



## Department for Education

### Schools that work for everyone Government Consultation

#### Response from: the National Grammar Schools Association

The National Grammar Schools Association (NGSA) has campaigned over many years for the removal of the prohibition on the opening of new grammar schools and restrictions on the expansion of existing schools. It therefore welcomes the government's initiative which shares these objectives.

The government's proposals appear to be based on two central propositions; first that selective grammar schools are excellent schools for which there is a great parental demand and therefore more should be opened and second that more places in them should be made available to able but disadvantaged children. It follows that all children whatever their social status must show in a selective process that they are capable of benefiting from the education such good schools offer. The NGSA fully supports both propositions but has reservations about the strategy and methods to achieve them postulated in the consultation paper. The form of its response is thematic.

#### *THE STATUS QUO*

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Some 95% of post primary state pupils are educated in non-selective schools of various kinds. They share the common feature of all ability admission and many have adopted the progressivist teaching philosophy favoured by the educational establishment. Since the introduction of the non-selective or comprehensive system as the dominant feature of post primary education, and the corresponding reduction in the number of grammar schools, the overall level in quality of education has been in decline. The recognition of this decline first led to a policy for its disguise. The level of difficulty in examinations was reduced. The generosity of marking was increased. Easier non-academic subjects were introduced and given equal value with academic ones. The number of pupils taking the difficult subjects ranging from physics and maths to modern foreign languages was in free-fall. At primary school the number of pupils at key stage 2 with poor levels of literacy and numeracy was a scandal. As will be discussed later the effectiveness of primary school teaching and the attitude of the teachers responsible (**appendix 2D**) will be a central feature if the government's proposals are to have any prospect of lasting success.

Tony Blair's Academy initiative was the first clear acknowledgment that in many areas of England particularly in the inner cities and in the north generally, comprehensive schools were failing. The term "bog standard comprehensive" became a recognizable description appropriate for many post primary schools.

The Academy reforms followed by the Free Schools Initiative were introduced together with curriculum and testing changes. Under both the coalition and the present government various panacea have been adopted with mixed success.

At present two sponsored academies per week are being placed in formal intervention. Current research indicates that after conversion to Academy status there is initial improvement, but original standards return after three years. Despite the irrefutable evidence of the excellence of selective grammar schools, the Conservative party under David Cameron abandoned them as part of any future overall structure in post primary education. The very number and variety of these reforms to the existing comprehensive system have been ignored, even though their necessity provided evidence of its continuing defects.

The NGSA is reluctant to criticise proposals aimed at the achievement of objectives which it shares. It is conscious of the political and educational protests that will be encountered and the limitations on reform they will create, yet it feels obliged to advise that ultimately the basic flaws in the comprehensive system will have to be addressed. Central to any successful post primary system is the foundation of education which is the responsibility of *the Primary Schools*.

### *The Availability Of Grammar School Places*

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The Butler reforms of 1944 provided free access to grammar schools for all children regardless of status. The reforms did not create grammar schools, their ethos or their teaching methods. They simply provided entry to them for all children who could show by a selective process, their capacity to benefit from an academic education. Merit not money was the key to a place.

The success of the reforms depended on the large number of places available, the quality and preparation of the primary schools and the simplicity of the binary system. Criticism was not levelled at the quality of the grammar school results or their capacity to promote upward social mobility but on allegations of social division and the failure of the secondary modern schools. A purely educational solution would have been to retain the best and improve the rest, but socialist politics and a marxist ideology of "equality of results" dictated otherwise.

When the reduction in the number of grammar schools and the prohibition on any new ones drastically reduced the number of places the Butler reforms were effectively reversed. Grammar schools once again became largely the preserve of the better off, whose aspirations, money and social awareness gave advantage to their children in a selective process. Private coaching improved the chances of their children, while the falling quality of primary school teaching further disadvantaged the poor and the just managing. The reduced number of places created fierce competition for them and grammar schools were increasingly criticised as elitist.

Many working class and disadvantaged parents came to view grammar schools as unsuitable for their children, an opinion often encouraged by primary teachers whose training made selection anathema. (appendix 2.D)

Post-1967 the devolved government in Northern Ireland retained its grammar schools. It has for years provided the best GCSE and A-level results in United Kingdom. It has also consistently sent more students to university from the lower income groups. Some 40% of its post primary pupils are taught in grammar schools, leading to a wide span of the social classes attending them. The tests are voluntary and enthusiastically welcomed by a majority of parents. Primary schools in the main prepare their children for them so that the influence of private coaching is much less prevalent than on the mainland. The widespread availability of places is central to the success of the present proposals.

The problems of increasing grammar school places in a non-binary system are appreciated but need to be addressed. Anti-selective institutions fear that if grammar schools are permitted to expand parents will demonstrate over time a preference for them. An increase in places will require a suitable mix of children to occupy them. It is in this area where an improved quality of primary teaching is vital if such a mix is to be achieved.

### *The Role Of The Primary School*

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Primary schools do not largely feature in the consultation paper yet they are central to the success of its proposals. If able but disadvantaged children who would benefit from a grammar school education are to be identified encouraged prepared and entered for a selective test then the positive participation of their primary teachers and head teachers is essential. For decades many teacher training colleges and university education departments have assiduously promoted child-centred progressivist teaching methods and strongly opposed both selection and traditional teaching. (appendix 2.D)

Even some educational researchers have commented on the virulence of this campaign and its singular effect on trainee teachers. Any suggestion of “teaching to the test” is met with severe criticism even though literacy and numeracy are its essential components and areas in which primary education is failing.

It is evident that today the educational establishment in concert with the teachers unions are resisting efforts to introduce more rigorous standards and the tests necessary to assess if they are being achieved. Progressivist theory aligned to a philosophy of equality of results is in opposition to inter-pupil competition, testing and preparation, which are aids to the identification of the able but disadvantaged, and which also frequently indicate indifferent and failing teaching.

If the able but disadvantaged child can only gain a place in the grammar school by a selective test, how can it succeed unless it is identified, encouraged, prepared and entered. No long-term policy of getting more such children into grammar schools can be fulfilled unless the government addresses and resolves these inherent prejudices in primary school education.

## *The Fundamental Difference Between Selective and Non-Selective Schools*

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While increasing the number of places in selective grammar schools is a vital element in improving the quality of post primary education such a policy must address the basic differences between selective and non-selective schools. These include educational theory, teaching methods and the ideologies underpinning them. Selective schools concentrate the number of pupils suitable for academic education and match them with teachers qualified as specialists in specific disciplines in discrete subjects for GCSE such as chemistry, biology, physics, history, english and modern foreign languages. The average grammar school will focus on S.T.E.M (science, technology, english, maths) and many GCSE classes including the aforementioned discrete subjects (predominantly academic) continue in years 12 and 13 for sixth form A level study for University entry. Teaching is of the traditional kind. The teachers' knowledge and experience in the transmission of concepts and ideas plus factual information is the basis of their authority. Pupils are encouraged to be aspirational, competitive and independent in thought. Parents see this form of education as the precursor of university study and professional training. While many of these attributes are shared by a minority of non-selective schools, these are often situated in areas of middle-class affluence, where location, house price and accessibility preclude disadvantaged families.

Non-selective schools catering for some 95% of state post primary pupils, offer in the majority of cases an educational philosophy and teaching method which is strongly influenced by the prevailing progressivist theories favoured by the education establishment and the teaching unions. Subjects tend to be general rather than discrete General science replaces physics, chemistry and biology. Pupil competition is discouraged and testing or examinations producing pupil ranking is frowned upon. The teacher's role is seen more as that of a facilitator than an authoritative figure. **(appendix 2.D)**

In many schools the small number of pupils taking specialist subjects such as A-level physics or a modern foreign language cannot justify the expense of the specialist teacher and they cease to be offered. The difficulties that will arise in requiring grammar or independent school teachers to influence a failing comprehensive when the basis of the grammar school success is alien to that of the failing school ,and the problems of the teachers in non-selective schools faced with less able students and class indiscipline are often foreign to their new mentors.

## *Good Schools For Everyone*

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To the above mantra should be added the words "according to their several ability". The government proposals in relation to selective grammar schools accept that they are good schools for which there is an increasing demand. It is axiomatic that to gain a place in such a school every child must pass a selective test. The proposals also indicate that it is so politically and socially desirable that it is a condition of increasing the number of places in existing grammar schools and creating new ones is, that disadvantaged children in social and economic terms should have greater access to them. There are teaching, parental and social reasons why the number of disadvantaged children in selective grammar schools is low. Such children are currently identified on the basis that they are entitled to free school meals (FSM).

Opponents of selection quote what appears to be the gross disparity between the percentage of FSM children in non-selective schools and those in selected grammar schools, as evidence that they are socially divisive and do not serve to promote upward social mobility. Such reasoning is unsound. The FSM test is no guide to the child's suitability for an academic education. The child's ability could range from super intelligent to a level requiring remedial teaching. It merely indicates that the child's family has an income level which entitles the child to that social benefit. The high percentage of FSM children in non-selective schools which educate 95% of post primary children covers the whole range of abilities. The lower percentage of FSM children includes only the much smaller percentage of children who have passed a selective test. In addition the FSM children in selective schools are clearly of marked ability since they have gained their place in competition with many children who have social advantages and often the benefits of private coaching. Nor does this flawed comparison take into account other relevant factors such as primary school direction towards non-selective schools, parental apathy (**appendix 2C**) or the school's location and difficulty of access.

What is required to determine the appropriate "good school" for any particular child is a process of testing to identify the child's potential during primary school education coupled with a program to combat parental apathy and to demand where appropriate that their children are prepared and entered for selective tests.

Primary school preparation based on parental demand have been a feature of Northern Ireland's success in achieving a 40% percentage of its post primary pupils gaining places in grammar schools. Apart from Northern Ireland's excellent results in state examinations it reflects the twin aspects of the government's proposals namely good schools and good access to them from all sections of the community.

### *Are Selective Grammar School Socially Divisive?*

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Opponents of selection argue that selective schools are socially divisive and that children who do not succeed in a selective test suffer a lifelong sense of failure. Currently 95% of post primary pupils are educated in non-selective schools, with only 5% of the state cohort attending selective grammar schools. Even if the proposed reforms increase that number to 20% can it be realistically contended that this would have any significant impact on social segregation? This is particularly so when socio-economic factors have a vastly greater effect, and when the proposed increase is accompanied by determined efforts to increase the number of disadvantaged children attending selective schools.

The NGSA has not only shared the government's assertion that selective grammars are good schools but endorsed the principle of free parental choice which should be recognised and reflected in the number of these "good schools" made available. The large and increasing demand by parents of places in these "good schools" is undeniable. The NGSA has always made the case that submitting a child for a selection test should be the entirely voluntary choice of the child's parents. For many decades that has been the norm. Currently the only parents who can allege that their child suffers any perceived sense of failure as a result of a selective test, are those who voluntarily submitted their child to one, while fully cognizant of all the facts and fully aware of the child's disappointment if unsuccessful.

## *How Can An Increase In Grammar School Places Be Reconciled With An Increase In Upward Social Mobility?*

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The present paucity in grammar school places, their excellent results and the increasing cost of independent education are all factors in fuelling fierce competition for them. Nowhere is this competition more evident than among middle-class professional families whose aspiration has driven up private coaching specifically directed to success for their children in selective tests. In excess of 10 applicants for every place in a grammar school is common. Children resident in non-selective counties are commuting over long distances to selective counties such as Gloucestershire and Kent. Children resident within these counties are compelled to compete with non-resident children often to their disadvantage and the resentment of their parents. The entrance level in many grammar schools has become so high that children who are not professionally coached are under a significant disadvantage.

Unless carefully controlled additional grammar school places will be swallowed up by middle-class children. While the availability of places will lessen the level of competition it will do little to improve the success rate of unprepared and non-coached, disadvantaged children in a competitive selection process. In Northern Ireland when Sinn Fein, for political and ideological reasons, decided to abolish selective education against the majority wish of both teachers and parents its attack was directed at the primary school curriculum and traditional teaching which majored on literacy and numeracy. A progressivist curriculum was introduced and the Schools Inspectorate instructed to suppress traditional teaching methods. This was not wholly successful but it did lead to a marked increase in private coaching. The advent of a Unionist Education Minister has begun a reversal of Sinn Fein policy and primary schools are permitted once again to prepare key stage 2 pupils for selective tests. This policy creates a level playing field for disadvantaged children, reduces the level of private coaching which is rendered unnecessary and encourages parents to submit their children to selective tests. Sinn Fein's attempts to reverse it demonstrates that ***the primary schools are central to upward social mobility***. Able disadvantaged children are identified by their teachers who make their parents aware of their potential and encourage, prepare and enter such children for selective tests. In the process all children benefit.

## *The Government's Proposals For Achieving Its Educational Social Aims*

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The government's twin objectives are encapsulated in its declaration:-

*"we want more good schools including selective schools but we want good schools including selective schools to make sure they help children from all backgrounds".*

The NGSA shares the government's view that providing access to quality education for disadvantaged children is a worthy and desirable objective. If that quality education is delivered through the medium of a selective grammar school the child must be not only disadvantaged but demonstrably suited for it by selective admission. NGSA considers that while the grammar schools are the agency for determining the child's suitability for the type of education they provide by way of selection, the assessment of any relevant degree of disability is entirely the government's responsibility. Similarly the preparation of disadvantaged children for success in a selective test can only marginally be the remit of the grammar school. As illustrated by the earlier response to the

solution in Northern Ireland this is primarily the responsibility of the primary school sector and ultimately direct government action. To make the grammar schools present or future directly responsible for facilitating upward social mobility under an implied threat of sanctions would be a mistake. No matter how attractive in PR terms for engendering support for the present proposals its administration would be a chaotic and complex nightmare and would not effectively address the central issue of identifying the able but disadvantaged child and ensuring that it could compete on an equal footing in a selective test.

### *The Obstacles To The Able Disadvantaged Child Underlined This*

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- (1) A failure to be incentivised as to the benefits of an education of which the child is capable
- (2) A poor primary school education especially in literacy and numeracy
- (3) Exposure to primary school teachers with an antipathy to selection
- (4) A lack of familial aspiration and ignorance of the opportunities available
- (5) An absence of any effective preparation for the form and procedural aspects of selective testing.
- (6) A tendency by heads of school trusts which include primary and post primary non-selective schools to retain able pupils within their chain.

All of the above difficulties are endemic even in areas where grammar schools presently exist, and where such good schools might and do engage in outreach through feeder primary schools on an entirely voluntary basis. In the approximately three quarters of England where no grammar schools currently exist (**appendix 2B**) and where places are most crucially required these difficulties will be exacerbated. In these areas there will be no established links between primary schools and selective schools. A new grammar school in these areas will be seen as a mecca by the professional classes. The new school will be saddled with all the problems of establishing its own presence including forging and developing links and pathways with local primary schools, Headteachers and their Trusts. To saddle it with the additional burden of improving a failing comprehensive or fundamental restructuring the quality and aims of primary schools, is perhaps unrealistic.

### *The Duty Of Government*

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The government's duty is to address directly the current obstacles faced by the able but disadvantaged child. Positive programs must be established to redress the barriers outlined above either by direct government intervention or in liaison with the grammar schools on a voluntary basis. Many grammar schools believe they are already underfunded and mandatory requirements to promote inter-alia teacher secondment or assistance to a failing school could cause their own quality to decline.

Government policy should recognise that attendance at a selective school requires success in what is now a competitive selective process. The question "what is the right proportion of children from low-income households for new selective schools to admit?" carries the inference that different standards might be applied to ensure some predetermined appropriate ratio. This seems to accept

that selective grammar schools should admit a proportion of children not on merit but on some subjective assessment of disadvantage. The problems to be addressed by the government reforms are the educational provision at primary school level and the social conditions that prevent such children being able to compete on an equal footing rather than allowing for these factors to determine the terms of their admission. To do otherwise is to permit the obstacles to continue merely by allowing for them in such special terms.

The statistics cited at page 23 in Atkinson's papers of 2004 lend support to the above. The research found that FSM pupils at grammar schools experienced an educational gain twice as high compared to the overall impact across all pupils. These FSM pupils had obtained their places on merit in open competition with all other candidates. Clearly they were of marked ability but almost certainly they had aspirational parents. They could hardly be compared to FSM pupils whose admission was the product of a special selective test designed to meet a predetermined proportion of such pupils.

***The policy must be to remove the causes of low numbers of disadvantaged children in selective schools not by allowing for their continued existence. These causes have already been listed but chief among them are poor primary education and a combination of parental apathy, (appendix 2C) social culture and a lack of parental awareness of beneficial educational pathways that are available. (appendix 1A)***

### ***The Major Importance Of Primary Education***

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The primary schools do not feature to any major degree in the government's proposals. Yet they are the foundation for all successful subsequent education, and the source of almost all later failure.

In a recent letter from Ofsted to Swindon Borough Council it was disclosed that only 44% of Key stage 2 children met the required standard in all of the reading, writing and mathematics by the time they finished year 6. The average level of attainment (September 2016) was 53%. The Council's response was that "most if not all of the teachers would take exception to it". The OFSTED report also stated that Liverpool and West Sussex were also on 44%, Luton and Dorset on 43%, Bedford 42% and Peterborough on 39%.

Almost all research into reading levels confirms that the children with low levels of reading ability at this age level never show any subsequent improvement. It follows that 47% of primary schoolchildren are proceeding to post primary education without an adequate reading level and are unlikely to improve. These statistics indicate that primary school education is the major reason, leaving aside scarcity of places and private coaching, for the low numbers of disadvantaged children in selective grammar schools. The percentage of children in the fail category is almost certainly greater in primary schools situated in areas of social disadvantage. Children from these areas are more likely to proceed to non-selective schools which are themselves struggling.

The present focus for achieving the twin aims of more good schools reflecting upward social mobility in their rolls is upon existing good schools being the agency for such improvement. While good schools have a contribution to make in improving standards, by the time they are in a position to do so, much of the damage has been done and is often irreparable. It is usually most severe among the disadvantaged. If the government's current proposals are to have any prospect of a lasting effect the real focus must be in the formative primary stage.

The new curriculum directed towards improved standards is a beginning. Procedures for the early identification of the most able pupils must be put in place (**appendix 2A**) and guidelines established for such children and their parents being incentivised of the benefits of an academic education. (**appendix 1A**).

Teachers must raise their expectations from their pupils (**appendix 2D**) and direct the able to the educational pathways most suitable for realising their potential. The general quality of primary school teaching must be improved. It is a mistake to approach the upward social mobility of the disadvantaged by cushioning their entry into a selective system either by way of predetermined ratios, or reducing for them - the standard of entry. In such cases both the children and the school suffer. The children struggle and are often unhappy while the school experiences difficulty in maintaining standards. Reform of primary school education and the removal of anti-selection prejudice fostered by teacher training institutions and the teachers' unions is the way forward.

Ends:

Mr R McCartney QC

Chair NGSA

Questions to be answered:

Who will provide the test?

- a. GL-Assessment
  - b. Durham University
    - i. CEM Helpsite <http://www.durham11plus.co.uk/>
    - ii. <https://www.sats-papers.co.uk/11-plus-papers>
    - iii. <http://www.11plusguide.com/11-plus-papers-books/free-11-plus-papers/free-sample-11-plus-cem-papers/>
    - iv. <http://www.cem.org/entrance-assessments>
2. GL-Assessment papers are used in most of the 164 UK Grammar Schools' selective entrance exams as well as many of the Independent Schools entrance examinations.
3. Who will provide make parents aware of 11+ guides and 11+ test papers?
- a. The Parents' Guide to the 11+
    - i. <https://www.bond11plus.co.uk/shop/product/721-the-parents-guide-to-the-11>
    - ii. <https://www.bond11plus.co.uk/shop/category/16-online-11-practice>
  - b. Test papers shops
    - i. [https://www.bond11plus.co.uk/shop/product/717-bond-11-standard-test-papers-mixed-pack-1/category\\_pathway-2](https://www.bond11plus.co.uk/shop/product/717-bond-11-standard-test-papers-mixed-pack-1/category_pathway-2)
4. GL Assessment papers are now distributed directly by Granada Learning (GL-Assessment, GL-A). <http://www.elevenplusexams.co.uk/advice/gl-assessment-nfer-and-letts>
- a. GL-Assessment have NOT produced any new practice papers; the papers sold for familiarisation are still the same as those sold in 1990s which were labelled 11A, 11B, 11C and 11D in each subject. However they have indicated that in the future they will create more practice papers, hence the new cover designs are called "Pack 1" and the papers in each subject are now labelled in numerical sequence: Paper 1, Paper 2 etc.
  - b. GL-Assessment has re-packaged the same pre-existing papers mentioned above under new covers and new ISBN numbers.(see table online)

## APPENDIX 1

### 1.A) **ATTAINMENT Children's Commissioner seeks to explain divide**

The Children's Commissioner Anne Longfield has launched a year-long investigation into why many children in the north get left behind, highlighting that children in London and the south-east are 57% more likely to get into universities ranked among the top third than those in the north of England. She says under-performance of secondary schools in the north of England was of "huge concern," and highlighted ONS figures that show the north-east has the best primary schools in the country, but the lowest adult employment rate. She added that it is "time to leave the North-South divide behind," saying the regeneration of the north offers a "unique opportunity" to improve children's prospects. ***Ms Longfield also said that northern parents should emulate the pushiness seen in their southern counterparts; the Guardian offers advice on how to best push a pupil to boost their attainment.***

### 1.B) **Children's Commissioner looks to improve northern education standards**

Research out this week from the Children's Commissioner, Anne Longfield, reveals that wellbeing among children in the north east is the highest in England while in the north-west verbal reasoning skills are the highest, and at primary school children do as well academically as their counterparts in the south. However, once they get to secondary school, a gap in attainment is opened up and is most apparent by the age of 16. Of the worst 20 local authorities in the country for GCSEs, moreover, the majority are in the north of England, the research reveals, with children on free school meals almost half as likely to get 5 A-Cs grades as those on free school meals in London. In southern regions 26 to 29% of students have gained the highest A-level grades, while in the Midlands and the north the figure is 22 to 24%, according to the JCQ. Ms Longfield comments that a new project, Growing Up North, will examine why progress nationally is different, and will study parenting styles and formal education. ***The Times notes that Ms Longfield has urged laid-back northern mothers to take a leaf from the book of the "tiger" mums of London and the south east who demand more for their children and from schools and teachers.***

### 1.C) **Pisa results in focus**

Dylan William, Emeritus Professor of Educational Assessment at UCL, suggests that some interpretations of data drawn from the upcoming ***Pisa rankings may be "useless, if not actually misleading."*** He says most of the results stem from 10 or more years of education, meaning "what countries are doing now is almost irrelevant." He adds that the results themselves are hard to interpret, with it hard to ensure that the students participating are truly a representative sample. He also suggests that educational systems have to be understood in the context of the societies in which they operate. He says Welsh schools need not look to the Pisa results on how to improve education, as the facts are already clear: ***"We need to create a culture in which every teacher in Wales accepts the need to improve - not because they are not good enough but because they can be even better."***

***Please see R McCartney report re: PISA***

***[http://www.ngsa.org.uk/downloads/The\\_Researcher\\_and\\_the\\_Teacher\\_29\\_10\\_2014.pdf](http://www.ngsa.org.uk/downloads/The_Researcher_and_the_Teacher_29_10_2014.pdf)***

## APPENDIX 2

### 2.A) Scouting for grammar pupils

Theresa May is considering football scout type searches as part of her grammar school plans. It would see schools sending talent scouts into deprived council estates to spot bright children, who could benefit from grammar education. The prime minister has also asked ministers to study a report **calling for grammars to be built in hard-up areas with poor exam results**. It comes as a report by the Centre for Social Justice found the attainment gap between poor and middle-class children is 4% in grammars compared to 25% at comprehensives. CSJ chief Andy Cook said: "No one would question the ambition of sports clubs to scout out the best talent. The same unapologetic quest for latent potential should be applied to the academic talent."

### 2.B) Tory MPs challenge grammar school plan

The prime minister's plans to expand existing grammar schools have come under fire from her own backbenchers after new official data showed that more than **half of the country's 108 towns and cities with populations of over 75,000 have no existing grammar school within ten miles of their centres**. Theresa May has pledged £240m to 164 state grammars to take more pupils. Conservative MP Ben Howlett, who represents Bath and whose nearest grammar is 26 miles away, said the injection of money will "only exacerbate the existing postcode lottery." Mr Howlett said he and "a large number" of colleagues had been "inundating" Education Secretary Justine Greening with complaints that Mrs May's pledge her Government would "work for all" was falling flat.

### 2.C) PRIMARY School grading parents

It has emerged Greasley Beauvale **Primary School** in Nottinghamshire is marking parents from A to D based on their involvement with their children's education. The system, in place since 2011, **is intended to improve children's performance by encouraging parents to attend events and help with learning at home**. The system has been commended by Sir Michael Wilshaw, head of Ofsted, in the watchdog's annual report. He said children of parents in groups A and B make significantly better progress than those in groups C and D, but that **the system ensures less-engaged parents are productively supported by the school**.

### 2.D) CLASSROOM No more learn-for-yourself, facilitator, approach

A report by a group of state school teachers has **rejected teaching styles that see the role of teachers as facilitating discovery learning** or independent research for parts of the lessons. The group has subsequently switched **to traditional approaches emphasising academic rigour and high expectations**. The teachers spent two years observing and teaching lessons in four independent schools **to discover the best approaches for gaining the best GCSE and A-level results**. The exchange programme was led by staff at Christ the King, a sixth-form college in Lewisham, south London, and involved teachers at four other state schools in southeast London.

(extracts from "HEADLINES")