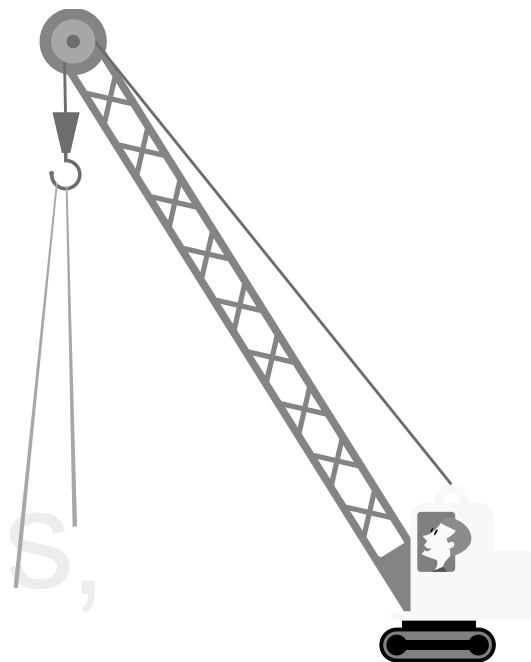


A commitment from  
The Children's Plan

Your child,  
your school  
our future:

building a 21st century  
schools system

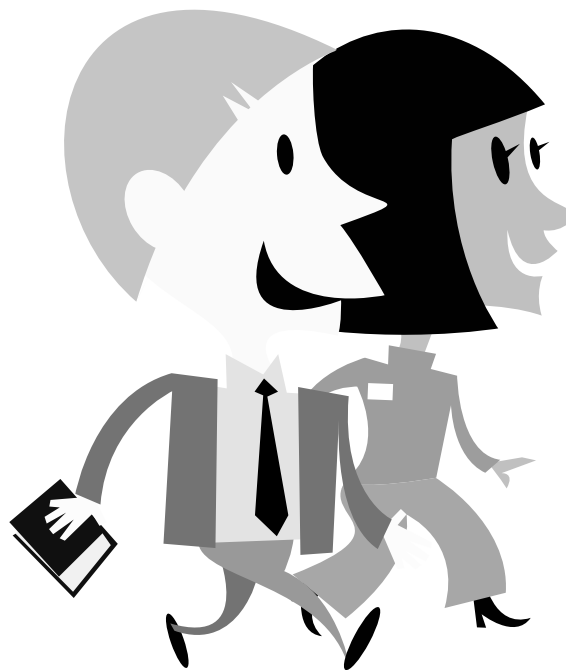
a guide for parents  
and carers



department for  
children, schools and families

To read the full White Paper go to  
[www.dcsf.gov.uk/21stcenturyschoolssystem](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/21stcenturyschoolssystem)

***School is changing – in new and exciting ways that will affect everyone, whatever year your child is in. This booklet explains what’s happening, why it’s happening, and when you can expect to see a difference in your child’s school.***





If children's learning stalls or if they face a barrier such as dyslexia parents say it is crucial that schools give children the extra support they need fast, before they fall behind and lose heart.

That's why at the centre of all our proposals there's a new guarantee for each child and parent about what they can expect from school; this is based on the things which children and their parents tell us matter the most.



We will set out in law each **pupil's guarantee** to a school where:

- There is good behaviour, strong discipline, order and safety.
- Pupils are taught in a way that meets their needs, with their progress regularly checked and additional needs spotted early and addressed quickly, including one-to-one tuition in English or maths if they are falling behind what is expected nationally.
- Pupils are taught a broad, balanced and flexible curriculum, including skills for learning and for life.
- Pupils take part in sports and cultural activities, and their health and wellbeing is supported.
- Pupils have the chance to express their views, and they and their families are welcomed and valued by the school.

Our **guarantee to parents** is that every child will go to a school that has high aspirations for them and that fulfils these conditions, so their children get the opportunity to do the best they possibly can.

The Parent Guarantee will also make sure schools work with mothers, fathers and other carers as full partners in their child's learning and development.

To make all of this a reality we are putting new measures in place to bring all schools up to the standards in those schools that are leading the way. For example, we will encourage all schools to work together and with other services for children and young people, to help all their pupils to do well. We will also maximise the positive

contribution of the highest performing schools and other education institutions by encouraging more federations and formal partnerships and enabling them to run more than one school through Accredited Groups of Schools. We will expect all Local Authorities to use Accredited Group Providers to support underperforming schools to achieve their full potential.

Our guarantee to parents will also provide:

*The opportunities, information and support parents need to exercise school choice with and on behalf of their children –*

Parents can already have confidence that the Admissions Code means there's a fair process for allocating school places.

- Now we will make sure they also get an information pack on every school in which they are interested. This will include a new School Report Card that shows how well the school is doing. A prospectus of the school's policies will form part of the contents and, among other things, this will explain how the school expects children to behave, so everyone knows where they stand, right from the start.



- Parents will be asked for their views about their child's school and these will appear on the School Report Card, to help inform other parents.
- Parents' views about the quality of schools across their area will now have to be taken into account by local authorities when they are planning the overall availability of schools locally.

*A Home School Agreement outlining parents' rights and responsibilities for their child's schooling –*

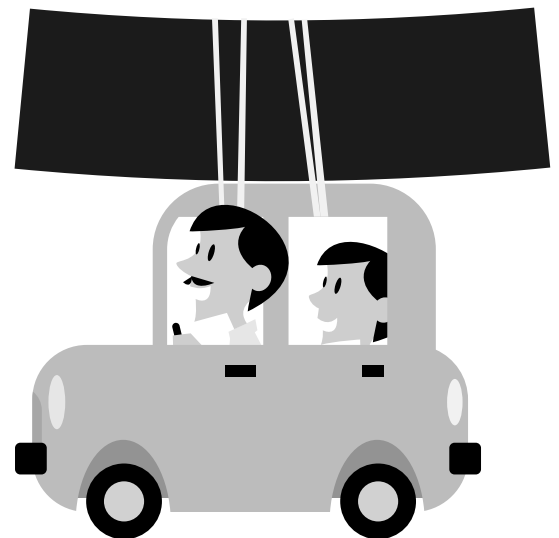
Schools are already expected to have a Home School Agreement.

- Now the new Parent Guarantee will make sure every parent is clear what their responsibilities are, especially over their child's behaviour.
- Schools will be able to enforce the new Home School Agreement if children are disruptive and parents are not fulfilling their responsibilities.

*The opportunity, information and support parents need to be involved in their child's learning and to help their children to do the best they can –*

Schools are already expected to give parents annual reports on children's progress and their child's school record if they ask for it.

- Now we will make sure that parents have direct contact with a named Personal Tutor in secondary school – a member of staff who knows their child well and who they can meet – as well as with their child's teacher in primary school.



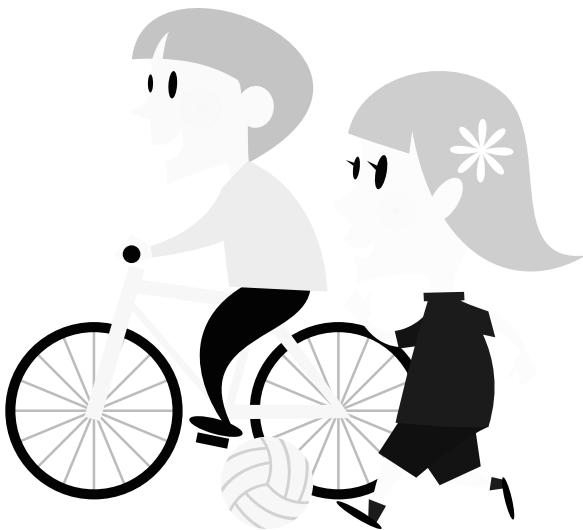
- If children reach the end of primary school without having mastered the basics in English and maths we will make sure they receive catch up support, followed by a progress check which will be reported to parents. This is in addition to the one-to-one tuition in primary schools that we are now making available for those children who may be falling behind national expectations.
- Parents will be able to get information about their child's behaviour, attendance, any special education needs and achievements online in secondary schools by 2010 and in primary schools by 2012.

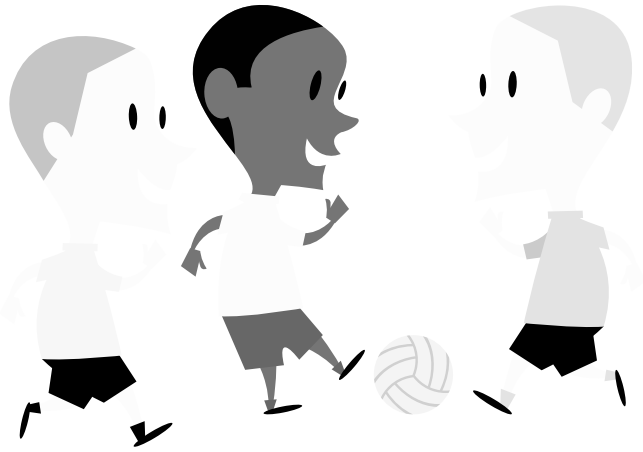
- For those children with exceptional gifts and talents, parents will receive written confirmation of what more the school will do to support and stretch them, and advice about the part they can play in this too.

*Access to extended services through school, including support and advice about parenting if they want it –*

Schools are already expected to act as a link to expert professionals if parents need extra help.

- The new Parent Guarantee will also make sure parents can take advantage of a wider range of 'extended services' through school by 2010, including information and advice on parenting, childcare, and opportunities to develop their own learning and to learn as a family with their children.





The quality of education children receive depends hugely on good teachers, so to raise the quality and status of teachers beyond its already high standard we will gradually introduce a new ‘licence to teach’, linked to giving them the right to additional development and training. This already happens in some other professions, like medicine, and we think education is so important it should apply to teachers too. We want to apply this first to people who are returning to teaching after being away for some time, and to supply teachers.

Many children will need extra support at some point during their school careers, for example because there’s a problem with their health, so we will encourage more of these other services

to move onto school sites to make them easier for children and families to reach. We are also acting to develop more youth facilities attached to schools, to help young people make good use of their leisure time.

We said in our Children’s Plan that we want this country to be the best place in the world to grow up in, and we know that means we need a school system that offers a great start in life for every child, not just for some. We believe the radical and ambitious steps described here will enable us to get there.



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D16(8295)/0609

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