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Centre for Social Justice Responds to the Department for Education's Schools White Paper 2010

The [Centre for Social Justice](http://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk) is delighted to see that the White Paper released today by the Coalition Government entitled "*The Importance of Teaching*," has been heavily influenced by our work on education. In particular, the White Paper has drawn on the findings of the "Educational Failure" section in *Breakthrough Britain: Ending the Costs of Social Breakdown* report (*published in 07/07*).

This report recommended (amongst other things) that: (i) bureaucracy should be reduced for heads, (ii) groups of parents and alternative providers should be given the right to set up new schools, (iii) heads should be given more powers to run their schools and to spare them from more centrally determined initiatives, (iv) heads and teachers should be put back in charge of discipline, and (v) vocational and academic options should be given parity of esteem and funding.

All of these proposals are reflected in today's White Paper. We believe that these changes announced today will help to address the inequality that is so prevalent in England's education system, the effects of which are devastating both for the individuals in question and society.

However, we note with concern that there are no plans in the White Paper to engage some parents, or carers in the actual education of their child, which is vital in terms of helping them to achieve their full potential and succeed. Responsibility for a child's education should not rest solely with schools. As stated in *Breakthrough Britain*, parents are the primary educators of children. It is in the home that children first learn and so improving some parents' involvement in, and support for, their children's education should be a key policy objective.

Our recommendations include:

- Home School Charters, for every school.
- 'Be a credit to your child' courses, targeted at parents of disadvantaged primary school children.
- Home-School Support Champions, to improve home-school links in schools serving deprived areas.

Gavin Poole, Executive Director, Centre for Social Justice says: “Britain’s broken communities are defined by five characteristics, which we define as the pathways to poverty: family breakdown, educational failure, drug and alcohol addiction, severe personal indebtedness and economic dependency – caused by intergenerational worklessness. We are encouraged to see the Government today taking such steps towards tackling one of the most significant drivers of poverty – the failure in our education system.”

For media inquiries, please contact Nick Wood of Media Intelligence Partners Ltd on 07889 617003 or 0203 008 8146 or Alistair Thompson on 07970 162225 or 0203008 8145.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

The Centre for Social Justice is an independent think tank established, by Rt Hon Iain Duncan Smith MP in 2004, to seek effective solutions to the poverty that blights parts of Britain.

The CSJ’s Breakthrough Britain: Ending the Costs of Social Breakdown report presented over 190 policy proposals aimed at ending the growing social divide in Britain.

Subsequent reports have put forward proposals for reform of the police, prisons, social housing, the asylum system and family law. Other reports have dealt with street gangs and early intervention to help families with young children.

The Rt Hon Iain Duncan Smith MP stood down as Chairman of the Centre on his appointment as Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in May 2010 and is now the Founder and Patron.