

Policies introduced in the past 25 years related to education

[Profession](#), [Teacher](#)



Over the past 25 years, different policies have been put in place to influence the education system in different ways. Some sociologists would say that the main aim of these policies were to result in the marketization of the education system. Other sociologists would disagree; they believe that trying to create less inequality was the main intention when it comes to the educational reform. When the New Labour came to power, it seemed that policies they were in favour of were more aimed towards trying to create less inequality of different schools. One policy The New Labour introduced was free places in nurseries, this would ensure children from all backgrounds started educational development early and started to gain skills needed to start school. This would also give working class parents a chance to go out and work whilst their child is at nursery. They also introduced 'Educational Action Zones' these areas of deprivation were giving extra funding in order to lessen the inequality between these schools in worse areas to the schools in better areas. This is trying to give people of worse financial areas a better chance to gain access to good schools, and not just be limited to worse performing schools just because they live in a poorer area. They also introduced The EMA award, this was to try and get pupils to stay on in education past ages 16 (college, sixth form, apprenticeships etc.) because if the pupils parent earned below a certain amount then the child would be entitled to £30 a week to help them with any costs that staying on in education may have. Although this may be contradicted by the inequalities that have been put in place by the steep rises in fees for universities, this has meant that working class pupils are at a disadvantage in comparison with the middle class. Previous to this; the conservative government

introduced new right policies which are viewed as trying to create a market place out of the education system. They introduced several policies in order to force different schools in to competing with each other; this would then result in schools doing better. They aimed to create a parentocracy, where parents had much more choice when it came to schools for their children, they were able to choose which school they wanted their child to attend, rather than it being dependant on catchment areas like it was previously. This would result in schools upping their standards to gain pupils and ensure that parents would pick their school, funding was changed to be dependent on the amount of pupils a school had. By doing better than other schools, more pupils would want to attend and result in more funding for the school, benefitting them and then helping them to improve further. Although, in order to rank schools against each other, there would have to be a system in place, so league tables were introduced and schools had to sit SATs and GCSE exams, the results were ranked in the league tables and parents could look through different schools to see where they were placed and pick the best school for their child, much like a market place. OFSTED were also introduced to monitor and inspect schools, they would review the schools standards in several different categories giving a report to be viewed in order to judge the school as a whole and give parents a wider range of data on the schools, giving them more understanding and a better basis to choose which school they would like their child to attend. These policies meant that standards for schools rose as they competed against each other and parents had a greater understanding of schools and had more freedom when it came to choice. On the other hand, it did also create problems, because the better

schools got more funding and pupils, the worse schools weren't able to get the funding they needed to improve which meant the gap between schools achievement became wider as the better schools got better and the worse schools became worse off this created greater inequality. Schools also started to exclude students that would affect their results in the league tables, this also created inequality. These inequalities may have been the reason for the new labour's aim to wipe out the inequality because there was so much created. Overall, The Conservative party and New Labour both introduced new policies to the education system; the conservative was more aimed towards creating a market in the education system, whilst new labour strived to wipe out inequality in the system and tackle the issue of poverty. Although this being said, the new labour may have created more competition in the system by introducing faith and specialist schools.