

Mobility Manifesto 2017

Improving social mobility
through education



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- 1** Guarantee that all disadvantaged children have access to the **best early years education** by protecting educational funding and resources at this vital stage, ensuring that it is being provided by 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** Ensure that disadvantaged pupils in schools are properly funded through the Pupil Premium and proper weighting through the new national funding formula, making sure that funds are more effectively targeted **with greater use of evidence** provided by the Education Endowment Foundation.
- 4** Ensure that **grammar schools provide fair access to disadvantaged pupils**, while tackling 'selection by house price' at comprehensives by creating fairer school admissions through the increased use of ballots and banding.
- 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** Help transform social mobility at the top by **opening leading independent day schools** to all based on ability rather than ability to pay and promoting more partnership working between the sectors.
- 7** Provide opportunities for young people to develop **essential life skills** beyond their core curriculum, including access to enrichment activities. Back this with good quality careers guidance by strengthening the Careers and Enterprise Company.
- 8** Keep the case for **means-tested tuition fees** under review and ensure the new Office for Students places improved access into universities at the core of its mission, with better evidenced access and outreach programmes, including the use of contextual admissions.
- 9** Ensure that there are **more advanced and higher apprenticeships**, with a focus on quality. This should give young people a real alternative to university and provide opportunities for progression, allowing employers to develop the skilled workforce they need.
- 10** Ensure that employers' recruitment practices are fair and transparent with more use of best practice to widen access, including **banning unpaid internships** over four weeks and making sure that they are publicly advertised and awarded on merit.

Foreword by Sir Peter Lampl

For twenty years, the Sutton Trust has been working to improve social mobility. Our ground-breaking research placed the issue of social mobility on the map. Our research has shown how elite groups continue to occupy positions of power and influence in Britain.

The Trust has helped to put higher education access on the policy agenda. Our work has contributed to the increase in 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 – give 5,000 young people each year the opportunity to change their lives. Our pioneering Open Access scheme showed how to open our leading independent day schools to all, regardless of a family's ability to pay. 90 independent day schools have said they would go Open Access if state funding were available.

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 with Impetus. 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 well-off children.

But social mobility in Britain remains low by international standards. To 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 over-represented by children from better off families. Successive governments have made social mobility a key priority. Theresa May in her first speech as Prime Minister said that social mobility was her number one social issue. With the 2017 election, we believe it is crucial that all political parties continue to place social mobility at the top of their agenda. Here we suggest ten practical steps to improve it.

1) Guarantee that all disadvantaged children have access to the best early years education by protecting educational funding and resources at this vital stage, ensuring that it is being provided by well qualified staff.

What the evidence says:

The Trust has welcomed the development of early learning for the most disadvantaged two year olds. However, we are concerned that an increased focus on childcare could see poorer toddlers losing out.

Whilst we welcome the emphasis on increasing the free childcare entitlement, safeguarding the quality of provision remains key. 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).¹ 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 gap² between the richest and poorest children age five, failing



There is already a **19 month gap** in school readiness between the richest and poorest children when starting school.

2012 Social Mobility Summit

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%) from the richest fifth of families.³

Our *Baby Bonds* report highlighted the importance of a strong bond between babies and their carers from birth to age three.⁴ 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 and the Trust has established a Parental Engagement Fund to further this area of work.

Recommendations

- Employ well qualified staff in all early years settings, particularly where they are working with disadvantaged children. **Early learning** must be at the heart of such provision.
- Offer all practitioners (including childminders) access to qualifications and **ongoing professional development** which adequately prepares them to meet the needs of disadvantaged toddlers and their families.
- Extend the **early years premium** so that it enables all settings to make the most of evidence-based interventions.
- Accompany access to free child care places with proven **parenting programmes** that 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 by international evidence as the most effective 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. The College of Teaching is a welcome innovation with the potential to be a powerful tool for teacher professional development.

Research by academics at the LSE 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.⁵ Our report, *What Makes Great Teaching*, outlines six common components that make up good quality teaching, which include quality of instruction, classroom management and

professional behaviours. When teachers use these components in their teaching, the impact is especially significant for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.⁶ 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.

The Trust's *Science Shortfall* report also highlighted the shortage of science teachers with specialised qualifications, chiefly in physics, and particularly affecting schools with higher disadvantaged intakes.⁷ More

work needs to be done in both recruitment and professional development to address the effects of this problem. 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.⁸

In March 2016 the Sutton Trust, in partnership with Carnegie, organised a 'Best in Class summit' which looked to address how disadvantaged pupils can have fair access to the best schools and the best teachers, and how teachers can be developed. A follow-up summit is planned for 2018.

"Schools with the greatest level of disadvantage tended overall to have less experienced teachers, while in contrast, those with the most advantaged intakes tended to employ more experienced teachers." (Best in Class, 2016)

Recommendations

- 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 should continue to support the profession in **learning and development**.
- **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.
- **Value added or progress measures**, rather than absolute test or exam results, should be the primary data used in evaluating individual teacher performance.

3) Ensure that disadvantaged pupils in schools are properly funded through the Pupil Premium and proper weighting through the new national funding formula, making sure that funds are more effectively targeted with greater use of evidence provided by the Education Endowment Foundation.

What the evidence says:

Giving children an equal chance should be central to funding decisions in schools. We support the Pupil Premium, as a way of funding all poorer pupils whichever school they attend. We also recognise the need for fairer national funding. But any new national funding formula should prioritise the prospects of pupils in the most disadvantaged schools.

Our report *Background to Success* shows that pupils who were from a disadvantaged background and who lived in a poorer neighbourhood are less likely to go on to study at A Level.⁹ This 'double disadvantage' means that pupils attending schools in poorer areas are significantly less likely to go on advanced courses than the average for disadvantaged pupils.

Recent polling for the Sutton Trust also shows that almost

Almost a third (30%) of heads say the funding they get for poorer pupils is being used to plug gaps in their school's budget



Teacher Polling (2017)

a third (30%) of heads say the funding they get for poorer pupils is being used to plug gaps elsewhere in their school's budget.¹⁰ Schools with more disadvantaged intakes were more likely to report cuts to staff with teachers in London and the North East most likely to report staff cuts and Pupil Premium funding being used to plug gaps.¹¹

With tight budgets, optimising spending becomes even more

important. The Sutton Trust and EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit synthesises 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. Six in ten secondary senior leaders have used the Sutton Trust-EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit.¹²

Recommendations

- Provide continued support for the **Pupil Premium** for all disadvantaged pupils, backed by strong accountability, to improve attainment and ensure appropriate targeting.
- Ensure that any new **national funding formula** recognises the needs of those who experience double disadvantage by living in disadvantaged areas.
- **Extend Pupil Premium awards** so that schools that most successfully and consistently improve results for all while narrowing the attainment gap are systematically rewarded.
- Education ministers and policymakers should commit to the **promotion of rigorous evidence**, particularly where it has been tested in randomised control trials. Ofsted should look at schools' use of evidence in their inspections and schools should be supported to monitor the impact of what they do. Improve teacher training and professional development so that all school leaders and classroom teachers understand how to use data and research effectively.

4) Ensure that grammar schools provide fair access to disadvantaged pupils, while tackling ‘selection by house price’ at comprehensives by creating fairer school admissions through the increased use of ballots and banding.

What the evidence says:

Sutton Trust research has shown that the existing grammar schools are highly socially selective, but through outreach, test preparation for all and contextual admissions this could be changed. Our *Gaps in Grammar* report showed that England’s grammar schools vastly under-represent pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, with a pupil attending a private prep school ten times more likely to enter a grammar school than a pupil on free school meals.¹³ The research also showed a correlation between income and the likelihood of attending a

grammar school at every income level.

Sutton Trust research has also shown that England’s highest performing comprehensive schools and academies are significantly more socially selective than other schools, taking just 9.4% of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM), just over half the rate of the average comprehensive (17.2%).¹⁴ Living in the catchment area of a top comprehensive school is associated with a house price ‘premium’ of around 20% - £45,700.¹⁵ This is also an issue in primary schools in England, with over 1,000 primary

schools having a free school meals proportion more than 10 percentage points lower than that found in the neighbourhoods from which they recruit.¹⁶

LSE research for the Trust revealed that more schools, including academies, are using banding or random allocation (ballots) to achieve a fairer intake.¹⁷ 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.¹⁸

“A pupil attending a private prep school is ten times more likely to enter a grammar school than a pupil on free school meals.”

Recommendations

- Before any expansion of the selective system, existing grammars should do much more to attract low income pupils through **improved outreach, contextual admissions and priority for disadvantaged pupils** who meet the entrance criteria.
- Government should encourage **ballots or banding** for fairer admissions, particularly in urban schools that are oversubscribed. Ideally these should be co-ordinated locally. One way to do this would be to have an inner catchment based primarily on distance and an outer catchment based on a ballot, with half the places allocated through each route.
- **Means-tested vouchers** should be available to low-income parents that can be spent on extra tuition, books and cultural activities for their children.
- All successful schools should use their powers in the admissions code to give **priority to pupils entitled to the Pupil Premium.**

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:

Our *Global Gaps* report shows that while England's highest achievers consistently score above the OECD average across English, maths and science, bright but poor pupils lag behind their better-off classmates by around two years and eight months.¹⁹

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.²⁰ Just five elite schools account for the same number of undergraduate places at Oxford and Cambridge as 2,000 state schools and colleges combined

“15% of highly able pupils who score in the top 10% nationally at age 11 fail to achieve in the top 25% at GCSE.”

(two thirds of the total).²¹ And almost half of leading people in the professions have been educated at independent schools.²²

However, many non-privileged young people are lost much earlier in the system. Our *Missing Talent* report reveals that every year there are high achievers at primary school (pupils scoring in the top 10% nationally) who five years later receive a set of GCSE results that place them outside the top 25% of pupils.²³ There are about 7,000 such pupils each year, 15% of all those we term

as highly able.²⁴ Those from less advantaged backgrounds are more likely to fall behind.

There is too little high quality activity in schools focused on highly able low and middle income pupils at younger ages. Whilst our Sutton Scholars programme aims to support young people earlier in the education system to avoid them being lost in the system, dedicated school level funding is needed to help to widen the pipeline of talented 18 year-old applicants to higher education.

Recommendations

- Create a new **'highly able fund'** to trial the most effective approaches to improving attainment and aspiration for the most able comprehensive school students.
- Use this fund to 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.

6) Help transform social mobility at the top by opening leading independent day schools to all based on ability rather than ability to pay and promoting more partnership working between the sectors.

What the evidence says:

Social Market Foundation research shows that between age 26 and 42 an independently educated person will earn on average £193,000 more than someone who was state educated.²⁵ However, most pupils who attend independent schools come from wealthy families who can afford these fees.

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.²⁶

The Sutton Trust piloted 'Open Access' at the Belvedere School (independent girls' school in Liverpool) between 2000 and 2007.²⁷ About a third of entrants had their fees paid in full (they were low income), and a further 33% from middle income families had their fees partly covered.²⁸ An independent study of the scheme by Buckingham University found that results improved while the social mix of the school became much more representative of the general population.

32.8% of girls admitted in the first five years of the scheme were eligible for Free School Meals – almost double the national average of 15.3% for girls in 11-15 state schools.²⁹

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. Such partnerships still have an important role to play in the system.



Three and a half years after graduation, private school graduates in top jobs earn **£4,500 more** than their state school counterparts.

Private Pay Progression (2016)

Recommendations

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

7) Provide opportunities for young people to develop essential life skills beyond their core curriculum, including access to enrichment activities. Back this with good quality careers guidance by strengthening the Careers and Enterprise Company.

What the evidence says:

Essential life skills (such as motivation, confidence, self-control and coping with stress) are crucial to the life chances of young people. The Sutton Trust welcomes an increasing focus in state schools on such skills, with new polling showing that over half of heads (54%) have increased their provision in the last five years. Our own summer school programmes provide non-academic guidance and support through a range of activities. However, more needs to be done to place all young people on a level playing field in a jobs market where such skills are as important as qualifications, as highlighted in the Harvard Social Skills report.³⁰

“43% of state secondary school teachers say they would rarely or never advise their bright pupils to apply to Oxbridge.” (Oxbridge Perceptions Polling, 2016)

Young people also 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’. Timely advice on choosing ‘facilitating subjects’ to access the right university courses is particularly crucial.

Trust research has found that over half of the guidance in schools is in some way inadequate – poorly timed, low quality, partial or simply absent.³¹ Whilst the establishment of the Careers and Enterprise Company is a welcome step in improving careers advice in schools, more needs to be done to trial and implement what works in careers advice for disadvantaged pupils. Research by Professor John Holman for the Gatsby Foundation has described in detail what good careers guidance could look like.³²

Recommendations

- Schools should focus on ensuring their pupils develop **a broad range of non-academic skills**, through classroom sessions and extra-curricular enrichment activities such as debating, cultural visits and volunteering.
- All pupils should receive a **guaranteed level of careers advice** from professional impartial advisers. For those facing disadvantage – or who are at risk of failing to reach their potential – there should be further support available.
- Building on their partnership with the Education Endowment Foundation, the Careers and Enterprise Company should be resourced and encouraged to **trial and identify what works in careers advice for disadvantaged pupils** in addition to their valuable work linking business with schools.
- 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, with appropriate accountability mechanisms.

8) Keep the case for means-tested tuition fees under review and ensure the new Office for Students places improved access into universities at the core of its mission, with better evidenced access and outreach programmes, including the use of contextual admissions.

What the evidence says:

The new Office for Students has an important role improving access and outreach nationally, building on the work of the Office for Fair Access. Sutton Trust programmes make a big contribution to improving access: our summer schools had 12,500 applicants for over 2,500 places in 2017, successfully encouraging bright state school students to apply to the top UK and US universities.

Many 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 funding council HEFCE has 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.³³ The Trust is working with the Office for Fair

Access and Warwick University to develop an evidence-based toolkit to show what works best in improving access.³⁴

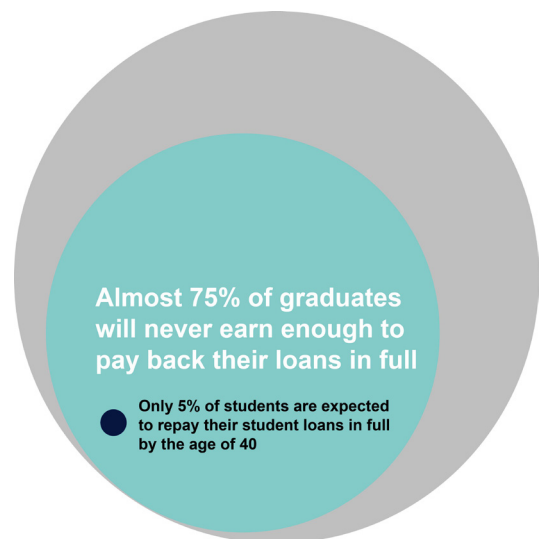
Financial constraints matter to students too. Institute for Fiscal Studies research for the Trust shows that most graduates will still be paying their student loans off into their early fifties.³⁵

English students have the highest levels of debt in the English-speaking world (£44,000 on graduation and over £50,000 for those requiring maintenance loans) and the inflation adjusted tuition fee rise will increase further still leaving poorer students in considerable debt.³⁶

The number of part time and mature students has also decreased significantly since the increase in fees. With the terms on

loans changing, transparency, good advice and a fair deal on interest rates are all essential.

Polling for the Trust showed that 53% of adults support students from lower income families being charged a lower tuition fee than other students.



Payback Time (2014)

Recommendations

- The next government should continue to monitor student debt and **review the case for means-testing tuition fees** again so that students from low income backgrounds have lower debts. Maintenance costs are already means-tested and fees were means-tested until 2006.
- Universities should **rigorously evaluate access and outreach programmes** to ensure that resources are used effectively, with Office for Students support. This should include proven approaches to **contextual admissions**.
- The Office for Students must place **widening access central to its mission**, particularly addressing the fall in part time and mature students, and ensuring effective coordination of outreach programmes. The Director of Fair Access must have the independence to challenge universities robustly, with the Director being required to report regularly to Parliament.

9) Ensure that there are more advanced and higher apprenticeships, with a focus on quality. This should give young people a real alternative to university and provide opportunities for progression, allowing employers to develop the skilled workforce they need.

What the evidence says:

Just over 200,000 of the 509,400 apprenticeships which started in 2015/16 in England were at level 3 (A level standard) or higher, and only around 100,000 of these are created for young people.³⁷ Recent government statistics suggest that there are 27,200 higher level apprenticeships, and only 7,600 of those have been awarded to 16 to 24 year olds.³⁸ BCG analysis for the Sutton Trust showed that 90 per cent of German apprenticeships are at level 3 or above.³⁹

Our *Levels of Success* report showed that higher apprenticeships result in greater lifetime earnings than graduate degrees from non-Russell Group universities.⁴⁰ We welcome the focus of the government on quality through the Institute for Apprenticeships and the

*“Across a lifetime, someone with a higher (level 5) apprenticeship averages earnings of around £1.5m, while someone with a degree from a non-Russell Group university earns just under £1.4m on average (when student debt repayments are considered).”
(Levels of Success, 2015)*

apprenticeship levy. But this will only be successful if both the quality and quantity of advanced and higher apprenticeships improve and progression between levels is automatic for young people starting at lower levels. Polling for the Sutton Trust has found that more than half of young people (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.⁴¹

Recommendations

- Apprenticeships should all be of good quality, combining workplace training and off-site learning. **Progression for those beginning on lower level apprenticeships** should be seamless and automatic. There should be a stronger drive from the government to encourage young people to take up apprenticeships as a real alternative to higher education.
- The Institute for Apprenticeships should have a widening access function to ensure **access to the best apprenticeships for those from less advantaged backgrounds**. The new apprenticeship levy should be properly monitored to ensure that it is helping to deliver genuine improvements in the number of good apprenticeships.
- There should be more **higher and advanced apprenticeships**, targeted at young people, to give young people real work-related options, complementing the new T-level technical qualifications.

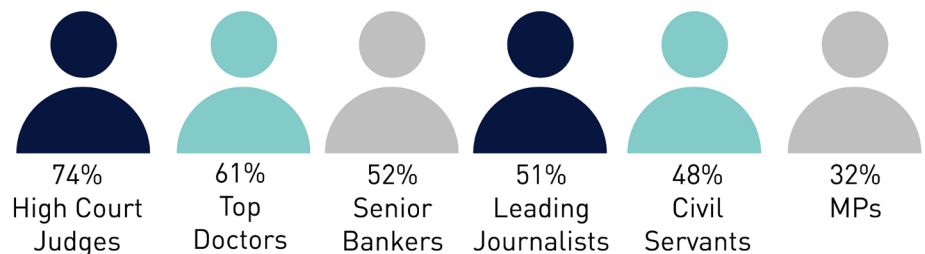
10) Ensure that employers' recruitment practices are fair and transparent, with more use of best practice to widen access, including banning unpaid internships over four weeks and making sure that they are publicly advertised and awarded on merit.

What the evidence says:

Across the years, our reports have shown the staying power of the privately educated at the top of the UK's professional elite. *Leading People 2016* found that over half of those at the top of many of our professions are privately educated. Nearly three quarters of High Court and Appeals Court judges, attended private schools, as did over half of the top 100 news journalists and over two-thirds of British Oscar winners. The same is true of a third of MPs in the outgoing Parliament.⁴² It was based on this research that we developed our Pathways Programmes which aim to widen access to leading professions by providing young people the opportunity to gain insight into the profession, undertake work experience and meet professionals from these careers.

Those from more advantaged backgrounds often have easier access to professional networks through their family and friends, which can be used both to expedite recruitment into top jobs. Our report

Despite making up only **7% of the school population**, pupils from independent schools are overrepresented in the country's professional elites



Leading People (2016)

Private Pay Progression showed that privately educated graduates enjoy an earnings premium over their state educated peers.⁴³

Internships have become an essential part of getting a professional job, but these are often unpaid and passed on through professional family networks, excluding talented graduates without such contacts.⁴⁴

Our estimates show that the minimum outgoings for an unpaid

intern living in London for a six-month internship is £6,081, with the largest expenditures being on rent and essential bills. Even after excluding transport costs (which employers frequently provide), total outgoings remain at £5,556, or £926 per month.⁴⁵ Payment of the minimum wage (under 25) would barely cover these minimal costs for an independent living intern (£1,069 per month before tax), whereas the London Living wage (£1,479) would provide a less precarious and more stable existence for interns.

Recommendations

- Employers should adopt **best practice in widening access** to break down the barriers graduates face when transitioning from higher education into employment.
- The government should **ban unpaid internships**, ensuring that after four weeks, interns should be paid the minimum wage or preferably the National (or London) Living Wage.
- Internships should be properly **advertised and fairly recruited** so that they are more accessible to young people from all backgrounds.

Endnotes

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