

What would a socially-just education system look like?

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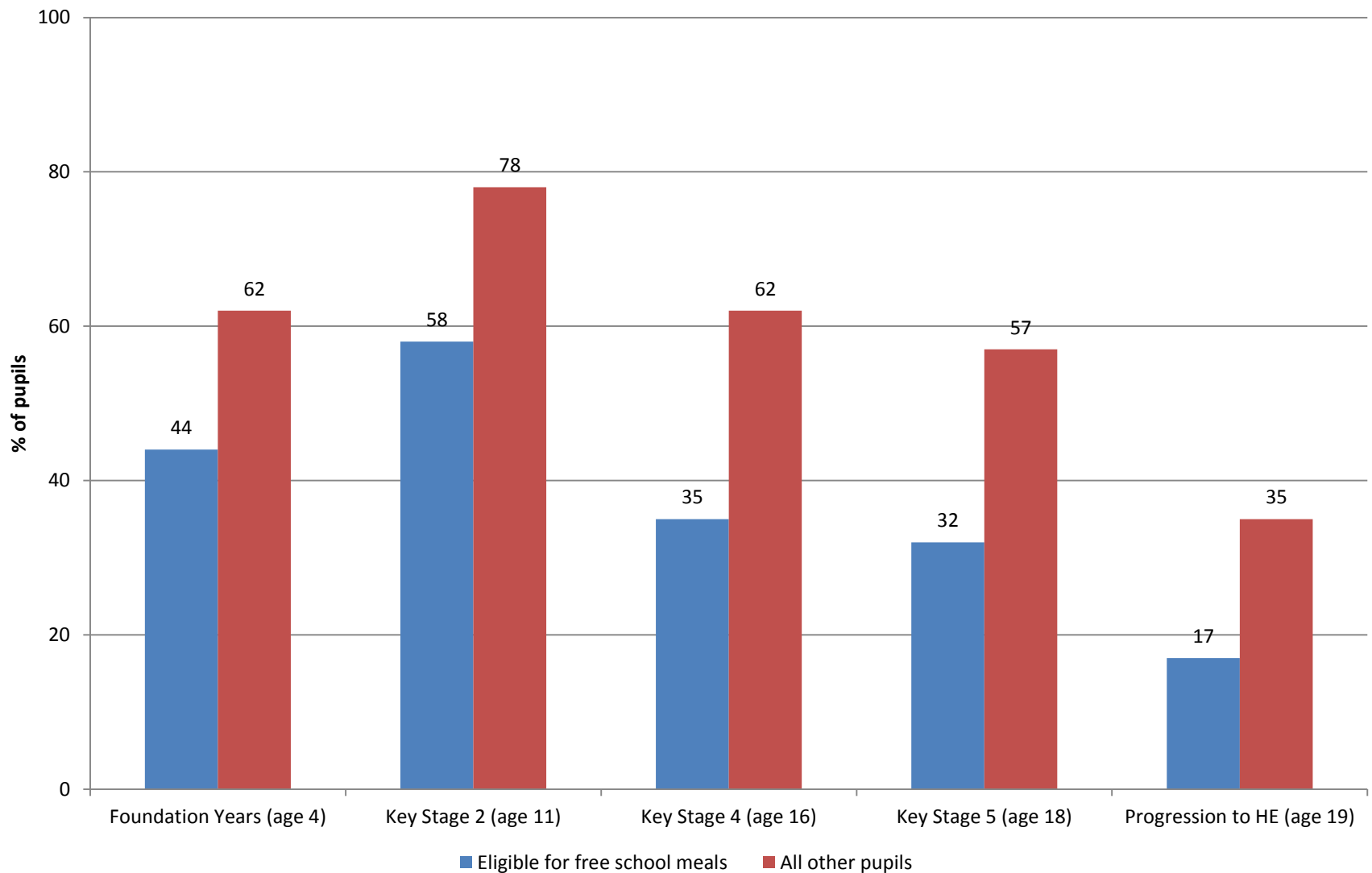
Social Injustice

Inequality:

- Outcomes (attainment gaps)
- Experience (practices of schooling)

Meritocracy?

- 36.3% of young people on free school meals (FSM) achieve 5 A*-C including Maths and English at GCSE, compared to 62.6% not taking FSM.
- Young people from the richest fifth of families are nearly three times more likely to go to university than the poorest fifth (Anders, 2012).
- Only 7% of children attend private schools, but 17% Russell group university entrants and 34% of Oxbridge entrants have been privately educated.
- The highest-performing 15 year olds from poor back-grounds are, on average, two years behind the highest-performing pupils from privileged backgrounds for reading ability (Jerrim, 2012)



Source: Statistics from the Department for Education (2010-11) and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (2008-09), as cited in Cabinet Office, 2012.

Current Government Initiatives

- Academies and Free Schools (see <http://www.academiescommission.org/>)
- Pupil Premium
- E-Bac 'powerful knowledge' curriculum
- High levels of accountability

Practices of schooling: Schooling as damage

- Schooling for inequality: processes of distinction
- Institutional structures and classroom management: schooling as panopticon
- Pupil brutalisation
- (Damage to teachers)

Tensions in our analysis

- Equality of offer v personalisation and autonomy
- Locally relevant/engaging curricula v national entitlement to 'high status knowledge'
- Teacher professionalism and autonomy v teacher limitations and accountability
- School autonomy v school accountability
- Mandatory attendance v democracy
- Local democracy v universal principles
- Our analysis: Proactive or reactive?

Future principles (for equity *and* engagement)?

- School collaboration
- Professionalism and CPD in the teacher workforce
- Fair admissions
- Entitlement to a curriculum that balances core subjects and necessary knowledge with choice, pleasure and engagement
- A common offer to 16, and early intervention to ensure common achievement
- Policy and practice built on research evidence
- Mandatory, but more democratic than currently
- Full service schools
- Education for agency and citizenship, as well as employability
- Less setting and streaming. High learning targets (expectations), combined with CVA measures for schools.

Publications alluded to:

- Francis, B. (2010) *(Un)Satisfactory? Enhancing life chances by improving 'Satisfactory' schools*, London: RSA.
- Francis, B. & Mills, M. (2012) Schools as damaging organisations – and instigating a dialogue concerning alternative models, *Pedagogy, Culture and Society*. Vol. 20 (2).
- Francis, B. & Mills, M. (2012) Editorial, Special Issue of *Journal of Education Policy*, 'What Would a Socially-Just School System Look Like?' Vol. 27 (5).