

# Give schools tough power to throw out rowdy pupils



Order: David Cameron says schools should be oases of calm

## Cameron: We'll work on the EU from inside

PAUL WAUGH

THE Tory Party will try change Europe "from within", David Cameron will declare tomorrow as moves to head off the th of Ukip.

In a speech in Brussels Mr Cameron will reject calls from his own hard Eurosceptic MP to pull Britain out of the EU. He has refused to talk about the EU since becoming leader to try to heal the party's rift over the issue.

But Mr Cameron will s Brussels appears obsess with internal issues such its constitution, rather than looking outward at climate change and globalisation. "We want work with the peoples a parties of Europe who share our vision, a new union based not on uniformity and compulsion, but on diversity and voluntary operation of independent nation states," he will sa

The Tory leader wants build on his poll lead ov Labour with a fresh gre initiative next week. He persuaded Sky boss Jam Murdoch and Tesco chie Sir Terry Leahy to atten "green business" summi

Mr Cameron upset ma in the business over the past year with his attac on WH Smith and BHS. shadow chancellor Geor Osborne suggested today was time to start healin relations with big busin

HEADTEACHERS should be given tough new powers to expel disruptive pupils from their schools, David Cameron urged today.

The Tory leader said that boosting the authority of heads would be a key weapon in the fight against teenage gangs and in tackling a growing culture of "disrespect for knowledge".

Speaking in west London, Mr Cameron unveiled new figures showing that the poorest children had fallen behind most under Labour. He said that deprived pupils often suffered most from rowdy classrooms and declared that a Conser-

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Political Editor

vative government would introduce a string of measures to improve discipline.

The Standard has learned that one radical Tory plan to boost discipline is the scrapping of parents' right of appeal against permanent exclusions.

At present, 20 per cent of exclusions are overturned on appeal to local authorities, a statistic that the Tories believe undermines the credibility of headteachers. Another plan is to recast current

rules for appeals boards, forcing them to weigh up not just the needs of an excluded child but also their impact on other pupils.

When Labour came to power, they issued guidelines to require heads to cut the number of children expelled. As a result, suspensions have soared.

The number of children expelled from London schools has fallen by more than 570, a 30 per cent drop, since 1997.

Other measures outlined by Mr Cameron and shadow education secretary David Willetts include an overhaul of the system of pupil referral units, specialist centres which have to provide education for expelled children. Charities and private firms should be encouraged to take over such centres, they said.

More setting and streaming at primary and secondary level would also tackle the capital's exam results and worsening social mobility.

Speaking at an education charity in Hammersmith, Mr Cameron published research showing a widening gap between children on free school meals and others on average incomes. He also said that the number of languages spoken in London

schools was a problem. "So many languages are spoken that a teacher's job can become impossible," he said.

Mr Cameron said schools should be "one of the few oases of calm and order for a child from a dysfunctional family or a deprived and crime-ridden community." He said: "Too often, however, the dysfunction and the crime are brought into school, not left at the gates.

"The result is a vast army of wasted talent — and this army does not sit quietly by. It makes its presence felt — as every victim of crime or anti-social behaviour knows. If we are to save London, and other British cities, from a new generation of alienated, abused and abusive young people, we have to act."

The Tory leader said that nothing undermined teacher morale, and damaged the ethos and culture of a school, more than the inability to impose order.

He said: "Behind all school rules is the ultimate sanction: the power to expel. We need to restore this power to head teachers, and cut the number of expulsions which are overturned on appeal."

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## How Tories will tackle education crisis and the culture of disrespect

### COMMENTARY

DAVID CAMERON  
Leader of the Conservative Party

AS the Evening Standard showed last week, as many as 40 per cent of secondary schools in the capital are failing to ensure teenagers achieve the expected standards in English, maths and science.

And as research published by the Conservative Party today shows, for the most deprived children in London, the problem is getting worse. At every key stage, results show a widening gap between the poorest kids and the average. The end result is declining social mobility. Despite decades of growing national wealth, on this key measure of social progress we have actually gone backwards.

Social breakdown starts with family breakdown. But schools have a vital part to play. Too often, however, the dysfunction and the crime are brought into school, not left at the gates. The result is a vast army of wasted talent — and it does not sit quietly by. But I do not believe that Labour have the clarity of analysis, the courage, or even the competence, to do what's needed.

For years politicians have been arguing over educational structures. Of course these things matter. But structural reform takes time. There are things we could and should be doing right now to give every child a proper chance to climb the ladder of opportunity. First, we must insist on higher standards of academic rigour: The teaching of reading and writing, in particular, is often still very poor. Synthetic phonics should be the norm in all primary schools, and teaching methods should be inspected by Ofsted. We need a sharper focus on core subjects in secondary education, and better skills training. And we should encourage schools to use more setting and streaming.

Second, we must tackle the crisis in the recruitment of head teachers. Future Leaders, a dynamic social enterprise which grew out of the pioneering Teach First programme, is doing fantastic work identifying and training the heads of the future. It's a great example of social responsibility in action.

Third, we need to enforce discipline. Nothing undermines teacher morale, and damages the ethos and culture of a school more than the inability to impose order. Behind all school rules is the ultimate sanction: the power to expel. We need to restore this power to head teachers, and cut the number (currently over 20 per cent) of expulsions which are overturned on appeal. Many disruptive pupils have

complicated special needs. Yet Government is closing down special schools. We need an urgent change in policy to keep special schools open, and I am proud of Conservative councils which are leading this campaign.

Currently excluded children are sent, if anywhere, to state-run Pupil Referral Units. These are and far between and inadequate the education they provide. But there are many social enterprises with the capacity and the expertise to give these kids a fresh start. I visited an inspirational organisation, the Lighthouse Project, in Bradford last week. Spear in west London, which I visited today, also has a great record at turning young lives around.

We should open up the provision of remedial education and supervisory work to the private and voluntary sectors, putting budgets in the hands of head teachers.

But there's something deeper most fix. We need a change in our society's attitude to education. Britain has an anti-learning culture — a disrespect for knowledge which permeates society. In other societies, learn and teaching have the highest status. That's not something you could say about Britain today, it's something we must change. We are to reverse the tragic decline in social mobility in our country.

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