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Parental responsibility in schooling depends on choice [1]

Written by **James Stanfield** [2] | Monday 5 September 2011

It would appear that the reason why the UK¹s education sector will remain closed to private investment, innovation and entrepreneurship for the foreseeable future is because Nick Clegg and his Liberal colleagues personally dislike the idea of giving highly efficient and successful for-profit companies the opportunity to transform the way education is designed and delivered across the UK. That said, Nick Clegg is now also calling for more parental responsibility in education which sounds like a positive development. Mr Clegg can?t have his cake and eat it too.

If parents are responsible for their children?s education then they can only fulfil this responsibility if they are free to choose the nature and form of education which their children receive. As a result, if the freedom of parents to choose is restricted then this will also undermine parental responsibility. Parental responsibility and the freedom of parents to choose are therefore intimately linked and are best viewed as two sides of the same coin.

Governments therefore have a clear choice. They can either promote parental responsibility in education by guaranteeing that they have the greatest possible variety of educational opportunities to choose from or they can undermine parental responsibility in education by restricting the variety of different educational opportunities which parents are free to choose from.

Therefore, by refusing to allow a variety of different education providers to compete on a fair and level playing field, Nick Clegg is continuing to undermine parental responsibility in education. Any rhetoric about wanting to increase parental responsibility in education should therefore be challenged as being in direct conflict with his position on refusing to allow for-profit companies to compete in education.

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