

# [How successfully did the liberal governments of 1906-1914](https://assignbuster.com/how-successfully-did-the-liberal-governments-of-1906-1914/)

[Government](https://assignbuster.com/essay-subjects/government/)

How Successfully Did the Liberal Governments of 1906-1914 Deal with the Problems Affecting the Poor and Underprivileged in Britain? By Ferguson How successfully did the Liberal governments of 1906-1914 deal with the problems affecting the poor and underprivileged in Britain? In Britain in 1906 to 1914 the Liberal government was faced with serious amounts of poverty affecting the young, the old and workforce. By 1906 they began to introduce a series of reforms to help the poor and underprivileged, these included free school meals, medical inspections and the children's charter.

For the elderly the Pension Act was introduced, and the national insurance act for the workforce. The Liberal government did a great deal to help the poor and underprivileged by introducing a series of very beneficial reforms, but then these were not entirely flawless. By 1906 the children in Britain suffered from severe malnutrition and a poor diet. They struggled to learn on an empty stomach and so in 1906 the Liberals introduced free school meals, aimed at providing all school children a free meal every day.

This helped them concentrate and learn in school. It was recorded that by 1914, 14 million eels were provided around Britain. While this reform seemed to have such a huge impact on children there were still flaws, mainly with funding. While some schools from richer areas were able to provide free meals, there were a lot of poorer areas that couldn't afford to do this. By 1912 the government realized that over half the schools in Britain failed to provide the children with meals at all.

Further research showed that the children who received the meals during school days were left to go hungry during the holidays. Finally, in 1914 the Liberal government made it impulsion for all children to receive free school meals and they agreed to provide 50% grants to the local authorities. So by 1914 the free school meals act was partly successful in helping the poor and underprivileged. Although the health of many children had improved, it was reported by most schools that children who turned up to school, arrived in 'dreadful and vermilion' conditions.

To help cure this, the Liberals introduced another reform, to provide medical inspections in all schools in 1907. Clinics were set up 1912 which were provided with nurses who would regularly examine the children. The medical inspections provided a great deal of help to the poor children who showed up in terrible conditions. The nurses were able to identify problem and also they were able to take action against the parent's who let their children come to school in these terrible states. As much as this reform seemed to have so many positives it didn't completely work.

This act was realized in 1907 but no clinics were even set up until 1912 that was five years where the act didn't actually make a difference. So when these clinics were finally set up and the children had men inspected, thousands of children had been recorded as vermilion or having defective teeth. The parent's of these children were informed of the conditions and from then on it was the parent's responsibility to make the changes, but children that suffered were suffering because they were poor and were not able to afford medical help.

So in a way the medical inspections were largely ineffective. When the Liberals were informed that the children still appeared at school in these horrible conditions, they were asked to fund the clinics so they could buy medicine, but the liberals effused. And so the medical inspections were only partly successful in dealing with the poor and underprivileged. The final step the Liberals made to improve the children of Britain was introducing yet another reform, the children's charter. This reform was set up so that children would stay off the streets and prevent them from breaking the law.

Lots of children were thrown out to the streets because the families were Just too poor to look after them. These children often grew up as thieves and had to steal to live on the streets. Juvenile courts were set up to prosecute the hillier who broke the law; this did help prevent crime because it acted as a deterrent to young offenders. Smoking was quite popular amongst young children who lived on the streets so it was made illegal to sell cigarettes and alcohol to children under 16.

The parent's also began to be prosecuted for neglecting their children; this managed to reduce the amount of children living on the streets by a considerable amount. Parent's could also be fined if they let their children go without education or food. As good as this act was for preventing crimes yet again there were flaws. Crime still continued amongst the young people so it was not completely successful. It was also very difficult to stop young people drinking alcohol and smoking.

So yet again while the children's charter did have a big impact in some ways, it was hard to reinforce them, so it was sometimes ineffective however the children's charter did help to deal with the problems affecting the poor and underprivileged. Poverty affected more than Just the young; the elderly were also affected. After retirement, the elderly had no money to live off, so the pension was introduced in 1908. The pension was a sum of money that over seventies could claim each week.

The pension was a way of getting the elderly out of the workhouse and to support themselves. This seemed like a good idea but it was far from perfect. For a start very few people ever received their pension because the life expectancy was below seventy. The money was so little that it only got you the necessities like food, so it only helped those who lived in poverty. The pensions were not Just handed out to anyone over seventy though, if you had ever earned over thirty one pounds in a year r been in prison then you were not entitled to the pension.

The pension was a good idea but the money did little to help anyone especially not the poor and underprivileged, but it was a significant step forward. The final area is looking at the workforce and how the working class was affected by the new liberal reforms. The next reform came in two parts, the unemployed and health, both under the national insurance act. The first part is aimed at the health care in Britain. Before 1911 there was no national health service like there is today, so this meant that many people in Britain went without health care no matter how bad there conditions were.

The system they did have before 1911 was simply pay a fee up front at the doctors, these fees could be quite expensive so most of the time the lower class could not afford it. As the general health in Britain was very poor especially amongst the working class, the liberals saw a need for more change. The national insurance act of 1911 introduced a cheap health service aimed at the working class. Every man that worked and earned less than one hundred and sixty pounds a year would receive impulsion health care for Just four pence a week.

The act also covered ill workers, if a worker ever fell ill then they would be entitled to a sickness benefit. Now even though in 1914 thirteen million workers were insured, which is an incredible amount yet again there were still problems with the system. For a start, men were had to pay a fee for this service; these men were already on seriously small wages so every little made a difference. Then the treatment which they had to pay for only insured the worker and not his family and also there was no treatment at all in hospitals.

So what they paid for was very overrated and not extremely useful, it only had small benefits. The second part to the insurance act of the national insurance of 1911 covered the unemployed in Britain, over ten per cent of the population were unemployed, so this was an obvious issue. The unemployed of Britain by the new reform received seven shillings a week for fifteen weeks a year. Now even though this seemed like quite a small amount but it made a big difference and by 1913 over two million of the unemployed in Britain were insured under the new reform.

While this reform had its ewe advantages there were several more disadvantages. The benefits that the unemployed received were only for that person and it was not taken into consideration if that man had a family and if so then the money was not enough, and then also this act only covered for Just fifteen weeks of the and so was not suited for anyone in long term unemployment. Then when the First World War came the act fell to pieces, the government reduced to the insurance they received.

So while this act did actually benefit those who lived alone it made no significant change to the people ho had families to support and the finally the act was a disaster when the war broke out, so this reform only partly helped the poor and underprivileged. The final reform which the liberals introduced came in 1909 and this was the labor exchanges. This act was to help the working class and the unemployed. The reform created lots of new Jobs and made them easier to get hold of, workers now had to register with their employer so that they could better suited Jobs quicker and easier.

This also helped the unemployed because employers could advertise vacancies to attract more attention. This act also reduced the unemployment because it was so much easier to get Jobs. The only real down side to the act was that the employers were simply employing the workers to the low paid Jobs so this did not solve poverty. Overall this reform by Winston Churchill was a quite successful reform with many positives and contributed towards helping the poor and underprivileged. Between 1906 and 1914 the poor and underprivileged suffered in poverty, the Liberals introduced a series of very important reforms that affected the British population.

The first reform in 1906 which was free school meals helped towards improving the education of children but sadly had a smaller effect on the poor. The next reform was medical inspections, now while this alerted the parent's of their children's poor conditions it did little to solve them so made Just a small contribution to help the poor and underprivileged. The finale reform aimed at children was the children's charter in 1908, this reform reduced a lot of crime amongst young people but it did nothing to help the poverty, so children still lived on the streets and committed rimes.

The next reform that affected the old was the pension act, now while this act did provide some income for those who were too old to work, it wasn't enough money to live off and very few people lived to the required age anyway. The first part of the national insurance act was the health care service, this reform did contribute to helping the poor with health insurance but it was too expensive for what you actually received. The second part of the national insurance act was aimed at the unemployed but this had a smaller contribution as this gave so little money to the unemployed and when the war arrived the act was almost completely abandoned.

The finale reform introduced by Winston Churchill was quite successful it was the Labor exchanges, this created many Jobs and also decreased unemployment and had no serious downside to it. The Liberal reforms between 1906 and 1914 did a great deal to help the poor and underprivileged and although some of the reforms had down sides they were all partly effective. By 1914 the poverty in Britain had dropped by quite a bit and so credit must be given to those Liberal reforms introduce by the Liberal Government.