

The NUT Stand Up For Education campaign has gained extensive support for an alternative vision of education. One of the key goals within this alternative is the need to end child poverty.

This briefing sets out recent policy developments, including the Welfare Reform and Work Bill and the Summer Budget. It argues that teachers are doing everything they can to support disadvantaged children but cannot compensate for the child poverty which some of their pupils are facing.

You can find further useful facts and figures in the Edufact on Child Poverty on the NUT website.¹

Recent policy developments

The Conservative Party Manifesto stated:

“We will work to eliminate child poverty and introduce better measures to drive real change in children’s lives, by recognising the root causes of poverty: entrenched worklessness, family breakdown, problem debt, and drug and alcohol dependency.”
(p.27)

The Government’s inverted concept of the ‘root causes of poverty’ has underpinned a range of proposed policies which are summarised here.

Welfare Reform and Work Bill

The Welfare Reform and Work Bill² is making its way through Parliament. The Bill Committee chairs are Gary Streeter and Albert Owen.³

Various clear and helpful briefings were produced before the Second Reading of the Bill in July by, for example, the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG)⁴, Shelter⁵, the Trades Union Congress (TUC)⁶ and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF)⁷. The Executive Summary of the CPAG briefing is provided overleaf.

¹ www.teachers.org.uk/edufacts/child-poverty

² <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2015-16/welfarereformandwork.html>

³ Other members are listed at <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2015-16/welfarereformandwork/committees/houseofcommonspublicbillcommitteeonthewelfarereformandworkbill201516.html>

⁴ www.cpag.org.uk/content/welfare-reform-and-work-bill-commons-second-reading-briefing

⁵ http://england.shelter.org.uk/professional_resources/policy_and_research/policy_library/policy_library_folder/briefing_welfare_reform_and_work_bill_july_2015

⁶ www.tuc.org.uk/social-issues/child-poverty/poverty-social-exclusion/welfare-and-benefits/welfare-reform-and-work

⁷ www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/jrf-welfare-reform-work-bill.pdf

CPAG Briefing on the Welfare Reform and Work Bill

Executive summary

Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) is a charity, working for children in the UK. We believe that no child should grow up in hardship or lose out through poverty. We aim to prevent and end child poverty by providing evidence-based solutions to child poverty to policy makers, and accurate information and advice so families can access the support they need. In this briefing we argue the following key points.

- Clauses 1 to 6: The Bill would repeal most of the Child Poverty Act, abandoning poverty-reduction targets and proposing new measures of poverty that do not include income. Child poverty is multifaceted, but the lack of an adequate income remains its decisive characteristic and must remain central to any poverty measurement. Proposed new reporting requirements on worklessness, educational attainment, apprenticeships, troubled families and social mobility are welcome, but are not measures of poverty.
- Clauses 7 and 8: The benefit cap policy severs the historic link between what families need to live on – as assessed by Parliament in its setting of benefit levels – and entitlement. Lowering the cap would mean families could be left with less than enough for their basic needs, such as food and warmth. Evidence on the current cap suggests that fiscal savings have been small (under 4 per cent of the total savings to the social security budget) and the effect on movement into work weak. A lower cap would compromise the wellbeing of more children, as housing security is compromised, school life is disrupted and community links are broken.
- Clauses 9 and 10: The Bill proposes to extend the freeze on working-age benefits from two years to four years, ending in April 2020. This would end the link with both prices and earnings and effectively cuts benefit support loose from the cost of living and the living standards of the mainstream of society. It would ensure the lowest income households will continue to get poorer and follows a series of below-inflation uprating decisions. Between 2010 and 2020, for example, child benefit is projected to lose 28 per cent of its value. Children's benefits should be given the same 'triple-lock' protection as basic state pensions enjoy.
- Clauses 11 and 12: Limiting child tax credit to the first two children would affect only a minority of families, but the impact would be dramatic. Only one-fifth of families (21 per cent) receiving tax credits have three or more children, but more than one-third of them (34 per cent) are in poverty. Limiting their tax credits would deepen poverty for the very children most at risk of hardship.
- Low pay (Summer Budget 2015 proposals, not included in the Bill): The Chancellor's proposal for a new 'national living wage' for the over-25s (starting at £7.20 with the aim of it reaching 60 per cent of median earnings by 2020) is a welcome increase in the minimum wage, rather than a true living wage, as the latter is based on real costs faced by families. An increased minimum wage is a positive development in and of itself, but will not straightforwardly flow to low-income households and is not a direct substitute for cuts to in-work support. The Institute for Fiscal Studies has noted that it is 'arithmetically impossible' for the increase in the minimum wage to provide full compensation for the majority of losses experienced by tax credit and universal credit recipients.

(www.cpag.org.uk/content/welfare-reform-and-work-bill-commons-second-reading-briefing)

Summer Budget

The summer budget continued with the Coalition Government's policy of targeting the poorest with disproportionate cuts. The welcome increase in the minimum wage (cleverly called the 'national living wage' despite not being one) is undermined by cuts to tax credits and the ongoing decrease in local services. Despite the Prime Minister's claim to "an all-out assault on poverty"⁸, the Resolution Foundation gives the following projections:

"Taking into account the tax and benefit measures announced at the Summer Budget, as well as the introduction of the national living wage, we estimate that a further 200,000 children (predominantly from working households) will fall into poverty in 2016.

*In 2020 we estimate that at least an extra 300,000 children will be in this position, rising to 600,000 once all policy measures have taken effect (removal of both the family element and support for third children and beyond only affects the flow of new claimants (or additional births) rather than the existing stock). Two-thirds of this increase is among children in working households."*⁹

The benefit cap is yet another step in the removal of a founding principle of the welfare state that there is a link between need and entitlement. The earlier benefit cap was considered by the Supreme Court¹⁰ before the 2015 election. In their summary, CPAG states:

"The judgment called into question the fairness of the cap, with three of the five judges finding that, in introducing the cap, the government had failed to comply with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and two finding that it breached Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights. In the judgment, Lord Kerr

*said that, 'it cannot be in the best interests of the children affected by the cap to deprive them of the means of having adequate food, clothing warmth and housing' and Lady Hale said the cap deprived children of 'the basic necessities of life' and made them 'suffer from a situation which is not of their making and which they themselves can do nothing about.'"*¹¹

Not just words: The shift from 'child poverty' to 'social mobility'

As the CPAG summary of the Bill makes clear, many of the Bill's provisions (and the summer budget) will lead to increased absolute and relative child poverty. This compounds the ongoing impact of Coalition policies. For example, "the decision to uprate benefits at a below inflation rate of just 1% for three years is estimated to have pushed 200,000 more children into poverty".¹²

At the same time, the Bill proposes to make such dramatic changes to the 2010 Child Poverty Act as to almost repeal it. It is to be renamed the 'Life Chances Act 2010'.

The 2010 Child Poverty Act set out four child poverty targets for 2020:¹³

- Relative poverty – to reduce the proportion of children who live in relative low income (in families with incomes below 60% of the median, before housing costs) to less than 10%.
- Combined low income and material deprivation – to reduce the proportion of children who live in material deprivation and have a low income (below 70% of the median, before housing costs) to less than 5%.
- "Persistent" poverty – to reduce the proportion of children that experience long periods of relative poverty, with the specific target to be set by December 2014"

⁸ <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/oct/07/camerons-assault-on-poverty-pledge-undone-by-new-figures>

⁹ www.resolutionfoundation.org/publications/a-poverty-of-information-assessing-the-governments-new-child-poverty-focus-and-future-trends/

¹⁰ www.supremecourt.uk/decided-cases/docs/UKSC_2014_0079_Judgment.pdf

¹¹ p10 of www.cpag.org.uk/content/welfare-reform-and-work-bill-commons-second-reading-briefing

¹² www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/our-campaign/short-changed-how-children-are-hit-by-benefits-freezes

¹³ Summarised in a useful 2014 briefing at www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN05585.pdf

- “Absolute” poverty – to reduce the proportion of children who live below an income threshold fixed in real terms to less than 5%.

The Government claims that the relative income measure is problematic as it decreases when overall incomes go down. The Bill proposes to remove income from the measure of poverty despite key arguments against this, including:

- The relative measure is considered alongside three others in the 2010 Act.
- A lack of money is the basic definition of poverty.
- The relative income measure is used in all other countries in the OECD to measure child poverty.

Instead, the Government plans to monitor the number of children in workless households and GCSE attainment. Both of these measures are important but do not measure poverty. They cannot replace an income measure especially in a context in which two-thirds (64%) of children growing up in poverty live in a family where at least one member works, i.e., does not live in a ‘workless household’.¹⁴

The 2010 Child Poverty Act required the setting up of a Child Poverty Commission. Instead, in 2012, the Coalition Government set up a ‘Social Mobility and Child Poverty (SMCP) Commission’.¹⁵ The Welfare Reform and Work Bill proposes to rename it again as the ‘Social Mobility Commission’¹⁶ – representing a full shift from ‘child poverty’ to ‘social mobility’. (As mentioned earlier, the Bill would also rename the 2010 Child Poverty Act, calling it the Life Chances Act.)

Social mobility

Social mobility accepts that inequality exists and suggests that some people, who are more deserving due to ‘merit’ and/or hard work, can move up the ‘ladder’ (though not down, due to the ‘glass floor’¹⁷ protecting middle class families).

Social mobility is largely premised on a moral argument that only those who are born with ‘merit’ or who work hard should benefit from material wellbeing. Conservative social mobility based policy undermines a basic premise of the welfare state that everyone deserves at least basic material conditions. Furthermore, in the context of child poverty, it contains some fundamental contradictions:

- Two-thirds of children in poverty live in households where at least one person works but their hard work does not pay them a decent income.
- The logic of social mobility cannot provide any moral justification for the suffering of a child due to the poverty of their parents/carers (whatever the causes of that poverty might be).
- Wilkinson and Pickett found a relationship between high social inequality and low social mobility¹⁸ suggesting that if the Government wanted high social mobility, they would need to address inequality.

In addition to these internal contradictions, social mobility is particularly problematic in the UK in that it is also premised on the idea of a knowledge economy where there are enough skilled jobs for everyone. However, as Professor Robin Simmons points out, “The harsh reality is that, despite rhetoric to the contrary, the workforce – and especially young people – are generally overqualified and underemployed”.¹⁹

Talking about social mobility allows for the abandonment of concern about inequality and, it seems, the abandonment of concern for children living in poverty. Responses to ‘social mobility’ need to point out its contradictions as outlined above but also continue to argue that inequality matters and that child poverty matters. Child poverty cannot be eradicated by removing the phrase from policy documents.

¹⁴ CPAG, ‘Child poverty facts and figures’ – www.cpag.org.uk/child-poverty-facts-and-figures

¹⁵ www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN05585.pdf

¹⁶ Despite all this, the Commission proposes to produce its autumn ‘State of the Nation’ report as usual. It will be worth reading. It will be at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/social-mobility-and-child-poverty-commission. The last report was published on 20 October 2014.

¹⁷ www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/447575/Downward_mobility_opportunity_hoarding_and_the_glass_floor.pdf

¹⁸ Wilkinson, R. G., & Pickett, K. (2011). *The spirit level*. Tantor Media, Incorporated.

¹⁹ Simmons, R (July 2015) ‘Youth, Austerity and Education’, NUT National Education Conference.

Poverty matters.

An analysis of child poverty needs to inform education and other social policy. Teachers will always do their best in the circumstances for every family but the circumstances are getting worse.

In terms of educational outcomes, disadvantaged pupils are attaining much lower outcomes than average. As the Sutton Trust recently reminded us in the 2015 edition of 'Chain Effects':

*"These differentiated outcomes cannot be solely attributed to the education system: family income, job prospects, health, housing, social capital and social culture are all important. Analysis suggests that schools contribute only between 7% and 20% of the variability in pupil outcomes."*²⁰

The figures are stark:

- "There was a 27 percentage point gap for Free School Meals in the key indicator of 5 A*-C including Maths and English at GCSE.
- Only 9.7% of those eligible for Free School Meals achieved the English Baccalaureate, compared to 26.6% of all other pupils.
- Only 6% of those pupils not achieving Level 4 for Key Stage 2 achieved 5 A*-C including Maths and English at GCSE."

(Chain Effects, p7, Attainment Gaps 2014)

A key Government response to these figures is to blame the "soft bigotry of low expectations" (a phrase borrowed from George W Bush).

Michael Gove, former Education Secretary, said:

*"Some in this country still argue that pupil achievement is overwhelmingly dictated by socio-economic factors. They say that deprivation means destiny, that we can't expect children to succeed if they have been born into poverty, disability, disadvantage."*²¹

The NUT refutes this allegation. The Union argues that material disadvantages do not *determine* educational outcomes but they do mean that some children need a lot of additional support to overcome the significant challenges they face. The pupil premium, discussed below, helps but has marginal impact when set against the challenges which children and their schools face.

This section sets out some of the reasons why schools cannot tackle poverty and inequality alone. These include: housing; hunger; the cost of school; and education policies that increase inequality. This is not a comprehensive list and teachers are working in contexts where many children are facing complex and multiple forms of disadvantage and deprivation.

Housing

The statistics around housing are frightening:

- Every 11 minutes a family in Britain loses their home.²²
- More than 93,000 children in England are living in temporary accommodation, the highest level since 2008.²³
- More than one million children live in overcrowded housing.²⁴
- 5.9 million homes in England fail to meet the Government's Decent Home Standard.²⁵

²⁰ www.suttontrust.com/researcharchive/chain-effects-2015/, p7

²¹ www.gov.uk/government/speeches/education-secretary-michael-goves-speech-to-brighton-college

²² http://england.shelter.org.uk/campaigns?_ga=1.67630353.1216914470.1433164080

²³ www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-33260114

²⁴ http://england.shelter.org.uk/campaigns/why_we_campaign/supporting_families_and_children

²⁵ http://england.shelter.org.uk/campaigns/why_we_campaign/supporting_families_and_children

- Shelter argues that:

“Bad housing has a massive impact on children’s lives, affecting everything from their health and educational achievement, to their emotional well-being and overall life chances:

- *Health: children living in cramped accommodation experience disturbed sleep, poor diet, higher rates of accidents and infectious disease*
- *Education: children from homeless households are more likely to suffer from bullying, unhappiness and stigmatisation*
- *Emotional well-being: about half of the families taking part in one study conducted by Shelter said their children were frightened, insecure, or worried about the future as a result of their homelessness*
- *Life chances: The health and educational impact of poor housing may affect children’s future job prospects and financial well-being.”²⁶*
- When launching their documentary ‘Poor Kids’, the BBC stated that “47% of children with asthma are from the poorest 10% of families in the UK, and 85% of children living in damp houses suffer from breathing problems”²⁷
- Children living in bad housing are nearly twice as likely as other children to leave school without any GCSEs.²⁸

Hunger

In May 2015, the Campaign to End Child Poverty reported that:

“One in five families – the equivalent of one and a half million across the UK, with two and a half million children – said that they had cut back on food, and a similar proportion had cut back on heating their home as a result of benefits being increased below inflation.”²⁹

Hunger should not be a problem in one of the richest countries in the world. The rise of food banks is well documented.³⁰ Nevertheless, according to CPAG, the use of food banks in crisis situations needs to be understood separately from issues of chronic food poverty.³¹ Both are having a serious impact on children.

Hunger and worries about getting enough food obviously have a significant impact on pupils’ ability to learn in school. A joint NUT/CPAG survey of 1,478 teachers in England and Wales conducted in September 2013 found that 85% of teachers had seen an increase in the number of children coming to school hungry in the last two years. A further 88% had seen an increase in the proportion of children unable to concentrate in class.

Holiday hunger is a significant problem in the UK. The All Party Parliamentary Group on School Food conducted a 2015 survey of local authority councillors and officers to determine the awareness of the issue of holiday hunger. They report that over 70% of respondents recognise holiday hunger as a key issue in their area.³² Magic Breakfast, which provides free breakfasts in schools, says:

“Teachers tell us they know even with free school meals it will take two to three weeks to get their kids back up to the weight they were at the end of the last school term because their families cannot afford the food during the holidays.”³³

The cost of school

Although state funded schools provide free education, they do have costs attached for parents. The Children’s Commission on Poverty produced a report, ‘At what cost? Exposing the impact of poverty on school life’, which describes the impact on young people of school costs such as uniform, meals, materials and trips.³⁴ It states:

²⁶ http://england.shelter.org.uk/campaigns/why_we_campaign/supporting_families_and_children

²⁷ www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-13632856. The documentary is worth watching.

²⁸ Rice B, Against the Odds, Shelter, 2006

²⁹ www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/files/short-changed/Short-Changed-the-true-cost-of-cuts-to-childrens-benefits-FULL-REPORT.pdf

³⁰ www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/missing-out-on-free-school-meals-for-just-one-week-at-half-term-is-enough-to-tip-some-families-into-food-poverty-10096119.html

³¹ www.cpag.org.uk/sites/default/files/CPAG%20submission%20hunger%20and%20food%20poverty%20inquiry%20June%202014.pdf

³² <http://apse.org.uk/apse/index.cfm/members-area/briefings/2015/15-41-holiday-hunger/>

³³ www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/jul/28/rich-poor-children-parents-holiday-food-camps

³⁴ ‘At what cost? Exposing the impact of poverty on school life’ – www.childrenscommission.org.uk/www.childrenscommission.org.uk/

“For many families, the idea of a free education is very far from reality. School related costs make up a large portion of family budgets and parents told us that, on average, they spend £800 a year on school costs. More than two-thirds (70%) of parents say they have struggled with the cost of school. This rises to 95% of parents who live in families that are ‘not well off at all’.”

“The £800 total includes £168 on school meals, £159 on school uniform and sports kit, £82 on travel costs and £167 on school trips. This is at a time when, for most families, the costs of many essentials are rising faster than incomes.”³⁵

“But poverty and the cost of school does not just mean that children are going without. Many children spoke vividly of the emotional impact of poverty on school. Poverty can set children apart, particularly if it is not addressed sensitively by schools. Children who are made to feel different – because they are entitled to a free school meal, cannot take part in activities with peers or do not have the right uniform – said they have been embarrassed or experienced bullying as a result.”³⁷

Education policies that increase inequality

John Cridland, of the CBI, said at the launch of the NUT’s ‘Exam Factories?’, that “teachers try to put the child first, despite the system, rather than because of the system”. This comment was specifically in relation to accountability measures. However, many aspects of current education policy similarly compound disadvantage and increase inequality.

As the OECD points out, international comparison of different school systems shows

that those which emphasise choice and competition, as England does, demonstrate higher levels of segregation and that this can lead to less equity in learning opportunities and outcomes.³⁸

Sociologists such as Stephen Ball have investigated the mechanisms through which educational inequalities are created and exacerbated. He considers, for example, how “middle class families use their social and cultural resources in relation to school choice both in order to escape from class ‘others’, and to maximize their children’s performance and future opportunities [and how] some schools are using their ‘freedoms’ to deploy subtle forms of selection”³⁹. The result of England’s high levels of segregation is that “disadvantaged pupils are often concentrated in schools judged to be poorer quality. Hence those most in need tend to be those least likely to access good educational provision, facing ‘double-disadvantage’”.⁴⁰

In relation to attainment, the Government’s flagship academisation programme means that disadvantaged pupils are achieving less well academically than those in maintained schools. As the Sutton Trusts, ‘Chain Effects 2015’ report has found:

“When analysed against a range of Government indicators on attainment, a majority of the chains analysed still underperform the mainstream average on attainment for their disadvantaged pupils.”⁴¹

The marketised system relies on quantitative data about schools. This shifts the focus of assessment away from forms which support pupils to those which provide ‘accountability’ for schools through league tables. The research report, ‘Exam Factories? The impact of accountability measures on children and young

³⁵ Ibid, p8

³⁶ Ibid, p16

³⁷ Ibid, p20

³⁸ OECD (2013) ‘PISA 2012 Results: What Makes a School Successful? – Resources, Policies and Practices (Volume IV)’ OECD Publishing, p. 54. Available at: <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/keyfindings/pisa-2012-results-volume-IV.pdf>

³⁹ p16 of [http://classonline.org.uk/docs/2013_Policy_Paper_-_Education_justice_and_democracy_\(Stephen_Ball\).pdf](http://classonline.org.uk/docs/2013_Policy_Paper_-_Education_justice_and_democracy_(Stephen_Ball).pdf). For a more detailed analysis, see, for example: Ball, S. J. (2013). The education debate. Policy Press

⁴⁰ p7 of www.suttontrust.com/researcharchive/chain-effects-2015/. This report refers work such as that of Lupton (Lupton et al 2009; Lupton 2010) and Francis (2011), which demonstrate the over-representation of working class children in poorer quality schools.

⁴¹ Hutchings, M., Francis, B. and Kirby, P (July 2015) Chain Effects 2015: The Impact Of Academy Chains On Low-Income Students – www.suttontrust.com/researcharchive/chain-effects-2015/

people',⁴² by Prof Merryn Hutchings of London Metropolitan University was commissioned by the NUT and published in July 2015. The research showed the negative impact of current accountability measures on pupils. These negative impacts were much greater for disadvantaged pupils, who were also more likely to experience a narrowing of the curriculum. The report states that:

“There is no evidence as yet that accountability measures can reduce the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers. There is evidence that disadvantaged children, who on average have lower attainment than their peers and are therefore under greater pressure to meet targets, can become disaffected as a result of experiencing ‘failure’, and this is being exacerbated by recent changes to the curriculum to make it more demanding and challenging.”⁴³

The Government's proposed future education policies are likely to perpetuate the trend towards disadvantaging the disadvantaged and increasing segregation. This certainly seems to be the case with the Education and Adoption Bill 2015.⁴⁴

Despite everything, teachers always do their best. However, education policies make teachers' role in tackling poverty and disadvantage increasingly difficult.

Pupil Premium

The Pupil Premium is funding that specifically targets disadvantaged pupils (largely defined by entitlement to free school meals (FSM)) to tackle the attainment gap between pupils from a low income background and other pupils.⁴⁵ The Government seems to suggest that the

Pupil Premium compensates for the ways in which pupils are disadvantaged as set out above. There is a danger that the Government's focus on the Pupil Premium lets them off the hook in terms of other policies which are leading to greater inequality and child poverty. Prof Ruth Lupton has examined the impact of the policies of the current and previous Coalition Government.⁴⁶ Her work shows that: “Pupil Premium is a very small proportion of overall school spending (initially 1.3 per cent in 2011/12, rising to 2.9 per cent in 2013/14)”.⁴⁷ She points out that this is about the same amount of money per pupil as low income families have lost in benefits.⁴⁸ Furthermore, in many cases, the Pupil Premium is used to plug other school funding gaps which are likely to increase. The National Audit Office (NAO)'s 2015 report into funding for disadvantaged pupils states:

“Other real-terms reductions in school funding mean the Pupil Premium has not always increased school budgets. Over the last four years, the department has given £6.0 billion to schools under the Pupil Premium policy but reduced other school funding in real terms at the same time. As a result total per-pupil funding has increased in 55% of schools in real terms, but it has decreased in real terms in the remainder. Some schools with very disadvantaged intakes have less money per pupil now, in real terms, than in 2010, despite the extra funding provided by the Pupil Premium. We estimate that the per-pupil funding of 16% of the most disadvantaged secondary schools fell by more than 5% in real terms between 2010-11 and 2014-15”⁴⁹

The low proportion of funding allocated through Pupil Premium means that other educational policies, such as those outlined above have a greater impact on disadvantaged pupils.

⁴² www.teachers.org.uk/examfactories

⁴³ Ibid, p4

⁴⁴ See the 'Written Evidence: Consolidated Evidence' at <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2015-16/educationandadoption/documents.html> particularly that by Prof Stephen Gorard on p42-3.

⁴⁵ <http://www.teachers.org.uk/node/18861>

⁴⁶ Lupton, R (July 2015) 'The record of the Coalition and the educational programme of the Conservative government', NUT National Education Conference.

⁴⁷ p28 of Lupton, R and Thomson, S (Feb 2015) 'The Coalition's Record on Schools: Policy, Spending and Outcomes 2010-2015' Social Policy in a Cold Climate, Working Paper 13, <http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/dps/case/spcc/WP13.pdf>

⁴⁸ Lupton, R (July 2015) 'The record of the Coalition and the educational programme of the Conservative government', NUT National Education Conference.

⁴⁹ NAO (June 2015) Funding for disadvantaged pupils www.nao.org.uk/report/funding-for-disadvantaged-pupils/, p7

The NUT works actively with the Child Poverty Action Group (www.cpag.org.uk/campaigns) and End Child Poverty (www.endchildpoverty.org.uk)

Five things you can do

1. Support local and national campaigns to end child poverty and to retain the current child poverty targets.
2. Talk to others about how the Government is trying to replace important targets on child poverty with vague promises of 'social mobility' – use this briefing, which is available at www.teachers.org.uk/campaigns/childpoverty
3. Draw on the NUT commissioned report, 'Exam Factories?' (www.teachers.org.uk/examfactories) to campaign against high stakes, test-based accountability measures, using the arguments about the double disadvantage this poses to poorer pupils.
4. Hold a meeting with teachers, governors and councillors about the impact of the disadvantages faced by children living beneath the poverty line, and plan what teachers can do to support low income families.
5. Teachers are powerful advocates for their students. Write to your local press about child poverty. Involve the press in exposing the gaps caused by poverty and inequality, which cannot be addressed by schools alone.