

What could be usefully emphasised in the Education and Children Policy Document?

“Labour will ensure that every school can excel and every child is given a great education.” (79,1)

“Labour recognises that what most parents want for their children is a good local school. This will be achieved if three conditions are met.

Clearly the first is that there are sufficient school places.

The second is that these schools are providing a good education.

The third is that there must be a fair admissions policy.” (80,2)

“Labour vision is one of high aspiration for all, in which every young person at 18 can choose to go into Higher Education or into a high quality apprenticeship”. (85,1)

(The bracketed numbers are page number – of the NPF Annual Report to Conference – and column number.)

General approach

Every Child Matters. “In office, we would look to develop a new and ambitious approach to child wellbeing, one that focuses all agencies involved in a child’s life upon a set of shared, long-term and clearly defined goals. The philosophy behind Every Child Matters remains relevant and the Labour Party affirms its guiding principles, but we need to update it in order to accurately reflect the challenges of 21st century childhood. We will do this with children and young people, parents and the children’s workforce and sector, creating a broad-based dialogue as to how we can best achieve this.” (75, 1)

Education is of the whole child. “Labour believes education has to mean education of the whole child, for the whole of a life lived responsibly and rewardingly alongside others, at work and in society.” (75, 2)

Local control and oversight

Local communities must have their say. This government has left “no oversight of standards. In a One Nation education system, parents and local communities will have a greater say in the school system that serves them.” (74, 2)

Local Authority to be given powers to hold the DSS to account. “Labour would give local authorities the powers to appoint and help hold to account Directors of Schools Standards who will hold all schools to account ...” (78,2))

Local Authorities as key players. “Local Authorities have a key part to play in delivering high-quality education for all our children and they will continue in that important work. We will clearly set out the role and responsibilities of local authorities and Directors of School standards and the way in which they will work positively together ...” (79,1)

Governing Bodies must represent local communities. “All governing bodies should include significant numbers of governors who represent local communities ...”. (79,1)

Local authorities to be responsible for commissioning new schools along with the DSS. “Local authorities in conjunction with Directors of School Standards will be responsible for overseeing the commissioning of new schools, taking decisions based on the needs of the local area as set out by local authorities. ... With Labour, local authorities will be able to open new community schools once again, ending this Government's bias towards academies and Free Schools.” (81,1)

Child care and Early Years

Labour committed to Sure Start. “Labour created Sure Start and we remain committed to it. We will restore early intervention at the heart of our approach to supporting children and their parents, with Sure Start playing a key role.” (86,1)

Increase Childcare to 25 hours per week. “The next Labour Government will expand free childcare from 15 to 25 hours per week for working parents of three and four-year olds. (87,1)

Schools

Schools may have their status changed. “Action on school standards would include the possibility of changing a school's status including to that of a community school if appropriate. All schools will be required to collaborate with other schools, follow the admissions code, ensure their teachers are or become qualified, and play their part in educating hard-to-place children.” (80,1)

School building needs will be met. “A priority for the Labour Government will be ensuring that where new school buildings are needed that need is met.” (81,1)

Adult Education

Adult Education must be expanded. “Labour also believes in second chances for those who could not complete their education the first time round. ... The economic downturn is a reminder that many people need support to manage economic and labour market change, and it is vital that we ensure there are retraining and lifelong learning options for those who need them. A Labour government would provide provision for literacy and numeracy classes for people of all ages who lack the basic skills in English and maths, and would take measures to encourage people not in work or training to take up this opportunity. We will look to ensure that Adult and Career Development courses are as effective as possible to reduce unemployment and allow people to upskill and retrain.” (85,2)

Apprenticeships

All interested parties to work together for better apprenticeships. “Labour will reform Sector Skills Councils and LEPs so that employee representatives are equally involved. Labour will also make sure that all apprenticeships, as well as occupational standards and skills frameworks are embedded with best practice jointly developed and agreed via industry-led bodies, comprising trade union, employer, educational and technical representation relevant to the occupations, industries and sectors they serve. We will work in partnership with employers, industry training bodies, trade unions and Further Education providers to develop apprenticeships that offer training that meets skills needs and collectively agreed minimum pay rates, ensuring the creation of more gold standard qualifications, trusted by both employers and young people. ... We will work with Further Education colleges and learning providers to ensure they are supported to deliver high quality training and are able to develop effective partnerships with employers.”

“Labour will ensure more apprenticeships are focused on new entrants to the jobs market, include more off-the-job training, where appropriate, and last for a minimum of two years and at least three years in technical sectors such as construction, engineering and manufacturing. There will be an emphasis on advanced apprenticeships to at least level three, underpinned by real, well-paid full-time jobs, clear routes of progress at all levels, mentoring, work-based learning and technical instruction through bona fide provider and college networks.” (84,1-2)

Qualified teachers, teacher training and professional developments

All teachers to be qualified. The government has allowed unqualified teachers to teach in our schools. “... Labour will end this Government's downgrading of teaching and give parents the peace of mind that comes from knowing teachers in every classroom are trained professionals.” (74, 2)

Initial teacher training to be improved. “Labour will also work to improve the quality of initial teacher training and ensure that teachers receive appropriate training for working with children with particular needs such as those who are gifted and talented and those with special educational need (SEN).”

More training opportunities for teachers in subject knowledge and teaching skills. “Labour will ... ensure that all teachers have the opportunity to build their skills once in the profession so they remain up to date with the subject and pedagogical skills and knowledge they need ...” (76,1)

Regular professional development to be required as with lawyers and doctors. “Just as in many other high-status professions such as medicine or law, under Labour teachers will be expected to undertake regular professional development, linked to revalidation on a rolling basis.” (76,1)

Teachers must be able to develop a career while staying in the classroom. “We believe we should ... offer opportunities to teachers who want to progress by building their expertise in a particular subject or

teaching practice ...". (76,1)

Teaching must be a high-status profession. "It is clear from the highest performing school systems around the world that the quality of teaching and the status of the profession hold the key to success." (75,2)

National pay and conditions

National pay bargaining needed. "We recognise that having a fair, consistent national pay system for all teachers is important in retaining and recruiting well-motivated teachers."

Labour supports national pay bargaining for teaching and non-teaching staff. "We continue to support national pay bargaining, and will keep under review any moves from nationally agreed terms and conditions. Labour recognises school support staff as professionals who contribute greatly to the achievement of our children ..." (76,2)

National conditions and review body structure to be maintained and extended. "We support and will maintain the national conditions and review body structure for teachers and will extend this commitment to school support staff by reinstating the School Staff Negotiating Body set up by the last Labour government to develop a much needed consistency in pay and conditions ... in all publicly funded schools". (76,2)

Pay and conditions for support staff are inadequate and will be improved by Labour. "Pay for support staff is low and too often schools do not recognise the commitment and dedication to their pupils that is expected of them in practice. The difference in pay levels is exacerbated by the norm of term-only pay and the proliferation of casualisation. We will provide security for teaching assistants ... ensuring that under Labour they continue to play a key role in classrooms across the country." (76,2)

Careers service

Better careers service needed. "Labour also believes that we need high quality independent careers advice in schools and colleges ... Labour will revive and strengthen independent careers advice in schools ..."

Ofsted

Ofsted has been politicised. "... this Government's attempts to politicise Ofsted have undermined the integrity of the Schools Inspectorate accountability should be collaborative, rather than confrontational ..." (79,2)

Need to examine Ofsted. "Labour believes the role of the Schools Inspectorate needs examining."

Free Schools

Free Schools to come within the same local framework as all state-funded schools. "We will ensure existing Free Schools become part of the local family of schools and that the Director of Schools Standards can work with governors, parents and school leaders on school improvement in all schools including Free Schools." (80,1)

Music, sex education, health

Music education for all. "Labour also believes that all children should have access to high-quality music education and that should not be a postcode lottery in musical opportunities for young people." (81,2)

Sex education for all. "Under Labour, Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) would be compulsory in all public-funded schools ...". (82,1)

Restore WHO initiative, bring in more school nurses. "Labour will support schools to restore the World Health Organisation initiative, 'Health Promoting Schools' and enable trained professionals including school nurses, to lead and deliver this strategy. Every secondary school should have access to a qualified nurse as should clusters of primary schools." (82,1)

Food standards. "... we want healthy food standards to apply to all schools." (83,1)

11+

The 11+ is harmful to all children. "Labour recognises that children develop at different rates and that environment and opportunity play a significant role. We will not allow any new grammar schools to open. **Academic selection at 11 damages education for all children** and is not the best way to give all young people the best start in life. We are focused on how to raise standards in all schools and improve education for all children." (87,2, Emphasis added)