

[News story: Plan to boost social mobility through education](#)

An ambitious plan to provide opportunity on every young person's doorstep and help make Britain a country fit for the future has been unveiled today (Thursday 14 December) by Education Secretary Justine Greening.

In a speech at the inaugural [Reform social mobility conference](#), the Education Secretary pointed to the success of government reforms in raising school standards and creating more opportunities.

This includes 1.9million more children in good and outstanding schools than in 2010, record numbers of young people in education or training and more disadvantaged pupils going to university. And earlier this month [a new study](#) revealed that England is rising up the international literacy league table, with English 9yr olds now significantly better readers than their American, Canadian and Australian counterparts.

But she made clear that if we are to make this a country that truly works for everyone, there is much more to be done to deliver equality of opportunity for every child, regardless of where they live.

The plan [Unlocking Talent, Fulfilling Potential](#) will deliver targeted action where it is needed most, focusing £800 million of government investment on overcoming these challenges.

One overarching ambition will focus on places and communities across the country that feel they have been 'left behind', because they have not yet seen the improvement that other parts of the country have already benefited from. A further four ambitions will cover the key life stages of people's education.

Ambition 1: Closing the word gap

Boosting access to high quality early language and literacy, both in the classroom and at home, ensuring more disadvantaged children leave school having mastered the basic of literacy that many take for granted.

Ambition 2: Closing the attainment gap

Raising standards for every pupil, supporting teachers early in their career as well as getting more great teachers in areas where there remain significant challenges.

Ambition 3: Real choice at post-16

Creating world-class technical education, backed by a half a billion pounds in investment, and increasing the options for all young people regardless of their background.

Ambition 4: Rewarding careers for all

Boosting skills and confidence to make the leap from education into work, raising their career aspirations. Building a new type of partnership with businesses to improve advice, information and experiences for young people.

Education Secretary Justine Greening said:

In modern Britain, where you are born, where you live, where you go to school and where you work directly affects where you get to in life.

Talent is spread evenly across this country; the problem is that opportunity isn't. We need systemic change and we need everyone – government, employers, education professionals and civil society – to work together so that social mobility runs through everything we all do.

[A recent study](#) has revealed that if disadvantaged pupils in all English regions performed as well as disadvantaged pupils in London, this would lead to an overall economic benefit of around £20 billion in present value terms.

Today's plan focuses government reforms and funding on the people and places that need it most to level up opportunity and ensure no community is left behind, helping to make Britain a success as it prepares for life post-Brexit.

It sets out action and investment in a range of areas including:

- £50million to boost school nursery provision in some of the most challenging areas, so more children benefit from early education support before they arrive at primary school.
- A consultation on proposals to enhance early careers support and professional development for teachers, in particular those working in challenging schools and areas. This will help to further drive up standards in schools by retaining the best teachers and attracting the best individuals to the profession with a 'gold-standard' training and development offer.
- A new £23 million Future Talent Fund to trial a range of new teaching approaches to support the education of the most-able children from less well-off communities.

Sir Peter Lampl, Founder and Chairman of the Sutton Trust and Chairman of the Education Endowment Foundation said:

We welcome today's social mobility action plan. It will play an important role in enabling less advantaged young people to get on in life. We particularly welcome the Future Talent Fund, which will support bright young people to fulfil their potential and the new role for the Education Endowment Foundation to evaluate early years practice.

Melanie Richards, Deputy Chair at KPMG UK said:

We have heard the Secretary of State's call to arms today for all sectors to work together to ensure future generations of young people have the skills, opportunity and support they deserve. We strongly support the Department's Unlocking Talent, Fulfilling Potential action plan; it is the right thing to do for the good of our society and it is also vital if the UK is to remain competitive on the global stage.

It will take the best efforts of all of us – working together – to stamp out the social immobility that currently stops too many people in this country from reaching their full potential.

David Hughes, Chief Executive of Association of Colleges said:

This is an important statement of intent and focus for the DfE. The plan sets out an ambitious agenda to tackle longstanding and deep-seated inequalities which the education system struggles to overcome. It is a brave step to establish this as a goal for the Government and I know that colleges across the country are already working on this ambition in everything that they do. Colleges are drivers of social mobility and will want to work with the Secretary of State to help transform the life chances of children, young people and adults.

The plan builds on wider government work to boost social mobility including the publication of an Industrial Strategy to boost productivity across the UK to create more jobs and increase earning power. In addition, the government has introduced the National Living Wage, investing £9 billion in affordable housing and creating more full-time, permanent jobs.

It will sit alongside work already underway via the [Opportunity Areas](#) programme, and comes after the Education Secretary hosted a [Skills Summit](#) for Britain's top employers at the DfE last month.