



2015

MANIFESTO

We believe in:

Breaking down barriers: the mission of all schools, whether state or independent, is to educate children to achieve their full potential; any barriers, real or perceived, between the two sectors are counterproductive

Social mobility: independent schools are and will be key contributors to social mobility; unlocking the potential of all children and young people benefits our society as a whole

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“EDUCATION TODAY IS YOUR ECONOMY TOMORROW”

Andreas Schleicher, Deputy Director for Education and Skills, OECD

“BRITISH INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS ARE THE ENVY OF THE WORLD FOR THEIR FIRST RATE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS, THE EXCELLENT ALL ROUND EDUCATION THEY OFFER PUPILS AND FOR THEIR OUTSTANDING PASTORAL CARE. THE STRENGTH OF OUR SCHOOLS LIES IN THEIR VERY INDEPENDENCE. THEY ARE FREE TO CHOOSE THEIR OWN CURRICULA AND QUALIFICATIONS, TO APPOINT THE BEST TEACHERS AND TO STRUCTURE THE SCHOOL DAY TO BEST SUIT THEIR PUPILS. THIS MEANS THAT THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT TYPES OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOL, BUT ONE THING THEY HAVE IN COMMON IS A COMMITMENT TO WIDENING ACCESS TO OUR SCHOOLS”

Barnaby Lenon, Chairman,
Independent Schools Council

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ISC brings together eight member associations to represent nearly 1,300 independent schools

INDEPENDENCE:

leading to excellence and innovation

The strength of the schools in the ISC stems from our independence, from both central government and local authorities.

We propose that:

- Our schools are permitted and encouraged to continue to operate independently, with the freedom to educate according to each school's culture and ethos

“IN MY OPINION THE BEST INSTITUTIONS IN THE BRITISH ISLES TODAY ARE THE INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS”

Professor Niall Ferguson,
Reith Lectures 2012

We expect:

- British independent schools to continue to be some of the best in the world

Fact:

- Over half of A-level entries at ISC schools awarded A* or A grade
- One in fourteen A-level candidates at ISC schools achieve three or more A* grades
- 92% of ISC pupils progress to Higher Education

PARTNERSHIPS:

building relationships

Partnerships between the independent and maintained sectors are an established part of the educational landscape.

We propose that:

- Best practice and current activity is collated and shared to encourage greater participation

We expect:

- New partnerships to be initiated based on local need, not national diktat

Fact:

- 90% of ISC schools are working in partnership with local schools or their community
- 110 ISC schools, either individually or in partnership with federations or groups of schools, are sponsoring academies and free schools
- 403 ISC schools open access to pupils from maintained schools to attend certain lessons or educational events



"THE PARTNERSHIP IS AT THE HEART OF OUR SCHOOL. I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT IT. WE ARE ALWAYS THINKING ABOUT OUR PARTNER SCHOOLS AND HOW WE CAN COLLABORATE WITH THEM THROUGH EXCHANGING IDEAS AND SHARING GOOD TEACHING PRACTICE"

Marion Gibbs, Headmistress, James Allen's Girls' School
and co-founder of the Southwark Schools Learning Partnership

ASSESSMENT:

creating a system that works

ISC schools are free to choose their exams and devise their own curricula and accountability measures.

We propose that:

- There should be no further significant reforms to exams until the current changes have been in operation for a number of years and their efficacy has been thoroughly tested; schools need a period of stability and government must take a step back
- For any future developments, government harnesses the expertise of leaders in all school types at an early stage in the reform process
- Improving the quality of exam marking should remain a priority

We expect:

- A fair and robust exam system which commands public confidence and ensures equity and justice for pupils and their schools

SCHOOL TYPE:

breaking down barriers

The use of school type as a proxy for wealth or advantage is endemic within government and beyond, and serves only to entrench the independent-state dichotomy. There are children from low-income backgrounds in independent schools just as there are children from advantaged backgrounds in state schools.

We propose that:

- Government departments and quangos cease to use the indicator of 'school type' as a proxy for advantage and focus on the individual, not the institution

We expect:

- A decrease in the emphasis on 'school type' will improve relationships between schools and further break down barriers between the independent and state sectors



ACCESS:

increasing social mobility

ISC schools stand willing and able to assist government in addressing current challenges in education by maximising the education system, both independent and state, to bring out the best in every child. The public supports us: in a recent survey just 16% would oppose the use of government funds to enable children from lower income families to attend independent schools, both day and boarding.

We propose that:

- Financial support is extended to more pupils with exceptional needs or talents, whether they be academic, sporting or SEN-related

We expect:

- More pupils with exceptional needs and talents including those from low-income families to achieve their full potential

Fact:

- Over 41,000 children receive bursaries at ISC schools
- The average means tested bursary is worth £7,894 per pupil per year
- 5,391 pupils at ISC schools pay no fees at all and nearly 42% of bursary pupils had half their fees remitted

“INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS PLAY A HUGE IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE COUNTRY’S EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPE. THE SCHOOLS PROVIDE CENTRES FOR SPECIALIST EXPERTISE AND SKILLS AND ARE ALSO ABLE TO OFFER PLACES TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES, WHO MAY NOT BE IN A POSITION TO FUND AN ENTIRE SPECIALIST SCHOOL FOR THE CHILDREN IN ITS AREA”

Barry Huggett, headmaster of More House School and Chair of the ISC Special Educational Needs Committee

TEACHER TRAINING:

encouraging the best for all pupils

Pupils in ISC schools can expect to be taught by someone with a good degree in the subject they are teaching.

We propose that:

- The independent sector retains the freedom to employ staff who do not have Qualified Teacher Status

We propose that:

- Teaching and learning in ISC schools continues to be some of the best in the country, in particular, in those subjects which are not as frequently offered in state schools



“IT HAS LONG BEEN THE CASE THAT THE INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS SECTOR DELIVERS PROPORTIONATELY MORE STUDENTS WITH BETTER STEM RELATED A-LEVELS THAN THE STATE SECTOR. WITHOUT THESE WELL QUALIFIED APPLICANTS MANY UNIVERSITY STEM COURSES WOULD FACE SERIOUS RECRUITMENT DIFFICULTIES”

Professor Sir Michael Sterling, former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Birmingham and former Chairman of the Russell Group

INTERNATIONAL:

fostering a lifelong bond to our nation

Recent changes to the visa system, intended to bring down net migration, have made it harder for overseas pupils to enter the UK and have increased the administrative burden on our schools.

We propose that:

- ISC schools are recognised as high-quality providers and that the regulations around overseas pupils seeking an education at an ISC school in the UK be relaxed

We expect:

- These pupils will gain a better understanding of Britain leading to stronger trade and cultural links in the future

Fact:

- ISC schools in Britain contribute £9.5 billion to the economy, more than the City of Liverpool or the BBC
- ISC schools generate £3.6 billion in tax
- ISC schools save the taxpayer £3.0 billion, equivalent to building 460 new free schools
- Every 2.1 pupils at an ISC school support one person in employment in Britain

“OUR INDEPENDENT SCHOOL SECTOR HAS BEEN ATTRACTING STUDENTS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD FOR DECADES”

International Education:
Global Growth and Prosperity -
HM Government

“THERE ARE HUGE ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES FOR BRITAIN. IN ADDITION TO FEES, STUDENTS SPEND IN LOCAL SHOPS AND RESTAURANTS. STUDENTS WANT TO COME TO US AS A STEPPING STONE INTO THE TOP SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES IN THE WORLD. AND AS IMPORTANT, THEY BUILD UP INVALUABLE AFFECTION FOR OUR COUNTRY AND CULTURE WHICH WHEN THEY RETURN HOME WILL GIVE US INFLUENCE MONEY CAN'T BUY”

Caroline Nixon, Principal,
Taunton School International

APPENDIX:

about ISC schools

There are nearly 1,300 independent schools represented by the Independent Schools Council, educating over 500,000 pupils or 5% of the total school population of the UK and a much higher proportion of those taking A-levels.

ISC schools are amongst the highest-achieving schools in the country. For example, in 2013 pupils in independent schools in England achieved 32% of all A* grades at A-level including, 41% of all A* grades in Further Maths and 54% of A* grades in Spanish. This would be less impressive if our schools were very selective academically, but most are not.

ISC schools are committed to improving social mobility. Over a third of pupils receive some form of fee reduction and in 2013-14 over £320 million was awarded to pupils as means-tested bursaries.

ISC schools educate around 35,000 pupils from overseas, many of whom go on to top universities in the UK.

Nine out of ten ISC schools are involved in partnerships with maintained schools, some supporting academies or free schools. Many more are deeply engaged in long-standing partnerships involving the development of staff, teaching of pupils or providing access to extra-curricular activities. All our schools are committed to breaking down barriers between the state and independent sectors.

What makes our schools special

Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offering genuine diversity of provision, approach and philosophy - Free to focus on the child, providing an individually tailored, pupil centred education
Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing the potential of every child, including those with extraordinary talents or needs - Going beyond the academic to educate the whole student
Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educating generations of young people who have brought benefit to society and the economy - Saving the taxpayer billions by educating children outside the state sector
Social mobility and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helping children from less well-off families by providing financial support - Providing high-quality education for aspirational parents, an increasing number of whom were themselves not independently educated
International reach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognised as having a long history of excellence and innovation, and a global reputation for quality and rigour - Providing overseas students with an introduction to British culture and improving the international community's view of the UK



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ISC brings together eight member associations to represent nearly 1,300 independent schools



HMC

T: 01858 469 059
www.hmc.org.uk
@HMC_Org



The Society of Heads

T: 01858 433 760
www.thesocietyofheads.org.uk
@societyofheads



Independent Schools' Bursars Association

T: 01256 330369
www.theisba.org.uk
@the_isba



Independent Schools Association

T: 01799 523 619
www.isaschools.org.uk
@isaschools



Girls' Schools Association

T: 0116 254 1619
www.gsa.uk.com
@GSAUK



COBIS

T: 020 8240 4142
www.cobis.org.uk
@CobisDirector



IAPS

T: 01926 887 833
www.iaps.uk
@IAPS_online



Association of Governing Bodies of Independent Schools

T: 01438 840730
www.agbis.org.uk

Affiliated Organisations ISC has links with the following associations:



Boarding Schools' Association

T: 020 7798 1580
www.boarding.org.uk
@BSAboarding



Scottish Council of Independent Schools

T: 0131 556 2316
www.scis.org.uk
@SCISschools



Welsh Independent Schools Council

T: 0779 189 1593
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