

# Greens call for overhaul of education system after results fiasco



19 August 2020

Ahead of GCSE results day, the Green Party has warned the recent fiasco over using an algorithm to determine results illustrates the failings of placing too much emphasis on national examinations and league tables over the learning needs of individual children.

The Greens have now called for an overhaul of the education system in order to tackle the disadvantage and inequality within it and provide further opportunities to learn throughout life.

Green Party education spokesperson Vix Lowthion, who is also a secondary school teacher on the Isle of Wight, said:

“The education system needs a complete overhaul to bring it into the 21st century.

“The results fiasco is a clear example of how the current system is not fit for purpose. The mere idea of adjusting results by algorithm in order to fit in with league tables shows just how warped the system has become and how little it prioritises the most important aspect, the students.

“As teachers we are nurturing the leaders of tomorrow and so we must stop limiting their potential through high stakes testing which creates unnecessary pressure and instead promote a system of continuous assessment to enhance the learning of each individual child.”

The Green Party has issued a five point plan to overhaul the education system and encourage learning for life:

- Trust teachers and take into account regular centre assessed grades at fixed points throughout the course for GCSE and A level
- Reinstate opportunities for coursework and modular assessment, which was removed by Michael Gove’s reforms

- Scrap league tables of exam results, and instead focus on reporting to parents on a mix of academic, practical and cultural achievements and opportunities for students in our schools
- Evaluate the purpose of education, which is not merely to pass exams, but to equip young people with practical and academic skills for the 21st century. Students do not need a curriculum for the office workers of the past, but to become problem solvers of the future
- Support educational opportunities outside of schools including home learning, adult learning and distance learning

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## [Green Party condemns government's lack of progress on LGBTIQ+ rights](#)



18 August 2020

- Two years since government published LGBT Action Plan yet still no action
- Greens condemn lack of progress and demand Liz Truss recommits to plan
- Natalie Bennett: "This government made a promise to the LGBTIQ+ community to make lives better, but the copious delays have meant more suffering and uncertainty."

The Green Party has condemned the government's lack of progress on its own

LGBT Action Plan more than two years after it was published.

Theresa May published the plan while Prime Minister in July 2018 [1], yet the government has so far failed to publish its annual review of progress.

At the time the plan was published, then Minister for Women and Equalities Penny Mordaunt promised that she was “determined to help make the UK a country that works for LGBT people because no matter what your gender identity or sexual orientation is, you should be able to reach your full potential.”

While the plan was welcomed as a positive step forward when it was announced, two years later the lack of progress has become notable.

The Green Party has now urged the current Equalities Minister Liz Truss to recommit to the LGBT Action Plan and deliver on the promises the government has made.

Green peer Natalie Bennett said: “The lack of progress on the LGBT Action Plan is incredibly disappointing.

“This government made a promise to the LGBTIQ+ community to make lives better, but the copious delays have meant more suffering and uncertainty. The absence of leadership has allowed transphobia and bigotry to prosper.”

Two years since the publication of the plan, the government has failed to:

- Ban conversion therapy – despite repeated promises [2]
- Deliver on the promise to reform the Gender Recognition Act – and make legal recognition of one’s gender a kinder process [3]
- Launch an enquiry on the needs of non-binary people [4]
- Collect improved data on LGBTIQ+ lives – including the prevalence of LGBTIQ+ suicides [5]
- Fully roll out PrEP with a sufficient budget for commissioning [6]
- Tackle unreasonably long waiting times at Gender Identity Clinics [7]
- Make the asylum process for LGBTIQ+ refugees fairer [8]

LGBTIQ+ Greens deputy chair Lee-Anne Lawrance said: “The absence of the annual report is disturbing. Is the government’s commitment to equality waning?

“I’d urge Liz Truss to not delay any more. Ban conversion therapy. Reform the Gender Recognition Act. Recommit to the LGBT Action Plan.”

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## Notes

### 1

Plan available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lgbt-action-plan-2018-improving-th>

[e-lives-of-lesbian-gay-bisexual-and-transgender-people](#)

2

Liz Truss promised plans to be published “shortly” in June

<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2020/06/05/uk-gay-conversion-therapy-lgbt-ban-liz-truss/>

3

Boris has once again confirmed a delay in publishing any recommendations

<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2020/07/20/boris-johnson-gender-recognition-act-announcement-delayed-liz-truss-reform/>

4

The government has not published the promised inquiry since the LGBT Action plan

5

“One year on from its “updated Suicide Prevention Strategy”, the government is yet to start its “rapid evidence review” into LGBT suicide.”

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-53223765>

6

The government announced a £5 million budget cut to the PrEP commissioning budget – before the delayed rollout

7

GIC waiting lists are at crisis point

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2019/feb/26/trans-patients-in-england-face-soul-destroying-wait-for-treatment>

8

LGBTIQA+ refugees are regularly having their claims rejected by the UK government

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/jul/09/lgbt-asylum-seekers-routinely-see-claims-rejected-in-europe-and-uk>

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## Greens urge government to reinstate teachers' A Level grades



13 August 2020

The Green Party has urged the government to reinstate teachers' grades after it was revealed that almost 40% had been downgraded by the exam regulator's algorithm.

Green Party education spokesperson Vix Lowthion, who is also an A Level teacher on the Isle of Wight, said:

"To see almost 40% of marks in England being downgraded in this way is extremely worrying.

"This will have a massively detrimental impact on students, particularly those who have gone to school in disadvantaged areas.

"The Class of 2020 have already lost opportunities in terms of jobs, travel and daily support from staff.

"To limit their life chances in this way, through overruling the professional judgement of teaching staff, is unforgivable.

"Students, parents and schools have been left confused by the ever changing goalposts and how to make an appeal.

"We urge this government to not delay and to reinstate the Centre Assessed Grades by teachers (CAG) and provide a clear and transparent Appeals process which students can begin today."

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## [A Level students need clear way to appeal results to avoid widening inequality](#)



11 August 2020

All A Level students must have a clear and credible way to appeal their results on Thursday to ensure pupils from disadvantaged communities are not doubly penalised by the arbitrary downgrading of their scores, the Green Party has warned.

Grades submitted by teachers for students across the country are expected to have been downgraded by exam regulator Ofqual after exams were cancelled this summer due to coronavirus, fuelling fears youngsters from disadvantaged communities will be most unfairly affected.

Ahead of the results being published on Thursday [12 August], the Greens have said the grades teachers gave their pupils should have been granted and that all students must have a simple and credible way to appeal their results.

Green Party education spokesperson Vix Lowthion said:

“Downgrading students for no fault of their own is the worst way Ofqual could have gone about this.

“It has been an extremely difficult summer for schools, pupils and examiners, but basing grades on schools’ past attainments will punish disadvantaged students and only widen inequalities in our society.

“This has not been a normal year and there is no point in pretending it has been. Instead, teachers should have been listened to and trusted. Teachers are the ones who know their pupils best and are most qualified to say how they would have achieved.

“Now it looks like modelling has taken place, the government must do everything it can to ensure a clear and credible appeals process is in place that allows any student to appeal their grades.

“The current system looks arbitrary and unclear. This is not the time to be gambling with peoples’ futures when so much is at stake, both for our young people and the country at large.”

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## [Greens reveal coronavirus testing postcode lottery](#)



3 August 2020

- Data shows Cardiff test results take on average up to 34 hours longer than Milton Keynes
- Freedom of Information request shows worrying disparity across country, and gaps in the Department for Health's information
- Jenny Jones: “Our testing system should not be a complete postcode lottery”

People taking coronavirus tests face a worrying postcode lottery in the time it takes to get results, with some parts of the country waiting on average up to 34 hours longer than others, the Green Party can reveal.

Data obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request has revealed that the longest delay was in Cardiff where people had to wait an average of 45 hours. [1]

The second longest delay was in Wembley, London, where people waited an average of 33 hours, and Lincoln had the third longest wait with 24 hours.

Meanwhile, those with the shortest wait were Milton Keynes, Glasgow and Llandudno with average times of 11, 12 and 13 hours respectively.

The data shows four of the testing sites, including the Nightingale Excel Walk In, are taking on average longer than the target set by Boris Johnson of 24 hours. [2]

Green Party peer Jenny Jones said:

“Our testing system should not be a complete postcode lottery with over a full day’s difference in waiting time for results between some regional testing centers.

“We need Johnson to meet his commitment for all tests to be returned well under 24 hours, and we must level up all testing sites to the highest possible standards of efficiency.”

The FOI request also revealed that the Department of Health had no records on how many results of tests are unsuccessfully returned to those who took the tests.

Wales Green Party leader Anthony Slaughter said:

“At a time when lockdown measures have been significantly relaxed across Wales, the news that the average time taken to receive Covid- 19 test results in Cardiff is forty five hours is a deeply worrying failure on the part of Public Health Wales.

“This unacceptable delay is endangering public health and reducing the efficiency of any attempts at a meaningful Test, Track and Isolate strategy.”

Caroline Russell, Green Party London Assembly member, said:

“As we are being encouraged back to city centres and to reopen more parts of the economy, it’s worrying to hear there are such disparities in the time taken to return test results.

“Every hour counts as we try to stay on top of the virus and contact the people who have been in touch with confirmed cases so they can isolate to keep others safe.

“It’s not fair to affected communities if the time taken to get test results



is letting down the track and trace system.”

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## Notes

### 1

The data provided was for the period 6 July 2020 to 12 July 2020 inclusive. It refers to the median hours from the time of test to the time of result communicated.

#### By RTS Site

ACF Code	Site Name	Median Hours
DFW	RTS – Cardiff City Football Club	45.13
WEM	RTS – Wembley	33.09
LNC	RTS – Lincoln	24.63
NGE	RTS – Nightingale Excel Walk-in	24.09
LEE	RTS – Leeds	23.31
LEI	RTS – Leicester	22.66
MDE	RTS – Birmingham Smethwick	22.24
STK	RTS – Stoke	22.13
NTM	RTS – Nottingham	22.09
HUL	RTS – Hull	22.03
DEE	RTS – Deeside	21.93
BRM	RTS – Birmingham Edgbaston	21.57
YOR	RTS – York	21.52
STA	RTS – Stafford	21.50
BRA	RTS – Bradford	21.36
TEL	RTS – Telford	21.26
IOW	RTS – Isle of Wight	21.08
DNE	RTS – Doncaster Airport, Sheffield	20.97
SHF	RTS – Sheffield	20.94
NOT	RTS – Nottingham Motorpoint	20.91
WRE	RTS – Worcester	20.76
COV	RTS – Coventry	20.75
PRE	RTS – Preston College	20.43
BLA	RTS – Blackburn	19.64
RMA	RTS – Ramsgate	19.32
PYE	RTS – Plymouth	19.27
SAL	RTS – Salisbury	19.12
CPR	RTS – Bournemouth	19.09
DCR	RTS – Derry City Rugby Club, Londonderry	18.98
GLO	RTS – Gloucester	18.97
BLE	RTS – Belfast Odyssey Arena	18.95
ENN	RTS – Enniskillen	18.84

WOB	RTS – Abercynon	18.83
EXE	RTS – Exeter	18.81
TAU	RTS – Taunton	18.66
NEW	RTS – Newbury	18.63
TIP	RTS – Portsmouth	18.59
POR	RTS – Portadown	18.56
EBV	RTS – Ebbw Vale	18.34
BRE	RTS – Bristol Airport	18.24
SWI	RTS – Swindon	17.94
HYE	RTS – Haydock Race Course	17.90
GWE	RTS – Gatwick Airport	17.22
ABE	RTS – Aberdeen Airport	17.20
MCM	RTS – Manchester Airport	17.05
IVE	RTS – Inverness	16.92
HEA	RTS – Heathrow	16.82
SLO	RTS – Slough	16.74
LIV	RTS – Liverpool Airport	16.41
LVE	RTS – Edmonton Lee Valley	16.33
MES	RTS – Manchester Etihad Stadium	16.27
PRS	RTS – Prestwick	16.22
AFE	RTS – Ashford	16.12
GUD	RTS – Guildford	16.10
PBO	RTS – Peterborough	15.99
PFK	RTS – Penrith	15.98
PER	RTS – Perth	15.88
CAM	RTS – Cambridge	15.87
EBB	RTS – Ebbsfleet	15.79
NWE	RTS – Newcastle Great Park & Ride	15.74
CHE	RTS – Chessington	15.70
NRW	RTS – Norwich	15.48
SAE	RTS – Stansted Airport	15.33
OXF	RTS – Oxford Parkway	15.26
TWE	RTS – Twickenham Stadium	15.14
BGE	RTS – Brighton	15.06
GRE	RTS – Greenwich	14.66
IWE	RTS – Ipswich	14.54
EDE	RTS – Edinburgh Airport	14.22
TPR	RTS – Oxford	14.09
WEL	RTS – Welwyn Garden City	14.07
DWR	RTS – Llandudno Coach Park	13.58
GLM	RTS – Glasgow Airport	12.59
MKE	RTS – Milton Keynes	11.31

[https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/boris-johnson-covid-tests-24-hours-by-end-of-june\\_uk\\_5ed76617c5b6a209e0b9dc16](https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/boris-johnson-covid-tests-24-hours-by-end-of-june_uk_5ed76617c5b6a209e0b9dc16)

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