Dear Bridget,

**An introduction to the FEPG ‘Labour‘s  Preparation for government’ briefing paper**

In the attached document we outline the key policy areas where there would be either initial statements in a White Paper or where a review process would be launched. The direction of travel would be made clear.

The overall aim should be to produce a more coherent school system that places the needs of the whole child at its centre, is in line with a modern understanding of how children learn, will value all of their attributes, and prepare them for life in the future. The education system as a whole will be designed to enable lifelong learning for all and will have fairness, compassion and equality at the centre. We appreciate that many changes in the education system will take a long time; the idea is to ensure that any changes made, no matter how small, form a coherent development.

Breaking down the barriers to opportunity is one of Keir Starmer’s five key missions. We suggest that this mission will have been achieved if:

* The achievement gap between the advantaged and disadvantaged has been significantly narrowed, and overall achievement compares favourably with other countries.
* Families, young children and vulnerable children and adults are better supported.
* Teaching becomes a prestigious profession in which morale is high.
* Employers find that their need for skilled workers is better met.
* The 4 C’s – communication, creativity, collaboration and critical thinking – are built into education at all levels.
* Local communities can better influence how education is provided in their areas.

We set out here a summary of the reforms for each area of education that will be needed to deliver the crucial changes needed. We recommend that commissions be set up to develop and discuss these proposals further.

**1)** [**Early years**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/102JJx5UTkkU6iL_VZBi5Lw0vx-E_kNcLF01mJ35gAgA/edit#bookmark=id.qhkz8uv38fz4)**:** We need to create a comprehensive and affordable childcare and early education offer from the end of maternity leave to the beginning of school. This should both support families and the development of young children both socially and educationally. (See page 6)

**2)** [**14-19 skills and FE**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/102JJx5UTkkU6iL_VZBi5Lw0vx-E_kNcLF01mJ35gAgA/edit#bookmark=id.rnco7p3jdg4s)**:** We need a flexible education system offering a broader curriculum and supporting second chance, retraining and adult learning. This includes developing ‘soft skills’ and linking life-long learning with communities. The curriculum should have flexible pathways. (See page 8)

[**3) Admissions: primary and secondary:**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/102JJx5UTkkU6iL_VZBi5Lw0vx-E_kNcLF01mJ35gAgA/edit#bookmark=id.7ele4lv0ipyz) We should end the ability of some schools and some families to game the process in order to gain an unfair advantage. Any admission policy should aim to, as far as possible, provide all schools with an intake which is a fair reflection of their community. (See page 12)

**4)** [**Curriculum: primary and secondary**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/102JJx5UTkkU6iL_VZBi5Lw0vx-E_kNcLF01mJ35gAgA/edit#bookmark=id.1w0yt5jpl3q0) **including interpersonal skills and emotional literacy:**  We need a school curriculum based on aims and values, such as the one developed by the Labour Party  2007 – 10. A balance should be struck between knowledge and its application, the skills and qualities, such as collaboration, compassion and creativity, that pupils require for their future lives. The changes proposed will also aid behaviour, social and emotional development, and equity. (See page 13)

[**5) Assessment: primary and secondary**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/102JJx5UTkkU6iL_VZBi5Lw0vx-E_kNcLF01mJ35gAgA/edit#bookmark=id.2v3ybdgdfw28)**:**Too much high stakes **a**ssessment is having a massive negative impact on mental health and well-being and can impact on self-esteem. We need an assessment policy which supports learning and respects all aptitudes and skills. There needs to be a multi-faceted approach to assessment. (See page 19)

[**6) Technology strategy**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/102JJx5UTkkU6iL_VZBi5Lw0vx-E_kNcLF01mJ35gAgA/edit#bookmark=id.nexsru8r0dka) **(including online resources):** Schools and colleges should be enabled to develop a blended approach to learning. This means that schools, colleges and learners have access to industry standardequipment and technical support services. Young people should be given life and work skills and appreciate that they can engage in lifelong learning. Up-to-date CPD should be universally accessible, with a wide range of online curriculum resources supporting innovation and improvementin teaching and learning. (See page 20)

[**7) Staffing and staff development**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/102JJx5UTkkU6iL_VZBi5Lw0vx-E_kNcLF01mJ35gAgA/edit#bookmark=id.2aid03v4sqdc) **including Teacher Initial Education and continuing professional development:** We must recruit and retain more teachers. We need to rebuild the initial training system and end the straight jacket imposed by the ITE review and Ofsted. A comprehensive training offer for support staff and career long development is essential. We detail an extension to the ECF called *The Master Teacher* offer. Above all we need to value staff and address workload and the current low morale of the profession. (See page 23)

[**8) SEND:**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/102JJx5UTkkU6iL_VZBi5Lw0vx-E_kNcLF01mJ35gAgA/edit#heading=h.enmx8apl21hw) We need to create a coherent policy around all areas of SEND provision, which is fully funded and demands equity for all. SEND policy should place the child at the centre of the decision-making process and value parents/carers as experts. All teachers should feel confident teaching SEND, and SENDCo’s should be supported and allowed strategically lead on SEND within their establishments. Local Authorities should be encouraged to achieve or exceed their Statutory obligations through thoughtful and meaningful funding. (See page 28)

[**9) Higher Education:**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/102JJx5UTkkU6iL_VZBi5Lw0vx-E_kNcLF01mJ35gAgA/edit#heading=h.89qzovb1pssv)Universities should provide the life-long skills which will shape Britain’s future. It is essential to develop a fully funded HE and FE that have closer partnerships so that they become a central focus of local systems and growth strategies. We should surpass local, national and global needs, identifying barriers and ways to overcome them. The student finance system should be reformed to restore maintenance grants and reduce the regressive nature of the loan system. UK participation in international programmes and networks should be restored and international students welcomed. (See page 31)

[**10) Inspection**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/102JJx5UTkkU6iL_VZBi5Lw0vx-E_kNcLF01mJ35gAgA/edit#heading=h.gefrji3cmbbj) **and accountability:** We need to remove the fear factor and create an accountability system which supports school, FE and HE improvement. This would involve ending crude grading and integrating inspection into a comprehensive school support system. (See page 33)

[**11)  Systems: developing the take back control concept**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/102JJx5UTkkU6iL_VZBi5Lw0vx-E_kNcLF01mJ35gAgA/edit#heading=h.iu62jgu13i0e)**:** We should devolve decision making about education and training to local communities. This will involve redefining the role of local authorities and ensuring all schools have a strong relationship with parents and other local stakeholders. It is important that the education system allows structures to enhance local responsibility with resources allocated fairly.  Critical friendship, respect, compassion and challenge are all needed. (See page 35)

**In conclusion**

We appreciate that many changes in the education system will take a long time but our aim is to ensure that any changes made, no matter how small, will support the overall plan. The attached document is detailed and comprehensive. Our aim is to provide reference points for the further exploration of each of the topics covered.

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