



DEBATE PACK

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Government Policies on Social Mobility

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Summary

The Social Mobility Commission has a duty to promote social mobility in England and provides an independent scrutiny and advocacy role on social mobility in England. The Commission published [Time For Change: An Assessment of Government Policies on Social Mobility 1997-2017](#) in June 2017.

This report notes that “After two decades of shared endeavour, it is worth asking how far those worthy political sentiments have been translated into positive social outcomes.”

It then goes on to examine what future public policy agenda should be, and makes a series of recommendations to government.

This debate pack has been prepared ahead of the debate on Government Policies on Social Mobility, to be held in Westminster Hall on Tuesday 11 July.

The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

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1. Social Mobility Commission

1.1 The Commission

The Social Mobility Commission has a duty to promote social mobility in England and provides an independent scrutiny and advocacy role on social mobility in England. The Commission is required to publish an annual report assessing progress on improving social mobility in the United Kingdom – this is the annual “State of the Nation” report.¹

The Commission is an advisory non-departmental public body. It was originally established as the ‘Child Poverty Commission’ by the Child Poverty Act 2010. Its remit was expanded to include social mobility following the Welfare Reform Act 2012. Child poverty was removed from the Commission’s remit by the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016, when it became the Social Mobility Commission.

The then Social and Mobility Child Poverty Commission published its first State of the Nation report in 2013. The most recent annual report for 2016 was published on 16 November 2016.

- [State of the Nation Report 2016](#)
- [State of the Nation Report 2015](#)
- [State of the Nation Report 2014](#)
- [State of the Nation Report 2013](#)

The Commission also undertakes and publishes other research on social mobility throughout the year. A list of recent publications is provided on [its website](#). On 28 June 2017 it published [Time for Change: an assessment of government policies on social mobility 1997 to 2017](#).

The Chair of the Commission is the Rt Hon Alan Milburn and the Deputy Chair is Baroness Gillian Shephard.

1.2 State of the Nation Report 2016

The 2016 State of the Nation Report warned that “Britain has a deep social mobility problem which is getting worse for an entire generation of young people”. As well as noting differences between income groups, it highlighted differences between age cohorts and widening geographical divides.

Although the report itself is over 200 pages long, a press release distilled the key findings:

- Britain has a deep social mobility problem - the poorest find it hardest to progress but so do families with an annual income of around £22,500
- people born in the 1980s are the first post-war cohort not to start their working years with higher incomes than their immediate predecessors

¹ More information on the responsibilities of the Commission is provided on the [gov.uk website](#).

- millions of workers - particularly women - are trapped in low pay with only 1 in 10 escaping
- only 1 in 8 children from low-income backgrounds is likely to become a high-income earner as an adult
- from the early years through to universities and the workplace, there is an entrenched and unbroken correlation between social class and success
- in the last decade, 500,000 poorer children were not school-ready by age 5
- children in deprived areas are twice as likely to be in childcare provision that is not good enough, compared with the most prosperous areas
- families where both parents are highly educated now spend on average around 110 minutes a day on educational activities with their young children compared to 71 minutes a day for those with low education. This compares with around 20 to 30 minutes a day in the 1970s when there was no significant difference between the groups of parents
- over the last 5 years 1.2 million 16-year-olds - disproportionately from low-income homes - have left school without 5 good GCSEs. At present, just 5% of children eligible for free school meals gain 5 A grades at GCSE
- a child living in one of England's most disadvantaged areas is 27 times more likely to go to an inadequate school than a child in the most advantaged
- young people from low-income homes with similar GCSEs to their better-off classmates are one third more likely to drop out of education at 16 and 30% less likely to study A-levels that could get them into a top university
- young people are 6 times less likely to go to Oxbridge if they grow up in poor household. In the North East, not one child on free school meals went to Oxbridge after leaving school in 2010
- in the North East and the South West, young people on free school meals are half as likely to start a higher-level apprenticeship
- in London, the number of top-end occupational jobs has increased by 700,000 in the last 10 years compared to just under 56,000 in the North East
- despite some efforts to change the social make-up of the professions, only 4% of doctors, 6% of barristers and 11% of journalists are from working-class backgrounds
- home ownership is in sharp decline - particularly among the young. Rates among the under-44s have fallen by 17% in the last decade
- people who own their homes have average non-pension wealth of £307,000, compared to less than £20,000 for social and private tenant households

- there is a new geography of disadvantage, with many towns and rural areas - not just in the North - being left behind affluent London and the South East. In 40 local authority areas, one third of all employee jobs are paid below the living wage
- more than half the adults in Wales, the North East, Yorkshire and the Humber, the West Midlands and Northern Ireland have less than £100 in savings

The report sets out various recommendations relating to early years; schools; post-16 education and training; jobs, careers and earnings; and housing. The press release again brings together the key recommendations:

Early years - the government should:

- introduce a new parental support package at key points in a child's life to support children falling behind
- set a clear objective that by 2025, every child should be school-ready at the age of 5 and the child development gap has been closed with a new strategy to increase high-quality childcare for low-income families
- double funding for the early years pupil premium to ensure better childcare for those that need it most

Schools - the government should:

- have as its core objective the ambition, within the next decade, of narrowing the attainment gap at GCSE between poorer children and their better-off classmates by two thirds, bringing the rest of the country to the level achieved in London today
- rethink its plans for more grammar schools and more academies
- mandate the 10 lowest performing local authorities to take part in improvement programmes so that by 2020 none of those schools are Ofsted-rated inadequate and all are progressing to good
- reform the training and distribution of teachers and create new incentives - including better starting pay - to get more of the highest-quality teachers into the schools that need them
- require independent schools and universities to provide high-quality careers advice, support with university applications and share their business networks with state schools
- repurpose the National Citizen Service so that all children between the ages of 14 and 18 can have quality work experience or extra-curricular activity

Post 16-education and training - the government should:

- develop a single UCAS-style portal over the next 4 years so that youngsters can make better choices about their post-school futures
- make schools more accountable for the destinations of their pupils and the courses they take post-16

- school sixth form provision should be extended and schools given a role in supporting FE colleges to deliver the Skills Plan. The number of 16- to 18-year-old NEETs should be zero by 2022
- low-quality apprenticeships should be scrapped
- a new social mobility league table should be published to encourage universities to widen access
- over the next 10 years, higher education should be extended to those parts of Britain that have no or low provision

Jobs, careers and earnings - the government should:

- create a new deal with employers to define business' social obligations and the support they will get
- develop a second chance career fund to help older workers retrain and write off advanced learner loans for part-time workers
- work with large employers, local councils and local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) to bring new high-quality job opportunities backed by financial incentives to the country's social mobility cold spots
- support LEPs in social mobility cold spots to tackle local skills gaps and attract better jobs to the area
- all large business should develop strategies to provide low-skilled workers with opportunities for career progression
- introduce a legal ban on unpaid internships

Housing - the government should:

- commit to a target of building 3 million homes over the next decade - with one third being commissioned by the public sector
- expand the sale of public-sector land for new homes and allow targeted house-building on green-belt land
- modify the starter home initiative to focus on households with average incomes and ensure these homes when sold go to other low-income households at the same discount
- introduce tax incentives to encourage longer private-sector tenancies
- complement plans to redevelop the worst estates, with a £140-million fund to improve opportunities for social tenants to get work

1.3 Time for change: an assessment of government policies on social mobility 1997 to 2017

The report notes how, over two decades, successive governments have made higher levels of social mobility public policy. It questions "how far those worthy political sentiments have been translated into positive social outcomes," examines the various policies pursued and assesses

their impact. It also addresses what future policy agendas should include, and makes a series of recommendations to government.

The report is 85 pages long, but the [press release announcing it](#) provides a summary:

- government policies to improve social mobility have failed to deliver enough progress
- calls on current and future governments to learn lessons from mistakes and successes over the last 20 years
- warns that without major reform social and economic divisions within Britain's society are set to widen
- assigns rag ratings to government policies depending on how successful government has translated policy into social outcomes
- makes recommendations to government

The Commission's analysis looks at where progress has been made across the various life stages, from the early years, through schools, into training or further / higher education and then into work. The report gives each public policy pursued a rating – red, amber or green – based on an assessment of how successful it has been across the two decades as a whole.

No life stage gets a green rating; two are amber – Early Years and Schools – and two are red – Young People and Working Lives. Within each life stage there are individual policies rated successful, such as the focus on widening participation at university and on creating jobs, for example. But overall, only seven policies score a green while 14 score amber and 16 red.

In questioning why more has not been achieved, the report observes five key lessons and makes corresponding recommendations:

- First, government efforts have been inconsistent and piecemeal, with effort varying by individual Minister, and the social mobility agenda has focused on children and education rather than young adults and the labour market. The Commission recommends future Prime Ministers ensures a single cross-departmental plan to deliver it.
- Secondly, long-term progress has too often been sacrificed to short-term change, with almost continual structural reforms to all parts of the education system. The Commission recommends that in future each policy area there are ten-year targets to chart progress.
- Third, dual-purpose policies (for example the extension of early years provision both enabling parents to return to work and raising pre-school attainment levels) are insufficiently focused on securing higher levels of social mobility. The Commission recommends that a social mobility test be applied to all new relevant public policy.

- Fourth, governments have not been sufficiently committed to funding social mobility policies, with spending on older people given greater priority, and quantity prioritized over quality in provision of services. The Commission recommends redistribution of resources to address geographical, wealth and generational divisions, identified in future Budgets.
- Fifth, governments have overly limited their scope of action, for example by absenting themselves from addressing progression in employment and elitism in the professions. They have additionally been too tentative in addressing market failures in local and regional economies. The Commission recommends that in future governments pursue a more activist agenda, working with councils, communities, employers and professions behind a shared national effort to improve social mobility.

The Commission's assessment concludes:

"Our country has reached an inflection point. If we go on as we have been, the divisions that have opened up in British society are likely to widen not narrow. There is a growing sense in the nation that these divisions are not sustainable, socially, economically or politically. There is a hunger for change. The policies of the past have brought some progress, but many are no longer fit for purpose in our changing world. The old agenda has not delivered enough social progress. New approaches are needed if Britain is to become a fairer and more equal country. It is time for a change."

2. Background reading on social mobility

2.1 General reading

- The Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission's [2015 State of the Nation Report](#) includes a "Social mobility overview" (pages 15-20). This is an excellent short introduction to different measures of social mobility and to the academic evidence on social mobility trends in the post-war period.
- An [article by FullFact](#) (5 September 2014) summarises the different concepts of social mobility but notes some of the conflicting research findings.
- Gov.uk, [2010 to 2015 government policy: social mobility](#) (May 2015) gives an overview of policy under the previous government. See also the Government's [Social Mobility Indicators](#).
- HM Government, [Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers: a Strategy for Social Mobility](#) (April 2011) gives an overview of the evidence on social mobility, with a particular focus on the different stages in people's lives. Note this [criticism](#) of one of the graphs in the report.
- National Equality Panel, [Anatomy of Economic Inequality](#) (Jan 2010), Chapter 11.1
- Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, [Social Mobility: A Literature Review](#) (March 2011)
- OECD, [A Family Affair: Intergenerational Social Mobility across OECD Countries](#), published in *Economic Policy Reforms 2010: Going for Growth* (March 2010). (An extended version of this paper is available [here](#).)
- Cabinet Office Strategy Unit, [Getting on, getting ahead: A discussion paper analysing the trends and drivers of social mobility](#), November 2008
- Stephen Aldridge, [Life chances and social mobility: an overview of the evidence](#), Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, March 2004

2.2 Further analysis from the Social Mobility Commission

The [Social Mobility Index](#) (June 2016) provides some information on social mobility at the level of local authorities:

The Social Mobility Index compares the chances that a child from a disadvantaged background will do well at school and get a good job across each of the 324 local authority district areas of England. It examines a range of measures of the educational outcomes achieved by young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and the local job and housing markets to shed light on which are the best and worst places in England in terms of the opportunities young people from poorer backgrounds have to succeed.

Research published by the Commission since the 2016 State of the Nation Report includes:

- [Low-cost home ownership schemes](#), July 2017
- [Social mobility barometer poll](#), June 2017
- [Home ownership access to first-time buyers in the UK](#), Mar 2017
- [The class pay gap within Britain's professions](#), March 2017
- [Low-income pupils' progress at secondary school](#), February 2017
- [Helping parents to parent](#), February 2017
- [Ethnicity, gender and social mobility](#), December 2016
- [Social and ethnic inequalities in post-16 choices](#), December 2016

3. Press Articles

[Meritocracy hasn't worked in Britain – it's time for a radical rethink.](#)

Abi Wilkinson

The Guardian, 28 June 2017

[Britain becoming more divided with 'whole tracts of country left behind', says Social Mobility Commission](#)

David Hughes

The Independent, 28 June 2017

[Social mobility tsar warns aspiration gap between UK's rich and poor 'will take 80 years to close'](#)

Jack Maidment

The Telegraph, 28 June 2017

[Britain's social mobility crisis in ten graphs](#)

Channel 4 News

28 June 2017

[Is Theresa May serious about social mobility?](#)

Eleanor Busby

Times Educational Supplement, 16 June 2017

[Young people losing hope over life chances, social mobility tsar says: Alan Milburn warns of stark intergenerational divide as poll reveals 'youthful pessimism is becoming the norm'](#)

Patrick Butler

The Guardian, 15 June 2017

[Young people feel social mobility is getting worse but think education will improve](#)

Helen Ward

Times Educational Supplement, 15 June 2017

[Half of young British people believe social background determines chances of success in life](#)

Ashley Cowburn,

Independent, 15 June 2017

[Social mobility is not on the agenda this election - that's why Teach First has devised its own manifesto](#)

Sam Freedman

The Telegraph, 2 June 2017

[Part-time student numbers collapse by 56% in five years: One architect of government policy on support for part-timers admits the result has been a 'catastrophe' for universities and students](#)

Anna Fazackerley

The Guardian, 2 May 2017

[How can companies cut the UK's class pay gap? Professionals from poorer families earn almost £7,000 less per year than those from wealthier ones, despite businesses claiming to act on social mobility](#)

Martin Williams

The Guardian, 27 April 2017

[Social mobility shouldn't have to mean moving city. The answer is adult education](#)

James Kirkup

The Telegraph, 26 April 2017

[Growth in unpaid full-time internships raises fears for social mobility](#)

Rob Davies and Elena Cresci,

The Guardian, 21 April 2017

[Poorer children half as likely to get into best schools, research shows: Teach First charity says findings demonstrate that 'social mobility remains a serious issue in our country'](#)

Richard Adams

The Guardian, 17 April 2017

[The Observer view on education and social mobility: the scandal of schools failing the poorest pupils is being ignored by both main parties](#)

Editorial

The Observer, 16 April 2017

[Telling children 'hard work gets you to the top' is simply a lie: I know about social mobility: I went to underperforming state schools, and am now a barrister. Could somebody take the same route today? It's highly unlikely.](#)

Hashi Mohamed

The Guardian, 14 April 2017

[Don't believe the hype – grammar schools won't increase social mobility](#)

Fiona Millar

The Guardian, 11 April 2017

[Why early years training could boost social mobility: Secondary staff with EY knowledge would be better skilled to help struggling pupils catch up, experts say](#)

Martin George

Times Educational Supplement, 7 April 2017

[Efforts to raise children's aspirations come too late: KidZania research suggests even the very young hit a class ceiling](#)

Andrew Hill

Financial Times, 3 April 2017

[How social class can affect your pay: Professionals from elite backgrounds earn more than peers from working-class families](#)

Naomi Rovnick

Financial Times, 22 February 2017

[The Guardian view on social mobility: the class ceiling: British politicians haven't paid much attention to the effect of social background. It's time to wake up](#)

Editorial

The Guardian, 26 January 2017

[Children from poorer areas 'make two years' less progress' at school: Pupils on free school meals 20 months behind by age of 16 due to 'dramatically' growing progress gap, says report](#)

Sally Weale

The Guardian, 22 November 2016

[Social divisions more entrenched than ever: Grammar schools will make situation worse, says government commission](#)

Helen Warrell

Financial Times, 16 November 2016

[UK's social mobility problem holding back Thatcher generation, says report: Commission says those born in the 1980s are the first to not start their careers with higher incomes than their parents](#)

Richard Adams

The Guardian, 16 November 2016

[Theresa May under pressure to scrap David Cameron's 'Big Society' and support young jobseekers: Exclusive: Alan Milburn, the Government's social mobility adviser, will urge PM Theresa May to scrap her predecessor David Cameron's 'Big Society' agenda in favour of measures to boost career opportunities for young people](#)

Andrew Grice

The Independent, 14 November 2016

4. Press releases and speeches

[Social Mobility Employer Index announces top 50 UK employers who have taken the most action to improve social mobility within the workplace](#)

Social Mobility Commission, 21 June 2017

[Justine Greening speaks at Social Mobility Employer Index launch](#)

Department for Education, 21 June 2017

[Poll: half of Brits believe background determines success](#)

Social Mobility Commission, 15 June 2017

[Sir Peter Lampl responds to the Social Mobility Commission's Social Mobility Barometer](#)

Sutton Trust, 15 June 2017

[Young Women's Trust calls on government to improve young people's prospects, as new poll reveals high levels of pessimism about the future,](#)

Young Women's Trust, 15 June 2017

[State of the Nation report on social mobility in Great Britain](#)

Social Mobility Commission

16 November 2016

[Britain, the great meritocracy: Prime Minister's speech](#)

Department for Education, Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street, and The Rt Hon Theresa May MP

9 September 2016

[New research uncovers 'class pay gap' in Britain's professions](#)

Social Mobility Commission

26 January 2017

[Education Secretary announces 6 new opportunity areas](#)

Department for Education and The Rt Hon Justine Greening MP

18 January 2017

[Social mobility in the Northern Powerhouse](#)

Social Mobility Commission

15 December 2016

[Social inequalities and post-16 choices](#)

Social Mobility Commission

5 December 2016

5. Parliamentary material

5.1 Written questions

[Department for Work and Pensions: Social Mobility](#)

[Written question - HL6625](#)

**Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett
April 2017**

Asked on: 04

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Minister of State for Work and Pensions on 8 December 2016 (HC56144) stating that they intended to bring forward a social justice green paper in the new year, whether that remains their intention following publication on 4 April of Improving Lives: Helping Workless Families; and if so, when they expect that that green paper will be published.

Answered by: Lord Henley

Answered on: 20 April 2017

Improving Lives: Helping Workless Families forms part of the Government's ambitious agenda for social reform. It sets out indicators and evidence that will provide a framework for continued action to drive improved outcomes for disadvantaged families and children, now and over time.

[Department for Education: Social Mobility Question- 68211](#)

Written

**Asked by Angela Rayner (Ashton-under-Lyne) Asked on 15
March 2017**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when her Department plans to publish a response to the Social Mobility Commission's policy paper State of the nation 2016: social mobility in Great Britain, published on 16 November 2016; and which of that paper's recommendations her Department plans to implement.

Answered by: Nick Gibb

Answered on: 29 March 2017

We welcome the Social Mobility Commission's report. We are considering carefully the report's analysis and findings as we further develop policy to address the barriers to social mobility.

Thanks to the Government's reforms, almost 1.8 million more pupils today have a place in a school that is good or better. We have also set out proposals to increase the number of good school places available, in more parts of the country, so that more children including those from disadvantaged backgrounds can benefit from a great education, by scrapping the ban on new selective school places and harnessing the expertise and resources of our universities and our independent and faith schools.

The Social Mobility Commission's analysis has provided an important input to our understanding of the geography of social mobility; and we are also now working with 12 Opportunity Areas, all identified as social

mobility coldspots by the Commission to understand how we can address the barriers to social mobility from the early years to adulthood.

Through our plans to create more good school places and transform teaching, combined with new legislation to support greater access to university and investment in technical education, we aim to ensure that where a student comes from does not determine where they get to in life. We will continue to set out further details on the Department's approach to improving social mobility in due course.

[Department for Education: Grammar Schools: Social Mobility: Written question - 907950](#)

Asked by Patricia Gibson (North Ayrshire and Arran)

Asked on 13 December 2016

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the potential effect on social mobility of proposed changes to the Government's policy on selective schools.

Answered by Nick Gibb
2016

Answered on 19 December

This government wants a school system that works for everyone. Grammar schools provide a good or outstanding education for the children attending them, regardless of background. We need to do more to increase the number of pupils from disadvantaged background that are attending grammar schools. That is why we have consulted on new conditions to ensure that selective schools contribute to driving up standards for all pupils, in both selective and non-selective schools.

[Department for Education: Social Mobility: Written question - HL3322](#)

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark
November 2016

Asked on 17

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment have they made of the recently published *State of the nation 2016* report by the Social Mobility Commission.

Answered by Lord Nash
2016

Answered on 24 November

We welcome the Commission's report, published last week. It is a wide ranging, valuable piece of work that draws out some important findings.

The Commission's approach to social mobility is in line with work going on in the Department: looking at the opportunities of a group beyond the most disadvantaged; solidly focusing on areas of the country which are falling behind; and addressing wider obstacles to opportunity, like

the need for high quality advice. Officials are engaging with the Commission's findings as part of this wider work programme.

Opportunity Areas, launched last month, will be the vanguard of our approach to social mobility in areas where there are the greatest challenges and the fewest opportunities and will benefit from our energy, ideas and resources to address the barriers to social mobility. These areas are all social mobility coldspots identified by the Commission.

The Commission points out that the barriers to social mobility will not be fixed overnight. It will require long term effort from the Government, business, civil society and communities to ensure that talent and hard work leads to success, wherever you live or whatever your background.

5.2 Oral questions

[Social Mobility: School/University Students](#) HC Deb 20 Mar 2017, c 364

Danny Kinahan (South Antrim) (UUP): What steps she is taking to enhance social mobility for school and university students. [909328]

The Secretary of State for Education (Justine Greening): I put social mobility at the heart of everything my Department does. Through our plans to create more good school places and transform teaching, combined with new legislation to support greater access to university and investment in technical education, we aim to ensure that where a student comes from does not determine where they get to in life.

Danny Kinahan: At the all-party group on universities the other day, we had an excellent presentation from Sunderland University on all aspects of helping to improve social mobility. Can we ensure that that stretches down to all types of schools—academies, grammars and secondary—and that we learn from each other, particularly in the devolved institutions?

Justine Greening: Indeed; I fully agree. The Higher Education and Research Bill will enable us to do more to widen access and increase the participation of these sorts of students. Of course, the "Schools that work for everyone" consultation document is all about making sure that universities, alongside grammars, faith schools and independent schools, can play a stronger role in lifting attainment for all.

[Social Mobility](#)
2017, c 2-4

HL Deb 20 Feb

Baroness Tyler of Enfield: To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their response to the findings of the report by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Social Mobility *The Class Ceiling: Increasing access to the leading professions*, published on 17 January, that talented young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are facing significant barriers to accessing jobs in the top professions.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for

Education (Lord Nash): My Lords, we welcome this excellent report highlighting that, all too often, family background determines success in later life. The Secretary of State recently set out how education should be central to transforming social mobility by ensuring that all young people have access to the right knowledge and skills, high-quality advice and opportunities for challenging, life-shaping experiences to prepare them for career success. Employers also need to do more to attract and draw out the talents of employees from all backgrounds.

Baroness Tyler of Enfield (LD): I thank the Minister for his helpful Answer. The report of the All-Party Group on Social Mobility—I declare an interest as co-chair—vividly demonstrated that students from disadvantaged backgrounds were not gaining access to either the elite universities or the top professions, with the gulf between London and the rest of the country being particularly stark. The report contains important and wide-ranging recommendations to tackle this. Can the Minister say when the Government will be able to respond in writing to these recommendations, and will he agree to meet with me to discuss them?

Lord Nash: We will be responding in due course on the recommendations and will, of course, focus very much on opportunity areas—to take the noble Baroness’s point about the situation outside London. I agree entirely with the conclusions. The Sutton Trust tells us that the 7% of the population educated privately gets nearly 60% of the top jobs in this country. We have to do better than that. I will be delighted to meet with the noble Baroness.

Lord Lexden (Con): Will my noble friend agree that a useful contribution to assisting low-income families could be made through the provision of large numbers of free places at independent schools under partnership arrangements between the Government and schools themselves?

Lord Nash: As my noble friend knows, we are very keen to encourage partnership arrangements between independent schools and the state sector, and we are in active discussions with them about that. We are considering all the proposals we have had—some 7,000—as a result of our consultation document, and we will react to those shortly.

Lord Bird (CB): Are the Government aware that not only are the professions out of kilter with regard to the socially immobile but that social immobility was a very large factor in the Brexit referendum last year?

Lord Nash: There is no question but that many of the social issues had a big influence on the vote last year.

Baroness Royall of Blaisdon (Lab): My Lords, does the noble Lord agree that the social mobility strategy recommended by the APPG should be developed as a matter of urgency so that the country can make use of all the talents available? Will he further agree that mentoring of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, especially those from black and ethnic minorities, is absolutely invaluable, and will

he welcome the new initiative, entitled One Million Mentors, which was launched last week?

Lord Nash: As I said, we will respond to the report shortly, but I entirely agree with the noble Baroness about the importance of mentoring. I know that Chance UK has an active programme in that, and the system she refers to is definitely to be encouraged. At the Bridge Academy in Hackney, which is sponsored by UBS, over 1,000 UBS employees mentor individual pupils every year. When you talk to pupils, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, many of whom have often not met people who work in white-collar jobs before at all, you understand that mixing with people like this and going to their place of work clearly has a transformational impact.

Baroness Manzoor (Con): My Lords, as well as the fact that there are not as many disaffected and disadvantaged young people getting into Russell group universities as there should be, there is a real problem in that, once they are in key roles, they do not progress as quickly as they should, particularly in areas such as the Civil Service and the NHS.

Lord Nash: My noble friend makes a very good point. I think that she is talking about what the Sutton Trust has termed “essential life skills”. It recently pointed out that Harvard University has said that the people who have been successful in recent years and are likely to be successful over the next 20 years are those with essential life skills. It is very important that all schools develop these, and I know that many of them do. Certainly, the Civil Service has a talent programme for bringing on people from a wide range of backgrounds.

Baroness Garden of Frognal (LD): My Lords, building on the question from the noble Baroness, Lady Royall, the Careers & Enterprise Company launched a mentoring community and fund. What resources are the Government providing to ensure that this mentoring, particularly in soft skills and confidence-building, is available for children from disadvantaged backgrounds?

Lord Nash: The noble Baroness is quite right to point to the Careers & Enterprise Company, which seems to have got off to a great start. It is very ably run by a bright young woman called Claudia Harris, formerly of McKinsey. We have made £90 million available over this Parliament for the Careers & Enterprise Company and for programmes that use the mentoring approach. The CEC has already appointed 1,300 advisers across the country to help improve links between employers and schools.

Lord Laming (CB): My Lords—

Baroness Kennedy of The Shaws (Lab): My Lords—

Baroness Farrington of Ribbleton (Lab): My Lords—

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Earl Howe) (Con): My Lords, it is the turn of the Cross Benches and then, if we have time, we can hear from the Labour Benches.

Lord Laming: My Lords, does the noble Lord agree that it is a real challenge to help these young people to recognise the talents that they have, to give them a sense of ambition and to nurture those ambitions through these important years in their development?

Lord Nash: I agree entirely with the noble Lord on that. Increasingly we are seeing schools develop what is sometimes called a “raising ambitions” programme to raise their pupils’ horizons and ambitions. All too often in the past schools have not been ambitious enough for their pupils. I recently attended a very inspiring event run by Ormiston Academies Trust, which is developing a raising aspirations programme, and we are seeing many more of these kinds of programmes being developed.

Baroness Farrington of Ribbleton: My Lords—

Baroness Kennedy of The Shaws: My Lords, perhaps I may raise the issue of the new universities and the large numbers of young people from working-class backgrounds who choose to do law and invest in their futures by going on to qualify as solicitors but do not get training contracts. There is an absolute dearth of these contracts for students from modern universities—the former polytechnics and all these new universities that the Government are so keen to create. Ordinary working-class families encourage their children to go into areas where they assume there will be jobs, but there are no training contracts because they all go to the privileged.

Lord Nash: The noble Baroness makes a good point. We are very keen to see access widened to all professions. I know that the Sutton Trust has a very active programme for those wishing to go into law, and it is certainly something that we will be looking at further.

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Michelle Donelan (Chippenham) (Con): What steps her Department is taking to improve social mobility through education. [908592]

Ben Howlett (Bath) (Con): 11. What steps her Department is taking to improve social mobility through education. [908596]

The Secretary of State for Education (Justine Greening): We want to see an education system that works for everyone and that drives social mobility by breaking the link between a person’s background and where they get to in life. We are delivering more good school places; strengthening the teaching profession; investing in and improving careers education; transforming technical education and apprenticeships; opening up access to universities; and focusing effort on areas of the country with the greatest challenges and the fewest opportunities, through opportunity areas.

Michelle Donelan: Currently, the pupil premium is a very limited measure—for instance, children who are young carers are not recognised. In addition, it stops at 16, despite some form of education being compulsory until 18. Will the Minister therefore consider a review of the pupil premium to achieve true social mobility?

Justine Greening: The pupil premium is worth £2.5 billion this year, and it is helping to level the playing field for 2 million disadvantaged children, including many young carers and children with mental health problems. We are also looking at the Children’s Commissioner’s recent report and, indeed, our own DFE research on the lives of young carers in England, as part of the cross-Government carers strategy that is being reviewed and developed. On the point about age, the national funding formula for 16 to 19-year-olds provides extra funding for disadvantaged students—around £540 million this year.

Ben Howlett: I welcomed the Government’s “Schools that work for everyone” Green Paper—probably as much as the Secretary of State enjoyed reading my lengthy response to it. It showed the Government’s commitment to ensuring that all pupils have the best chance of accessing a good education. When will the draft be published?

Justine Greening: I very much appreciated my hon. Friend’s submission to that consultation. We received several thousand submissions, which we are now going through. We will respond in the spring.

Lucy Powell (Manchester Central) (Lab/Co-op): I noticed that the Secretary of State did not mention grammar schools in her answers to the previous questions about social mobility. Is that perhaps because in seven out of 10 grammar schools, all the free-school-meals children could fit in one classroom? Sir William Borlase’s grammar school, which I understand is set to be the first to open a new school, has just three children on free school meals. Does she think that reflects true social mobility? Are those numbers acceptable, and if not, what is she doing about it?

Justine Greening: We have been clear that we want to see existing grammars take more free-school-meal and disadvantaged children. The right way to go about getting no progress is to have no consultation and no policy development in this area, which is apparently the Labour party’s position.

Rosie Cooper (West Lancashire) (Lab): If the Department for Education is as committed to social mobility through education as it claims, will the Secretary of State explain why cuts to the early years funding formula and to local authorities have actually weakened outstanding early years education, which is the foundation of social mobility?

Justine Greening: Record levels of funding are going into early years. We are now extending the 15 hours of free childcare to 30. It is simply wrong to characterise this Government as doing anything other than pumping record amounts of money into both early years and indeed the school system.

[HC Deb 16 Nov 2016, c 236](#)

Lucy Powell (Manchester Central) (Lab/Co-op): In its state of the nation report, the Government’s Social Mobility Commission today issued a damning verdict on progress: things are getting worse. The commission concluded that the key drivers of social mobility—quality in

early education, narrowing the educational attainment gap, and access to work and housing—are all going backwards on the Prime Minister's watch. When will she come forward with a real strategy for opportunity for all, instead of fixating on creating an even more elite education for those who are already elite? [907162]

The Prime Minister: I note that the Social Mobility Commission has recorded today that more working class youngsters are benefiting from higher education than at any point in our history. The Government have invested record amounts in childcare and the early years, and the attainment gap, as the report acknowledges, has actually narrowed. The hon. Lady refers to the education system and the reintroduction of grammar schools, so I refer her to the report commissioned by a Labour council in Knowsley to look at how it could improve educational achievement there. That report said:

“Re-introducing grammar schools is potentially a transformative idea for working class areas”.

5.3 Debates

[Education and Local Services](#)

HC Deb 27 Jun 2017 c 477-564

[School Funding: North-east of England](#)

HC Deb 26 Apr 2017 c 503-527WH

[Technical and Further Education Bill](#)

HC Deb 19 Apr 2017 c713-731

[Higher Education: Loans](#)

HL Deb 5 Apr 2017 c1101-1118

[Educational Attainment: Boys](#)

HL Deb 30 Mar 2017 c65-81GC

[School Funding \(London\)](#)

HC Deb 29 Mar 2017 c115-140WH

[Social Mobility Commission: State of the Nation Report](#)

HC Deb 23 Mar 2017 c 1000-1031

[Apprentices: Financial Support](#)

HC Deb 8 Mar c297-318WH

[Higher Education and Research Bill](#)

HL Deb 6 Mar 2017 c1097-1145

[Intergenerational Fairness](#)

HC Deb 28 Feb 2017 c 230-266

[Social Mobility](#)

HL Deb 20 Feb 2017 c 3-4

[School Funding](#)

HC Deb 25 Jan 2017 c 357-405

[Northern England: Opportunity and Productivity](#)

HL Deb 12 Jan 2017, c 2070-2108

[Social Mobility Committee Report](#)

HL Deb 20 Dec 2016, c 1579-1623

[Child Poverty](#)

HC Deb 20 Dec 2016, 483WH-504WH

[Education and Social Mobility](#)

HC Deb 22 Nov 2016, c 757-820

5.4 Reports

[Chain Effects 2017](#), Becky Francis and Merryn Hutchings, The Sutton Trust, 30 June 2017

[Social Mobility and University Careers Services](#), A report by the Bridge Group funded by the UPP Foundation, May 2017

[Apprenticeship participation reaches a record high – but wider adult education and training continues to decline](#), Resolution Foundation, 26 June 2017

[The class ceiling: increasing access to the leading professions](#), All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Mobility, January 2017

[Overlooked and left behind: improving the transition from school to work for the majority of young people](#), House of Lords Social Mobility Committee, April 2016.

[Government response to House of Lords Social Mobility committee](#), July 2016

5.5 Library briefings

[Recent policy developments: Grammar schools in England](#), House of Commons Library, Briefing Paper SN07070, 5 July 2017

[Early Intervention](#), House of Commons Library Briefing Paper CBP-7647, 26 June 2017

[Oxbridge 'elitism'](#), House of Commons Library Briefing Paper SN00616, 19 June 2017

[Part-time undergraduate students in England](#), House of Commons Library Briefing Paper CBP-7966, 13 June 2017

[Careers guidance in schools, colleges and universities \(England\)](#), House of Commons Library Briefing Paper CBP-7236, 9 June 2017

[Millennials](#), House of Commons Library, Briefing Paper CBP-7946, 11 April 2017

[Postgraduate loans in England](#), House of Commons Library, Briefing Paper SN07049, 4 April 2017

[Social Mobility Commission: State of the Nation report](#), House of Commons Library Briefing CDP-2017-0099, 21 March 2017

[Grammar school statistics](#), House of Commons Library, 10 March 2017

[Recent policy developments: Grammar schools in England](#), House of Commons Library, 9 March 2017

[Participation in higher education: Social Indicators page](#), House of Commons Library, 8 February 2017

[Social Mobility Committee Report](#), House of Lords Library, 12 December 2016

[Education and social mobility](#), House of Commons Library, 21 November 2016

[Government Plans to Promote Social Mobility](#), House of Lords Library, 21 October 2016

[Oxbridge elitism](#), House of Commons Library, 5 September 2016

[Early intervention](#), House of Commons Library, 7 July 2016

[Children: introduction of 30 hours of free childcare \(England\)](#), House of Commons Library, 22 June 2016

[Support for disadvantaged children in education in England](#), House of Commons Library, 6 July 2015

6. Library contacts

Social mobility (General)	Grahame Allen	(x2457)
Child Care	Tim Jarrett	(x 6918)
Education (schools)	Rob Long	(x 6318)
	Nerys Robert	(x 6318)
Education (higher and further)	Susan Hubble	(x 1478)
Housing	Wendy Wilson	(x 5615)
Unemployment	Andrew Powell	(x 6962)
Income	Feargal McGuinness	(x 4904)

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