

Liberal Democrats

Early Education & Childcare

- Expand free childcare offer to 20 hours a week for parents with children aged 2 to 4 and for all working parents from the end of paid parental leave (9 months) to 2 years.
- Roll out tax-free childcare (worth up to £2000 per child each child).
- Improve quality of early years teaching, and protect the wide range of family support services offered in children's centres.
- Improve the early identification of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), so targeted support can be provided.
- Ensure that by 2020 every early years setting employs at least one person who holds an early years teacher qualification, recruit more qualified early years staff and extend full qualified teacher status to all those who are properly trained.
- Increase early year's pupil premium to £1000 per pupil per year.

Welfare and employment

- Double the number of businesses offering apprenticeships and tailor placements for those with disabilities or mental health problems.
- Review the Work Capability Assessment and Personal Independence Payments (PIP) assessments to ensure their fairness.
- Invest to clear any backlog in assessments for Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and PIP.
- Improve the benefits system for disabled people based on the principle of one assessment, one budget to bring together support including PIP, Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and health and social care entitlements.
- Give more help to carers with a bonus of £250 to spend however they choose
- Introduce a right to paid leave for carers
- Raise earn threshold for Carer's Allowance from £110 to £150 a week
- Consult on introducing 5 days paid additional care leave a year for carers
- Build 300,000 new houses a year and ensure disabled people who need an extra room are entitled to one in any assessment of their housing benefit needs

Health and Social Care

- Secure local agreement on full pooling of budgets between the NHS and care services with a target date of 2018

- Work with local authorities (LAs) to integrate services at a local level and support users in pooling their personal budgets into mutual support arrangements
- Give the NHS a legal duty to inform carers of their rights, such as more flexible visiting hours, and assert carers' role as expert partners in care.
- Expect LAs to set out a clear purpose for the care system: to promote emotional wellbeing and resilience, support children's development and provide individually tailored help with recovery
- Implement the proposals outlined in the report of the Governments' Children's Mental Health Taskforce
- Publish a national wellbeing strategy which puts better health and wellbeing for all at the heart of the Government policy including preventing mental ill health
- Return delivery of public health services to Local Authorities to ensure a more coordinated and localised approach

Other

- Maintain Disability Students Allowance to ensure students with disabilities receive appropriate support in their university studies and review impact of any changes to consider additional protections
- Continue the Access for All programmes, improving disabled access to public transport