

Chair

David Chaytor MP

Vice Chair

Fiona Millar

Secretary

Margaret Tulloch

Treasurer

Malcolm Horne

Urgent appeal for funds to aid campaign activities

We rely on donations to carry on our campaign for fair admissions and an end to selection and do not have a membership fee. A membership fee involves a lot of administration for a voluntary organisation, sending out reminders etc. So we hope supporters will make donations.

Our minimum yearly costs, including lobbying, running a conference and one fringe meeting and increased publicity, are about £8,000 a year. At the moment our account has quite a bit less than that! We have plans for more activities in the Autumn, for which we urgently need funds. We are grateful to the many supporters who have sent donations. Please make cheques payable to *Comprehensive Future* and send to our address.

Or you might like to do as some supporters have done and take out a standing order to make an annual or monthly donation. This gives us a regular cash flow, which is very helpful. You can do this by asking your bank to pay to *Comprehensive Future*, Barclays Bank PLC, Wimbledon Business Centre, Sort code 20 96 89, a/c number 40008869, giving them your bank account details, the amount you wish to pay and how often.

AGM and national conference

Please use the attached leaflet to book now for our conference, which will have the theme *Divided schools – divided communities?*

Taking place on Saturday 13 October at Birmingham and Midland Institute, Margaret Street, Birmingham B3 3BS, the event will run from 11 am to 4 pm and combine a conference with the *Comprehensive Future* AGM. Registration will be from 10 am.

This will be a great day to meet, hear our excellent speakers, discuss the campaign and plan for the future, including plans to set up a Young Comprehensive Future. At the last AGM, members were keen that we paid some attention to admission to faith schools and our research commissioned from Professor West has been part of this.

At this AGM we plan to discuss our proposed policy position on faith schools admissions. Overleaf is a draft which we will discuss at the AGM. We also need to agree a quorum, which was accidentally left off the constitution agreed at the last AGM (20 would seem sensible as one more than the maximum number on the committee).

The venue is in central Birmingham, close to main rail stations. There is no charge and coffee etc and a sandwich lunch will be provided, but we would very much like to have donations on the day towards the costs of the conference.

**Comprehensive
Future**

PO Box 44327
London SW20 0WD

mtulloch@poptel.org

020 8947 5758

Faith schools seminar

A lively parliamentary seminar on 22 May launched our research by Professor West and Hazel Pennell on admissions to London faith schools. This research for *Comprehensive Future* has been funded by the Rowntree Reform Trust. It is now, in full, on our website. Speakers at the seminar, along with the report's authors, were Sarah Tough, author of the recent IPPR report on school admissions, and Rev Jan Ainsworth, Church of England Chief Education Officer.

Draft statement on faith school admissions

This is the draft policy statement on faith schools' admissions for debate at the AGM:

- *Comprehensive Future* wishes to engage with all faith groups in an open and honest dialogue about how best to ensure fairer admissions criteria to all publicly funded schools.
- *Comprehensive Future* recognises the contribution that faith groups have made and continue to make to the education of Britain's children. It seeks the support of all faith groups in securing an equal chance for all children and the ending of selection by both ability and aptitude. CF welcomes the adoption by some faith schools of an open admissions policy which welcomes all children regardless of faith.
- *Comprehensive Future* is of the view that local

accountability for all school admissions is essential in consultation with all relevant stakeholders. We support the co-ordinating role for the local authority in "ensuring fair access to educational opportunity" and the monitoring role of the Admissions Forum in "ensuring a fair admissions system that promotes social equity" as set out in the School Admissions Code. Regulations allow for the administration of all admissions to be carried out by the local authority, that is the administrative decision on whether an applicant meets the admission criteria even if these are set by the school.

Comprehensive Future wants to see this as a requirement on all publicly funded local schools. *Comprehensive Future* believes that no school should set its own admission criteria in isolation and that all admission criteria for all publicly funded local schools should be agreed by the admission forum.

Extract from speech by David Willetts

In a speech to the CBI conference on public service reform on 16 May, David Willetts – now the Shadow Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills – argued that good education, available for all, helps achieve social mobility.

He told delegates that, "the uncomfortable truth is that our schools are not still spreading educational opportunities, they are entrenching social advantage". He concluded that:

"This dense inter-connection of family investment and access to good schooling lies behind our low social mobility. It shows that the abolition of grammar schools and the creation of comprehensives failed to spread opportunities in the way that was hoped. But equally giving schools powers over their own admissions has not spread opportunity either.

"It is one of the new rules of public service reform – you can have diversity of supply provided that the new suppliers can't choose who they serve. It is very important that we comply with this successful international model. It is what makes the new entrants genuinely open to all children rather than just an ingenious way of helping an elite to escape. Our reform must always rest on the key principles of fair funding and fair admissions."

The full text is on the Conservative Party website at:
www.conservatives.com/tile.do?def=news.story.page&obj_id=136757&speeches=1

Comprehensive Future elections for steering group

The organisation and planning of the campaign is the responsibility of a steering group of members comprised of four officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer) and up to 15 members.

The officers and members of the steering group are elected at the AGM. The steering group meets at least four times a year, usually in Westminster.

Please send in your nominations (you may nominate yourself) for these posts to Margaret Tulloch at the *Comprehensive Future* address to arrive by 22 September 2007.

Nominees should provide a short personal statement of up to 75 words for circulation before the AGM to those attending and eligible to vote.

Social selection, social sorting and education

This conference on 12 October 2007 in London's City Hall is organised by several bodies including the Mayor's Office and the GLA, supported by the London Education Research Network, the Institute of Education and the NFER.

It has a London focus and costs £25 to attend.

Details are available from Alison Riley at the NFER on 01753 523156, or email a.riley@nfer.ac.uk

The Liberal Democrat conference

If you are going to Brighton to the Liberal Democrat conference please come to our fringe meeting.

It takes place on Monday 17 September at 8 pm in the Keats and Shelley Rooms of the Thistle Hotel. The theme is *School admissions – fair enough?* and taking part will be:

Chair

- Paul Holmes MP, Steering Group *Comprehensive Future*

Speakers

- David Laws MP, Liberal Democrat spokesperson Children, Schools and Families
- Fiona Millar, journalist, Vice Chair *Comprehensive Future*
- Jacob Hunt Stewart, student, Steering Group *Comprehensive Future*