



Fair Education Alliance  
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Dear Prime Minister,

**RE: Extending the National Tutoring Programme**

We would like to formally congratulate you on the launch of the National Tutoring Programme (NTP). Over 70 members of the Fair Education Alliance, including businesses and charities committed to tackling education inequality, backed this policy this summer. We know that one-to-one or small-group tuition is one of the most robust interventions in education, and will help many children from disadvantaged backgrounds who have lost out on learning this year due to Covid-19, get back on track.

Already in the first half term of this academic year, non-profit members of the Fair Education Alliance delivered over 6,000 tutoring sessions - and we hope that with the launch of the NTP many are able to scale their work to reach thousands more children and young people across the country.

We are delighted that the NTP is now up-and-running and that school pupils are benefitting from tuition. While the NTP is to be commended, we are writing to you now to urge you to build on this policy. Despite the best efforts of the education sector, it is now clear that the impact of Covid-19 on education will continue well beyond the current academic year. Early research indicates that children who started secondary school this autumn are nearly two years behind their expected progress in writing, when compared to previous cohorts<sup>1</sup>. This pattern will be repeated across year groups - and will have a disproportionately negative impact on those who are vulnerable and from disadvantaged backgrounds.

As a result, we would urge you to consider extending the NTP both in duration and also in scope. A one-year policy will not be enough to mitigate the exponential learning loss that children and young people have experienced - and that many continue to experience - due to the public health crisis. In addition, 16-19-year-olds from disadvantaged backgrounds - who are the closest to a challenging labour market and most at risk of becoming Not in Education Employment or Training, are currently unable to benefit from the funding allocated through the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF).

We believe that extending the NTP into a three-year programme that includes support for young people aged 16 to 19, will both limit the attainment gap widening and play a considerable part in your commitment to level up for those students who have fallen behind. The EEF have confirmed that the NTP will support 250,000 pupils during the current academic year, with the programme due to end in July 2021. Yet more than 1.4 million children are eligible for free school meals, and thousands more aged 16-19-year-olds are classed as disadvantaged. These figures are rising rapidly during the public health crisis. With multi-year funding and a broader scope in age, we believe that the NTP would be able to reach the majority of these students. Its extension would mean all schools and colleges are able to meaningfully embed high-quality tutoring in their offer to students from poorer backgrounds and harness the potential of this programme to boost outcomes.

We acknowledge the extraordinary pressures on the public finances right now. However, there is a powerful economic and social case for extending the NTP. Without extra support to address lost learning, thousands of children and young people may now be less likely to secure basic

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<sup>1</sup> TES (October 2020), '[Year 7s going backwards - now nearly 22 months behind](#)'



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qualifications or fulfil their potential and may find it harder to access higher-level qualifications or employment later on in life. Consequently, the return on investment from extending the NTP would be significant.

Moreover, we strongly welcome the intention you set out in your speech to the Conservative Party conference in October, to take further and build on the value of one-to-one and small group teaching. We believe that embedding access to tuition for children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds into the education system long-term, could be a transformational, positive outcome to come out of this crisis. Access to tuition for this group has the potential to play a pivotal part in closing the country's attainment gap in the long-term. We believe that the increased capacity to deliver tuition nationwide in schools and colleges that would result from extending the NTP could form the starting point for further, sustainable policy in this area.

We look forward to hearing from you, and we would be happy to brief you, your Ministers and your officials if this would be helpful.

This letter is copied to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretary of State for Education, the Minister of State for School Standards, the Minister of State for Apprenticeships and Skills and Director of the Policy Unit, Munira Mirza.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Burns, Principal at Ormiston Forge

Julian Drinkall, CEO of Academies Enterprise Trust

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