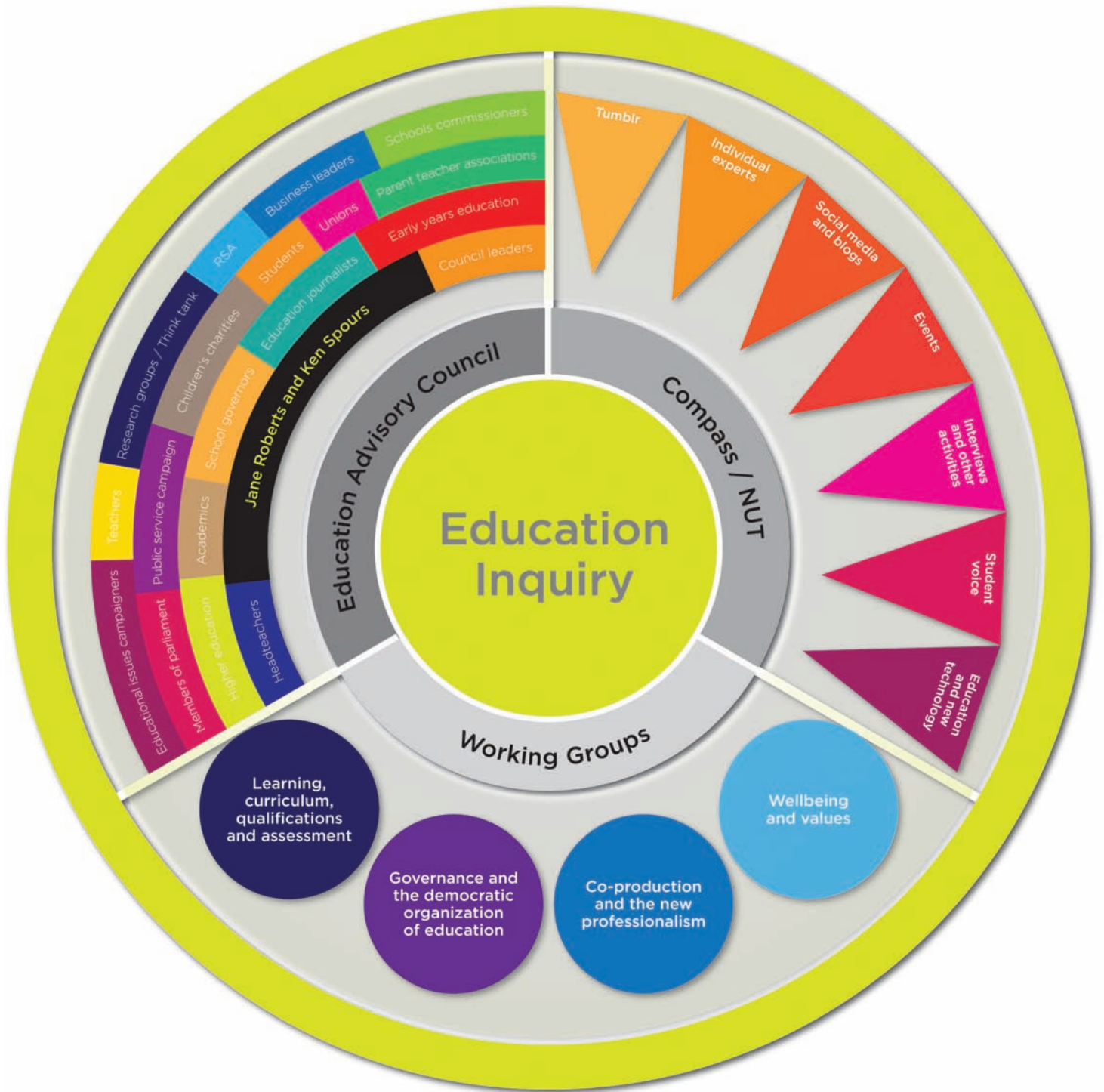


The Bloomsbury Paper

The Interim Report of the Inquiry into a 21st Century Education System



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Acknowledgments

The drafting of this Interim Report of the Inquiry into a New System of Education has been a collective endeavour. Not just the endeavour of those who actively participated in its production but the endeavour of those living and dead whose ideas and actions inspired and informed us. We stand on the shoulders of giants. The notes at the end list particular authors, papers and books that have guided us.

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- the members of the Advisory Council, which is chaired by Dame Jane Roberts; their names are listed at the end of this report
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- the Compass Education Organising Committee
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 - Learning, Curriculum and Qualifications
 - Local Governance, Democracy and Collaboration
 - Professionalism and Co-production
 - Values

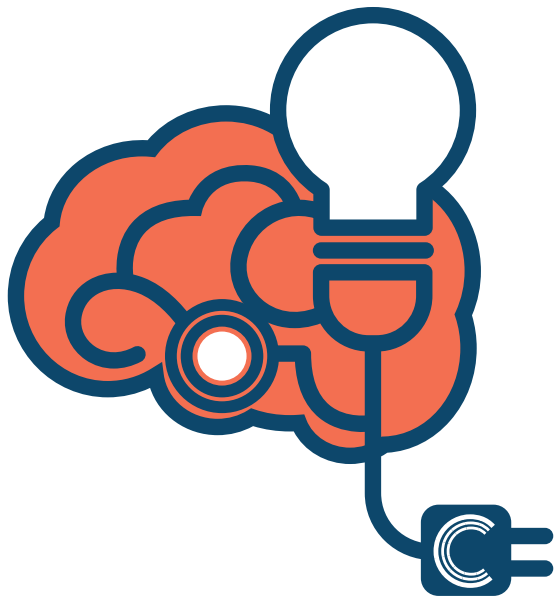
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It has been a joy learning together.

We want to know what you think!

Please do give us feedback on this document and especially the policy propositions on page 10. You can get in touch via email (rosie@compassonline.org.uk), phone (0207 463 0631), write to us (National Coordinator, Compass, Southbank House, Black Prince Road, London, SE1 7SJ), visit our website (www.compassonline.org.uk/education-inquiry) or get in touch on Twitter (@compassoffice)



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A 21st Century Education System



A 21st Century Education System

The need for change

The potential of education

In any society, beyond the physical survival of its members, education is probably the most important activity people can create together, for education, along with the family, is the means by which we understand and reach our full potential as human beings. Education can enable us to flourish as individuals, helps build cohesive communities and innovative enterprises, fosters the skills and knowledge to participate in the world, and provides ways of seeing beyond our current condition and reaching beyond our grasp. Education is society's prime means of helping us learn how we can live together.

What is wrong with the English system?

It is too centralised, competitive, individualised and backward looking. More importantly, successive governments, and in particular the current Coalition Government, have run education in England in such a way that the transformative and social potential of education is not realised. Power has become highly concentrated in the hands of ministers, resulting in constant politically and ideologically imposed change, which demoralises teachers, confuses students and parents, and marginalises key stakeholders like the business community. At the same time, furious competition between education providers has led to education provision becoming highly fragmented and the lack of collaboration is damaging the prospects of all learners, especially the

most vulnerable. Education has become more individualised and reduced to a 'positional or private good'. Its role in driving personal advantage has increased at the expense of working together to deliver personal achievement and a common good. Moreover, by prioritising traditional academic subjects, top-down learning and access to only the top universities, the Government is creating a curriculum that is elitist, divisive and out of touch with the demands of a globalised economy and the need to create a more cohesive society. Education, and its relationship with the economy, is also betraying a whole generation of the young, many of whom see little future beyond unemployment and hardship. Even those who achieve exam success are not being taught the adaptive and relational skills organisations like the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) are demanding. These young people and future generations deserve much better. Schools and other learning institutions are doing an amazing job for many students, but their success is largely despite the system not because of it.

There is at least a grain of truth in the Government's position

Despite these regressive features the Right has set forth a powerful set of propositions – that institutions should enjoy the freedom to innovate; young people should have access to what is termed 'powerful knowledge' and be aspirational; there is a positive role for the external motivation of education professionals; the basis of effective learning is to be found in a respectful and regulated environments; and good leadership is incredibly important. But we believe these aims can only be achieved through a more democratic and holistic approach to education



reform and not through the divisive 'half-model' being promoted by the current government.

There has to be a better way and there is

In schools, colleges, communities and workplaces, education professionals and their social partners are striving to build the capacity of their students and workers to become the very best they can be. Education standards have improved not only because of external pressures, but also because of the dedication of a whole range of professionals and partners to focus on the needs of their students in an ethos that is open, collaborative and participatory. Despite having been denied important powers, local authorities are trying hard to bring providers together to collaborate in the interests of all learners. The comprehensive ideal thus continues in hundreds of schools, colleges and other places of learning up and down the land.

A new democratic education system

We need a transformative moment for education

The aim of the Inquiry is to build on these efforts so the comprehensive ideal can be fully realised through the development of a new democratic education system. This will be less centralised and more devolved; it will create a new sense of common purpose, consensus and the common good, and seek to develop the capacities of all throughout the life-course to participate fully in society and to address the enormous challenges of the future – of climate change, economic turbulence and a democracy that no longer feels fit for purpose. The realisation of a new participatory and comprehensive model would mark education's transformative moment – the birth of a national education service from cradle to grave, based on a new democratic settlement between national government and those at the local level who offer leadership, those who provide the service and those who use it. At its heart this democratic model rests on a profound sense of trust and belief in the ability of institutional leaders, teachers, students and other key stakeholders to make the system theirs – by co-creating it. By so doing performance, innovation

and standards would dramatically improve, and all would enjoy the intrinsic value of the joy of collaboration and mutual self-help. Education would then align itself with a broader economic and culture future, which will be made by the many – not the few.

Radical democracy and catching the tide of 'new times'

This vision of education is made increasingly inevitable by what we term 'new times'. Amid the negative trends of globalisation – worsening poverty, increased social division and the despoliation of the planet, there are emerging equally powerful progressive trends. These concern the development of a more horizontal, flexible and networked society and economy, and more inter-connected, relational, democratic and egalitarian ways of interaction and innovation these flatter structures tend to impose on us. Fuelled by social media and the insight that all of us are smarter than any one of us, this is the wave a new education model must catch. However, 'new times' will need to be infused with democratic practices that give us the power and opportunity to control our lives and shape our destinies. Without power in our hands, these promising trends will be distorted by markets that are too free and states that are too remote. The new model will be built on a belief in the best of people – not the worst.

PISA and three global models

The prevailing English model is now part of a global narrative, which has become focused around international rankings of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), a worldwide study by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). However, there are counter-trends to the dominant marketised Anglo-Saxon (e.g. England and USA) and authoritarian Pacific models (e.g. China, South Korea and Singapore) in the Nordic countries and parts of Canada, which adopt high trust professionalism and comprehensive, socially cohesive approaches. The Inquiry, with its democratic and participatory approach to reform, will draw strongly on Nordic and Canadian logic, but be rooted in English conditions. However, important though they are, national models of education are no longer adequate. National reforms have to become part of a global movement for progressive education reform.

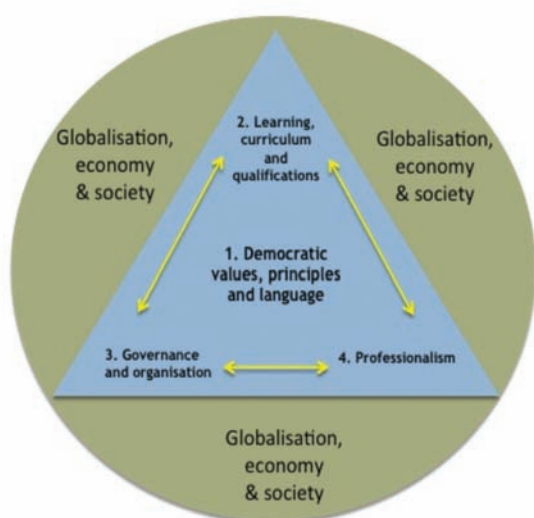
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Dimensions of a future democratic system

A new education system could be seen to comprise several major dimensions (Figure 1).

Figure 1 The dimensions of a new education system



Dimension 1

Democratic values, aims and language

The key values that guide the Inquiry are the pillars of a Good Society – equality and social justice, democracy, sustainability, wellbeing and creativity. More than anything, our view of education is inspired by a profound belief in people’s ability to transform themselves and their world. Rooted in these good society values, the key aim is to create an education system that is inclusive, innovative, participatory and lifelong.

Dimension 2

Learning for the future – curriculum and qualifications reform

Learning, and in particular learning how to live together, is the central purpose of education; therefore, what is learned and how the learning process takes place is a driving concern of the Inquiry. Education is far better caught than taught. It

is what we practise at school that matters most – not what we are told. Central to this is the idea of a more democratic curriculum approach that has a broad range of aims – personal and societal, as well as economic and oriented towards developing the learner and a full range of human capacities throughout the life-course. This demands a more developmental, flexible and creative learning, curriculum and qualifications system.

Dimension 3

Governance, democracy and collaboration

The demand for a new democratic governance framework with an accent on devolution and accountability to the local level and with the strongest possible voice for students, practitioners and citizens is now unanswerable. Here the local authority is the key building block. At the heart of the new system should be democratic co-operative education institutions that attempt to practise today what we envisage for a Good Society tomorrow – the co-production of the education service.

Dimension 4

Professionalism and co-production

The key ingredient of a more equitable, inclusive, high performing and efficient education system is the central role of education professionals, who will have the capacity to lead, innovate, collaborate, care and bring the best out of their students. It is the relationship between leadership, teachers and learners that must be at the heart of a new model.

Dimension 5

A lifelong learning system

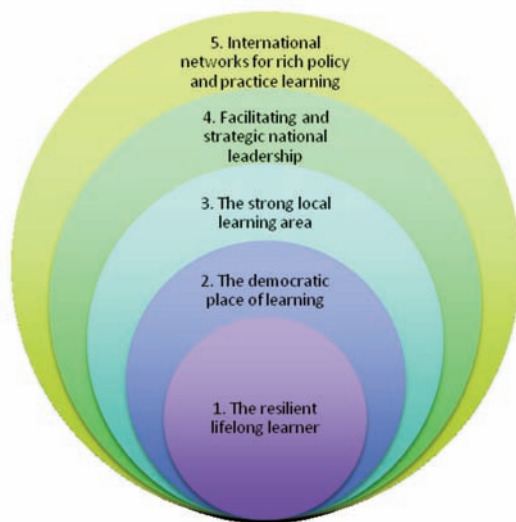
Finally, a new democratic system has to be based on the conception of education as lifelong. It is critical that we see education not as something to be endured and given up at the first opportunity, not as a means to an end – but as an end in itself. Education must be a continual, joyful, rewarding and enriching part of the whole of our lives – otherwise we will never be whole people.



Transforming education – steps towards a new system

How might the different dimensions of work in practice and how might they be developed from what we have now? We suggest that there are five levels that require change to transform the education system within a globalised perspective, with everyone at each level being clear about their roles, rights and responsibilities and the links between each of the levels (Figure 2).

Figure 2 The five levels of transformation



Challenging issues for the Inquiry

While the Inquiry has so far set out a comprehensive analysis and some potentially interesting proposals, it faces enormous challenges arising mainly from the dominance of the prevailing model and the elite parts of the current system. These are some of the difficult questions for the Inquiry, how is it possible:

- To facilitate genuine choice and diversity within a more comprehensive system – not least for those who have special educational needs?
- To address underperformance within the system effectively while fundamentally respecting education professionals?
 - To turn democratic participation into system improvement?
 - To ensure that learners' voices, in particular, inform the basis of a new model?
 - To address the elite parts of the education system (e.g. independent schools and research intensive universities) that perform highly, but also sustain deep education and social divisions?
 - To apply, broadly at least, the insights of the Inquiry thus far to the various life phases of education?
 - To build and maintain structures and culture that demand education be truly life long?
 - To conceptualise a new system as a coherent and distinct model?
 - How is it possible to establish the contours and basis of a new model without imposing it? It must be organic and built from the bottom up, but seeded and resourced from the legitimate national collective will – the state.

It will not be easy to answer these and numerous other questions. However, in the remaining months of the Inquiry we will have to address many subjects raised by such questions and we hope that you will join us to develop a broad approach to reform that is capable of building a new kind of education settlement in England. Like our education model, this Inquiry will continue to be co-created.

Values and drivers of the system

The Inquiry seeks to create a more democratic education system that is increasingly shaped by popular participation and less driven by an interfering state and fragmenting markets.

1. Therefore, the first proposal is **to make values the key driver in the new system** - equality and social justice, democracy, sustainability, wellbeing and creativity – and a profound belief that everyone is ‘educable’ and in people’s ability to transform themselves and their world. These shared values should become the ‘glue’ of the system and therefore, over time, the collective awareness of professionals and wider stakeholders replaces top-down state actions and the vagaries of the market.

Curriculum and qualifications

The curriculum emphasis will be on collaboration, progression, creativity and participation to develop deeper learning and higher-level skills:

2. **A focus on a developmental approach to early years education**, which is more child-centred and on smoother transitions between education phases so that pupils/students gradually build their capacities.

3. **A reformed National Curriculum that is more ‘open’**, allowing for more creative translation by teachers and schools to meet local needs. The more open approach could then apply to all schools, including those in the independent sector.

4. **A greater emphasis on creativity, problem-solving and ‘rich tasks’** that apply subject knowledge and skills to societal and economic issues.

5. **More assessment for learning and personal progression and less testing for external accountability.**

6. **A more democratic curriculum that seeks to involve students as responsible co-producers** and providing greater choice over what is learned.

7. **A multi-level and unified baccalaureate award at 18/19 that embraces both general and vocational education.** GCSEs at 16 will become a ‘progress check’. In the meantime, the Inquiry supports the idea of the ‘Best 8 GCSEs’ measure because it encourages breadth of learning.

Education governance

The major emphasis is the devolution of governance away from ministers and their political agendas and towards those who provide and use education and to creating a more coherent, collaborative and stable approach.

8. **A major focus on institutional collaboration** (schools, colleges and work-based learning providers) supported by financial incentives, inspection and even a public duty to collaborate in order to offer a more enriched curriculum in both general and vocational education.

9. **Creation of new education specific bodies at the local level – Local Education Boards – to provide democratic oversight.** The LEBs will involve locally elected officials and various stakeholders including teacher representatives, employers, parents and students.

10. **The clustering of small local authorities** to improve their capacity to assist with education improvement and to collaborate around a regional skills agenda.

11. **The creation of an independent National Education Council** that brings together all the major national stakeholders and provides an expert view on education development and with an emphasis on evidence based policy. Over time, the Council could acquire functions from government. In the meantime, the Inquiry would propose that national government restricts itself to developing overall strategy; supporting equity and investing in education and refrains from political micro-management.



12. Encouraging the formation of more 'democratic and co-operative' schools and colleges that attempt to practice today what we envisage for a Good Society tomorrow.

13. **Reforming Ofsted – a reformed inspectorate will be essential to the reforms.** The Inquiry supports the idea of a more independent and expert HMI approach to inspection; focused on improvement rather than accountability or marketing; having an area-wide as well as institutional focus and able to collaborate with local improvement teams.

Professionalism, collaboration and teacher development

A key ingredient of a more equitable, inclusive, high performing and efficient education system is the central role of education professionals who will have the capacities to lead, innovate, collaborate, care and bring the best out of their students. It is the relationship between leadership, the teacher, wider stakeholders and the learner that will be at the heart of a new model.

13. **Educators should develop a 'triple professionalism'** - expertise in an area of knowledge and skill (professional persona No 1); expertise in understanding learners; pedagogy and the organisation of learning (professional persona 2) and capacities to collaborate beyond the institution with social partners such as students, parents, employers and other types of professionals, in multi-disciplinary way (professional persona 3).

14. **Preparation to become an expert educator should be a more continuous and progressive process** involving the process of 'licensing' as in the medical profession and membership of a 'national college of educators'.

15. **Efforts should be made to reduce the paper-based accountability burdens** on teachers and to increase the time they are able to devote to improving teaching and learning

A lifelong learning system

A new democratic system has to be based on the conception of lifelong that is seen as a system and service involving and educating all from cradle to grave. The Inquiry Final Report will contain a series of proposals on further, higher education, learning in the workplace, community education and regional skills development.

Part 1 Introduction:

the necessity of change

In any society, beyond the physical survival of its members, education is probably the most important activity people can create together, and in its most ambitious form, it is a truly remarkable endeavour. For education is the means by which we understand and reach our full potential as human beings. Indeed, the idea of devoting years of our lives to learning and reflection, which some would say requires a lifetime, is what helps mark us as human. Education can enable us to flourish as individuals because it demands our socialisation, helps build cohesive communities and innovative enterprises, fosters the skills and knowledge to participate in the world, and provides ways of seeing beyond our current condition and to reach beyond our grasp. Dynamic, creative, innovative and challenging, education, at its best, must be about the transformative potential for self and society to progress, improve and develop. It teaches us what to treasure and conserve and what to transform. It must be rooted in an utter and profound belief in everyone's equal right to do something marvellous with their lives and the different capacities and capabilities we have.

But this is not where we find ourselves. For several decades, education has been on an endless treadmill of imposed change, constant meddling and furious competition – between students and between schools. This treadmill has created a few exhausted and stressed out winners and far too many losers; it is a system of atomistic individuals, market waste and bureaucratic suffocation; one that teaches our children to become anxious at an earlier and earlier age in a global race in which there is no finishing line; one now dominated by the view that the good life is never enough, and in turn requires a place at Oxbridge in order to have the best paid job, so it is necessary to go to the very top secondary school, have the best tutors money can buy, participate in a host of extra-curricular activities for the CV, and go to the highest performing primary and nursery. We are the human race, but this endless and competitive pressure is not what most of us think being human emans. John Maynard Keynes remarked that there are many visions of the Good Society, but the

treadmill is not one of them. But survival on this treadmill is what our education system is designed to teach us. It is not even bringing economic growth, as Professor Alison Wolf wrote in her book *Does Education Matter?: 'The simple one-way relationship – education spending in, economic growth out – simply doesn't exist.'*¹

There has to be a better way and there is. It is already happening in schools, colleges, communities and workplaces that strive to build the capacity of their students and workers to become the very best they can be, and that have an ethos that is open, collaborative and participatory. It is there in the pages of reports and studies whose authors have examined success and failure and researched answers to the problems and opportunities our education system faces. And in the hearts and minds of students, teachers, administrators, parents and employers who know there is a better way.

This report on a 21st Century Education System, and the Inquiry behind it, is striving to bring the best analysis and experience together to develop a new system of education. But this cannot be imposed or even taught – it has to be built through consensus and caught. The building of an open, relational and dynamic concept of education has to be undertaken in an open, relational and dynamic way.

Education for the 21st Century is an interim report to communicate the ideas and findings to date so that others can express their views and help shape its conclusions. Key questions appear at strategic points later in the document where we test ideas and seek responses, particularly in relation to issues that, at the moment, feel difficult. The ideas and proposals in the second half of the report will be critiqued and elaborated in the coming months by engaging with the widest range of stakeholders from within – and more importantly beyond – the world of education. We know that all of us are smarter than any one of us.

Our approach must match a vision of education that is multi-dimensional, multi-layered and increasingly universal. Education is a collaborative activity that



from its inception involves a series of mutual relationships on ever expanding and inter-connected ecological spheres – between parents or carers and children; between families and the school; between the school and the community; between education, business and training providers and other social partners in a locality and across a region; between these levels and the national education system; and between lifelong learners and the global communication networks that are now ubiquitous.²

We need to accept and absorb the fact that modern education is about lifelong learning that includes not only schooling but also education and training in colleges, universities, companies, workplaces, community centres, various civil society organisations, at home and increasingly through digital technologies. As a result, education is moving from the national to the global arena. No profit-led market or bureaucratic state can hope to respond to the subtlety and complexity of this new educational world.

The Inquiry attempts to mirror these changes and so sets out to stimulate a range of responses in the form of Tumblr contributions submitted to the Inquiry website; documents from interested parties; liaison with other inquiries, campaigns and key stakeholders in political and civil society; and interviews with key actors in the education arena. It also draws on events that have taken place in London and at local NUT, Compass and other group meetings (see Appendix for a 'map' of the Inquiry).

Crucially, the Inquiry roots its view of the future of education within the context of wider economic, social, political and technological worlds that are shaping 'new times'. Driven by new technology, the world is tipping from vertical to horizontal structures. On these flatter and more inter-connected structures everyone has a voice and relevance. The transformative potential of these new horizontal structures chime exactly with and will help create a new vision and structure of education, one that is created by and for people – and not done to them.

The Inquiry is rooted not only in the 'trends of the future' but also in the good practice of the present and the past. It thus draws on rich seams of ideas, strategies and practice from teacher unions and

professional associations; from academia, think tanks and civil society organisations; from other inquiries and campaigns that have similar aims to our own; and, crucially, from education practitioners who are an education system's most important asset. It seeks to reclaim the past, particularly the language of education, and to blend the best of our existing system with the new. This will involve engaging with ideas that may be dissimilar to ours, but that may contain more than a grain of truth.

The ambition of this Inquiry is not only to influence thinking, action and policy on an issue, sector or stage of education, but to set the course for a path to a new and different system. It will carry the seeds and inspiration of the past but meld them with the world as it is now and, critically, anticipate the way in which the world is fast developing. For what is exciting and potentially liberating about this moment is the opportunity to align a belief in the incredible transformative nature of people with the reality of emerging daily life. The future can now be constructed by all of us. Education is the key to unlocking a world in which people together take charge of their lives and their world.

Part 2:

What is wrong with education?

England's lack of settled will

Unfortunately, this expansive and transformative vision of education is not where we find ourselves today. Education in England symbolises a supreme paradox. Education should be something that we treasure, see as a common good and all feel part of. Instead, it has become a political battleground and a source of great anxiety to parents, students and others such as employers and those in higher education. Despite having the best generation ever of teachers and high student satisfaction rates, few seem particularly happy with our education system. There is a lack of settled will about how it should be developed. We therefore need to explore what should be the basis of a new consensus about what education means in the 21st century.

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A crisis of relevance, inclusion and opportunity

In early 2014 we start with the comparison of a medical clinician and a secondary school teacher transported from the Victorian times to the present day. The clinician would find themselves totally out of their depth in a modern complex and team based surgical theatre. The teacher, on the other hand, would feel on rather familiar ground when looking at a classroom with its rows of desks, and at the school timetable. The rest of the world in which we live is almost unrecognisable from Victorian times, but the world of education simply fails to grasp what it is to educate for the modern world or what we have called 'new times'.

Despite the achievements of the last 30 years or so (e.g. better buildings, some improved examinations results, better teachers, better support workers, and many schools working to the comprehensive principle and committed to their communities), the English education and training system is caught in a multiple and chronic crisis. It is a historical crisis arising from the conservative modernisation that has expanded education while keeping it elitist and deeply divided. The education system also remains profoundly unequal,³ with disadvantage that starts early on in life remaining a permanent scar.⁴ It is a crisis of public education, which is fragmented, hierarchical, privatised, statist and highly competitive, and stirs up social anxieties and encourages parents to see education as a 'positional good'. The problems of the past and present conspire to create a crisis of the future. The education dial in our national system has been set to the past – too focused on narrow content, too mechanical in the organisation of learning, too controlled from above, and aimed at too few. At its heart is a belief that only an expanded elite can help the country, whereas the wider evidence suggests that the country will thrive when there is the belief that everyone can do better and everyone has something valuable to contribute.

'Overschooled and undereducated',⁵ many young people do not see the curriculum as relevant and are becoming disengaged from education, particularly in the secondary phase. Because of the focus on acquiring a set of narrow academic subjects, the 21st

century competences needed for educational progression, working life and citizenship exist on the margins of the curriculum. Creativity has been stifled⁶ and a pressurised attitude towards narrow exam success contributes to what has been termed the 'social recession'.⁷ Pupils are ordered, ranked, drilled, tested, told, punished and placed. They become human data storage centres that equip them for nothing but passing exams and not to work and live in the real world. Education has thus become disconnected from the economy and society, and the curriculum has become almost 'anti-industrial'. In the context of this academic elitism, vocational education continues to come a distant second. Beyond compulsory education, the contract between education and employment has been broken⁸ as a million young people in the UK – including thousands of university graduates – find themselves unemployed. Those in work face low pay, huge debts and the impossible cost of a home.

Sebastian Thrun, the scientist behind Google Glass wearable technology, is just one of many business leaders who have criticised the use of restrictive and 'fear-based' testing regimes in education, describing a lack of innovation in the system as a crisis:

The education system is based on a framework from the 17th and 18th century that says we should play for the first five years of life, then learn, then work, then rest and then die. I believe we should be able to do all those things all the time... The way the system administers tests is fundamentally wrong. [It is done] more in a summative way, and we ask the question 'has the student done the correct thing' and we do it more in a fear inspiring way, forcing a student to submit to a date irrespective of how long it takes them to learn. It should be more like a feedback mechanism to help them understand how much progress they have made, with pervasive challenges repeated privately and as often as they want until they feel confident.⁹

Fear-based learning is not creating the workers that tomorrow's companies will need. Laszlo Bock, a senior vice-president of people operations at Google, gave a candid assessment of his firm's track record at predicting who would turn out to be a good employee in an interview with the New York Times:



We did a study to determine whether anyone at Google is particularly good at hiring... We looked at tens of thousands of interviews, and everyone who had done the interviews and what they scored the candidate, and how that person ultimately performed in their job. We found zero relationship. It's a complete random mess.¹⁰

Bock's testimony is unusually valuable because Google collects and analyses a huge quantity of information from employees:

One of the things we've seen from all our data crunching is that GPAs [grade point averages] are worthless as criteria for hiring, and test scores are worthless – no correlation at all. Your ability to perform at Google is completely unrelated to how you performed in college.¹¹

Bock went further, arguing that there may be an inverse correlation between formal education and original thought:

I think academic environments are artificial environments. People who succeed there are... conditioned to succeed in that environment... You want people who like figuring out stuff where there is no obvious answer.¹²

Tim Hands, the head of Magdalen College school and chair of the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference, told the group's annual meeting in 2013 that excessive interference and obsession with league tables had 'emasculated the education system of this country'. As a result, education,

is increasingly in the grip of central government and, worse, increasingly at the mercy of much-favoured commercial providers who would like to expand their operations... The story of the last 50 years is, I suggest, the intrusion of government and the disappearance of the child. More radically put, it is the intrusion of the state, and the disappearance of love.¹³

Education, which was originally seen as a way of improving life chances, has become an alienating and exclusive experience for some young people and their families as it reflects deepening social differences and declining economic opportunities. There are a few winners, but even they are becoming an ever-narrower and disconnected band.

This wider climate affects education professionals. Education in England has become a 'low trust' affair disempowering professionals, parents and wider stakeholders. The focus on league tables and an obsession with tick-box data and top-down accountability has resulted in teachers being swamped with paperwork and head teachers being put under enormous pressure to 'game the system'. They inevitably teach to the test if that is how they are to be assessed. This situation affords too little recognition and respect for education professionals and without that respect and space they are not able, try as they do, to give their best.

There is now increasing evidence that educational performance and opportunity is grinding to a halt. The brakes have been applied to examination attainment in the name of 'rigour' and attainment and post-16 participation rates are now in decline. The greatest negative effect is being felt by not just NEETs (those young people not in education, employment or training) but also the 'overlooked middle'.¹⁴ Those educated in private schools are tightening their grip on places at the most prestigious universities and mass youth unemployment – which has reached over 50 per cent among young black males – has a corrosive effect.¹⁵ Any vision of lifelong learning has long been abandoned and adult learning is in retreat as investment dries up and extraordinary levels of tuition fees take hold. This demonstrates that there is a new systemic crisis of education and its relationship with society and any idea of national progress.

These problems epitomise a crisis of the Anglo-Saxon model of education, which continues to focus on the marketisation of education, driving change from the centre and promoting a narrow set of standards through accountability measures and performance management. Inevitable failure leads to constant change and tinkering in the name of succeeding in the global competitive race, but such adherence to global competition creates a double bind for education. It places intolerable pressures on students and teachers to 'out Singapore' the Singaporeans on a joyless treadmill of rote learning and individual and institutional competition, in which only the already wealthy come out on top. But the very fact that the economy has escaped the control of national politicians and has gone global means that politicians inevitably and needlessly meddle in what they think they can still control – the education system – so the

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repeated cycles of top down and imposed change ratchet up still further. The only form of 'progress' change is how to run faster and regurgitate more accurately. It's not just that the race cannot be won – it's that it never ends.

How did we get here? England modernised the wrong way

The road to conservative modernisation

Since the end of the 1970s education in England has been 'conservatively modernised', a path that has led to the Anglo-Saxon model of education. However, an important factor in this process was the incomplete attempt to modernise education in the 1960s and 1970s by making it comprehensive. New comprehensive schools, in reality the old secondary moderns relabelled, co-existed with old grammar schools and independent schools. There was no comprehensive national curriculum and schooling was dominated by selective academic qualifications (O levels and A levels). Moreover, most young people left school at 15 or 16 and the apprenticeship system, which was proportionally bigger than it is now, was not part of a formal education training as it was and is in Germany. Crucially, universities remained the province of an elite despite post-war expansion. The English education system and training by the end of the 1970s was not comprehensive in any real sense.

The result was a 'halfway house' that was to be 'conservatively modernised' in the 1980s and early 1990s. Under the Thatcher and Major governments, the Conservatives created both a centralised and more marketised national education system, and introduced the National Curriculum. New national qualifications bodies and a national qualifications framework were established, schools were managed locally and the control of local authorities was weakened. With some irony the strong state was used to create a free market. There were some progressive reforms, such as the creation of GCSEs out of O levels and CSEs, and participation in education and training expanded rapidly including in higher education. This system redrew boundaries and increasingly divided education between those gaining

good GCSE grades and the rest; between high performing schools and the rest; and between academic and vocational learning. Performance tables were publicly promoted to increase competition between schools and between parents. As education expanded, so it remained divided and its purposes narrowed.¹⁶

Labour's successes and failures

Between 1997 and 2010, the Labour Government failed to challenge the status quo of the previous Conservative Government's education state. That is not to underplay some important practical successes. It launched several bold initiatives such as Sure Start, paid rigorous attention to numeracy and literacy, introduced the Education Maintenance Allowance, oversaw a massive school and college building programme, and invested heavily in new teachers and school leadership. By 2010 more young people than ever were staying on in education beyond 16, over 40 per cent from right across the social spectrum were attending university, and examination results had risen each year. But Labour adapted the conservative education state and the prevailing value system. Successive Labour governments continued to centralise policy-making and compromise local decision-making, continued with school and college competition (renamed contestability), established academies, encouraged faith schools, introduced tuition fees to create a market in higher education, continued to support a divided qualifications system, and rejected radical plans for change such as the Tomlinson 14–19 proposals and the new conception of primary education proposed in the Cambridge Primary Review. Above all, it failed to educate the public into a different way of thinking about education or to establish popular structures with which people could identify. This is one of the principal reasons why Michael Gove, the Secretary of State for Education, has been able swiftly to entrench a new phase of conservative modernisation.

Education has yet to experience its comprehensive transformative moment

Despite these dominant trends, the idea of comprehensive education has lived on, albeit in a fragmented way. Many schools regard themselves as comprehensive even if they are not so called;



teachers all over the country commit themselves to comprehensive ideals and practices such as classroom differentiation (teaching each student as their needs and ability demand); schools pride themselves on their relationship with their communities; and inclusion in education and training up to 18 (raising the participation age) has become a new system priority.

But we do not yet possess a public comprehensive education system that is held in high esteem by the wider population. The very notion of comprehensive has been narrowly applied to schooling rather than to a holistic cradle to grave system of learning, and comprehensive education is still associated with school failure despite its manifold success. When school and university is widely valued primarily as a means of social advantage, many yearn for the grammar school as a symbol of elite education while dismissing the rest – further education, vocational education and work-based learning, and adult literacy and learning – as suitable only for other people and their children. Outmoded notions of fixed intelligence, despite being scientifically demolished, still hold sway not just among conservative politicians but also within some sections of the population at large, providing a philosophical basis for a retrograde and narrow conception of human worth.

The 'Gove revolution' – an extreme Anglo-Saxon model of education

As England is compared unfavourably with other countries internationally through PISA and other measures, the Coalition Government is responding to the problems of system performance by trying to create a larger and better-qualified elite capable of competing on the global stage.¹⁷ PISA is organised by the OECD and comprises a test taken by a sample of 15 year olds from 65 participating countries. Focusing on areas such as problem-solving and mathematics, it grades participating national education systems into an international league table. This has led policy-makers to respond dramatically if their country suddenly slides down the table. However, academic critics complain that its measurements are narrow, arbitrary and conceptually flawed,¹⁸ and that it is a vehicle for the international standardisation of educational governance.¹⁹

Using the pretext of the relative declining position of England in the PISA table, the Coalition Government is attempting to take the Anglo-Saxon model to new extremes. When implementing changes in learning, the curriculum and qualifications, Michael Gove is focusing on core knowledge, traditional subjects, didactic learning and more selective GCSEs and A levels, all under the banner of increased 'rigour', but the driving force has been organisational, with a programme of 'forced academisation'; powerful business interests – Harris, ARK and other private academy chains – have been invited in to the centre of education. These private education corporations are loyal to their enterprises and not the communities they are supposed to serve. Education has become increasingly fragmented and privatised, and at the same time highly centralised and driven by political whim.²⁰

The current education reform process should be understood for what it is – a highly confrontational and ideologically confident strategy to reshape the education state. Demonstrating scope and ambition, it unites privatised institutions and selective universities, a highly selective curriculum, a politicised and punitive inspectorate, and a divided and deregulated approach to teacher preparation, together with a language of inclusion and freedom that links a more academic curriculum to greater opportunity for young people from deprived backgrounds to access Russell Group universities. In reality, however, this project is backward looking and exclusive, promising a narrow track of social mobility for a few while threatening to exclude the many. It concentrates unprecedented levels of power in the hands of the secretary of state and pushes parents, education professionals, local authorities and wider social partners, including employers, increasingly to the margins.

The consequences of 'half-rightness'

Despite the 'Gove revolution' described above, the nearer you get to classrooms and places of learning and the world of teachers, lecturers and trainers working with their students, the better English education looks and feels. The real crisis is not to be found in the aspirations of our learners who undertake general and vocational education. What they lack is a system that allows the vast majority to climb to explore their full potential and the

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opportunity to turn educational achievements into rewarding jobs. Instead, increasing numbers experience poverty that corrodes hope. It is also not a crisis of our teachers, despite the small minority who struggle. The current generation of teachers and lecturers is the best qualified and the most competent that has ever existed, particularly those who teach disadvantaged learners and have helped them, against all the odds, to scale new heights. If the quality of teaching is a key to success, then our educators require the recognition of politicians and wider society, and the conditions in which to strive professionally and to take risks.

There is also no crisis in educational research or teacher training – like others, colleagues in higher education are more productive and insightful than ever, and better connected with schools and colleges than ever. This is not to say that there cannot be improvements – there can and there must be – and they have to be much more sustainable and organic – derived from internal systemic innovation, accountability and motivation and not the external shock imposed by the market or the state.

However, it is important to acknowledge the ‘truth’ in some of the claims the Right is making about education and how these truths can be extended to form a new logic. Education institutions should enjoy the freedom to innovate; young people should have access to what is termed ‘powerful knowledge’²¹ and be aspirational; there is a positive role for some external challenge to education professionals; the basis of effective learning is to be found in respectful and regulated environments that promote good learning behaviour; and good leadership is incredibly important.

But these apparent virtues are being articulated through a divisive ‘half-model’ – a half curriculum focused on traditional subjects and ‘the knowledge of the powerful’, which downplays new and inter-disciplinary knowledge and the wider competences required for living successfully in the 21st century:

- concern with a relatively small minority of learners despite the rhetoric of inclusion
- privileging certain schools that actively damage less fortunate neighbouring institutions

- privileging research intensive universities and under-estimating new universities, which play a very important role in local economies and communities
- a focus on a new cadre of teachers who arrive through Teach First while paying insufficient regard to the wisdom of established teachers
- an obsession with the ‘hero headteacher’ who will turn things around quickly at the expense of paying attention to distributed and collaborative leadership
- a reliance on inspection through fear rather than producing the conditions for sustainable improvement
- a focus on learner behaviour and ‘manners’ at the expense of paying attention to how learners can become ‘self-regulating’ from the beginning of their education.

When all the features of the half-model combine, they do not emerge as half-right but very wrong, because together they sustain belief in a selective, narrow and authoritarian approach to education, which at best only half prepares all our learners for ‘new times’.

Arguably the best features of our current system are those that, in different ways, reflect comprehensive ideas and practices, but we need to create the conditions for sustained good practice and improvement – a new type of system. Education is at a crossroads. On the one side lies a mechanical, quasi-market, outdated and divisive Anglo-Saxon model, which uses the rhetoric of rigour and inclusion, but treats education as a political football. This model has delivered some improvements to date, but at considerable cost. Fear works, to a point. More of it will deliver less. It is exhausted. Not only does it not get the best out of people, it lacks a vision of the future that can inspire learners, teachers, employers and parents. On the other side we suggest there is another model – more open, trusting, creative, motivating and participatory – while, at the same time, appreciating the need for perseverance, the accumulation of knowledge, intellectual rigour and grasp of detail. Hope is the promise of progress without limit.



A central argument of the Inquiry is to try to achieve a new synthesis in education policy and practice, rather than simply restoring the past or tweaking with the present. Put another way, the Inquiry seeks to combine the established virtues of the prevailing model with a set of new virtues, to remedy a 'part model' by building something more complete and relevant to the 21st century. It is to the global context of 'new times' and the historical, economic, organisational and social basis of a new model that we now turn.

Part 3 New Times:

Education, economy, democracy and transformation

People do not live by the managerialism of the state nor by the transactions of the market. They live in relationships and networks of friendships in local places and these make up society, which is where people experience all that is good and bad in their lives.²²

Being human – a sense of history

We believe that education should prepare us for the world and enable us to change that world. And the world is changing fast. Driven by two decades of new technology these 'new times' are now creating an emerging daily world of horizontal and peer-to-peer structures that are increasingly being found in all aspects of economic and public life. Driven by digitisation, the internet, mobile and social media in particular, governance and innovation are becoming flatter, more adaptive and relational. The skills, aptitudes and ways of being for the future go to the very heart of what it is to be human – collaborating, sharing and therefore demonstrating empathy and solidarity.²³ What marks out modern humans with their symbolic cultures is the development of the powers of reflection, abstract thought, language and learning, and the capacity for co-operation and altruism.²⁴ We learn by relating thinking and practice and reflecting on what we do. Over the past 50,000 years the signs of growing civilisation that paved the road to the modern era have been the increasing use of technology; the transition to agriculture, trading

and industry; and the development of art, religion and ultimately philosophy.

Within modern human history formal education is still in its infancy, being less than 100 years old in its more universal form (the last 3 minutes on a 24 hour clock). Moreover, mass education has not evolved naturally, but has had to be fought for as part of wider struggles for a more inclusive society. It is continually evolving as it tries to keep pace with sweeping developments in new technologies, globalised communication systems, more social forms of production, and demographic change.²⁵

But our education system is largely a product of the 20th century, an era of big, centralised and top-down structures in which people were merely cogs in a production line to be shaped as required by very vertical structures. Education must now 'go horizontal' to be part of the 21st century and to allow people to become fully relational, innovative and transformative citizens.

We have to ask ourselves as humans at this point in our development, what is the role of education? As education has expanded, so its purposes have become more complex. It is now multi-dimensional – it involves acquiring knowledge, skills and values; fostering positive attitudes; coping with adversity; and developing powers of reflection. It is also multi-layered, concerned with personal, social, emotional and wider economic, technological and societal development. On the widest possible scale, the purposes of education are global and forward-looking – about not just the future of our own society, but the planet itself and how we create a viable and sustainable future for all species. It is in this sense that we see education as a potentially 'holistic', 'pre-figurative', 'transformative', 'sustainable', 'lifelong' and 'inter-generational' endeavour. Only a complex, multi-layered and holistic vision of education can help us understand the implications of these 'new times'.

New times' – the confluence of economic, digital, organisational and social change

It is economic development in particular that is driving these 'new times'. The successful enterprise of the

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future will be adaptive and networked. In its end of year report *First Steps: A New Approach for Our Schools*, the CBI calls for an approach that develops the 'whole child' and empowers schools leaders and teachers.²⁶ The characteristics, values and habits this important business organisation wants to see are grit, resilience, curiosity, zest, gratitude, confidence, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, sensitivity to global concerns and humility. These are 21st-century competences. The CBI now recognises that the economy of tomorrow will not be built by robot workers but by adaptive, problem-solving and collaborative workers, whose voice is heard and appreciated.²⁷ A new education system should encourage these skills and habits. Such thinking fits with the work of Clayton Christensen at the Harvard Business School, who talks about three types of innovation, those that are empowering (platforms), sustaining (new products and services built on these platforms, and efficient (improving what is there).²⁸ Education can be the glue that ensures all three forms of innovation are functioning. A new alliance can be built between education and employers on this potentially new relationship between modernising the economy and modernising education.

On the surface, however, much of the world still looks like 'old times' – bureaucratic, hierarchical and controlling. Economically, the world is still dominated by large global companies like Amazon, which have highly Fordist modes of working. But 'new times' are arriving fast, spurred on by technological innovation and digital communications, flatter structures in leading edge companies, and the creation of looser networking relationships. Adding to this is what Robin Murray refers to as the growing role of the 'social economy' in which the units of production are becoming smaller and more customised, and 'household' economies play a greater role.²⁹ There is also a growing appetite for co-operative and mutual forms of organisation as people seek greater collective control over ways of working or to be part of more trusting and ethical consumer organisations. It is now possible to see a confluence of different streams of technological, economic and social forms of innovation to form a new type of civil society. The possibility is opening up, not of education being done to people, but of education achieved with people, for people, by people.

Like the worlds of production and politics, education still looks and feels largely top-down and controlling, within institutions and by national politicians. But in the emerging complexity of a networked world the centre cannot hold. 'Official ideas' about education lag behind events. And all the time flatter, more networked and collaborative modes of education exchange are erupting. Heads and teachers are collaborating across schools and local areas; massive open online courses (MOOCs) are making highly specialised research lectures available on the web; and 'flip classrooms' require students to do their knowledge-based research online and then to meet and interact to discuss the ideas of their research approaches. The project *This University Is Free*, which aims to provide remote and open access to courses, is just one more straw in the wind of a future that will be co-created.³⁰ These kinds of open and collaborative approaches to learning have a long history, but digital technologies bring new global and local possibilities. The opportunity to learn faster and scale up quicker are now emerging. The new culture will be more humble, open, respectful and empathetic, and the ethos will be playful, collaborative and creative. With all these innovations, it is social interaction that counts, together with the role of highly competent specialist educators.

Democracy and educational transformation

There is a confluence of economic, digital, organisational and social changes that holds out the possibility of a transformed educational system defined by how we learn to live and work together in the 21st century. Such a vision is premised on the expectation that everyone is educable but not everyone will be educated in the same way; that a broad general education is a human right, that education can take many different forms, and that effective schooling and learning should be encouraged in a variety of contexts throughout the life-course. This vision of education is fundamentally democratic in that people are able to exercise far greater control over their formal education and to organise their lives. In their book on 'communities of discovery' Frank Coffield and Bill Williamson go to the core of the issue as they define democracy as 'the most equitable and harmonious means of living,



learning and working together'.³¹ It is through each of us learning to take control of our lives, by working together, that education becomes one of the means by which we are able to shape these 'new times'.

Democracy is the bedrock value for this new world: without the power and opportunity to control our lives and shape our destiny we have no possibility of confronting the enormous economic and environmental challenges we face. Democracy is about gaining a voice, using dialogue and collaboration, solving problems together, the value of public service and civic society, and holding the powerful to account. However, the idea of democracy reaching and transforming every corner of our lives is not immediately obvious to many people because they have had restrictive experiences of democracy and may have been persuaded that they can exercise sufficient power and control as a consumer rather than a citizen.³² In addition people's lives already feel tough enough, trying to make ends meet and survive the day, week, month or year. Do people want or need more responsibility? Indeed, to talk about 'new times' when so many children go to school every day hungry in a nation that is so palpably rich feels almost indecent. Society must right that wrong. But education must grasp the moment and bend the future to build a better model – or the future will grasp us!

We have no real choice – the technology and culture shift that goes with it are going to happen – they already are happening. Some will need much more help and support, but we will all feel liberated by immersing ourselves in decision-making about the institutions that shape our lives. Outsourcing education and the socialisation of our young to a bureaucracy or business does not solve problems. It just delays and deepens them. Students, parents and the wider community will not only help foster a better education system through their active engagement in the system – they could find the experience empowering, enjoyable even.

Democracy as participation and deliberation is better caught than taught. It has to be learned and experienced in schools, colleges and workplaces so that people can see democracy as not just intrinsically of value but instrumentally of value because it can produce better outcomes for all.³³ Democracy can

lead to greater innovation and enterprise precisely because decisions are negotiated and the voices of all are heard. Rich and complex inputs lead to rich and complex outputs. Democracy is thus capable of becoming the new governance 'common sense' and can trump either irresponsible markets or the remote and bureaucratic state when it can demonstrate the capacity to bring people into common collaborative endeavour, guided by strong values and mutual regard.

Like the networked and relational tendencies emerging strongly in the economy and society, this quiet revolution is happening now in our system and elsewhere. Teachers, students and parents in England are building co-operative schools and a college movement.³⁴ The mood of the times is for devolvement and innovation. From China to South America people are experimenting with democratic ideas and practices as they seek solutions to their deep-seated problems³⁵ and the Nordic countries have shown us the possibility of another path of education development based on collaboration and trust. What is now required is that these ideas become crystallised in a new system vision that shows how democratic change can lead us to a new phase of education development in England and the wider world.

Specialist knowledge in a networked world

In an increasingly networked world, the role of specialist knowledge and the specialist educator becomes more not less important. The digital world is full of dangers and opportunities. One such danger is being 'data rich' and 'knowledge poor'. People can access all manner of information and opinion on the web, including endless blogs. Search engines, such as Google, have ever increasing powers. But what kind of information is trustworthy and how can we tell? Education has to provide us with knowledge (conceptualisation, ways of seeing and the capacity to research and discriminate) to understand this data. Without this we are exposed to a global surge of opinion rather than a global tide of knowledge and understanding, giving us the ability to act. Education has not only to go with the flow of technological and social change, but also to be in active tension with it because all that is new is not always good. Education

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allows us to understand and participate in the world in which we live, but also to stand apart and to see it for what it is.

But knowledge is not static; it is growing exponentially. This is not just the result of the accumulation of understanding – we know much more about education and ourselves as humans than we ever have – but also the result of rapid advances in science and technology. For example, recent studies of the human brain using MRI scanning suggest that its internal connectivity, which supports higher order thinking in childhood and throughout the life-course, is heavily influenced by environmental factors.³⁶ These include the negative effects of ‘stressors’ such as poverty, neglect and inactivity, and the positive effects of security, educational stimulation and social interaction. These suggest that the embodied brain, as part of a whole human psychomotor system, has significant plasticity,³⁷ and confirm the power of challenging education and rich social relations to improve our individual and collective capacities throughout our lives.

At the same time, practitioner networks are being established that allow for the lateral exchange of ideas, views and experiences that were unimaginable 20 years ago. This has helped us to see education in a much more developmental and holistic way. The Cambridge Primary Review, citing a wealth of scientific research, captured that synthesis by declaring that the ‘biological, social, emotional and intellectual aspects of learning are inextricably interwoven’.³⁸

A data and knowledge commonwealth

Data could be seen as the emerging new currency in ‘new times’, contributing to the knowledge that we might call ‘intangible capital’ – our shared intellectual propriety. While intangible capital delivers competitive advantage the key question is how far knowledge and data can be shared for the common good. Is it to be controlled by the state, traded as a commodity in an emerging data market, or developed democratically as part of what might be termed a ‘data and knowledge commonwealth’? As with all emerging tendencies, all three scenarios apply. Which one dominates and shapes the others remains to be seen.

The Inquiry sees potential in what is termed ‘open data’. As Figure 3 shows, this comes in many forms and much of it from governments and civil society organisations. However, the open data revolution can head in different directions. It could be eroded and commodified in a data market and there are several global forces trying to do this. On the other hand, authoritarian states will want to control data and awareness. The third road is a democratic one and the path we wish to follow. Given that we could be characterised as ‘data rich but knowledge poor’, the issue is not just how to access to data but how to use it to produce new and valuable knowledge.

Figure 3 Types of open data



As part of this third model, an important aim of the Inquiry is to build an open education system in which sharing of data will benefit all. This will involve the development of critical skills and a code of ethics; the nurturing of connective intellectuals of progressive outlook who specialise in data in creating, reusing and interpreting data; democratising the use of data by developing collective and popular capacities; and turning data into really useful knowledge. Crucially, the issue will be how we use this new data to positively influence the curriculum in places of learning, how we make decisions about the data we really need, and how we share data and knowledge to improve attainment and our wider capabilities.



Beyond 'old times'

Unfortunately, education systems that have been heavily steered by politicians and their short-term electoral concerns have proved resistant to new ideas and to the science, philosophy and reflection that lie behind them. Labelled 'faddish', serious research and rich practitioner experiences have been dismissed in preference for the perceived commonsense views of those who were educated in another age or whose thoughts and actions are dominated by established and powerful forces. While this has been the English experience, it is not always the case in other countries where there is often a more constructive relationship between education research, practitioner reflection and policy-making.³⁹ In this regard we are seeking a culture change based on the argument that more rounded and multi-layered approaches to education are the key to the future.

The current education model is rooted in a weird hybrid of statism and overly free markets of the 20th century. Meanwhile the future is becoming the present at an accelerating rate. The smartphones found increasingly in many people's hand changes their identity and relationship to others and the world. Education needs to embrace and critically shape these 'new times' for the common good. We need a new system model of education.

Part 4 A new democratic system:

Vision and strategies

We can start to understand the basis of an alternative model by understanding what is happening around the world.

Three global models of education

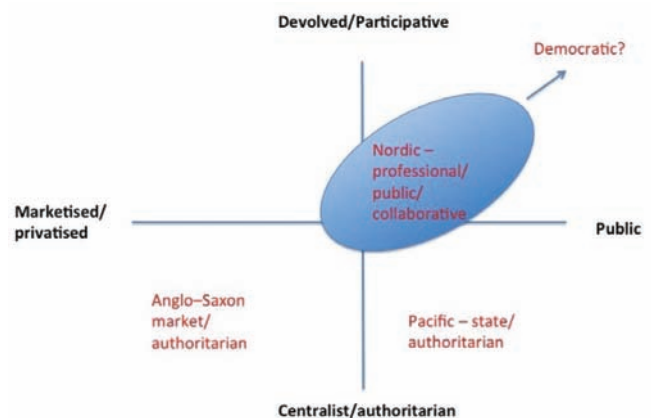
Despite the dominant Anglo Saxon tendency, international research suggests that national responses to globalisation have not been uniform and that different models have emerged that help us understand democratic possibilities. Pasi Sahlberg, a leading expert on the Finnish system and a member of this Inquiry, has identified three international models of education:⁴⁰

- Anglo-Saxon (found in the USA, England, New Zealand, Eastern Europe and now Africa) – based on markets, choice and competition; standardises teaching and learning; test-based accountability
- Pacific (found in South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and now China) – authoritarian and conformist; high levels of parental and social support for education; didactic teaching methods; high expectations and normative behaviours
- Nordic (found in Nordic countries such as Denmark, Sweden and Finland) – high status education profession; high trust relationships; devolved responsibilities within broad national frameworks; an emphasis on links between education, social services and localities linked to school improvement.

In Figure 4 we conceptualise the three global models in relation to two axes – centralist–devolved and public–private. According to this modelling approach, the Nordic system can be situated within the top-right quadrant. It is within this area that the proposed democratic model can be usefully explored. However, all models are 'ideal types' and in reality national systems combine elements of all of them. Which model can provide the future organising logic for the English system?

Figure 4 Three global models of education

What can be learned from these global models and the international PISA league table? First, we



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emphatically reject the Anglo-Saxon model believing that it is backward looking and mainly speaks to an elite. Second, the Pacific model, despite its more universal standards, holds few attractions because of its authoritarianism, the focus on conformity and rote learning, and the emotional and wellbeing costs it imposes on young people. We want to promote wellbeing not emotional stress and mental ill health in the young. The Nordic model (and in some respects parts of Canada), on the other hand, has proved to be both high performing and inclusive because it is based on high levels of trust, teacher competence and social cohesion. It can therefore be viewed as the exception to the global rule and is of interest to the Inquiry, not only as a result of its evident success, but also because it demonstrates the virtues of collaborative and democratic tendencies.

However, we are not interested in mechanical policy borrowing from other systems no matter how good they look; and they are rarely as good as they are made out.⁴¹ While educational change for England has to be made in England by democratic means and not just imposed as an alien model, we also argue that democratic modernisation has to be increasingly part of a global effort for change so that all national systems can embrace the wider values and purposes of education, and the potential for mutual policy and practice learning, rather than being captured by the PISA 'global race'. This suggests the availability and exchange of 'rich data' between national systems that become part of an international dialogue on the potential of education for societal and global transformation.

Democratic modernisation: towards a new comprehensive system

Learning from the best of domestic and international education, our goal is to create a new democratic, comprehensive system of education and training in England driven by positive values and a vision of learning throughout the life-course. Reform on this scale has never been envisaged before, but its realisation could be seen to mark education's transformative moment – the birth of a national education service from cradle to grave based on a new settlement between national government, those who lead and provide the service, and those who use

it. But unlike another transformative moment in our public services – the creation of the NHS in 1948 – it will not be created from the centre but with the willing and active involvement of thousands of students, teachers, parents, communities and businesses. The job of politicians and policy-makers is to facilitate such change.

This ambitious comprehensive system cannot be built by education operating on its own. It has to be an integral part of a wider societal, political and economic strategy that seeks to overcome inequality and is part of a wider social, economic and cultural renewal of our nation.⁴² The democratic and participatory approach it takes must be developed in all public services as a new form of modern governance. Such a system cannot be built overnight because what is being proposed is the modernisation of all levels from bottom to top in a systematic and gradual way. The process will last a generation at least. But that journey has to start somewhere. We suggest it starts here and now.

This democratic approach to education has a wider and deeper potential resonance with the democratic health of our nation. Something is clearly going wrong with the party-based system of politics in Westminster. The decline of defence and top-down institutions – like political parties – is stifling the need for change just when the challenges of inequality and environmental change are becoming ever more apparent. By transforming education we can help transform and reinvigorate the democratic system – by helping people develop as fully rounded citizens.

Democracy's instrumental and intrinsic benefits

Democratic practice can allow students, schools and communities to enjoy more control of their lives and reach their personal, institutional and social potential, and democracy can create better outcomes and higher standards. At the moment performance is pushed by either crude central control – the machine – or competition – the market. Both seek to impose change on schools and students through external shocks. Such shocks based largely on fear have diminishing returns. Neither the market nor the machine trusts people to do things themselves.



Democracy makes change organic and internal. Yes it takes time to make a decision because everyone's voice has to be heard, but the process of deliberation gives a chance to test ideas and builds buy-in for solutions. If all of us are smarter than any one of us then a collaborative approach fosters the best ideas and practice. What is more, through democracy and participation, this can happen every day. The challenge is to design a participatory system that drives up performance, standards, innovation and efficiency. This is not to say that democracy is the sole means of governance. Diversity, and therefore some contestability, has a role to play, especially in the form of co-operative schools. Professionalism in a modern form is key and the role of the centre to promote standards and equity cannot and must not be overlooked. Good quality leadership at all levels is incredibly important, but democracy ought to be the prime way in which the education system is governed – the guiding mind of a new system of education. Refuse can be collected by the top-down state and mobile phones sold by the free market – but education deserves and requires co-production. We will all do it together – or it will be done badly.

Devolution and polycentrism

We see a major feature of democratisation to be moving from a mono-centric and hierarchical model of public management towards a more polycentric approach to governance and more active involvement of different stakeholders in knowledge and local networks.⁴³ This basic principle will affect the way that education providers organise more collaboratively; the structure of the National Curriculum and greater space for professional interpretation and local innovation; and the conduct of inspection as it provides a clear and objective picture of performance and encourages high trust in improvement, and the engendering of a new culture of reciprocity and shared responsibility.

Democratic institutions and systems

A democratic system has to emerge from the one we have got and the ideas available to us. The focus of democratic education thinking thus far has been largely on democratic schools and practices, drawing on historical figures such as Dewey, Bloom and Freire, and on radical movements in Latin America. For example, the Inquiry is looking at Michael

Fielding and Peter Moss's ideas, particularly in relation to developing democratic aims and values, the concept of the democratic school, and the relationship between educators and their students. They provide a strong moral compass, a sense of the possible, and the case for pre-figurative practice – that it is important to practise a desired future (what they have termed 'real utopias'⁴⁴) now because if we do not it will never arrive.

Democratic practices and institutions are a vital part of a new system vision but they are only a part. A democratic alternative model has to be more expansive, more coherent and more participative than its dominant counterpart if it is eventually to supplant it.⁴⁵ The Inquiry, therefore, takes a holistic approach and distinguishes between democratic schools and democratic systems. This allows us to conceptualise and design a 'democratic education system' within which democratic institutions and practices can flourish (see Figure 5) and to recognise that democratic practices can and should take place at different levels and at different times, not only in schools and for young people, but for all learners throughout the life-course.

A word on democratic education: by democratic education we do not mean an endless series of votes on what to do next, but an approach that is participative, deliberative and collaborative. Yes there will be some votes within institutions and areas – but only as a last resort. It is educational consensus we seek – not the rule of the majority over any minority. What we envisage is not another set of tests to measure 'how democratic' an institution or area may be but instead the notion of a journey towards a more democratic culture and participatory practices.

And a word of warning: Democracy, like any other practice, can be distributed unequally. By embodying the spirit of 'daring more democracy'⁴⁶ we must be very mindful not to concentrate more power in the hands of the already powerful and must disproportionately democratise those who currently feel powerless. Resources, support and time have to be focused on those who are currently being failed by the system.

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The world of 'and' – a pluralist approach to reform

We live in an adversarial world and no part of it is more adversarial than education. However, a new system cannot be achieved by mimicking the practices of those who currently dominate. That will only lead to further division. Such a world was endemic to vertical institutions that by necessity clashed. In the horizontal world now emerging answers have to be negotiated rather than imposed. We need to find a new behaviour, the unity of means and ends through an education system that practices democratic citizenship and build a society of democratic citizenship. If there is a grain of truth in the position of those we do not always agree with, it follows that what might be described as a 'half-world' should be made whole. This could be described as 'radical additionality' in which we employ the world of 'and' rather than the mutually exclusive world of 'versus'. For example:

- education as individual achievement and as a collective activity and public good
- education as personal attainment and as personal flourishing
- the curriculum as knowledge and wider competences⁴⁷
- learning as acquisition and learning as participation
- 'freedom from' higher interference and 'freedom to' act together locally
- professionalism as technical competences and professionalism as democratic commitment
- improvement through personal aspiration and structural change to support these aspirations.

This does not suggest indifference or the absence of a distinctive and alternative vision, but it does involve rejecting the simplistic division of the world into binaries much loved by some politicians and theorists. Instead we seek to work with these tensions and

dualisms by viewing their potential co-operation as a basis of new synergies. This is the essence of alliance working and working in a critical and democratic manner to gain the greatest consensus wherever possible. There are tensions between our desire for self and for others. Our educational system must mirror the dualism contained with us – or it will only speak to part of us.

Equality, social justice and meeting the needs of the most vulnerable

At the centre of the democratic modernisation of education has to be the drive for equality and social justice, so we need to educate all ages in the overriding virtues of tolerance and non-discrimination, be they related to class, race, gender, sexuality or disability. While we will argue in the final part of this interim report that a commitment to lifelong learning is the hallmark of an advanced education system, we will also argue that the same could be said regarding the concern of the education system to meet the needs of the most vulnerable. That is why in the remaining months of this stage of the inquiry we will also explore how a democratic education system can place a particular emphasis on those with special educational and other needs and how they can be better served by specialist and child-centred provision, their increasing social and educational integration into mainstream education and wider life, and the role of effective inter-agency working.

Five dimensions of a democratic system of education

A whole system vision and architecture allows us to practise the world of 'and' successfully. With a new system of education it will be a case of 'unity in diversity' where there is space for everyone, increasingly drawn together by accommodation, debate and the search for agreement. A new education system needs consensus not conformity. At the heart of the new system will have to be an agreed set of democratic aims and values that promote an international collaborative vision rather than the internationally competitive paradigm that currently grips us. It must:



- be primarily concerned with promoting expansive, creative and inclusive learning aimed at building capacities of everyone to innovate in a modern world and learn to live together
- be organised through a more democratic, devolved and collaborative learning system where people work together rather than in isolation from each other
- promote expansive and democratic professional capacities in our educators and wider social partners
- be thoroughly lifelong in its vision and ambition.

Figure 1 The five levels of transformation



Dimension 1

Democratic aims, values and language

If a new system of education is to have an impact on policy and be attractive to the wider public, it will have to project a compelling vision of the future, show that it can perform well by combining the best of what we do now with new ideas, and provide ways in which everyone can engage with education throughout their life.

The key values that guide the Inquiry are the pillars of a Good Society – equality and social justice, democracy, sustainability, wellbeing and creativity.

Over time we will have to conceive of a system that demonstrates these fundamental values through an optimistic and credible vision of the future. This includes:

- acknowledging what it means to be human; our social, emotional and relational selves and what we share and value beyond economics
- offering a credible economic and social narrative, based on emerging trends within the global economy; this is why we have stressed the importance of ‘new times’ and collaborative ways of thinking and working
- being adamant about the fundamental comprehensive principle that everyone is educable and having faith in the potential capacities of everyone to shine – the mission of education is to nurture that talent
- being equally adamant about the negative impact of various forms of inequality on educational opportunity and wider lives and therefore the centrality of equality and social justice in all that we do
- recognising the multi-dimensional nature of learning, which requires a new set of relationships between different forms of knowledge, different forms of skill, attitudes to learning, and learning how to learn in order for education to become truly creative and innovative
- appreciating the centrality of high quality and dedicated leaders and educators who exhibit the expansive professional values and capacities that assist innovation in more flexible and demanding situations
- building a genuine lifelong learning approach that provides not only ‘good schooling’, but also ways of engaging the whole population throughout the life-course with the principle that it is never too late to learn and develop
- understanding and arguing for the importance of the ‘local’, because it is in

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communities and localities that education can help shape our sense of identity and place and that educators can work in a collaborative and expansive manner

- being a system that is always learning by being rooted in the best of current education practice, research and thinking – local, national and international
- accepting that education by itself cannot bring about a new system and that alliances have to be built with other social partners and dimensions of society by bringing together different social partners to build on the best of what we do and know; innovating and envisioning the needs of the future and the creative possibilities of education.

There also has to be a compelling vision of the learner and the capacities that we are trying to foster. The Nuffield Review of 14–19 Education and Training in England and Wales asked what it meant to be an ‘educated 19 year old in this day and age’. It suggested that education should support concepts of self-worth, and that 19 year olds should have basic capabilities in reading, numeracy and communicating orally and in writing; show knowledge and understanding for the intelligent management of life; be able to make sense of the social, physical and economic worlds they inhabit; have practical capability; demonstrate moral seriousness in thinking about life (e.g. environmental destruction); and have the capacity to contribute to the wider community of which they are part.⁴⁸ We can add to these the personal virtues of perseverance, curiosity and care. The Inquiry will continue to debate these in order to arrive at a strong moral framework of values and aims.

Dimension 2

Learning for the future – curriculum and qualifications reform

The Education Inquiry aims to develop a new democratic model of education to supersede the current top-down, managerial and marketised paradigm. As part of this broad enterprise, the Inquiry is exploring the idea that there should be a more democratic approach to setting out the curriculum. The curriculum would have

- a range of aims – personal, societal and economic
- be oriented towards developing the learner and a full range of human capacities throughout the life-course
- be flexibly interpreted by education professionals to meet the needs of their students in relation to international and national standards and local conditions
- recognise the growing importance of informal learning in a networked world
- crucially, aim to involve learners as active participants who will over time become co-producers of knowledge.

To date the learning, curriculum and qualifications working group of the Inquiry has developed a number of key propositions that will be elaborated over the coming months as an integral part of the new democratic system model:

- The curriculum should be informed by an agreed set of aims and values and should foster a range of capacities that reflect the pillars of a Good Society – awareness of the need for equality, social justice and tolerance; collaborative and democratic skills; wellbeing, emotional development and personal flourishing; and the capability to be innovative and creative.
- All education should be developmental, starting with and developing the natural curiosity of children and involving a more gradual introduction to formal learning and the curriculum, and extending to encompass education throughout the life-course. At the earliest stages of life our health and education systems are intertwined. Parents and carers, working closely with one another and health professionals, should be able to provide the best possible start for our children. Research evidence suggests that the broadening of social contact in small groups in the early years and months produces better outcomes.⁴⁹ Building on this should be an experiential basis of learning, particularly in the early years, highlighting the importance of play and other exploratory



activity. Learning in primary schools can lay good foundations in language and wide cognitive development. Going beyond the broad experience of literacy in its many forms, children should be able to open up, discuss and formulate values. A developmental approach in the later phases will involve critical engagement with knowledge and the development of expansive intellectual and technical capacities.

- A new curriculum approach should emphasise continuity and smooth transitions within a conception of lifelong learning, promoting thoroughness and transitions rather than sharp breaks and the curtailment of opportunity. Therefore the agreed fundamental capacities should be fostered throughout the life-course in conjunction with the specific knowledge and skills required in each of the phases.
- There should be a multi-dimensional approach to learning – education should foster a wide range of different dimensions of learning, values and ethics (acquiring and understanding knowledge, broad and specific skills, societal skills, creative and critical thinking, learning to learn, aesthetic thinking, physical development and wellbeing, and positive attitudes towards learning). One aim would be for these dimensions to enable learners individually and collectively to explore the values that should inform the new system.
- There should be an extended and flexible national curriculum framework – the National Curriculum should become a broader, less closely defined and more inspiring framework. There should be space for education professionals to interpret it to meet the needs of their students and for an institution or group of institutions to have space for local adaptation, while ensuring equity and continuity of learning. At each stage, it should have a democratic orientation, regarding the world as open to change and not simply fitting individuals into society as it stands. In this more flexible form the National Curriculum should apply to all schools and colleges for pupils up to the age of 19 and provide a means of ensuring progression, so

learners, teachers and parents can clearly understand the pace and nature of learner development.

- The right to access a broad and balanced curriculum should be reflected by the development of a series of inter-locking curriculum frameworks (for early years and primary, lower secondary, upper secondary and tertiary) in which learners can engage in a broad and balanced curriculum and gradual specialisation. Expectations for achievement in each phase should be challenging but realistic, and designed to encourage deep, satisfying and engaged learning. Early years education is primarily concerned with exploration through play. Primary education is concerned with the development of fundamental literacies, engagement with the surrounding world and development of core values. Lower secondary education is about greater engagement with subjects and areas of knowledge, and personal development and creativity as in, for example, the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) Middle Years Programme. Upper secondary education (for 14–19 year olds) should introduce greater choice and specialisation, including vocational specialisms. However, any specialisation will need to take place within a curriculum and qualifications framework that emphasises balance and the development of core competences such as research, and mathematical and high-level communication skills.
- There should be a democratic right to access all forms of knowledge, including established disciplines and new forms of knowledge emerging as the result of social, cultural and technological change. This includes, for example, the right to continue to access general education beyond the age of 16 (presently young people are broadly banned from studying general education if they do not gain five GCSE A*–C grades) and an understanding that vocational skills are highly prized. All forms of knowledge should be considered ethically in relation to the human benefit and critical skills developed to strengthen democratic capacities.

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- There should be access to rich tasks and research skills should be fostered that promote research and investigation, design and production, diverse forms of communication, critical thinking and connective understanding, co-operation and the ability to address 'real world' problems.
- There should be creative pedagogy – the organisation of learning and teaching is the means by which educators match the needs of learners to the requirements of the curriculum. Highly skilled professionals should be free to use a range of pedagogical approaches. While it is reasonable in a democracy for professionals to be challenged, we do not believe it is the role of ministers to prescribe to teachers how to teach. Appropriate pedagogy should arise from the experience of high quality initial teacher education and collaborative professional reflection supported by local education bodies, universities and specialist curriculum organisations.
- The role of technologies in learning – digitised technologies allow us unprecedented opportunities to access to information and to communicate with one another. An information and communication revolution is taking place in virtually all aspects of our lives, and the rate of technological change is accelerating. However, education has an ambivalent relationship with these changes for understandable and less excusable reasons. Digital technologies have negative sides including encouraging restless, socially remote and distracting behaviour, which can detract from concentration, deliberation and face-to-face relationships. On the other hand, conservatism in relation to education pedagogies can simply overlook the potential of there being more democratic access to data and knowledge. What is needed is not only educational technological innovation, but also the fostering of capacities to use them for the best possible outcomes and to strike the right kind of balance and relationship between human educational leadership and these communication and digital developments.
- There should be more diverse and professionalised approaches to assessment, including testing but with a greater focus on supporting learning, personal improvement and progression. Assessment has become trapped in an accountability system, which has underplayed its power to support learning. The really creative power of assessment is not to be found in selection and accountability, but in providing formative feedback to improve performance or identify where pupils require additional support. We need to move away from assessment procedures that only value cognitive abilities and explore how to value the development of wellbeing and an understanding of equality and social justice. This rebalancing will involve a greater role for education professionals in the assessment process; a smaller but no less strategic role for testing and external examinations; significant changes at local level including the development of more local assessment expertise, for example, by promoting the status of 'chartered examiner'; and encouragement to participate in local networks of evaluation and improvement supported by local authority staff, a national inspectorate service and awarding bodies. A more professionalised approach to assessment will also involve reducing the influence of factors (such as performance tables) that undermine ethical and objective approaches to assessment.
- There should be a baccalaureate award at 18–19 – formal assessment for qualification should be delayed until 18 or 19 with the award of a unified, multi-level baccalaureate-style qualification that embraces both general and vocational learning. Examination at 16 should become a progress check rather than a summative award. External testing within the National Curriculum should be reviewed with the possibility of there being one interim testing point towards the end of primary education.
- There should be a new unified tertiary phase – further and higher education (representing achievement at levels 4, 5 and 6 in the National Qualifications Framework) should be considered as a unified tertiary phase that is able to play an enhanced role in developing regional



knowledge-based economies, reproducing the best features of the previous polytechnics. Further education colleges and their capacity to promote high quality vocational learning will play a fundamental part in the new sector and while universities will continue to enjoy their unique role in knowledge production, they will be more integrated into a national system of learning and progression.

- There should be a learning framework for work and life beyond the tertiary phase that includes apprenticeships and work-based learning, adult and community learning, and education by civil society bodies, supported by a lifelong credit and qualifications system.

Key questions for the final stages of the Inquiry

1. How can a more flexible National Curriculum framework also function as a framework for learner progression?
2. How are the five pillar values to be built into the education system in ways that will be esteemed by teachers and employers?
3. How should the transitions between a less specialised curriculum (primary education) and a more specialised curriculum in secondary education take place? Is there a case for subjects to be bundled up between ages 11–14 as in the IBO Middle Years Programme and for some delay in subject specialisation until 14 years?
4. What kind of balance should be struck between core processes in the curriculum (e.g. research skills, project work, guidance and a range of experiences that wider life cannot guarantee, particularly to working class pupils) and subjects?
5. How might different forms of achievement can be recorded in a end of upper secondary baccalaureate qualification?

6. How can teachers and lecturers be afforded a greater voice in the assessment process (formative and summative) to mitigate the distorting pressure of assessment-led accountability systems?

Dimension 3

Governance, democracy and collaboration

Reform of the system of educational governance is one of the most controversial aspects of education politics and is therefore of great importance to the Inquiry. This section of the report presents provisional proposals for a new democratic governance framework for English education and training across the life-course. It is joined up, collaborative, encourages devolution to the local level, and provides a strong voice for students, practitioners and citizens.

Here we outline proposals for a 'democratic middle tier' based on a multiplicity of forms of co-operation and partnership that encourage direct engagement by individuals and communities in shaping their destiny and the role of co-operative and democratic institutions. We began our work with a vision of the education system as a whole in which change takes place from top to bottom and cradle to grave, infused by a clear set of values and a strong sense of what education is for. Such a democratic approach to educational governance will require the development of new structures, measures and, above all, a cultural change catalysed by a national debate about the purposes and organisation of education.

A new facilitating role for central government

In contrast to the current practice of politically inspired micro-management, central government would take a step back. Reflecting its democratic mandate, its role would be to set the broad education agenda for England with the accent on establishing a longer-term consensus rather than pursuing narrow party political agendas, and to encourage regional and local initiative. Its national roles would include promoting particular policy priorities at a strategic level, establishing guidelines for standards and equity, and creating investment plans. It would devolve responsibility downwards to the local level using 'facilitating frameworks', which would offer new

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freedoms for stakeholders at regional and local level to work effectively together. These frameworks would include discretionary funding, regional and local target setting, regional skills development and local improvement strategies.

Part of the process of stepping back and devolving downwards could also involve the creation of what might be termed a 'national education council': an independent body bringing together a range of stakeholders and experts, drawing on research evidence from home and abroad, and in due course charged by Parliament to develop a stable framework for curricula and qualifications applicable throughout the life-course. Guided by research evidence from home and abroad, the council could advise on the most effective strategies for school and college improvement.

Central government would undertake the reform of Ofsted in order to establish a national inspectorate truly independent of government so it had the trust and support of all the major education stakeholders. Its role would be, as it is now, to provide high quality professional scrutiny of standards and practices across all the education and training system and as a repository of best practice observed in its work. There could be a new accent on area-wide inspection approaches, on the processes of improving collaboration with local authority improvement services, and on providing spaces for local initiatives (e.g. schools, colleges and work-based learning providers could choose local criteria that they felt met local need in addition to established national criteria). Ofsted would report periodically to Parliament about its progress in achieving the objectives set by national, regional and local frameworks.

Place and identity – the local counts

Inequalities manifest themselves spatially and locally,⁵⁰ and education can be strengthened by a sense of place and identity.⁵¹ It will be important, therefore, to develop a counterbalance to the excessive political centralisation of education by exploring the dimensions of a new 'civic formation' of local and regional education actors – schools, colleges, work-based providers, universities, employers, parents and representatives of wider civil society organisations – as part of a more democratic national system and service. Inclusive planning and collaboration will draw on resources that are squandered in

competition and jockeying for place. Democratic accountability will ensure a place for the whole community, including students and practitioners in devising and developing new approaches.

Local authorities as a leading force in a new civic formation

There should be an enhanced role for local government as a champion of the locality and to promote the interests of all, particularly the most vulnerable. Accordingly, local authorities (acting singly or in clusters) would draw up with local partners an overall area plan to integrate and deliver all services in the local area to ensure high standards, participation, collaboration and social justice. Local plans could stipulate measures to reduce class, gender, race and other inequalities and to promote the highest standards for all. Local authorities would act as the champions of families, children and young people, and the vulnerable. They would plan and manage (or delegate to another body) services for families, children and young people, school improvement, school admissions and places planning.

The clear lesson of the London and Manchester Challenge programmes that have done so much to raise pupil attainment is that school-to-school collaboration, despite its importance, is not enough. Radical improvements require a coordinating agency with the capacity to intervene effectively to partner schools and mobilise expertise, a role carried out by government-appointed programme directors with the active support of local authorities.

To reduce the disparities in intake and performance between schools, local councils would be empowered to either focus more resource on the most disadvantaged institutions or manage admissions through more socially balanced intakes.

They could cluster up to city or regional level for economic development, workforce and skills development and for education improvement services where this larger theatre of operations would make sense. Thus, local authorities would take on for education the strategic status and responsibility that they already enjoy in health, transport and adult social care. Where they lacked the capacity for this new role, they would share responsibilities with other local authorities. The secretary of state would reserve the right to intervene in extremis.



New democratic local education-specific strategic bodies

Acting in partnership with the local authority and overseeing the quality and impact of local education planning and management and holding education providers to account would be new local education-specific strategic bodies. What might be termed local education boards could be seen as the more democratic, participative and lifelong learning replacements for local education committees that were abolished by the last Labour Government. Like these, the proposed boards would bring together elected councillors sitting alongside representatives of other education interests, but there would be important differences. First, the boards would not be responsible for managing local authority or any other services. Indeed, the principle of local management of schools and colleges could well be extended to a wider range of services such as pre-school and youth. Their central role would be to take a holistic view of local education needs and to hold service providers to account on behalf of the public. Second, recognising that they were not the sole source of expertise or legitimacy, they would collaborate with stakeholder networks, such as governor or student bodies, and provide partnerships to improve local provision.

Local education boards would:

- oversee education for all ages and sectors including further education and aspects of higher education in their local authority area – or cluster of areas – as part of local government service provision
- ensure that providers collaborated to track systematically the progress of individual learners, especially at critical transition points (at ages 7, 11, 14, 16 and 18)
- liaise with regional skills bodies such as local enterprise partnerships and encourage collaborative local partnerships and forums, being responsible for ensuring a voice for all
- challenge and call to account failing providers, including local authorities, and act as a catalyst for improvement; their role would be analogous to that of local safeguarding boards.

Local authorities and their education partners, including practitioners, managers, parents, governors, students and employers, would set up the boards. We favour democratically elected bodies comprising elected councillors – including district councillors in counties – sitting alongside the elected representatives of stakeholder bodies such as local area forums and provider partnerships. Local education boards would have the power to co-opt experts and have the obligation to report on the quality and progress of provision in reaching agreed objectives in their area to the local authority (as part of integrated local delivery) and more directly through ‘assemblies’ to the networks they support and the wider local population. In return, publicly funded providers would be obliged to participate in local education planning.

Collaborative networks of providers, service users and wider stakeholders

Sitting alongside and being part of these new bodies would be a variety of collaborative partnerships, networks and forums, which would bring a disparate array of schools, colleges and work-based learning into a local family of institutions and also provide the means of participation and a stronger voice for users. Afforded particular powers and resources to make them effective, these would include education partnerships – schools, colleges, work-based and training providers, higher education, and adult and community services, and neighbourhood or local forums – a cross-section of the local community who contribute to service development including student forums, governor forums and local area forums. Collaborative networks and partnerships could also be scaled up to district or local-authority-wide level where they are required to support integrated planning, service delivery and skills development. These would be underpinned by powers devolved from local authorities and local education boards, and by the commitment of national government, to encourage and incentivise collaboration, even including an educational duty to collaborate.

Education for social cohesion – approaches to faith schools

In his recent book *Education Under Siege*, Peter Mortimore proposes that all schools – faith or not – should be opened to all pupils. Faith-based religious practice would not be part of the curriculum, although

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study of religions could be. Schools that wished to could provide voluntary after-school classes in faith observance – funded by different faiths – for children whose parents requested this. Mortimore acknowledges that such a proposal would be likely to be resisted by those happy ‘to proselytise their faith whilst being funded by the public purse’.⁵² However, if social cohesion is one of our main aims then some sort of settlement on this issue has to be achieved.

Developing democratic places of learning

Nurseries, schools, colleges, universities, work-based learning providers and community organisations that promote and practise democratic values should form the bedrock of a democratic education system. The democratic institution or places of learning should be at the core of a new collaborative or inter-dependent system of governance because they can provide the means by which the future can be practised in the present through what Michael Fielding refers to as ‘democratic experimentalism’.⁵³

However, when people think about ‘schooling’ and the ways that learning is organised the term ‘democracy’ does not always spring to mind. Instead, we find ourselves in the middle of what can only be described as a ‘new education authoritarianism’, which cannot reflect the direction in which the economic and social world is proceeding or needs to head. What we have termed ‘new times’ will require not only mathematical, scientific and linguistic knowledge, but also digital, research and, crucially, social and people competences in a more relational world. Our version of ‘new times’, therefore, prioritises not only specialist knowledge and skills, but also shared values and collaboration as the basis of innovation. We are thus interested in developing different dimensions of ‘capability’ and broadening the debate about the achievement of ‘standards’ in education. This brings us to the role of what we call democratic places of learning, which can unite learners, their teachers, parents and wider stakeholders in the enactment of the strong values of a Good Society and a belief that education is better if it is about a world of fairness, involvement in decision-making, a sense of common ownership, a sustainable future, the promotion of individual and collective wellbeing, and human creativity.

The fragmentation of our education system and the chaotic mosaic of schools and colleges have somewhat unexpectedly provided a context for a renewed emphasis on democratic ways of working. For example, the Co-operative Schools Movement now comprises over 750 schools, many of which sought academy status but did not want to be part of an academy chain. There is also growing interest in other forms of democratic organisation such as ‘citizen schools’.⁵⁴ These are schools that not only provide an expansive and democratic climate for professional and parental involvement, but also see students as partners and co-producers in the education process and promote their voice in the learning and governance process. Student Voice⁵⁵ and the Phoenix Education Trust⁵⁶ are pioneering new ways of ensuring that schools and learners benefit from the direct and everyday involvement of students in how and what they are taught. The confidence such practice engenders in young people is staggering. Meanwhile, Learn to Lead⁵⁷ is involving ever more schools in a programme that puts students at the centre of the educational process with impressive improvements in learners’ confidence, self-esteem and capacity. A Cambridge University Evaluation found,

The evidence so far is that the programme is making a huge contribution to building capacity for learning in its deepest sense. The qualitative evidence points to radical shifts in student dispositions, marked improvement in the quality of relationships and the development of participative school cultures which enable young people to flourish and achieve.

The term democracy is popularly understood to be one-dimensional – the exercise of the vote in a representative democracy. Applied to places of learning – the nursery, school, college, workplace or community centre – we use democracy in more expansive and diverse ways, including to cover:

- the role of values and the particular values that guide the place of learning to operate in an inclusive and ethical manner
- the degree of collaboration and mutualism exercised within and beyond the organisation



- how far deliberation and reflection is encouraged among staff and students in their everyday work
- the degree of control staff and students have over the curriculum in order to adapt learning to national and local circumstances
- the character of the curriculum and the degree to which it promotes a holistic concept of capability
- the balance between collective and personal needs.

This diverse concept and language of democracy allows us to view places of learning on a democratic continuum – all providers can become more democratic. The Inquiry is particularly interested in those places of learning that have advanced democratic and co-operative agendas, cultures and systems so they can provide examples of the effects that participatory and democratic inputs of all stakeholders (students, teachers, parents, governors, employers and the local community) have on empowering students with the capacity to make the most of their lives and have the biggest impact on the society in which they live.

Democratic places of learning therefore accord a special place for the role of the learner, not only in the belief that this can produce better educational outcomes – practising democracy in schools impacts positively on student motivation, their sense of ownership and empowerment, and in turn their attainment⁵⁸ – but is part of a commitment to help students learn and practise to become future citizens. It involves not only the creation of more democratic institutional governance, for example, through student councils, but also the deep involvement of learners in the design and creation of their school experience, what we have termed ‘co-production’. Democracy is not just a theory to be taught in class, but a culture to be experienced and practised. Enfranchising school and college students and trainees as equal partners in education and training also creates an educational culture of co-operation, collaboration, reciprocity and respect, which is of benefit to every actor in the education system.

We will also need to redefine what is meant by institutional freedom. A more democratic system of governance would try to bring schools, colleges and work-based learning providers into new forms of collaboration in which all providers would enjoy genuine freedoms to manage their own affairs while at the same time working within national and local frameworks such as funding, admissions, curriculum and qualifications, teacher standards, equality and quality. These new governance arrangements involve a redefinition of institutional freedom. What needs to be explored is the ‘freedom to’ act together, rather than just ‘freedom from’ higher authority freedom.

A new approach to leadership will also be key. Current and previous governments have applauded the ‘hero head’ who would be brought in to turn around failing schools or colleges. Clearly, we need to develop highly competent institutional leaders and to provide them with an environment that can result in positive change. At the same time, we need to foster a new type of leadership culture that is determined but respectful, collaborative and consultative. Practising ‘distributed freedom’ would enable teachers, students, parents and communities to gain a greater sense of control alongside that exercised by headteachers and governors.

Democratic institutions will require wider political change. While co-operative and democratic schools have grown, in an era of school autonomy and competition they remain relatively small in number and highly constrained by a restrictive curriculum and qualifications system. It is therefore difficult to imagine the growth and spread of these types of institutions without some assistance from the wider system and a facilitating state. A series of reforms proposed elsewhere in this report could assist the development of democratic institutions which, in turn, would provide breadth and depth to a new system. Helpful national frameworks would include a more open and flexible National Curriculum and a reformed 14–19 qualifications system, with a greater emphasis on local interpretation by teachers; a more devolved and democratic form of local governance that emphasises participation of all types of local stakeholders, and a reformed approach to inspection that would take into consideration local and institutional criteria for judgement alongside national ones. Democratic system reform could go much further – the rights of

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students could be recognised in legislation and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child could be included in national law.

Key questions for the final report of the Inquiry

While the Compass and NUT Education Inquiry is broadly committed to the proposals outlined above, there are ongoing areas of debate and discussion, particularly around a number of difficult issues and operational detail:

1. How is it possible to reconstitute the role of local authorities as facilitating, championing and partnership promoting bodies?
2. What population size should the local education boards be responsible to in order to balance the competing requirements of proximity to the community and critical mass of resources and expertise?
3. What are the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of reformed local authorities and the new boards?
4. How should local authorities that lack the expertise or resources to play a positive role in the proposed arrangements be treated?
5. What lessons can be learned from analogous bodies (e.g. safeguarding boards) in education, social services and the NHS so that new bodies are effective and not just 'talking shops'; institutions must be accountable to individuals and communities?
6. How can school federations, faith schools, grammar schools and academy chains be integrated into local governance?
7. How can governing bodies contribute to improving local performance?
8. How can Ofsted be reformed to create an inspectorate focused on supporting improvement and local planning and management?
9. What is the best route for funding flows to schools, colleges and other provider?
10. How can the democratic school experiment be developed on a local and national scale?

Dimension 4

Professionalism and co-production

We need to learn and teach differently. The more flexible and expanded learning, curriculum and qualifications framework and the more devolved, connective and democratic governance framework will demand a new type of education professional that can effectively mediate the inter-connective worlds of the learner, institution, local area, national system and global networks. The current model of professionalism cannot be regarded as fit for purpose. It is bureaucratized and marketised, having been shaped by the Anglo-Saxon model of education with its emphasis on standardised teaching and assessment, performative accountability systems and market choice. The previous Labour Government established national standards, but the Coalition Government has undone many of them with its deregulatory approach.

The effect on teachers and lecturers has been, at best, mixed. While under Labour there was investment in professional development, this was accompanied by high bureaucratic transactions costs (paperwork), an emphasis on compliance and the lack of professional and creative freedom. Under the Coalition, professional standards are in doubt, particularly related to pedagogy and in further education. Top down and marketised approaches to professionalism have failed to get the best from our teachers and lecturers.

In these 'new times' there can be no return to a simple 'the state knows best' approach. Following the spread of information and the welcome end of a culture of deference, the 'doctor [teacher] knows best' approach of the last century has little place in this one. People are already co-creating better health and education. The challenge is to recognise the value of a public service ethos and the special role of professionals who are trained to do a demanding job – but within this new context of empowered citizens.



The key facets of this new and modernised form of professionalism are:⁵⁹

- Multi-layered professionalism – education professionals have to develop different types or layers of capacities or professional personas. These include expertise in an area of knowledge and skill (professional persona no. 1); expertise in understanding learners; pedagogy and the organisation of learning (professional persona no. 2); and capacities to collaborate beyond the institution with social partners such as students, parents, employers and other types of professionals, in a multi-disciplinary way (professional persona no. 3).
- Democratic professionalism – this expansive professionalism can also take on a ‘democratic character’, particularly in relation to the style of working with students (what Michael Fielding refers to as ‘democratic fellowship’), seeing them as potential co-producers of knowledge and not just consumers to be prepared for examinations.
- Enhanced preparation and continuous development – for there to be enhanced professionalism there will be high thresholds for entry to the profession, as is the case in Finland, and quality initial teacher education. There is a case for initial teacher education to be longer and more staged than it is at present, involving a close relationship with the school and college workplace, and the development of different stages of teacher status. This would thus blend initial and continuing teacher development.
- Better recognition and treatment for professionals – at the centre of education is the relationship between learners and education professionals. Treating professionals badly lets students down. Enhanced professionalism, therefore, has to be based on the proper treatment of teachers and lecturers as well as setting legitimately high expectations of how well they teach. This involves abiding by national pay and conditions and not embarking on a race to the bottom through regional pay. It also involves recognising that teaching is a stressful profession and that the wellbeing of the profession should be given greater priority. The improvement of teaching quality, a major key to future educational success, entails valuing the

experience of established teachers as well as the new high achieving graduate and finding ways of helping all teachers to contribute their professional wisdom and seek new challenges. Dylan Wiliam has stressed, ‘love the one you are with’, recognising that it is far more cost-efficient to invest in the existing teacher force than to rely on their replacement.⁶⁰

- Expansive workplaces – expansive professional learning can best take place in expansive work environments that offer opportunities for professional learning. This will depend on the quality of school and college leadership, and the emphasis they place on professional improvement in classrooms and the wider education process. Expansive work environments provide an opportunity to establish ‘communities of practice’ so that teachers and lecturers can learn from colleagues and build their professional identity. Spaces for professional development can be given within individual institutions and in different areas. In Ontario, Canada, teachers and school leaders circulate between different institutions within the state every so many years. This provides for an exchange of expertise and stimulates new challenges for education professionals.
- A national college of educators – as in the field of medicine, teachers and lecturers need a professional body to provide a strong voice for the profession, as a means of exercising a degree of self-regulation and to support continuous professional development. There may be an argument for these bodies to include not only those who teach in schools, but all the professionals who educate throughout the life-course.
- Collaboration between teacher unions and civil society bodies – it is important that teacher or lecturer unions and other bodies concerned with educational professionalism come together to agree on the key dimensions of an enhanced professionalism as a first step towards a unified professional voice for education and lifelong learning.

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Key questions

1. What role does a strengthened professional voice play in a more democratic model of education?
2. What role does democratic professionalism play in a strengthened civic education formation?

Dimension 5

A lifelong learning system – education at its most comprehensive

A new democratic system has to be based on the conception of lifelong learning; this is arguably where the democratic model will be at its most radical if it is to be seen as a system and service involving and educating all from cradle to grave. Accordingly, the Inquiry will focus its remaining months on discussing and elaborating on how education, training and skills development beyond 18 years can be democratic in the most profound sense. Such a system could:

- be built on four key stages – (up to age 25, ages 25–50, ages 50–75, ages 75+) based on a new set of entitlements as recommended by the Inquiry into the Future for Lifelong Learning⁶¹
- have a more central role for further education and its relationship with higher education and skill development in the formation of a ‘unified tertiary sector’
- include the concept of the ‘public university’, where higher education is seen as a public good and contributes towards the generation of democratic life⁶²
- include strong and social-partnership-based vocational education and training, apprenticeships and skills formation as part of a UK-wide economic and skills plan, with new national specialist vocational institutions, strong regional skills networks and expansive work-based learning in workplaces that offer support for quality training

- include collective self-organisation of education by trade unions, mutual organisations and a multitude of civil society bodies in which people discover the joy of education as part of wider struggles for social justice and a sustainable future, independent of even the representative democratic state
- build on the relational aspects of our society and the high value human activities that make us happy and produce wellbeing; in his article *The relational society* Mike Rustin writes about the intrinsic qualities of particular activities – cooking, gardening, dancing, music-making or even house renovation – that are relational and bring into being ‘communities of practice’ or ‘communities of enjoyment’,⁶³ and in *The Craftsman* Richard Sennett reconnects the idea of production, vocation and enjoyment when he describes a basic human impulse ‘as the desire to do a job well for its own sake’.⁶⁴

Key questions

1. Should the proposed education and lifelong learning system as a whole be organised nationally under one ministry, as it is in Wales?
2. Do we accept that this concept of lifelong learning will limit the autonomy of universities?
3. How could such a system be funded – purely through public taxation or through contributory schemes from a graduate tax of higher education beneficiaries and through employers?



Part 5 Transforming education:

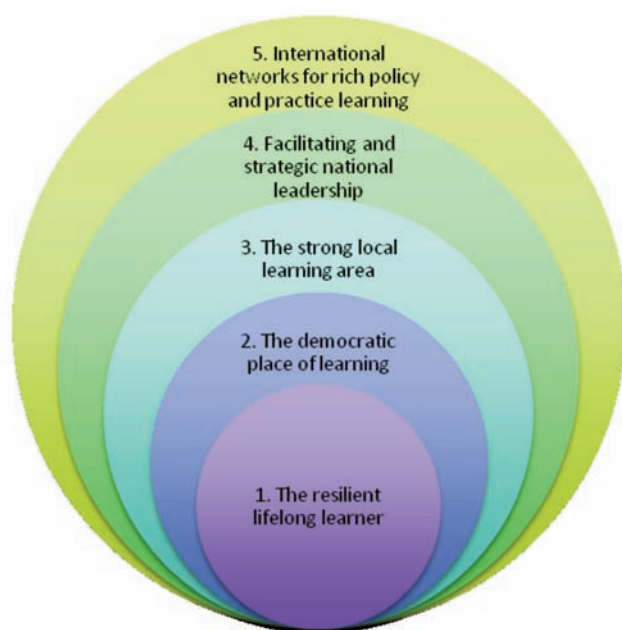
Steps towards a new system

Five levels of reform

Let us start to pull all this together. This analysis and these values imply there is an inter-connected educational system that has democracy and participation as its defining cultural and organisational feature, and applied in its broadest sense, this holds the key to a high aspiration, high inclusion, high care, high trust and high performance lifelong learning system. But how might the different dimensions work in practice and how might they be developed from what we have now?

We suggest that there are five levels that require reform to transform the education system within a globalised perspective; everyone at each level must be clear about their roles, rights and responsibilities (Figure 6).

Figure 2 The five levels of transformation



These are the inter-linked levels of transformation:

- the resilient lifelong learner – high expectations from cradle to grave and high support from families, communities, local government and the national state to develop the capacities to positively shape lives and wider society
- the democratic place of learning – strong student and professional participation and relationships, and the strengthening of involvement of parents, communities and wider social partners
- the strong ‘local learning area’ and democratic local governance – towards a democratic middle tier including the building of strong collaborative networks of institutions, gaining support for the formation new local education strategic bodies, and the reinvigoration of democratic local government
- facilitating national leadership – including the formation of an independent national education council, encouraging a partnership approach by Ofsted, a looser and more expansive National Curriculum framework up to the age of 19, and winning support among political parties for greater devolution of responsibility to the local level
- encouraging the formation of international networks for rich policy and practice learning – including the development of policy learning networks across the four countries of the UK and dialogue with collaborative and democratic national systems and education movements globally.

Challenging issues for the Inquiry – over to you

While the Inquiry has so far set out a comprehensive analysis and potentially interesting proposals, it faces enormous challenges arising principally from the successes of the prevailing model and the elite parts of the current system. Some crucial questions for the Inquiry include:

- How is it possible to facilitate genuine choice and diversity within a more comprehensive system – not least for those who have special educational needs?
 - How is it possible to address underperformance within the system effectively while fundamentally respecting education professionals?
 - How is it possible to turn democratic participation into system improvement?
 - How is it possible to ensure that learners' voices, in particular, inform the basis of a new model?
 - How is it possible to address the elite parts of the education system (e.g. independent schools and research intensive universities) that perform highly, but also sustain deep education and social divisions?
 - How is it possible to apply, broadly at least, the insights of the Inquiry thus far to the various life phases of education?
 - How, in particular, is it possible to build and maintain structures and culture that demand education be truly life long?
- How is it possible to conceptualise a new system as a coherent and distinct model?
 - How is it possible to establish the contours and basis of a new model without imposing it? It must be organic and built from the bottom up, but seeded and resourced from the legitimate national collective will – the state.

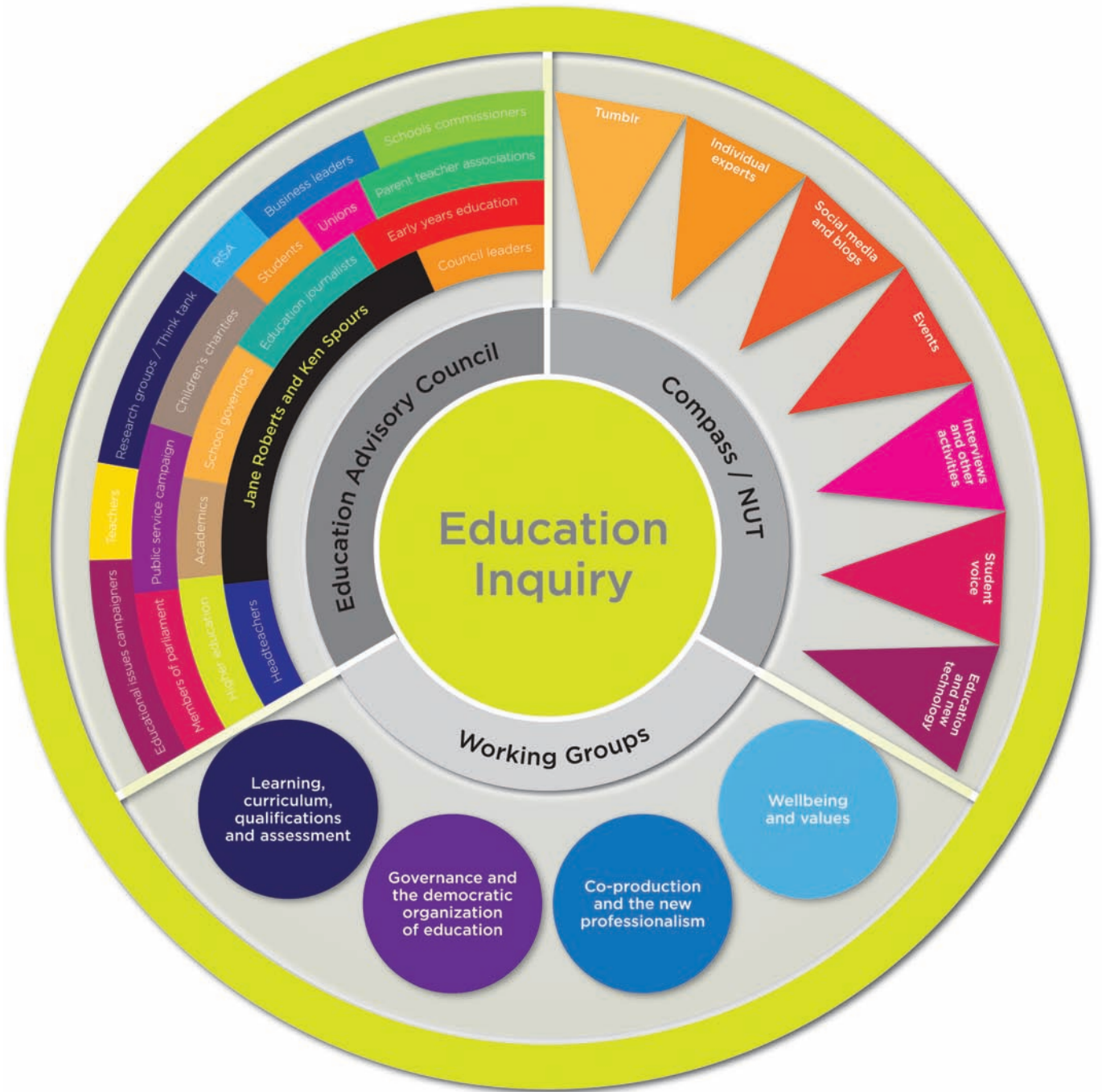
It will not be easy to answer these and numerous other questions. However, in the remaining months of the Inquiry we will have to address many subjects raised by such questions and we hope that you will join us to develop a broad approach to reform that is capable of building a new kind of education settlement in England.

Appendix About the enquiry

The Inquiry is sponsored by Compass and the NUT. The Inquiry aims to define a new approach to education in England to inform the development of a high performing and innovative national system based on the principles of a Good Society – fairness and social justice, democracy, sustainability, wellbeing and creativity.⁶⁵ While the focus is on England reference is also being made to developments in other countries of the UK, particularly Wales, which is following an increasingly different path from this country.

The Inquiry, started in 2013, will produce a report in the summer of 2014 before decisions are made on how the work is then developed. Figure 7 provides an overview of the structure of the Inquiry.

Figure 7 The structure of the Inquiry



The Advisory Council

Chair: Dame Jane Roberts

Sir Alasdair MacDonald

– Former Headteacher of Morpeth School

Alex Kenny – Teacher, Stepney Green Maths & Computing College, Tower Hamlets, London

Anna Prescott – StudentVoice

Anne Swift – Head teacher, Gladstone Road Infant School, Scarborough

Baljeet Ghale – Former NUT President

Prof Becky Francis – Professor of Education and Social Justice, Kings College London

Ben Lucas – Director, 2020 Public Services Trust, RSA

Colin Richards - Emeritus Professor University of Cumbria and former senior HMI

David Butler OBE – Executive President PTA UK

Prof. Sir Eric Thomas – Vice Chancellor, University of Bristol

Emma Knights – Chief Executive, National Governors' Association

Prof Diane Reay – Professor of Education, Cambridge University

Fiona Millar – Journalist and campaigner on education and parenting issues

Geethika Jayatilaka – Director, Parent Gym and Governor, Brecknock Primary School, Camden, London

Hazel Danson – Teacher, Clough Head Junior & Infant School, Huddersfield

Hilary Emery – Chief Executive, National Children's Bureau

Hilary Cottam – Principle Partner, Participle

Huw Evans – Former Principal, Coleg Llandrillo Cymru, Colwyn Bay, North Wales and Chair of Qualifications Wales

Prof John Howson – Managing Director, DataforEducation.info

Dr Jonathan Carr-West – Chief Executive, LGIU

Judith Blake – Deputy Leader and Lead Executive Member Children's Services, Leeds Council

Kate Frod – Head teacher, Eleanor Palmer Primary School, Camden, London

Prof Ken Spours – Professor of Education, IoE

Luke Shore – StudentVoice

Martin Pratt – Director for Children, Schools & Families at London Borough of Camden

Mervyn Wilson – Chief Executive and Principal, Co-operative College

Prof Miriam E David - Professor Emerita of Education, Institute of Education, University of London

Neil Carberry – Director, Employment and Skills, CBI

Pam Tatlow – Chief Executive, million+

Pasi Sahlberg – Director General, Centre for International Mobility and Cooperation, Finland

Pat Glass MP – Education Select Committee Member
Paul Cottrell – National Head of Public Policy, UCU

Pauline Trudell – Vice President, National Campaign for Real Nursery Education

Peter Downes – Cambridgeshire Councillor and Vice President, Liberal Democrat Education Association

Peter John – Leader, Southwark Council and London Councils' Executive Member for Children's Services and Skills and Employment

Dr Phil Cross – Head teacher, Hurlingham and Chelsea School, Hammersmith, London

Rachel Roberts – Director, Phoenix Education Trust
Sir Rod Aldridge – Chair, The Aldridge Foundation

Tim Brighouse
– Former Schools Commissioner for London

Tom Wilson – Director, Unionlearn, TUC

Toni Pearce – President, NUS

Warwick Mansell – Education Journalist

Sir William Atkinson
– Former Headteacher Phoenix High School

Yasmin Rufo – National Executive, StudentVoice

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Notes

- [1] Alison Wolf, *Does Education Matter?: Myths About Education and Economic Growth*, London: Penguin, 2002.
- [2] The concept of connected scales of a human ecological system was first developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner in 1979 in his *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. His ecological systems theory has been adapted to post-14 education and the topography of the education governance landscape in England by Ann Hodgson and Ken Spours in several publications, including 'Tackling the crisis facing young people: building "high opportunity progression eco-systems"', *Oxford Review of Education*, 39(2), 2013.
- [3] Jonathan Clifton and Will Cook, 'The achievement gap in context' in *Excellence and Equity* edited by J. Clifton, London: IPPR, 2013.
- [4] The profound lifetime effects of poverty have been highlighted in a recent report by the National Children's Bureau, *Born to Fail*, 2013.
- [5] John Abbott and Heather MacTaggart, *Overschooled But Under-Educated: How the Crisis in Education is Jeopardising our Adolescents*, London: Continuum, 2010.
- [6] This is a central argument of Ken Robinson whose declared mission is 'to transform the culture of education and organizations with a richer conception of human creativity and intelligence', <http://sirkenrobinson.com>.
- [7] See Jonathan Rutherford, *Capitalism and the social recession*, Compass publications, www.compassonline.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/CTP33CapitalRecessionRutherford.pdf, and Alan Finlayson, 'The broken society versus the social recession', *Soundings*, 44(13), Spring 2010, pp. 22–34.
- [8] Phil Brown, Hugh Lauder and David Ashton, *The Global Auction: The Broken Promises of Education, Jobs and Income*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- [9] Quoted in Jemima Kiss, 'Google Glass creator says "fear-based" testing regimes block technology', *Guardian*, 5 September 2013, www.theguardian.com/education/2013/sep/05/google-glass-creator-testing-regimes-technology.
- [10] Quoted in Ed Smith, 'This is the age of educational anxiety: but good grades don't always make great workers', *New Statesman*, 30 August 2013, www.newstatesman.com/education/2013/08/age-educational-anxiety?quicktabs_most_read=1.
- [11] *Ibid.*
- [12] *Ibid.*
- [13] Quoted in Richard Adams, 'Love has disappeared from state education, says private school leader', *Guardian*, 30 September 2013, www.theguardian.com/education/2013/sep/30/state-education-private-school-league-tables.
- [14] Ann Hodgson and Ken Spours assert that the Coalition Government with its policy focus on the EBacc and traditional academic subjects and apprenticeships are 'overlooking the middle attainer'. See *Stuck in the Middle – Prospects for Four in 10 Teens 'Overlooked' by Coalition*, IOE Press Office, www.ioe.ac.uk/66726.html.
- [15] Submission from the Runnymede Trust to the House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee, 9 September 2012, www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmworpen/151/151we14.htm.
- [16] The concept of conservative modernisation of education is explored in the joint professional inaugural lecture of Ann Hodgson and Ken Spours, *Towards a Universal Upper Secondary Education System in England: A Unified and Ecosystem Vision*, June 2012, Bedford Way Papers, London: Institute of Education.
- [17] The rationale for grammar schools and a more academic curriculum in selective state schools is to promote social mobility and, in the current context, to dilute the dominance of independent schools in relation to the top universities and jobs. See Harry Mount, 'A public school elite runs this country because Labour and Tory governments destroyed grammar schools', *Telegraph*, 11 November 2013, <http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/culture/harrymount/100071517/a-public-school-elite-runs-this-country-because-labour-and-tory-governments-destroyed-grammar-schools/>.
- [18] Mona Chalabi. 'The Pisa methodology: do its education claims stack up?' *The Guardian*, 3 December 2013 and William Stewart. 'PISA rankings utterly wrong' *Times Education Supplement*, 19 July 2013.
- [19] Heinz-Dieter Meyer and Aaron Benavot, *PISA, Power, and Policy: The Emergence of Global Educational Governance*, Symposium Books, 2013.
- [20] Some of these issues are explored in 'Ten things they don't tell you about academies: Ten inconvenient truths about the academy revolution', *New Statesman*, 12 March 2012 and in various publications from the Anti-Academies Alliance, <http://antiacademies.org.uk/2012/01/are-academies-proven-to-succeed/>.
- [21] Michael Young, *The Curriculum: 'An Entitlement to Powerful Knowledge: A Response to John White*, 2012, www.newvisionsforeducation.org.uk/2012/05/03/the-curriculum-an-entitlement-to-powerful-knowledge-a-response-to-john-white/.
- [22] Jon Cruddas, 'Building the new Jerusalem', *New Statesman*, 30 September 2012, www.newstatesman.com/politics/politics/2012/09/jon-cruddas-building-new-jerusalem.
- [23] The question of what it is to be human and the implications for education have recently been explored by Michael Fielding and colleagues in 'Learning to be human: the educational legacy of John Macmurray', *Oxford Review of Education*, 38(6) 2012.
- [24] Recent research on behaviours in toddlers and in chimps has lent further support to the argument that altruism has played a fundamental role in human evolution back to the point where we shared a common ancestry with apes – Felix Warneken and Michael Tomasello, 'The roots of human altruism', *British Journal of Psychology*, 2009, pp. 455–71.
- [25] Robin Murray in *Danger and Opportunity: Crisis and the New Social Economy*, NESTA, 2009, argues that there is an emerging 'social economy' that includes the environment, care, education, welfare, food and energy. This social economy, often comprising small companies and groups, has the potential to play a much greater role in addressing global problems. However, realising this potential will depend on dramatically increasing our capacity and skills of 'social innovation' and the process of learning across enterprises and institutions.
- [26] CBI, *First Steps: A New Approach for Our Schools*, Confederation of British Industry, 2012, www.cbi.org.uk/media/1845483/cbi_education_report_191112.pdf.
- [27] See www.cbi.org.uk/campaigns/education-campaign-ambition-for-all/first-steps-read-the-report-online/.
- [27] The Clayton Christensen concept of 'disruptive innovation' can be explored at www.christenseninstitute.org/?gclid=ClOa8c7YpbsCFWjmwgodUjMMApA.
- [29] www.nesta.org.uk/publications/danger-and-opportunity-crisis-and-new-social-economy
- [30] www.ifproject.co.uk
- [31] Frank Coffield and Bill Williamson, *From Exam Factories to Communities of Discovery: The Democratic Route*, Bedford Way Papers, London: Institute of Education, 2012, p. 11.



[32] Colin Crouch describes this situation as 'post-democracy' where the 'institutions of democracy increasingly become a formal shell and the energy and innovative drive pass away from the democratic arena and into small circles of a politico-economic elite', <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/archives/30297>.

[33] This stresses the importance of experiencing different forms of democracy on a small scale as a means of gaining practice and experience. The concept of 'democratic experimentalism' refers to innovative actions that are being put into practice on behalf of the system itself and could be viewed as a form of national action research, which is then properly evaluated – See Fielding and Moss, *Radical Education and the Common School* 2010.

[34] The schools co-operative movement has grown rapidly in recent years and in 2013 there were over 600 schools in England of which many are part of co-operative trusts. See the Schools Co-operative Society, www.cooperativeschools.coop/what_we_do/case_studies.

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[36] See for example Iroise Dumontheil and Sara Jayne Blakemore, 'Social cognition and abstract thought in adolescence: the role of structural and functional development in rostral pre-frontal cortex', in *Educational Neuroscience*, BJEP Monograph Series, British Psychological Society, 2012.

[37] An exploration of social neuroscience, the concept of the 'social brain' and interpretations of 'human nature' constitutes a major focus of the work of the RSA's Social Brain Project www.thersa.org/action-research-centre/learning-cognition-and-creativity/social-brain. The concept of the 'social brain' has major implications regarding the role of socialising and group learning and exchange in education.

[38] Robin Alexander (ed.), *Children, their World, their Education: Introducing the Cambridge Primary Review*, p. 13, www.primaryreview.org.uk/downloads/CPR_revised_booklet.pdf.

[39] Fiona Millar's piece 'Education research exists, so why isn't it used in policymaking?', *Guardian*, 7 May 2012, argues for a greater and more independent status for government scientific advisers and research groups to introduce evidence at each stage of the policy process.

[40] Pasi Sahlberg, *Secondary education in OECD Countries Common Challenges, Differing Solutions*, Turin: European Training, 2007.

[41] In Peter Wilby, 'Finland's education ambassador spreads the word', *Guardian*, 1 July 2013, Pasi Sahlberg fears that the Finnish system is now too complacent and may not adapt: 'Ask Finns about how our system will look in 2030, and they will say it will look like it does now. We don't have many ideas about how to renew our system. We need less formal, class-based teaching, more personalised learning, more focus on developing social and team skills. We are not talking about these things at all.'

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[43] We are grateful to these ideas on networked and collaborative approaches to inspection provided by Dr Melanie Erhen of the Institute of Education, University of London.

[44] The concept of serious or real utopias refers to radical practical solutions to problems of neo-liberalism that can be introduced now as part of what is referred to as 'pre-figurative practice'. See Michael Fielding and Peter Moss, *Radical Education and the Common School: A Democratic Alternative or Resisting the Dictatorship of No Alternative*, London: Institute of Education, 2011.

[45] By the term 'expansive' we refer to systems and practices that contain several dimensions or levels and capable of incorporating positions prioritised by those with whom we disagree.

[46] <http://www.compassonline.org.uk/publications/dare-more-democracy/>

[47] The term 'competences' is used in a broad sense to refer to a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes.

[48] Richard Pring et al., *Education for All: The Future of Education and Training for 14–19 Year Olds*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2009.

[49] Imogen Parker, *Early Developments: Bridging the Gap between Evidence and Policy in Early Years Education*, London: IPPR, 2013.

[50] See the work of, for example, Danny Dorling, 'Inequality constitutes a particular place', *Social and Cultural Geography*, 13(1), 2012, pp. 1–9.

[51] See Carlo Raffo, 'Educational equity in poor urban contexts – exploring issues of place/space and young people's identity and agency', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 59(1), 2010, pp. 1–19.

[52] Peter Mortimore, *Education Under Siege: Why There is a Better Alternative*, Bristol: Policy Press, 2013, pp. 222–3.

[53] 'Democratic experimentalism' refers to innovative actions that are being put into practice on behalf of the system itself and could be viewed as a form of national action research, which is then properly evaluated – See Michael Fielding and Peter Moss, 2011.

[54] See Jamie Audsley, Clyde Chitty, Jim O'Connell, David M Watson and Jane Wills, *Citizen Schools: Learning to Rebuild Democracy*, London: IPPR, 2013.

[55] www.studentvoice.co.uk.

[56] www.phoenixeducation.co.uk.

[57] www.learntolead.org.uk.

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[59] Sources on democratic professionalism include Geoff Whitty and Emma Wisby, "'Collaborative" and "democratic" professionalism: alternatives to "traditional" and "managerial" approaches to teacher autonomy', in *Educational Studies in Japan: International Yearbook*, 1, 2006, pp. 25–36. For activist concepts see Judith Sachs (2003) *The Activist Teaching Profession*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 2003. For an ecological perspective, see Ron Barnett, 'Towards an ecological professionalism' in C. Sugrue and T. Dyrda Solbrenke (eds), *Professional Responsibility: New Horizons of Praxis*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2012.

[60] Dylan Wiliam, 'The importance of teaching' in J. Clifton (ed.) *Excellence and Equity: Tackling Educational Disadvantage in England's Secondary Schools*, London: IPPR, 2013.

[61] See Tom Schuller and David Watson, *Learning Through Life: Inquiry into the Future of Lifelong Learning*, NIACE, 2009.

[62] See John Holmwood, Campaign for the Public University, <http://publicuniversity.org.uk>.

[63] Mike Rustin, 'The relational society', *Soundings*, 54, pp. 23–36.

[64] Richard Sennett, *The Craftsman*, Penguin, 2008.

[65] These are considered the key 'pillars' of the Good Society and were outlined initially by Neal Lawson and Ken Spours in *Education for the Good Society*, Compass publications, 2011.



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