

Giving your child the best start in life

Our commitment to you:

Your child deserves the best start in life. A good education is not a luxury; it should be a right for everyone. We will:

- *ensure a good primary school place for your child, with zero tolerance for failure*
- *turn every failing and coasting secondary school into an academy and deliver free schools for parents and communities that want them*
- *help teachers to make Britain the best country in the world for developing maths, engineering, science and computing skills*
- *create 3 million new apprenticeships and make sure there is no cap on university places, so we have aspiration for all.*

We know what works in education: great teachers; brilliant leadership; rigour in the curriculum; discipline in the classroom; proper exams. We have been bold in reforming the education system to deliver these things, based upon simple, clear principles and values. We believe that parents and teachers should be empowered to run their schools independently. We believe that teaching is a highly skilled profession, and that we need to attract the best graduates into it. And we believe that there is no substitute for a rigorous academic curriculum to secure the best from every pupil.

We inherited a system where far too many children left school without the qualifications and skills they needed. One in three children was leaving primary school unable to read, write and add up properly. The number of pupils studying the core academic subjects at GCSE had halved. Our schools had fallen down the global league tables for maths and science. And the poorest children were attending the weakest schools.

Our far-reaching education reforms have changed this. We have brought high standards back to teaching, discipline back to schools, and challenging subjects back onto the curriculum. Today, there are a million more pupils in schools rated by Ofsted as 'good' or 'outstanding'. Over a thousand schools that were ranked 'inadequate' have become Academies, bringing in new leadership to promote discipline, rigour and higher standards.

There are over 250 new free schools – set up and run by local people – delivering better education for the children who need it most. We have boosted the number of apprenticeships to record levels – 2.2 million over the last five years – and last September more people headed off to university than at any time in history. Too many children, however, are still not receiving the excellent education that they deserve. So we will continue our reforms, so that every child has the best possible start in life.

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Our plan of action:

We will drive up standards in your child's school

We have made exams more rigorous and ended grade inflation. There is more to do. We will start by introducing tough new standards for literacy and numeracy in primary schools. We will expect every 11-year-old to know their times tables off by heart and be able to perform long division and complex multiplication. They should be able to read a book and write a short story with accurate punctuation, spelling and grammar. If children do not