

Focused on the Future: FED's new report cuts through the political noise to offer practical long-term planning solutions for education

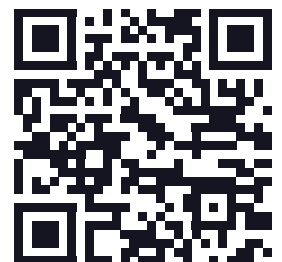
Education must be on the ballot

As the UK approaches the general election on July 4th, the future of education policy should be a pressing, crucial topic.

The Foundation for Education Development (FED) is set to release the final report of its comprehensive four-year consultation on education in England, the most wide-ranging to date. Scheduled for complete publication on July 9th, this report advocates for a forward-thinking vision for strategic planning in the education sector. It resonates with the consensus across all political parties on the urgent need for a long-term planning approach to tackle some of the nation's most critical challenges.

With the impending transition of power to a new government, the urgency for far-reaching policy-making that transcends political cycles is clear.

FED's research shows that by embracing the proposals outlined in their forthcoming report, a new government would have a solid foundation for implementing education policy-making reforms with legitimacy and widespread support.



FED's research identifies critical solutions

FED's research has identified critical mechanisms that would enhance capacity in the education system, enabling it to evolve and adopt a more strategic, long-term approach. These include:



A Long-Term Planning Framework

To provide a stable and consistent approach to education that delivers long-term solutions guided by a clear vision.

The framework incorporates all facets of education; lifelong and broad-ranging. Its breadth would encompass a thorough examination of education policy and planning including but not limited to, scoping, capacity enhancement, vision development, strategic planning, alongside implementation procedures and execution strategies.

Implementing the Long-term Planning Framework would empower leaders to achieve goals effectively while ensuring accountability.



A National Education Assembly

To expand engagement with a wider range of stakeholders for a more inclusive and representative system.

This body would counter the problems associated with over-centralised policy creation and ensure a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to policy development by involving learners, parents, educators, experts and stakeholders from various sectors.

It would provide a space for effective feedback and a deliberative and long-term perspective on education policy.



An Education Council

To provide independent leadership and build more robust governance in the system.

The Council would provide impartial oversight, valuable input, and guidance to the Secretary of State for Education, integrating a diverse range of perspectives and expertise to effectively tackle challenges and set priorities.

The Council would play a vital role in crafting a long-term education plan, offering support and counsel to the Department for Education. In addition, it would embody a resilient governance structure.



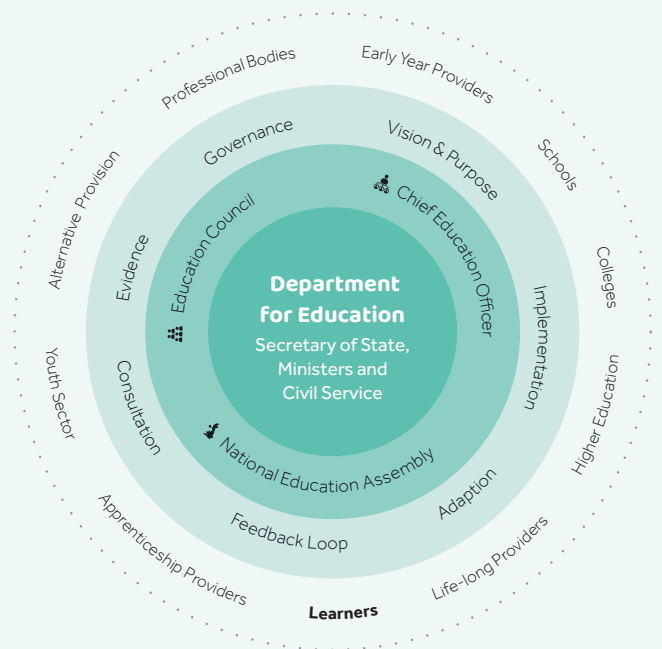
A Chief Education Officer

and associated office, to embed more deep knowledge and expertise in the system, modelled on the existing roles of Chief Medical Officer and Chief Scientific Officer.

S/he would bring expert advice - a deep understanding of the education system that politicians do not always possess - from the profession. They would serve as the country's most senior education professional, drawing public attention to education policy matters.

They would play a vital role in restoring trust that ministers and civil servants actively listen to knowledgeable and experienced individuals within the education sector.

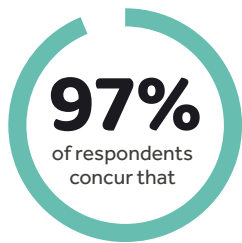
These interconnected elements have been carefully considered through FED's consultation process and, if adopted, could significantly enhance the education planning process. They are not intended to add another layer of policymaking but to bolster capacity within the current system and bolster support for key education planning entities.



A clear mandate for change

Over the past four years, FED has spearheaded an unprecedented qualitative consultation on education in England, revealing widespread recognition of the lack of

long-term planning within our education system and a resounding demand for a change in approach. The FED annual survey further supports this:



“
A fresh approach to strategic education planning is imperative for the future.



“
The incoming government to instigate a comprehensive review of the education system within it's first 12 months in power.

Why we 'must do better' for education

FED's stakeholders recognise that education is vital in unlocking a prosperous and secure future. This requires a well-defined approach that steers learners of all ages towards a sustainable, equitable, and inclusive future.

However, constant change and churn in education policies, driven by electoral cycles, have hindered progress. Since 1979, there have been more than 100 Education Ministers and 24 Secretary of States

for Education, and three times more primary legislation focused on education than on defence (edpol.net).

The current system is falling short in its capacity to deliver a long-term educational vision. Moreover, everyone knows it. The Department for Education's 2022 Schools White Paper admitted that the system has evolved to be 'often messy and confusing'.



Long-term problems demand long-term solutions

Persistent complexity and short-term focus have allowed deep-seated issues within our education system to fester and worsen. From growing attainment gaps between pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers to the ongoing struggles with SEND provision, teacher recruitment and retention, and the surge in mental health concerns among students post-COVID, the challenges are multifaceted and urgent.



For the full report, scan the QR code

An urgent call for forward-thinking, future-ready policymaking

It is vital that the incoming administration prioritises strategic, long-term education planning. Taking this step will not only enhance the education system but also create a ripple effect that could help address some of the numerous challenges confronting the nation today. A strengthened education system holds the key to boosting employment prospects, reducing inequality, facilitating social mobility, and bolstering the economy.

By focusing on long-term education planning, we underscore our dedication to cultivating an educational environment that emphasises sustained progress and equitable opportunities for forthcoming generations.

FED firmly believes that by prioritising these reforms, we can build a brighter future for education in our country. We encourage and welcome feedback on our work, and our full report will be published on [fed.education/fed-report-2024/](https://www.fed.education/fed-report-2024/) on 9th July 2024. Together, let's work towards a future where education takes centre stage in our nation's development and growth.

Get involved

Join in the conversation online and keep up to date with all things FED.



@Fededucation



www.fed.education

