

# 7

## **KEY TRUTHS ABOUT SOCIAL MOBILITY**

**The interim report of the all-party  
parliamentary group on social mobility**

**1 May 2012**

# About the all-party group on social mobility and this document

- The all-party group was formed to “discuss and promote the cause of social mobility; to raise issues of concern and help inform policy makers and opinion formers”
- Social mobility is a subject claimed by both left and right ... but we believe it is of such critical importance as to demand cross-party working
- Though we don’t and won’t agree on every policy implication, we can at least understand and agree what it is we disagree about
- “The particular focus is to be on understanding what social mobility is, and what has/does/could impact it – both in policy terms and in more informal, cultural ways ... Much of the activity is likely to centre around research and analysis, and taking input from academics, think tanks and other thought leaders.”  
– from our objectives at formation



# Acknowledgements

**We are very grateful to the following expert witnesses for presenting to the all-party group**

- Paul Johnson
- Claire Crawford (IFS)
- Prof Paul Gregg
- Graham Allen MP
- Dame Clare Tickell
- Sir Michael Barber
- Sir Peter Lampl
- Prof Alison Wolf
- Ginny Lunn (Prince's Trust)
- Rt Hon Alan Milburn
- Susan Hazledine (Allen & Overy)
- Diane Herbert (Channel 4)
- Norman Pickavance (Morrisons)
- Louise Hyde (Wates)

**...as well as to the dozens of organisations who have attended the sessions and joined in the debate, and especially to the **Prince's Trust** for their invaluable support, the **IFS** and **Sutton Trust** for advice and **Policy Exchange** for hosting today's event**

# Social mobility

Essentially, social mobility is the extent to which **where you end up**, in terms of income or social class, is not determined by **where you started**

## Some related issues

### UPS & DOWNS

Everyone is happy about people moving up. But full social mobility also means some people moving down, at least in relative terms.

### EQUALITY & MOBILITY

Though they are clearly not the same thing, there is a recognised correlation between developed countries with high levels of mobility and high levels of income equality. Although it is hard to determine causality, there are a number of plausible reasons why high inequality reduces social mobility.

### EQUITY vs EFFICIENCY

Not all programmes to improve mobility will have net positive returns. And there can be tension between objectives of maximising overall economic growth, and equalising access to its benefits.

### WITHIN & BETWEEN

The academic literature distinguishes between income and class measures, and between inter- and intra-generational measures. For practical policy purposes, we focus primarily on inter-generational mobility – though in future, changes in labour market structure may raise the importance of intra-generational.

# Mobility matters both for fairness and for efficiency

## Social justice

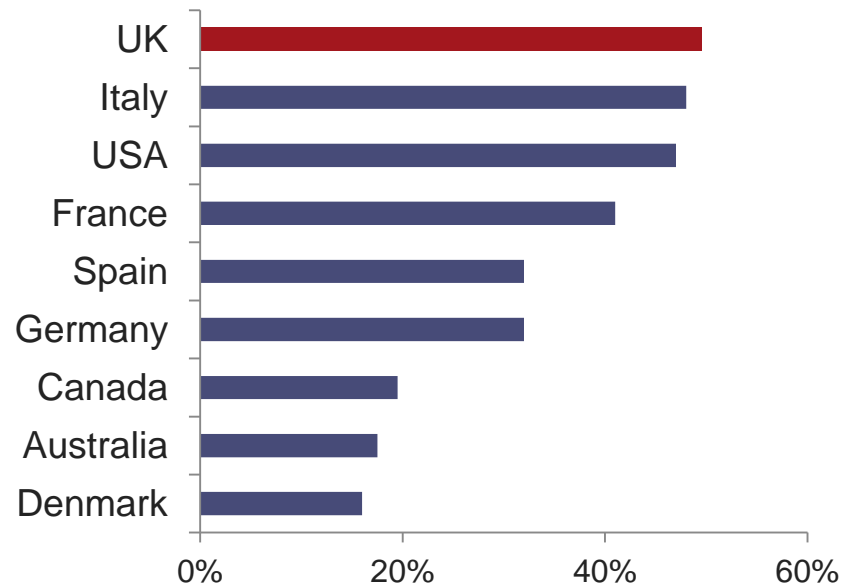
**Self-evidently, every person should have equal opportunities to fulfil their intrinsic potential**

## Economic growth

**National income maximisation requires optimal deployment of resources – including human resources. Studies suggest that reaching international benchmarks for social mobility could eventually be worth the equivalent of £150bn per annum on national income or the equivalent of 4 %points of GDP growth**

# British social mobility is low by international standards and does not appear to be improving

**Extent to which children's prospects are predictable from parents' circumstances**  
(‘Intergenerational Earnings Inelasticity’)



**UK mobility is low relative to other OECD countries**

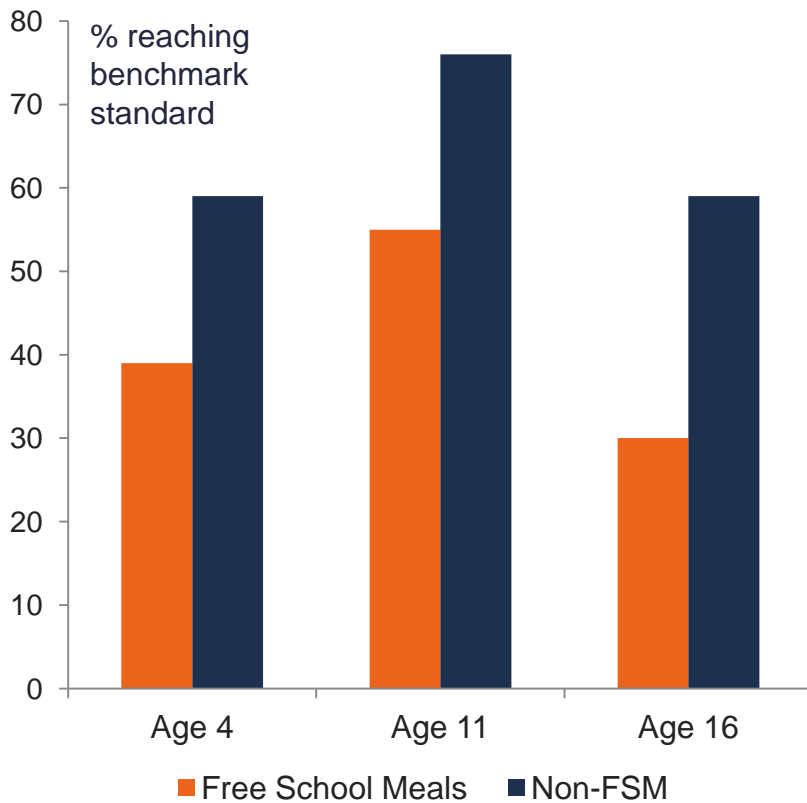
**UK Cohort Studies**

Cohort	1958	1970
Left school in	1970s	1980s
Age now	54	42
% graduates from top vs bottom fifth	4x	5x

**Today's 40-somethings have shown less mobility than their elders**

# This manifests itself in a massive skewing of opportunities

## At school



## At work

24% of vice-chancellors

32% of MPs

51% of top Medics

54% of FTSE-100 chief execs

54% of top journalists

70% of High Court judges

...went to private school, though  
only **7%** of the population do

# Many factors may be at play

School choice  
Career ladders  
Economy  
Regional inequalities  
Disability  
Gender  
Rehabilitation  
Labour market structure  
Pre-school participation  
Teachers  
Housing mix  
Welfare system  
Childcare  
Role models and culture  
Re-training opportunities  
Careers advice  
Home environment  
Post-16 participation  
Faith  
Financial assistance (e.g. EMA)  
Vocational training  
Race  
Peers  
University costs  
Age of specialisation  
Care system  
Inherited wealth  
Books at home  
Early years provision  
Basic skills  
Recruitment policies  
Literacy  
Internships  
Parental attitudes & engagement  
Informal networks  
Class size  
Childbirth age  
Health / nutrition



# This is not one subject, but three – calling for distinct policy responses

Social Mobility is generally spoken of as a single subject; but more often than not policy discussions centre on only one of three quite distinct areas

**1.**

**2.**

**3.**

## Breaking out

from poverty of aspiration or a troubled background

## Moving on up

making sure all can reach their potential

## Stars to shine

nurturing outstanding talent

*Debates about...*



**Early years**

- High intensity parenting programmes e.g. Family Nurse Partnership

- Quality of Early Years settings, investment in nursery teachers
- General parenting / home learning environment

**School years**

- Funding formulae e.g. pupil premium
- Opportunities exposure

- Careers advice
- Worthwhile qualifications

- Selective education
- Top universities' entry criteria

**Later**

- Basic skills
- Job content
- Welfare system & immigration links
- Criminal justice system

- Lifelong learning
- Tax & benefits, parental leave, childcare, etc
- Hollowing-out / career paths

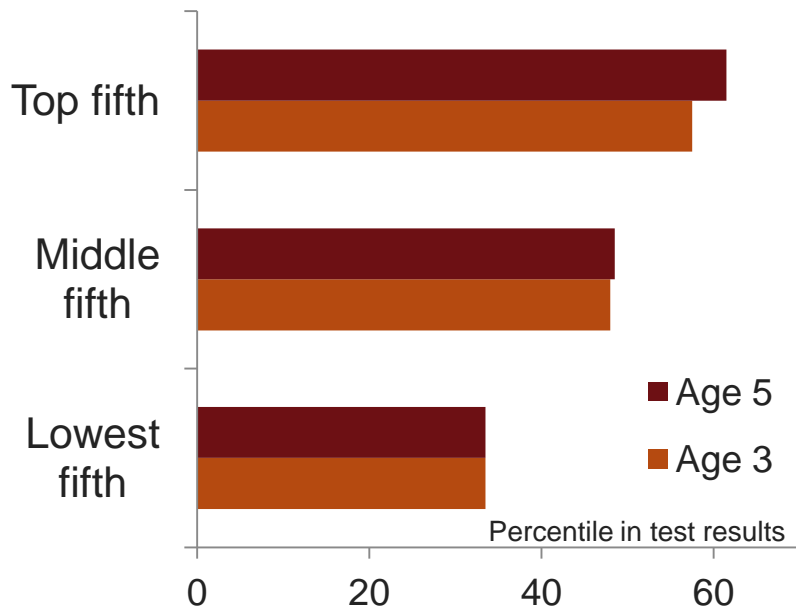
- Internships
- Informal networks

# 7 key truths about social mobility

Key Truth		Policy challenge
1. The point of greatest leverage for social mobility is what happens between ages 0 and 3, primarily in the home	➔	A massive premium on 'parenting' skills
2. You can also break the cycle through education...	➔	Children must be able to access learning (school readiness; reading ability)
3. ...the most important controllable factor being the quality of your teaching	➔	Focus first on quality of teachers & teaching
4. But it's also about what happens after the school bell rings	➔	Find ways to level the playing field on out-of-school opportunities, and participation
5. University is the top determinant of later opportunities – so pre-18 attainment is key	➔	Reinforces importance of school years – but also raises questions about university admissions
6. But later pathways to mobility are possible, given the will and support	➔	Find the exemplar programmes, analyse and demonstrate impact
7. Personal resilience and emotional wellbeing are the missing link in the chain	➔	Recognise that social/emotional 'skills' underpin academic and other success – and can be taught

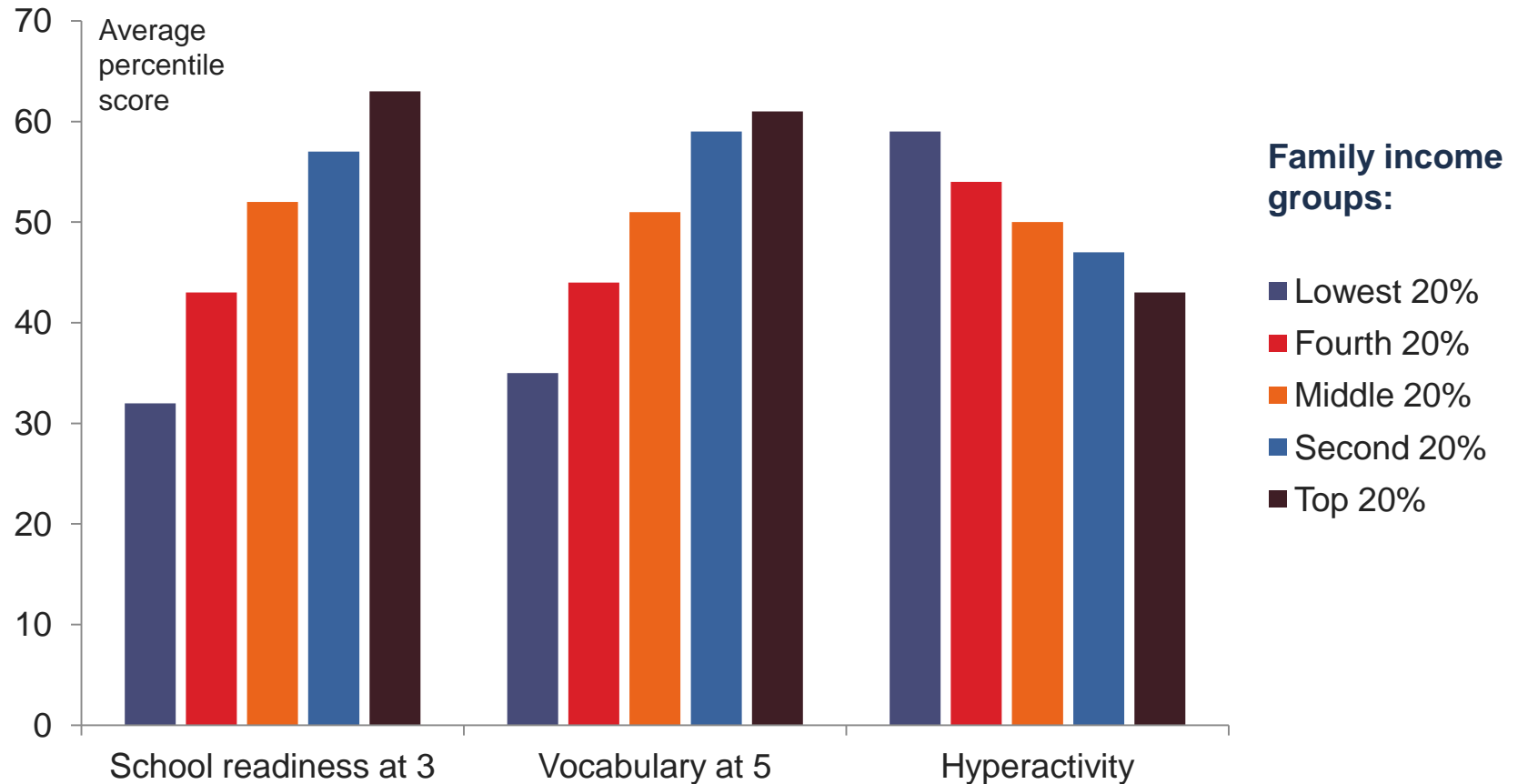
# 1. The point of greatest leverage is at 0-3, primarily at home

**Millennium Cohort Study**  
Cognitive scores by socio-economic group



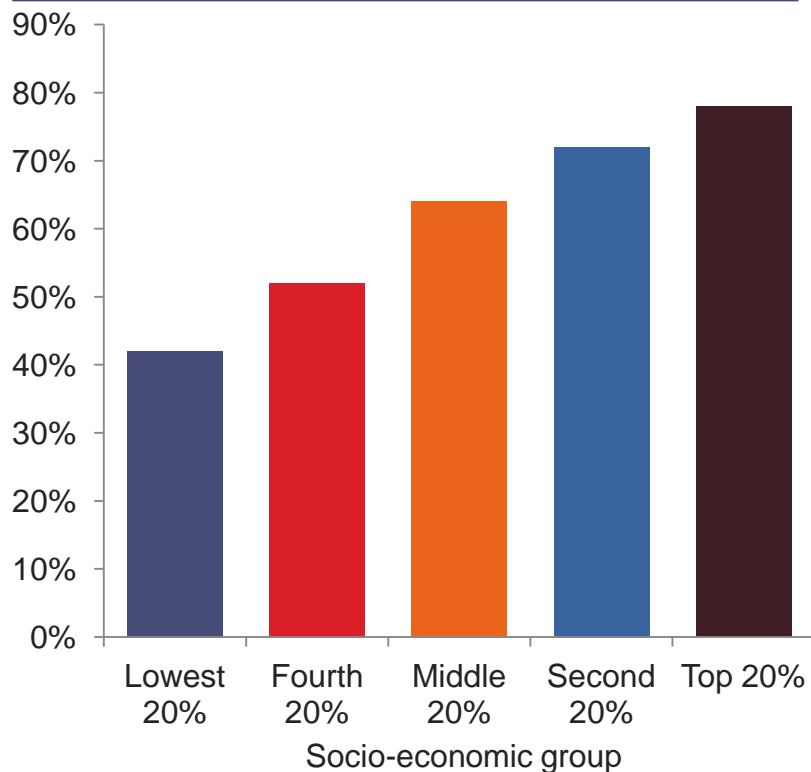
- Even toddlers' test scores vary dramatically by their parents' socio-economic group – over and above innate differences in ability
- Millennium Cohort Study shows no narrowing between ages 3 and 5
- Other studies suggest gaps persist (and may even widen somewhat) through the school years
- The early cognitive assessments are quite strongly related to later academic attainment and eventual employment and class
- Countries least marred by social immobility tend to have invested in training of early years staff

# 1. The point of greatest leverage is at 0-3, primarily at home **Contd.**

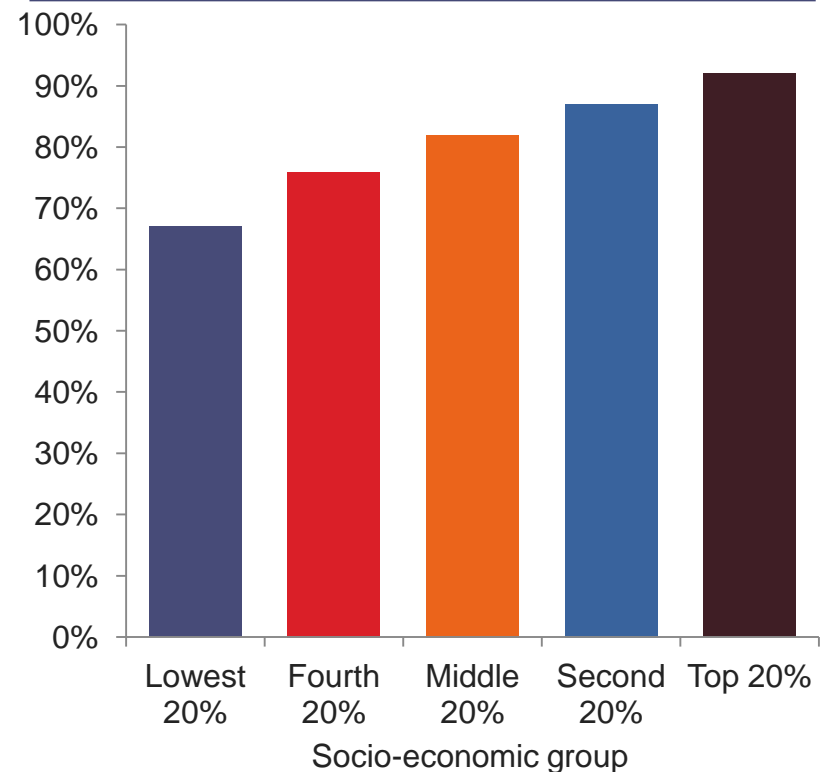


# 1. The point of greatest leverage is at 0-3, primarily at home **Contd.**

Read to every day at Age 3



Regular bed time at Age 3



**Of course these are averages, and there is both outstanding parenting and poor parenting in every income group and background**

# 1. The point of greatest leverage is at 0-3, primarily at home **Contd.**

“During the earliest years, it is primarily parents who shape their children’s outcomes – a healthy pregnancy, good mental health, the way that they parent and whether the home environment is educational” – Frank Field

## Some key positive factors

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- Mother’s age at childbirth
- Healthy pregnancy
- Early attachment & warm relationships
- Books at home
- Interest & engagement in education

## Context

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- Few people know instinctively how to parent
  - Not everyone reads the books
  - Pre-natal ‘preparation’ may take you little further than Day One
- Home life is difficult territory for the State



**Need ways to communicate\* simple parenting skills & techniques**

## 2. You can also break the cycle through education...

It is not that parents' class/income directly determines outcomes for children, but rather parents' class/income is correlated with educational attainment and it is *that* that drives outcomes for children



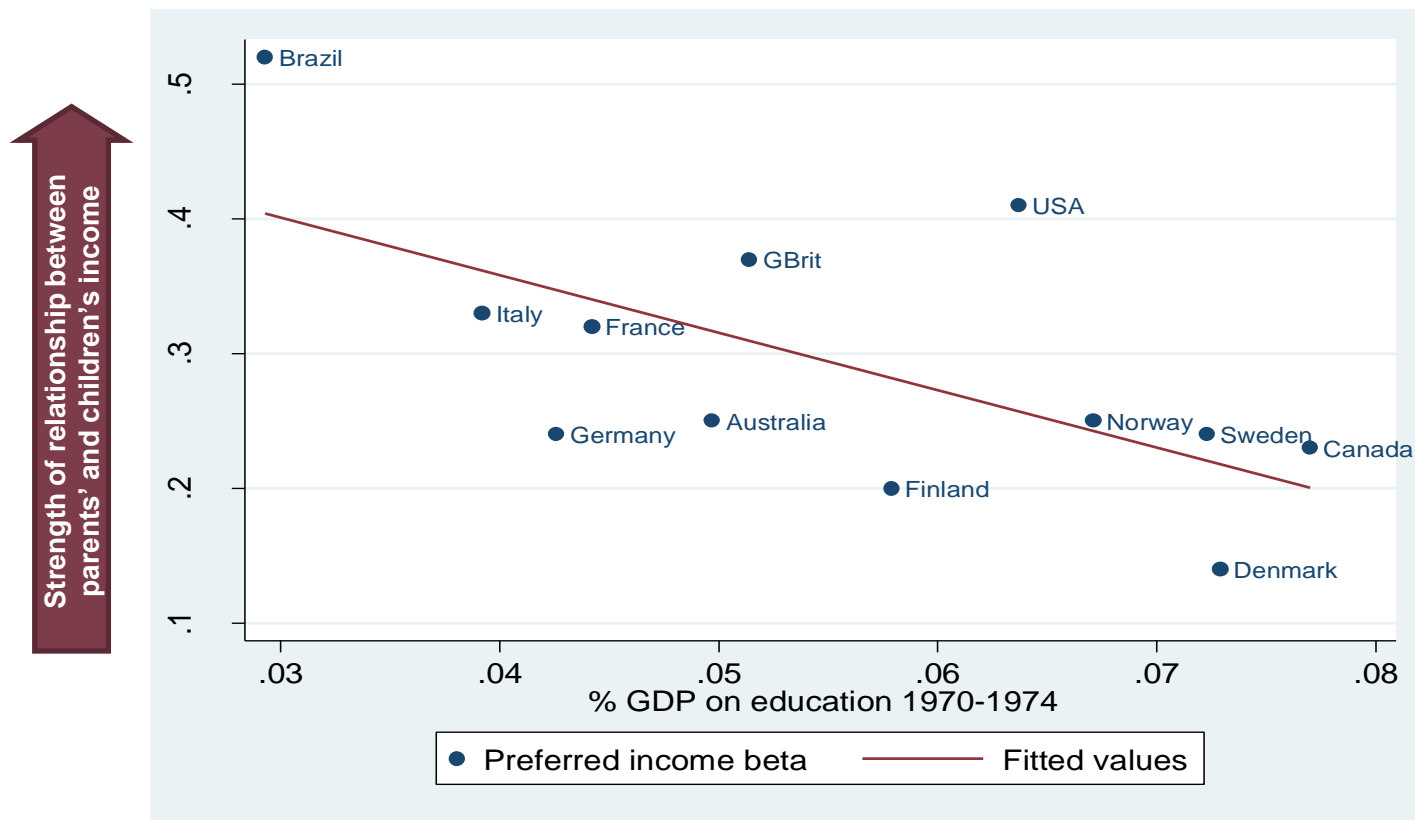
This is the link to break



**School (and nursery) is the most obvious place for the State to have a positive impact – but children need to be *able* to benefit**

## 2. You can also break the cycle through education... Contd.

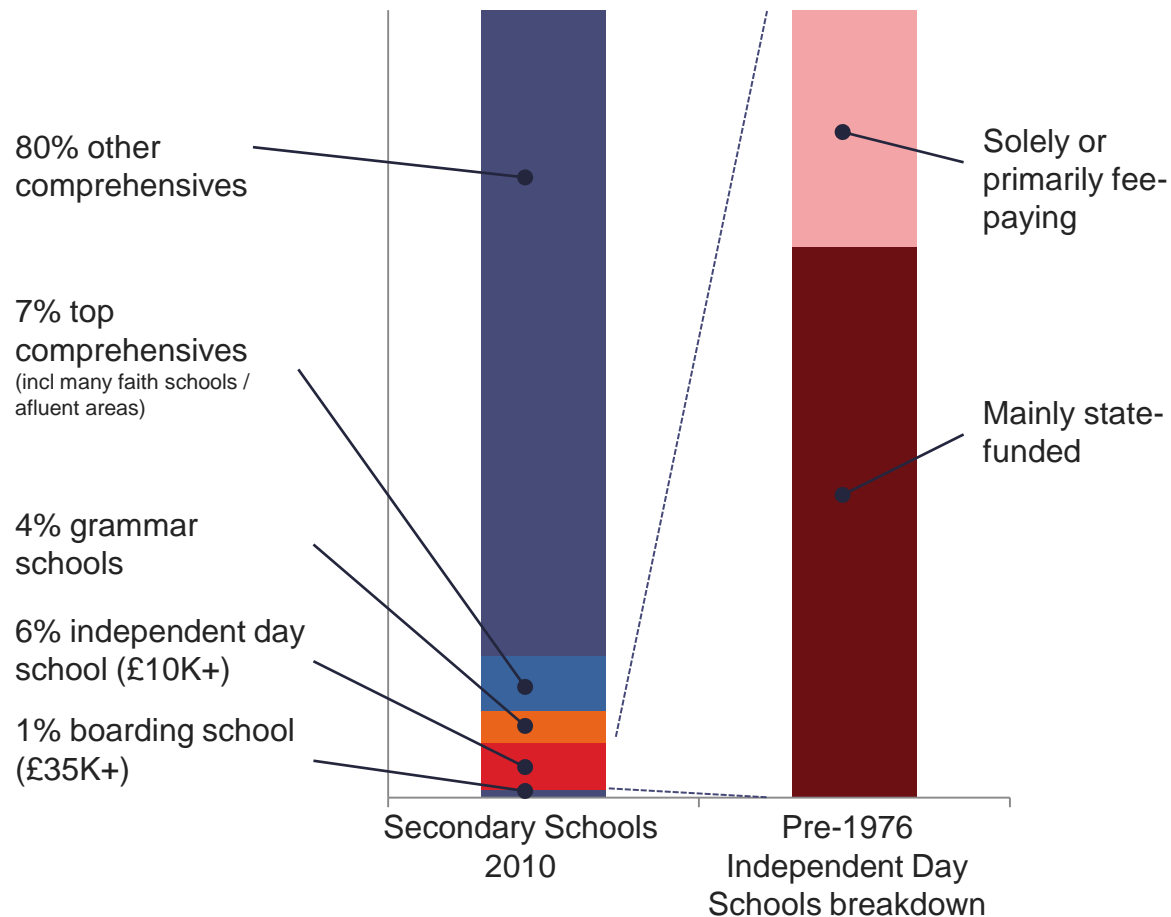
Generally speaking, there is a correlation between higher spending on education and higher levels of mobility





## 2. You can also break the cycle through education... Contd.

Though there have been many improvements in schools since the 1960s, there are fewer opportunities now for poorer children to access the very highest-achieving ones



Before 1976, 70% of independent day schools were principally state funded.

Of 174 Direct Grant schools...

- 51 joined the state sector
- 4 closed
- 119 went independent

## 2. You can also break the cycle through education... **Contd.**

The Sutton Trust have evaluated a number of programmes that can narrow the gap for disadvantaged children...

	Low Impact	Medium Impact	High Impact
Low cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Individual instruction</b></li> <li>• Learning styles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Homework</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Effective feedback</b></li> <li>• <b>Pupils plan, monitor &amp; evaluate own learning</b></li> <li>• <b>Peer tutoring</b></li> </ul>
Medium cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After-school programmes</li> <li>• <b>Arts participation</b></li> <li>• Performance pay</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment for learning</li> <li>• <b>Parental involvement</b></li> <li>• Sports participation</li> <li>• Summer schools</li> </ul>	
High cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reducing class sizes</b></li> <li>• Teaching assistants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1:1 tutoring</b></li> <li>• <b>Effective IT use</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Early intervention</b></li> </ul>



**A mix of new programmes and things that some good schools do already**  
**The 'low cost' ones may nonetheless have major implications for teachers' professional development**

## 2. You can also break the cycle through education... **Contd.**

...and have also identified major potential programmes for further study / piloting, including:

- Extra learning time
- Support for university admissions tests
- Summer camps to prevent summer learning loss\*
- Individual enrichment sessions
- Summer schools at top universities
- Auto applications (or opt-out) at high-performing schools
- Means-tested fees at independent schools

# 3. ...and the most important controllable factor is the quality of your teaching

Intuitively, it makes sense that teacher quality is the #1 factor in educational outcomes. Less intuitive, but nonetheless apparently true, is that teacher quality is also the #1 factor in narrowing the gap between rich and poor

- McKinsey, Sutton Trust / BCG research and international evidence show that...
  - During one year with a very effective maths teacher, pupils gain 40% more in their learning than they would with a poorly performing one
  - Over a school year, disadvantaged pupils gain 1.5 years' worth of learning with very effective teachers, compared with 0.5 years with poorly performing teachers – a difference of a whole year's learning
  - Over the realistic range, teacher quality has a much bigger impact than reductions in class size
- But you can tell very little about teacher quality from their CV or apparent (outside the classroom) characteristics

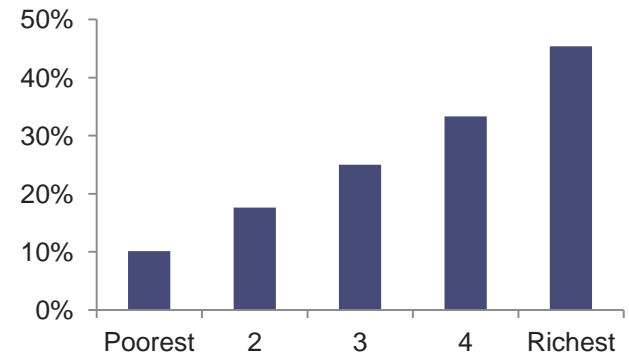


**Calls for relentless focus on quality of teachers – new and existing – and systematic ways of identifying, and encouraging, them**

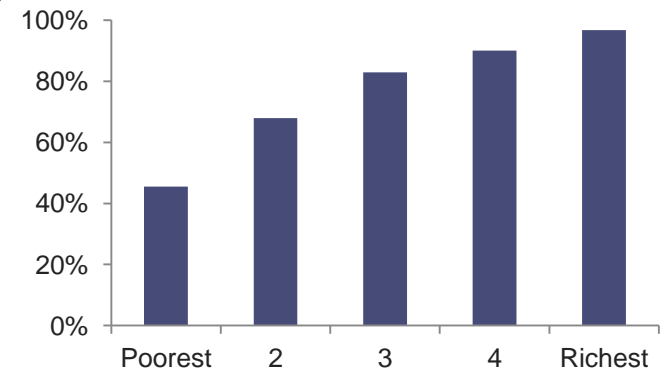
# 4. But it's also about what happens after the school bell rings

- Some evidence of trend towards increased use of tutoring to 'top up' state education
  - 2011: 23% of children have had tutoring at some point vs 18% in 2005
  - Concentrated among affluent families
  - (Asian and Black families also over-index)
- Wide differences in parental use of 'educational' trips, summer camps, etc
- US evidence suggests significant 'learning loss' in the summer among poorer children while wealthier ones advance
  - This is a significant part of the impetus behind the longer school day at KIPP schools
- But we have also heard that participation / take-up of extra-curricular activities is at least as big a challenge as opportunity availability

Lessons outside school, age 14



Internet access at home, age 14



**Need more equal opportunities for extra-curricular learning and development – but also focus on take-up**

## 4. But it's also about what happens after the school bell rings

- We have heard repeatedly of the importance of quality careers information and guidance – on qualifications, HE and training opportunities and eventual careers
- A key challenge is often to raise expectations of which careers may actually be possible
- We were impressed with the ambitions of the work experience programme operated by Allen & Overy and the PRIME partnership



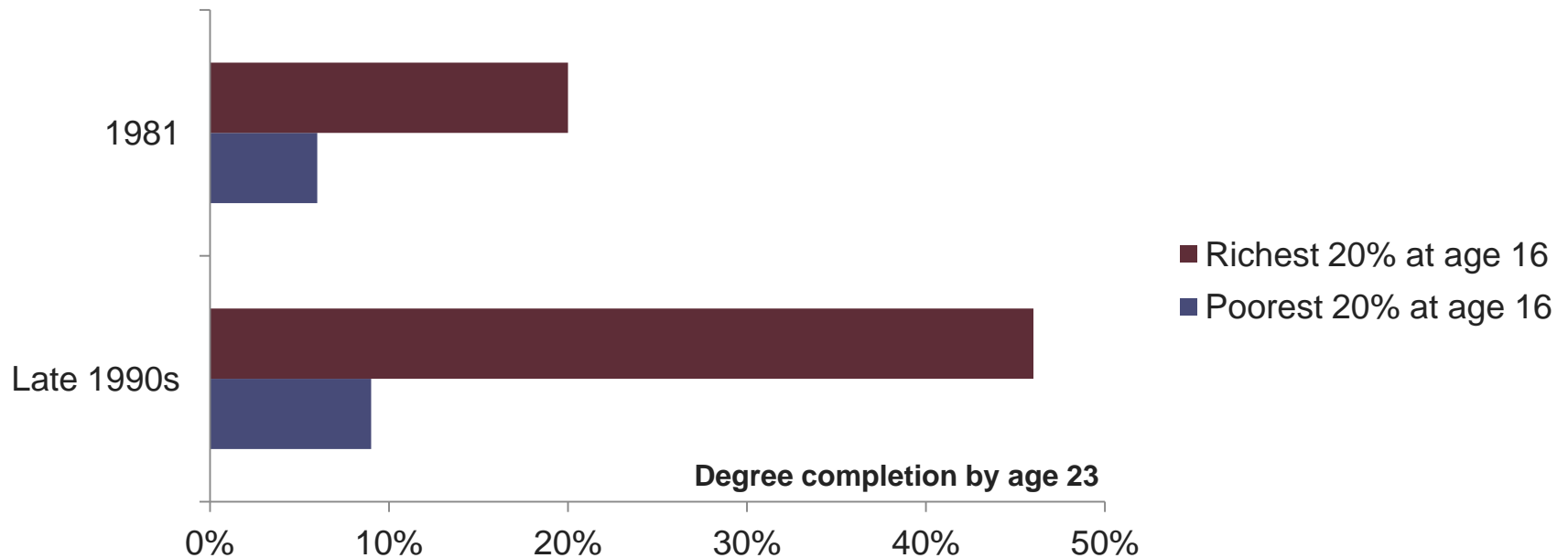
- Instrumental in creating **PRIME** collaboration across 23 law firms
- Work experience for disadvantaged pupils
- Follow-through programme with guidance before and mentoring after
- *“It helps us maximise the talent pool”*

## **5. University is the top determinant of later opportunities – so pre-18 attainment is key**

- Intuitively, it is going to university more than anything else which levels the playing field with peers (from the same tier of university)
- Many top employers will only recruit from top universities
- More generally, a number of careers have become ‘graduate-ised’
- In 2010, graduates enjoyed a 19 %pt premium in employment rate over those with only A-levels (or equivalent)
- Graduates have a discounted lifetime earnings premium estimated at over £100,000 versus those with only A-levels (or equivalent)

## 5. University is the top determinant of later opportunities – so pre-18 attainment is key **Contd.**

Although Higher Education participation grew over the long term across the income scale, the gap between rich and poor widened

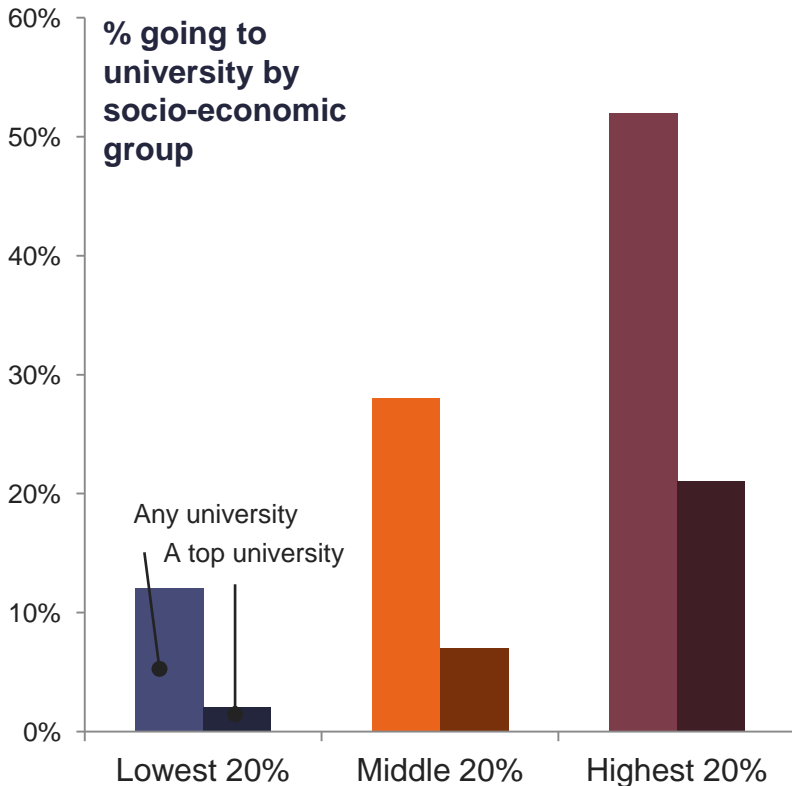


**There has been some narrowing in the overall gap since then ... but not at the top third of selective universities**

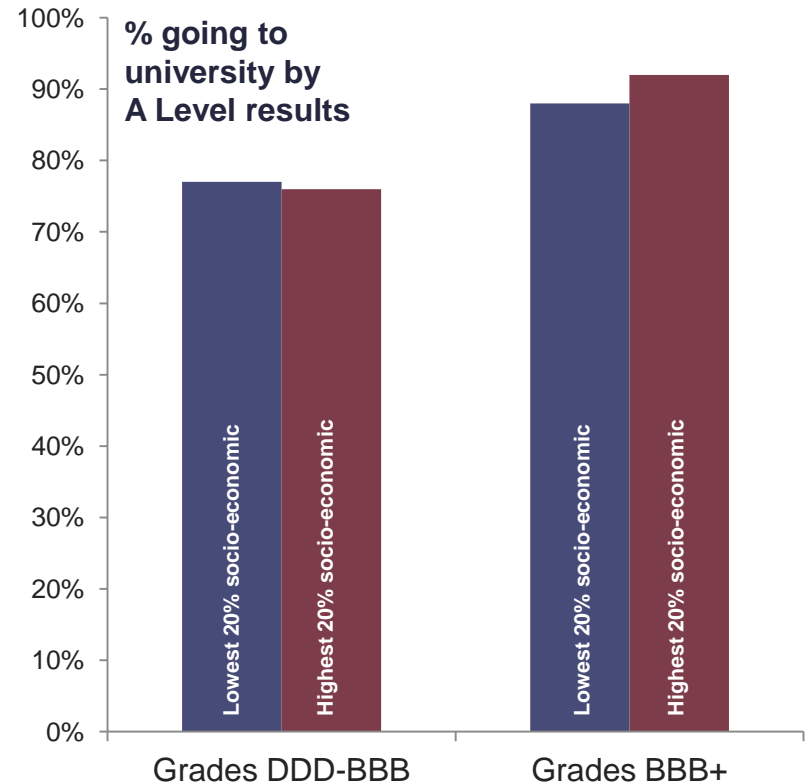


# 5. University is the top determinant of later opportunities – so pre-18 attainment is key **Contd.**

## The Higher Education divide...



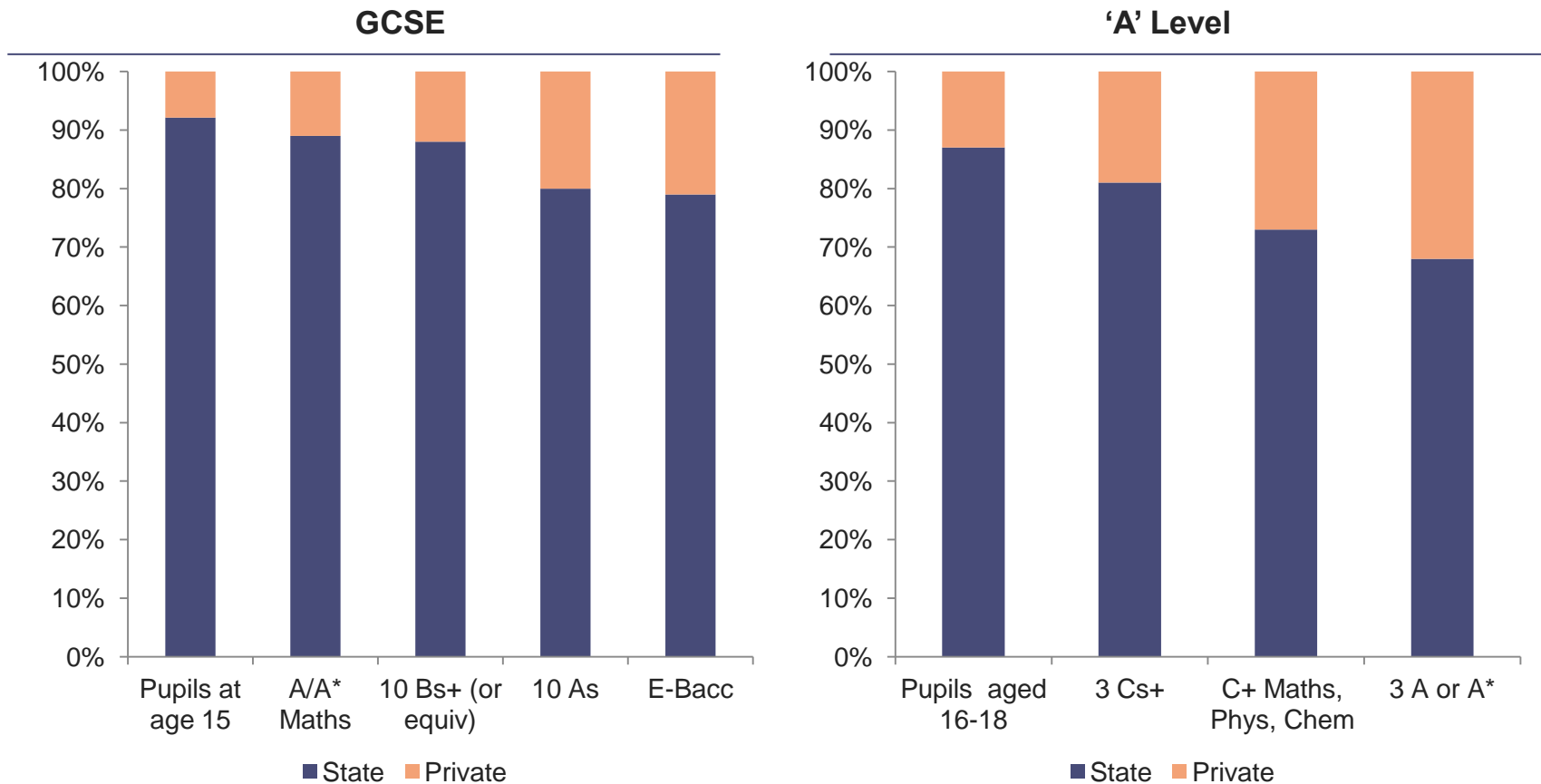
## ...is entirely explained by prior attainment



**The problem is that only 3% of the lowest socio-economic group get BBB+ versus 25% of the highest group**

# 5. University is the top determinant of later opportunities – so pre-18 attainment is key **Contd.**

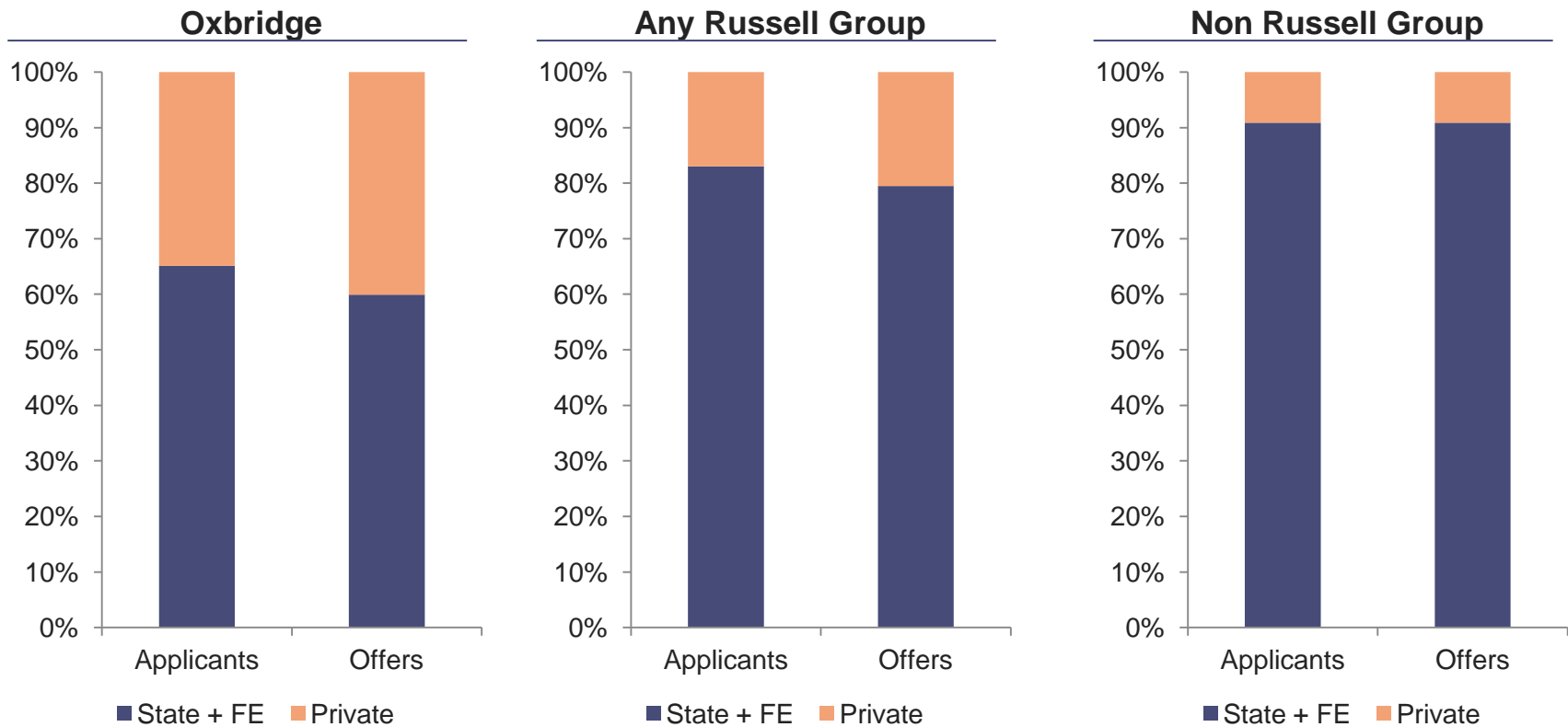
The state/private differences really open up at 'A' Level



**Private schools may only have 7% of pupils overall, but they account for 32% of AAAs at 'A' Level**

# 5. University is the top determinant of later opportunities – so pre-18 attainment is key **Contd.**

For elite universities, although there is a difference in state / private acceptances, the really big gap is in applications



**(If you do get to university, the gap narrows: a comprehensive pupil with BBB at A Level performs as well in their degree as an independent or grammar school pupil with AAB)**

## 6. But later pathways to mobility are possible, given the will and support

- University is the most common path to increase earnings mobility but not the only one
  - Can be a variety of career routes – helped if professions have multiple entry points and well-oiled internal career ladders
- Later development of ‘non-cognitive skills’ or character traits can be very productive. These skills, such as confidence, leadership, and time-management are highly valued by employers, and have a significant impact on future earnings
- *“If we are serious about social mobility, the ability to obtain more skills later on in life through education or training should be made easier”* – Prof. Alison Wolf
- Once a young person falls out of education, training and work (i.e. they are ‘NEET’), they encounter a range of barriers which make upward mobility more unlikely: youth unemployment is still impacting on individuals’ wages by 13% - 21% at age 42
- However, many disadvantaged young people who are NEET and have struggled at school still respond positively to later opportunities

## 6. But later pathways to mobility are possible, given the will and support **Contd.**



**Prince's Trust**

- Key workplace skills for unemployed / educational under-achievers aged 13-30
- The **Enterprise Programme** supports unemployed young people interested in self employment to explore and test their ideas, develop plans and start their own businesses
- 52% become self-employed; 62% of these still trading two years later



**wates**

- **Building Futures:** two-week accredited Construction / 'Employability' training
- Recognise journey (back) into labour market
- "Confidence, direction and new goals in life"



**MORRISONS**

- Pre-employment work with partners
- Work with schools – but also bring the classroom into work
- 2,500 under 24s in junior management
- 'Shop Floor to Top Floor' case studies
- "The battle for talent is at all levels"

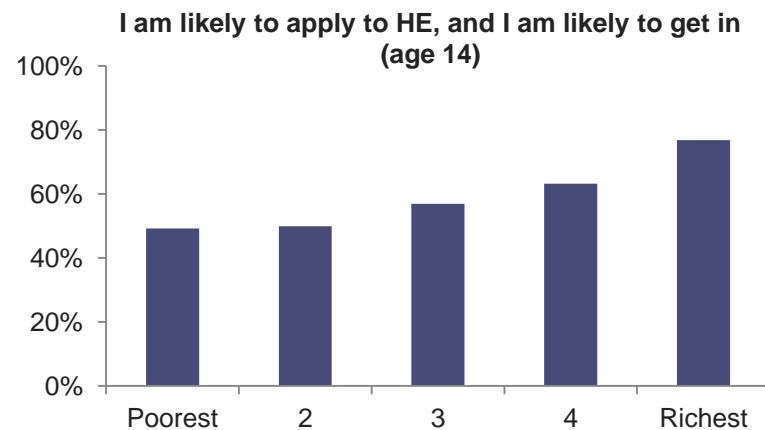
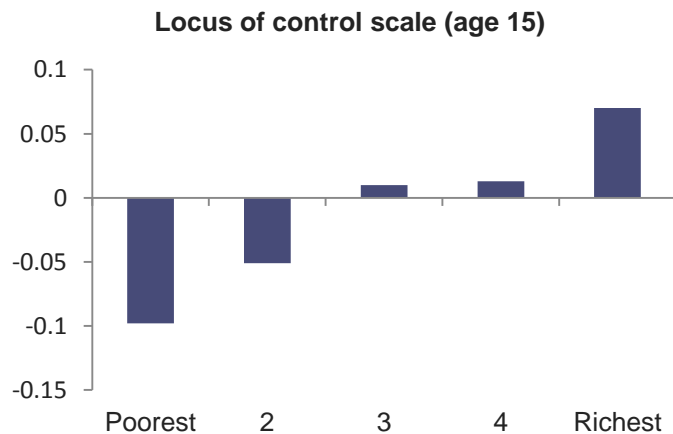


- Workshop days in high youth unemployment areas
- Short work experience programmes, paid interns
- **4talent** programme Identifies creative talent outside 'traditional' areas

# 7. Personal resilience and emotional wellbeing are crucial to success

Developing the social and emotional skills which give young people the resilience, persistence and motivation to deal with the stresses and the rebuffs of everyday life, are key to being able to move up the social ladder

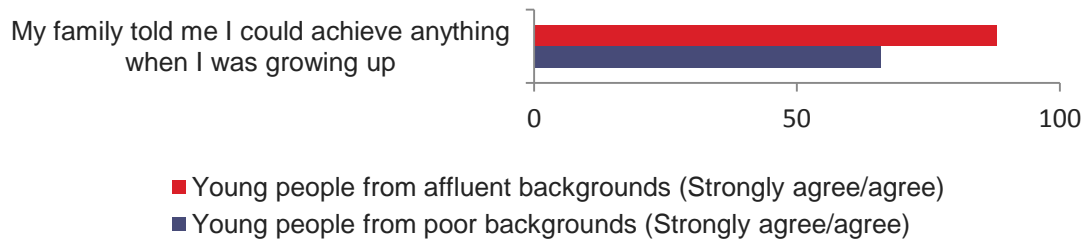
- Blanden, Gregg and Macmillan found that the decline in UK mobility could be partly attributed to the strengthening of the relationship between family income and the 'non-cognitive' abilities such as self-esteem, personal efficacy and concentration
- A young person's expectations, aspirations, and self concepts such as ability beliefs and 'locus of control' play a particularly strong role in mobility
  - 77% of children aged 14 from the richest families report that they are likely to apply to university and likely to get in, compared with 49% of children from amongst the poorest families.



'Locus of control' refers to an individual's belief that they have the power to control what will happen in their lives

# 7. Personal resilience and emotional wellbeing are crucial to success **Contd.**

- Young people from affluent backgrounds are significantly more likely to be told by their family that “they can achieve anything.”
- More than one in four young people from poor backgrounds feel that “people like them don’t succeed in life.”

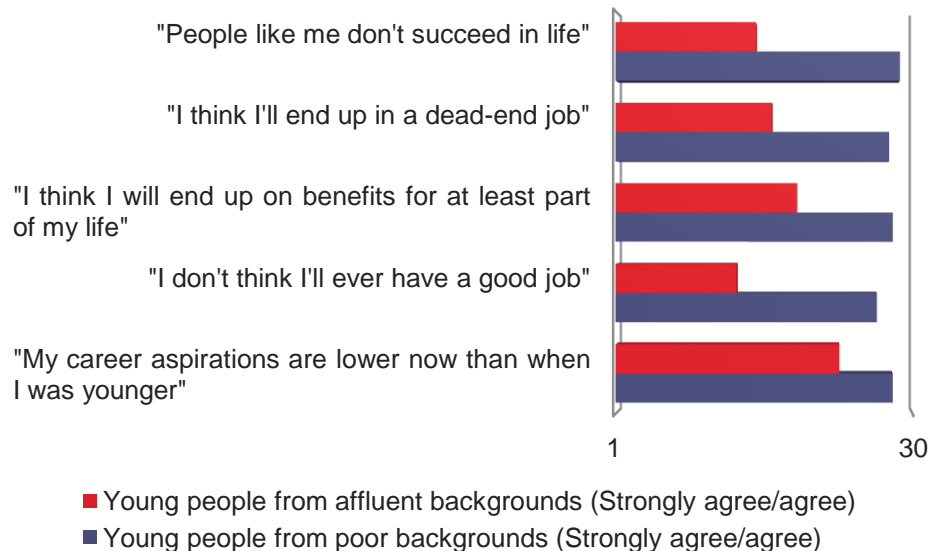


However...

...skills such as resilience, self-belief and persistence can be taught. Heckman found a clear economic return for investing early in children, particularly disadvantaged children.

Focusing solely on earnings gains, returns to cash invested are as high as 15-17%

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:



# For further study: Challenges from our findings

What should policy-makers prioritise for consideration?

	Breaking out	Moving on up	Stars to shine
1. The attainment gap starts before Age 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Earlier identification</li> <li>• How to reach the hardest to reach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programmes for parenting</li> <li>• Early years staff development</li> </ul>	
2. Breaking the cycle through education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupil premium programmes</li> <li>• Children in Care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School admissions systems / policy</li> <li>• Best practice careers advice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs-blind / assisted places / selective</li> </ul>
3. Key variable: quality of teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attracting best teachers to places of greatest need</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What makes a great teacher</li> <li>• Existing teachers' CPD</li> </ul>	
4. Uneven opportunities / participation outside school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Out of school activities vouchers</li> <li>• Incentives?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School extra-curricular / enrichment programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internships / HE exposure</li> <li>• Top programmes (D of E etc)</li> </ul>
5. Pre-18 attainment & university access key		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Level focus</li> <li>• Potential for contextual admissions programmes</li> </ul>	
6. 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> chances post 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic Maths &amp; English at 16-18</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing non-cognitive skills ... What does that really mean?</li> <li>• Professions' entry routes</li> </ul>	
7. Emotional well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How best to build resilience, persistence, motivation &amp; self-esteem to help young people deal with life's problems without being knocked off course</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to replicate 'Public School confidence'</li> </ul>



## For further study: 7 things we don't know

Realistically, we are not going to be able to address all these issues, but we would encourage academics towards further study of these matters which we consider of high importance for public policy

We do know...	But we don't know...
Distribution of innate ability is clearly a strong factor in test scores at any age	How much. And therefore, how much of the difference in opportunity is really there to 'go after'
Teachers hold the key to educational attainment	The extent of this in quantifiable terms in a UK context
In days gone by many of today's elite schools were open to more bright children regardless of ability to pay	The extent to which the advantages of those settings can be replicated in a comprehensive-intake state school setting
Out-of-school matters as well as in-school	Which extra-curricular activities have most impact – and what works in driving participation
Contextual HE admissions have had some success	How this would apply at large scale and between rich/poor and different types of setting
Non-academic skills such as leadership, teamwork, customer empathy etc are very important at work	How much these skills can mitigate a deficit in academic skills/qualifications; how to develop them; and exactly which ones
'Hollowing out' or the 'hour glass' labour market look set to create new challenges for mobility	How this challenge will manifest itself – and how to rise to it

# **The all-party parliamentary group on Social Mobility Forward programme (subject to change)**

- Higher Education
- Careers advice / mentoring / role models
- Enterprise
- Geography
- Disability / Gender / Ethnicity

**All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Mobility**

**Damian Hinds MP Hazel Blears MP Baroness Claire Tyler Eric Ollerenshaw MP Jack Lopresti MP Baroness Estelle Morris Stephen Gilbert MP**

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