



**HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR**  
**Ministry of Education, Financial Services, Gaming, Telecommunications and Justice**  
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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**WHO DOES MORE FOR EDUCATION?**

If he ignores the rants of 'acerbic accusations,' 'mendacious assertions,' and 'glaring examples' in the GSD's recent Press Release, the Minister for Education can calmly confirm that his current plans are designed to remedy the 16 years of educational neglect by the GSD.

Instead of providing any firm commitments on the issue of school populations in their last manifesto, the GSD stated that they would review certain of their own policies. No doubt this lack of a firm commitment arose from their failure to deliver what they previously promised. For example, their 2007 manifesto actually contained an impression of the new school planned for the Mid Town area to serve the Mid Harbour estate. Whilst the idea of a school on the old Number 4 Dock was considered, everyone can see that they did not even start to build on the site and the new estate was built without a school. This lack of additional school places has caused real difficulty for parents in Mid Harbour, as children from the estate now need to travel to St Mary's First School or Sacred Heart Middle School. Understandably, their parents are not best pleased with the previous administration's lack of forward planning, so perhaps the Opposition spokesperson on education should ask these parents if they are happy with the GSD's educational provision?

The Government needs to deal with a similar lack of forward planning in the South District where, again, the school-age population has increased rapidly in recent years.

In a TV programme, the Opposition spokesman on education said that the GSD would, had they been elected, have carried out a root and branch review of education. Why would such a review have been necessary when they had already been in power for fifteen years? To carry out a root and branch review would be a clear acknowledgement of their failure to address these issues during their time in Government.

It is the GSLP/Liberal government that has made a significant and unprecedented investment in education such as the 47 new teachers and, in effect, 28 classroom aides who have been recruited to work in our schools. It has eradicated the immoral practice of permanent supply teachers and formally recognised the years worked on

supply, including a retrospective pension contribution, for all teachers engaged on a permanent basis. Also, the Government has granted full employment rights, including pension provisions, through fixed-term contracts of employment for all supply teachers engaged to cover a temporary absence of three months or more.

Significantly, the Education Department budget has been increased by over 20% and mandatory scholarships for second degrees have been introduced.

In terms of physical assets, a 9-man dedicated schools' maintenance team has been recruited and an extension with 6 classrooms and other facilities has been built (in record time) at Notre Dame School. Also, work on an extension to St Martin's school is about to start.

Clearly, the GSLP/Liberal government has achieved more in 10 months in education than the GSD achieved in 16 years. The evidence is there for all to see. The Government promised to make education a priority and has done so. By contrast, the GSD made many promises but delivered none of them.