

Blair to Outline School Reform Plan - Evening Standard  
3 March 2005

Tony Blair will launch a "mini-manifesto" for reforming schools, pledging to give parents more power over their children's education.

The Prime Minister will outline moves to offer children "tailored" tuition in smaller groups than normal classes - or even on their own - during the day and after school.

Aides said Labour was planning to open up opportunities which in the past were available only if parents paid for private tuition or sent their children to public schools.

Parents will be at the heart of the document - the first of a series of campaign papers which will form the basis for the Labour manifesto at the coming General Election.

Mr Blair is expected to say: "If re-elected for a third term, we will carry through a fundamental system-wide change: to put 'parent power' at the heart of the education system."

Instead of the current system of parents' evenings, the Government wants an ongoing "dialogue" between parents and schools.

The document will promise to give pupils who require extra help the personal support they need, while making sure the brightest children are stretched.

Mr Blair and Education Secretary Ruth Kelly are expected to say that Labour will give all parents "the choices and opportunities needed for their children to succeed".

The campaign document will set out Labour's claimed successes since 1997, including 28,500 more teachers and 105,000 more teaching assistants and support staff in schools.

The document will trumpet higher standards in primary schools and at GCSE under Labour.