



Department for Education

The Rt Hon Lucy Powell MP
Secretary of State for Education

Helen Hayes MP
Chair of the Education Select Committee
By email: educom@parliament.uk

6 August 2026

Dear Helen,

REWIRING THE STATE ANNOUNCEMENT

I am writing to update you on the Prime Minister and Cabinet's announcement setting out plans to rewire the state by devolving more powers and responsibilities to local leaders and communities. These reforms create a significant opportunity to improve outcomes for children, young people and families which I will set out in more detail below. My apologies for not sharing this in advance, as would normally have been the case.

These reforms are about creating a more joined-up, locally shaped and responsive system, where services work together around the needs of children and families, rather than in silos. Places are often best positioned to coordinate these services, ensuring they support local need. The changes will also better align education and skills provision with local labour market demand, giving young people clearer pathways into education, training and work, and with mayoral authorities helping to shape that offer.

The aim is simple: to place power and decision-making sitting at the right level, whether in neighbourhoods, local authorities or strategic authorities, delivering better outcomes for young people and strong local communities and economies. A cross-government White Paper will follow in the Autumn, setting out detailed proposals. We will co-design these proposals with strategic authorities and shape them through close partnership with local government, education providers, sector bodies and other delivery partners, whose expertise will be essential to success.

Strengthening delivery of education and skills

Following the government's announcement of the vision for new vocations and technical pathways for young people from age 14, the Prime Minister has now begun the journey of the biggest devolution of powers in a generation. This creates a huge opportunity for places to bring support and opportunities together strategically and holistically to improve outcomes for children and young people in a way Whitehall could never do. We will give early focus to devolving 16-19 skills funding, and family support and early intervention, and, again, I look forward to working collaboratively

with strategic authorities in making this agenda a reality and in transforming outcomes.

Joining up skills, education and employers

Bringing local services together around the needs of individuals and the opportunities present in local labour markets is central to these reforms. By better joining up skills education and local employers, we can help young people access the skills, experience, knowledge and know-how they need to succeed. This requires collaboration between employers, education providers and local partners to deliver meaningful work experience, careers advice and a shared understanding of local opportunities. I know many strategic authorities are already leading the way in this work, and their expertise will be vital to making pathways into work a success.

Strong and integrated public services will also be key to meeting the needs of children and families, alongside the labour market. This will be supported by Deputy Mayors with responsibility for key public services, alongside the continued critical role of local authorities, whose close connection to communities makes them best placed to deliver many services.

We recognise that strategic authorities are only as strong as those local authorities that make them up. That is why we are taking steps to improve local authority financial sustainability, including through ongoing reforms to the highest cost services, such children's social care and special educational needs funding. Again, we will continue to work with strategic authorities as part of these reforms, ensuring their success in all regions of England.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lucy Powell', is positioned below the 'Yours sincerely,' text.

**The Rt Hon Lucy Powell MP
Secretary of State for Education**