

[This announcement will do nothing to address the funding crisis facing schools across the country – Angela Rayner](#)

Angela

Rayner MP, Labour's Shadow Education Secretary, commenting on the Government's funding announcement for schools in England, said:

"None of today's announcement is new money. Seven years of Tory neglect has left our children in crumbling and overcrowded schools.

"The National Audit Office have already told us that existing school buildings across the country are inadequate, while money has been ploughed into inefficient free schools and the Prime Minister's grammar schools vanity project.

"This announcement will do nothing to address the funding crisis facing schools across the country."

[Jeremy Corbyn comment on the PM's visit to Saudi Arabia](#)

Jeremy

Corbyn MP, Leader of the Labour Party, commenting on the Prime Minister's visit to Saudi Arabia, said:

"The Prime Minister should put human rights and international law at the centre of her talks with Saudi Arabia's government this week.

"Numerous human rights organisations, including the UNHRC and Amnesty International, have documented the dictatorial Saudi monarchy's shocking human rights record.

"The Saudi-led coalition bombing in Yemen, backed by the British government, has left thousands dead, 21 million people in need of humanitarian assistance and three

million refugees uprooted from their homes.

“Yemen urgently needs a ceasefire, a political settlement, and food aid, not more bombing. British-made weapons are being used in a war which has caused a humanitarian catastrophe.

“Britain must halt arms sales to Saudi Arabia immediately, throw its weight behind a ceasefire resolution at the United Nations and back a full and genuinely independent investigation of the evidence of war crimes in Yemen.

“As it stands, the British-Saudi relationship is damaging to the people of Saudi Arabia, Britain and the wider Middle East, and helping to export insecurity to the rest of the world.

“Unless the Prime Minister challenges the Saudi regime over its abuses this week, it will be clear she is ready to sacrifice human rights and security on the altar of the arms trade.”

Press release: £2.4 billion funding boost for England's schools

Thousands of schools across England are to benefit from a £2.4 billion cash injection, Education Secretary Justine Greening announced today (3 April 2017).

It comes as new government figures show that almost 735,000 additional school places have been created since 2010 – with 92% of new primary places and 89% of new secondary places created in schools rated as ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’ by Ofsted in 2015 to 2016.

Local councils say they need to create over 230,000 primary and secondary school places nationally between 2017 and 2020. The funding announced today will provide a further boost to the government’s drive to help create over 600,000 extra places by 2021, which will generate additional capacity to meet local demand.

Schools, local authorities and academy trusts will also receive a share of £1.4 billion to invest in upgrading or improving their school buildings. As part of this, academies and sixth-form colleges throughout the country, will receive a total of £466 million to pay for almost 1,500 vital school building work projects.

As part of its [Plan for Britain](#), the government wants every child to have access to a 'good' school place, giving them the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the future.

Alongside this multi-billion pound investment, the government is considering wider proposals to ensure school standards continue to rise by creating more 'good' places in every part of the country.

These proposals include lifting the ban on new grammar schools – on the strict condition they improve the education of other pupils in the system – as well as harnessing the expertise and resources of our universities, and our independent and faith schools.

Education Secretary Justine Greening said:

Our Plan for Britain is to build a fairer society, with a good school place available for every child.

This £2.4 billion investment, together with our proposals to create more good school places, will help ensure every young person has the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

The £2.4 billion allocated today is part of more than £24 billion the government has committed to investing in the school estate between 2015 to 2021.

1. We have announced £2.4 billion of capital funding allocations to create new school places across the country, and to maintain and improve the condition of school buildings.

This funding comprises [£980 million of funding allocations for local authorities in 2019 to 2020](#), to create over 60,000 school places needed. This is part of a wider investment of £7 billion in the course of this Parliament which, alongside our investment in the free schools programme, we expect to create an additional 600,000 places by 2021.

The funding also comprises [£1.4 billion of funding allocations for schools, local authorities and academy trusts](#) to invest in improving the condition of the school estate. This includes [£466 million through the Condition Improvement Fund](#) to fund 1,435 projects across 1,184 academies and sixth-form colleges.

2. The government's ['schools that work for everyone' consultation](#) closed in December last year (2016). The responses are currently being considered, and the government will respond shortly.
3. The government has also published today:

[Greens call on EU to create new agency to avert future Dieselgate scandals](#)



Keith Taylor MEP: “Dieselgate is not a problem of too much Europe, but too little”

Keith Taylor, Green MEP for the South East, is joining fellow MEPs in calling for the creation of a new [independent surveillance agency](#) ahead of a vote on the findings and recommendations of the committee inquiry into the Dieselgate scandal.

The European Parliament’s Environment Committee, of which Mr Taylor is a member, has already voted to back the establishment of a new EU-wide agency to guarantee independent enforcement of EU emissions legislation.

Keith, who is also a member of the European Parliament’s Transport Committee and a vocal campaigner on air quality issues, said ahead of the vote on Tuesday (4 April):

“The dieselgate inquiry shows unequivocally that EU emission limits, far from simply being ignored by some car manufacturers, were the subject of deliberate fraud with criminal intent, through the use of so-called ‘defeat devices’ which trick the test procedure into thinking that the car produces much lower nitrogen oxide emissions than it does on the roads. Nitrogen oxides react in the atmosphere to form nitrogen dioxide, which is toxic to human health.”

“The inquiry is clear that member states and the EU Commission both failed to act on emissions fraud and are not sufficiently impartial to ensure a similar scandal does not happen again. It is clearly not enough to simply ask our national governments and the Commission to do better next time.”

“The establishment of an EU-wide independent and neutral surveillance body, that has the power to test vehicle emissions in the laboratory as well as in real driving conditions, is absolutely essential for the health and wellbeing of the people of Europe, who have twice been the victims of Dieselgate; from being exposed to toxic air pollution and having their rights as consumers disregarded.”

“Dieselgate is not a problem of too much Europe, but too little. The UK government’s promise of a bonfire of regulations and the fact that Tory MEPs tried to water down this report gives British citizens an alarming insight into what kind of (lack of) protections we can look forward to outside of the EU.”

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[Press release: Company owner jailed for 15 months](#)

A waste criminal whose actions resulted in the closure of the M60, polluted a river and blighted communities has been disqualified from being a company director for 6 years and sentenced to 15 months in prison.

Barry Kilroe, Shareholder and Director of J25 Recycling Ltd, Recovered Fuels Shipping Ltd and Asset and Land Group Ltd was sentenced at Manchester Court (on Friday 31st March).

Transport Manager and Company Director, Jane Williams was fined a total of £500 and Richard James Davies, Financial Director, was given a conditional discharge for 12 months.

Mr Kilroe pleaded guilty to ten charges relating to the unlawful operation of three waste sites, in Stockport, Salford and Warrington Docks.

Ms Williams pleaded guilty to 2 charges; 1 relating to the Salford site for storing waste in excess of its 10,000 tonne capacity, the second charge was for operating the Warrington site without an Environment Agency permit.

Mr Davies pleaded guilty to a charge relating to the Stockport site where he failed to provide and implement an adequate environmental management system.

Environment Agency investigation

The Environment Agency brought the case against Mr Kilroe and the other directors after a lengthy investigation. The investigation identified the unlawful operation and mismanagement of the 3 sites. Excessive amounts of waste were imported on to the sites, which breached their environmental permits, and the defendants failed to comply with Enforcement and Suspension Notices.

A major fire broke out in August 2013 at the J25 Recycling Ltd site in Bredbury, Stockport that lasted for 41 days. The manner in which the site was managed increased the impacts the fire caused to the environment and local community. The fire resulted in the closure of the M60 Motorway and 3 weeks of disruption to traffic as well as significant disruption to local residents and businesses. A nearby river was polluted by the fire-fighting water run-off.

A fire also broke out in March 2014 at the Recovered Fuels Shipping Ltd site in Salford. This led to Network Rail closing the railway line in Salford.

Local roads and main routes to Manchester City Centre were also closed. The manner in which the site was operated increased the impacts of the fire, which lasted for 19 days. It caused severe disruption to local residents and businesses, which were affected by smoke and ash. Mr. Kilroe failed to remove the waste following the fire, leaving the landowner to remove more than 14,000 tonnes.

Further waste was also transferred to Asset and Land Group Ltd at Warrington Docks, adjacent to the Manchester Ship Canal. The Environment Agency's modelling also advised that a fire at the site would have affected the Ship Canal, West Coast Railway, and also flights in and out of Manchester and Liverpool airports. There would have been a significant effect on UK PLC because industry from Manchester to Liverpool would have shut. There is still a significant financial impact to the landowner who now has to pay to clear the site which has an estimate of 75,000 tonnes of waste to clear with a cost in excess of £10 million to send to landfill.

Case results in 'significant financial impacts'

Lee Rawlinson, the Environment Agency's Area Director for Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire, said:

This is one of the biggest cases the Environment Agency has prosecuted, we have been committed to do so because of the severity of the offence and cost and impact on the environment, communities and business. It has resulted in significant financial impacts to legitimate businesses.

The Environment Agency would like to thank partners including Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) and United Utilities as the impact would have been even greater had it not been for their tireless effort and cooperation to get the fires under control.

We would also like to thank Excalon, Salford who assisted GMFRS at Recovered Fuels Shipping Ltd. The Environment Agency has also been offering advice and support to the landowner at Warrington Docks.

Following this case GMFRS has invested in an Aerial Imagery Reconnaissance (AIR) unit. Now working in partnership with the Environment Agency Enforcement Team they use the remote controlled AIR unit to take pictures and videos of waste sites and to detect elevated heat sources within waste piles.

During Barry Kilroe's sentencing Judge Driver said Mr Kilroe whilst on bail acted for financial gain and failed to comply with the Environment Agency's warnings. Summing up, Judge Driver thanked the Environment Agency for all its help with a complex case.

Anyone who believes any illegal waste activities are taking place is urged to report the matter to our incident hotline on 0800 807060 or CrimeStoppers on

0800 555111 so that we can investigate.

Illegal waste activities pose a significant threat of harm to the environment and local communities, so it is important that everyone plays their part in stamping out waste crime.