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Time is short – please join our campaign

Fight the expansion of grammar schools

With the announcement of the general election on 8 June, and the Conservatives clearly committed to expanding grammar schools if they win, *Comprehensive Future* has launched a crowdfunding campaign with the aim of raising £10,000 to expand its work.

The money will support our work lobbying politicians, raising awareness of the problems with selection, and working with schools, local authorities and communities that wish to avoid selective education.

If the Government expands selective education it will divide our education system in a hugely damaging way. Children are more likely to succeed when they are taught in high-quality, inclusive, all-ability schools.

Time is short; a new education bill may be proposed soon after the election. So we need your help now.

If every *Comprehensive Future* supporter can donate £20 to our campaign then we will more than meet our crowdfunding target.

Please donate to our campaign, if possible, and write a short comment to say why you support schooling without tests for ability. And please share news of our campaign with any friends who might help.

Our crowdfunding page is at [JustGiving.com](https://www.justgiving.com) You can use the search box to search for 'Comprehensive Future' or the long link is:

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/comprehensivefuture>

Please help protect our children's education.

Below, there is more news of our activities. I do hope you find it interesting and can find ways to support our work at either a local or national level.

With best wishes,

Melissa Benn,

Chair of Comprehensive Future

An action plan for the general election

During this election campaign, *Comprehensive Future* members can help raise awareness of government plans to expand selection. Please take the time to make a difference. Below are a couple of things you can do to help. Please contact us with news of any of your own initiatives!

• **Contact your election candidates and ask for their views on selection.**

Contact your general election candidates and make it clear that you do not want more grammar schools. If you contact Conservative candidates explain that selective education will prove unpopular and produce poor results.

• **Communicate the problems of selective education.**

Please help to spread the word about the problems with selective education. You could write letters to the papers, ask questions at hustings, or use social media to comment on selection. And tell your friends to support *Comprehensive Future's* campaign.

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“Putting pressure on children at such a young age and causing a divide between them and their peers I believe would have an immensely negative effect on children. No to the 11-plus. A good, fair and free education for all.”

Maxine Peake, stage, radio, film and television actress

Introducing Michael and Jo

We are pleased to announce that *Comprehensive Future* has made two new appointments. Joanne Bartley has been hired as our new campaign support worker, while Michael Pavey has been appointed as our Parliamentary Support Officer on a short-term contract.

Joanne Bartley's previous experience as a marketing manager will be invaluable in helping us develop our social media strategy and gain press attention.

As the mother of two school-age children in Kent, she has personal experience of the problems caused by selection in her community. She has already proved herself an excellent advocate for non-selective education as chair of the Kent campaign group, the Kent Education Network (<http://kenteducationnetwork.org>). We are sure her experience will further our aims of fair admissions and an end to selection by ability and aptitude.

We are also delighted that, thanks to a generous contribution from a supporter, we have been able to appoint Michael Pavey as our Parliamentary Support Officer.

Michael, who was until recently advising the Labour front bench on early years policy, will be concentrating on parliamentary and political liaison in the crucial months ahead as the Government begins to shape its policy on selection. Michael grew up in selective Lincolnshire and the damaging divide of the 11-plus led to his interest in political campaigning and social justice. He is a Brent councillor and school governor at Wembley Primary School.

We feel sure that Joanne and Michael will strengthen our campaign in the coming months as we fight the Government's flawed and damaging plan for new grammar schools. Our campaign will work to ensure all new schools are comprehensive schools with fair admissions.

Letter to grammar school heads

Comprehensive Future sent a letter to the Grammar School Heads Association. The heads met Justine Greening and officials from the Department for Education and a summary of the meeting included the comment:

'Ministers and officials agree with us that there are a lot of people, who are philosophically opposed to selection, who keep saying it damages the education of other pupils but present little or no evidence to support this claim.'

We sent a letter outlining 14 pieces of evidence to disprove their point, and the letter can be read in full at our website.

The reply by Jim Skinner, the GSHA CEO, was not so detailed. It simply said: *'Thank you for your letter. We note the references you have cited and the conclusions you have drawn from them.'*

Moving to greater use of email

We have decided to send paper newsletters just twice a year in future and we will more regularly contact supporters with news by email.

So many more people use email now, postage is expensive and we have no reliable way to keep track of supporters who move home. We do hope you understand our decision. If you are not receiving our emails and would like to get these then please add your email address to our short form on the website here:

<http://comprehensivefuture.org.uk/join-us>

Crowdfunding campaign has some notable supporters

We have a range of well-known figures supporting our crowdfunding campaign and we will be placing their words and videos about selection on our fundraising page in the next few weeks.

We are particularly grateful to author Michael Morpurgo, who has written an article for us. Do look out for that on the website soon.

Here are some of our supporters:

Michael Morpurgo, author, poet and playwright

Maxine Peake, stage, radio, film and television actress

Becky Francis, Director of the UCL Institute of Education

Selina Todd, Professor of Modern British History at the University of Oxford

Danny Dorling, Halford Mackinder Professor of Human Geography at the University of Oxford

Billy Bragg, singer and songwriter

Michael Rosen, children's novelist and poet

Stella Duffy, writer, theatremaker, Co-Director Fun Palaces

Brian Apter, Chair of the British Psychological Society's Division of Educational and Child Psychology

Lewis Iwu, Director of the Fair Education Alliance



Michael Morpurgo

"The 11-plus exam creates many more failures than successes. I was one of them. The test has set back the self-esteem and prospects of millions of us and many have not recovered from it. And just as important, it has created the us and them, the have and have-not society that still persists today."

Michael Morpurgo, author, poet and playwright