

# Greens will guarantee every child a Good Childhood



Childhoods are being eroded by the policies and actions of recent governments, and child poverty is a growing crisis. The Resolution Foundation has assessed that Conservative plans will mean a rise in children growing up without basic material security to a 60-year high of 34 per cent, while the new investment planned by Labour will only prevent the problem getting worse.[2]

Only the Green Party will eliminate child poverty by investing nine times more into transforming the callous and chaotic welfare system and introducing a Universal Basic Income.

Schools are also facing cuts, and children, teachers and parents are pressured from the moment a child starts school to focus on tests rather than time and space for children to develop.

A Green education system would remove testing and Ofsted, aim for smaller class sizes, broaden education to include more sport, culture, environment and nature lessons, and shift formal lessons in school to start at six years old.

As children get older, community spaces and youth work that can help them flourish and develop have been dramatically cut back, contributing to a crisis of youth violence and mental health. Sian Berry's work in London has exposed a cut of nearly half in council youth service budgets since 2011, and over 100 youth centres have closed in the capital city alone.[3]

Greens would restore £10 billion of funding to councils to provide a full youth service and community support.

Co-leader, Sian Berry says:

"Children who are supported to play, learn and grow as active citizens are the foundation and responsibility of a good society and only the Green manifesto in this election comes close to recognising that, backing the principles of a Good Childhood up with a comprehensive policy programme.

"Young people growing up need a community around them that values their growth and wellbeing, and our plans for system change within both welfare and education will make a profound difference to how children are treated and valued in Britain. They will do what no other party comes close to with their plans: eliminate the blight of child poverty.

"Greens also believe in the principle of giving young people a real voice in policy-making. With both votes at 16 and the ability to stand for Parliament at the same age, Greens will put the spirit of the climate strikes at the heart of our democracy. Young people are leading the way and we must listen

to them and provide for their development as citizens with the Good Childhood they need.”

Green Party Education Spokesperson and candidate for the Isle of Wight constituency, Vix Lowthion says:

“A good childhood means fundamentally changing how we see education. Education should be about nurturing potential and inspiring a love of learning. Yet all too often it can feel like a production line, manufacturing children-shaped pieces to fit gaps in the workplace.

The freedom to let children play, flourish and grow has been replaced with endless testing and measuring. It demoralises teachers and adds yet more pressure on young people. Children growing up today cannot wait another five years for things to change.”

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