



# IDEAS

TO CHANGE BRITAIN

## Instilling co-operation into learning

Policy submissions & feedback

the co-operative party



years of pioneering the future  
1917-2017

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# Introduction to the policy process 2017

The Party's policy process 2017 focused on two specific areas of policy, namely housing and education. This was driven by the views of conference 2016 and agreed by the NEC policy sub-committee. The reasoning behind these two areas in particular were;

- Recent shifts in wider UK public policy and government approach to these areas.
- The shifts in the nature of approach being pursued by devolved governments and regions.
- The strong local government focus of the Party and of the policy areas
- Finally, conference and the sub-committee's view that these were such important areas to improving society that the co-operative Party needed as good and up to date policy platform as possible.

The policy sub-committee produced two consultation documents on housing and education which include the existing Co-operative Party platform. Local and Regional parties, individuals and co-operative organisations were asked to comment on the consultation documents and existing platform. Alongside this the policy subcommittee posed four separate consultation questions which sought to gather individual experiences of the policy areas from around the country. The policy sub-committee hoped that this approach would encourage a larger number of individual contributors than in previous years as well as to locate the new document in personal experience.

## The 2017 process

Following the launch of the consultation documents a range of activity led to the generation of policy contributions this included:

- Nationally organised policy phone conference
- Wide range of regional and branch meetings
- Nationally organised local consultation meetings
- Meetings of self-organising networks within the party such as the Women's Network
- Nationally driven email and social media support and promotions

## Who got involved

The policy sub-committee received over a hundred responses on the two policy areas, as outlined in the process. The policy sub-committee have now reviewed the responses and provided individual feedback to the organisations and Party units outlining where their suggestions have been incorporated in to the final policy document to be discussed at conference. The individual responses which focused mainly on local experience have been collated and a written report of their common themes and concerns has been provided. The policy sub-committee used these individual experiences and submissions to ensure that our proposed new policy platform reflected their concerns and wants.

## What now?

The policy sub-committee has issued the feedback documents alongside the report of the individual responses. The sub-committee has now issued the new policy platform documents which it is hoped will be discussed at conference and accepted by members. This will be done following the final policy debate and during the policy sub-committee report back to conference.



# Part A

# **Responses**

# Report on individual submissions

Policy cannot be created in a vacuum, and our consultation process this year sought to gain an insight into the lived experience of education from our members across the country, in order to ensure our proposals to conference are practical and relevant to communities.

The Co-operative Party process seeks to develop the unique co-operative voice in its policy asks. Clearly there are a wide range of issues in education, not all of which have a specific co-operative angle. While we have sought to take on board all concerns and ideas raised, we have focused our policy development in areas where we can seek to put our co-operative values and principles into practice.

Many of our members highlighted the need to re-evaluate the school curriculum, and their concern that it was failing to help young people to become active citizens. Members proposed that a greater emphasis on co-operative values and principles would make sure that the next generation are equipped to play an active role in their communities. There was also concern that the curriculum in subjects like business studies and economics omitted co-operative approaches to business. We support these suggestions, and propose the introduction of co-operation to the curriculum in chapter 4. We also agree with members' that in order to teach co-operative values and business models, it should be included in teacher training and continuing professional development.

Members were also unhappy with the increasing focus within the curriculum on subjects traditionally deemed "academic" and that there was less recognition of vocational and technical studies. We agree that there needs to be parity between traditionally academic subjects and



technical education, and that a fully comprehensive education would include both vocational and academic qualifications.

This came up in the context of school curriculum, but also regularly in terms of the impact of underfunding and lack of focus on the role of further education. Community colleges and opportunities for lifelong learning were of critical importance to many members, as was ensuring that these institutions were responsive and accountable.

This year, we have placed greater emphasis on our policy work on further education and technical colleges, something we have sought to rectify in order to properly reflect the need for a greater focus on vocational education. Further education is covered in greater detail in chapter 5, including our call for proper funding to ensure that all further education is of high quality and accessible to everyone. We also propose more democratic structures, ensuring that students, staff, parents and communities have a voice. Some members proposed a network of co-operative community colleges, which is an interesting idea we would welcome the opportunity to explore further.

Some members raised the importance of linking businesses, particularly co-operatives, with schools and colleges – we completely agree and were pleased to include examples such as the Co-op Academies Trust where the Co-op Group sponsor nine academies in Manchester, Stoke-on-Trent and Leeds, and the Co-operative Childcare nurseries that the Midcounties Co-operative invest in and run. Apprenticeships were also raised as a key role that business can play in education and training. We are pleased that co-operative businesses lead the way on apprenticeships, and support the work of the Co-operative College in creating a co-operative apprenticeship programme.

The policy sub-committee was delighted that there was overwhelming support from members for co-operative models in schools – driven both by a belief in co-operative values and principles and importance in education, but also a real concern about the fragmentation of the education system under the Conservative Government's academisation programme and promotion of free schools. It is clear that members feel that schools being taken out of local authority control creates a serious

accountability deficit which is damaging to pupils, staff, parents and the wider community.

School funding was another common theme in response, with many members concerned at the impact of the Government's so called "fair funding formula" and the effect that wider cuts to facilities like child and adolescent mental health services, local councils, and youth clubs and services have on schools' abilities to focus on delivering the highest possible education. We are clear that there should not be a profit motive in the provision of education and that the education system should be properly funded, as set out in chapters 3 and 4. We agree that the issue of funding goes further than the school gates, and that cuts to services like mental health provision and music classes have grave consequences for many young people.

In the context of concerns about funding, members raised important issues like free school meals, smaller class sizes, the reinstatement of Education Maintenance Allowances and school holiday provision. The Co-operative Party's sister Party the Labour Party put forward a strong case in the recent election that the provision of free school meals for all primary school children was of vital importance to children's learning and wellbeing. They also proposed to reduce class sizes to under 30 for all five- six- and seven-year olds, and to seek to extend this as and when resources allow, and the restoration of the Education Maintenance Allowance for 16 to 18-year-olds. While there is no specific co-operative angle on these issues, the Co-operative Party is happy to see their inclusion within the Labour Party manifesto.

Finally, members shared their views on higher education – their concern at the high fees and the increasing commercialisation of the sector. While we don't feel there is a specific co-operative angle on fees, we are pleased that our sister party, the Labour Party, committed in their 2017 manifesto to ensuring that under a Labour & Co-operative government, university tuition will be free. We also support a more co-operative approach to higher education, where students are active participants in their learning rather than consumers. To this end, we are pleased to support ongoing work by the Co-operative College and others to develop a co-operative university, explored in more detail in chapter 5, and to propose inclusion of co-operation on relevant curricula.

# Branch and organisational submission responses

## Cardiff and Vale branch

The policy sub-committee recognises the importance of ensuring the Co-operative Party's policy reflects the devolved nature of government in the UK, and will continue to refer to differences in Wales and Scotland where powers are devolved. We are grateful for the examples of best practice in Wales that you included in your submission, including the ambitious Future Generations Act – it is clear that Welsh Assembly Members, councillors and schools are making great progress in this area.

The focus on co-operation on the curriculum is one we welcome, and have included in chapter 4. We will be interested to work with the branch, and the wider Co-operative Party in Wales, as you develop the 6th form resources that the branch references.

We take on board the points made about any education policy needing to focus more on standards of learning, and hope the branch feels that this has been reflected in the policy document in chapter 2.

The policy sub-committee agrees on the need for greater co-operation between schools, and this point is explored in chapter 2. Academisation and free schools have created a much less engaged and accountable school system, and the sub-committee agrees that there needs to be stronger links between schools and communities.

## Chelmsford Star

It is clear that the Chelmsford Star party held a useful policy session, and the policy sub-committee shares your concerns about the fragmentation of the education system, and calls for greater co-operation between schools to be enabled, in chapter 2. We strongly believe that there should not be a profit motive in the provision of education and that the education system should be properly funded, as set out in chapter 3 and 4. We agree that the issue of funding goes further than the school gates, and that cuts to services like mental health provision and music classes have grave consequences for many young people.

The sub-committee agrees with the suggestion made by the branch to write co-operation into the curriculum, set out in chapter 4. The additional actions taken by the branch to contact local universities and colleges to ask how co-operative business models are applied in their courses is a great initiative and we look forward to hearing more when you receive responses.

## Chorley and West Lancashire branch

The policy sub-committee thanks the branch for their response to the policy consultation – members clearly were able to have a detailed and fruitful discussion. We are pleased to see such wholehearted support for the values and principles of co-operative schools and the importance of good, grassroots engagement.

The branch's comments on the fragmentation of schools under academisation has been taken on board, and we hope you feel that the new policy paper more clearly sets out our shared concerns on this matter. We do push for more co-operative structures – both within schools and between schools, and highlight some good examples of this in practice such as St Clare's Co-operative Academies Trust.

The branch is right to highlight the importance of teacher training and we have taken on board your suggestion to include co-operative principles in initial teacher training to better support the delivery of a co-operative curriculum in chapter 4.

We agree that unions are vital in workplaces, and that co-operative schools should involve teachers and support staff as well as parents, pupils and the wider community. We often undertake joint work with trade unions, for example on co-operative approaches to education we have held a number of workshops and joint events with NASUWT.

Thank you for your contribution on lifelong learning. We agree that this is an important and underexplored aspect of education – and one that is very much in line with principle five, “education, training and information”. The application of co-operative values and principles in the workplace should mean a greater focus on building in lifelong learning into every workplace.

## **Dorset branch**

The policy sub-committee thanks the Dorset branch for their contribution, and we are supportive of the branch's plans to work more closely with the Schools Co-operative Society and to visit a local co-operative school in Wey Valley.

We note the branch's comment that most local schools are academies and grammar schools – many other submissions have also commented on the way that the education system is being fragmented through government policy. With regards to selective education specifically, we were pleased that our sister party, the Labour Party, was clear that they “will not waste money on... the Conservatives' grammar schools vanity project”.

## **Oxford and North Oxfordshire branches**

The policy sub-committee thanks the branches for their contribution. We agree that co-operative education needs to look beyond schools to properly reference higher and further education. We are very supportive of work being undertaken by the Co-operative College to develop a co-operative university, and discuss both further and higher education in chapter 5. We anticipate that during the annual conference the issue of co-operative universities will be explored in a lot more detail.

## **Greenwich branch**

The policy sub-committee thanks the Greenwich branch for having what was clearly a detailed and thoughtful discussion on education policy. We are pleased to see that Greenwich members wish to see all schools be able to adopt co-operative values and agree that the movement and Party should support schools who are embedding our values and principles in their curriculum.

Thank you for highlighting the important role that local authorities play, particularly in ensuring local accountability of schools. We agree that the accountability deficit created through the fragmentation of the education system into academy chains and free schools has been damaging and that their governance should have greater community and democratic oversight.

We are also concerned about the lack of scrutiny of the motivations of academy chain sponsors, and take on board your point about assets remaining in the community to prevent any risk of asset stripping. We also look at how we can improve scrutiny of sponsors through Ofsted inspections in chapter 2.

In terms of the branch's suggestion on the Living Wage, we have long been supporters of this campaign and would encourage all organisations to become accredited. We are an accredited Living Wage

employer ourselves, and in our recent '6 steps to build community wealth' publication we suggest that all public institutions become Living Wage employers, and ensure that it is a requirement in all appropriate contracts.

## **Harlow branch**

The policy sub-committee thanks the Harlow branch for their contribution to our policy consultation. We are glad that the branch supports co-operative models and agree that the free school movement and introduction of the profit motive to our education system by the Conservative Government has been damaging. Thank you for highlighting the importance of Sure Starts and early years provision – we have sought to put much greater emphasis on early years in our education policy this year – please refer to chapter 1.

## **Kent Party Council**

Thank you for the thoughtful submission to the policy development process. The policy sub-committee agrees wholeheartedly with your assessment that there is an accountability deficit in education, and we put forward a number of proposals in chapter 2 on how this can be tackled. We agree also that there needs to remain a role for the local authority and that good governance requires good training.

We also agree with the Kent Party Council that there should be a greater focus on co-operation in the school curriculum. There are some great examples in our policy document of schools who have put this into action, and we would like to see this rolled out more widely.

The Co-operative Party's sister Party the Labour Party put forward a strong case in the recent election that the provision of free school meals for all primary school children was of vital importance to children's learning and wellbeing. While there is no specific co-operative angle on

this issue, the Co-operative Party is happy to see its inclusion within the Labour Party manifesto.

## **Liverpool, Sefton and Halton branch**

The policy sub-committee thanks the Liverpool, Sefton and Halton branch for engaging members in policy development and contributing a thoughtful response to the consultation in the run up to our annual conference.

The policy sub-committee notes the branch's comments about being broader in our understanding and description of education so that it explicitly covers education from early years through to further, higher and lifelong learning. We hope that branch members will feel that this balance has been rectified in our new policy documents. We have certainly endeavoured to include a greater focus on co-operative approaches to nursery and childcare, to express our support for the development of a co-operative university – work being led by the Co-operative College, to explore issues in further education and put forward ideas on lifelong learning, particularly in relation to workplaces.

Thank you for highlighting the importance of apprenticeships and technical education, and the importance that it is on a par with the traditionally academic routes through the education system. We address these concerns in chapter 5.

The provision of services for pupils with learning disabilities is an area that has suffered from budget cuts to local authorities and schools, and we agree that it is an issue requiring greater focus and funding. We call for a properly funded education system, and propose ways that freelance and peripatetic staff, such as those providing specialist services to schools, can work together in a co-operative rather than relying on the exploitative agencies that currently dominate the market.



The branch's support for the Woodcraft Folk is welcomed – the Party has always been supportive of the Woodcraft Folk and many of our members are very active in supporting and running local groups.

## **North and Mid Wales Party Council**

The policy sub-committee thanks the North and Mid Wales Party for their comprehensive submission to the policy process.

The committee agrees that the approach to education should be co-operative rather than competitive. We support your point on involvement of pupils in the governance of their school, and propose democratic structures for student participation in chapter 4. Co-operation between schools is, as the branch points out, also very important. We have highlighted some best practice examples of co-operative schools developing co-operative clusters to share expertise and resources in chapter 2.

We also agree with the branch that education and schools must be rooted in their communities for the best outcomes for pupils and the wider community. Schools should be places of learning for everyone, not just the pupils, and we propose that schools should offer classes to parents as standard. That wider community involvement should also extend to ensuring greater accountability of schools, with a clear role for the local authority, local elected representatives, parents, staff and the community to play an active role in governance.

The branch rightly highlights the importance of teacher training – we agree that if we are to expect schools to include co-operation on the curriculum, the teachers delivering the learning must be confident and well versed in the values and principles. This is covered in greater detail in chapter 4.

Thank you for the branch's suggestions on higher education. The Co-operative Party is a strong supporter of lifelong learning and opening access to education, and agree that the Open University is a great

example of what the Labour Party in Government can achieve. We believe that it's time for a renewed focus on higher education, and that there should be a new wave of co-operative university courses open to everybody. The branch can also see our strong support, in chapter 5, for the development of a co-operative university, plans for which are being developed by the Co-operative College. The branch's suggestion for greater emphasis on learning in workplaces is also one we support – it is absolutely in line with principle five, “education, training and information”.

## North London branches

The policy sub-committee thanks members in branches in North London for their submission, and agrees with that the voice given to teachers, support staff, pupils, parents and the wider community through co-operative models is important and needs to be supported and encouraged. In chapter 2 we propose ways that school governance and accountability can be strengthened – an issue of growing importance as schooling is fragmented through free schools and academisation.

We hope that the branches feel the new policy put forward in the policy paper meets their request that a more system-wide approach to education be addressed, looking at co-operative approaches from early years through to adult education.

The Co-operative Party was pleased to see that our sister Party, the Labour Party, puts forward a comprehensive proposal for a National Education Service, as pointed out by members in North London. We hope to work with the Labour Party to ensure that any National Education Service incorporates co-operative values and principles.

## **South East Regional Party**

The policy sub-committee thanks the South East Regional Party for their useful contribution to the policy process. We agree with the branch's overall aim for schools to be co-operative with multi-stakeholder involvement, and that the curriculum for all schools should include co-operation and co-operative business models. These issues are explored in greater detail in the section of our policy document on schools, in chapter 4.

The policy sub-committee would be interested to explore further the ideas put forward by the South East Regional Party regarding learning materials being published under a creative commons licence. Conference will be one opportunity to explore this further, and we hope that we can work with the branch to develop our thinking on this issue.

## **Southern and Eastern Society Party**

The policy sub-committee thanks the Southern and Eastern Society Party for their submission to the policy consultation. Members clearly had a thoughtful discussion on their local communities' experience of education and have made some valuable points.

We are pleased to see the level of support from the branch for co-operative values and principles in the national curriculum. We wholeheartedly agree, and discuss our proposals for this in chapter 4. We also share your concerns about academisation and believe that it has created an unaccountable education sector. In terms of better supporting co-operative schools and encouraging that sector to grow, we point the branch to the section in our policy document on schools in chapter 4.

The Co-operative Party's sister Party the Labour Party put forward a strong case in the manifesto for the 2017 General Election to reduce class sizes to under 30 for all five- six- and seven-year olds, and to seek

to extend this as and when resources allow. While there is no specific co-operative angle on this issue, the Co-operative Party is happy to see its inclusion within the Labour Party manifesto.

## Sutton branch

The policy sub-committee is pleased to see such a detailed response to our consultation on education from the Sutton branch. We are particularly pleased to read your account of co-operative values and principles being put into action through the formation of the Sutton Education Trust and by the Forum of Sutton Governors. This is a great example that we hope other parts of the UK can emulate.

The sub-committee recognises the issues you raise about underfunding – we believe that public services should be properly funded and agree that cuts to wider services like CAMHS increase the pressure on school budgets and ability to deliver the best outcomes for young people. We agree that it is increasingly important for schools to work together and share resources and expertise, and support co-operative clusters and school improvement, as set out in chapter 2.

We also recognise the issue of an accountability deficit in the newly fragmented education system, with academies and free schools acting without the oversight from local authorities and elected members, which the branch raises in relation to the lack of effective scrutiny from the Children, Schools and Families Committee. Our policy document proposes ways to strengthen school governance and better embed schools in their local communities, ensuring they are accountable to parents, pupils, staff and the wider community, in chapter 2.

We welcome the branch's support for greater emphasis on co-operation on the curriculum in schools, further education and adult learning. We strongly believe this should be the case at every level of education, as detailed in chapters 4 and 5.

## SW Peninsula Party Council

The policy sub-committee would like to thank the SW Peninsula for their proactive approach to engaging in the policy development process, and congratulates them on a successful summer conference.

We share the Party Council's concerns about a lack of transparency of MATs and their sponsors, and about the introduction of a profit motive into education. We propose, in chapter 2, that academy sponsors, as well as the individual schools, should be required to undergo Ofsted inspections as currently they are able to operate without scrutiny. We also agree that school governing bodies should include elected representatives, the community, teachers and staff, parents and pupils to ensure proper local accountability.

The policy sub-committee thanks the Party Council for sharing the example of the "Learn to Live" movement in Devon. We agree that co-operative principles and values should be embedded in our school system and part of the national curriculum. We also agree that there is a role for co-operative organisations to sponsor schools or to play an active role in their governance and other partnerships..

## Linda Gilroy, SW Peninsula Party Conference

The policy sub-committee thanks Linda for taking detailed notes on behalf of the Plymouth branch at the recent South West Peninsula Party Conference. It was clearly a thought-provoking event with knowledgeable speakers.

We agree with the comment that there needs to be a values-driven approach to 21st Century education, and believe that the network of co-operative schools, who embed our values and principles in learning, are putting this into practice every day. We would like to see more schools embrace a co-operative approach to education, as set out in chapter 4. We also see value in applying co-operative principles to governance

to ensure, as the submission references, better accountability. This local accountability is something we feel is being lost in the chopping and changing of the system, as well as the lack of stability failing to demonstrate value for money, as the submission references. In chapters 2 and 4 we set out our proposals on ensuring parents, pupils, staff, local representatives and the wider community are involved in decision making in schools.

The submission also highlights the importance of schools taking responsibility for helping other schools to improve, co-operating with each other rather than a reliance on top down monitoring. We agree, and explore co-operative school improvement structures in chapter 2. The nature of testing is also covered in our policy papers.

## **Yorkshire Party Council**

Motions at conference will only pertain to organisational motions. The Party has moved away from policy motions, however for the purposes of this policy consultation, the policy sub-committee will accept the Yorkshire Party Council's motion as a submission to its policy consultation.

The policy sub-committee is pleased that the Yorkshire Party Council and its members are supportive of the involvement of the co-operative movement in education and agree that the network of co-operative schools should be expanded. In chapter 2 in our policy document, we detail ways that this network can be supported and encouraged.

## **Jon O'Connor, Co-operative Schools Network**

The policy sub-committee thanks Jon for making a submission on behalf of the Co-operative Schools Network and for his work on co-operation in education. We share his upbeat assessment of the impact of co-operation in the sector, and are pleased to be able to highlight a number

of great examples of co-operative values and principles being put into practice by schools across the country in chapter 4.

We are grateful for the suggestions of amendments put forward and have taken these on board. We also take on board Jon's comment about the important role that the unions who represent teaching and support staff play – we work closely with the trade union movement, and have undertaken joint work with trade unions, for example on co-operative approaches to education we have held a number of workshops and joint events with NASUWT.

Thank you for recommending the work of Coops UK on their “Do It Ourselves” publication. We agree that the co-operative movement has historically been, and quite rightly continues to be, one driven by the principles of self-help and member participation. However, working with the sector and our members, we have identified some barriers for the sector that could be resolved through changes in policy, legislation or regulation – as the political voice of the co-operative movement in the UK, we support the wider movement to be active while working within Westminster, devolved and regional government, and local councils to ensure policy enables the sector to grow and flourish.

We agree that proper support for co-operative schools, from expertise to procurement, is important, as referenced in our paper, and that local networks of schools helping each other to improved is explored in our section on co-operative school improvement in chapter 2.

## **Cilla Ross, the Co-operative College**

The policy sub-committee is grateful for the considered response from Cilla on behalf of the Co-operative College, and for the work that Cilla and the Co-operative University Working Group are leading in higher education. It makes an important contribution to the wider discussion on the future of the UK's universities given the impact of student fees, the introduction of profit motives and the withdrawal of government funding from universities.

We have placed much greater emphasis on co-operative approaches to higher education than in our previous policy platforms, and have sought to include the examples and arguments raised in this submission. We are pleased to adopt the recommendation in the paper to promote and support co-operative higher education and specifically the work of the Co-operative University Working Group in our new policy paper, and include detail on this in chapter 5.

## The Schools Co-operative Society

The policy sub-committee thanks the Schools Co-operative Society for its work supporting co-operative schools and furthering co-operation in education, and for taking the time to contribute to our policy process. We found the suggested amendments and examples shared very useful.

We share the Society's concern about cuts to school budgets, and believe that our education system first and foremost must be properly funded. Coupled with the constant changes in policy and focus over the last seven years – academisation, free schools, wider cuts to CAMHS and other vital services, and changes to the curriculum to name a few – the sector has experienced a great deal of uncertainty and challenges.

We agree that co-operative values and principles apply to both the governance and the ethos and learning in schools. Academisation has resulted in, in many places, an accountability deficit, and the sub-committee agrees that it is important to involve those with the greatest interest in the success of the school – parents, staff, learners and communities – to be represented. We agree in the importance of parent-teacher associations and liked the suggestion for schools to develop staff networks to strengthen this link. We also agree that co-operation has a role in the curriculum, and plays a key role in shaping responsible, active citizens. Governance is explored in greater detail in chapter 2 and the curriculum is covered in chapter 4.

We share your belief that local government has an important role to play in education. As the submission points out, austerity has created



significant challenges for local councils, and changes to government policy have reduced the extent to which they are able to play a formal role too. We detail in our recent publication, “6 steps to build community wealth” that local government procurement officers should be trained in co-operative approaches, and believe that this applies equally to local education officers too, to enable them to best advise schools about co-operative models. We also support the delivery of support and shared services by co-operatives. We highlight the example of Plymouth’s school food co-operative, CATeRed, and of supply and specialist teachers forming co-operatives, in chapter 3.

Finally, we appreciate the submission’s recognition of the important differences between education in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and is grateful for the Schools Co-operative Society’s offer of support to organisations in other nations. We agree with the proposals regarding Regional Schools Commissioners and have sought to include the points raised in chapter 2.

## Co-ops and Mutuals Wales

The policy sub-committee thanks Co-ops and Mutuals Wales for their submission to our policy process. We take on board points raised about establishing a ‘Power Commission’ but as these do not pertain directly to our education policy development will take them on board elsewhere.

The substantive contribution reports back from an event on co-operative education held in April 2017 – we thank Co-ops and Mutuals Wales for organising the event and for the interesting outputs shared. The points made about being a co-operative teacher are important,

In the report, important issues are raised about the role of the community, parents and learners, which we have sought to include in the section of our paper on accountable and inclusive governance structures in chapter 2. We note the importance of co-operative ways of learning and believe that co-operation should be embedded in the curriculum, pedagogy and teacher training, as explored in chapter 4.

The contribution on the Open University was interesting, and the sub-committee would welcome a further discussion on Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and other innovative and inclusive ways to ensure lifelong learning is accessible.

# Part B

# **Submissions**

# Branch and organisational submissions

## Cardiff and Vale Branch

The consultation document on Education was discussed. The fact that the document referred specifically to differences in Wales and Scotland was welcomed, recognising that Welsh Education issues are now primarily a matter for Welsh Government and therefore for development in relation to the Co-operative Agenda for Wales input at the time of Assembly elections. Nevertheless it was felt that an overarching statement of co-operative principles for education was relevant across the UK.

It was suggested that there should be a stress on co-operation having a clear place in the curriculum – including co-operation in history, incorporated within the Welsh Baccalaureate – with materials for promoting understanding. It was suggested that in Wales we might develop a 6th Form resource perhaps using the John Reynolds resources and an essay competition.

There were concerns that the document had nothing to say about issues like class sizes, teaching (for example salaries, promotion of teaching as a career).

We stressed the importance of education being firmly rooted in the family and the community, rather than policy being focussed just on how schools are managed and on the curriculum. This was seen as a key difference between the approach to education in Wales and currently in England. Concern was expressed that standards seem to measure the wrong things, with insufficient emphasis on learning and achievement.

We stressed the importance of meeting the needs of disabled children within the mainstream education system, recognising them as part of the community both within education and in life after school.

The section on Co-operative Education in Wales was welcomed. It was suggested that more should be added about co-operation within education. Huw Lewis, through the Donaldson Review, had embedded this in the system and current AMs were promoting this approach. Jeremy Miles was likely to lead this work within the Assembly. The Education Consortium was intended to encourage collaboration with geographical clusters encouraging the development of capacity especially within maths and science and promote development of leadership. It was important to understand the building blocks to co-operation and the role of councillors in promoting such an approach should be supported and strengthened. This was not always local and reference was made to a link between Mountstuart School and a school in Maesteg.

There was a stress on the need for community engagement – for a community voice and a good understanding of how the school fits into the community, with collaboration at its heart.

Reference was made to awards in the Rhondda for school-community collaboration and the encouragement of children to work together. Too much pressure on teachers to focus on “measurement” could squeeze out valuable projects such as the Barry Island History Project.

Reference was made to the work of Co-ops and Mutuals Wales which has focussed on co-operative education as a key aspect of achieving a Co-operative Wales and the goals of the Well-Being of Future Generations Act in Wales. Pupils learning about the huge success of co-operative ventures world-wide would learn that there is an alternative to top-down control. It was suggested that this work should be reflected in the document. This work is being actively pursued at present and a link could be provided in the final document so that the approach can be shared more widely across the UK as it develops.

## Chelmsford Star

### What is your biggest concern in regard to the education system in your area?

The biggest concern of those present was the fragmentation of provision, Grammar, Academy, Free School, LA School, Church School which seemed to be leading to division and eventual privatisation of the whole system. Schools have needed to look for funding sources other than taxation to survive.

Schools make greater progress when they work together and a level of local accountability beyond the school is needed.

The next concern was lack of sufficient money to enable schools to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum with sufficient, well-motivated staff. An example of a local primary school's budget difficulties was given by a member who is a school governor.

Concerns were also expressed about the reduction of the Creative and Performing Arts provision, the Practical Curriculum, the pressure children were under from a one-size-fits-all results-driven experience, the presence of Selective Schools in Chelmsford and the demise of Sure Start

### What changes have taken place in your area?

It was thought that the reduced influence of the Local Authority coming from many Schools becoming Academies, private tutoring for the 11+, and reduced spending on the Schools' budgets.

## **What is your local community's experience of education?**

Those present felt that most people held their schools in high regard but there were concerns for children who do not fit the regular mould and those who have Special Needs. Some children need more support than others and that's expensive. Access to Music for children without a background in this at home was considered highly regrettable and extends disadvantage. The lack of provision for children with mental health issues was a grave concern.

## **How could Education be improved in your local community?**

The following were suggestions, a) a Charter for Pupils Rights, b) a more flexible curriculum c) consider the curriculum of Private Schools which appear to be successful in confidence building d) end charitable status for private schools e) end religious schools which although often well-intentioned did increase division in society.

## **What is your view of co-operation and co-operative values and principles?**

A member recalled a Sports Day he had attended in a local Co-op School where co-operative values had been seen in action. He had been impressed by the way the children cared for each other and that some events had not simply favoured those with good athletic skills but had needed co-operation for success. The principle could be extended to all areas of the curriculum in favour of teamwork, celebration of all skills brought to school and that when we help each other, everyone benefits.

## **How could local and national governments' support be changed to support co-operative education?**

The History of Co-operation should be written into the History, Business Studies and Personal and Social Education curricula.

From the earliest age, children should be encouraged to act co-operatively in all areas, with self-help, self-responsibility democracy, equality and solidarity written into the broad curriculum.

## **What opportunities are there for co-operative values to be applied and taught within Higher Education and lifelong learning activities?**

No-one present had much experience of the present situation or how this could be done but VS agreed to write to Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford Campus, Writtle Agricultural College and Chelmsford College asking whether Co-operative Business models were taught in any of the courses. The idea of a presence for the Co-operative Party at Freshers' Week was suggested.

## **From the consultation document on Education the following points were made:**

- The table of School Types at the end was very useful in clearly pointing out the differences in the school organisations.
- Some schools, although not specifically co-operative schools, worked hard to help children learn co-operative values.
- The contribution on Co-operative Education in Scotland was encouraging



- The terms “stakeholders” and the “wider community” are used extensively but it is not always clear who these groups are, whether they are constitutionally formed and how democratic they are
- The Millmead Community Mutual seems a really good model and we congratulate the people concerned.
- The idea of parental “choice” was most misleading. In fact, in the local shortage of school places, the choice appears to rest with the schools.

## Chorley and West Lancashire branch

The Branch fully supports the values and principles for co-operative schools. Grassroots engagement with stakeholders and local communities is key to all successful schools.

The Branch considers that the policy does not address the real issue of the local fragmentation of schools under the Government’s academisation programme. There is no critique of the Tory approach to this fragmentation or the consequences of the lack of local co-operation which has resulted. The diminution of local democratic accountability and the provision of good support services for schools needs to be highlighted and real options proposed for enhancing the role of local authorities. Dispersed academy groups do not provide co-operation across the family of schools within a local community. The Party should propose that there is a requirement for all schools to co-operate within their local areas across a range of areas, including joint support services and purchasing.

The Branch notes that whilst there is reference to curriculum co-operation there is none to initial teacher training and how co-operative principles could be applied to support all bodies responsible for initial teacher training. This would help to support the delivery of a co-operative curriculum.

The Branch wishes to see the Party promoting the concept that all schools could be co-operative schools. The creation of separate trusts is another element dividing our education system. A change in the law would enable community and faith schools to become co-operative schools, without the consequent changes to employer and land ownership.

The Branch is concerned that no reference is made to the employer responsibilities of co-operative trust schools nor to the role trade unions play in promoting good employer relations. Even the governance model makes no reference to support staff and their place as stakeholders.

The cuts to local authority budgets is resulting in the closure of a large number of children's centres in Lancashire. Whilst the co-operative model is recognised as an effective approach to providing services for the local community, the policy needs to recognise the threat to the future of Early Years provision and explore ways in which this can be maintained.

The policy document asks how cooperative values can be applied within lifelong learning. Would it be also appropriate to see cooperative structures as affording the opportunity to build lifelong learning into all work places?

The Branch noted that the list of Cooperative Party policies on education doesn't make reference to the glaring injustice of charitable status for public schools, or indeed of the existence of public schools.

## **Dorset branch**

### **Cooperative education**

The Reddish Vale example is good one, I have heard pupils at a Cooperative College event in Manchester talk with enthusiasm about their school .

The Dorset Cooperative Party needs to consider affiliating to the Schools Cooperative Society.

There is only one cooperative school in Dorset that is Wey Valley in Weymouth, so we have little experience of cooperative schools in our area.

Dorset Coop Party will be visiting the school in the near future. Most of the large towns in Dorset have grammar schools and of course the usual supply of academies.

## **Oxford and North Oxfordshire branches**

The Oxford and North Oxfordshire branches commented on the lack of reference to further and higher education in the document and therefore asked the Party to have a policy on the development of co-operative institutions for these sectors.

It was also queried whether the Party should have a policy on tuition fees.

## **Greenwich branch**

Greenwich Co-operative Party had a full discussion on the education policy document at their recent meeting.

The key points we wish to be included in the final document are:

- That all schools should be able to adopt Co-operative Values whatever their status and the Co-op can support them (as appropriate) in cooperative values, co-operative history and including co-operative models in secondary curricula as appropriate. This should lead to a wide network of schools across the UK that adopt co-operative values and principles.

- That the policy consultation document was fundamentally weak on supporting a new role for local authorities, ensuring accountability to elected community representatives, and that the Co-op Party should explicitly support a framework where all schools are within an LA family (not LA control) where the local authority retains overall responsibility for admissions, fair funding, school place planning and has reserve powers of intervention in the event of a financial, governance or educational failure (subject to some safeguards). All Co-op schools should embrace a continued role for LAs including at least one LA governor.
- That there is scope to develop a new model of Co-operative Schools where, like NHS foundation trusts, there is a membership of all registered parents/carers, staff and possibly some local community membership that own the school and elect the GB. This could be within a community/LA framework but presents a real coop model for common ownership for the benefit of the local community for generations.
- The assets of a school should remain with the community, with the local authority or (3) above held in trust by the School Co Op for future generations, to guard against asset stripping by commercial academy trusts.
- We were also concerned about the organisation of payments for transferring status and believe there should be no financial incentive to academise; and if schools do choose to become academies, the land and building should be retained by the LA for the long-term community benefit.

There is also a strong case for a universal school standard that all LAs, academy chains and the Co-op should sign up to including elected parent governors; all teaching staff should be qualified; all schools should accept the local admissions policy; all should recognise

relevant trade unions; and all should seek accreditation as Living Wage organisations (for contractors as well as staff).

I hope this is of value and we look forward to being involved in further discussions.

## Harlow branch

Harlow Co-op Party met recently to discuss the Co-operative Party's policy document on Education and we wish to make the following comments.

- We believe strongly in the comprehensive system of education and are very much opposed to grammar schools, free schools and faith schools. We take the view that the Co-op Party should oppose completely the whole free school movement and publicise the waste of money involved.
- Although we feel that schools should be under the democratic control of local authorities, if there must be academies we are strongly of the view that the co-operative model is by far the best.
- There is a need to stress the importance of the co-operative model for Sure-Starts.

## Kent Party Council

All schools should be under local authority control to offer a degree of accountability.

School governors need influence and should be accountable to the whole community – have local community election of governors. Could nominate locally through local authorities.

All school governors should have specific training on ‘the learning experience’.

Further Education colleges should come under local authority control – accountability issue.

We need more Co-operative schools and therefore need more publicity about them – lack of knowledge/understanding of what a Co-op school is.

In terms of curriculum input, there should be more about co-operation and working together to solve problems rather than competing with one another.

There should be similar standards across the estate and across the UK.

All school meals should be free, not just for early years primary.

## **Liverpool, Sefton and Halton branch**

Liverpool, Sefton and Halton branch set up a small interest group to examine the education policy document and to report back to the branch with comments that members would like to submit to the consultation. The document below is the result of this consultation process and a full discussion at the Liverpool, Sefton and Halton Branch meeting on the 27/07/17.

- The primary concerns raised in the group were in relation to the documents scope. It was noted that the focus was almost entirely on children and adult, further, higher, and continuing education were not fully addressed by the document. For example under the heading “What is Cooperative Education” the document begins by stating “Children get the best education...” (p4). There are two potential remedies to this limited scope.

- The document could be explicit in limiting its scope to compulsory school age education, or
- it could be expanded to include other sectors and age groups in a comprehensive manner.
- The policy statement contains a very useful summary and explanation of current school policy and powers, but it misses out on a critique of the status quo and neo-liberalism to question the choice agenda in schools. We recommend that the document includes:
  - A stronger statement of the kind of educational system that would embody cooperative values and principles and
  - A discussion of the failures and lessons learned from the introduction of Academies.
  - A balanced discussion of the potentials and pitfalls associated with the introduction of new technologies at all levels of education.
  - Adult education is mentioned once in the consultation document, but only in the context of support for parents in the Community Mutual model of cooperative education. ("A greater emphasis on adult education programmes for parents who lack self-esteem and self-confidence" .p9). We recommend an additional focus on approaches to attract older people back into education. For example through localised outreach programmes. We also note the currently narrow focus in adult education on vocational training and the lack of education for life (e.g. the availability of woodwork courses geared to leisure not work related skills)
  - Further education is included when the document makes recommendations with regard to governance structures (pp 12-13), but this does not follow a full review of the sector nor the potential for cooperative education in FE.

- Higher Education appears in the bullet points which requested comments during the consultation set out in the introduction of the document (What opportunities are there for co-operative values to be applied to and taught within Higher Education and lifelong learning sectors?). However this is the only mention of HE or Universities in the entire document other than a section devoted to a joint course on cooperative economic models run by Edinburgh and St Andrews Universities. The absence of a fuller discussion of HE is unfortunate as there is an ongoing discussion about the possibilities of cooperative governance and cooperative education (pedagogy) in the sector. See for example this Times Higher article from 2015. There are some comments on university level education with regard to Scotland but these comments are not developed in relation to England and Wales. An opportunity is also missed to emphasise the importance of Open approaches to education and the threats to the Open University and its role of making HE available to non-traditional and mature students.
- A concern was also expressed about the lack of emphasis on those students who took non-academic routes after school and a consideration of continuing education and apprenticeship. Specific mention was made of the Tomlinson Report (2004) and the development of a curriculum for 14-19 year old students.
- Specific concern was raised about the correlation between people in prison and low levels of literacy. We would like to see a comment on remedial literacy provision for the prison population and a broader focus on prisoner education with cooperative values.
- There was a feeling that Special Education needed greater emphasis and it was also felt that this area required further consultation. The very limited comment on special needs is a fundamental flaw in the document in particular the failure to discuss a) inclusion or separate education for pupils with special needs b) the needs of pupils with behavioural problems.



- Finally it was noted that informal education of young people was also missing from the document, and specifically there was no mention of the Woodcraft Folk. This is odd in that the organisation is supported by the Coop and has extensive experience of cooperative education.

## North & Mid Wales Party Council

- Is there a need for Co-operative Education in Wales?
- What would an 'excellent' Co-operative Education system in Wales look like?
- How can Co-operative Education in schools engage communities and embrace adult learning?
- Can curriculum development and teacher training be given a co-operative nudge?
- What opportunities are opened up by the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015?

If we are serious and determined about the need to transform Wales the surest route must be via a transformative education policy that takes Wales forward in a far more creative direction than ever previously conceived or envisaged. The Welsh Assembly has been clear that it will not be adopting the English strategy of separating schools from LEA's and creating academies and free schools. Rather than focusing upon structure, a radical co-operative education philosophy could deliver the education improvements needed to move Wales up the world educational ladder toward better performance and a far more valuable outcomes for the local and wider community.

The narrow approach to education focused upon addressing pupil deficits has not served Wales as well as might have been hoped and there is a strong case for developing an education philosophy based

upon “capability theory”, which seeks to build upon identified pupil strengths. Co-operative learning could compliment this model, as opposed to the relentless competitive approach which pits pupil against pupil, teacher against teacher and school against school throughout Wales.

The nature of co-operation is “bottom up rather than top down” which seeks to engage people and communities by involving and empowering them. A co-operative philosophy could result in a more collaborative approach taken to education by children, in groups across classes, between schools, within local communities and local businesses. Teachers should work more closely as parts of a bigger team; be it within a department, across a discipline or as between a cluster of schools in a defined geographical area.

Whereas head teachers might in the past be driven by individualistic competition and achievement (pupil, department or school), the achievements and rewards applying a co-operative approach could be so much broader and deeper where educational establishments are part of a network of schools or a hub of further and adult education from which business, community, families and whole estates reap the rewards.

This approach is not to rule out competition, nor measurement of attainment and achievement, but the balance between co-operation and competition begins to favour the former, with lesser emphasis but nevertheless some regard for the latter where appropriate.

This would be a sea change in education, but may well find favour from schools, teachers, pupils and parents if they can see that the benefit for the greater good means that wider communities are more closely connected to the education and upbringing of the local pupils, with much more successful outcomes.

The fight for resources on a competitive basis as between schools should be reduced with the new emphasis upon sharing resources, knowledge and skills. Weaknesses are more likely to be addressed on a

collective basis and gaps in provision are more easily plugged between a cluster of schools working together. Schools can pool specialisms so that supply and demand are more easily matched up. Teacher shortages can be “smoothed” out across a group of schools working together.

As the upsides of co-operation are learnt, so more co-operation follows in a virtuous circle. Collective working will reap benefits that might previously have been overlooked; covering teacher sickness; organising exams; arranging school trips; funding specialist activities (music, drama, business classes); ensuring sports equipment is available etc.

Teacher training in the broad co-operative philosophy will be crucial if we are to bring about the necessary changes desired. This will need to be properly resourced and will benefit from a pilot process followed by cascading best practice...

Reference to co-operative and co-operation, is not therefore to be wrapped in complex theory or terminology. Using the word “co-operative” (small c) in a much more generalised, basic way could demonstrate the following features, facets and benefits of a co-operative approach to education:

- Co-operation as an educative process as opposed to competition as an educative process.
- Co-operation which drives learning through teamwork.
- Co-operation which offers wider collective outcomes for learning and education.
- Co-operation as a means of making the learning process and education more fun and more interesting.
- Co-operation as a more creative way of problem solving and thus learning or educating.

- Co-operation which has the facets of collaboration and sharing for the widest learning for all, way beyond the individual pupil.
- Co-operation which emphasizes group learning as opposed to the current predominant individualistic learning process.
- Co-operation which emphasizes the benefits of this (co-operative) learning process almost as much as the learning outcomes.
- Co-operation which recognises the value of education for the benefit of the wider community.
- Co-operation as a philosophy; especially when juxtaposed with competition (capitalism) as the dominant philosophy.

An explanation about the 7 principles and 10 values underpinning co-operation. \*[1]

Co-operation doesn't have to be about creating co-operatives, but simply working together co-operatively; joint activity, joint goals and learning objectives and joint education all of which enhance the learning process.

Most people do not and will never be creating co-operatives, so this emphasis is more basic and connected with the every day reality of peoples' lives and thus helps to make a connection more likely and a shared understanding easier. If we can all have co-operation in common, it is more likely to succeed.

A comprehensive co-operative education philosophy would be underpinned by co-operative values and principles\*[1].

These values and principles will help take Wales through the transformative process necessary to bring about a more confident, independent, inclusive and cohesive society, united and pulling together in the same direction. A co-operative education policy will demonstrate features that mark out this change in direction towards equity, self-responsibility, self help and solidarity. These include:

## Greater School Democracy

This will be demonstrated by the involvement of pupils in governance structures such as school councils; which show that accountability and responsibility go hand in hand in mature schools with a true co-operative ethos. It is also more likely to create young people who feel more empowered and engaged with the rest of society when they embark upon a career after leaving school.

## “Community of Enquiry”

This is a very democratic approach to deal with a multitude of school issues which allows, indeed empowers pupils, parents, teachers, governors and the local community to have a real say in the way the school is run. The “Community of Enquiry” process is convened as a means of resolving issues between parties by bringing them together resulting in valuable engagement, which demonstrates fundamentally that all parties can have their say and therefore feel they have ownership of the outcomes, by which all are more likely to abide.

## “Community of Enquiry” Process (rules of engagement):

One person starts and we all should listen

- If you want to speak you raise your hand (but should wait to hear what is being said)
- There could/should be a moment of reflection upon what the last speaker said before hands go up.
- When the speaker has finished they will choose from the raised hands, the next speaker (baton handover)....

- Speakers should follow from the last points being made (logical baton change over) rather than changing the subject and appearing to ignore what has just been said.
- No one should dominate the “community of enquiry” or go on too long.
- If the point you wished to have made, no longer fits the progress of the conversation; perhaps you have to let the point go...
- We should move toward a conclusion at an agreed point; everyone who wanted to contribute should have been given an opportunity.

## **Schools Perceived to have or be owned by “stakeholders”**

This is another paradigm shift reflecting the “bottom up rather than top down” approach of the co-operative model. Stakeholders will include, the head teacher, pupils, teachers, parents, the local education authority (LEA), the teaching union(s) and the local community including local businesses. Many nearby businesses would anticipate employing a large number of pupils as they graduate from the school.

## **Union Learning Representatives (ULR's)**

ULR's will be at the forefront of supported adult learning and second opportunity learning usually in the workplace. Unions are embedded across the workforce so that ULR's are in a position to reach the workers a more formalistic structures approach to education often fails to reach. Created by the Labour government in 1997, ULR's have been slowly marginalised in the last decade, so that their potential cannot be realised without a renewed funding, encouragement and support.

## **Emphasis upon empowerment**

In order to maximise the potential of a school, the teaching staff, the head teacher, the pupils, parents and the local community, must be given a sense of empowerment to join in and feel involved with their local school(s) as part of the community.

## **Renewed emphasis upon the Open University Cymru**

The Open University has brought about a more open and accessible education for all, regardless of means and qualifications achieved. Created by the Labour Party in 1969 it would be in the forefront of the democratisation of education in Wales.

## **Creation of a Co-operative University**

This would provide another symbolic shift toward the co-operative ethos, whilst also providing a beacon for all that is best in co-operative thinking and taking forward co-operation in a way that retains its relevance in the 21st century. It would be the generator of new ideas, innovation and business opportunities so that it's positive influence went far beyond its walls right across Wales.

## **Education is at the heart of so much that determines all the key metrics of a strong, vibrant and cohesive nation**

Levels of poverty, wealth, health, fitness even happiness, confidence and identity are inextricably linked to Hence taking the Welsh education system into a more radical co-operative philosophy could fundamentally affect all of the above for the better. These changes will take many years to establish and embed, but they relate far more to philosophy that to actual structural or physical changes, so that they relate to core

values and beliefs, which once understood and shared more widely across Wales the educational transformation and breakthrough could be remarkably dramatic with amazing outcomes for all the communities, villages, towns and cities in Wales.

## North London branches

Members believe that –

- The academisation and fragmentation of education has been damaging. The Local Authority should play a strong role in the delivery of schools, and should be funded properly to do so
- Comprehensive education is a significantly better and fairer approach to education than grammar schools
- There should be a National Education Service, as per the Labour Party manifesto 2017
- Co-operative approaches to education should be supported because they give a voice to teachers, staff, parents, pupils and the wider community. Education and its institutions should be accountable – this is lacking in the current fragmented system.
- Any policy on education should be framed in terms of improved educational outcomes – the left needs to reclaim the agenda on school standards.
- Co-operative approaches should be system-wide, focusing on provision of education from early years to lifelong learning.



## South East Regional Party

Overall aim is for all schools to be co-operative schools

- All schools to have multi-stakeholder involvement (mandated)
- New schools and conversions to have a co-operative option
- Guard against false co-ops
- Curriculum to involve co-operative education, particularly Economics and Business
- What role for LEAs?
- Assessing school performance – there should be an equal baseline and value added should be assessed
- All media and learning material procured with public funds should adhere to a creative commons attribution or similar (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/uk/>)

## Southern and Eastern Society Party

### Local Communities Experience of Education

- The 'better' academies "cherry pick".
- For example: non faith children start going to church to get into, good, faith schools and other schools are left with children who are not so motivated and manifest bad behaviours and they become 'sink' schools.

- Further Education colleges can no longer make up gaps left by schooling because they have not got funding by 'incorporated status'.
- Local Authority representatives are no longer accepted on school Governing bodies, they can only be accepted as community Governors, thus taking the focus away from the child.

## **Concern about Education system in Your Area**

- All schools moving towards academies and all that it implies.
- Focus on academics and taken away the concept of an 'all rounded individual' that has been a product of a good education.
- Selective education at this time closes door of opportunity for some children.
- It is hidden private education at the expense of the public purse.

## **Change to Education system in your Area**

- Teachers leaving the profession
- Unqualified Teachers in the classroom
- Academies have control over feeder schools and they set the Agenda
- Sometimes children of the same family have to go to various different schools because of lack of spaces in a particular school.

How can education be improved in your community?

- Address all the issues in the above sections.
- Smaller Class sizes (15-20 or lower)

## Coop values and principles in Education

- Cooperative values and Principles should be part of the National Curriculum.
- Academies values and principles are in conflict with Cooperative values and principles because they are driven by the Private Sector.
- There is a role for Cooperative Education in the Curriculum in all sectors of Education.

Local and National Government Support for Cooperative Education

- CEDC Personnel and Cooperative MP'S should do more
- Consult with the Government as to their interpretation of Cooperation.

## Cooperative Values and Principles in Lifelong learning and Higher Education

- Accessible Opportunities for people to learn
- Need to look at University curriculum to identify opportunities
- Opportunities for Cooperative Education are expensive they need to be cheaper.
- Providers need to know what Cooperative Values and Principles are before trying to teach them.

## Responses to Document in General

- Why are Cooperative Schools on the demise? What is causing the reduction and why is nothing been done about it?

- How are future Governments going to educate people?
- Keep Sure Start

## Sutton branch

### 1. Your biggest concern re Education in your area?

Sutton is a selective authority, with several high performing single sex grammar schools. Although these schools' results are close to the best in the country, over two thirds of their intake come from outside the Borough. All but two of the borough's secondary schools are academies and some of them have formed Multi-Academy Trusts.

The non-selective secondary schools in Sutton became comprehensives in the 1990's and have only in the last few years managed to become truly comprehensive, given the presence of several grammar schools.

Sutton educational support services were spun out on 1 November 2016, when 200 Council staff were transferred to Sutton Education Services Ltd, which has since then reduced its staffing levels, struggled to carry on providing the services that schools need or want and been dependent on financial support from the Council.

The Children, Schools, and Families Committee no longer carries out effective scrutiny of education in the borough and hardly any of its members are school governors.

### 2. What changes have taken place locally?

Facility time for union reps is now down to individual schools. A few years ago, Camden Junior School was forced to become part of the Harris Federation rather than allowed to join the Greenshaw MAT (Greenshaw High School was the first comprehensive school in Sutton when it opened in 1964). The Greenshaw MAT will be opening a new secondary school on open land in Rosehill, while Harris will be opening

a secondary school on part of the former Sutton Hospital site in September 2017.

### **3. What is your local community's experience of education?**

Budget cuts as in other areas. High numbers of students with Special Educational Needs (SEN). In some schools there is a high rate of exclusions. The Pupil Referral Units in Sutton are overloaded.

### **4. How could Education be improved locally?**

More places in the selective schools for local children provided this is not at the expense of the comprehensive schools in the borough. We welcome the fact that the Government has decided not to go ahead with a programme of hundreds more free schools and more grammar schools across the country. The Government's apparent u-turn on the new National Funding Formula for schools is also welcome but this will not reverse the budget cuts that have already taken place. More co-operation between schools would help. Teachers need to be better able to identify children with dyslexia and those with mental health issues. The Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) is underfunded and therefore unable to respond quickly enough.

### **5. What is your view of co-operation and co-operative values and principles in education?**

Nine primary schools in Sutton (including one special school) formed the Sutton Education Trust (a co-operative federation) on 1 February 2017, under the auspices of the Co-operative College, which advised the schools on how to conduct the statutory consultation of staff, parents, and governors and draw up the articles of government.

This was achieved in a borough where there have been no Labour Councillors since 2006. Although the Vice-Chair of Governors of the

school which took the lead in promoting the idea of forming a co-operative schools trust is the secretary of Sutton Co-operative Party, party politics was not a factor. Co-operative values as an alternative to academisation were the big selling point. Following the formation of the SET some primary schools in Surrey expressed an interest in possibly joining at a later date.

## **6. How could local and national government support be changed to support co-operative education?**

Local authorities and the National Governors' Association rarely mention the Co-operative model as an alternative to academies. The Forum of Sutton Governors (whose Chair is a Co-op Party member) has encouraged local schools to consider the co-operative model and is an important source of information and debate and remains independent of the local authority. The Government's insistence on all new schools being either free schools or academies reduces the scope for co-operative schools but there are plenty primary schools across the UK which have not converted to academy status and might do so if they were made aware of the benefits of co-operation as an alternative.

## **7. What opportunities are there for co-operative values to be applied to and taught within the Higher Education and lifelong learning sectors?**

There are no universities in the Borough but we do have Carshalton College of Further Education and Sutton College for adult learners. We consider that Co-operative values should be embedded in the curriculum at school, FE, and adult learning institutions and at the governance level, taking the Sutton Education Trust as a model in Sutton.

# South West Peninsula Party Council

Response from the SW Peninsula Party Council's summer conference

## **"The Future for our Schools" – 117th June, 2017**

The conference heard presentations from Hannah Packham, NUT SW Regional organiser, Julia Studchbery-Ullah, Co-operative College, Associate, Sarah Jones, Executive Head of Tavistock College, Jill Grainger and Saxon Spence, governors Learn to Live Federation. These were followed by discussion and two workshops. These are the recommendations of the workshop looking at Co-operative Party education policy.

## **School Organisation**

### **1. Faith Schools**

In principle we wish to see the end of faith schools, believing them to be divisive, but recognising that this is currently impracticable we want a 'fair admissions' policy for faith schools which should be open to everyone in the area served by the school without regard to faith. They should also be required to follow the National Curriculum.

### **2. MATs**

It should be mandatory for every school, whatever its status, to have a local governing body on which should be elected parent and staff governors, and community representatives. We are particularly concerned that large, national MATs are not transparent and can be dominated by business interest, leading to schools being run as profit making businesses.

All MATs should have a pay scheme that is transparent, visible and fair so that public money is not diverted into large executive salaries. We accept there needs to be a pay structure for schools that rewards

talented educators with the right skills and values to ensure that teaching and learning improves continually.

3. There should be legislation to ensure that no state funded school can be run for profit.

4. The free school programme should be ended and local authorities should be allowed to open new schools to meet local need for new school places.

## Resources

5. Providing adequate resources for all school must be a priority, and any reforms to the formula used to allocate funds should not redress underfunding by reducing funding at comparable schools.

## Co-operative Education

6. There should be a child/student centred approach ethos to Education with a no exclusion policy, at national, local and school level particularly in Co-operative schools. This is particularly important for children with additional needs whose voice should be listened to as the central tenet of the “Learn to Live” co-operative movement based in Devon model developed in Devon .

7. Co-operative principles and practice should be part of the national curriculum.

8. Co-operative organisations should be encouraged to sponsor schools, encourage members to take on the role of governor, act as mentors and develop partnerships to promote co-operative young enterprise, e.g. Phone Co-op.



# Linda Gilroy, SW Peninsula Party Conference

## The Future of our Schools

Workshop: Co-operative Schools

Led by Julie Stuchbery- Ullah (Co-operative College Associate) and Sarah Jones, Principal Tavistock College

Members were impressed by the practical delivery of things through Co-operative Schools:-

I.e. Local solutions without expensive structures. Involvement of the community - local voices are heard. Because it is built on co-operative principles and local accountability (local governors) the model is effective and achieves more than current DFE top down "this is how it is – make it work"

An ethical approach appropriate to 21st century education (which many say they want) is built in (co-operative principles and values). These also deliver stability and consistency of policy and give vfm of continuous chopping and changing and moving of goalposts of top down approach.

More research is needed – to evidence positive outcomes of value driven schools and leadership eg. recruitment rate for schools (oversubscribed); recruitment rates for staff (subject specialist/ School Direct co-operative is full at a time when others cannot recruit)

Labour and Co-operative Education Policy would benefit from defining what the purpose of education is.

We had a discussion suggesting that Co-operative Education has a lot to contribute to the question "What is the National Education Service (promised in Labour manifesto) for?"

This ranged around ideas of the importance of education in preparing the next generation to have the values, principles and skills to live and work in modern Britain and our interdependent world; the chance to make the most of their lives in a way that is ethically minded, analytical, able to appreciate what is fair and not fair; to understand what are the values of Modern Britain (as opposed to “British Values”– laden with tradition not always easily adapted to the present?)

Co-operative party policy should highlight how co-operative governance models can help deliver an ethically driven national education service – and how this delivers VFM.

Local authorities should be encouraged and enabled to facilitate and serve schools and governors – through co-constructive working - to ensure a national education service best serves local communities and students.

Co-operative Education Policy should place importance on a broad curriculum (not just core subjects) and co-constructed school improvement. Co-op schools participate in external monitoring and inspection but achieve improvement by taking responsibility for each other and through models of co-operative Continuous Professional Development. (See various articles by S Jones above)

It would be wonderful to have a Labour and Co-operative Secretary of State for Education (again) who understands the power of the Co-operative approach to deliver the sort of outcomes from education which parents, students, teachers - and politicians - want.

Finally education policy currently involves constant changing of the boundaries for tests and exams and produces stability because of norm referencing. This needs to stop so that students are compared on a fair and like for like basis!

We also wanted recognition of the role which a well-run education service has to play in improving mental health – not just among current young people – but future generations of adults too.

## Yorkshire Party Council

This Party Council calls upon the Co-operative movement to renew its interest and involvement in Education with the aim of expanding the Co-op Schools network.

## Jon O'Connor, Co-operative Schools Network

I was pleased as a member of the Co-operative Party and as Director for the Co-operative Schools Network to receive this invitation, as in previous years, to comment on Co-operative Party education policy.

I've contributed in the past to policy papers and it's good to see the progressive approach and progression in the thinking.

Firstly, I am delighted to see the upbeat assessment of what has been achieved in the co-operative education sector, despite the obstacles of limited resource and capacity and a historic lack of strategy at a national level. I too am optimistic that there is an opportunity to build on some recent signs of a more coherent picture and some modest revival of the co-operative models for schools.

This is a rare period (in terms of education policy and national political context) in which further real progress can be made in the next five years.

- but it is important to ensure that the strategic vision is clear and that the operational model is shown - ideally in visual form.

There is no doubt in my mind that this will need to build on the regional support model, a strategy which has been confirmed by the Schools Co-operative Society, but is a significant element not mentioned in the information pack.

There is no reference to the important working relationship between the co-operative education movement and the education unions - who provide support on the basis of sound co-operative schools principles in public service.

I am also a little concerned that there are one or two errors included in the briefing pack and feel these should be corrected or amended during the process of assimilation into final policy documents:

These include:

p19        the table of school types, which incorrectly states that the Governing Body of a Foundation School hold the land and assets - in the majority of co-operative and other Trusts this is a significant role of the Trust

p6        references to the Cooperative College providing support for schools to convert: it is my understanding that this is no longer the case and that it has been agreed that school support is provided by local regions of the Schools Co-operative Society

p7        an implication (by omission or over-emphasis on government policy preference for academies) in this paragraph that the Foundation Trust model is no longer viable: this is untrue and the tone is also somewhat defeatist.

in our region, we have seen significant growth in interest with almost 50 new co-operative Foundation schools in the last year, including the Coastal Alliance, which is mentioned.

The reason for the success story we have seen is clearly rooted in the regional network arrangements, which we have developed on the basis of goodwill, personal commitment and co-operation, to make the most of our limited capacity.

Secondly, having contributed as a member of the Coops UK Strategic Reference Panel to the recently launched paper "Do It Ourselves" on the vision for co-operatives going forward, I believe there is a missed

opportunity in not attuning with this thinking in the tone and form of the consultation questions - which focus too strongly on the changes which others should make.

I'm sure you've seen this, but it is strong because it is simple: it invites empowerment, through engagement and personal exploration with fellow co-operators. It is what is also needed in the policy landscape.

You could argue that an over-passive and reactive approach to important social and community issues is one which would not have seen the co-operative movement even come into being!

[A simple strategy The strategy for a new wave of co-operation in the UK is simple, with three interlocking steps](#)

What is needed from the Co-operative Party at this time is along these lines:

Members and leading voices can share a clear sense of direction to engage the power and potential of co-operative activism, with local communities, governors and the wider co-operative movement offering to contribute....

A watching brief on education policy, with the confidence to challenge this - notably where there is a failure to engage with learning communities in a democratic and accountable manner

A fuller understanding of the model which has successfully developed of local education co-operatives becoming involved in a network of co-operation, increasingly sharing best value and best practice

A commitment to share expertise and experience from successful co-operative models across all sectors of enterprise and social provision to support co-operation in public service education

My own contribution over the last 20 years has been to promote education partnership as intrinsically rational and productive.

In the last ten years, I have been extensively engaged in specifically co-operative education models and I will continue to support these with passion and conviction.

Finally, I would wish to see the core recommendations in the final policy reflect a simple mantra of Co-operative Education: Potential; Purpose; Pride

The Co-operative Party should promote co-operative education through fulfilling these three core pillars of policy:

Potential: a fully functioning regional support system, which underpins and supports co-operative education with principles, procurement and professional resource - "the power of 3P"

Purpose: a commitment to ensure that co-operative education is "good with schools" - a strapline we have used for our last three CSNET conferences in London - providing outstanding learning opportunity for all

Pride: a determination to celebrate the co-operative education model as the ethically and economically sound education system for the future, which provides the resilient communities and strong social infrastructure which we need

90% of the raw material is here in this work already; hopefully you will be able to take and use some of these comments in the constructive spirit in which they are offered.

Do feel free to get in touch if I can offer any practical advice or assistance.

# Cilla Ross, the Co-operative College

## Co-operative Higher Education

The Higher Education and Research Act 2017 marks a paradigm shift in Higher Education in England. At the core of this shift is the status of students as consumers, the reduced independence and autonomy of universities, as well as opening up the sector to new higher education providers. These new providers will be granted immediate degree awarding powers, which will be monitored on a probationary basis.

There is an implication within the Higher Education and Research Act that these providers will support the competitive business model approach. However, there is nothing within the current legislation that would preclude a more radical form of university from being established: a co-operative university, based not on markets and privatisation but on collaboration and co-operation.

There is strong synergy and shared heritage between the values of the co-operative movement and academic values: sharing, collaboration, open membership, democratic member control, autonomy and independence, concern for community and the power and importance of education (Realising the Co-operative University, Dan Cook, 2013). The co-operative model is a real alternative because it is based on a different legal, governance and management structure, challenging the corporate business model with a framework organised around workers' ownership and democracy, as well as social solidarity.

The University of Mondragon in the Basque Country in Spain is an example of a well-established co-operative university and offers one model on which a new co-operative university in the UK could be developed. A new co-operative university can build on the success of the schools co-operative movement with more than 800 schools in the UK gaining co-operative status since 2006. This network, the third largest in the country (behind the faith based schools) shows there is an alternative to the state versus private sector approach towards the

delivery of public services. It can be a pathway to learning for a better society.

A co-operative attitude already informs the section of the Bill which proposes a Sharia compliant model of student finance. This alternative financial model is constructed on the secular principles of co-operation, communal interest, equality of benefit and mutuality.

The co-operative principle for higher education has been the focus of recent research undertaken by academics at the University of Lincoln 'Beyond Private and Public – a framework for co-operative higher learning' (Neary and Winn 2017), funded by the Independent Social Research Foundation; as well as their ongoing research on 'Co-operative Leadership for Higher Education', funded by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education.<sup>1</sup>

This type of alternative co-operative provision is not simply a matter of different management and governance structures, but is based on a fundamentally different view on the nature of the state in capitalism. The free market view is that the state intervention should be reduced to a minimum, although paradoxically strong regulation is needed in order to facilitate marketization. This is very evident in the new Higher Education and Research Act. For those who defend public education the state is a neutral arbiter that can be put to use for the defence of the public good.

The history of the co-operative movement in the UK is that it has never been incorporated within a statist model, but is international in its outlook and orientation, containing within it the possibility of generating a new form of social life which is close to the idea of the commons or commonwealth as a definition of public provision. The co-operative movement does not depend on the state, indeed its ideal expression requires its dissolution and replacement with new forms of human association not grounded in models of political society.

If that sounds utopian, that is the point. In a hostile climate where radical debate is being shut down it is vital to develop new critical imaginaries based on radical academic histories and traditions that inform the

<sup>1</sup> <http://eprints.lincoln.ac.uk/27564/> & <http://eprints.lincoln.ac.uk/26917/>



co-operative movement. We would anticipate working towards a co-operative model of higher education which is genuinely inclusive, creative, relevant, challenging and driven by rigour and critical thinking.

The Higher Education and Research Act (2017) offers the possibility to carry out this radical re-imagining within the proposed new legislative framework. This can be taken forward most effectively by using the collective lobbying power of the co-operative movement and its institutions in the UK as part of a group that could include, along with the Co-operative College, the Co-operative Party and Co-operatives UK.

The inclusion of co-operative practices and principles in the new Higher Education legislation might not change the corporate logic on which it is based, but it will remind law-makers and those who wish to create new universities that another world is possible, built not on capitalist values but as part of a co-operative commonwealth.

The Co-operative College has started exploring a model for the creation of a co-operative university. A Co-operative University Working Group (CUWG)<sup>1</sup> has been created after a process of consultation with different partners from the Higher Education sector. The broad purpose of the group is to explore a) a federated co-operative university model b) how the Co-operative College might work towards acquiring degree awarding powers as a secondary co-operative.

## To this end we are:

- Considering likely demand for a co-operative university
- Producing a draft proposal/institutional design for a federated co-operative university
- Developing a business plan for a co-operative university

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.co-op.ac.uk/our-work/researching-co-operatives/co-operative-university-working-group-cuwg/>

- Designing a set of principles and considering other associated outputs
- Considering how the Co-operative College might acquire degree awarding powers
- Considering quality assurance for co-operative higher education

We would like to propose that the Co-operative Party and its members agrees to adopt the promotion and support of co-operative higher education as part of its education policy.

## **The Schools Co-operative Society**

### **What is your biggest concern in regard to the education system in your area?**

The greatest concern for our Member schools at the moment is without doubt the extent of planned level of real-term cuts in school budgets. Whilst it is to be welcomed that the Secretary of State is attempting to mitigate some of the impact by redistributing resources from within existing budgets, this will not resolve the problem. What is needed is a realistic recognition by central Government that public funding in education must be maintained if as a nation we are to ensure future generations have the skills and capability to fulfil their potential.

### **What changes have taken place in education in your area?**

The pressure for structural change applied to individual schools to accept voluntary and forced conversion to academy status within multi-academy trusts continues to be a distraction for many governors and senior leaders. The capacity of local authorities to support schools is increasingly diminished, leaving schools with the added pressures. The impact on schools of local authority cuts is not restricted to cuts in LA

education services. Cuts in child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), multi-disciplinary early years provision and housing support are also impacting upon the workload of teachers and senior leaders in schools.

## **What is your view of co-operation and co-operative values and principles in education?**

We believe firmly the Co-operative Values & Principles (“the V&Ps”) have the capability to provide a step-change in education. Our internationally shared Values should be seen as a readily acceptable set of human values. They align well with the concept of fundamental British values and ought to be acceptable to all – irrespective of mainstream political persuasion, religious belief or the absence of it.

The V&Ps provide a good framework for school governance in that they are capable of allowing both for skills-based governance and representation for those with the greatest interest in the success of schools - parents, staff, learners and local communities.

The potential to use the V&Ps does not stop with governance. Applying them to the ethos of schools and to pedagogy has the potential to:

Improve job satisfaction within the workforce – SCS is to develop a network of staff “co-op advocates” to promote the practical application of co-operation within and between schools;

Better engage parents in children's education – in 2017/18 SCS will be working with PTA-UK to develop school-parent support programmes;

Shape the citizens of the future – our experience is that the V&Ps strike a chord first and foremost with young people.

In short, co-operative schools are those that sign up to the V&Ps and reflect them in decisions around governance, ethos and pedagogy. Partly for this reason, we do not draw a distinction between particular forms

of school governance (ie trust or academy); rather we believe schools should first and foremost should co-operative.

## How could local and national government support be changed to support co-operative education?

### (1) Central Government policy (England)

The Co-operative Party and its MPs have been proactive in support of co-operatives in education and in cross-party consideration of the benefits of the co-operative approach. We encourage the Co-operative Party to continue in this endeavour.

We are seeing signs of a shift in current Government policy. In a DfE paper<sup>1</sup> published December 2016, guidance on what makes a good multi-academy trust (MAT) included some interesting elements that align very well with the co-operative approach. Examples given of successful MATs included those that:

Enabled governors and leaders to come together and take responsibility to provide better education in their community, rather than just in their individual schools, supported by a common ethos; and

Facilitated the sharing of effective practice across a group of schools;

The guidance encouraged “Effective and meaningful arrangements ... to engage with parents and the wider community” and acknowledged “parents who are trustees or involved in governance at school level have valuable knowledge and perspectives to bring to bear in discussions and decisions. They also guarantee that there is always a link between governance and the parent community. Where trustees or local governors ... are elected, this also helps to ensure that a diverse range of

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<sup>1</sup> Multi-academy trusts – good practice guidance and expectations for growth, DfE, Dec 2016.  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/576240/Multi-academy\\_trusts\\_good\\_practice\\_guidance\\_and\\_expectations\\_for\\_growth.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/576240/Multi-academy_trusts_good_practice_guidance_and_expectations_for_growth.pdf)

perspective, including those of parents, is always brought to the table to enable robust decision making". And the most well aligned advice of all:

"What matters most is identity and that is what will make other schools want to join the MAT. There needs to be a sense of what the MAT stands for, which is not solely driven by a personality. The mission, vision and values must drive everything"

The DfE have published model co-operative governance articles on the Government website.

## **(2) Local Government in England**

We recognise these are difficult times for local government. Wide-ranging budget cuts are impacting on many services upon which schools have relied (both in terms of school support and more widely across child and family services). There are two approaches that we think co-operators in LAs should consider so as to mitigate the impact of these pressures.

Firstly; encourage LA maintained schools to consider both co-operative academy and co-operative trust status. When previously the Government proposed a set timetable for all schools to convert to academies within MATs, it also instigated a regime of active discouragement of new foundation trusts. The subsequent Government reversal an academies timescale appears now to have been followed by a relaxation of the policy towards new foundation trusts.

We are now seeing evidence of a resurgence in trust conversions. Many schools are reluctant or uncertain about academy conversion. We believe no school, however, should be reluctant about local co-operation and collaboration between schools. This can be a means of mitigating the effects of service cuts and of building school improvement.

The current Government's preference is for academies in MATs and the co-operative academy model is there for schools that have decided academy conversion is right for them. For other schools not ready or

unwilling to make that change, the co-operative trust model provides a structured way for them to build local collaboration.

Secondly; many local authorities have already floated off their school support services to mutual or community interest entities. Examples of mutuals owned by their member schools include Newham Partnership Working in London and SIPS Education in the West Midlands. Other LAs have followed different routes to create entities to provide school support (including Herts for Learning, Birmingham Education Partnership and Learn Sheffield).

We believe our own programme of building regional networks sits well with the development of such second-tier provision; we would hope to see active collaboration where these entities are formed

The Co-operative movement should encourage greater mutual control over the services relied upon by schools. The development of school LA instigated mutuals is an important area of opportunity to grow the co-operative economy.

### **(3) Devolved Government in Scotland and Wales**

SCS was formed as the representative body of schools that converted to co-operative trust schools within the English system. We do not, of course, view that historical situation as an impediment working in solidarity with those who wish to see the development of co-operative schools in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Co-operative foundation trusts in England are “minority trusts” – they do not control, they support schools that remain as LA-maintained schools. A co-operative approach could be developed in Scotland and Wales. This should not be seen as an alternative to existing systems; rather a means to strengthen them. The Welsh and Scottish Co-operative Parties have already developed a number of policies to promote co-operation in the education sector. SCS stands ready to help if we can be of assistance in relation to maintained schools.

## (4) English Regions

There are 8 “Regional Schools Commissioners” (RSC) covering England. In addition to oversight of academies and free schools, they decide upon academy applications and the approval of sponsors. They also exercise the powers of the Secretary of State over local authority schools “causing concern” or judged to be “coasting”. RSCs are appointed civil servants reporting to the National Schools Commissioner who is answerable to the Secretary of State. Each RSC is advised by a headteacher board (HTB) of 4 – 8 headteachers and business leaders.

At times, Government Ministers, senior Whitehall officials and some RSCs have supported co-operative models, but our members report a varied view from officers of some RSCs – ranging from ignorance of the model to hostility.

We do not regard the decision-making processes of RSCs to be sufficiently open overall and there is an inconsistent approach to openness. HTB meetings are said to take place once or twice a month, yet at the time of writing, a Record of Meeting has not been published for 5 months in one region and 6 in another.

The full minutes are not published and it is difficult, therefore, to come to a view on the decision-making process. There does not, however, appear to be any LA or stakeholder voice in any of the meetings. We accept that there is a need to strike a balance between confidentiality and openness and that the HTB members are experienced school leaders in the academy form of governance, but our fear is that the current system risks “confirmation bias” and aversion to innovation. Without more open government in this area we simply do not know.

We encourage the Co-operative Party to adopt a policy of promoting more open decision-making in the management of the schools system in England and more direct accountability local stakeholders. Where appropriate, consideration could be given to a transfer of responsibility to the offices of regional elected mayors.

## Best practice examples

### Learning Trust for Excellence

Co-operative Trust schools are foundation schools that have “acquired” a charitable trust to support them. A trust can have just one school, but the most common configuration is for a group of schools that have already worked in collaboration to form a shared trust to strengthen their partnership.

The Learning Trust for Excellence (LTE) comprises seven forward thinking schools based in Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham. They are all primary schools, but they have included partners within their Trust from HE, secondary schools and the charitable sector.

Having worked well together in the past, the collaboration was formally established with a view to inspiring excellence and furthering opportunity for all.

By forming a Co-operative Trust each school retains its individual autonomy and Governing Body whilst at the same time collaborating in what the schools’ describe as “exciting opportunities for its pupils, staff and wider community created through the power of collaboration”. Being stronger together they are generating new ideas to improve the way they work - improving the educational and learning services they offer, valuing input from all colleagues and respecting individuality and uniqueness.

### St Clere’s Co-operative Academies Trust

In April 2012, St Clere’s secondary school and the three primaries that comprised a local Foundation Trust converted into the first Multi-Academy Trust in the country to have Co-operative Articles of Association. Since then, the Trust has proudly sponsored additional primary schools and another secondary school has chosen to join this growing partnership, now of 7 schools.



The ethos of all schools in the Trust is centred on the Co-operative Values. Their CEO (a Local Leader of Education) says;

“by providing support to each other with these values in mind, we aim to improve educational standards in our schools and the local area so that every pupil can reach their full potential. We believe that it is a sense of shared responsibility – in which everybody has a vested interest and the opportunity to play their part – that will transform education in our community.”

The Trust collaborates with other local primary and secondary schools including in jointly running a Sixth Form Centre.

Each school has a pupil council and representatives from each school meet to discuss cross-phase issues including transition. Pupils are supported to be active learners, capable of being tomorrow's leaders.

## Improving English Schools

The Schools Co-operative Society and its member schools are working to create a climate of collaboration and mutual support. Through an evolving regional network, schools will have increasing opportunities to contribute to and benefit from the sharing of innovation and exemplary practice for the benefit of all.

One example is the work of the Co-op Group sponsored “Co-op Academies Trust” in the development of high-quality curriculum and learning materials to be rolled out across all of the MAT's schools. The potential benefit for pupils' outcomes and reduced teacher workload is held up in published DfE guidance as an exemplar:

“The DfE published three reports looking at teacher workload in Spring 2016. In response, the [Co-op Academies Trust] invited teaching and non-teaching staff to join a working group to consider what could be gained through addressing the issue as a MAT. The trust knew there would be great value from a coordinated approach and found significant

benefit in enabling discussion between staff in both phases across the schools the trust runs in the north of England.

When discussing planning, the working group recommended that reliable and robust schemes of work should be made available for all teachers and that a tailored approach to planning should be adopted, according to teacher needs and preferences. High expectations are set consistently across the trust but such an approach to planning ensures teacher creativity can be accommodated, as well as ensuring each subject has the most appropriate planning format and approach to achieve the highest standards. Shared schemes also mean that workload issues can be addressed."

The Trust has offered to support all co-operative schools by making available to them the resultant "Raising Achievement" website.

The Trust is working with SCS and other co-operative schools in the North West to build the region's network along similar lines to networks in London & South East, the South West, Eastern England and the Midlands.

## Co-ops and Mutuels Wales

Please find the main submission – a report from an event in April 2017, "A Co-operative Education System for a Co-operative Wales?" – is attached separately.

**<https://party.coop/submissions/education/attachments/3>**

**"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world"**

- a supplementary submission on Co-operative Education from Co-ops and Mutuels Wales

We understand the Party NEC is giving consideration to establishing a high-powered, 'Power Commission'. Those making this case might argue that what is required is changing the structure of our country to take power from the elites and to give it back to whom it belongs - the people and that this will help bring the benefits of change directed towards achieving a 'Co-operative Commonwealth'. We suggest a different approach and although this paper is from Wales, the approach is fairly universal in its applicability.

In recent years, we have experienced the collapse of communism and the serious dysfunctional operation of capitalism. In offering a vision and a narrative about transforming society, Co-operative values and principles remain a shining beacon for achieving the democratic transformation of society, but this will require a 'bottom-up' approach.

If we want to launch a 'Commission', and one is based upon real empowerment, it is argued that a strong case exists for creating an 'Education Commission' taking account of differences across the four UK countries. As Nelson Mandela says, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." (23 Apr 2013)

We absolutely agree with the observations of Margaret Llewelyn Davies, the General Secretary of the Co-operative Women's Guild (1861 - 1944) that 'Co-operation is far more than a reformist movement. We are working for no patchwork modification. We are seeking to lay the foundations of a new society.'

The Co-operative model has always been about the grassroots empowerment of members. As Bonner reminds us "... for the most important product of the Co-operative Movement are co-operators and if it fails to produce these it may well end with producing nothing - for it cannot exist without them." (Arnold Bonner, British Co-operation, 1966)

Most will be aware of the significant ABCA system of Army education in World War II which led to a Labour Government in 1945. Since its inception, the Co-operative Women's Guild had a practical system

of education by doing, which is discussed elsewhere. How could an 'Education Commission' assist us with fresh ideas in facing such a daunting task and one fit for the 21st Century?

The fact that we are realists does not prevent us from being idealists also. In building upon recent work <http://www.cooperatives-wales.coop/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/cmw-final-8-APRIL-2017-report.pdf>, we find the work of USA philosopher Martha Nussbaum impressive [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martha\\_Nussbaum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martha_Nussbaum) especially her work on 'creating capabilities' <https://www3.nd.edu/~ndlaw/prog-human-rights/london-symposium/CreatingCapabilities.pdf>.

Whilst this is not an easy read for most, including myself the writer, Otto and Zeigler in 'Education and Capabilities makes this more accessible, in particular, when referring to <http://philosophyfaculty.ucsd.edu/faculty/rarneson/ElizabethAndersonWhatIsThePointofEquality.pdf> 'What is the Point of Equality' (1999) by Elizabeth Anderson.

In the context of "the basic preconditions for the process of generating informed and considered decisions that matter to plan and shape one's life", Otto and Zeigler (University of Bielefeld and University of Münster) <http://www.socwork.net/sws/article/view/158/549> state:

"Anderson argues that to "be capable of functioning as an equal citizen involves not just the ability to exercise specifically political rights but also to participate in the various activities of civil society, including participation in the economy. And functioning in these ways presupposes functioning as a human being."

"Thus there are three basic "aspects of individual functioning: as a human being; as a participant in a system of co-operative production; and as a citizen of a democratic state."

"These three aspects fit well to the suggestions about democracy and education ....(and the) space to evaluate the 'capability inputs' of educational institutions."

“ A further aspect of the democratic ‘capability inputs’ in the field of education is the creation of space for the ‘capability of voice’ to become effective. This implies the creation of spaces where individuals get the opportunity to express their own opinions...It is also a basic precondition for..... individuals and groups to be able to identify valuable capabilities and to participate in informed discussions ....on this matter.”

To paraphrase Anderson: “Education is a basic capability .... in the sense of being a fundamental capability and foundational to other capabilities extends to ...reflection, understanding information and awareness of one’s capabilities...and the possibility to formulate exactly the valued beings and doings that the individual has reasons to value... and certain levels of social and political participation.”

Thus we are referring to learning by doing which is equally applicable across the UK. Not, a deficit model of education, but one that builds upon the capabilities of people. Things that people enjoy, wish to do, value, and also create that pearl of self-learning which may not be measurable in conventional terms. WEA type model if you will.

In our previous submission, we made the case for a complete overhaul of the “Learning Experience” from primary level through to informal adult education. We trust this paper supports a strong focus upon ‘education and capability theory’ in providing a solution to creating essential building blocks that promote and support a Co-operative View of Society.

We therefore propose that:-

(a) Any future proposals for co-operative expansion, in any sector, be proofed against the very simple question – where will the co-operators of the future come from to ensure an authentic democratic movement based upon Co-operative Values and Principles?

(b) In establishing a ‘Commission’ the Co-op Party give serious consideration to establishing an ‘Education Commission’ focused upon the significance of developing capability, primarily through our state education system to support a ‘bottom-up’ approach to reinvigorating

the UK Co-operative Movement; or at the very least this be a significant strand within any proposed 'Power Commission'.

(c) The Co-op Party NEC adopts a 'community of enquiry' <http://www.sapere.org.uk/Default.aspx?tabid=76> and or an 'appreciative inquiry' [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Appreciative\\_inquiry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Appreciative_inquiry) methodologies in advancing future work.

(d) Based upon experience, particular attention should be given to teacher training and then piloting and cascading best practice.

Please let us know if you require clarification or further information.

David Smith M.A. Secretary, C&MW

<http://www.cooperatives-wales.coop/who-we-are/> Please note: we are a cross party organisation. Co-op Party members have drafted this paper.

### **Comment by a former Head of CPD, at a Welsh University Education Department**

I am very impressed with the document. I am looking forward to following up the links you have provided to capability theory and really pleased you agree with me that this is a radical and necessary way forward. It is very exciting! I just hope that people will understand the principles and realise how powerful it is.

The human capabilities approach offers a way of taking into account where children are positioned and what they are able to do with personal, material and social resources, rather than merely looking at what resources children have access to and assuming that they are equally placed in relation to these resources which is an assumption that I think underpins The Future Generations, (Wales) Act 2015. I think we need to emphasise that resources in themselves are not a meaningful way of assessing human well-being. In Wales like everywhere, children, young people and adults are differently positioned in terms of social markers, including age and generation. We need to consider what sort of

resources would be needed in order for children to be able to flourish, not just material resources. Learning how to behave cooperatively is central I would have thought. The adoption of the UNCRC in Wales as a statutory requirement is important - the focus on the right to participate, the ability to do something for oneself and others is an important aspect of quality of life in the human capabilities approach and something we should be prompting as part of the UNCRC. Nussbaum also talks about the importance of developing moral imagination and developing our capacity to put ourselves in another person's situation, especially those we consider 'different' to ourselves. I would see the development of moral imagination as central to this approach.

# Individual submissions

## Anthony Bolden

We are lacking skills for the real world so:

- Technical education needs to be placed on a par with an academic education
- Need to create the equivalent of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the UK - to be seen as being the equivalent of Oxbridge
- The number of University places offering a basic academic style education should be reduced to be replaced by an equivalent number of science, technological based courses/places. Qualifications on offer would be still be at degree level
- Children at 13/14 should be offered either an academic or technological route to education. Either route should still maintain rigorous standards
- Children at 18 should be guaranteed on leaving school either an University/Technological tertiary place for further education or an apprenticeship or an place in the armed forces or in community service or have a job to go to. No child should be unemployed for at least 2 years after leaving secondary school.
- The Sats tests at 11 should be more meaningful. It is tragic that so many children fail to attain a reasonable pass in the key subjects. Children must be expected to pass before entering secondary school; otherwise they are in danger of falling further behind.



- Primary school class sizes should be vigorously controlled to be less than 25 per class. If Independent schools have places in class below that number they should be expected to take pupils on where other schools are over subscribed.
- Infant/Primary schools should continue to offer free lunches.

Hope these ideas resonate

## Anthony Campling

Make it illegal to pay for education (as Sweden has made it illegal to pay for sex). Parents and children would be given the opportunity (if they wish), through lottery, to spend a year at a public school, boarding school etc. In effect, nationalise school education.

## Christian Wilcox

### Work

We need to fix workfare so that it is restored to what it should be; as in, a training program for those lacking experience. The fact it was warped into a free-labour program for Rich Firms is ghastly.

### Grammar Schools

Stick a means test on them, so that said free places can only go to poor people. I'm not opposed to the Grammar Education style, as some kids do ok in it. I'm opposed to freebies for The Rich when we are £2t in debt as a nation.

## Mass Education generally.

As a 40 year old who will pay my pension? A bunch of half-bankrupt kids, as Education Fees have wiped them out? Not likely is it? So we must get Education back in play. This will be paid for by bringing back the 50p AND 60p rates of Tax. We Tax The Rich.

We also re-classify Capital Gains as a type of Income. And then lump it in with other Incomes that person has. Tax Simplification is a good thing. We get rid of Capital Gains Tax, basically. It's a Tax Dodge. If all incomes for a person are classed as Incomes then the 50p & 60p rates can do their bit properly. We also ban Pension Relief, as it is another freebie for The Rich.

We have a mass-skill-shortage in this country, and this Govt have put Education Fees up ( to fund Tax Avoidance ). We have to reverse this awful & suicidal stance.

## Evelyne Godfrey

### Introduction

In the Co-operative Party education policy consultation document of February 2017, a brief summary of post-Second World War UK education policy is provided, along with a detailed description of the principles of co-operative schools.

This submission is intended to make supplemental suggestions regarding Further (i.e. postage 16) and Higher Education policies, in England.

### Further Education (FE) in England

Children who live in England are still legally able to stop full-time education at the age of 16. However, from the age of 16 to 18, they must

follow one of three pathways: - continue in full-time education, usually at an FE or Sixth-form college - start an apprenticeship or traineeship - spend 20 hours or more a week working or volunteering, while in part-time education or training

The withdrawal of maintenance allowances for 16-18 year olds might be forcing a segment of the population who are under financial pressure at home to follow the third path, i.e. working 20 hours per week. This can contribute to inequality in our society. It is undoubtedly difficult for children to concentrate on studies while working at what will inevitably be unskilled, lowwaged jobs that offer little prospect of advancement and are unlikely to coincide with the child's career aspirations.

Apprenticeships on the other hand can potentially involve intensive practical training that leads to meaningful employment, but they are necessarily very narrow in scope. An apprenticeship can provide entry to a trade that the child - at that point in their life - has decided they want to pursue. However, their career plan might change, and more than once, when they are adults. It may be that the apprenticeships of today are ultimately of little value, either to the child or to the company providing the training.

Post-16 education and training should not form a straightjacket, and it should certainly not be the case that "Children only have one go at education", as rather unfortunately suggested recently by an Oxford Liberal Democrat MP (<http://www.theoxfordpaper.co.uk/2017/07/21/children-one-go-education/>).

In light of the above, it is suggested that full-time education is the most reasonable pathway for 16 to 18 year olds. It must be acknowledged that people aged under 18 are still children. Children need to be provided with a strong basic skill set, and introduced to a wide variety of subjects, in order to allow them to make career decisions when they are adults.

It must also be acknowledged that in this age of short-term employment, we need an adaptable workforce. Individuals might go through several phases of learning in a lifetime.

The learning needs of adults naturally differ from those of children. Adult learners are likely to be clear about what specific career path they wish to pursue, and are more focussed on employment.

Subjects like A-Level Archaeology, for instance, serve a valuable purpose in further education. A-Level Archaeology is due to be dropped by the last exam board in England by 2019, in the face of protests from the archaeological profession. It is true that most university admissions tutors are looking for A-Level subject combinations such as Chemistry, Biology, and Physics, or History, Geography, and a modern or ancient language, for entry to degree courses in Archaeology. But this is because the vast majority of university admission offers are made to 18 year-olds coming straight from Sixth-form.

It is unreasonable to expect adult learners, who have already decided on a career - in archaeology, for example - to spend two years studying for A-Levels in Chemistry and so forth, with the goal of eventually getting around to the subject that they already know they would like to learn. Courses like A-Level Archaeology provide adult learners with both the necessary qualifications, and the confidence, to progress to Higher Education (HE).

For 16 to 19 year-olds who are not yet sure about what they want to do, but might be interested in the subject, the opportunity to take an A-Level course in Archaeology, or in Law, or indeed an A-Level Medicine course, can give them the insight that they need to make a better decision about their university course. Time and money is then less likely to be misspent on following the 'wrong' HE course. With English university tuition fees now up to £9250 per year, and drop-out rates, even on professional degree courses, often in the order of 20% - undergraduates do change their minds, and personal circumstances change too - this is a significant consideration.

There are a number of professions that generally require the practitioner to possess life experience and maturity beyond that of the average young person, and so tend to attract applicants aged over 21. All the healthcare/medical professions, education, law and social care

are obvious examples. As entry to these professions is likely to be of interest to learners at a point in their life when they might have already followed another course of education or training, affordable degree-level qualifications in these subjects should be regularly offered through local FE colleges.

Since April 2017, funding for FE in England has been provided through the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skillsfunding-agency>). [The ESFA has an annual budget of around £4 billion (unverified Wikipedia source)]. The ESFA funds education, apprenticeships, and training for 16 to 19-year olds, and for some people with disabilities aged up to 24.

There is some funding for learners aged over 19 to gain basic skills in English or Maths, and for adults who don't have any prior qualifications to train in certain subjects at 'Level 2', which is equivalent to GCSE - grade A\*, A, B or C, or old O-Level - grade A, B, or C.

For all other adult learners over 19, a National Careers Service provides advice, including regarding funding (e.g. via loans), but learners aged over 19 generally need to pay a full fee.

Fee reductions are available if, for example, the learner is registered as disabled or unemployed and in receipt of benefits.

Household income is taken into account when assessing eligibility for benefits, so it is possible that many adults who are unemployed and unable to pay fees or to take on debt, are currently excluded from FE, and thus limited in developing their career or entering employment. It is likely that unemployed women whose male domestic partner is in work, are disproportionately disadvantaged by household-income based means-testing for FE fees.

Finances and domestic commitments mean that many adults are limited to studying only in their local area. There is a gap in affordable FE provision in England that could be filled by establishing a publically-funded network of community colleges, of a similar model to the CEGEP

(General and Vocational Colleges) system in Quebec. Publically-funded community colleges organised on a co-operative model should be provided in each county of England.

## Further Education policy recommendations:

- Full-time education should be compulsory to the age of 18.
- All 16 to 18 year-olds should be eligible to apply for an educational maintenance allowance, equivalent in value to working 20 hours per week at minimum wage.
- Practical work-placements offered within an FE course can serve the same intended purpose as apprenticeships. This is also known as a “co-operative education programme”.
- Children should not be offered ‘only one go at education’. The short-term nature of work today means we need an adaptable workforce. Affordable learning opportunities must be offered throughout people’s lives.
- There is great social and personal economic value in FE colleges offering A-Level subjects such as Archaeology, Law, and Medicine.
- Public funding should be provided to cover the tuition fees of all learners, including those aged over 19, at FE community colleges.
- A network of community colleges, organised on a co-operative model, should be established in each of the counties of England.

### Higher Education (HE) in England

Entry to most professions in the UK requires post-secondary level, and sometimes postgraduate level, qualifications.

While professional qualifications are predominantly offered by universities, they can be provided through FE colleges as well.

In the public services, nurses, paramedics, forensic scientists, and officers in the armed forces, to give just some examples, are graduates, and often hold post-graduate qualifications. Police officers remain the significant exception. It can easily be argued that policing today more than ever requires a high technical level of education, and that police forces in England should introduce a graduate-only recruitment policy, alongside offering Continuing Professional Development courses to their existing officers.

Funding cuts since 2010 have had negative impacts across the public sector. Moreover, cuts in funding health and social care degree courses at universities, and a consequent drop in enrolment, have coincided with a recruitment and retention crisis in the NHS in England. The current difficulty in recruiting staff who have already been trained abroad, is undoubtedly connected to the uncertainty potential foreign workers feel following the 2016 referendum decision for the UK to leave the European Union.

Staff retention has likely been adversely affected by government funding cuts that mean pay and working conditions in health and social care have reached a point that many workers find unacceptable. There is also a recruitment and retention problem in primary and secondary school-level education in England, as funding cuts and major - and seemingly arbitrary - reorganisations have made conditions increasingly difficult for teachers.

To help improve recruitment and retention in the public sector, graduate and post-graduate level training for all the public service professions should be provided through local FE community colleges, with tuition fees being fully publically funded.

There is no doubt that the cost of HE in England is a problem for prospective students. However, it is less clear whether universities in England are seriously concerned about the primary source of their

income, e.g. whether it is coming wholly or in part from public funding that amounts to the full-economic cost of courses, or whether tuition fees come entirely from the students (who typically have taken out large personal loans).

Universities should be specifically questioned by the government regarding their business models, and the decision to publically-fund tuition fees for all degree courses equally should be made in conjunction with the universities.

The inequality in tuition fees charged by universities to residents of England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales is an extraordinary and inexplicable situation, that cannot continue. In September 2017, students at English universities will be charged up to £9250 per year. Scottish students at universities in Scotland will be charged up to £1820, and EU students in Scotland will also be charged £1820, but English students at universities in Scotland will pay the £9000 fees. Welsh students who study in Wales have only been liable for the first £3000 to £4000 of their tuition fees, and Northern Irish universities likewise now charge NI residents around £4000. English students in Wales are charged the £9000 fees, even if other EU citizens have effectively been paying around £3600 to study at Welsh universities. The reasonable solution might be to charge a £3000 fee across the UK.

## Higher Education policy recommendations:

- Affordable professional degrees should be provided through public funding to cover the tuition fees of students following degree and post-graduate level courses in all public service subjects at FE community colleges.
- Police officers should be educated to degree-level.
- The decision to transfer the burden of university tuition fees in England away from the students and back to the State, must come on the recommendation of English universities themselves;



universities should be encouraged to re-assess their business models in light of their charitable status and social responsibilities.

- The current situation, that students who are normally resident in different countries of the UK pay different university tuition fees, is unfair and untenable.

## Andy Allen

Please see submitted academic abstract.

Read submission at

<https://party.coop/submissions/education/attachments/1>

## David Bainbridge

### **What is your biggest concern in regard to the education system in your area?**

Locally, the Cooperative Retail Society appears to be managed by personnel who's education appears seriously wanting in the basics of retail management! I would like to see basic standards of literacy and numeracy extended to foundations in the principles of good business management, customer relations and economic competition!

### **What changes have taken place in education in your area?**

A relentless drive towards academic qualification with an utter neglect of vocational, artistic and trade-skilled achievements!

### **What is your local communities experience of education?**

From an early pioneer of the Comprehensive system to the dogma of an "Academy"!

### **How could education be improved in your local community?**

Offer a broader spectrum of opportunity.

### **What is your view of co-operation and co-operative values and principles in education?**

My view is that Cooperation has the potential to make all participants a winner if managed efficiently.

### **How could local and national government support be changed to support co-operative education?**

Such change is beyond my most idealistic expectation!

### **What opportunities are there for co-operative values to be applied to and taught within Higher Education and lifelong learning sectors?**

Opportunities are limited by the ethos subscribed to and broadcast by Margaret Thatcher (and lingers on) that "There is no such thing as Society"! By the stages of Higher Education it's too late. Cooperation needs to be taught at the same time as native language!

## **David Dawson**

As Chair of Governors of a VA funded Catholic school which faces the prospect of joining a MAT, I would strongly urge a more co-operative less corporate alternative Structure closer to our current arrangements

whilst being very supportive of partnerships between schools David Dawson Bury St Edmunds Suffolk.

## Deborah Mitchell

We believe that Co-operative schools should commit to mainstreaming peace education to help young people respond to conflict positively and be peacemakers in the world. Evidence shows that a practical commitment to empowering children and young people can transform outcomes.

### Implementing peace education should include:

- Democratic Peacebuilding: Students having space to participate in decisions that affect them so they can build peace within the school;
- Co-operative Peacemaking: Establishing whole school restorative approaches so young people can share responsibility for resolving conflict;
- Active Citizens: Committing curriculum time to prepare students to be active citizens in their community, nationally, and internationally.

### Living out co-operative values

Co-operation on the curriculum is a commitment of the Co-operative Party<sup>1</sup>: "Co-operative values and skills can empower young people as active citizens, and embed civil society skills. These should be:

- "Embedded in the curriculum across early years,
- "Children for young people can be agents primary and secondary education."

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<sup>1</sup>

Co-operative values are rooted in fairness and responsibility. Treating young people equitably means accepting their right to have a voice in conflict, in their school, and as democratic citizens.

Co-operative Party policy states that “Cooperative values and skills can empower young people as active citizens, and embed civil society skills.”<sup>1</sup>

Peace education provides the opportunity to turn these principles into practical policy.

UNICEF states that:

*“Peace education is an essential component of quality basic education.”<sup>2</sup> UNICEF defines peace education as “the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behaviour changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural; to resolve conflict peacefully; and to create the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level.”*

Co-operative schools are well-placed to integrate these principles with everyday practice.

## Challenges facing young people

### Mental Health

Young people face increasing challenges to their wellbeing and mental health at School. These factors are recognised as relevant for their attainment, and relevant when assessing the gap between the attainment of disadvantaged students (pupil premium) and the attainment of other students.

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<sup>1</sup> Education Policy Paper, 2013 | <https://party.coop/wp.../blogs.../Education-Policy-Paper-Annual-Conference-2013.docx>

<sup>2</sup> Peace Education in UNICEF, 1999 | <https://www.unicef.org/education/files/PeaceEducation.pdf>

## Bullying

At a practical daily level, the experience of bullying or conflict which is badly managed, can cause profound and lasting harm. It is acknowledged by the Department of Education that 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' is an important responsibility for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies. The [key document](#) was updated July 4th 2017.

## Gangs

The pressure to participate in group or gang behaviour which is not right for the individual child, or associated confusion around relationships and identity can also cause profound problems. These are discussed in depth by our colleague organisation '[Leap Confronting Conflict](#)'

## Racism

In 2017 there is serious cause for concern about racism - [here](#) is some recently published research

Childline figures show that: there were more than 2,500 counselling sessions in the last three years about racial and faith based bullying (Source NSPCC 28th June 2017)

## Integrating practical Peace Education

Peace education practices have been shown to have a real impact.

Democratic Peacebuilding: Students having space to participate in decisions that affect them so they can build peace within the school;

Pupils should have a voice in their school as peacebuilders. The Co-operative is well placed in terms of reach and values to develop democratic schools in which young people participate in decisions. Peace education in this form helps young people be peace builders-speaking about for fairness and justice in the school community. The

major benefits according to UNICEF are those that enable “individuals to develop into more competent and confident members of society, and those that improve the organization and functioning of communities.”

UNICEF draws on the work of R. Hart to differentiate token participation or manipulation from genuinely shared decision-making.

Co-operative Peacemaking: Establishing whole school restorative approaches so young people can share responsibility for resolving conflict;

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, in its concluding observations of its last review of the United Kingdom, recommended more human rights and conflict resolution education to address bullying<sup>1</sup>.

Conflict is a part of life, but at present society is preparing young people haphazardly, perhaps even harmfully, to deal with it. Children have the right to be heard when decisions affect them, whether in the context of the family, the school, or society at large. Successful restorative programmes in schools show young people can be empowered to be peacemakers, sharing in responsibility for finding solutions. Whether through mediation, conferencing or

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), which have long been on the forefront of developing peace education in Britain, states: “the UK government has done little to fulfil this obligation. While excellent initiatives have taken place to tackle violence in schools, this has been with sparse state support. Schools and civil society organisations have worked to introduce successful mediation and restorative justice programmes in schools and training for young people, but this provision is variable and depends on availability of local or civil society initiatives.”

This need not remain the status quo. As it expands its work in schools, the Cooperative movement is in a position to change this at the grassroots.

<sup>1</sup> Concluding observations (2016) CERD/C/GBR/CO/21-23 | [http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CERD/C/GBR/CO/21-23&Lang=En](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CERD/C/GBR/CO/21-23&Lang=En)

According to the Restorative Justice Council, restorative approaches in schools can improve attendance and address problems such as bullying, classroom behaviour and pupil disputes.<sup>1</sup>

Benefits of peace education<sup>2</sup>:

- provide young people with opportunities to learn about themselves and each other through the development of positive relationships and the constructive resolution of conflict.
- Restorative approaches provide a language and framework for integrating these opportunities with social and emotional learning on a daily basis.
- Finding ways to live out principles such as equality and diversity and values such as tolerance and respect for self and others.
- Restorative Approaches support transitions as they can be adapted from key stage 1 to employability on leaving school or college or university.
- The language and framework is positive and accessible, relevant also for parents and family life, so can generate and strengthen relationships between schools and parents, and contribute to the development of the wider school community.

Active Citizens: Committing curriculum time to prepare students to be active citizens in their community, nationally, and internationally.

Schools are responsible for equipping young people to be active citizens. This begins in the school community, but should reach out to the world. Existing programmes such as Go-Givers, Peace Jam and Amnesty International's schools programme help thousands of children and

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<sup>1</sup>

<https://www.restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-practice-schools>

<sup>2</sup>

Cremin and Bevington, Positive Peace in Schools

young people be active citizens, turning their values into action even at a primary school level.

## Doug James

### Education questionnaire

**What is your biggest concern in regard to the education system in your area?**

Summer Holiday gap.

**What changes have taken place in education in your area?**

Improving local Primary Schools now all Ofsted rated good.

**What is your local communities experience of education?**

Low aspiration poor levels of educational attainment

**How could education be improved in your local community?**

Summer Provison

**What is your view of co-operation and co-operative values and principles in education?**

Fully support cooperative Schools in all Areas

**How could local and national government support be changed to support co-operative education?**

Make Cooperative Schools default option for all failing Schools



What opportunities are there for co-operative values to be applied to and taught within Higher Education and lifelong learning sectors?

## **Summer Provision Cooperative Apprenticeships Funding to support pupils into Uni.**

We need a Cooperative approach to tackling serious local issues such as:

1. Holiday Hunger
2. Educational standards of children going to First Primary School
3. Access to affordable art and play equipment
4. Safe Play & Sport Opportunities
5. Capacity build for Volunteers
6. Accreditation on skills first aid, child protection
7. Culture through history, language and stories.
8. Info, advice & guidance to families.

For too long at the end of Term an exhausted and resource drained School or Service breaks for a lengthy holiday. Through a cooperative structure we can open up existing resources and use local skills.

A patchwork 'offer' of one day events or activities is available and often weather dependent.

Cooperative must fill this vacuum and create a National, Regional Summer Cooperative to deliver the above. Bringing communities together and empowering people to organise in a Cooperative led structure.

# **Dr Michael Parakos**

## **Compulsory Arts Education in Schools**

Proposal that this party believes in the centrality of the arts to the education of all children, and will require that schools be required to provide all children, regardless of background or wealth, with the opportunity to take part in practical visual art, music, drama and dance activities on a weekly basis as part of the compulsory education curriculum.

### **Background**

The arts sector is one of the most dynamic in Britain, and is not only the source of pride and pleasure for tens of millions of people across the country each week, but contributes to the economic health of Britain. Scientific studies have also shown time and again that the arts benefits the health and well-being of people in society, thereby taking pressure of the National Health Service and social services.

However, the continued success of the arts is dependent on schools being able to offer children the opportunity to participate and enjoy the arts from a young age until their teenage years. Not only does this benefit the children's well-being, it gives early experience of arts activities to future artists, musicians, actors and dancers, and gives other children a love of the arts that many will carry into later life. But with cuts to school funding and pressures on the curriculum the place of arts in schools is becoming increasingly difficult.

As a result, the arts are in danger of becoming the preserve only of the wealthy, as poorer children in poorer schools are denied opportunities in the arts.

All of this has been exacerbated in recent years by the increasing prominence given to STEM subjects which has the potential to penalise those schools that continue to offer arts in their timetable.

Without action to require schools to offer children the opportunity to take part in arts activities on a weekly basis, the skill and international prestige enjoyed by the British arts world today is under threat, and children from poorer backgrounds are being denied the opportunity to make and enjoy the arts on an equal footing with their wealthier peers.

## Eileen Driver

Since Finland and other Scandinavian countries usually enable their young students to achieve the highest international results at 18 often through an education system which contains many Co-op values and principles, why not try to use some of their methods, such as

- No testing til students are 14, but much reporting to parents as to how students are progressing. Teachers usually know the parents very well and communicate often.
- Students not beginning formal education til 7. Helps boys to achieve better results at 17.
- Learning in teams!! Rather than focus on individual. This does enable the individual to thrive?

## Jack Whitehead

I do hope the published paper I sent on you about enhancing professionalism with master and doctor educators made sense to you. I believe that the Cooperative Party could develop an Educational Policy that focuses on enhancing professionalism in education. No other political party has produced an educational policy that focuses on enhancing professionalism through continuing professional development programmes that focused on improving the quality of pupil and student learning with teacher CPD enquiries of the kind, 'How do I

improve what I am doing with values and understanding that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity?" The paper I sent to you is based on such a CPD programmes I tutored at the University of Bath, with the evidence-based explanations of teachers as they gained their masters degrees. The Country still does not have a body that recognises the embodied knowledge of master and doctor educators. The Cooperative Party could lead the way in campaigning for this recognition.

Read attached article at

<https://party.coop/submissions/education/attachments/2>

## Jim Dewey

Regarding "Education", the commitment to the "comprehensive" principle. Do remember, in being "comprehensive", the needs of the individual student should never be ignored. One hat doesn't fit ALL.

## Joe Gluza

### Education questionnaire

#### What is your biggest concern in regard to the education system in your area?

How will overseas students at our universities be affected by Brexit and what will happen to jobs given reduction in universities' incomes?

#### What changes have taken place in education in your area?

Staff from EU uncertain for their futures

#### What is your local communities experience of education?

Very variable. One of our 6th form colleges is excellent. Some of our secondary schools are abysmal.

How could education be improved in your local community?

we need more affordable housing for school staff, and university staff. And get rid of managerialism.

### **What is your view of co-operation and co-operative values and principles in education?**

I would like to see some. So called "cooperative schools" are no different from the rest.

### **How could local and national government support be changed to support co-operative education?**

Adding co-operation to PGCE courses.

### **What opportunities are there for co-operative values to be applied to and taught within Higher Education and lifelong learning sectors?**

Lots of opportunities in Business Education if only there were the teachers

## **John Rose**

### **Education questionnaire**

### **What is your biggest concern in regard to the education system in your area?**

Its over focus on education in school with its externally validated examination process

### **What changes have taken place in education in your area?**

Moved some deckchairs around

### **How could education be improved in your local community?**

Broadening its focus to include community based education and learning

### **What is your view of co-operation and co-operative values and principles in education?**

Needs to catch up with the debate in Europe on broadening education and learning beyond the classroom

### **How could local and national government support be changed to support co-operative education?**

A more effective hearing aid to enable them listen more effectively

### **What opportunities are there for co-operative values to be applied to and taught within Higher Education and lifelong learning sectors?**

Very few

## **Introduction**

There is a need to broaden the idea of education to include non-formal education and informal learning of the sort delivered by a well-resourced and well supported Youth Service. This organisation would be underpinned by the concept of developing for young people a 'life worth

living' that is individually determined but linked to social responsibility. Youth Work in Wales would be driven by a 'young people first approach' concerned to enable young people to seek and answer the central questions of self - 'what sort of person am I?' 'What kind of relationships do I want to have with myself and others?' 'What kind of society do I want to live in?' Integral to this process is the issue of identity, an exploration of 'who am I?' Consequently, Youth work should be very much focused on developing opportunities for young people that enables them to develop their emotional competence. This includes increasing levels of confidence and self-motivation, improving self-awareness, motivation and self-worth, developing the ability to maintain and sustain relationships in a wide range of settings and developing empathy and consideration for others. Unfortunately, this is rarely the approach in an environment overly concerned with externally validated qualifications. This is, I believe, to the disadvantage of Welsh Society.

## **How best can the Co-operative Party encourage this approach?**

By develop 'political projects' that reflect the identified interests of young people. These could initially be short or medium term activities focused on specific priorities that young people relate to e.g. employment, unemployment, transport, housing, welfare, education, environment, sport, music, social networking. This approach would be part of a wider community response to the identified needs of young people, which are most often linked to educational, emotional, welfare and social needs. It would be underpinned by a complementary form of education seen as part of the response to society's moral obligation to young people carried out in partnership with school, employment, local community, and family endeavours.

Young people would become involved through this process with real life situations in which choices must be made based on ethical considerations. It should become a process underpinned by the importance of young people developing interests and being passionate about them. From such interests, other initiatives can be developed within the broad themes of 'Social Projects' and 'Education'. These could



be concerned for example with diminishing the gap between youth and adult society, working in schools to improve the social climate and managing occasions where large groups of young people meet at sporting events, cultural events and festivals. Strategies could also be developed to guide young people into adulthood through a range of activities such as residential activities, study visits and charity work. The role of the adult in these programmes would be critical in that it clearly recognises that young people need to mix with adults to participate, contribute and to learn. It would be a process concerned with real life politics not the politics of the powerful.

## **How can the Co-operative Party change the way politics works so it is more inclusive and able to communicate more effectively with young people?**

Make the process more inclusive by developing short or medium term activities linked to the identified passions of young people. Rebrand the process. Change the term politics to 'community involvement' or 'community action' or something else that young people feel comfortable with. Provide positive role models from the world of politics who are less adversarial and more inclusive in fundamental ways. Make a much more effective link between young people's participation and decision making and action. Stop using the political process to demonise young people. Start using the political process to encourage and motivate young people. Publicly tell all young people about their potential

This type of approach is important because most young people feel that mainstream politics are not relevant to their concerns because too often it is not. Mechanisms need to be set up to engage young people from all sectors of society in the decisions that affect what goes on in their lives. These mechanisms need to involve young people in a flexible and creative way to reflect their varying interests, aspirations and current abilities. It is a process that requires the intervention and support of specialist educationalists. This requires a different approach to engaging young people in the decision-making processes that affect them. First, through a process that is participative and empowering and linked to real life situations. Second, through the development and use of a range

of specific communication methods that is used most often by young people. A recent survey of 426 young people across Wales aged 14-19 identified that 87% of them used Social Networking sites several times a day 91% indicated that they could not imagine life without a mobile phone. 76.9% of respondents said they spent most of their leisure time alone online. This is not to suggest an easy answer, but to indicate the possibility of new approaches particularly when the approach is linked to specific interests of young people.

## **What are the barriers to political involvement faced by young people?**

Young people too often feel subservient, disinterested and distant from political processes that they have no part in developing or delivering. Young people too often see the political process as undermining their status as young people.

There are many examples of School Councils and Youth Forums, that are too often replicas of the procedure-driven way politicians appear to carry out their work. These have generally been imposed from above rather than through a participative process. They are too often seen as conservative, sterile and predetermined and failing to act too often on the decision made by young people. There is, consequently, a rejection by them of their involvement in the traditional political process as can be evidenced by the relatively low numbers of 18-25 year olds voting, or even bothering to register to vote.

## **What role should the Youth Service rather than schools have in educating young people about politics and wider citizenship issues?**

Schools do not have enough time to effectively manage all the responsibilities they have been given. Only 9 minutes of every waking hour of a young person of compulsory school age is spent in school. 51 minutes is spent in the community. Rowan Williams recognised this in

his Dimpleby Lecture in 2002 when he said “school bears an impossible burden of trying to create a ‘culture’ practically on its own, because the institutions that help shape a story for life are not around. Family continuity is rare; conventional religious practice is minimal; shared public activity is unusual. Those who are taught come from and go to a social environment in which common life, in the simplest sense, has often become problematic. Work and relationships tend to be equally transient”.

As a consequence, consideration needs to be given to maximising out of school time for the benefit of young people and as part of an empowering and participative process involving them in the lives of their communities. This could be achieved by using the un-hypothecated £40 million per year (an estimated £300 million + during the last decade or so from the Welsh Government for Youth Work) in a more creative way to promote active citizenship and the social empowerment of young people during their leisure time. This Youth Work approach would be concerned with getting young people more active, developing citizenship skills and supporting personal citizenship. Active citizenship would require voluntary participation in economic, social, cultural and political activities delivered in an outcome driven non-formal education learning framework outside of school. Learning would be part of an activity not necessarily its main point.

The answer to developing young people’s growth and development in a way that encourages active citizenship and personal citizenship requires a more holistic approach to education and learning than that found in school. Non-formal education and informal learning outside of school should be primarily concerned with supporting growth into citizenship and developing skills for active citizenship by;

- promoting participation in the labour market, cultural life, education and public decision making;
- creating opportunities for discussing topics such as identity, knowledge and moral issues;

- practicing and developing participatory pedagogy;
- developing participation skills in practice

To maintain at least parity with educational developments in many other countries consideration needs to be given to developing a complementary education approach that uses methods used in many elite British schools. This approach would be concerned to achieve the bullet points above through simple but effective strategies linked to young people's passions. For example, young-people-managed societies, sports clubs and music events are easily identified possibilities. This approach would be about not discouraging individualism or the pursuit of dreams and aspirations.

Political ideas need to reflect the reality of young people's lives and what they are passionate about. If it is the intention to empower young people and consequently increase their participation they need to be included in creating, designing, deciding on, implementing and evaluating projects. However, this can not be done without support and as part of a process where participation is seen as both a process and an opportunity for learning. Underpinning this approach is a commitment to a collaborative approach between the young person and the non-formal educator who is a key element of the learning process.

## **What does not work?**

The existing model of involving young people in active citizenship during their leisure time leading to their social empowerment is not effective. Young people are too often offered the opportunity to make choices and decisions but very little opportunity to enact them.

Believing that school is the only effective place where young people can be educated or where they learn.

## What does work? What could work?

- A strategic approach over a five year or ten-year period for the Youth Service using existing resources with clear goals and outcomes linked to the promotion of active citizenship and the social empowerment of young people during their leisure time. Active citizenship would require a programme of real life activities through participation in economic, social, cultural and political life. This would need to be done in a way that not only increased the knowledge and understanding of young people but also created enthusiasm, motivation and skills as well as practical experiences in active citizenship.
- The availability of a well-qualified Youth Service workforce committed to the delivery of the strategic plan
- That a national system is developed in a way that is not dependent on its organisation, management and delivery being within 22 local authorities, where there is a potential to spend the un- hypothecated budget on locally determined priorities diluting its collective ability to adhere to a core philosophical position which can also be subsumed by competing political and managerial priorities.
- That the national system develops a network of existing physical resources across Wales which into centres of excellence concerned to involve young people in a wide range of non-formal community based learning through, for example, the performing arts, sport, outdoor activities and the visual arts.
- That the work of the national system focuses on an agreed priority age range, of young people aged 13 to 19 years.
- That a national structure ensures the continuation of local delivery of agreed programmes. Strategic management and the management

of corporate activities such as training, quality standards and quality assurance systems, and programme development could, however, be carried out on a regional or national basis.

- That the national system develops strategies to more appropriately meet the needs of young people by maximising the times their service is accessible to young people by opening more often at weekends and during school holidays.
- That those working within the national system be directed to link the skills development of young people to an intentional learning process that is voluntarily entered, through a broad spectrum of activities that young people find enjoyable, challenging and appealing.
- Consideration should be given to existing models of good practice in this country and elsewhere.
- Have the ambition to become world leaders in the field of non-formal education and informal learning as a means of increasing young people's activity, developing citizenship skills and supporting personal citizenship.

A new model is required with a 'Made in Wales' approach.

## John Smithy

Has society lost its way when it has failed our young people on this scale?

An insight into the crisis within the Youth Service in 2013. It appears this service has been lost to our young people of 2017

It is now apparent that spending cuts to local services and government programmes already hit young people disproportionately. As councils drove ahead to shed services in face of major budget cuts, throughout

the UK youth clubs and projects, young people's volunteering schemes and range of voluntary led youth programmes have all been lost. At the centre of all there were hundreds of thousands of young people. Youth work support that was available to them through a range of initiatives no longer exists. This arose at a very critical time for young people with special needs or going through a personal crisis.

Personal development achieved in acquiring new skills and experience is recognised as a youth service achievement but is now lost through these cuts. The valuable youth worker role as an informal educator and role model is being lost when it is needed more than ever. Through clubs, projects and other initiatives the engagement with young people is youth workers essential role as well as supporting the vulnerable and at critical times during their adolescence. Youth workers are trusted by young people as well as being highly committed and qualified. Loss of these skilled staff and positive role model will cause long term damage.

The present youth service, created fifty years ago, is now being dismantled by the sheer scale and speed of the Government's cuts in public spending. It appears that the youth service has now been the first public service to go, and has destroyed years of professional expertise committed to partnership and volunteer working. These cuts are starved voluntary- youth organisations of funding as well. Denying 400,000 young people the opportunity to volunteer. The hardest hit has been open access youth clubs and centres, which are reduced or axed, with a loss of 3,000 full-time youth worker jobs. Through its partnership ethos and shared funding the youth service has not been an expensive service. It does not deserve these levels of government cuts which in the end marginalise young people most in need.

The reality is that today commissioning out is being pushed by government agenda to a field within which youth work and youth services are being savagely cut. It is being transformed without negotiation; at a time when young people themselves are 'up in arms' about what is happening to services they cherish. There is very strong feeling on transferring to managing agents and losing the ethical pride left in "youth work". Perhaps this agenda is being driven by those who

feel they will benefit from the parts of the service being commissioned out.

To make this situation worse there is a failure by many local authorities to comply with conventions on consulting young people as users on major changes proposed through the cuts agenda. Involvement of young people and staff in considering these changes are fundamental to the youth service. European and UN conventions on human rights are not being observed. The requirement under the Lisbon Treaty that specifically states young people should be consulted on changes to services affecting them was ignored. Many local authorities have not fully complied with these conventions. There are also questions about whether their own policies and procedures have been applied during the change process.

A full consultative process involving young people was required, a right as users of this valuable public service. Managers & elected members only wanted to go for commissioning out ignoring users & staff representatives.

The voluntary nature of young people's participation is fundamental to the youth service. It is not compatible with the youth justice statutory role. There has been real concern over integrating these conflicting services together within a single support structure for young people. The failure to consider these implications has been apparent within many local authorities who should have known better.

The demise of professional qualified youth workers has been at the centre of this crisis. They have provided valuable guidance and support to a wide range of voluntary community projects targeting vulnerable young people. The loss of these experienced staff today is happening at the same time as local authorities conspire to move away from professional JNC pay and qualifications. It appears that senior managers brought in (on very high salary) to make these cuts have little or no understanding of the youth service as well as its values and ethics. Their lack of experience in managing change processes was so apparent in their lack of understanding policies and procedures as



well as the rights of users and all staff to be fully consulted throughout the change process. The effect of these failings has been a process of de-professionalising the youth service, in the current austerity, when it is more than ever needed. This has taken place without considering the implications for thousands of young people.

Who stands up for young people today with further damaging cuts in the pipeline? Join the action to save the professional Youth Service by supporting the 'Choose Youth' Campaign. Young people across the country made very clear points about losing local youth facilities and youth workers in the October 11 rally at Westminster. 'Choose Youth' has made a significant achievement with over 30 voluntary youth sector organisations and trade unions arriving at a new Manifesto 'Our Vision for a New Youth Service' in February 2013. 'Choose Youth' aimed to fulfil their statutory duty to provide youth work in three areas: positive activities, decision making by young people and 14 – 19 learning further to section 507B Education Act 1996.

For more information about this campaign and to sign up your support for this manifesto please visit: [www.chooseyouth.org](http://www.chooseyouth.org) or follow on Twitter @chooseyouth.

Thanks to the following for information in this article: 'Choose Youth', 'In Defence of Youth Work' and 'UNITE CYW Not For Profit Sector'

## Joy Walton

### Education questionnaire

How could education be improved in your local community?

PSHE -littering in particular, there is a section of society who throw rubbish out of cars, as they walk along, who need education, in some form or another- ads, social media, school visits, teaching packs- about the effect of litter on the environment, on the community. It is an issue that should be addressed by schools as part of OSHE- but there needs to be more training of teachers in PSHE and higher priority in the hierarchy of subjects .It covers, rights, responsibilities, citizenship and co-operation . Local shops need to keep areas around the shops and car parks , pristine- this would be an education in it's self to the community the shop services .

### **What is your view of co-operation and co-operative values and principles in education?**

Much weakened by the individualistic model of teacher assessment -including the emphasis on data as a measure of success for a school or for a pupil. This destroys values of kindness , inclusion and quality of communication and collaboration , that are so fundamental in building a forward thinking, healthy society.

## **Kath Altham**

Cooperative education must include everyone. First and foremost the children must be included in reviewing curriculum content, teaching methodology, all school policies especially marking, homework setting, bullying, everything. They must be involved in governors, PTAs, Senior Management, building committees, well being groups, like Blackpool Rock they must be through the centre of everything. Let us not also forget to include all non teaching staff who often have a valuable insight into how everything "works". Also we really have to start engaging with society as a whole who seem to think all children in schools lack respect for all teachers and are very badly behaved. These ideas need getting rid of and we have a duty to our children to praise, rejoice in and celebrate

what they do. Surely we can start putting positive ideas into the media and stop giving schools and pupils bad press. Children and young people are wonderful. I have concrete suggestions about all of this e. g. at end of each module every subject is evaluated as to content, marking, variety of teaching and learning opportunities - by the students. Focus groups of students discuss live issues. I am a retired teacher.

## Phil Harris

### Education questionnaire

#### What is your biggest concern in regard to the education system in your area?

Children with NO education because they have been excluded from schools and there is not enough capacity at the Short Stay School for Norfolk, which is part of the Engage Multi Academy Trust.

#### What changes have taken place in education in your area?

Increase in the number of children that have been excluded from school, particularly Primary Age Children

#### What is your local communities experience of education?

Norfolk County Council children services has had a bad ofsted and there have been many heads of children services. The department is in a mess. The High Needs block is greatly overspent which could result in cuts to AP provision.

#### How could education be improved in your local community?

Greater number of places for children excluded from school. More pressure on schools to take children back once they have spent time at the short stay school.

### **What is your view of co-operation and co-operative values and principles in education?**

See the Engage Trust and how it has incorporated co-operative values.

### **How could local and national government support be changed to support co-operative education?**

Education of Local Authority Officers about Co-operative Education.

I am the chair of the Engage multi academy Trust, which was set up with the help of co-operative college.

<http://www.engagetrust.org.uk/>

The Engage Trust exists to provide high quality education and ensure progress for all our children and young people by developing a high quality network of alternative provision / specialist academies and services, through the promotion of the core values of the co-operative movement.

We are an Alternative Provision Academy providing short stay provision for children who have been excluded from school, have mental health problems etc.

As we have to work with all schools we thought that the co-operative model suited us best.

Pupil exclusion are on the increase nationally, particularly amongst primary age children yet when it comes to policy this is always omitted as very few people fully understand the challenges and problems. Funding is never sufficient as main stream schools are always seen as a priority.

One of our bases has recently featured on Channel 4

<http://www.channel4.com/programmes/excluded-at-seven>

<https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2017/jul/26/excluded-at-seven-review-a-sort-of-educating-naughty-norfolk>

<http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/education/what-a-great-school-rosebery-is-viewers-applaud-king-s-lynn-school-for-problem-children-in-wake-of-channel-4-documentary-excluded-at-seven-1-5122520>

I believe there is the need for a whole section with the Co-operative Party policy covering this sector of education and I am happy to work with the party on this. In the run up to the school summer holidays I have been too busy with all my with all my commitments to give a fuller response.

## Philip Watson

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE ALL TEACHERS IN SCHOOLS TO BE QUALIFIED

I WOULD ALSO RECOMEND LEAS PLAY A GREATER ROLE IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

FURTHER EDUCATION COLLEGES ECT. RETURNED TO DEMOCRATIC CONTROL BEFORE CORPORATION STATUS WAS APPLIED IN1993

EDUCATION MAINTAINANCE ALLOWENCES RESTORED

STUDEND LOANS ONLY REPAID OVER A LONGER TIME AND A LARGER THRESHOLD BEFORE YOU PAY

SPECIAL NEEDS ASSESSMENTS FULLY FUNDED

COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES APPLIED TO STATE SCHOOLS

## **Roger Whiting**

Force all private schools to pay back the cost to the state of training their teachers.

Remove all charity based concessions from private schools.

## **Ronald Fisher**

More qualified teachers to be employed

More money to be budgeted for schools

Smaller class sizes

Times tables to be recited every day in primary school

Languages to be taught in primary school

More but shorter holidays throughout the year

Pupils to become part of the community.eg visiting hospitals, old peoples homes, businesses etc.

## **Viv Chasey**

I would like to respond to the 2017 Policy consultation document on Education (as invited in an email to members from Anne Birley)

P13 mentions support for school governors, which I feel is important (I'm a parent governor myself).

I would like to suggest support for Governor networks as a policy. I'm thinking here of networks open to governors of all schools in a particular geographical area. (They already exist – but seem to be stronger in some places than others and could be encouraged/ supported including financially).

p15 mentions exam boards. I would like to see the possibility of new qualifications for senior school students explored. I'm not suggesting rapid change – but additional and alternative qualifications to GCSEs. One way to give pupils more of a say in their own education would be to offer more choice in study options. In terms of immediate policy a starting point might be a think tank?

## **William Carter**

### **The Political Philosophy Education Campaign**

#### **Introduction- Mission statement**

"Education, Education, Education", captivating a nation, Tony Blair's election in 1997 may have been down to many compounded factors. However, the power of this rhetorical device must be subjugated rather than thought of as a gimmick. Espousing pragmatism as the grounds for his educational policy rather than ideology, he refined an already established but not widely prevalent idea. The idea that increasing choice improves education. It's this niche that I believe the proposed Political Philosophy Education programme feeds into. If not by compatibility, then by a carefully crafted reimagining of what it means to have a choice.

Nationalism in the face of globalisation, populism in the face of stagnation are key debates of our time. Although these ideas are ever present, and thus increasingly difficult to escape from, the inherent

meaning within them often eludes our young people. They may know the sides of the debate, but they do not know the terms. Knowing that liberty is something we promote in the face of terror, but not possessing the knowledge to make an informed choice as to whether this is truly, or even should be the case. Understanding that behind actions are ideologies, belief systems and ideas, but not quite knowing what to make of them, or even how to frame an argument to make sense of them. This is not a symptom symbolic of a broken Britain or even a tired one, but a country who after fighting off the evil of 'Nazism' instituted a programme of Religious Education and thought the jobs done. Or after growing political apathy encouraged the teaching of Citizenship, strengthened teach first, improved school facilities, broadened the humanities or sciences or bolstered vocational education and then asked what else can be done.

Without fully understanding the foundations of our children's education, we should not be so uninformed as to cynically disapprove of a teenager who understands that the terms 'multiculturalism' and 'tolerance' exist. But in no way, has a grasp of the many constituent ideas, debates and history that has gone into its common usage. Moreover, instead of blaming the school, or focusing all efforts on teaching them about politics through parliament or political systems. Teach politics through its philosophy, through its underlying constituent parts.

We often view the purposes of education through the prisms of the economy, knowledge creation, and social change. And thus, import certain policy ideas onto this prism before settling on a policy stance. This document contains a conception of an educational programme that will increase competitiveness as much as it does establish knowledge for knowledge sake all while steadily raising the opportunities of its participants. Political philosophy was needed before but can be enacted now. Therefore, please heed my mission, and indeed pay respect to my aims. To have a literate, numerate and philosophically grounded generation of young Britons that will undoubtedly lead the world. At a time where globalisation has seen to the increased sharing of knowledge but hasn't yet concerned itself with the understanding of it.



## About us- Structure and Formation

Based on a curriculum currently being designed by Dr Johnathan Floyd, a lecturer of Political Philosophy at the University of Bristol, and the logistical and outreach know-how of William Carter the chair of the campaign, we call for the introduction of political philosophy in the classroom.

Although not finalised, we envisage the curriculum being in the form of a 10-15-week programme that will see PhD students from participant universities, engage with people between the ages of 14-15 in a Socratic and safe environment. This project is currently in the exploratory phase and is looking for contributors from a diverse range of areas, who would be joining a lean campaign that is already working towards a formal partnership with several organisations.

The form of this curriculum, at the current moment, would take inspiration from the operating model of 'The Student View' in England and Wales, 'High Resolves' collective identity program in Australia and specific elements of genocide teaching in Rwanda. Taught over 10 hour long sessions we hope to initially target young people who are vulnerable to indoctrination, from a low economic background or failing to progress academically.

Although this campaign is run independently, it will seek to be partnered with or supported by politicians, leading educators, NGO's and other organisations. Therefore, on top of an expression of general interest, we are asking for an early commitment as to whether you would want to join the leading group of organisations and individuals, or whether you feel it more appropriate to advance as a contributor at the current point in time. While termed as a 'National Campaign', the main goal of this newly establish social enterprise is to introduce the changes through facilitating common-ground between those inside government and out. Thus, there will be no emphasis on gaining signatures, raising publicity, or even money per say. Its fundamental goal, however, will be gaining the relevant contacts and logistical know-how that's critical for a project of this size.

## Message from Chair

On a more personal note, as the chair of this organisation, as a Brit, a man, a person of dual heritage and bisexuality I have forgone a true understanding of myself to establish an understanding of others for others. And if I'm still struggling to find the time to further explore the meaning of the terms that denote my identity, that prescribe my personhood, as the chair of this organisation. It must be a sorry affair for the millions of other young Britons. Political philosophy in the classroom will not only equip young people for the wider world in helping them to understand the ideology and beliefs behind someone else's thinking/ actions. It can also play a critical part in helping them to understand their own cultural, religious, ethnic, sexual or gender identities that concern their own personhood – something that on a pastoral level, is of equal worth to its academic counterpart.

Sincerely,

- William James Carter
- Chair of The Political Philosophy Education Campaign
- Roles held Independent of this Campaign-
- Head of National Outreach – StandNow UK
- Advisory Board Member – The Student View

## Yawo D'almeida

### Education questionnaire

**What is your biggest concern in regard to the education system in your area?**

Education system in my area must be addressed by giving a budget by the government to build schools

### **What changes have taken place in education in your area?**

Changes that have taken place in education in my area are new rules have been introduced by the government. GCSE remains, Baccalaureate replace A-Level.

### **What is your local communities experience of education?**

My local communities experience of education is support of project of new school

### **How could education be improved in your local community?**

Education could be improved in my local community with new budget more schools better rules.

### **What is your view of co-operation and co-operative values and principles in education?**

My view of co-operation and and cooperative values and principles in education are connect schools to companies.

### **How could local and national government support be changed to support co-operative education?**

Local and national government support could be changed to support co-operative education with new measures budgeting building schools.

**What opportunities are there for co-operative values to be applied to and taught within Higher Education and lifelong learning sectors?**

Introduce co-operative values to Higher Education and lifelong learning sectors with new laws voted by parliament.



# politics for people

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