in a fair assessment policy. Labour must commit to ensuring that a grade reflects an individual learner's achievement against criteria regardless of what other learners achieve.
- Labour should introduce a baccalaureate/diploma style qualification to incorporate as well as replace GCSEs, A levels, BTECs, and T levels. This will be delivered and assessed throughout the 14 to 19 phase. The qualification will recognise different levels of achievement rather than stigmatise failure. Assessments should be taken when students are ready. Students should be able to pick vocational, technical and academic elements which will be of equivalent value and be able to switch institutions at 16.
- Labour should ensure all young people have access to expert and neutral careers advice and guidance including full information about all post-16 opportunities. Simplify the process of applying for post-16 courses including making it easier for students to move between institutions at that age. We welcome Labour's current commitment to this.
- Ensure that decisions taken at 14 do not close future career opportunities for young people,

7. Restoring Teachers' and Educators' Professional Autonomy and the Integrity of Teacher Education

- The Tories' proposal for a non-graduate teaching apprenticeship is a retrograde step. Labour must reaffirm teaching as a graduate only profession, promote undergraduate routes into teaching such as the three year B.Ed (including fast track routes for late joiners), provide bursaries for all PGCE students and support for Masters' courses to help overcome teacher shortages and the very low retention of newly qualified teachers.
- Labour should recognise it is not just poor pay and workload pressures which are causing the teacher recruitment crisis. It is the expectation teachers should conform without question to a narrowly-prescribed curriculum, associated teaching methods, and downloadable lessons. 'Compliance rather than critical scrutiny is the value to be admired' (Forum).

- Labour should commit to abolishing the Institute of Teaching run by MATS and hand teacher education back to university education departments. Subject graduates have always preferred the PGCE route where they are given some time to consider the wider context in which schools operate, together with alternative philosophies of education.
- The government's 'core content framework' for teacher training is steeped in the 'knowledge rich' approach emphasising committing knowledge to long term memory at the expense of developing creativity and critical thinking. It should be removed as a compulsory element of teacher education to prevent the reduction of a teacher's role to that of 'executive technician' - an outcome the Russell group of universities feared in response to consultation.
- Labour should abandon the market reforms and the political interference in teacher education that has been the hallmark of the Tories and restore the delivery of teacher education and the award of teaching qualifications to universities in line with high performing countries like Finland.
- Labour should break up the Oak Academy which is moving to standardise teaching in an unprecedented way through downloadable lessons. Instead it should fund increased preparation time for teachers to work together in their schools and localities to devise and share innovative schemes of work designed for their pupils with the support of university education departments. Excellence in teaching can only be developed from the classroom up, not imposed from above.
- National professional and training standards should be developed for teaching assistants and support staff
- Bursaries should be provided for training teaching assistants to national standards

8. Ending Academisation, Selection and Returning Schools to Local Democratic Oversight

- The truth is that there is no evidence that academisation and multi academy trusts are the answer to improved outcomes for learners. If anything, evidence suggests the opposite. Labour must end this experiment and hand schools back to local democratic oversight and give communities back a voice in their schools. The SEA has published [a document](#) as to how this can be achieved without disruption to education or closures of schools.
- Handing power back to communities as proposed by the Brown commission should include giving communities oversight over their schools and colleges. How else can schools and colleges help to serve the local economy and reflect the cultural experiences of local communities?
- Regional School Commissioners should be abolished.
- All schools and colleges should have governing bodies with delegated powers. They should contain elected staff, parent and student members. (Students would not be present for discussion of confidential items)
- Labour should introduce a duty on schools and colleges to set up students' councils and other forms of democratic engagement of students to contribute to their schooling environment and make the collective changes they need

- Local councils should control admissions, including in-year or casual admissions, plan overall provision in their areas, intervene with struggling schools, be responsible for SEND provision, and provide central services such as but not exclusively supply staff, HR, and Legal services for schools, as well as coordinating professional development programmes.
- Local Councils should establish representative parent and carer forums with a meaningful voice. They must aim to enable the most marginalised communities to have a voice. These forums should be empowered to have their say on the curriculum, inclusion/SEND, equalities, admissions, provision planning, sport and arts opportunities.
- Labour should establish forums for students, too, to discuss local education issues
- Labour should end academic selection whether by ability or aptitude at all levels. Grammar schools should be integrated into the comprehensive system.

9. Building an Inclusive Education Service

Labour should :-

- re-state its commitment to inclusion and work towards the position where mainstream schools become the default providers for children with disabilities and Special Needs. Labour Newham has a strong record in this regard. Inclusive practice should be celebrated and the capacity of all mainstream schools to meet wider diversity of need, should be built up.
- grant and delegate greater powers to local authorities over opening, closing and changing schools, admissions, exclusions and the care of vulnerable and SEND pupils.
- ring fence SEND funding.
- set up a new agency (see inspection and accountability) to enforce disability duties on all schools under the Equality Act and build in local accountability and monitoring of SEND provision.
- reduce class sizes and increase staff ratios to create more accessibility for neuro-diverse pupils as part of the general increase in school funding,
- reverse the position whereby only more affluent parents can access specialist services such as Educational Psychologists, because these specialists have opted out of the system. It must reverse cuts to specialist services and pay practitioners competitive rates.
- ensure that schools must have ready access to assessment and diagnosis with support provided before such diagnosis takes place.
- require teacher education and training for other educators embraces inclusion and the Equalities Act.
- initiate a national strategy to work towards ending permanent exclusion. This should emphasise the role of positive humane relationships, restorative justice, social understanding, communication, problem-solving and teamwork. Zero tolerance behaviour polices should be phased out.
- A mechanism for scrutinising and monitoring school fixed term exclusions should be

set up in each local authority to ensure that behavioural and exclusion policies are not impacting disproportionately on specific groups of students (e.g. Black and/or Muslim young men). It should draw upon the model of the Newham Monitoring Project including representatives from all key disadvantaged and minority communities in the area. Additional funding should be made available to local authorities for this purpose.

- ensure that qualification framework allows the accreditation of everyone's skills and achievements.

Include the voices of parents/carers of children with SEND in formal mandatory structures in schools and local authorities.

- Reform the childcare system so that:
 - highly vulnerable children in the care of Local Authorities are given stability, are able to attend schools consistently and are not repeatedly moved from home to home.
 - A disproportionate burden does not fall on schools in particular geographical locations, such as Kent and Lincolnshire.
 - No child in the care of a Local Authority is out of school for longer than 5 school days while waiting for a place.

10. Inspection and Accountability

Labour must:

- Ensure schools and colleges are accountable for the safety and wellbeing of the young people in their care.
- Set up a new NGO with powers to enter schools, including those in the private sector, to monitor and ensure children's safety and wellbeing, plus compliance with legislation including the Equalities Act.
- Give the new NGO the role of parent advocate particularly for disadvantaged parents, refugees, and non-English speakers. It should also be the last port of call when complaints from parents and learners are not resolved.
- Abolish OFSTED and cease the practice of inspecting schools with ever-changing frameworks which create excessive workload and pressure on staff.
- Set up an independent peer review process for schools in the mould of the Challenge Partners organisation where staff from member schools review each other's provision led by an experienced external reviewer.
- Ensure reports on what the school does well and what it could improve are available to parents.
- Identify schools' areas of excellence through the review process (eg. teaching maths, inclusion, student voice etc) so that practice can be shared with other schools.
- Set up a similar review process for teacher education.
- Abolish the publication of league tables; these do not account for the nature of a school's intake and provide a perverse incentive to excluding, off-rolling and refusing or delaying admission to children whose particular needs or circumstances mean their academic progress is likely to be slower than average.

Part 2

Improving Higher Education and Lifelong Learning

1. Principles

The SEA believes that everyone should have the right to access higher education and life-long learning whatever their age or background. Education which is accessible throughout people's lives enhances the well-being and capacity of individuals to enjoy life, supports intergenerational aspiration and adds value to communities and workplaces.

A Labour Government must encourage individuals to study at universities, colleges, in adult education and evening classes on programmes that meet their needs, provide opportunities to develop new interests and gain further and higher education qualifications, including higher level and degree apprenticeships.

A Labour Government must:

- Turn the clock back on the marketisation and free-market principles that have been applied to universities, colleges, and life-long learning.
- Introduce radical new policy and funding arrangements to support aspiration, co-operation, and collaboration in teaching, learning and research and ensure that further and higher education institutions receive adequate public funding to support teaching, learning and research.
- Invest in further, higher, and adult education as part of local and national growth strategies, bringing monetised and non-monetised benefits to individuals, the economy and wider community, and progressing the green prosperity agenda to which Labour is committed.
- Ensure that promoting access, participation and success is matched by a funding system which supports students during and after their studies, rather than pushing them into debts that will never be repaid in full.
- Abolish tuition fees and provide free tuition for undergraduate courses for first time students and for students aged 19 years and over studying for Level 3 qualifications.
- Follow the example of the Labour Government in Wales which has introduced a much more progressive system to support students while they are studying in further and higher education.
- Restore Educational Maintenance Grant (EMA), introduce an FE Learners' Grant and restore maintenance grants for full and part-time students with accessibility to loans for the latter commencing at a study threshold of 25%.
- Ensure that postgraduate students have access to loans and student support.
- Follow the lead of the Biden administration in the USA and introduce a student debt relief scheme for students and graduates for whom the Coalition and Conservative Governments tripled tuition fees from 2012 and abolished maintenance grants.
- Abolish the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)
- Encourage universities and FE colleges to end the casualisation of all types of staff (teaching, research, academic related and professional services) working in HE and FE. giving them decent pay and working conditions.

2. Replacing the Office for Students

Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC) should replace the Office for Students. HEGC should be an arm's length body with responsibility for the allocation of teaching grant, widening participation in all regions and holding universities and colleges providing higher education to account in respect of their governance, the investment of public resources and the terms and conditions on which they employ both academic, other professional and support staff.

3. The Higher Education System in England

Unlike in Scotland and Wales, the weakening of criteria by which institutions can be awarded university title and/or their students entitled to student support, has resulted in over 400 higher education providers being registered by the OfS in England, many of which are for-profit providers.

A Labour Government must:

- Review the criteria for university title in England.
- Ensure that institutions accessing public resources via student support and teaching grant are not-for-profit organisations.
- Challenge through funding regimes, the elitism that taints the UK's higher education sector at the expense of modern universities and the majority of graduates, and drives selection and the education system more generally.

4. Research

A Labour Government must introduce a new research funding system which:

- Ensures that all not-for-profit universities receive research funding.
- Promotes collaboration and the joint use of research facilities.
- Supports regional needs, innovation, and applied research.
- Addresses the casualisation of the academic workforce.

Labour must also reach agreement with the EU so that UK universities can again be part of the Horizon research programme.

5. Arts and Humanities

Equal access to the study of the arts and humanities is crucial to a more equal society. The creative industries make a greater contribution to the UK's GDP than the pharmaceutical sector and the media trope of 'mickey mouse' degrees is inaccurate and misplaced.

A Labour Government must:

- Abolish the Tories flawed definition of 'quality' courses.
- Restore funding to the arts and humanities and make clear that their study is valuable for its own sake.
- Ensure that study of the arts and humanities is affordable and accessible for all, whatever their background.

6. Internationalism

Trans-national education programmes and the study by international students in the UK enrich our universities and their students socially and intellectually.

- Labour must commit to negotiating a deal with the EU to ensure that future generations of students and adults benefit from a new Erasmus programme.
- A Labour Government should support student mobility and expand opportunities for international students to study in the UK and UK students to study overseas.
- Labour should remove international students from the immigration figures, review the cost and complexity of student visa requirements and support schemes which help UK students to study for some of their course overseas.
- End the implementation of hostile environment immigration policies in higher education, which create a climate of fear and inequality between home and international students

7. Further and Higher Education and the Climate Emergency

- Labour must ensure that addressing the climate emergency is central to the mission of further and higher education.
- Labour should develop in students an understanding of issues around climate change including its international dimension and the importance of worldwide climate justice and contribute to the development of a workforce able to meet the economic challenges and the Green New Deal.
- Labour should ensure that all trainee teachers are equipped to explore Climate Action with all pupils in all subject areas.
- Universities and colleges should be supported in divesting from fossil fuels, minimising the carbon footprint of their estates and working towards challenging targets to achieve net zero.

8. Further Education

Labour should:

- Devolve decision making and funding for local skills strategies, the provision of post 16 and adult education, job centres and return to work programmes and the monitoring/oversight of all providers to local democratically accountable bodies in collaboration with employers, unions, HE and education and training providers.
- Reverse cuts to post-16 education and training made since 2010. Ensure funding can support, pay comparability between FE staff and the school sector, the recruitment and upskilling of staff to meet the changing needs of the economy, enhanced contact time for all students, a common broad wrap around curriculum, and a third post-16 year for those who need it.
- Ensure that the further and adult education system can meet the skill demands of the transition to net zero.
- Reintroduce the Education Maintenance Allowance for 16-19 year olds, including support for those undertaking apprenticeships in the same age group.
- Learn from the Welsh government's initiatives on student support.
- Ensure that benefit rules are not an obstacle to adults seeking to retrain.
- Ensure there is good provision for all groups of vulnerable students including those with disabilities, those who are care experienced, young carers, teenage parents, benefit recipients, refugees and asylum seekers.

- Implement the proposals for curriculum and qualification reform set out in the curriculum section of the SEA manifesto. Specifically, end the defunding of applied general (BTEC) courses until a new diploma/baccalaureate is in place.
- Bring back the governance of FE Colleges to local democratic oversight.

9. Lifelong Learning

Qualifications should all fit into the national qualifications framework so that learners can return to formal and informal education at any time in their lives. They should also be able to move across the framework to course in areas which are new to them. The SEA believes that the academic vs technical and vocational debate is a false divide which diverts attention from what is really required to deliver Labour's green prosperity agenda, namely:

- Investment in all qualifications whatever their level with credit transfer built into funding regimes.
- Student support systems which are accessible to potential students including those already in the workforce.
- Funding to develop new provision to increase participation at levels 4/5 and foundation years.
- Incentives to encourage collaboration with employers.
- Abolition of the Equivalent Level Qualification (ELQ) rules which require students to self-fund study for courses which are at the same or lower level to qualifications which they have already obtained.
- Provision of free access for adults to courses up to and including Level 3 including the right to retrain in new skills.

Access to programmes not leading to qualifications

Not all lifelong learning need or can lead to qualifications. Qualifications are actively damaging to many of the purposes of Adult Education as they transfer control of the curriculum from negotiation between students and tutors to examining bodies.

There is a huge need for programmes that aim at personal growth, cultural and artistic development, citizen involvement, community engagement, parent and family education, and more. In order to promote non-qualification oriented learning, we call for:

- A wide range of daytime and evening courses accessible to all regardless of where they live, physical impairment; income; previous educational experience
- Childcare support for learners and teachers
- Courses devised in conjunction with community organisations designed to meet local demands
- A de-casualised workforce with access to career development opportunities
- Employment of professional staff to foster programme and curriculum development within colleges or free-standing adult/community education establishments

10.Apprenticeships

A Labour Government must have an ambitious strategy to promote apprenticeships at every level. As a priority, Labour must:

- Simplify the apprenticeship system and levy to encourage the involvement of small employers as part of a skills and growth strategy.
- Use the opportunity to reform the apprenticeship system to support Labour's Green Prosperity agenda.
- Ensure that, when allocating funds, employers are committed to developing apprenticeships with jobs, particularly for young people, at the end of the training.
- Support Level 2 and 3 apprentices with funding for travel and other costs associated with their apprenticeship.
- Ensure that employers, colleges, universities, and trade unions are involved in the development of apprenticeships at local level.
- Explore the potential for apprenticeship training boards focused on specific sectors.

11. Rejuvenating Youth Services

An incoming Labour Government must:

- publicly recognise the value of high-quality youth work in ensuring all young people achieve their full potential.
- identify a budget to ensure the work takes place, recognising that the budget will be supplemented by contributions from charities and business as well as the contribution of thousands of volunteers supported by JNC qualified employed youth workers.

Introduce an appropriate framework to inspect the scope, quality and impact of the local youth work offer.

- ensure local government recognises its position at the heart of the formulation of local statutory, voluntary sector and business partnerships to deliver youth work. Locally councils must take responsibility for developing an accessible and comprehensive local offer. At a national level the Local Government Association should reinvigorate its partnership with the National Youth Agency to support development and sharing of best practice, drive innovation and audit quality.
- ensure employers require all youth workers to undertake JNC approved qualifications relevant to their roles and responsibilities. A register of youth workers should be introduced to provide public with assurance around the quality of youth work practice in the sector.
- ensure Local Authorities have a local offer which includes:
 - access to high quality youth work for every young person in their community. This includes open access provision as well as targeted opportunities that engage groups and individuals with specific needs.
 - A youth work offer which is clearly educational and which provides young people with opportunities to engage locally, nationally and internationally with others face to face and/or through social media.
 - Involvement and ownership of the local offer for young people who will be involved at every level. They will have the opportunity to influence the decision-making processes in the organisations that deliver services to them and in local democratic structures. They will be encouraged and supported to

be co-producers of services and play major roles in commissioning, scrutiny and audit and have direct control of budgets.

- Strengthen the legislation so that the future of services to young people and youth work are secure.

EPILOGUE

We recognise that this manifesto cannot be achieved all at once. It represents though what we think is wrong with the service and how we think it could be put right. Much of it does not require funds but political will. We are asking the next Labour government to face down the right wing ideologues, currently in charge of the service, and start the process of creating an education service which does break down barriers for the majority of learners.