



The Children, Schools and Families Bill should include a statutory duty for students to be offered triple science GCSEs.

Triple science increases student uptake and performance in science A levels and the wealth of opportunities that they bring.

- A tenth of students take three separate biology, physics and chemistry GCSEs (triple science).
- Pupils who take triple science get 76% more A or B grades at chemistry A-level than pupils who take two combined sciences.¹
- Students who study triple science are more likely to continue studying science at A level and beyond.²
- Over nine out of ten businesses employ people with science, technology, engineering and mathematical skills, but two thirds of all employers report difficulty recruiting enough of these workers.³

The Government has tried but failed to ensure that all able and interested students can take triple science.

The Government made a commitment that all pupils achieving at least level 6 at Key Stage 3 would be entitled to study triple science GCSE (although, not necessarily in their own schools) and that all specialist science schools would offer it by September 2008.²

- In 2008, only 32% of maintained schools entered students into triple science. It is not known how many science specialist schools entered students into triple science, but it was not more than 72%.⁴
- While independent schools accounted for 9% of all GCSE entries they made up 18% of entries into triple science and while grammar schools accounted for 6.5% of all entries they made up 17% of those in triple science.⁵
- Only 2% of children eligible for free school meals studied triple science in 2007.

The Children, Schools and Families Bill needs to include a statutory duty that ensures that all schools offer students triple science.

The Children, Schools and Families Bill proposes parent and pupil guarantees which will lay out specific entitlements and a means of redress if expectations are not met. The white paper stated that there will be a pupil guarantee for triple science GCSE for the highest achieving students. It is not clear why such a guarantee will succeed where the previous entitlement failed, whereas a statutory duty should ensure success.

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¹ Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004-2014: Next Steps, 2006 budget.

² Success in science, Ofsted, June 2008.

³ Education and skills survey 2009. CBI/Nord Anglia education and skills survey 2009

⁴ DCSF statistics and Parliamentary question, Mr Gibb, 10 June 2009, 277957

⁵ JCQ, 2009.