

Early Years and Childcare Aged 0-7 in England Working Group Remit

The remit of this group is to review the party's policies on early years education and childcare covering ages 0-7 in England, and make updated proposals which communicate our values of liberty, equality, democracy, community, internationalism and environmentalism in a way which helps secure the election of as many Liberal Democrats as possible, at local, regional and national level, in order to promote our vision of society and remove from power a Conservative government that is failing the country.

The group will be expected to build on existing policy proposals as set out in the 2019 Election Manifesto and Policy Paper 128 Every Child Empowered: Education for a Changing World (2018). The group is expected to consider and address Liberal Democrat principles on diversity and equalities in developing their proposals.

This group will as a top priority:

- Develop up to three headline policies on early years education and childcare 0-7 which the party can communicate widely to win votes.

The working group will develop policies on:

- How we deliver our 2019 manifesto commitment on free childcare, including funding, delivery and ensuring quality
- Ensuring a healthy balance between parental care and non-parental childcare, and taking account of the economic and social value of facilitating participation in the labour market
- Parental leave
- The relationship between local, regional and central government, and the maintained, voluntary and independent sectors in delivering childcare
- Funding of Early Years Education up to age 7 and the financial stability of the childcare sector
- Meeting the needs of SEND to age 7
- Empowering and engaging parents and guardians so they can be more involved in their children's education
- Ensuring there is not a 'lost generation' due to education 0-7 being disrupted by Covid-19
- Closing the 'Digital Divide' between the better and less well off so that all children's education harnesses the benefits of technology
- Supporting and nurturing mental health and wellbeing of children aged 0-7

The group will need to consider the development of more detailed proposals to implement relevant headline policies included in the 2019 Election Manifesto.

The group will also consider the need for institutional change at central, regional and local government levels to embed these approaches firmly in policy.

Although the remit of the group is primarily England-only, the issue of Parental Leave is a Federal issue.

The group will take evidence and consult widely both within and outside the party. This evidence should inform the group's proposals, which will be presented alongside an analysis of costs and an Equalities Impact Assessment.

A policy paper of no longer than 10,000 words should be produced for debate at Autumn Conference 2022. Prior to that a consultative session should be held at Spring Conference 2022, and a draft policy paper should be presented to the Federal Policy Committee by June 2022.