

Liberal Vannin

Policy Discussion Paper

On

Education & Training

Manifesto Pledge (What we will do)

The Liberal Vannin Party will develop a Policy on Education and Training based on the premise that the whole of our educational system should work for everyone and that we should put an equal value on all children whether they are academic or not. Education should not be judged purely on statistical achievements and the drive towards administrative excellence as opposed to educational excellence has to be halted.

We will develop a 'time enough' policy when evaluating new ideas or new initiatives which come from the UK and which may not necessarily be suitable for the Island.

The Liberal Vannin Party believe that the protection of our education system has to be a number one priority and that the present grant system for students to attend University must be retained at all costs - they are the future of the Island.

We will encourage further development of vocational and life skill education to enable our future Manx citizens to realise their maximum potential as well-balanced and productive members of our society. We recognise that education is a life long learning process starting at infancy and progressing throughout life and we are committed to the review of the current style of curriculum taught in schools which is out of date. We would also investigate providing more parental choice in school selection.

Policy Statements (How we will do it)

Academic Education (Traditional Schooling up to 18)

The Party will protect the right of all our children to have an education that will help them to achieve their maximum potential in life. Children from the poorest homes who have the academic ability can take full advantage of an inclusive and comprehensive educational system which is fully resourced by the taxpayer of the Isle of Man.

We recognise that education is not just about academic achievements and exam results. Education needs to value the less academically inclined pupils and provide the resources to maximise their potential and opportunities to play a full and active role in our society. Children with learning difficulties must be given the opportunity and resources to reach their full potential and as part of an inclusive education system this will give other students the opportunity to appreciate and value that each one of us have a contribution to make to society as a whole.

The policy of 'buying in' services to deal with troubled and troublesome children has to cease. The Manx Government in partnership with parents should take full responsibility for these often ignored and neglected future citizens. Parents must take an active role to ensure their children do not behave disruptively and inhibit the educational opportunities of others. Addressing antisocial behaviour should be the ultimate responsibility of the parent and not the teacher with parents taking full responsibility for the liabilities created resulting from the actions of their children.

The Party believe that blindly following education reforms from the UK has led to a situation of confusion and diminished morale among the teaching profession and before we increase any more levels of management in Education we should address this issue.

Higher Education (18+)

The Liberal Vannin Party does not endorse the UK system of student loans and will continue the commitment of providing grants to Manx students wishing to further their studies at University level. We recognise that education is for life and we would look at developing strategies to support those individuals who wish to further their adult education – especially as this enhances their economic value to the Island. We believe in providing education for skills needed so that the local workforce can apply for the most highly paid and prestigious jobs thus ensuring that they do not go to off Island candidates.

Professional and Vocational Development

The Liberal Vannin Party will develop a progressive policy of both academic and vocational education for mature students in areas of skills shortage with financial assistance provided where appropriate.

We will work towards making the apprenticeship schemes more financially viable for both students and the employers. The Government must lead by example by creating the opportunities in this area given that they are the largest employer on the Island.

The Liberal Vannin Party is committed, where possible, to providing educational courses on the Island to give the opportunity to those who have family commitments who are seeking a change of career to do so. Where these courses suffer from insufficient numbers to make them economically viable we will make up the numbers by offering spare places to either UK based fee paying students or to third world support organisations such as Christian Aid as part of our commitment to overseas aid programmes.

The Liberal Vannin Party believe it is more important to teach a man to fish and feed himself for life than it is to provide him with a free meal - this way everyone gains.