

# The Sutton Trust

## Mobility Manifesto

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Improving social mobility  
through education





# Mobility Manifesto

- 1** Ensure all disadvantaged children can access the best early years education and care. In particular, all disadvantaged two year-olds should have access to nursery places with well qualified staff.
- 2** Make improving the quality of classroom teaching the top priority in schools, with effective appraisals and a guaranteed entitlement to good quality training for all teachers.
- 3** Create fairer school admissions to both state grammar schools and comprehensives at age 11, including through the increased use of ballots and banding in admissions.
- 4** Improve the impact of the pupil premium through greater use of evidence provided by the Education Endowment Foundation and incentives for schools that narrow the attainment gap.
- 5** Develop an effective national programme for highly able state school pupils, with ring-fenced funding to support evidence-based activities and tracking of pupils' progress.
- 6** Strengthen academies' support for low and middle income pupils by regular inspection of chains, publication of more data across chains and speedier interventions where academies are not working.
- 7** Break down barriers between state and private schools, by promoting more partnership working and opening 100 leading independent day schools to all on the basis of ability rather than ability to pay.
- 8** Provide every young person with an entitlement to good quality personalised education and careers guidance, strengthening the national careers service to support schools and colleges effectively.
- 9** Introduce a new body, separate from individual universities, for the effective coordination of evidence-based outreach programmes, backed by more use of contextual admissions to improve access.
- 10** Greatly expand the number of good apprenticeships so that young people have real options at 18 and employers can develop the skilled workforce they need.

# Introduction

For seventeen years, the Sutton Trust has been working to improve social mobility through education. Our ground-breaking research has helped place the issue of social mobility high up the political and policy agenda, and has shown how elite groups continue to dominate the positions of power and influence in Britain.

The Trust has helped to put higher education access firmly on the policy agenda, and our work has helped to increase the numbers of state-school educated students at top universities. Nevertheless the gap remains wide: a young person from the richest fifth of neighbourhoods is still ten times more likely to go to a Russell Group university than a child from the poorest fifth.

Our programmes – including university summer schools – help thousands of young people fulfil their potential every year. They ensure that able children gain the extra stretch and support at school that they need to succeed. Our pioneering Open Access trial showed that it is possible to open our leading independent day schools to all, regardless of a family's ability to pay.

The work of our sister charity, the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), is leading the way in developing approaches to school improvement based on evidence. The Sutton Trust has always called for rigorously evidence-based education practice, and in 2011 was awarded a Department for Education grant of £125m to set up the EEF as lead foundation in partnership with Impetus Trust. It has since established itself as the organisation that most effectively trials evidence-based programmes to narrow the attainment gap between the poorest children and their classmates.

But social mobility in Britain remains low by international standards. In the extent to which people's incomes are determined by those of their parents, only the US fares worse among major developed nations. Social mobility declined for the 1970s generation compared with those born in the 1950s and has not improved since. Other recent Trust research has shown that leading comprehensives and grammar schools are dominated by better off families.

Successive governments have made social mobility a key priority, and the coalition has made its improvement 'the principal goal' of its social policy.<sup>1</sup> With an election in 2015, we believe it is important that all political parties continue to place social mobility at the top of their priorities. Here we suggest ten practical steps to address issues central to making a difference to mobility.

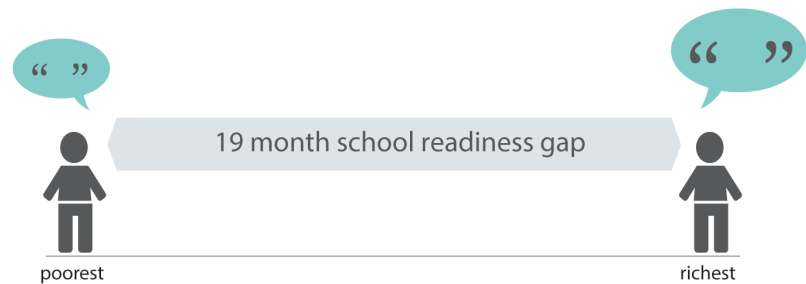
# 1

**Ensure all disadvantaged children can access the best early years education and care. In particular, all disadvantaged two year-olds should have access to nursery places with well qualified staff.**

## What the evidence says:

There is growing consensus on the need to provide early learning for the most disadvantaged two year-olds. The government provided an entitlement to free provision to the poorest fifth of children in 2013 and is extending it to the poorest two-fifths in 2014. However, our Sound Foundations report showed that 20,000 staff working in childcare settings providing these free places required more training to reach Level 3 (A-level standard).<sup>2</sup>

For the poorest children, quality is crucial to later school readiness, and the focus should be on getting it right for those children first. With a 19 month school readiness gap<sup>3</sup> between the richest and poorest children at age five, failing to get this right will embed these inequalities for the future.



Good parenting and a supportive home environment are the most important determinants of better test scores at age five, accounting for half of the gap between low-income and middle-income children. Sutton Trust research in 2010 found that just under half (45%) of children from the poorest fifth of families were read to daily at age three, compared with eight in ten (78%) of children from the richest fifth of families.<sup>4</sup>

Our Baby Bonds report highlighted the importance of a strong bond between babies and their carers from birth to age three.<sup>5</sup> Such attachment is even more crucial to a child's development when added to poverty and other disadvantages. Early identification and support for parents who are failing to bond with their children can head off serious educational and social problems in later life.

## What we recommend

- Well qualified staff should be employed in all early years settings, particularly where they are working with disadvantaged children.
- All staff working with disadvantaged two year olds should be qualified to at least Level 3 (A-level standard) and have support from a graduate practitioner.
- All practitioners (including childminders) should have access to qualifications and ongoing professional development which adequately prepares them to meet the needs of disadvantaged two-year-olds and their families.
- Extend the early years premium so that it enables all settings to make the most of evidence-based interventions.
- Access to free child care places should be accompanied by easy access to proven parenting programmes which engage parents or carers and empower them to be their child's first educator. Health visitors and other children's services should play a stronger role in supporting attachment and parenting from birth.

# 2

## Make improving the quality of classroom teaching the top priority in schools, with effective appraisals and a guaranteed entitlement to good quality training for all teachers.

### What the evidence says:

Improving teaching is recognised in international evidence as the most important way to improve schools. However, school leaders and teachers sometimes lack the most effective practical tools to help them improve this 'core business' of teaching practice.

Research by academics at the London School of Economics and Stanford University for the Sutton Trust has shown that if you improve the lowest-performing 10% of teachers in the UK up to the average, this would greatly boost attainment and bring the UK into the PISA top five within a decade.<sup>6</sup> They also found that the effect of good teaching is especially significant



for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds: over a school year, these pupils gain 1.5 years' worth of learning with very effective teachers, compared with 0.5 years with poorly performing teachers. In other words, for poor pupils the difference between a good teacher and a bad teacher is a whole year's learning.

Other Sutton Trust research has shown that the best appraisal for teachers combines a mix of value added or progress measures,

classroom observations and pupil surveys.<sup>7</sup> However, more research is needed on the best forms of teacher development, particularly after the initial period of teacher training. The Sutton Trust is organising an international summit, in partnership with the Gates Foundation, to develop guidance on the most effective approaches to observations and feedback for teachers and what it is that helps teachers improve their instructional practice.

### What we recommend

- Every teacher should have a clear entitlement to effective professional development, based on evidence of what works.
- Teachers and policymakers need to identify the most effective forms of professional development and establish the best ways to share these findings. The new College of Teaching could take ownership of this agenda on behalf of the profession.
- Feedback on teacher performance should be carefully collected and used constructively. With appraisal and teacher evaluation, clear systems should be developed for teacher appraisal in every school. Appraisal should be implemented fairly and consistently. Developmental and evaluative classroom observations should be carried out separately to promote honest feedback.
- External advice should be used, where possible, to assess the quality and standard of a school's system and to assure staff of its fairness and governors of its robustness.
- Value added or progress measures, rather than absolute test or exam results, should be the primary data used in evaluating individual teacher performance.

# 3

## Create fairer school admissions to both state grammar schools and comprehensives at age 11, including through the increased use of ballots and banding in admissions.

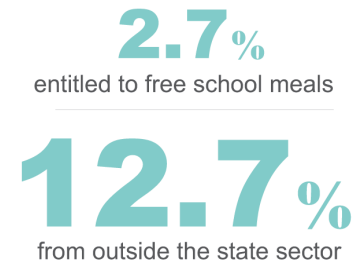
### What the evidence says:

Sutton Trust research has shown that England's highest performing comprehensive schools and academies are significantly more socially selective than other schools, with only half the national average proportion of children on free school meals.<sup>8</sup> LSE research for the Trust has shown that more schools, including academies, are using banding or random allocation (ballots) to achieve a fairer intake.<sup>9</sup> YouGov polling has found that 47% of parents would support making random allocation or ballots a part of school admissions rather than only prioritising how close parents

live to a school.<sup>10</sup>

Research for the Trust has also shown that one in three professional parents with children aged 5 to 16 has moved to an area which they thought had good schools, and 18% have moved to the catchment area of a specific school.<sup>11</sup> There are significant differences in the information available to parents and their children's enrichment opportunities. Our research has shown that one in four pupils receives private tuition.<sup>12</sup>

2.7% of entrants to grammar schools are entitled to free school meals, whereas 12.7% of



entrants come from outside the state sector, largely independent schools, even though there are three times more pupils receiving Free School Meals (FSM) than prep school pupils.<sup>13</sup> In selective local authorities, 66% of high achievers who are not eligible for FSM go to a grammar school compared with only 40% of similarly high achieving FSM pupils.

### What we recommend

- Government should encourage ballots or banding for fairer admissions particularly in urban schools that are oversubscribed. Ideally these should be co-ordinated locally.
- There should be better information about schools and about the right for poorer pupils to free transport to a choice of schools should be made available to parents.
- Means-tested vouchers should be available to low-income parents that can be spent on extra tuition, books and cultural activities for their children.
- Grammar schools should be encouraged to broaden their social intake by expanding their outreach work significantly, actively encouraging high achieving pupils from low and middle income backgrounds to apply, and alleviating parents' misconceptions.
- Grammar school tests should be reviewed to ensure they operate as fairly as possible, including by providing free familiarisation resources and making the tests less coachable.
- All schools should use the powers in the revised admissions code to give priority to pupils entitled to the pupil premium.

# 4

## Improve the impact of the pupil premium through greater use of evidence provided by the Education Endowment Foundation and incentives for schools that narrow the attainment gap.

### What the evidence says:

Since 2011, the pupil premium has provided extra resources for schools to improve the attainment of their disadvantaged pupils. Unlike previous such funding, cash is provided to all schools based on their number of eligible pupils. In 2014/15, for each pupil, the premium is worth £1300 in primary schools and £935 in secondary schools, reflecting the importance of addressing disadvantage early.

The government also invested £135m through the Sutton Trust to establish the Education Endowment Foundation as lead charity in partnership with the

Impetus Trust. The EEF has been trialling interventions to improve attainment for disadvantaged children and is publishing evidence on their effectiveness. The Sutton Trust and EEF, with Durham University, have together developed a Teaching and Learning Toolkit to synthesise over 10,000 pieces of research to provide guidance for teachers and schools on how to use their resources to improve attainment of disadvantaged pupils. The Trust and EEF have been designated as the What Works Centre for education by the government.

Polling for the Sutton Trust has shown that 45% of school

**70%** of schools leaders look at research in informing spending decisions

leaders say their school uses the Toolkit.<sup>14</sup> 70% say they look at research in informing spending decisions. However, in practice, implementing some of the most cost-effective approaches, such as peer tutoring or improved feedback, can prove a challenge for schools. Government figures show that the gap in attainment between disadvantaged and other pupils narrowed by two percentage points between 2010 and 2013 in primary schools<sup>15</sup> but only narrowed a little in secondary schools.<sup>16</sup>

### What we recommend

- Continued support for the pupil premium, backed by strong accountability, to improve attainment for disadvantaged pupils.
- Extension of pupil premium awards so that schools that successfully and consistently improve results for all while narrowing the attainment gap are properly rewarded.
- A strong commitment to the promotion of rigorous evidence, particularly where it has been tested in randomised control trials, by education ministers and policymakers. Ofsted should look at schools' use of evidence in their inspections and schools should be supported to evaluate approaches themselves.
- Improved teacher training and professional development so that all school leaders and classroom teachers understand how to use data and research effectively.



# 5

## Develop an effective national programme for highly able state school pupils, with ring-fenced funding to support evidence-based activities and tracking of pupils' progress.

### What the evidence says:

The UK compares poorly in international comparisons of the highly able. Half as many English 15 year-olds reach the highest levels in maths as the average for developed nations, and we rank 26th out of 34 OECD countries in the performance of our brightest pupils.<sup>17</sup>

This has knock-on effects on university access, especially for young people from low and middle income backgrounds. Private school pupils are 55 times more likely to end up at Oxbridge than a student on free school meals.<sup>18</sup> Just five elite schools account for the same number of

undergraduate places at Oxford and Cambridge Universities as 2,000 state schools and colleges combined (two thirds of the total).<sup>19</sup> And almost half of leading people in the professions have been educated at independent schools.<sup>20</sup>

Working with state school pupils in Years 12 and 13 (Sixth form) can help them make informed choices about higher education, as we do on our flagship summer schools programme. But many non-privileged young people are lost much earlier in the system. Sutton Trust research has found over 60,000 pupils each year who at some point are among the top-performers in their cohort,

but who do not go on to enter university.<sup>21</sup>

There is much less activity to support younger low and middle incomes pupils since the demise of the national Gifted and Talented programme. But universities' widening participation departments are increasingly keen to work with younger pupils to improve the impact of their access work and the diversity of their student body at undergraduate level. Dedicated school level funding is needed to supplement university funding streams, helping to widen the pipeline of talented 18 year-old applicants to higher education.

### What we recommend:

- Reintroduce ring-fenced government funding to support the most able learners (roughly the top ten per cent) in maintained schools and academies from key stage three upwards. This funding could go further if schools were required to provide some level of match funding.
- Develop an evidence base of effective approaches for highly able pupils and ensure training and development for teachers on how to challenge their most able pupils most effectively.
- Make a concerted effort to lever in additional support from universities and other partners with expertise in catering for the brightest pupils, including through creating a national programme for highly able learners, delivered through a network of universities and accessible to every state-funded secondary school serving areas of disadvantage.

# 6

## Strengthen academies' support for low and middle income pupils by regular inspection of chains, publication of more data across chains and speedier interventions where academies are not working.

### What the evidence says:

The government has expanded the number of academies – state-funded schools independent of local authorities - significantly since 2010. Nearly three in five secondary schools is now an academy, as is one in eight primaries. Sponsored chains typically have a higher than average disadvantaged intake and often replace failing schools.

Sutton Trust research has shown that, on average, the improvement for disadvantaged pupils in the proportion getting five good GCSEs in sponsored

academies was greater than the average for all mainstream schools between 2011 and 2013.<sup>22</sup> However, there was enormous variation between chains, with only nine out of 31 exceeding the figure for all mainstream schools in 2013.

The research showed that some sponsor chains are managing to raise attainment significantly for young people with low prior attainment - an important demonstration of value – and five chains are promoting high attainment for all pupils across a whole range of measures. However, other chains are

failing to improve the prospects of their disadvantaged pupils. When analysed against a range of government indicators on attainment, a majority of the chains still underperformed the mainstream average on attainment for their disadvantaged pupils. While some of those below the average are continuing to improve, others are not.

Key factors identified in the more successful chains are a measured approach to expansion, and the importance of building up strong experience of strategies for improving schools.

### What we recommend

- Ofsted should be empowered to undertake formal inspections of academy chains, and to make judgements on their provision, based on clear criteria.
- The government should publish data on chains' performance, across a range of measures, in addition to that which they publish for individual academies.
- The DfE should sharpen its procedures for awarding sponsorship, and new chains should not be allowed to expand until they have a track record of success with their early academies.
- Funding agreements for new sponsors should be for five years rather than seven. And the government should not renew funding agreements unless there has been improvement.
- The government should spread the lessons from successful chains and commission robust research on the practices of those chains that are providing transformational improvement for their disadvantaged pupils, so that lessons of success may be spread throughout the system.

# 7

## Break down barriers between state and private schools, by promoting more partnership working and opening 100 leading independent day schools to all on the basis of ability rather than ability to pay.

### What the evidence says:

Social Market Foundation research shows that between age 26 and 42 an independently educated person will earn on average £193,700 more than someone who was state educated.<sup>23</sup> However, most pupils who attend independent schools come from wealthy families who can afford the fees. YouGov polling for the Trust found that 41% of parents agreed that all children should have the opportunity to go to private school, regardless of their family's income, at the government or taxpayer's expense (29% disagreed).<sup>24</sup>

Beneficiaries of the assisted places scheme, which provided

a means-tested education at independent schools for young people from less advantaged homes until 1997, continue to reap the benefits from their private education. Research by Professor Sally Power shows that as well as gaining good qualifications and jobs, the assisted place holders felt their schools helped them develop strong personal attributes, such as self-discipline and self-reliance, as well as enduring social networks.<sup>25</sup> Virtually all of these alumni, who are now in their forties, have gained promotion in well-paid professional and managerial occupations, and over 40% are earning more than £90,000 a year.



From 1998-2011, the government funded independent state school partnerships, a programme established with the Sutton Trust to provide structure and funding for co-operation between the sectors. Partnerships have covered the curriculum, professional development, sports and arts, and have helped break down barriers between the sectors, sharing professional expertise to raise standards.

### What we recommend:

- State funding for the Sutton Trust's 'Open Access' scheme, which seeks to open independent schools up to pupils from all backgrounds based on academic ability.
- The programme should be run in around 100 leading independent day schools, with a strong academic track record and a good tradition of access to the best universities.
- Participating schools should receive the same funding per pupil as local state-funded schools, but charge fees on a means-tested basis, with the poorest families paying no fees and middle earners paying reduced fees.
- Using the latest data on independent school fees, the SMF estimates that applying the scheme across 100 leading independent day schools, covering 62,000 pupils, would cost the government around £215 million per year.
- The government should strengthen its support for independent-state school partnerships and encourage this mechanism for sharing best practice between the two sectors, including by providing dedicated funding to stimulate new partnerships and evaluate existing ones.

# 8

## Provide every young person with an entitlement to good quality personalised education and careers guidance, strengthening the national careers service to support schools and colleges effectively.

### What the evidence says:

Young people need to negotiate a complex educational landscape, with many different education, training and career options. Careers advice is even more important for young people from less advantaged backgrounds, as they may not have access to networks of graduates and professionals, and so may not be aware of options available to 'people like them'. Previous research by the Trust found that over half of the guidance in schools is in some way inadequate – poorly timed, low quality, partial or simply absent.<sup>26</sup> NFER polling for the Sutton Trust has found that over 40% of teachers in state secondary

schools would rarely or never advise academically-gifted pupils to apply to Oxbridge.<sup>27</sup>

Most advice in schools is delivered by non-specialist teachers, though some schools have a more coherent structure than others. Forthcoming research for the Trust by Professor Tristram Hooley at Derby University will show a link between effective career guidance and attendance, attainment and progression and make the argument that career guidance has an important role to play in ensuring social mobility. A thematic review by Ofsted<sup>28</sup> following these changes found that career advice in schools was often inadequate and questioned

whether it was “going in the right direction”. Beyond the Ofsted Review, there is no systematic monitoring or evaluation of provision.

Schools are under a statutory duty to provide effective and independent career guidance and advice. However, this statutory duty is loosely framed and there are no specific quality or impartiality measures. At present the government’s national careers service is not intended to provide direct support to schools and colleges beyond a website and phone service. Research by Professor John Holman for the Gatsby Foundation<sup>29</sup> has described in detail what good careers guidance could look like.

### What we recommend:

- All pupils should receive a guaranteed level of careers advice from professional impartial advisers. For those facing particular disadvantage – or who are at risk of failing to reach their potential – there should be further support available.
- The government should strengthen the national careers service, ensuring that schools and colleges have access to registered professional advisers with specialist and up-to-date knowledge, including those with expertise in vocational pathways and with knowledge of entry to elite universities. There should also be specialist advice on particular career pathways.
- The government should describe clearly in statutory guidance what good careers guidance looks like in practice, informed by the benchmarks outlined in the Gatsby research.
- Schools should be held accountable on how well they implement their statutory duty to provide independent careers advice and guidance by Ofsted and the national careers service.

# 9

## Introduce a new body, separate from individual universities, for the effective coordination of evidence-based outreach programmes, backed by more use of contextual admissions to improve access.

### What the evidence says:

Sutton Trust summer schools, which had 12,000 applicants for over 2,000 places in 2014, play a big role in encouraging bright state school students to aim for the top UK and US universities. A report by the funding council HEFCE in 2014 found that state school students go on to do better in their degree studies than students with the same prior educational attainment from independent schools.<sup>30</sup>

Many of the world's leading universities recognise that it is harder to excel academically in some schools than others, and use contextual admissions to recruit bright students from less advantaged backgrounds. The

Trust is working with Durham University to develop a toolkit of best practice in access and outreach.

By 2015, the Office for Fair Access estimates that £323million will be spent on widening participation and access initiatives per year, in addition to over £400million spent on financial support through access agreements alone. OFFA and HEFCE rightly want better evidence to support this spending, as there is too little robust research at present. Since AimHigher was disbanded there has been no national co-ordination of university access and widening participation programmes. This has hindered the reach of such access

initiatives, with some schools and students receiving multiple interventions and others none.

# £66,897

Institute for Fiscal Studies research for the Trust shows that most graduates will still be paying their student loans off into their early fifties.<sup>31</sup> In cash terms, the average graduate would repay £66,897, more than twice the £32,917 they would have repaid under the pre-2012 system. Polling for the Trust shows that 53% of adults support students from lower income families being charged a lower tuition fee than other students. 25% oppose the idea.<sup>32</sup>

### What we recommend:

- Means-tested tuition fees so that students from low income backgrounds borrow less. Maintenance costs are already means-tested and fees were means-tested until 2006.
- The outreach coordination networks being funded by HEFCE under the national access strategy should be used to co-ordinate university access and widening participation programmes, improving awareness and efficiency and improving evidence of what works. They should be funded securely and sustainably with strong accountability measures to monitor outcomes.
- The partnerships should be closely linked to the national careers service as it expands its work with young people and have sufficient resources to address gaps in provision.
- Increased use of contextual data in university admissions decisions, including by the most selective universities, recognising the different opportunities young people have had and the benefits of a diverse student body.
- Rigorous evaluation of access and outreach programmes to ensure that resources are used effectively.

# 10

Greatly expand the number of good apprenticeships so that young people have real options at 18 and employers can develop the skilled workforce they need.

## What the evidence says:

Analysis by the Boston Consulting Group<sup>33</sup> for the Sutton Trust has shown that fewer than 200,000 of the 520,000 apprenticeships starting each year in England are at level 3 (A level standard) or higher, and only 100,000 of these are created for young people.

This compares to 570,000 apprenticeship starts in Germany for young people, 90 per cent of which are at level 3 or above. Switzerland has 43 apprentices at level 3 for every 1000 staff, compared with 40 in Germany, 39 in Australia and 33 in Austria. The UK has just six per 1000.

Until recently, the expansion in 'apprenticeships' has been driven by low level qualifications, often targeted at older workers. A National Apprenticeship Service report found 11 young people chasing every apprenticeship, with 33 applying for every plumbing apprenticeship.

BCG calculates that a move to three year apprenticeships on a German scale could boost the economy by £8 billion a year and reduce public spending by £2.5 billion, after initial apprentice wage subsidies.

Recent polling for the Sutton Trust has found that more than half of young people<sup>34</sup> (55%) aged 11-16



say they would be interested in an apprenticeship rather than going to university if it was available in a job they wanted to do, but only 30% say that their teachers have ever discussed apprenticeships with them at school. 65% of teachers would rarely or never advise a high-achieving student to consider an apprenticeship, while two thirds of the public believe that most apprenticeships should be designed to meet A-level standard or higher.

## What we recommend:

- A radical expansion of three-year apprenticeships at level 3 or above, with a strong focus on young apprentices. An extra 150-250,000 level 3 starts are needed each year (some of this can be achieved by upgrading current level 2 apprenticeships.)
- Apprenticeships should all be of good quality combining workplace training and off-site learning. Young people could start an apprenticeship with relatively low or high skills, but would build those within the apprenticeship programme over three years, rather than taking several disconnected qualifications, as often happens now.
- While large firms would directly employ apprentices, smaller firms could hire apprentices employed by training agencies, encouraging more small firm participation.
- New licences to practice should be introduced in trades and professions, certifying that people have the skills needed to do the job, protecting consumers and boosting the importance of having completed an apprenticeship successfully.
- Improved wage subsidies through tax breaks or national insurance contributions should be provided for employers who take on apprentices to boost employer engagement.

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- 10 A YouGov survey of 6185 GB adults of which 1169 were parents of school aged children (aged 5-18)
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- 15 In 2010, the proportion of pupils in receipt of free school meals reaching level 4 at Key Stage 2 was 56% in English and Maths and 77% of all other pupils, a gap of 21 percentage points. In 2013, the proportion reaching level 4 at Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics was 60% of FSM pupils and 79% of all other pupils, a gap of 19 percentage points. The gap narrowed by two percentage points, although it should be noted that the more recent combination is not directly comparable with the earlier one.
- 16 The proportion of pupils in receipt of free school meals gaining five GCSEs at grade C and above, including English and Maths, was 31.2% in 2010 and 37.9% in 2013. For all other pupils it was 58.8% in 2010 and 64.6% in 2013. The gap narrowed by less than 1percentage point.
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Improving social mobility  
through education

