



Your child,
your schools,
our future:

building a 21st century
schools system **SUMMARY**



Summary

Chapter 1 – Our ambition for every child: an education that prepares them for the challenges of the 21st century

1. We want every child to succeed, and we will never give up on any child. These convictions underpin our Children’s Plan vision to make this the best place in the world to grow up, and all of the proposals in this White Paper. Ensuring every child enjoys their childhood, does well at school and turns 18 with the knowledge, skills and qualifications that will give them the best chance of success in adult life is not only right for each individual child and family, it is also what we must do to secure the future success of our country and society.
2. Over the last 12 years great progress has been made. Childcare, nurseries and early learning have been transformed, school standards have risen, more 16- and 17-year-olds are staying on in learning and gaining good qualifications, and England’s education system has gone from below to above average in comparison with other advanced countries. These achievements are in large part due to the greatly improved leadership and teaching in our schools and colleges, which is stronger than ever before.
3. However, we also face new challenges. The demand for higher skills, including key skills in science, technology and mathematics,

continues to rise. Projections of the future skills needs of our economy when today's young people are adults show that there will be very few jobs available for people with low or no skills, and the current global economic downturn makes it even clearer that everyone needs good qualifications and skills. Tackling global environmental change will require enormous creativity and adaptability.

4. The world is changing fast: many of today's most popular graduate jobs did not exist 20 years ago. It will continue to change fast and unpredictably, so today's young people will need to be able to learn and re-train, think and work in teams and to be flexible, adaptable and creative. They also need to develop a sense of responsibility for themselves, for their health, for their environment, and for their society. They need to develop respect and understanding for those from different backgrounds, and the confidence and skills to make a positive contribution to their community.
5. The challenge to our education system is clear: that it should prepare not just most children but every child to make a success of their life, developing the broader skills, knowledge and understanding that they will need for this future world. If this is our ambition, then we must make sure that the best of what is on offer in our school system – which matches the best anywhere in the world – is made available to all children as we seek to break the link between disadvantage and low achievement.
6. So in this White Paper, we set out to build on the last 12 years of reform by establishing an ambitious new **Pupil Guarantee**,

setting out new entitlements to personalised support for every child, matched by a **Parent Guarantee** for every parent. And we set out our plans for securing those guarantees across the country.

Chapter 2 – In every school: excellent teaching and the extra help each child needs

7. The school system we seek is one where every child and young person is inspired to develop a lifelong love of learning; where every child and young person is progressing and achieving to 18 and beyond; and where each one is being prepared by the education and training system to make a success of their life. The reforms of the last 12 years and all the successes of teachers and schools in recent years, mean that it is now possible to seek to guarantee this for every child and every parent.
8. Every pupil will go to a school where there is **good behaviour, strong discipline, order and safety**. Every parent wants to know their child will be safe and happy at school. To secure every child's right to learn in a well-run, orderly school, we will act upon the recommendations of Sir Alan Steer's behaviour review. In addition, new Home School Agreements will give parents a clearer understanding of their own responsibilities toward their child's schooling, especially around behaviour. In applying for a school place every parent will agree to adhere to the school's behaviour rules. Once their child is in school, the parents will be expected to sign the agreement each year and will face real consequences if they fail to live up to the responsibilities set out within it, including the possibility of a court-imposed parenting order. In turn, parents

will also have the right to complain if they believe the school is not holding other parents to their responsibilities.

9. Every pupil will go to a school where they are taught a broad, balanced and flexible curriculum including skills for learning and life. It remains our absolute priority that every child achieves well in the basics, especially in English and mathematics. There has been a step change in the standards achieved. The challenge now is how to achieve the next big step forward: we believe that now standards of teaching and knowledge of effective practice are high, one key will be allowing schools more flexibility in the curriculum, particularly to devote more time to English and mathematics for those who have fallen behind, while giving schools more scope to tailor provision to their own circumstances and the needs of the children in their care. A new, more flexible primary curriculum will be introduced from 2011, alongside the new secondary curriculum introduced by 2010. From the age of 14, young people will have an entitlement to study a choice from any of the new Diplomas by 2013, and the choice of an Apprenticeship place from the age of 16. We intend to create a system in which no matter what level a young person is learning at, and no matter what their preference for style of learning, they will have access to a course and to qualifications that suit them.
10. Every pupil will go to a school where they are **taught in a way that meets their needs**, where their progress is regularly checked and where additional needs are spotted early and quickly addressed. Every child will have a Personal Tutor, who knows them well. Any primary pupils falling behind in Key Stage 2 will have an

entitlement to 10 hours of one-to-one tuition. For those who are behind at the start of secondary school, we will now guarantee one-to-one or small group catch-up tuition in Year 7. As recommended by the Expert Group on Assessment, we will also develop a 'progress check' assessment for these pupils to ensure that support has been effective, carried out by class teachers and reported to parents. More generally, schools will report online in 'real time' to parents about progress, behaviour and attendance, by 2010 in secondary schools and by 2012 in primary schools. Where young people face barriers such as a disability or special educational need, or where they or their family are facing wider problems and needing specialist support, we will make sure that they get early intervention support from appropriate professionals. This will often be based in schools, but working as part of multi-agency teams – so that problems are tackled early and barriers to learning broken down.

11. Every pupil will go to a school where they **take part in sport and cultural activities** – including access to 5 hours of PE and sport each week and a wide range of out-of-school activities. Childcare will be available for primary school pupils.
12. Every pupil will go to a school **that promotes their health and wellbeing**, where they have the chance to express their views and where they and their families are welcomed and valued. Every school should be a healthy school, and every child should receive personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) as part of their curriculum entitlement.

13. The Pupil and Parent Guarantees will be underpinned by legislation, and implemented across the country in the coming years, driving the next stage of education reform and embedding across the country much of the best practice to be found in our most effective schools.

Chapter 3 – Every school working in partnerships: because no school can do it alone

14. No school can meet the needs of all its pupils alone. Delivering the Pupil and Parent Guarantees will require schools to work in partnership with other schools and with wider children's services in order to offer more by working together than any one partner could alone and to provide better value for money. At the same time, federation and other partnership solutions will become central to tackling underperformance and extending the reach of the best leaders. Partnerships with wider children's services as part of the Children's Trust will mean that schools can tackle problems early.
15. Building on the near-universal specialist schools system, we will seek to make sure that across the country, children and young people have access to the best subject teaching and centres of excellence in specialist schools, through partnership working and the specialist schools networks. We want to see 21st century special schools developing partnerships, sharing their expertise and facilities with other schools and providing children with the skills and confidence needed for greater independence in adult life. We will ensure that in every part of the country, local consortia

are in place which can offer a choice of every one of the new Diplomas to 14-19 year-olds. And as the new primary curriculum is implemented, we will support primary schools to work together to share specialist teaching that they could not have access to on their own. And we will make sure that where schools wish to bring partnerships together – for example, curriculum, behaviour and extended schools partnerships – to maximise their impact, they are able to do so.

16. In order to support this approach, and to make clear that as well as making sure that their own pupils benefit from partnerships, schools should contribute to the good of other pupils, we are currently legislating to require schools to collaborate and we will go further to make it clear that schools have responsibilities for children across the area as well as those on their own roll. We will make clear that where schools wish to pool funds and resources to achieve better value, they can do so.
17. In order to continue to tackle weakness and low performance rigorously, we will continue to accelerate the creation of Academies – to 200 by September 2009, with a further 100 the next year – and of Trust schools, bringing in new sponsors and partners as we do so. Building on the success of education institutions sponsoring Academies, we will extend the powers of strong governing bodies to allow them to directly sponsor Academies and propose new schools.
18. And we will now develop and promote a system for accrediting good education providers who wish to run groups of schools – Accredited Schools Groups – so that the best schools and school

leaders can spread their excellence around the system. We are extending local authorities' powers to intervene in cases of failure and as the new system is developed, and as providers are accredited and capacity grows, we will require local authorities to consider the use of accredited providers to tackle underperforming schools. We will make available £20m over two years to support accredited providers to develop their capacity and take on underperforming schools.

19. We will support the creation of multi-agency teams in schools, bringing together a wide range of children's services professionals. We will bring schools and wider services together in Children's Trusts, establishing Children's Trust Boards, making schools partners in the Children's Trusts and giving schools' representatives places on the Boards. We have established a co-location fund worth £200 million and we have just announced 101 projects in which local authorities and their partners are co-locating services such as specialist child health clinics, youth centres and sports facilities around schools, children's centres and other community facilities. We will continue to promote approaches to partnership which increase efficiency – including, for example, School Business Managers – and will require governing bodies to consider federation or executive headship before appointing a new head.
20. We will make sure that barriers to partnership working are removed and we will fund a leadership and partnership national support programme to support schools to manage change as partnerships develop. In addition, Ofsted is introducing a revised

grade for partnership working and will carry out more co-ordinated inspections for federations of schools.

Chapter 4 – Every school improving: strong accountability and rapid intervention when it is needed

21. Our central principle has always been that each school is responsible for its own improvement. Nonetheless, centrally driven support programmes have played an important role in recent years in challenging performance, in training teachers and in spreading effective practice. The gains made through these programmes are well embedded: teaching is more effective than ever before and knowledge about effective practice widely shared.
22. With these gains in place, the next stage in improving schools will be based on a much more tailored approach. This is in no way a step back from the reforms of recent years. For example, we will still expect every primary school to be teaching daily 'literacy hours' and daily mathematics lessons. The key question now is how to help each school to do better day by day its core job of teaching those lessons. Where reforms have been underway for less time, for instance, in the early years, centrally-funded support may need to continue. But in most areas, with firm foundations in place across the country, taking the next step requires improvement support to be based on a deeper understanding of the needs of each school and of what will be effective in generating improvement.

23. We will reform the role of ‘School Improvement Partner’ (SIP) so that SIPs are responsible not only for monitoring and challenge, but have a wider role of brokering support, based on a deep understanding of a school, its challenges and what will be effective in generating improvement. SIPs will work with school leaders to identify what support is needed to generate improvement. Support will come from a wider range of providers, including high performing schools and nationally accredited providers. DCSF will ensure there is sufficient supply of high-quality support across the country, differentiated to meet schools’ specific needs. We will expect local authorities to work through SIPs to support schools. We will reform SIP training and quality assurance in support of the new role.
24. We have started to move towards this system already. The proposed approach to the SIP role is based on that which has proved successful in the City Challenges, and has been developed as part of the National Challenge. The differentiated approach to support builds on our secondary school improvement strategy, *Promoting Excellence for All* and on *Gaining Ground*, our strategy for schools where pupils are not making fast enough progress. We will establish a *Good and Great Schools* programme to give good schools inspiring opportunities to support their ongoing development. And our new primary school improvement strategy will support both the weakest performing primaries, and those with poor rates of progression or inconsistent results.
25. Our reforms will be underpinned by strong school accountability. The school accountability system will now focus more sharply on

how well each child is progressing and developing; it will take more account of the views of pupils and parents; and reward those schools which are most effective in breaking the links between deprivation and low achievement. To deliver this we will develop a new School Report Card (SRC) for every school, which will provide a rounded assessment of school performance and enable parents and the public to make better informed judgements about the effectiveness of each school. Alongside this White Paper we are publishing, jointly with Ofsted, a Prospectus for the next, detailed stage of development of the School Report Card.

26. Where the School Report Card shows low or declining performance, Ofsted may inspect more frequently. In inspecting schools, Ofsted inspectors will also strengthen their focus in key areas, raising the bar, with more time spent observing lessons; and new and more demanding standards for each judgement. ‘Limiting’ grades for achievement, equalities and safeguarding will act as caps on the overall effectiveness judgement; and inspectors will also judge the quality of partnership working.
27. When schools are underperforming, timely and effective action must be taken. To ensure this, local authorities will use the School Report Card assessment of performance, and Ofsted’s judgement of a school’s overall effectiveness, to produce an overall school improvement assessment. This will trigger strong intervention where schools are not performing well and not improving or have little capacity to improve, with closure, or a structural solution – Academy, federation, Trust status or becoming part of an Accredited Schools Group – being the normal response.

Chapter 5 – Every school and school leader supported: the right roles for local and central government

28. We have made unprecedented investment in schools over the last 12 years. We have launched a major review of the distribution of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) from 2011. The review needs to produce a funding system which better reflects need, raises standards, narrows gaps and supports partnership working. Children from deprived backgrounds are still less likely to achieve than their more advantaged peers, and the DSG review is looking at how best to target funding at children from deprived backgrounds. We will bring forward proposals in early 2010, subject to spending decisions and the outcome of the review, but our principles are that: money allocated at the national level for deprivation should all be allocated locally to schools with the pupils who need it; the system should be more responsive to changes in the characteristics of pupils in schools and local authorities; and the proportion of resources allocated nationally for deprivation should be maintained or increase so that the amount spent locally on deprivation will grow. We will consult on specific proposals in early 2010.
29. We will provide greater flexibility for schools and encourage greater innovation. We will ask the Implementation Review Unit, an independent panel of experienced heads, teachers and school managers, to undertake a review of how our policies are implemented with a view to removing barriers to delivery.

30. Local authorities, operating between the national level and front-line delivery, need to use their commissioning role to ensure delivery of high-quality school places and children's services that deliver the Pupil Guarantee, effective early intervention and wider support for children, young people and their families. Local authorities will be clearly responsible for ensuring maintained schools are effectively challenged and supported to improve. Local authorities must make sure their SIPs are performing well and agree challenging but achievable targets for maintained schools.
31. Parents make a critical contribution to their children's success at school and it is important that they have a strong voice at all levels of the system. Local authorities are responsible for ensuring there is a pattern of high-quality provision to meet local demands and aspirations. We intend to place a new requirement on them to gather parents' views on the school choices available in their area, and to publish a local plan for improvement if a high proportion of parents are dissatisfied. Alongside parental views about their own child's school feeding into the School Report Card, this will mean a significant strengthening of parental voice in the education system as a driver for improvement.
32. In future, we want to move to a position in which the relationship between DCSF and local authorities (as the leaders of Children's Trusts) mirrors that which we would like to see between local authorities and schools. The White Paper clarifies the role of DCSF Children and Learner Teams based in regional Government Offices (GOs) to lead and co-ordinate strategic support and challenge to

local authorities and Children's Trusts on behalf of DCSF across all five Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes. We will also develop a new system of improvement support for local authorities and Children's Trusts which will provide a better balance between centrally commissioned support for national programmes and more targeted and differentiated packages of support to meet local and regional needs. DCSF will continue to intervene in local authorities which are underperforming.

Chapter 6 – In every school: a well-led and highly skilled workforce

33. It is only the workforce who can deliver our ambition of improved outcomes, with children and young people fully engaged with their education and supported to progress through it. This workforce will need to be well-led, highly-skilled, motivated and effectively-deployed.
34. We want our best school leaders to be innovative, to take on wider system leadership roles and to lead school partnerships. In addition to the established pattern of head teachers working together in local areas, there are already a number of new and developing system leadership roles, including head teachers becoming 'consultant leaders' or 'executive heads' who provide strategic leadership across a number of schools operating in partnership.
35. We aim to transform the culture of teachers' professional development, through the introduction of the new Masters in

Teaching and Learning, which we aim to extend across the profession. In addition, we intend to introduce a new renewable ‘licence to teach’ linked to a new professional development entitlement for teachers. This will mean that every teacher will need to keep their skills up to date and demonstrate periodically that their professional practice and development meets the standards required for the profession; and that they will have access to the necessary professional development support. We will begin the roll out of the licence to teach and new entitlement with newly qualified teachers and for those returning to teaching.

36. We will also establish new and stronger expectations for the development of support staff. Our ambition is that all staff within a school are trained and supported in their current role and are given the opportunity to develop their skills and progress in their careers. In the 21st century school all staff supporting pupils’ learning will have, or will be working towards, a Level 3 qualification. We will also look to the School Support Staff Negotiating Body to develop a pay and conditions framework that contributes to the effective training and deployment of school support staff.
37. School governors play a vital role in our education system by holding to account the school’s leadership for the performance of the school. We want to strengthen this role by enshrining in law governing bodies’ fundamental duties to children, young people and the wider community. We will require SIPs to provide information and advice to the governing body about the school’s performance, so that governors are more able to challenge and

support school leaders. We will also improve governor training and expect all chairs of governing bodies to undergo specific training. We will expect initial training for governors to focus on the central tasks: providing effective challenge and support, holding to account, making effective use of data and information to manage performance and ensuring value for money. Governors will also be trained where appropriate in overseeing more than one school and managing co-located services. And we will introduce greater flexibility into rules about the composition of governing bodies.

38. Taken together, these proposals will build on the foundations of the progress made over the last 12 years, to create a world-leading system of schooling which reflects the needs of the 21st century: responding to the challenges of a changing global economy, a changing society, rapid technological innovation and a changing planet. They will ensure that every school develops and extends the potential and talents of every child and young person to give them the skills they need for the future, so that every child can enjoy growing up and achieve high standards. And fundamentally, they will create a system which progressively breaks the link between disadvantage and low educational attainment.
39. Schools are central to our Children's Plan vision to make this the best place in the world to grow up. They exist to give a great start in life for every child, not just for some. That is why teachers join the profession, why school leaders take on their challenges every day, and why we are taking the radical and ambitious steps set out in this White Paper.

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