

Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers: A Strategy for Social Mobility

Update on progress since April 2011

May 2012

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The Government aims to improve social mobility across the United Kingdom. However, we recognise that many of the policy levers needed to help create greater social mobility are in the hands of the devolved administrations and that, as such, these administrations are responsible for their own devolved policies and are therefore not bound by the social mobility strategy. Similarly, many of the actions in the social mobility strategy can only apply to England. The Government will, however, continue to work closely with the devolved administrations to promote improved social mobility across all parts of the United Kingdom.

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Foreword by the Deputy Prime Minister



This document is published against a difficult economic backdrop. The Coalition Government is determined to keep our economy safe by tackling the deficit, and we are fighting for growth.

While repairing and reforming the economy is the most urgent challenge facing the Government, it is not all we are here to do. This is a socially radical Coalition. Our social radicalism is evident in our decision to make social mobility the principal goal for our social policies; to create a more open society, where we loosen the links between the lottery of birth and chances in life.

Some argue that, in the face of our economic challenge, we should lower our ambition for social mobility. That would be wrong, and wrong-headed. Wrong, because this Government is as committed to creating a fairer society as we are to fixing the economy. Creating greater opportunity is a moral imperative that cannot be shelved until better economic times. Our children deserve better than that. And wrong-headed, because breaking the barriers so that talent can rise is intrinsic to a more dynamic economy. If we want a more dynamic economy, we need a more dynamic society.

In the last year we have legislated for a new statutory Commission on Social Mobility and Child Poverty to track our progress, as a society, towards greater mobility. And we have engaged the whole of government in the social mobility mission. I am grateful to my colleagues on the Ministerial Group on Social Mobility, and especially the Vice Chair Iain Duncan Smith, for their zeal in pushing this agenda. We talk a lot about 'joined-up' government. Social mobility has demanded it, and I am proud of the way Ministers and departments have joined forces.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Independent Reviewer on Social Mobility, Alan Milburn, for his tireless efforts.

This is a partnership within government – but with other organisations too. Employers signing up to the new Social Mobility Business Compact, pledging fair and open internships and work experience; universities working hard to open their doors wider; charities working to help disadvantaged children catch up. Social mobility has to be a national mission.

In the last year we have initiated still more policies to promote mobility – extra childcare for two-year-olds, a Youth Contract to get young people earning or learning, more support in schools – but there is much more to do. This report, the first of its kind, draws together a suite of indicators showing our progress on social mobility. We do not want targets; that can distort policy making. But we do want to be able to see, in clear and objective terms, that we are on track.

We are still in the foothills of the journey to a fairer, more open society. But we have our eyes clearly on the prize: a nation where every child is free to rise; where everyone, whatever their background, can get on in life.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nick Clegg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Nick Clegg MP
Deputy Prime Minister

Introduction

No one should be prevented from fulfilling their potential by the circumstances of their birth. What ought to count is how hard you work and the skills and talents you possess, not the school you went to or the jobs your parents did.

The UK is still a long way from achieving this ideal. Income and social class background have a significant impact on a child's future life chances and there have been few signs of improvement in recent decades. That is why *Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers*¹ established improving social mobility as the principal goal of this Government's social policy.

Social mobility is a measure of how free people are to improve their position in society. Our focus is on:

- **Intergenerational social mobility** – our priority is breaking the transmission of disadvantage from one generation to the next, allowing children to succeed whatever circumstances they are born into. Allowing people opportunities to progress during their working lives – intragenerational mobility – is crucial to achieving this goal.
- **Relative social mobility** – our priority is ensuring that, for any given level of skill and ambition, regardless of an individual's background, everyone should have an equal chance of getting the job they want or reaching a higher income bracket. Providing opportunities for more people to do better than their parents through creating more and better jobs – absolute mobility – is important, but can go hand-in-hand with a society in which social background has an unfair influence on life chances.

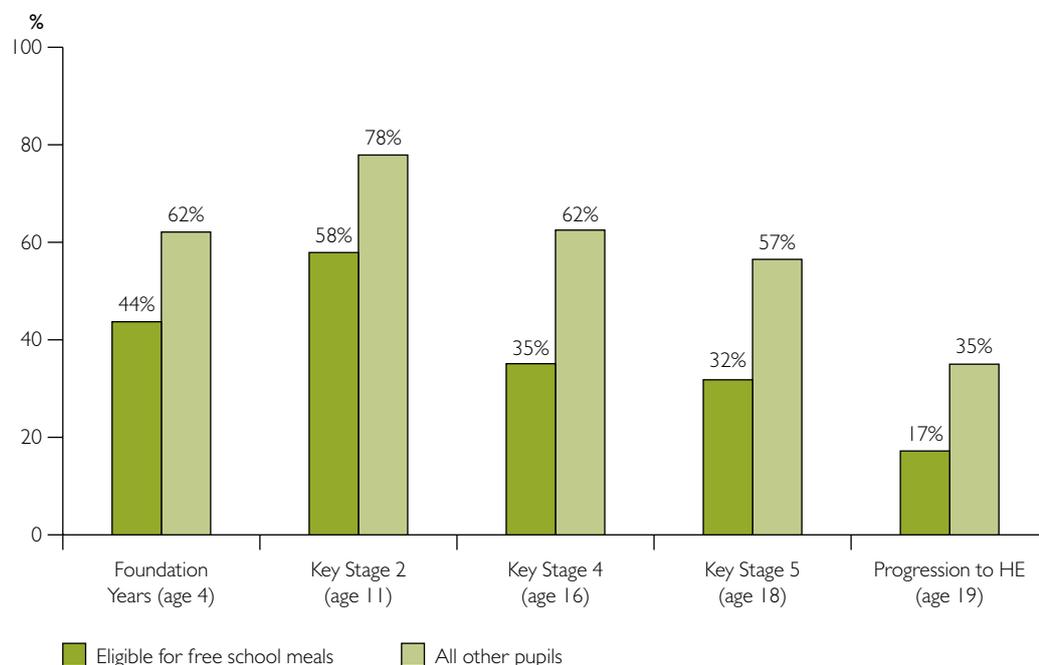
The backdrop is a challenging one. We cannot get away from the intense fiscal pressures we face as a country. Failing to reduce the deficit would saddle future generations with enduring public debt and slower growth. That would not be fair. Instead, we must ensure that our efforts and resources are devoted to giving young people growing up today the best chance of achieving their full potential, whatever their background.

This requires tough choices to be made. The system of support for the poorest that this Government inherited did not deliver social mobility. Social mobility is at the heart of the public spending decisions we have made, shifting the focus away from welfare payments towards services that will deliver real opportunities to tackle the causes of disadvantage and improve social mobility in the long term. Increasing social mobility can also drive growth through creating a more highly skilled workforce and putting people in the right jobs for their talents.

This document follows through on a key commitment: it identifies a set of indicators that will tell us whether, as a country, we are moving in the right direction on social mobility. Rather than waiting decades for the longitudinal data, these indicators will allow our decisions to be guided by what is happening in the here and now to the things we know are associated with social mobility in the future.

Research carried out by academics at Bristol University concluded that the leading indicators of social mobility developed in *Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers* are 'likely to be useful in informing us whether today's young people will

Figure 1: Children from the most disadvantaged backgrounds – those eligible for free school meals – are less likely to achieve the expected level of attainment at each stage in the education system or to progress to Higher Education²



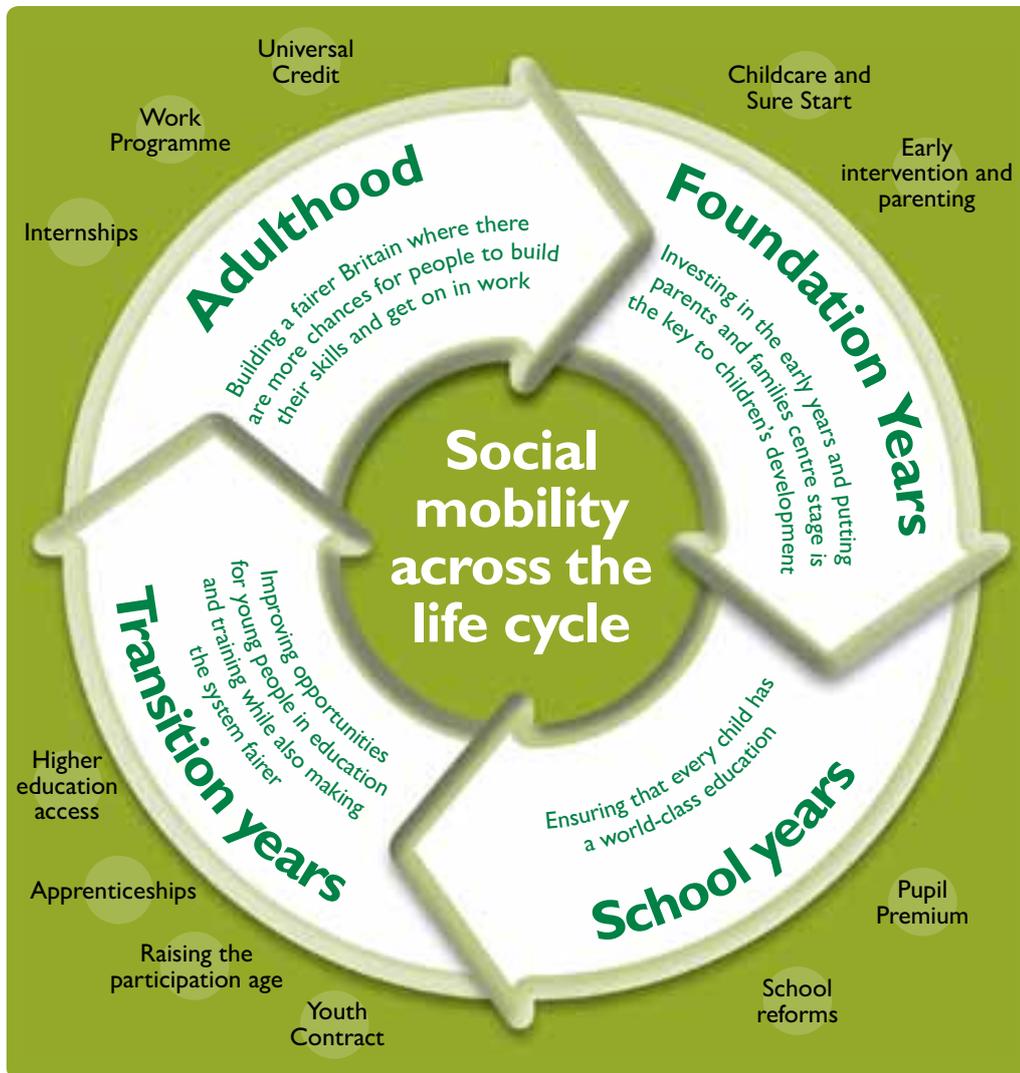
experience similarly low levels of mobility as the previous generation, or whether new policies will improve life chances for the poorest in society.³ We will continue to seek to improve and sharpen our indicators to ensure that they are effective in allowing us to estimate progress towards improving social mobility.

The social mobility strategy focused on four crucial points at which doors can be opened to allow people to access opportunities and fulfil their potential. Our indicators assess the progress that the Government and wider society are making in ensuring that these doors are open for everyone, regardless of their background.

We have taken action at each of these key transition points. For example, since *Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers* was published last year we have:

- committed to doubling our pledge to extend free early education places to disadvantaged two-year-olds, so that it will now cover up to 40% of two-year-olds by 2014;
- introduced the Pupil Premium to help support the most disadvantaged and doubled its size to £1.25 billion in 2012–13;
- launched a new £1 billion Youth Contract to help young people who require extra help to get learning or earning;

Figure 2: *Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers* took a life cycle approach, taking action at the crucial points where talent can be lost and opportunities wasted



- established a new framework to widen participation in Higher Education, including arrangements for new access agreements, with expenditure expected to rise to £620 million by 2015–16, and a new National Scholarship Programme; and
- rolled out the Work Programme, providing personalised employment support to help people find, and keep, sustainable employment.

Because we recognise that this is not just about government, we have reached out to other sectors. Businesses across the country are responding to the call to help young people get started in the jobs market and to provide opportunities more fairly – ending the ‘who you

know’ culture – because they know it is the right thing to do and because it makes good business sense.

Improving social mobility is a long-term challenge. That is why our indicators are so important. It is also why the new independent Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission matters. This is now established in law and will be a powerful and enduring advocate for social mobility, holding government and others to account.

We will continue to strive to improve the life chances of those growing up today, whether it is in the early years, giving schools the freedom and accountability they need to improve educational outcomes or helping young people make a

successful transition to work or further or Higher Education.

The reforms to improve social mobility in *Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers* complement and are supported by three other key strategies:

- our reforms to tackle the root causes of child poverty as described in *A New Approach to Child Poverty*,⁴ intervening early to break the cycle of deprivation and to deliver sustainable routes out of poverty;
- our reforms to deliver social justice and transform the lives of the most disadvantaged individuals and families in *Social Justice, Transforming Lives*,⁵ tackling the root causes of poverty to prevent people falling into disadvantage and, where problems do arise, ensuring a 'second chance' society focusing on recovery and independence; and
- our new approach to equality in the equality strategy *Building a Fairer Britain*,⁶ protecting the most vulnerable and prioritising equal opportunities for all.

Together these interlocking strategies form the Government's ambitious agenda to build a fairer society, emphasising the importance of life chances and looking at issues beyond income alone.



Foundation Years

Investing in the early years and putting parents and families centre stage is the key to children's development.

Key policies

- Doubling childcare entitlement to reach up to 40% of two-year-olds
- Increasing the number of health visitors by over 50%
- Doubling capacity of the Family Nurse Partnerships

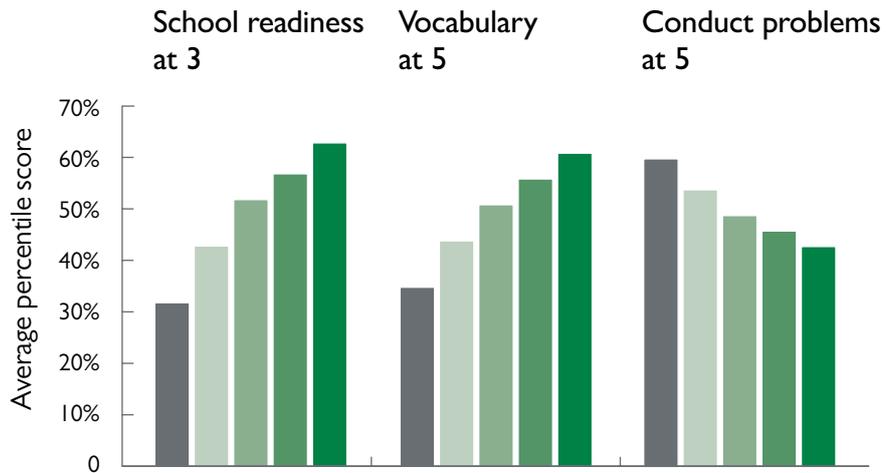
We will check progress is being made by looking at:

- low birth weight;
- early child development; and
- school readiness.

Mean child outcomes by income (ages three and five)

- Poorest 20%
- Middle 20%
- Middle 20%
- Richest 20%

(Source: Waldfogel J and Washbrook E, *Early Years Policy*, Sutton Trust, 2008)



School Years

Ensuring that every child has a world-class education.

Key policies

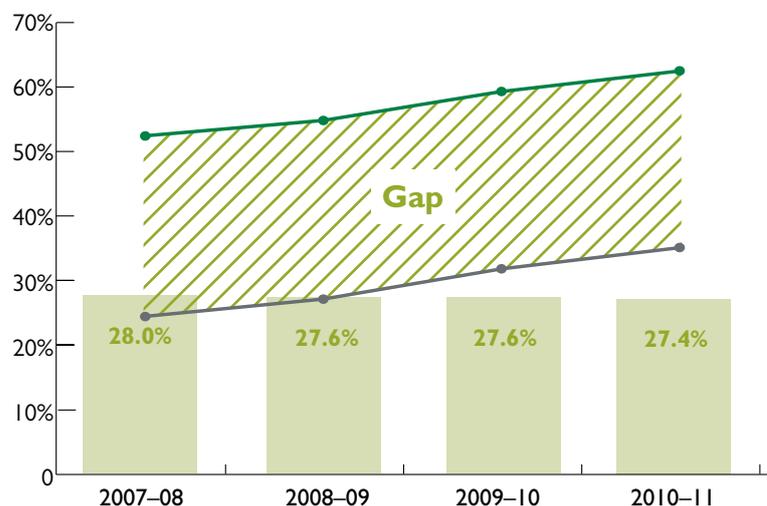
- Pupil Premium, worth £2.5 billion by 2014–15
- £50 million Summer Schools programme
- Education reforms: improving structures, teaching and qualifications

We will check progress is being made by looking at:

- Key Stage 2 attainment; and
- GCSE attainment.

Children eligible for free school meals are less likely to achieve grades A*–C in English and maths than other pupils. This is one of the indicators that we will use to measure progress.

- Gap
- Free school meals
- All other pupils



Transition Years



Improving opportunities for young people in education and training while also making the system fairer.

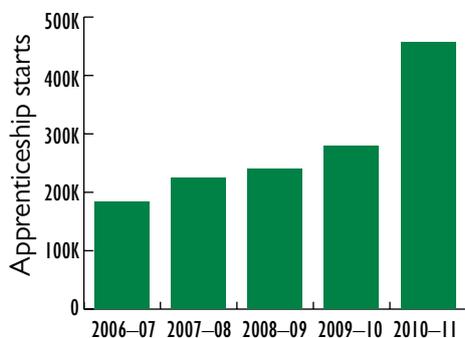
Key policies

- £1 billion Youth Contract
- Improving access to Higher Education
- Reforms to careers information, advice and guidance

We will check progress is being made by looking at:

- attainment at age 19;
- 18–24-year-olds participation in education and employment; and
- Higher Education participation.

Apprenticeship starts have increased by 63.5% compared with 2009–10.



Independent school pupils are 55 times more likely than pupils eligible for free school meals to gain a place at Oxford or Cambridge.



Independently educated

Eligible for free school meals

(Source: Sutton Trust, *Responding to the New Landscape for University Access*, December 2010)

Adulthood



Building a fairer Britain where there are more chances for people to build their skills and get on in work.

Key policies

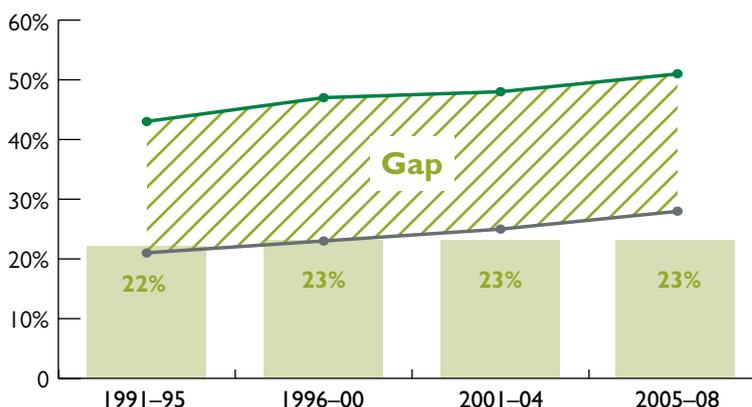
- Improving access to internships, ensuring that they are of good quality and paid fairly
- Social Mobility Business Compact – almost 140 companies signed up so far
- Reforms to the tax and welfare systems

We will check progress is being made by looking at:

- graduate destinations;
- access to the professions;
- wage progression of low earners; and
- second chances for adults to gain qualifications.

Those with parents in managerial or professional occupations are almost twice as likely as others to end up in those occupations as adults. This is one of the indicators that we will use to measure progress.

- Gap
- More advantaged groups
- Others



Chapter 1

Foundation Years

Why the Foundation Years matter

What happens in the first five years of a child's life has a profound and long-lasting influence on their life chances. By the time children start school, there are already wide variations in development between children from different backgrounds, with poorer children doing less well across a wide range of outcomes.

For example, less than half of children from disadvantaged backgrounds achieve a 'good level of development' by age five in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.⁷ This is compounded later on: for example, pupils who start school in the bottom 20% of attainment aged five are nearly six times more likely to be in the bottom 20% of attainment aged seven than their peers.⁸

Without action to enable all parents and families both to provide the right home environment and to access the high quality early education necessary for their children to flourish, the cycle of deprivation from one generation to the next will continue.

The Government's approach

The Government is committed to giving every child a fair start in life, ensuring that all children have the opportunity to develop well and fulfil their potential. Since the publication of the Social Mobility Strategy, the Government has published *Families in the Foundation Years*⁹ – our vision for improving health and development outcomes for all children from birth to age five.

Our approach has been informed by a series of independent reviews, ensuring that our policies are based on rigorous evidence about what really works to improve outcomes, including: the Review on Poverty and Life Chances, led by the Right Hon. Frank Field MP;¹⁰ the Review of Early Intervention, led by Graham Allen MP;¹¹ the Review of the Early Years Foundation Stage, led by Dame Clare Tickell;¹² and the Review of Health Inequalities in England, led by Professor Sir Michael Marmot.¹³

Families in the Foundation Years

Families in the Foundation Years describes the Government's vision for the system of services that should be offered to all parents and families across England from pregnancy until a child reaches the age of five. There are five key elements:

- Focusing on **child development** so that, by the age of five, children are ready to take advantage of the next stage of learning and have laid down the foundations for good health in adult life.
- **Supporting families** to ensure that parents can balance their work and family responsibilities, have access to support and information to help them parent well and to give them more say in the running of Children's Centres.
- Making the most of all opportunities for **early intervention**, identifying additional needs early on, allowing more families to benefit from extra support and focusing Sure Start Children's Centres on early intervention.
- Building a **well-qualified and well-motivated workforce** to enhance the quality of early years services and so improve the outcomes of these services.
- Establishing a **stronger partnership** between central government, local service commissioners and service providers to develop integrated services that can work effectively together to deliver positive early years outcomes.

Delivering on our commitments

Since the publication of *Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers*, we have made substantial progress in a number of key areas.

The Government is on track to meet its commitment to increase the health visitor workforce by 4,200, **increasing the number of health visitors by over 50%**. For example, in 2011/12, three times as many health visitors began training compared with the previous year.¹⁴

We are also on track to meet our commitment to **double the capacity of the Family Nurse Partnership** which provides targeted, intensive support to young, first-time mothers. The programme will grow from supporting just over 6,000 families in April 2011 to 13,000 by 2015. The number of places has already increased by 50% and, as of April 2012, there are 3,000 additional places available.

We are working to ensure that the health system plays an effective part in supporting the development and life chances of children and young people through the development of a **children and young people's health outcomes strategy** for publication in summer 2012.

Our already ambitious commitment to create an entitlement to **15 hours a week of free early education and childcare for disadvantaged two-year-olds** has been **doubled** so that, from September 2014, up to 40% of two-year-olds will be eligible. This amounts to a total investment of £760 million per year by 2014–15 which will benefit up to 260,000 two-year-olds.

The two-year-old childcare offer

Evidence shows that good quality early education is particularly beneficial for the most disadvantaged children, for whom gaps in attainment start to appear as early as 22 months.¹⁵ The benefits of early education are still visible at age 11.¹⁶

In November 2011, the Government announced it would double its commitment to secure 15 hours a week of free early education for the most disadvantaged 20% of two-year-olds by 2013 to reach up to 40% of two-year-olds from September 2014. This is in addition to the entitlement to 15 hours of free early education a week for all three and four-year-olds.

The Government is working together with local authorities and early education providers to understand how to meet the challenges of delivering the new entitlement, including ensuring that there is sufficient good quality provision in every local area to allow every eligible child to take up their free place.

We know that the **quality of early education** matters most in disadvantaged areas.¹⁷ The Government has committed to introducing a new 'basket of quality measures' for providers of the two, three and four-year-old entitlements to ensure that children receive high quality early education. This will mean that if a provider has not been judged as Good or Outstanding by Ofsted, they will need to demonstrate quality through other measures by, for example, having a highly qualified workforce or participating in a quality improvement programme.

A well-qualified and properly skilled workforce makes a big difference to the quality of early education and there is strong evidence on the impact of higher-skilled staff.¹⁸ In summer 2012, Professor Cathy Nutbrown will advise the Government on how best to strengthen qualifications and career pathways in the Foundation Years.

We are already working to improve the skills of the existing workforce in disadvantaged areas through programmes including New Leaders in Early Years and the Early Language Development Programme. As part of our commitment to ensuring graduate leadership in the sector, the Government has also launched an updated Early Years Professional Status programme, which makes improving the skills of professionals who work in disadvantaged areas a specific priority.

The new **Early Years Foundation Stage Framework**, was published in March 2012¹⁹ and will be in force from September 2012. The new framework will help to ensure earlier intervention for children who need extra help, and places more emphasis on professionals engaging parents in their child's learning. It will simplify assessment (for example, reducing the number of early learning goals from 69 to 17), free professionals from bureaucracy and focus more strongly on developing the skills and capacities children need to develop and become ready for school.

The Government protected funding for **Sure Start Children's Centres** in cash terms, including new investment in health visitors. We are committed to maintaining a network of children's centres across the country which are open to all, but provide more effective support for the most disadvantaged families. Our reforms to Sure Start are refocusing Children's Centres on their core purpose of improving child outcomes and narrowing gaps between the most and least disadvantaged²⁰ and we are reforming their accountability framework to drive improvements in outcomes for children and families.

The Government has been working to promote new social investment models, unlocking new sources of finance to tackle social issues, including intervening in some of our most deprived communities. This includes social impact bonds in up to six local authority areas, with the potential to help disadvantaged children and their families participate more fully in the opportunities of our society.

Sure Start Children's Centres

The core purpose of Sure Start Children's Centres is to improve outcomes for young children and their families, with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged, so that children are equipped for life and ready for school, no matter what their background or family circumstances.

Local authorities are required by law to ensure that there are sufficient children's centres to meet local need and the Government has provided enough funding in the Early Intervention Grant to maintain a national network of Sure Start Children's Centres. It is for local authorities to determine the most effective arrangements in their areas.

It is the outcomes that these services achieve that are most important. The Government is trialling new arrangements to pay local authorities by the results they achieve. This will encourage more innovation in designing services that are more effective in achieving the outcomes that we want to see for the most disadvantaged children.

Good parenting has a crucial influence on child development, ensuring that children gain the cognitive and social skills they need to do well. We are taking action to help parents to provide a supportive home environment, including:

- Providing £11 million of funding for national online and telephone **helpline guidance** and intensive support on a wide range of topics.
- Launching a new digital **NHS information service for parents**. Parents will be invited to sign up from early pregnancy to receive free email and SMS messages offering high quality advice, including short videos, and signposting them to quality assured information from other sources.
- Trialling free **parenting classes** in three local areas to test ways of establishing a market for universal parenting classes, allowing all families to benefit from high quality support and advice.
- Providing a single point of access for information to support families with children under the age of five via the Families in the Foundation Years **website** (www.foundationyears.org.uk/parents).
- Making dedicated funding of £30 million available for **relationship support** over the Spending Review period, including encouraging parents to take up support as a preventative measure and providing support to parents who are experiencing difficulties in their relationship.

- Making it easier for parents to **balance their work and home life**. In the Modern Workplaces²¹ consultation last year, we consulted on proposals to introduce a new system of flexible parental leave and we proposed extending the right to request flexible working to all employees, replacing the existing bureaucracy with a duty for employers to consider requests 'reasonably'. The response to the consultation will be published shortly. We will also consult on a flexible working code of practice to explain what we consider 'reasonable'.

Evidence on progress

Our indicators for the Foundation Years look at the impact of our policies to support families during the antenatal period and the first few years of their children's lives on reducing the influence of family background on child outcomes.

They look at the 'disadvantage gaps' in early years outcomes that we know are strongly correlated with future educational performance and, ultimately, success in the labour market as adults:

- the risk of low birth weight, by social background;
- early child development by age three, by social background; and
- school readiness (Early Years Foundation Stage and Phonics Screening Check) by free school meal eligibility.

Low birth weight

Indicator definition

Proportion of live births under 2,500 grams, by social background (defined using father's occupational group based on the Office for National Statistics, National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (ONS NS-SEC) framework).

Why is this indicator important to social mobility?

Children with low birth weight have worse child development outcomes. There is a strong link between social background and low birth weight.

How are we performing?

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
More advantaged groups (NS-SEC 1–4)	6.4%	6.6%	6.4%	6.5%	6.5%	6.2%
Less advantaged groups (NS-SEC 5–8)	8.7%	8.2%	7.7%	7.9%	7.3%	7.3%
Gap	2.3%	1.6%	1.3%	1.3%	0.8%	1.1%



What will influence this indicator?

Key drivers include:

- maternal health and lifestyle (e.g. smoking, poor diet, depression); and
- lack of access to and low take-up of antenatal care.

How will we ensure that progress is made?

Key policies include:

- ensuring early access to maternal care in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy;
- improving access to antenatal care for women at risk – the Health and Social Care Act 2012 includes new health inequalities duties on access and outcomes in the NHS; and
- reducing the rate of smoking through pregnancy – the Tobacco Control Plan²² aims to reduce this to 11% or less by the end of 2015 and we are implementing National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance for midwives on helping pregnant women to quit smoking.

Further information

Data are published annually by ONS in *Child Mortality Statistics*.²³

Early child development

Indicator definition

Not yet available – a new metric based on the Healthy Child Programme developmental review at age 2–2½ years is being developed.

Why is this indicator important to social mobility?

Children from poorer backgrounds are more at risk of poorer development and the evidence shows that differences by social background emerge early in life.

How are we performing?

There is currently no national indicator or nationally collated data on child development. The Public Health Outcomes Framework²⁴ set out the Government's intention to develop such an indicator.

Developing the indicator is a major task. We hope to use the data generated through the Healthy Child Programme developmental review of all children at age 2–2½ years.

Development and testing of the new indicator will take around three years as new data collection mechanisms are required. The aim is for the indicator to be ready for baseline setting in 2014–15 and wider implementation from 2015.

What will influence this indicator?

Key drivers include:

- maternal health and lifestyle (e.g. smoking, poor diet, depression);
- parenting (e.g. parent–child relationships, sensitive and responsive care giving and age-appropriate development stimulation); and
- material deprivation and poverty.

How will we ensure that progress is made?

Key policies include:

- increased investment in the universal health visitor service, e.g. increasing the number of health visitors by 4,200 (50%) and doubling the capacity of the Family Nurse Partnership programme by 2015;
- the two-year-old childcare offer – up to 40% of disadvantaged two-year-olds will be entitled to 15 hours a week of free high quality childcare by 2014;
- the Healthy Child Programme – a programme of screening, immunisation, health and development reviews provided to children; and
- introducing the Integrated Review at 2–2½ years by 2015 – providing oversight of a child's development and needs.

Further information

Further information about our plans for developing this indicator can be found in the Public Health Outcomes Framework.²⁵

School Readiness – Early Years Foundation Stage

Indicator definition

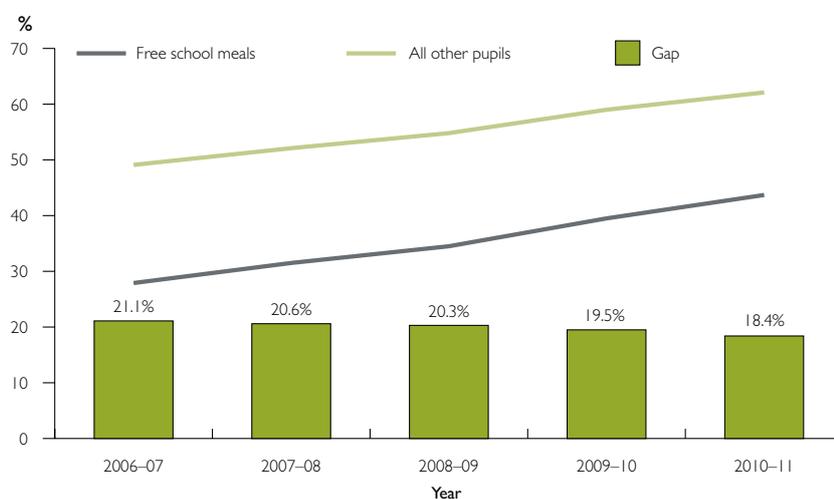
Proportion of children achieving a 'good level of development' in the Early Years Foundation Stage, by free school meal eligibility.

Why is this indicator important to social mobility?

The level of school readiness is closely related to future educational attainment. There are significant gaps by social background in the level of school readiness.

How are we performing?

	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11
Free school meals	27.9%	31.5%	34.5%	39.5%	43.7%
All other pupils	49.1%	52.1%	54.8%	59.0%	62.1%
Gap	21.1%	20.6%	20.3%	19.5%	18.4%



What will influence this indicator?

Key drivers include:

- family factors, e.g. parental education, maternal age, material deprivation, maternal and child health;
- parental engagement and early home learning environment; and
- quality of early years settings.

How will we ensure that progress is made?

Key policies²⁶ include:

- entitlement to 15 hours/week free childcare for disadvantaged two-year-olds (20% by 2013, up to 40% by 2014) and all three and four-year-olds;
- reform of the Early Years Foundation Stage with a stronger focus on areas of learning and development crucial to preparing for primary school; and
- the new 'core purpose' of Sure Start Children's Centres to better target families with the greatest needs.

Further information

Data are published annually by the Department for Education in *Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Attainment by Pupil Characteristics in England*.²⁷

School Readiness – Phonics Screening Check

Indicator definition

Proportion of Year 1 children meeting the expected standard in the phonics screening check, by free school meal eligibility.

Why is this indicator important to social mobility?

Children need to learn the basics of reading early in their education so that they can access the whole curriculum and succeed in school. The pilot of the phonics screening check indicates that there are significant gaps in the phonic decoding ability of pupils eligible for free school meals compared to their peers at the end of year 1.

How are we performing?

The phonics screening check will be administered for the first time in June 2012, and we will publish the results in a statistical first release in the autumn. This will create a baseline from which to track progress.

In a pilot of the phonics screening check in around 300 schools, 32% of all pupils met the expected standard; 22% of pupils eligible for free school meals met the standard.

What will influence this indicator?

Key drivers include:

- quality of phonics teaching in Reception and year 1;
- level of support for reading and phonics provided to children by their parents or carers.

How will we ensure that progress is made?

Key policies include:

- match-funding of up to £3,000 for schools to buy phonics products and training;
- embedding the teaching of systematic synthetic phonics into the initial teacher training framework; and
- increasing the focus of Ofsted on the teaching of early reading in their inspection visits.

Further information

Data will be published annually by the Department for Education as part of a statistical first release.

Information about the design of the screening check and the pilot results is available on the Department for Education website.²⁸

Chapter 2

School years

Why the school years matter

Between the ages of five and 16, children develop the knowledge, skills and aspirations that determine their success in further or Higher Education and the labour market. A high quality education provides children and young people with the qualifications and experience that are essential to allow access to future educational opportunities and to give them a good platform to build on for their adult lives.

But, too often, young people from disadvantaged families have not had access to the same high quality educational opportunities as others. The gaps in attainment between children from different backgrounds which open up in the early years continue to widen throughout school. Children from more advantaged backgrounds are almost twice as likely to achieve good GCSEs in English and maths by the age of 16 as children eligible for free school meals, and are four times as likely to achieve the English Baccalaureate. These qualifications, in turn, lead to better educational opportunities, employment rates and higher earnings.

The Government's approach

Every child has the right to the best education, with high expectations for their attainment and future prospects regardless of their social background. Our schools should be engines of social mobility, providing every child with the knowledge, skills and aspirations they need to fulfil their potential.

The Government is clear that standards in all schools need to be high to allow the attainment gaps between rich and poor children to be narrowed. However, we are also clear that disadvantaged children will need more targeted support.

We are protecting school funding at flat cash per pupil before adding the Pupil Premium so that, as pupil numbers go up, the overall budget also goes up. But we know that money is not enough. We are committed to radical reforms, learning from the best-performing school systems in the world to raise standards in all schools, narrow gaps in attainment and raise children's aspirations.

*The Importance of Teaching*²⁹ presented our vision for transforming England's school system: giving school leaders more power and control; raising the status and quality of teaching; maximising accountability and transparency; allowing parents more choice; and setting clear and high expectations of what all children should achieve.

Delivering on our commitments

Our school reforms seek to give schools more autonomy to raise standards. Through setting up **Academies and Free Schools** we are offering additional freedoms for schools to manage their budgets and curricula and to improve educational performance for their pupils. As of 1 May 2012, there were 1,807 Academies open in England, up from 203 in 2010. Over 50% of all secondary schools in England are now Academies, and in the local authority areas of Bromley, Bexley, Swindon, Kingston-Upon-Thames, Darlington and Rutland all maintained secondary schools are either open as Academies or in the process of becoming Academies. The 2011 GCSE results show that results in Academies open for two years have improved almost twice as fast as results in maintained schools.

Academies have used their freedoms to further raise standards

For example, **Ormiston Victory Academy** opened in September 2010, replacing a long-term underperforming secondary school. A year later it recorded one of the biggest improvements in GCSE results in the country: 64% of its pupils achieved five or more grades A*–C GCSEs (or equivalent) including English and maths in 2011, up 26 percentage points from the results achieved in 2010. The Academy helped to raise aspirations for pupils, staff and the community, by making the most of its new freedoms, including introducing a new uniform, a more dynamic curriculum, a transformed school day, running extra intensive English and maths sessions during the Easter holidays, and ensuring that pupils and parents are a part of the new ethos.

24 **Free Schools** have been opened already and we are currently working with 60 groups seeking to establish Free Schools this September. Many of these schools will be serving the most deprived areas of the country.

The **Pupil Premium**, which is designed to boost the attainment of the most disadvantaged pupils, was worth £625 million in 2011–12: £488 for each of the 1.3 million children who were either eligible for free school meals or who had been looked after continuously for more than six months.

The Pupil Premium has doubled in value to £1.25 billion a year in 2012–13, (£600 per pupil) and by 2014–15, it will be worth £2.5 billion a year. The eligibility has also been extended to cover any child known to be eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years, benefiting an additional 550,000 children. This means that nearly 1.8 million children now attract the Pupil Premium – some 25% of all children. Academies and Free Schools can prioritise applications from pupils who attract the Pupil Premium in their admissions.

£50 million of the Pupil Premium is being made available for schools to run a **Summer Schools** programme to help disadvantaged pupils make a successful transition from primary to secondary school. Summer Schools will provide activities which will enable children to make a flying start to their secondary school career. These activities may include familiarisation with their new school, wider enrichment activities and additional support in English and maths.

We have introduced measures in schools to improve standards, including improving reading through the teaching of systematic synthetic phonics in primary schools. This will benefit all pupils, but in particular those with fewer home

advantages. Ensuring that all children gain sound reading skills at the earliest possible stage will enable them to develop wider reading skills which will set them up well for success in their secondary education and in later education, training and employment. Our range of strategies to improve reading includes enhancing initial teacher training, offering match-funding to schools with Key Stage 1 pupils to buy systematic synthetic phonics materials and training, introducing a phonics screening check at the end of year 1 to ensure that those who have not met the standard are identified and can receive further support, and improving the focus of Ofsted on reading.

We want to ensure that young people are studying qualifications which will provide them with a broad range of future options for both their education and employment, so that opportunities are fair and equal for all.

It is our intention that the **National Curriculum** is slimmed down so that it properly reflects the essential knowledge required in key subjects and does not take up the majority of teaching time in schools. This will free teachers to use their professional judgement to design curricula that meet the needs of all their pupils. Our review into the curriculum will focus on ensuring that our National Curriculum is as ambitious and rigorous as the best in the world, enabling our young people to compete internationally.

The introduction of the **English Baccalaureate** means that more children from all backgrounds are now able to aspire to a broad education that includes a core set of academic subjects (English, maths, sciences, languages, geography and history) at Key Stage 4. Evidence tells us that taking these subjects at Key Stage 4 means that pupils are

Pupil Premium

There is no single solution to address the underachievement of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. Schools are free to decide how to spend the Pupil Premium and will be accountable for how effectively it is used.

For example, **Old Palace Primary School in Bow, East London**, has used the Pupil Premium to free up staff time to monitor pupil progress closely and, where necessary, to fund intervention strategies to address underperformance, including: a book club to motivate pupils achieving less well in reading; workshops with published authors to engage reluctant writers; a boys' writing group; sessions for gifted and talented pupils; and introducing setting in years 5 and 6.

Holyhead School in Birmingham, a secondary school, has spent the Pupil Premium on a tutor group system which gives pupils greater individual care and support, smaller class sizes, and financial support and subsidies to ensure all pupils can access extra-curricular activities and take pride in wearing the correct uniform. Pupil Premium funding also supports a transition programme, activities to widen aspiration and out of hours study support.

We have established the £125 million **Education Endowment Foundation** to enhance the evidence base for schools to decide how best to use the Pupil Premium. Over the next few months, the Education Endowment Foundation will invite proposals from groups of schools in a local area to test approaches to helping pupils to catch up in literacy, including a focus on the areas and primary schools where we know there are the biggest issues. The Education Endowment Foundation has an additional £10 million to distribute for this purpose during the 2012–13 academic year. The 'what works' evidence will be available to all schools, not just those involved in the research, to draw on immediately so that they can get the best from their Pupil Premium and so that no pupil in receipt of the Pupil Premium goes through their secondary school career unable to read.

To help incentivise schools to use the Pupil Premium effectively, the school performance tables now include measures of the attainment and progress of children who receive it. From September 2012, schools will be required to publish information online showing how they have used their Pupil Premium allocation. Ofsted will also be looking closely at how schools spend the Pupil Premium and will be providing regular updates to Department for Education Ministers and the Deputy Prime Minister. Under the new Ofsted framework, the progress of particular groups, including children in receipt of the Pupil Premium, comes under particular scrutiny.

We have also announced that, in partnership with the *Times Educational Supplement*, we will be introducing awards of up to £10,000 for the 50 schools which have done the most to boost the performance of their poorest pupils.

significantly more likely to go on to take A levels.³⁰ It is hoped that, as schools increasingly offer the English Baccalaureate, more young people – and particularly those in disadvantaged areas who are currently less likely to be entered for these subjects – will be taking qualifications that will help to improve their opportunities to apply to the top universities.

Research indicates that the creation of the English Baccalaureate and the publication of information

about its achievement are encouraging schools to alter their GCSE curriculum offer. For example, 47% of pupils taking GCSEs in 2013 will be doing a combination of subjects that could lead to achievement of the English Baccalaureate compared with just 22% of pupils who took their GCSEs in 2010.³¹ This is helping to address the inequalities that have often seen children from the poorest backgrounds entered for qualifications that do not carry as much weight for entry to Higher Education or employment.

We also want to be sure that the vocational qualifications taken by 14–16-year-olds genuinely support entry to further education and are valued by employers – especially as highly able pupils attending the most disadvantaged schools are 10 times more likely to take a vocational qualification than highly able pupils in the most advantaged schools.³² Following Professor Alison Wolf's **review of vocational education**,³³ the 2014 performance tables will be restricted to qualifications that are high quality and rigorous and that enable progression to a range of study and employment opportunities, reducing the number of qualifications recognised in the tables by 96%. This will ensure that young people are studying for those qualifications which are in their best interests and will genuinely increase their opportunities when applying to high quality universities and employment.

Teacher quality has a disproportionate impact on attainment and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.³⁴ The Government has already designated 200 teaching schools – with the aim of having 500 by 2015 – to lead the training and professional development of staff in order to help raise standards.

We are strengthening initial teacher training and have published the details of our reforms in *Training Our Next Generation of Outstanding Teachers*.³⁵ This includes working to attract the best

graduates into teaching, including through providing a new package of training bursaries and increasing the entry requirements for trainees. We are also expanding Teach First, which has an outstanding record of recruiting top graduates to teach in challenging schools, to 1,250 places by 2013–14 and we welcome its plans to increase this to 1,500 by the end of this Parliament.

In September 2012 we will launch the new National Professional Qualification for Headship, which will include elective modules on Achievement for All and Closing the Gap. We also want to ensure that head teachers have the opportunity to incentivise and reward the best teachers to work in the most challenging schools. The School Teachers' Review Body has therefore been asked to consider how we reduce rigidity within the system of teachers' pay, so that it best supports the recruitment and retention of high quality teachers.

Special educational needs (SEN) impact around 20% of the school population. Although only about a third of these children are eligible for free school meals, a significant majority will go on to be disadvantaged in adult life if they do not get the educational support and opportunities they need. The Green Paper, *Support and Aspiration: A New Approach to Special Educational Needs and Disability*,³⁶ sets out the most radical reforms for 30 years. We are addressing the problems in the

Inspiring the Future, and Speakers for Schools

Raising the aspirations of young people from the most disadvantaged backgrounds is key to ensuring that they fulfil their potential.

Inspiring the Future (www.inspiringthefuture.org/) will be launched by the Education and Employers Taskforce in July 2012. The programme aims to get 100,000 people from all sectors and professions volunteering to go into state schools and colleges to talk about their jobs, careers, and the education routes they took. The Government has committed to encourage all civil servants to volunteer for at least one working day per year using special paid leave.

Speakers for Schools (www.speakers4schools.org/) was launched in October 2011 and aims to give state schools access to a network of high-profile inspirational speakers who will speak in schools for free to help raise children's aspirations. The number of volunteers signing up to the scheme has been expanding month on month and there are now in excess of 850 speakers signed up, including the Cabinet.

existing SEN systems by putting in place a single assessment and integrated education, health and care plan from birth to age 25. The Government is also making Achievement for All, which provides personalised school-based support that engages parents and young people more constructively, available in every school.

Accountability and transparency have been enhanced through new performance tables which provide parents with more information than ever before about how their child's school is performing, allowing them to more effectively hold schools to account. The Department for Education is now publishing four times as much data about secondary schools than in 2010 and, for the first time, parents are now able to judge how well a school delivers on the potential of its disadvantaged pupils.

There are many schools which show that, no matter what the circumstances, all children can succeed. We have reformed the reporting areas for **school inspection** so that they focus on the most important areas to drive up educational standards. Ofsted will look at aspects of 'gap narrowing' evidence during school inspections, particularly under its assessment of pupil achievement. The new Chief Inspector, Sir Michael Wilshaw, has recently consulted on further changes from September 2012, including earlier follow-up of coasting schools and a higher benchmark for what constitutes 'Outstanding' to challenge all schools to achieve the highest standards.³⁷

In 2011, around 8,500 young people took part in the **National Citizen Service** which brings together 16- and 17-year-olds from different backgrounds in a programme of activity that helps to build employability skills and raise aspirations.

The evaluation of the 2011 pilots³⁸ shows that the programme was successful in bringing together young people who may otherwise never have mixed in the same circles to learn from one another's experiences and perspectives. For example, participants on the National Citizen Service were more likely to come from a disadvantaged background than non-participants.

We want to ensure that the National Citizen Service has a lasting beneficial impact that endures beyond the programme. We will therefore look at ways in which we can strengthen its impact on social mobility. From next year, providers will be required to put extra effort and resource into engaging the hardest to reach young people. A proportion of the payment made to providers will depend on achieving a good social mix, including 'hard to reach' young people.

We will also look at how the National Citizen Service can best work with other services to help young people, particularly those at risk of experiencing lengthy spells not in education, employment or training, move on successfully after completing the programme.

Evidence on progress

Our indicators during the school years look at the impact of our policies to raise the quality of education available to those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

They look at 'disadvantage gaps' in educational attainment at the end of primary school and at GCSE, which we know are closely related to future earnings potential:

- attainment in English and maths at Key Stage 2, by free school meal eligibility;
- attainment in English and maths at GCSE, by free school meal eligibility; and
- the proportion of children achieving good GCSEs in English and maths, by deprivation level of school.

Attainment at age 11

Indicator definition

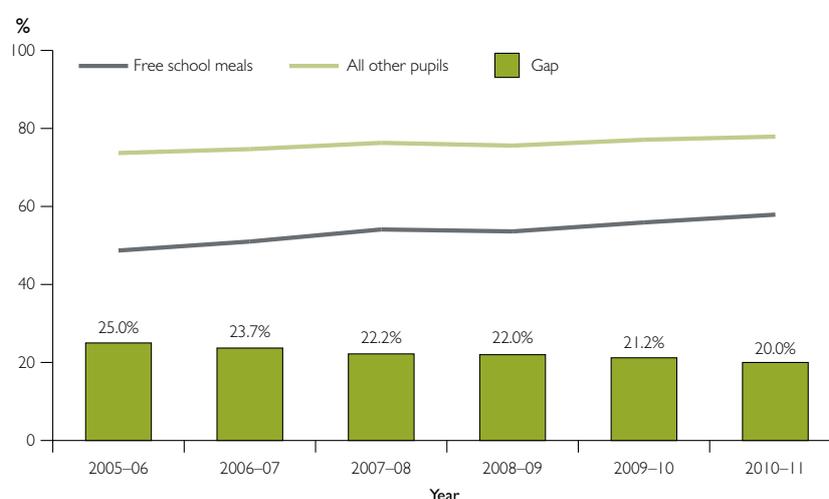
Proportion of children achieving level 4 in both English and maths at the end of Key Stage 2, by free school meal eligibility.

Why is this indicator important to social mobility?

Attainment at age 11 is closely related to GCSE attainment, e.g. less than a fifth of children who do not achieve level 4 in maths go on to achieve a C grade or better in maths GCSE. There are significant gaps in attainment by social background.

How are we performing?

	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11
Free school meals	48.7%	51.0%	54.1%	53.6%	55.9%	57.9%
All other pupils	73.7%	74.7%	76.3%	75.6%	77.1%	77.9%
Gap	25.0%	23.7%	22.2%	22.0%	21.2%	20.0%



What will influence this indicator?

Key drivers include:

- prior attainment in the Foundation Years and at age seven;
- quality of primary schools – 1,310 primary schools are below the floor target (less than 60% achieve level 4 in English and maths and fewer pupils than average make expected levels of progress between Key Stages 1 and 2); and
- parental engagement and the home learning environment.

How will we ensure that progress is made?

Key policies include:

- a range of strategies focused on improving literacy and numeracy (e.g. Every Child Counts, synthetic phonics, improving initial teacher training);
- the new strengthened Ofsted inspection regime;
- additional funding for disadvantaged pupils through the Pupil Premium; and
- Academy solutions found for underperforming schools.

Further information

Data are published annually by the Department for Education in *National Curriculum Assessments at Key Stage 2 in England*.³⁹

Attainment at age 16 by free school meal eligibility

Indicator definition

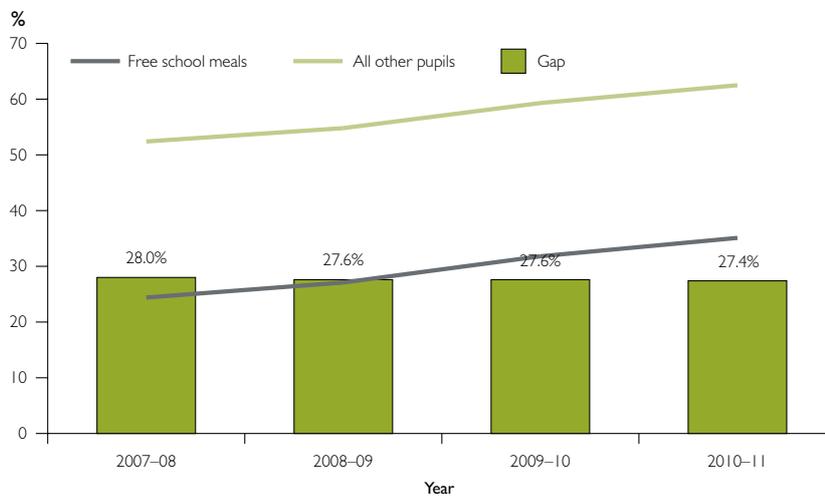
Proportion of children achieving grades A*–C in English and maths at GCSE, by free school meal eligibility.

Why is this indicator important to social mobility?

Good performance at GCSE is required if children are to be successful in post-16 education and the labour market. Children eligible for free school meals are only just over half as likely to achieve the 'basics' at GCSE.

How are we performing?

	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11
Free school meals	24.4%	27.1%	31.8%	35.1%
All other pupils	52.4%	54.8%	59.3%	62.5%
Gap	28.0%	27.6%	27.6%	27.4%



What will influence this indicator?

Key drivers include:

- prior attainment at age 11 (e.g. only a fifth of children who do not achieve level 4 in maths go on to achieve grade C in maths GCSE); and
- the quality of secondary schools.

How will we ensure that progress is made?

Key policies include:

- improving teacher quality (e.g. initial teacher training, Teach First);
- additional funding for disadvantaged pupils through the Pupil Premium;
- reforms to performance tables to improve transparency and accountability; and
- curriculum reform and improving the rigour of qualifications (e.g. implementing the Wolf Report and English Baccalaureate).

Further information

Data are published annually by Department for Education in *GCSE and Equivalent Results in England*.⁴⁰

Attainment at age 16 by deprivation level of school

Indicator definition

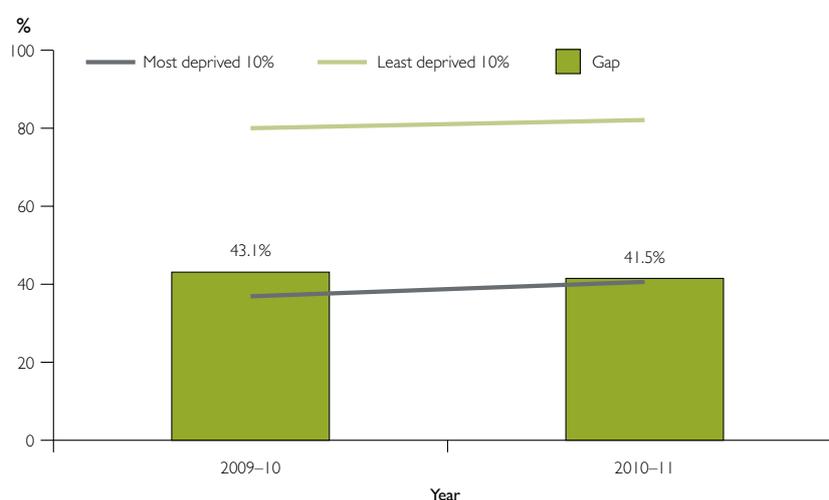
Proportion of children achieving grades A*–C in English and maths at GCSE, by school deprivation level (gap between the 10% most disadvantaged and 10% most advantaged schools defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals or who are looked after children).

Why is this indicator important to social mobility?

Ensuring that there is fair access to high quality schools for all children regardless of their background or where they live is an essential part of social mobility. Children attending the most deprived schools are less likely to achieve the 'basics' at GCSE.

How are we performing?

	2009–10	2010–11
Most deprived 10%	36.9%	40.6%
Least deprived 10%	80.0%	82.1%
Gap	43.1%	41.5%



What will influence this indicator?

Key drivers include:

- prior attainment at age 11; and
- parental engagement and the home learning environment.

How will we ensure that progress is made?

Key policies include:

- improving teacher quality (e.g. initial teacher training, Teach First);
- introducing challenging floor standards for secondary schools;
- a new strengthened Ofsted inspection regime that looks at 'gap narrowing' during school inspections;
- allowing more schools to benefit from Academy status; and
- additional funding for disadvantaged pupils through the Pupil Premium.

Further information

Data are published annually by the Department for Education in *GCSE and Equivalent Results in England*.⁴¹

Chapter 3

Transition years

Why the transition years matter

The transition years cover the period from the end of compulsory education through to the time when young people have embarked on a career. This is a critical phase for social mobility and the choices that a person makes during this period can have a lasting impact on their future. There are many different routes available to young people and during this period their individual paths start to diverge.

Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to make a successful transition to adulthood and work; they are more likely to not be in employment, education or training and are less likely to progress to Higher Education, especially in the most selective universities. These young people are more likely to embark on vocational or work-based training but too often the quality of this training has been variable and has not provided the skills that young people need to get on in work.

The Government's approach

We want to make the system fairer and more effective so that all young people have the best possible chance to make a successful transition to adulthood and the world of work.

Our approach is presented in detail in *Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers* and in a number of strategy documents published since then, reflecting the varied routes that young people may take during the transition to the world of work:

- *Building Engagement, Building Futures*⁴² showed how our radical reforms to schools, vocational education, skills, Higher Education and welfare will together make a significant difference to young people's opportunities and the support available to them. The Youth Contract is a crucial part of that, supporting disengaged 16 and 17-year-olds and tackling youth unemployment for those aged 18–24.
- *New Challenges, New Chances*⁴³ detailed how we will deliver our plans to build a world-class further education skills system that is underpinned by the principles of fairness and shared responsibility.
- The radical reforms in *Students at the Heart of the System* focus on improving the student experience. But reforms will emphasise the importance of highly effective teaching and place it at the centre of our Higher Education system.⁴⁴ The reforms will promote fairer access to Higher Education, both through a more generous financial package and through arrangements which ensure that Higher Education Institutions actively seek to attract students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- *National Careers Service – The Right Advice at the Right Time*⁴⁵ set out our plans to put in place a range of new advice and support services that will help people to improve their prospects.

Delivering on our commitments

Youth participation

We have developed and published the cross-government participation strategy – *Building Engagement, Building Futures*. This shows how the Government will tackle the problem of the high numbers of young people who are **not in education, employment and training**. There are

five key priorities: raising attainment in school and beyond; delivering on our commitment to raise the participation age to 18 by 2015; encouraging employers to recruit young people through, for example, offering more high-quality Apprenticeships; ensuring that work pays and giving young people the personalised support they need to find it; and putting in place a new Youth Contract.

Youth Contract

The Youth Contract was launched in April 2012 and will provide £1 billion of funding over the next three years to support young people back into work or learning. Support is targeted at the young people who are most likely to become long-term unemployed. Key measures include the following:

- The provision of 160,000 wage incentives worth up to £2,275 each, for employers who take on 18–24-year-old jobseekers. This process has been simplified for employers and the amount is more than enough to cover their National Insurance contributions for employing a young person for a year.
- An extra 250,000 work experience places will be provided over the next three years. Every 18 to 24-year-old Jobseeker's Allowance claimant who wants one will now be able to take up a placement before receiving more intensive support through the Work Programme.
- An extra 20,000 incentive payments will become available to encourage smaller businesses to recruit their first apprentices.
- Extra resources will also allow advisers based in each of the 741 Jobcentre Plus offices to spend more time working with young people. A face-to-face National Careers Service interview will also be available to young people aged 18–24 within the first three months of a Jobseeker's Allowance claim.
- £126 million of investment to support at least 55,000 of the most disengaged 16 and 17-year-olds into education, Apprenticeships or jobs with training. Providers will be paid on the basis of achieving successful outcomes.

Raising the participation age and improving qualifications

As we prepare for **raising the compulsory participation age** in education or training to 17 in 2013 and 18 in 2015, we are investing a record £7.5 billion in 16–19 education and training places in 2012–13 and continuing to support disadvantaged learners by maintaining the extra £150 million we put into funding for this group in 2011–12. Our £180 million 16–19 Bursary Fund will continue to provide targeted financial support to those young people who most need it. Students with young children are also able to claim childcare costs under the *Care to Learn* scheme.

In March 2012, we published details of our proposals to give universities a much bigger role in the design and development of A levels. The redesign of A levels to meet the requirements of Higher Education will ensure that all students, regardless of background, are working towards **qualifications that have real value** and that are recognised by top universities – opening doors to Higher Education and employment. This is part of a wider package of qualification reforms intended to drive long-term improvement in standards and widen opportunities for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

We have focused our **investment in further education and skills** on the areas that benefit young people the most. Young people up to the age of 24 will receive full public funding to undertake their first full set of GCSEs and A level or equivalent qualifications and we are significantly expanding the number and range of Apprenticeships.

Reforming vocational education

Following the Wolf review of **vocational education** we are working with employers, schools, colleges and training providers to ensure that the skills system better meets the needs of business. Young people will be encouraged to take more substantial vocational qualifications that are more valuable to employers, supported to achieve GCSEs in maths and English, and also offered a wider range of work experience.

We are also continuing to improve the quality of **Apprenticeships** and have launched an employer-led review into standards to ensure that every

apprenticeship delivers qualifications that are recognised and required by business, maximising the impact of our investment.

One way in which we are delivering high quality vocational education is through new **University Technical Colleges**, schools for 14 to 19-year-olds offering pupils a technically orientated course of study that both engages young people and meets the needs of modern business. In partnership with universities and businesses, they will provide a new generation of school leavers with the technical knowledge and skills that industry demands. There are already two University Technical Colleges open – the JCB Academy in Staffordshire and the Black Country University Technical College in Walsall – and a further 17 are planned to open in 2012 and 2013.

Higher Education

The Higher Education White Paper, *Students at the Heart of the System*, was published in June 2011 and showed how our reforms will improve social mobility through widening participation in Higher Education and promoting fair access without undermining academic excellence or institutional autonomy.

A new framework has been established for supporting disadvantaged students to enable us to achieve our goal of **widening participation**. New undergraduates will not have to pay tuition fees up-front and those from lower-income backgrounds will receive a more generous package of financial support for living costs, including a grant of £3,250 per year. The National Scholarship Programme (see box below) will also help to support the participation of those from disadvantaged groups.

The Government's Student Finance Tour reached over 152,000 students and 8,400 parents, making sure that prospective students had all the facts about the new finance system. 95% of pupils engaged in the tour reported that they had a greater understanding of student finance and 86% of parents thought that the tour had provided them with the information they needed to help their children make a decision about applying for university.

To **promote fair access**, all publicly funded institutions that intend to charge more than the basic £6,000 annual tuition charges have to demonstrate what more they will do to attract students from disadvantaged groups. Access Agreements will now be negotiated with the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) annually (rather than every five years), and have a clear focus on the outcomes of that activity rather than simply on how much is being spent. OFFA expects that total investment through Access Agreements will reach £620 million in 2015–16 – a 50% increase on current levels of investment.

We will also spend £50 million on the National Scholarship Programme in 2012/13, rising to £150 million by 2014/15. This is in addition to the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) widening participation budget of £140 million a year. We estimate that the total expenditure available to support fair access and widening participation through these three main elements could be over £100 million more in 2012–13 than in 2009–10.

We want to ensure we are doing everything possible to widen participation and promote fair access, so we have asked HEFCE and OFFA to work together, with government, to consider how we maximise the impact of the investment we are making, including how we can ensure that resources are focused on evidence-based interventions and collaboration in order to improve value for money.

As part of this wider work we will consult the expert group on reviewing the National Scholarship Programme. This will capture the views of students and others with expertise in social mobility and experience from across the education sector, in particular to consider:

- the large number of options for reform of the National Scholarship Programme and other forms of student support, including a possible 'HE Premium', alongside other models such as those suggested by Simon Hughes, the National Union of Students (NUS) and others, and whether we can give greater certainty of the support available to individuals at the point they are considering applying to university;
- arguments put forward for creating better synergies across funding streams to ensure that incentives for individuals and institutions are aligned;
- with OFFA, how we can recognise and encourage the work that individual universities do with schools and colleges to build aspiration and engagement, work that may well result in applications to other universities rather than their own; to ensure universities are incentivised and given credit for work that improves progression to Higher Education in the schools and colleges they support; and
- how we can ensure that resources are focused on evidence-based interventions and collaboration in order to improve value for money.

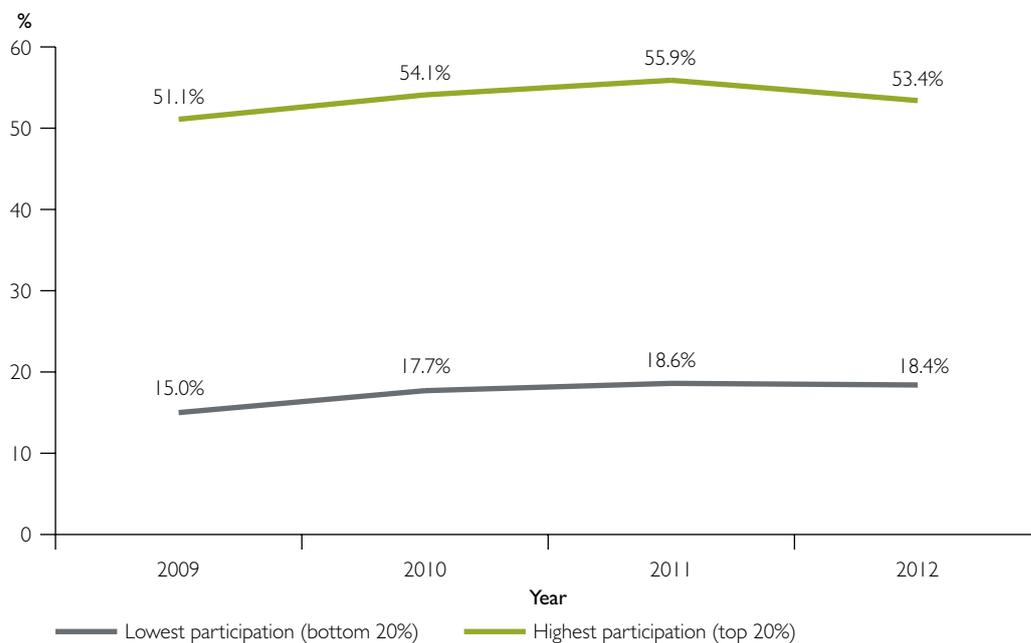
The National Scholarship Programme

The National Scholarship Programme will begin in September 2012. All institutions charging over the basic amount for tuition will be required to participate. By 2014–15, the Programme will provide £150 million plus match funding from institutions to help improve access to Higher Education among disadvantaged groups and to provide scholarships for up to 100,000 students per year.

The Programme has been designed with the help of an expert group which included student and Higher Education sector representation. Institutions can offer a range of scholarship awards, including tuition fee waivers or discounts, a free foundation year, discounted accommodation and a financial bursary of up to £1,000.

We will review the design of the National Scholarship Programme on an ongoing basis, based on the best available evidence.

Figure 3: Proportion of English domiciled 18-year-olds applying to university through the UCAS application process by Participation of Local Areas (POLAR) quintile of area⁴⁶



Applications data from the 2012–13 admissions process (see box below) suggest that the reforms are not having a negative impact on social mobility.

Improving information

If students are to take full advantage of the Higher Education choices available, they need to fully understand the different employment and other benefits that can flow from them. It is often the students from disadvantaged backgrounds who understand those differences the least.

In September, a new Key Information Set will be published containing the 17 items of information that students and prospective students told us they most wanted to know. Students will be able to compare different courses at different institutions along each of these dimensions and the information will be easily accessible via a link on each university's website and via Unistats.⁴⁷

The publication of the Key Information Set is just the start of our plans to improve student information. We are also working with the main

Latest Higher Education applications data

Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) applications for university courses beginning in the 2012–13 academic year provide an early indication of the impact of the reforms set out in *Students at the Heart of the System*.

The most recent data (see figure 3) show that the application rate of school leavers is the second-highest on record and that applications from young people from low participation neighbourhoods – a widely established proxy for disadvantaged backgrounds – have held steady, falling by just 0.2% for English domiciled applicants compared with the same point in 2011, with larger reductions in applications from those from high participation neighbourhoods.

While it is too early to draw any firm conclusions, there is no evidence to suggest that gaps in participation will increase for those entering Higher Education this year.

providers of student data to facilitate increased access to it where this is legally possible.

Careers advice and guidance

Raising aspirations and providing careers guidance is crucial to increasing social mobility. Good careers advice helps young people to progress in learning and helps to increase confidence, motivation and the desire to succeed.

Young people aged 14 to 16 will, from September 2012, have access **to independent and impartial careers guidance** on the full range of post-16 education and training options from their school; the Government is consulting on extending this entitlement more widely across the age range from September 2013.⁴⁸ We have asked Ofsted to carry out a review of careers guidance in order to identify good practice and provide a baseline for future quality improvements, which will report in summer 2013. From July 2012, we will publish the education destinations of students after they leave school or college, and we aim to expand this to include employment destinations from 2013. This will encourage schools and colleges to support and prepare young people to progress to a positive destination which offers sustained engagement.

The **National Careers Service** was launched in April 2012.⁴⁹ The services combine face-to-face local advice with a new interactive website. It will:

- provide information and advice for approximately 370,000 young people through the use of the helpline and website;
- offer face-to-face advice to 700,000 adults each year in a range of locations in local communities;
- provide detailed sector-by-sector labour market information so that people can discover which industries are growing in their area;
- provide tools such as a CV builder and a Skills Health Check on the website to help people identify their skills strengths and gaps; and
- allow people to open a Lifelong Learning Account, which gives them clear information and advice on skills, careers and financial support in a single personalised online space.

Evidence on progress

Our indicators during the transition years reflect the diversity of different routes that people follow from GCSEs to entering the labour market.

They look at the 'disadvantage' gaps in further education attainment, participation in education and employment during young adulthood and access to Higher Education.

- Attainment by age 19:
 - attainment of A level or equivalent qualifications by the age of 19, by free school meal eligibility; and
 - proportion of children achieving A levels at grades AAB or above in 'facilitating subjects' – those which open the most doors to courses and are most often required by the most selective universities – by type of school or college attended.
- 18–24 participation in education and employment:
 - proportion of young adults participating in full- or part-time education or training, by social background; and
 - proportion of young adults who are not in full-time education who are not in work, by social background.
- Higher Education – widening participation and fair access:
 - proportion of children who go on to Higher Education by the age of 19, by social background; and
 - proportion of children who go on to Higher Education in the most selective universities by the age of 19, by type of school attended.

Attainment by age 19 by free school meal eligibility

Indicator definition

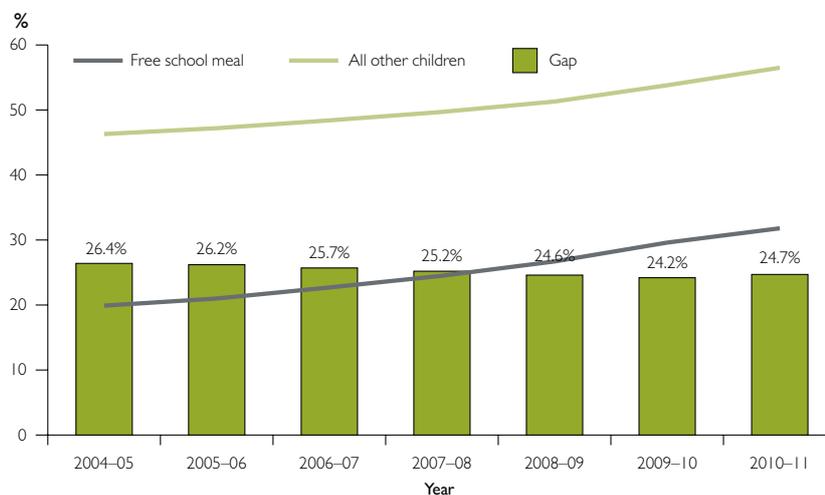
Proportion of children in maintained schools at age 15 who achieve level 3 qualifications (at least two A levels or equivalent) by age 19, by free school meal eligibility at age 15.

Why is this indicator important to social mobility?

Achieving a level 3 qualification leads to significant returns in the labour market and allows progression to Higher Education. For example, those with two or more A levels earn on average 14% more than those without.⁵⁰

How are we performing?

	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11
Free school meal at age 15	19.9%	21.0%	22.7%	24.5%	26.7%	29.6%	31.8%
All other pupils	46.3%	47.2%	48.4%	49.7%	51.3%	53.8%	56.5%
Gap	26.4%	26.2%	25.7%	25.2%	24.6%	24.2%	24.7%



What will influence this indicator?

Key drivers include:

- attainment at GCSE (e.g. over 80% achieving five A*–Cs including English and maths, and only 20% of those without five good GCSEs or equivalent, achieve a level 3 qualification by age 19).

How will we ensure that progress is made?

Key policies include:

- raising the participation age to 17 in 2013 and 18 in 2015 and increasing 16–19 funding in line with the extra places required;
- the new duty on schools to secure independent and impartial careers guidance for children in years 9 to 11; and
- the English Baccalaureate to encourage study of a combination of subjects at GCSE, which increases the likelihood of staying on post-16, and restricting the number of non-GCSE qualifications which count as equivalent subjects to those with clear links to future success in education or employment.

Further information

Data are published annually in *Level 2 and Level 3 Attainment by Young People in England Measured Using Matched Administrative Data: Attainment by age 19*.⁵¹

High attainment at age 19 by school or college type

Indicator definition

Proportion of children studying towards A level qualifications at age 17 achieving at least grades AAB at A level in 'facilitating subjects';⁵² by type of school or college attended.

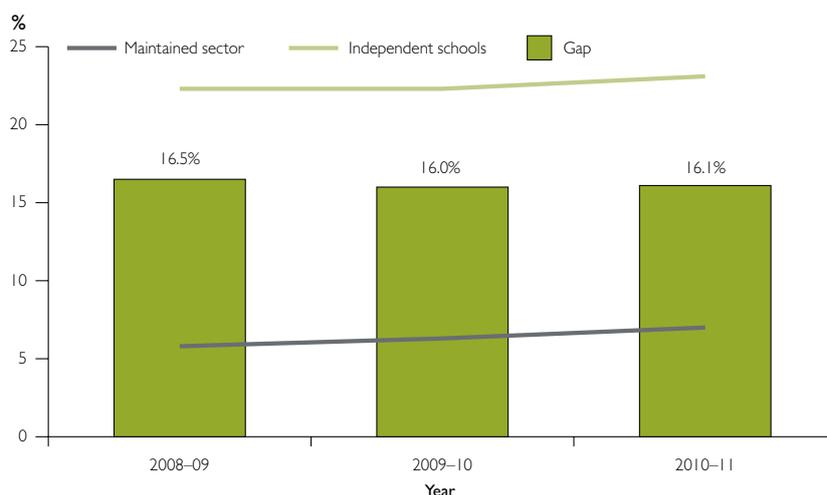
Why is this indicator important to social mobility?

High achievement at A level is necessary to allow children to progress to the most selective universities which provide the highest labour market returns.

The 'facilitating subjects' have been identified by the Russell Group as those subjects most likely to be required or preferred for entry to degree courses.⁵³ Choosing these subjects is likely to help students to keep their university options open.

How are we performing?

	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11
Maintained sector	5.8%	6.3%	7.0%
Independent schools	22.3%	22.3%	23.1%
Gap	16.5%	16.0%	16.1%



What will influence this indicator?

Key drivers include:

- performance of maintained and independent schools and colleges; and
- prior attainment of children in maintained schools at age 16.

How will we ensure that progress is made?

Key policies include:

- curriculum and qualification reform pre-16 to ensure that young people are well prepared for stretching A level courses;
- improving teacher quality through, for example, increasing the supply of specialist subject teachers; and
- improving school quality through our school improvement programme.

Further information

Data will be published annually in *GCE/Applied GCE A/AS and Equivalent Examination Results in England*.⁵⁴

18–24 participation in education by social background

Indicator definition

Proportion of 18 to 24-year-olds who are participating in full- or part-time education and training activity, with a gap measure for participation in full-time education by social background defined using father's occupational group based on the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC).

Why is this indicator important to social mobility?

Participation in learning and gaining higher level qualifications are important drivers of success in the labour market. Long periods spent not in education, employment or training can often have a permanent 'scarring' effect on future earnings and waste a young person's potential.

How are we performing?

Full-time education (BHPS experimental series)*	1991–95	1996–00	2001–04	2005–08
More advantaged groups (NS-SEC 1–2)	31%	33%	35%	37%
Others	12%	14%	19%	18%
Gap	19%	19%	15%	19%
Full-time and part-time education and training (LFS)**	1995	2000	2004	2008
All 18–24-year-olds	n/a	46%	45%	44%

* The experimental gap measure developed using British Household Panel Survey only covers full-time education.

** The definition and measurement of full-time education in the Labour Force Survey differs from that in the BHPS.



What will influence this indicator?

Key drivers include:

- demand for education and training by young people and businesses; and
- the number of publicly funded further education and Higher Education places.

How will we ensure that progress is made?

Key policies include the reforms set out in:

- the Further Education White Paper *Skills for Sustainable Growth*;
- the Higher Education White Paper *Students at the Heart of the System*; and
- the Participation Strategy *Building Engagement, Building Futures*.

Further information

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) is undertaking more work in summer 2012: a question on social background is being tested for inclusion in the Labour Force Survey to enable BIS to explore trends on the British Household Panel Survey and Labour Force Survey and to develop a gap measure that includes part-time education and training.

18–24 participation in employment by social background

Indicator definition

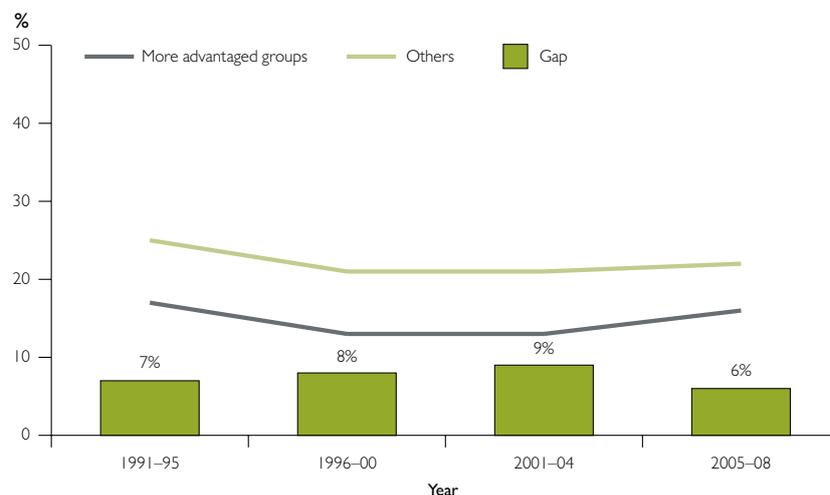
Proportion of 18–24-year-olds not in full-time education who are inactive or unemployed, by social background defined using father's occupational group based on the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC).

Why is this indicator important to social mobility?

A number of studies find that people who are unemployed when they are young are more likely to experience unemployment and lower earnings when they are older. There is a strong association between social background and the likelihood of not being in education, employment or training.

How are we performing?

	1991–95	1996–00	2001–04	2005–08
More advantaged groups (NS-SEC 1–2)	17%	13%	13%	16%
Others	25%	21%	21%	22%
Gap	7%	8%	9%	6%



What will influence this indicator?

Key drivers include:

- the educational attainment gap at school, access to further and Higher Education and support in getting training and finding jobs; and
- the impact of macroeconomic conditions on the labour market.

How will we ensure that progress is made?

Key policies include:

- enhanced assistance for unemployed young adults in getting back to work through the Work Programme and the Youth Contract; and
- ensuring that young people have access to further education and Apprenticeship programmes to ensure that they have the skills to be productive in work.

Further information

A new Labour Force Survey question on social background is being tested by ONS in summer 2012. If testing is successful, an indicator consistent with headline 18–24-year-old participation data will be available from 2013. In the interim, we are using data derived from the British Household Panel Survey to report against this indicator.

Higher Education participation by free school meal eligibility

Indicator definition

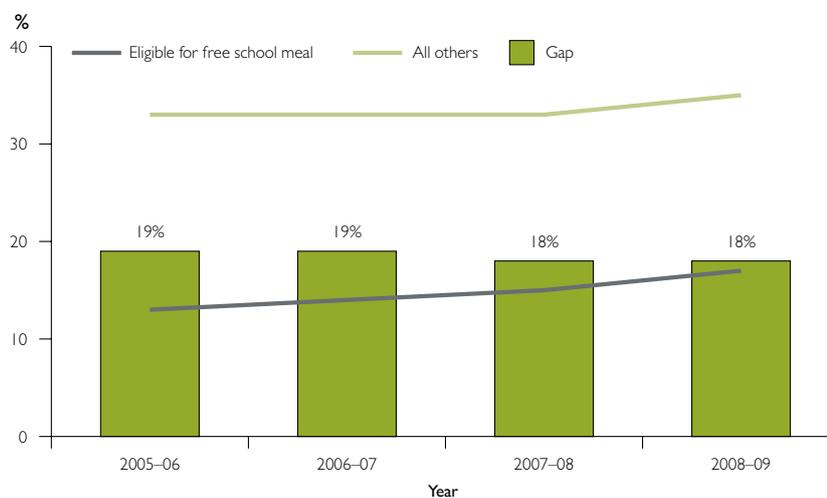
Proportion of children in maintained schools who progress to Higher Education by age 19, by free school meal status.

Why is this indicator important to social mobility?

Participation in Higher Education is associated with significant labour market returns. Children from more disadvantaged backgrounds are less than half as likely to enter Higher Education as other children.

How are we performing?

	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09
Free school meal	13%	14%	15%	17%
Others	33%	33%	33%	35%
Gap	19%	19%	18%	18%



What will influence this indicator?

Key drivers include:

- post-16 participation in education and attainment at A level;
- aspirations to participate in Higher Education and application rates; and
- understanding among young people about the options available to them.

How will we ensure that progress is made?

The Higher Education White Paper *Students at the Heart of the System* set out a large number of measures being implemented to widen participation, including:

- improving the quality of careers advice;
- new 'Fair access' agreements between OFFA and universities setting out actions, including financial support to attract disadvantaged students; and
- the new National Scholarship Programme.

Further information

Data are published annually in *Widening Participation in Higher Education: Analysis of Progression Rates for Young People in England by Free School Meal Receipt and School Type*,⁵⁵ though are only available after a significant time lag. UCAS is working with government to develop measures using data from the applications process to provide a more timely indication of trends in progression to Higher Education.

Higher Education participation in the most selective institutions by type of school or college attended

Indicator definition

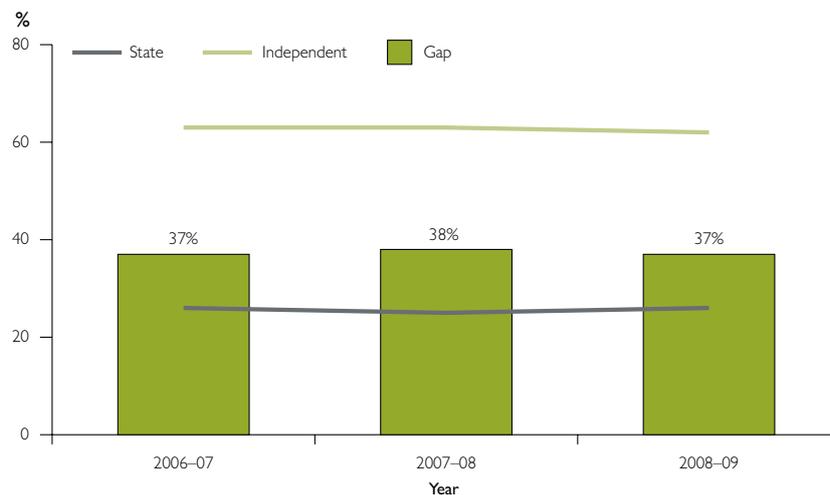
Proportion of A level students who progress to the most selective universities (i.e. the top third ranked by UCAS tariff score) by age 19, by type of school or college attended.

Why is this indicator important to social mobility?

Graduates leaving the most selective universities have a greater chance of quickly moving into a graduate job and experience higher labour market returns. There has been little change over the past 15 years in access to the most selective universities.

How are we performing?

	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09
Maintained sector	26%	25%	26%
Independent sector	63%	63%	62%
Gap	37%	38%	37%



What will influence this indicator?

Key drivers include:

- attainment of very good A levels (e.g. 30% of children achieving AAB+ grades at A level are educated in the independent sector) and choice of A level subjects; and
- aspirations to apply to the most selective universities and admissions processes.

How will we ensure that progress is made?

Key policies include:

- raising standards in state schools to narrow the attainment gap;
- improving the quality of careers guidance and raising aspirations; and
- policies aiming to widen participation, as set out in *Students at the Heart of the System*.

Further information

Data are published annually in *Widening Participation in Higher Education: Analysis of Progression Rates for Young People in England by Free School Meal Receipt and School Type*,⁵⁶ though are only available after a significant time lag. UCAS is working with government in order to develop measures using data from the applications process to provide a more timely indication of trends in progression to Higher Education.

Chapter 4

Adulthood

Why adulthood matters

If someone has not had the opportunity to gain sustainable employment, realise their potential in education the first time round, or build a successful career, that should not be the end of the matter. Fairness demands second chances – opportunities to retrain and to try again. If people are out of work, or trapped in low-paid jobs, it not only affects them but also their children, compounding a cycle of disadvantage and social immobility.

Too many of our employers and professions remain dominated by those educated in the independent schools sector and at a handful of universities. This is not just an issue of social mobility. Improving chances to get on in work will help to ensure that our economy is productive and can grow and develop to create new sources of employment. In addition, those professions which play a crucial role in the governance of our country, such as law and journalism, should be representative of our country in order to underpin their legitimacy.

The Government's approach

The Government's approach has four key components:

- Improving fair access by challenging employers, in particular the professions, to open up opportunities and contribute to improved social mobility.
- Supporting those who missed out on education first time round or who want to update their skills later in life.
- Ensuring that no one is left behind by enhancing support for workless adults through tax and benefit reform and the new Work Programme.
- Helping those with little wealth to build up assets so that they are better insulated from shocks as well as more able to grasp opportunities.

The role played by employers and the professions in removing barriers to success is crucial in ensuring that everyone can access opportunities which allow them to fulfil their potential, and that there are clear pathways for people to progress over the course of their careers.

Delivering on our commitments

On **internships and improving fair access to jobs**, while we recognise that there is still a way to go, we have made significant progress since the publication of *Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers*:

- Guidance bringing greater clarity about how the national minimum wage applies to work experience, including internships, has been published.⁵⁷
- Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, which enforces the national minimum wage on behalf of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, is carrying out targeted enforcement activity in sectors where internships are commonplace. The initial focus has been on the fashion sector and we will decide whether to extend this to other sectors once the current campaign has been evaluated.

- The Government has worked with the professions through the Collaborative Forum to develop a new Best Practice Code for High Quality Internships.⁵⁸
- The Government continues to support the Graduate Talent Pool,⁵⁹ which now includes a quality assurance process to ensure that all vacancies represent good opportunities for graduates. 46,000 internships have been made available to graduates from all backgrounds through the Graduate Talent Pool website, and more than 6,000 employers and 73,000 graduates have registered. 90% of current vacancies are for paid internships.
- The Whitehall Internship Scheme was successfully piloted last year and is being fully rolled out during 2012.
- Businesses and the professions have upped their game – almost 140 businesses are now signed up to the Social Mobility Business Compact, and several professions have collaborated to create a new best practice toolkit for employers to help them make a real difference improving social mobility.
- Building on this, we will be testing Supported Internships for young people with special educational needs or who are disabled, for whom apprenticeships may not be a realistic aim in their current form.

Understanding the progress being made to widen access to the professions

Employers are increasingly taking their responsibilities to widen access seriously and many are investing significant amounts of money to help achieve this goal. However, there is a lack of information about the ultimate impact of this activity which businesses can use to maximise the effectiveness of their investment.

The Legal Services Board has introduced a duty on all law firms and chambers to collect information on the socio-economic make-up of their workforce and many employers are already doing so.

The Social Mobility Toolkit for the Professions,⁶⁰ launched by Professions for Good in March 2012, aims to spread this best practice further. Since July 2011, Professions for Good has been raising awareness of the professions' contribution to the UK through chartered bodies representing over 750,000 professionals. The toolkit is the first attempt to provide a framework for employers to monitor the social background of their staff.

Government – doing our bit as employers

The Government is leading by example and we are taking steps to ensure that the civil service is open to people from less advantaged backgrounds. For example:

The first **Whitehall Internship Scheme** was successfully piloted over summer 2011:

- At secondary school level, 110 year 9 students from under-represented backgrounds benefited from a one-day programme to learn more from ministers and senior civil servants about what working in the civil service entails.
- At college level, 61 16–18-year-olds from disadvantaged backgrounds benefited from a two-week work experience placement.
- At undergraduate/graduate level, 74 paid intern placements lasting eight or nine weeks were offered to young people from black and minority ethnic groups and less well-off backgrounds. More than 120 places will be offered this year.

We have taken action to end informal internships in Whitehall and will launch a new central Whitehall Internships website to support open and transparent recruitment.

To **monitor progress** towards our goal of ensuring fair access to the civil service, and to inform our recruitment policies, we will collect and publish data looking at the social background of senior civil servants and of new entrants to the Fast Stream (the civil service graduate recruitment scheme).

The Social Mobility Business Compact

Business engagement can make a real difference to young people's lives but these opportunities are not evenly spread. Young people who have had regular contact with employers while in education are five times less likely to be not in education, employment or training and earn, on average, 16% more than their peers.⁶¹ If you are from a better-off background, you are far more likely to have these benefits and connections.

The Compact asks businesses to do their bit towards removing the barriers to success that those from less well-off background too often face. Signatories commit to open their doors to people from all walks of life, regardless of their background, to help raise aspirations among children from disadvantaged groups and help them to realise those aspirations.

Since the Deputy Prime Minister formally launched the Business Compact in January 2012, the number of businesses which have signed up has risen to almost 140, covering almost 2.5 million employees and generating a combined turnover of over £530 billion. A full list of signatories, along with further details about the Compact, is available from www.dpm.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/businesscompact.

The Compact also provides opportunities for organisations to learn from best practice across a range of sectors, including law, media, finance, manufacturing and retail. Government is helping to kick-start these conversations through, for example, setting up a dedicated social media channel and facilitating a series of social mobility workshops.

Over the next few months, we will continue to build on the success of the Compact so far. We will work with signatories, partners and other companies to make more opportunities available to the schools that really need them. Our initial aim is to unlock 1,000 extra high quality opportunities for the 100 schools who need them the most.

On **adult skills**, significant reforms to the further education and skills system are beginning to deliver results. In the 2010–11 academic year, the number of adults aged over 19 studying for a full level 2 qualification increased by 1.2%, the number studying full level 3 qualifications increased by 5.3% and the number of apprenticeship starts among adults aged over 19 more than doubled to 325,500.⁶² Part-time study opens up Higher Education to non-traditional students, who cannot or do not wish to study on a full-time basis. It is particularly suitable for those who want to balance education with other commitments such as employment or caring responsibilities.

From 1 September 2012, **eligible part-time university students starting new courses will not pay upfront tuition fees**. For the first time, they will be able to apply for tuition fee loans, rather than applying for income-assessed grants as in the past and eligible new students will be able to take out a loan to pay towards the cost of their tuition fees.

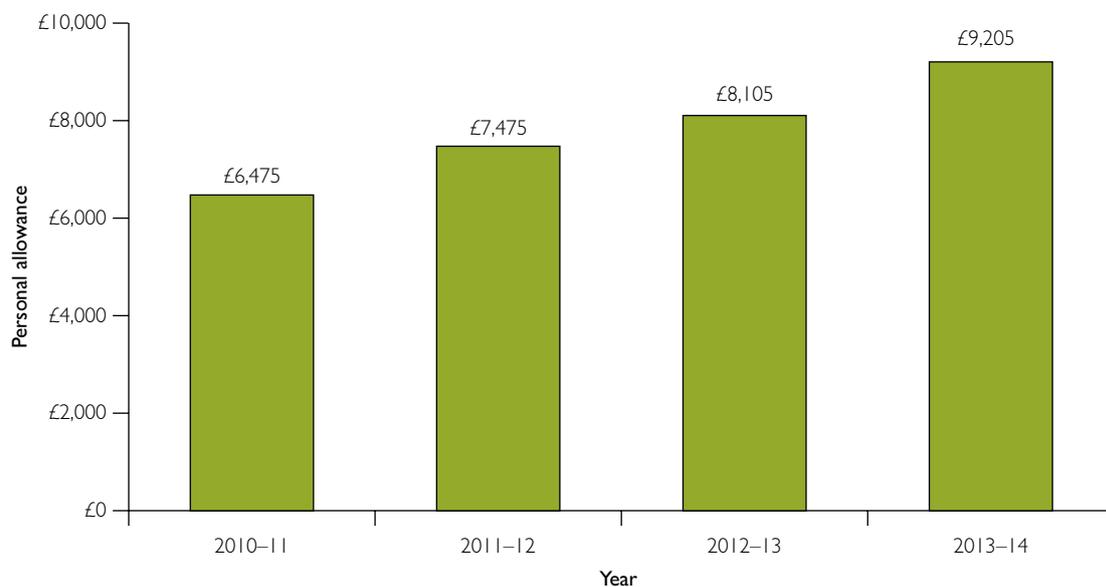
The Welfare Reform Act 2012 was given Royal Assent on 8 March 2012, introducing a number of **reforms to the welfare system** to improve life chances by tackling the welfare trap that acts as a barrier to employment for many, including the introduction of Universal Credit from 2013.

This complements the acceleration in progress towards **raising the personal allowance** to £10,000 announced in Budget 2012, taking it to £9,205 from April 2013. The 42% increase in the personal allowance since May 2010 means that, by April 2013, two million people will have been taken out of income tax altogether. This year's increase of £1,100 is the largest ever cash increase in the personal allowance. Together, these measures provide real incentives to work.

Universal Credit

We are launching Universal Credit in 2013 to help support people back into work. Universal Credit will improve work incentives through a number of channels:

- The benefits system will be far simpler and the distinction between in-work and out-of-work support removed – this will ensure that the potential gains to entering employment and increasing hours of work are far clearer, and will reduce the risks associated with moves into employment.
- Financial support will be reduced at a consistent and predictable rate and people will generally keep a higher proportion of their earnings.
- Work will always pay and be seen to pay – our reforms to Housing Benefit and caps on the total amount of out-of-work benefits that a family can receive will create a more level playing field, ensuring that everyone has the same incentives to work.

Figure 4: Income tax personal allowance increases since 2010

The Welfare Reform Act will also allow us to better support those who are in work and receiving Universal Credit to increase their earnings and hours in a way that we have never been able to do before, helping people along a journey towards financial independence from the state as they progress through the labour market.

As well as ensuring that people have the right incentives, we need to offer the right support to help them successfully gain relevant skills, move into work and move on in the labour market. The **Work Programme** has been in operation since summer 2011, replacing a confusing array of existing employment programmes and ensuring that the Government only pays where interventions have been successful in getting people back to work. By giving providers the freedom to design personalised support around the needs of the individual, rather than enforcing a one-size-fits-all approach, we are encouraging them to find new, innovative and effective solutions for getting people back to work. There were 370,000 referrals and 332,000 attachments to the Work Programme during June–October 2011.

The **Housing Strategy**, *Laying the Foundations*,⁶³ was published in November 2011 and set out a number of ways in which the Government will improve social mobility by supporting families in meeting their housing needs and helping to spread opportunity and wealth, including:

- support for first-time buyers struggling to get a foot on the housing ladder and support for social tenants who aspire to own their own home, including through the NewBuy scheme and the revitalised Right to Buy scheme launched in March 2012; and
- radical reforms to change the way that people access social housing, as well as the types of tenancies provided, to ensure that the way housing support is provided helps rather than hinders social mobility.

Evidence on progress

A number of indicators that address success in the labour market are presented as part of the Department for Work and Pensions' Business Plan, with impact indicators looking at numbers on out-of-work benefits, children in workless households, disabled employment rates and measures of success for Jobcentre Plus and the Work Programme.

Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers made a commitment to supplement these indicators with measures focused on social mobility looking at access to the professions, progression in the labour market and the availability of 'second chances' to succeed in the labour market.

We have developed two indicators of 'access to the professions' focusing on differences by family background in entry to higher-level occupations (senior managers, professionals and associate professionals). These indicators will, in time, be supplemented by the information that the professions themselves are beginning to collect and report about the social background of the people within them:

- **Destinations of graduates from Higher Education** – looking at gaps by family background in entry to higher-level occupations among recent graduates.
- **Access to the professions** – looking at the proportion of all working-age adults from different family backgrounds who are in higher-level occupations.

For the progression in the labour market indicator, we have focused on the ability of those who initially settle in the labour market at low earnings levels who experience significant upwards progression through the earnings distribution over their careers:

- **Progression in the labour market** – looking at the proportion of people who are in the bottom hourly earnings quintile at age 25–30 who progress more than 20 percentiles in the earnings distribution over the course of the following decade.

The 'second chances' indicator looks at the ability of those without the right skills to attain the qualifications which allow them to move on and fulfil their potential as adults:

- **Availability of 'second chances'** – looking at the number of adults aged 19 or over who achieve qualifications at level 2 (five GCSEs A*–C or equivalent) and at level 3 (two A levels or equivalent).

Higher Education – graduate destinations

Indicator definition

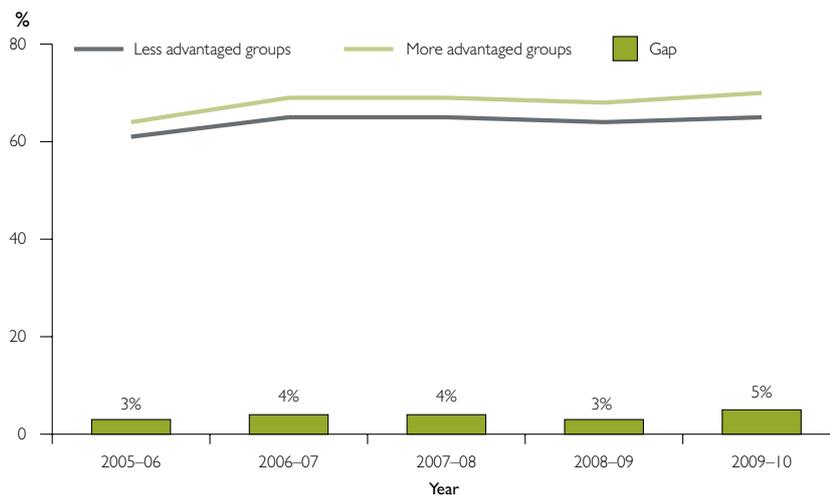
Proportion of graduates in full-time employment six months after graduating who are in 'graduate jobs', by social background (defined as the occupational group of their highest-earning parent).

Why is this indicator important to social mobility?

Ensuring fair access to professional occupations and other higher-level jobs is crucial to developing a more socially mobile society. This indicator is one way of looking at this issue – are graduates from less advantaged backgrounds as able to enter 'graduate jobs' as their peers from more advantaged backgrounds?

How are we performing?

	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10
Most advantaged groups Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) 1–3	64%	69%	69%	68%	70%
Less advantaged groups Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) 4–9	61%	65%	65%	64%	65%
Gap	3%	4%	4%	3%	5%



What will influence this indicator?

Key drivers of this indicator include:

- access to the high quality Higher Education courses that give young people the skills they need to access 'graduate jobs'; and
- recruitment practices of graduate employers (e.g. access to internships and graduate entry programmes).

How will we ensure that progress is made?

Key policies include:

- policies to widen participation set out in *Students at the Heart of the System*;
- allowing the most selective universities to expand through the relaxation of number controls for those achieving ABB+ grades at A level; and
- improving the information that is available to students in order to inform their choice of university.

Further information

This analysis looks at the position six months after graduation. At this point many people have not yet reached their career destination. These are the best data currently available. It must be noted that, due to response rates in the survey from which these data are taken, all figures should be treated as estimates. Data will be published annually in *Widening Participation in Higher Education*.

Access to the Professions

Indicator definition

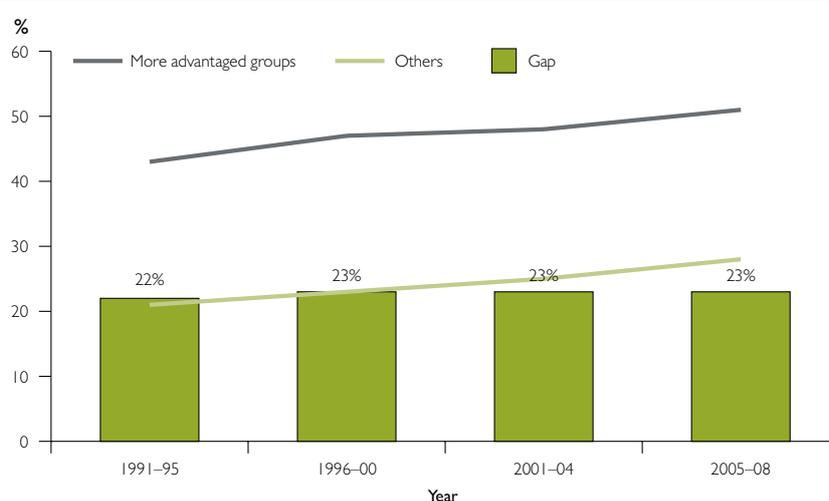
Proportion of working-age population employed in higher-level occupations by social background (defined using father's occupational group based on the Office for National Statistics (ONS) National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC)).

Why is this indicator important to social mobility?

There is evidence that a large number of the professions remain dominated by a small section of society and that, in recent decades, many professions have become less socially representative.

How are we performing?

	1991–95	1996–00	2001–04	2005–08
More advantaged groups (NS-SEC 1–2)	43%	47%	48%	51%
Others	21%	23%	25%	28%
Gap	22%	23%	23%	23%



What will influence this indicator?

Key drivers include:

- attainment of relevant Higher Education and professional qualifications; and
- recruitment practices of the professions (e.g. availability of non-graduate entry routes, access to internships and graduate entry programmes).

How will we ensure that progress is made?

Key policies include:

- working with the professions as part of the Gateways to the Professions Collaborative Forum to ensure that practices which support social mobility are shared and promoted (e.g. best practice code for high quality internships);
- working to open up access to internships (e.g. new guidance on internships and the national minimum wage); and
- raising awareness among the professions (e.g. encouraging them to collect information on the social background of employees in order to inform their policies).

Further information

A new Labour Force Survey question on social background is being tested by ONS in summer 2012. If testing is successful, this will be used for reporting this indicator in the future. In the interim, we are using data derived from the British Household Panel Survey to report against this indicator.

Progression in the labour market of low earners

Indicator definition

Proportion of the lowest earners (defined as those in the bottom 20% of earners at age 25–30) who experience wage progression over the course of a decade (defined as being 20 percentiles or higher in the earnings distribution at age 34–39).

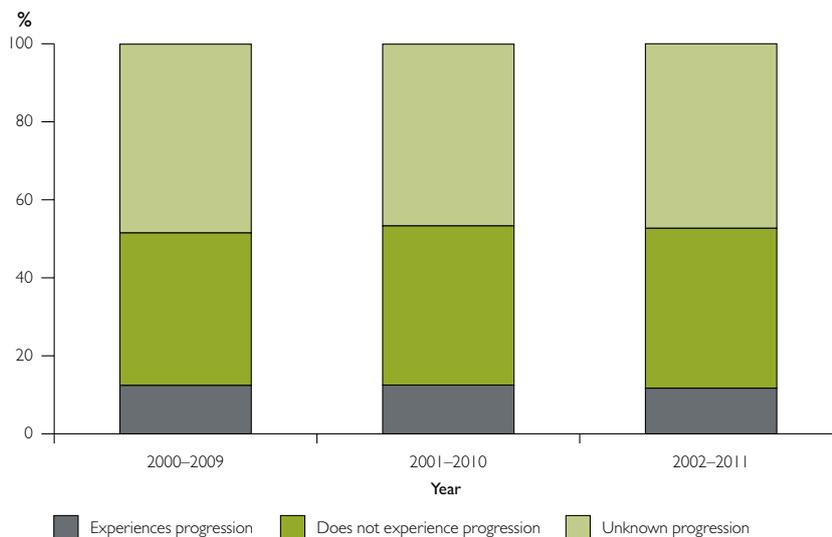
Why is this indicator important to social mobility?

It is important for social mobility that everyone has an opportunity to move on and up in the workplace. This indicator focuses on the progression of low earners – those who are most likely to face disadvantages in the labour market.

How are we performing?

	2000–09	2001–10	2002–11
Experiencing wage progression	12.4%	12.5%	11.7%
Not experiencing wage progression	39.1%	40.8%	41.0%
Progression is unknown	48.4%	46.6%	47.3%

Progression is unknown when those who start off in the bottom quintile have no earnings recorded at the end of the decade. This could be for many reasons, including a switch to self-employment, unemployment, inactivity, migration or death.



What will influence this indicator?

Key drivers include:

- how the market values different people's skills, qualifications and experience;
- how productivity changes in different industries or occupations; and
- routes to progression from low-wage jobs, e.g. the availability of promotion opportunities and 'second chances' to gain new skills or qualifications.

How will we ensure that progress is made?

Key policies include:

- supporting individuals into sustainable employment and allowing them to accumulate the skills and experience necessary to move to a better-paid job;
- ensuring that people have the ability to improve their skills during adulthood; and
- providing low-paid individuals with more incentives to progress in work, e.g. through enhanced in-work support for those eligible for Universal Credit.

Further information

Data will be reported annually as part of the Department for Work and Pensions Business Plan transparency measures, updated in the January Quarterly Data Summary each year.

‘Second Chances’

Indicator definition

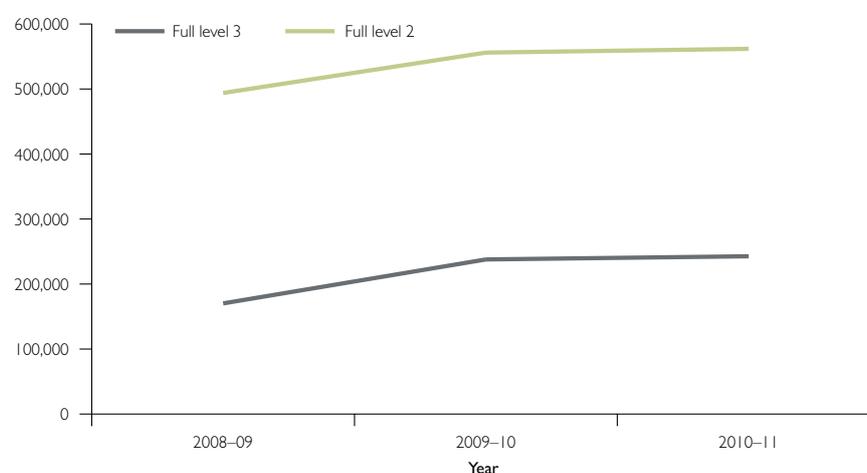
Achievement of level 2 and level 3 qualifications by adults aged 19 and over.

Why is this indicator important to social mobility?

Qualifications play an important role in allowing people to progress in the labour market – those with few qualifications have lower employment rates and less earning potential. Access to opportunities to gain qualifications and update skills throughout adulthood is important in giving people a ‘second chance’ to succeed.

How are we performing?

	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11
Full level 2 (five GCSEs or equivalent) achievement	493,900	556,000	561,800
Full level 3 (two A levels or equivalent) achievement	170,200	237,800	242,700



What will influence this indicator?

Key drivers include:

- aspirations among adults to improve their qualifications and demand for qualifications from employers;
- availability of financial support to help adults access education and training; and
- access to high quality courses that meet aspirations and circumstances.

How will we ensure that progress is made?

Key policies include:

- the National Careers Service: a universal careers service to help support people to develop and achieve their aspirations;
- funding support for courses and other costs, such as fee remission for all or part of courses for certain groups and loans for courses at level 3 and above;
- improvement in the quality, range and availability of Apprenticeships; and
- increased employer influence over the use of public funding for skills and improvements to vocational qualifications.

Further information

Data are published annually in *Post-16 Education and Skills: Learner Participation, Outcomes and Level of Highest Qualification Held*.⁶⁴

Chapter 5

Accountability

The Social Mobility Strategy outlined a number of steps the Government has taken to ensure that the commitments it made are implemented and to allow the public to hold the Government to account for the progress it makes.

One of the most important was the commitment to establish an independent **Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission**. The Commission has now been established and will report annually to Parliament on the progress that is being made on social mobility and child poverty.

A second key commitment was the development of a suite of **'leading indicators' of social mobility** which will improve our understanding of whether we are moving towards our goal of improving social mobility. This update presents, for the first time, the full set of indicators and the most recent data on progress against them.

These are intended to be high-level indicators of the direction of travel which are supported by data and analysis looking across the whole distribution as a further check that our policies are driving real improvements in social mobility. They are explicitly not targets. This avoids the perverse incentives for 'gaming' the indicators that an excessive focus on rigid targets can lead to.

Analysis of the social mobility indicators carried out by academics at Bristol University⁶⁵ concluded that 'the Government's choice of mobility indicators is likely to be useful in informing us whether today's young people will experience similarly low levels of mobility as the previous generation'. The new indicators which we have developed since last year will add to the value of the indicators in providing information about likely trends in long-term social mobility. We will continue to seek to improve and sharpen our indicators to ensure that they are effective in allowing us to estimate progress towards improving social mobility.

The Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission

The independent Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission was formally established in law on 8 May 2012. The Chair, Vice Chair and up to seven commissioners will be in place by autumn 2012 following a public appointments process. The Commission will report annually to Parliament on the progress being made by government and wider society in improving social mobility and reducing child poverty.

In the interim, Alan Milburn will be acting Chair, providing continuity between the work of the Commission and his work as Independent Reviewer of Social Mobility and Child Poverty. The Independent Reviewer will shortly be reporting on the progress being made on Access to the Professions and Higher Education, and will be publishing his final report on progress against the Government's social mobility and child poverty goals this summer.

Additional factors

In addition to the impact of income and social class, gender, race, disability and other characteristics also influence life chances. Our approach to social mobility must be sensitive to these influences, and the ways in which different factors can converge to produce persistently poor outcomes. Examples include:

- **Children in care** experience persistent disadvantage throughout their adult lives that is highly likely to stifle social mobility. A transition to adult life, without support from their family or the state, is made more difficult by poor educational achievement, teenage motherhood and poverty, and very little progress to Higher Education.
- **Poor white boys** have lower educational attainment than most other groups, are less likely to stay in education post-16 and are more likely to be not in education, employment or training.
- **Young black men** have been hit particularly hard by the recession. For example, recent evidence suggests that social mobility for this group is lower than for white British men and declined during the last decade.
- **Pakistani and Bangladeshi women** have persistently poorer employment outcomes than other ethnic groups. Even after controlling for education and other factors, they are significantly less likely to enter managerial and professional occupations than those from white non-migrant backgrounds.
- **Poor young mothers** where socio-economic background combines with low qualifications and low employment rates, resulting in significantly worse outcomes for their children at age five.

These examples are by no means exhaustive. The different combinations of factors means each group faces specific barriers, but this analysis also reveals several common themes, including: geographical concentration in poor areas of our inner cities, limited access to wealth and finance and a lack of aspiration, particularly in educational choices.

We have asked the Government Equalities Office to work with other departments to explore the barriers and common themes and how they could be addressed, with an initial focus on Pakistani and Bangladeshi women, young black men and poor white boys. They will report back to the Ministerial Group on Social Mobility with initial findings by the end of this year.

We have also created a new **website**, bringing all of the indicators together in one place to improve transparency and make it easier to hold the Government to account (www.dpm.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/social-mobility).

Other actions we are taking to improve our understanding of social mobility and our ability to measure the impact of our policies include:

- The **Labour Force Survey** is the key source for statistics on the labour market in the UK. We are exploring the potential for including a new question looking at social background in the survey, both to inform our social mobility indicators and also to allow detailed academic research about how social background plays out in labour market outcomes and how this changes over time.
- There are untapped opportunities to develop a richer understanding of social mobility through using the data available across government more intelligently; improving accountability, providing better information for students and supporting the development of more effective policies and public services. A new Social Mobility Sector Transparency Board will drive this forward. The

Government will shortly be publishing proposals in the **Right to Data White Paper** which will explain in more detail how we plan to take advantage of these opportunities.

- We have provided £33.5 million of funding for a new **British Birth Cohort Study**, to enable long-term data collection and academic research into the factors affecting trends in social mobility. Data collection will begin in 2013 and will follow 110,000 children – one in 14 of all children born in the UK – over the first year of their lives, with follow-up surveys as they grow up.

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