
David Blunkett

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Ex. A. Find and underline the following collocations in the text.

1. to enhance **your chances**
2. to liberate **your potential**
3. to encourage **one's contribution**
4. to raise **standards**
5. to highlight **concerns**
6. to seek to focus on sth
7. to adopt **the wrong formula**
8. to set out **an objective**
9. to ensure **transparency**
10. to set out **recommendations**
11. to shift away from... and towards...
12. to drive up **standards**
13. to bring **pressure**
14. to strengthen **the role**
15. to lay out **recommendations**

Ex. B. Use ten (10) of the collocations above to summarize the text.

(orally in class and in writing as homework)

Labour would put schools in local hands

The party's education policy would ensure local oversight of free schools and academies to drive up standards

Nothing is more important for young people than enhancing their life chances, liberating their potential and encouraging their contribution to a globally competitive and modern economy. Yet, instead of a relentless focus on raising standards over the past four years, we have seen incoherence, confusion, a lack of accountability and, above all, a fractured school landscape.

The chief inspector of schools, Sir Michael Wilshaw, recently described English education as "atomised"; the Conservative chair of the House of Commons education select committee, Graham Stuart, says we "have ministers trying to run schools from a desk in Whitehall". More than half of secondary schools are now being run centrally. Allegations over the past two months regarding the alleged "Operation Trojan Horse" in Birmingham have highlighted these concerns. As have the scandals of the Al-Madinah free school, Discovery New School and King's Science Academy, all given the worst Ofsted ratings or forced to close completely. This is what can happen when proper monitoring and oversight do not exist.

My report for the Labour party's policy review, published today, has sought to focus on a strategy for school improvement. According to Ofsted, there are 1.5 million children in underperforming schools. Clearly the education secretary, Michael Gove, has adopted the wrong formula.

We need to build on what we know works – local oversight of schools to keep a check on performance, timely interventions in schools to support those at risk of failing, and partnerships between schools to help each one to improve.

My report sets out two overriding objectives: a relentless drive to raise standards and to offer equal opportunity, facilitated by bringing coherence to the chaotic schools system. This will give parents the confidence that, wherever they live, their schools will be supported locally and challenged to improve.

To spread best practice, ensure probity and the equitable use of public funds, and to ensure transparency and accountability locally, we need a devolved schools system. The recommendations I set out offer a blueprint for a major shift in English education – away from the centre and towards the frontline.

A core recommendation is that key functions currently exercised centrally by the education secretary would be devolved to the new post of an independent director of school standards at the local level. It is a hugely positive step that the shadow education secretary, Tristram Hunt, is today committing to take forward.

These local directors of school standards will monitor, support and challenge schools to improve, driving up standards in underperforming and "fragile" schools. Local oversight of all state-funded schools, including academies and free schools, will ensure that the kind of underperformance being spotted too late by the Department for Education will be addressed. The directors will be appointed locally, be accountable locally, and be free to bring both pressure and support where needed.

With the commissioning of new schools undertaken by a local director of school standards, decisions will be fair and transparent, rooted in the needs of the local community. The admissions code and the role of the adjudicator will also be strengthened to provide fairness for all children.

Local authorities will focus on being the voice and advocate for pupils and parents, and will once again be able to open new community schools. By working with the director of school standards, they will ensure local intelligence and data are at the heart of decision-making.

The recommendations laid out today represent hard-edged delegation of responsibilities away from an overstretched and remote Department for Education. This is an agenda of high standards for all and one that I am proud Labour is committed to offer in the general election.

Ex. C. Match the following collocations.

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| 1. to enhance .. | one's contribution |
| 2. to liberate .. | the wrong formula |
| 3. to encourage.. | the role |
| 4. to raise.. | recommendations |
| 5. to highlight .. | standards |
| 6. to seek to focus on | standards |
| 7. to adopt.. | pressure |
| 8. to set out.. | concerns |
| 9. to ensure .. | your chances |
| 10. to set out .. | |
| 11. to shift away from... and towards... | an objective |
| 12. to drive up .. | recommendations |
| 13. to bring .. | your potential |
| 14. to strengthen .. | transparency |
| 15. to lay out .. | |