

will need as adults, and every pupil should be given advice and guidance about their future.

We will:

- ♦ Establish an independent Educational Standards Authority (ESA) entirely removed from Ministerial interference. The ESA will have responsibility for curriculum content and examination standards.
- ♦ Introduce a minimum curriculum entitlement – a slimmed down core national curriculum, which will be taught in all state-funded schools. This will include Personal, Social and Health Education: a ‘curriculum for life’ including financial literacy, first aid and emergency lifesaving skills, citizenship, and age-appropriate sex and relationship education. To ensure all children learn about a wide range of religious and nonreligious world views, religious education will be included in the core curriculum; however we will give schools the freedom to set policy on whether to hold acts of collective worship, while ensuring any such acts are strictly optional.
- ♦ Complete the introduction of reformed GCSEs, while continuing to oppose Conservative plans for a return to the old O-level/CSE divide.
- ♦ Improve the quality of vocational education, including skills for entrepreneurship and self-employment, and improve careers advice in schools and colleges.

4.5 Improving care for looked after children

Liberal Democrats have long championed early intervention to prevent problems before they arise, but we also need to make sure we equip social workers with the skills to address these complex issues and ensure children’s safety. Where children do have to be taken into care we must make sure they find a loving home with as little disruption and instability as possible. We have done much in Government to be proud of in helping children in care and to improve social work, but we can still go further.

We will:

- ♦ Continue to invest in early intervention, further expanding the Troubled Families Programme and building on the work of the Early Intervention Foundation to spread evidence of what works.
- ♦ Expect Local Authorities to set out a clear purpose for the care system: to promote emotional wellbeing and resilience, provide a secure base on which children can be supported in their development and provide individually tailored help with recovery.