

2024 manifestos summary

Labour – Our plan to change Britain

Education headlines

- Recruit 6,500 new teachers in key subjects to set children up for life, work, and the future, paid for by ending tax breaks for private schools.
- The way bursaries are allocated, and the structure of retention payments, will be reviewed.
- Break down barriers to opportunity by reforming our childcare and education systems, to make sure there is no class ceiling on the ambitions of young people in Britain.
- Fund free breakfast clubs in every primary school, accessible to all children.
- Bring down the cost of school by limiting the number of branded items of uniform and PE kit that schools can require.
- Open an additional 3,000 nurseries through upgrading space in primary schools to deliver the extension of government funded hours families are entitled to.
- Update the Early Career Framework, maintaining its grounding in evidence, and ensure any new teacher entering the classroom has, or is working towards, Qualified Teacher Status.
- Introduce a new Teacher Training Entitlement to ensure teachers stay up to date on best practice with continuing professional development.
- Reinstate the School Support Staff Negotiating Body, which will help address the acute recruitment and retention crisis in support roles.
- Improve the quality of maths teaching across nurseries and primary schools.
- Fund evidence-based early-language interventions in primary schools, so that every child can find their voice.
- Create a new Excellence in Leadership Programme, a mentoring framework that expands the capacity of headteachers and leaders to improve their schools.
- Introduce new Regional Improvement Teams, to enhance school-to-school support, and spread best practice.

- Enhance the inspection regime by replacing a single headline grade with a new report card system telling parents clearly how schools are performing.
- Bring Multi-Academy Trusts into the inspection system and introduce a new annual review of safeguarding, attendance, and off-rolling.
- Launch an expert-led review of curriculum and assessment, working with school staff, parents, and employers to change this.
- Provide access to specialist mental health professionals in every school, so every young person has access to early support to address problems before they escalate.
- Act to improve access to universities and raise teaching standards.
- Support children to study a creative or vocational subject until they are 16 and ensure accountability measures reflect this.
- Get more children active by protecting time for physical education and support the role grassroots clubs play in expanding access to sport.
- Launch a new National Music Education Network – a one-stop shop with information on courses and classes for parents, teachers, and children.

SEND

- Take a community-wide approach, improving inclusivity and expertise in mainstream schools, as well as ensuring special schools cater to those with the most complex needs.
- Make sure admissions decisions account for the needs of communities and require all schools to co-operate with their local authority on school admissions, SEND inclusion, and place planning.

FE and Skills

- Local leaders will work with major employers, universities, colleges, and industry bodies to produce long-term plans that identify growth sectors and put in place the programmes and infrastructure they need to thrive.
- Upskill UK workers by linking migration to training plans, enhancing the Migration Advisory Committee, and collaborating with key bodies to reduce reliance on overseas workers in critical sectors.
- Establish a youth guarantee of access to training, an apprenticeship, or support to find work for all 18 to 21-year-olds.
- Establish Skills England to bring together business, training providers and unions with national and local government to ensure we have the highly trained workforce needed to deliver Labour's Industrial Strategy.

- Skills England will formally work with the Migration Advisory Committee to make sure training in England accounts for the overall needs of the labour market.
- Devolve adult skills funding to Combined Authorities, empowering local leaders to have greater control of skills development in their areas, alongside a greater role in supporting people into work.
- Skills England will co-ordinate between local areas to ensure everyone can access all the opportunities available.
- Transform Further Education colleges into specialist Technical Excellence Colleges that will work with businesses, trade unions, and local government.
- Reform the Apprenticeships Levy. Create a flexible Growth and Skills Levy, with Skills England consulting on eligible courses to ensure qualifications offer value for money.
- Set out the role for different HE and FE providers, and how students can move between institutions, as well as strengthening regulation.

Disability

- Work with local areas to create plans to support more disabled people and those with health conditions into work.
- Devolve funding so local areas can shape a joined-up work, health, and skills offer for local people.
- Tackle the backlog of Access to Work claims and give disabled people the confidence to start working without the fear of an immediate benefit reassessment if it does not work out.
- Reform or replace the Work Capability Assessment and introduce a plan to support disabled people into work.
- Introduce the full right to equal pay for disabled people.
- Introduce disability and ethnicity pay gap reporting for large employers.
- Support disabled people to work by improving employment support and access to reasonable adjustments.
- Protect LGBT+ and disabled people by making all existing strands of hate crime an aggravated offence.

Youth

- Guarantee two weeks' worth of work experience for every young person and improve careers advice in schools and colleges.

- Every young person caught in possession of a knife will be referred to a Youth Offending Team and will receive a mandatory plan to prevent reoffending, with penalties including curfews, tagging, and custody for the most serious cases.
- Intervene earlier to stop young people being drawn into crime, creating a new Young Futures programme with a network of hubs reaching every community. These hubs will have youth workers, mental health support workers, and careers advisers on hand.
- Place youth workers and mentors in A&E units and Pupil Referral Units, funded by full recovery of the cost of firearm licensing.
- Introduce a new offence of criminal exploitation of children, to go after the gangs who are luring young people into violence and crime.
- Work with local government to support children in care, including through kinship, foster care, and adoption, as well as strengthening regulation of the children's social care sector.
- Implement the expert recommendations of the Cass Review to ensure that young people presenting to the NHS with gender dysphoria are receiving appropriate and high-quality care.
- Bring waiting times down and intervene earlier by recruiting an additional 8,500 new staff to treat children and adults in their first term of office. These new staff will be specially trained to support people at risk.
- Build on the Online Safety Act, bringing forward provisions as quickly as possible, and explore further measures to keep everyone safe online, particularly when using social media.
- Give coroners more powers to access information held by technology companies after a child's death.
- Give 16- and 17-year-olds the right to vote in all elections.

Conservative – Clear Plan – Bold Action – Secure Future

Education headlines

- Require schools to ban the use of mobile phones during the school day.
- Deliver new legislation which will make clear that parents have a right to see what their child is being taught in schools and schools must share all materials, especially on sensitive matters like relationships and sex education.
- Attract more talented teachers by expanding recruitment and retention premium and reducing workload. From September, new teachers in priority areas will receive bonuses of up to £30,000 tax-free over five years.
- In primary schools, support teachers to use tried and tested techniques, including world-leading phonics programme and mastery approach to maths, enabling every child to master the basics before they start secondary school.
- Support children in their transition to secondary school and ensure they continue to receive a broad and enriched education during and after-school, including via our multi-million-pound Music Hubs.
- Mandate two hours of PE per week in schools, supported by extending the PE and Sports Premium to secondary schools.
- Increase funding for School Games Organisers to get more competitive sport into and between schools and work with sporting bodies to create more UK-wide school competitions like National Finals, to identify the best sporting talents.
- Work with schools and local authorities to improve school attendance, including through more mental health support
- Legislate to create a register of children not in school.
- Lift the cap on faith schools, allowing them to offer more places to children based on faith and encouraging them to expand.
- Back Ofsted to provide clear judgements to parents on the quality and safety of schools.
- Rebuild over 500 schools through the School Rebuilding Programme, including rebuilding/refurbishing every school with RAAC.

SEND

- End the postcode lottery of support by delivering 60,000 more school places and a further 15 new free schools for children with SEND.
- Back independent special schools instead of penalising them by taxing them. [Note – we have verbal reassurance from Labour that they do not intend to tax independent special schools]

FE and Skills

- Introduce the Advanced British Standard to remove the artificial divide between academic and technical learning.
- Each child will spend more time in the classroom, learning more subjects, including English and Maths to 18.
- Extend recruitment and retention premium payments to eligible teachers in FE colleges.
- Fund 100,000 high-quality apprenticeships for young people, paid for by curbing the number of poor-quality university degrees.
- Deliver the Lifelong Learning Entitlement to give adults the support they need to train, retrain, and upskill flexibly throughout their working lives.
- From the 2025 academic year, adults will be able to apply for loans to cover new qualifications.
- Continue to expand adult skills programmes, such as Skills Bootcamps which meet skills shortages.

Disability

- Continue to modernise autism and learning disability services.
- Give councils the power to ban pavement parking, provided they engage with businesses and residents to ensure they are not adversely affected.
- Ambition is to make the UK the most accessible place in the world for people with disabilities to live, work, and thrive.
- Improve support for people who have guide or assistance dogs.
- Explore bidding to host and deliver the 2031 Special Olympics World Summer Games.
- Continue programmes including the Invest in Women Task Force and the Lilac Review to encourage more female and disabled entrepreneurs.
- Address the unsustainable rise in benefit claims for people of working age with a disability or health condition:
 - Reform disability benefits so they are better targeted and reflect people's genuine needs.
 - Improve PIP assessments to provide a more objective consideration of people's needs and stop the number of claims rising unsustainably.
 - Make the assessment process simpler and fairer for those with the most severe conditions.

- Change the assessments from September 2025 so that those with mobility problems who could potentially engage with the world of work are given tailored support, instead of being written off on benefits.
- Design a new system which moves the responsibility for issuing fit notes away from GPs towards specialist work and health professionals, and test integrating this with the new WorkWell service.

Youth

- Introduce mandatory National Service for all school leavers at 18, with the choice between competitive placement in the military or civic service roles:
 - Civic service: Equivalent of one weekend a month (25 days a year) volunteering in the community, alongside work or study, for a year.
 - Military service: Year-long full-time placement in the armed forces or cyber defence. This will be competitive and paid.
- Establish a Royal Commission to design the modernised national service, backed by funding rising to £2.5 billion in the final year of the Parliament and a new National Service Act.

Lib Dem – For a Fair Deal

Education headlines

- A Fair Deal means every child can go to a good school and have real opportunities to fulfil their potential
- Tackle the crisis in teacher recruitment and retention by creating a teacher workforce strategy, making the School Teachers' Review Body properly independent of government and fully funding fair pay rises recommended, and funding a professional development programme for teachers
- Improve careers advice and employer engagement with schools and colleges
- Redirect funding for new free schools to repair of existing schools
- Reform Ofsted inspections and end single-word judgement

SEND

- Give local authorities extra funding to reduce the amount that schools pay towards the cost of a child's Education, Health and Care Plan. [Increase high needs funding budget?]
- Establish a new National Body for SEND to fund support for children with very high needs [Need to clarify this includes full 0-25 range]
- Give LAs the power and resources to act as Strategic Education Authorities including responsibilities for SEND functions

FE and Skills

- Replace the apprenticeship levy with a broader and more flexible skills and training levy
- Scrap the lower apprentice rate and ensure they are paid at least the National Minimum Wage
- Create Lifelong Skills Grants of at least £5,000 for adults to spend on education and training throughout their lives
- Develop National Colleges as centres of expertise in high-level vocational skills of expertise for key sectors, such as renewable energy
- Expand vocational training such as foundation degrees, higher national diplomas, and higher national certificates to solve skills gaps

- Increase school and college funding per pupil above the rate of inflation every year
- Invest in new buildings and clear the backlog of repairs
- Introduce a 'Tutoring Guarantee' for every disadvantaged pupil who needs extra support
- Review further education funding, including the option of exempting colleges from VAT
- Introduce a Young People's Premium, extending Pupil Premium funding to disadvantaged young people aged 16-18
- An industrial strategy that focuses on skills the UK economy will need such as renewables, digital and bioscience
- Tackle the productivity crisis by encouraging businesses to invest in training, take up digital technologies and become more energy efficient
- Establish a commission to broaden the curriculum and "make qualifications at 16 and 18 fit for the 21st century", drawing on "best practice such as the International Baccalaureate" and ensuring children learn "core skills such as critical thinking, verbal reasoning and creativity"

Disability

- Provide free access to sign language lessons for parents and guardians of d/Deaf children
- Establish an Independent Living Taskforce to help people live independently in their own homes
- Enable individuals to transfer their care package so they don't feel stuck in their current locality due to their care needs
- Develop a digital strategy for tech-enabled lives
- Make the benefits system work better for disabled people by involving them in the design of benefits policies and processes, bringing Work Capability Assessments in-house and reforming Personal Independence Payment assessments to stop unnecessary reassessments
- Provide additional support and advice to employers on neurodiversity in the workplace and develop a cross-government strategy to tackle all aspects of discrimination faced by neurodiverse children and adults
- Adopt new accessibility standards for public spaces.
- Improving the legislative framework for blue badges
- Incorporate the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities into UK law.
- Tackle the disability employment gap by implementing a targeted strategy to support disabled people into work, with specialist disability employment support.

- Raise employers' awareness of the Access to Work scheme, simplify and speed up the application process and ensure that Access to Work support and equipment stays with the person if they change jobs through use of an Adjustment Passport
- Increase the use of BSL in government communications and promote and facilitate the use of BSL.
- Require at least 80% of on-demand TV content to be subtitled, 10% audio-described and 5% signed
- Support and encourage campaigns to improve equality, diversity, and inclusion in sport.

Youth

- Give 16- and 17-year-olds the right to vote
- Addressing the underfunding and neglect of children's mental health services, youth services and youth justice services
- Give higher education institutions a statutory duty of care for their students and require them to make mental health services accessible to their students. Require universities to widen participation by disadvantaged and underrepresented groups.
- Make care experience a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 to strengthen the rights of people who are in or have been in care
- Extend half-fares on buses, trams and trains to 18-year-olds and introduce a 'Young Person's Buscard', giving 19- to 25-year-olds a third off bus and tram fares.
- Adopt a public health approach to the epidemic of youth violence with police, teachers, health professionals, youth workers and social services all working closely together to prevent young people falling prey to gangs and violence.
- Invest in youth services that are genuinely engaging and reach more young people.