

Edda for MYP: My manifesto

Hello, my name is Edda and I am delighted to be running as a candidate for the Member of Youth Parliament for Gateshead. For 4 years, I have been a committed member of the Gateshead Youth Assembly, helping to deliver projects such as the Big Red Bus Scheme, Project Pheonix: Green Gateshead, as well as providing my secondary school with recycling bins. In addition to my involvement in projects, I have been the co-chair of the Youth Assembly (alongside the wonderful Hannah Craggs), so have been leading youth sessions and empowering young people for two years. We as co-chairs have attended events on behalf of the Gateshead Youth Assembly, such as sitting on a community panel to interview the next Chief Executive of the Council, and have ourselves interviewed Martin Gannon (the leader of the council) and Gary Hailey (council member). I want to use my expertise from my time on the Youth Assembly to serve the young people of Gateshead as best I can.

On a larger level, I am part of the national campaign, Bite Back, which aims to create a fairer food system by challenging fast food companies and their constant unhealthy advertising. Through this, I have learned valuable interpersonal skills, and I have gained skills in networking with other young activists. I already know many MYPs and can collaborate and support them on projects. In addition, I was the deputy for the previous MYP, Maebh Carey, in Gateshead, so have been Gateshead's interim MYP ever since she stepped down in September 2025. As a result I have already attended Youth Con and a House of Commons debate, as an MYP. This means I have the most knowledge for any MYP candidate in Gateshead over how to navigate the UK Youth Parliament and how to be an MYP.

This being said, I want you to know that the reasons you should vote for me extend beyond my knowledge and experience. As your MYP, I will commit to three key promises.

1. Promoting anti-racism
2. Climate action
3. Empowering young people

Promoting anti-racism

Within our curriculum and wider British society, there is a fundamental lack of understanding on how colonization and racial injustices in the past have shaped our economic, social and political systems. Structural racism in the UK leads to racial inequality in all areas of life, including employment, higher education, crime and living standards. It shouldn't be the job of young activists, pressure groups and crisis lines to promote anti-racism. Anti-racist education should be entrenched in our curriculum and educational institutes should be trained to be intrinsically anti-racist. It is not enough for schools to simply promote "tolerance" while Black workers with degrees earn 23.1 per cent less on average than White workers and while 37.4 per cent of Black people and 44.8 per cent of Asian people report unsafe being at home or around their local area, compared with 29.2 per cent of White people. In addition, schools are criminally underfunded and lack the funding, resources and expertise to promote anti-racism on their own.

The Government needs to support and fund a comprehensive approach to make anti-racism a distinct and compulsory topic within our PSHE curriculum.

As a result my manifesto points I will put forward to the UK Youth Parliament will be:

1. Make anti-racism a distinct and compulsory topic in the PSHE and Citizenship curriculum which is taught at least annually. The Government will work with other resource providers to create anti-racist resources available to all schools.
2. Full comprehensive anti-racist training for teachers, particularly for PSHE, Citizenship, Humanities and English teachers.
3. All trainee teachers will be given training on anti-racism and all Master in Education courses will have a compulsory anti-racist module.

Not only this, but as part of my anti-racist campaigning, I will run an anti-racist zine campaign. I will work alongside other young activists in the area, as well as the Youth Equality Coalition, to produce zines that not only empower anti-racists and create a sense of community, but also educate people in my local area about racism.

I will also continue to speak out about racism and attend meetings with anti-racist organisations in the North East

Climate action

We all understand that solutions to the climate crisis include governments and huge fossil fuel corporations collaborating globally to help achieve net zero, and it can feel like nothing we can do as individuals will have an impact. Our government does have net zero laws, however have continued to pay oil and gas companies an estimated £17.5 billion in subsidies and tax relief per year, contributing massively to their profits. To be clear, this means the tax payer's money is still going to fund oil and gas companies and is estimated that this will increase over the Labour Government, totally to around £87.5 billion over 5 years. This money should clearly be redirected towards schemes helping to phase out fossil fuels, rather than continue to support the trillion-dollar industries that are causing this climate crisis.

As a result my manifesto point for the UK youth parliament:

1. The UK Government to immediately end all tax reliefs for the fossil fuel industry.

Despite this, I do believe that although we as individuals can't fix the climate crisis, we can have an impact on our local environment and community. This is why me along with Hannah Craggs and Daisy Thompson have launched the Pheonix Project: Green Gateshead.

This project is an eco-friendly competition across all primary schools in Gateshead, where we will give primary schools certain eco-friendly tasks and reward them points based on their completion. The idea of being eco-friendly in your day-to-day life has become somewhat toxic and exclusionary, disregarding people who may not have the time and resources to commit to being green. For example, although opposing fast fashion is an essential part of fighting climate

change, some people can only afford fast fashion and it is the most readily available source to them. This is why all the tasks we have designed will be free for the schools to do, and we hope this competition will build stronger communities within schools and a stronger sense of stewardship for their local environment. Fighting climate change should bring us together and reconnect us with the natural world.

Alongside this, I am part of the Climate Leader's Fellowship, which is an international organisation empowering young activists to make climate action projects in their local community. Through this, I will continue to collaborate and bounce off other young activists around the globe.

Empowering young people

Although issues like rising mental health problems and bullying in schools have a variety of sources, I believe that centrally, young people are not empowered in UK society. We go to school, which has the primary focus of training us to sit exams. We go on our phones, with apps that have addictive algorithms to train our minds into constant consumption. We go outside, but there's nothing to do, due to rising transport costs and lack of youth clubs.

Not only this, but when we do reach adulthood, we are faced with the reality that, even after we may spend thousands on a university degree, we are entering into vicious job and housing markets. Our futures are also tainted by the reality of rising global tensions and conflict, an unprecedented health crisis and of course the global climate crisis.

The very least the UK can do, in my opinion, is cancel university tuition fees and as such will be one of my manifesto points.

1. Cancel university tuition fees

Not only this, but I am passionate about empowering young people in my local community. As I've said before, through my role on the Youth Assembly, I have had a huge impact on the young people who have joined, through supporting them to pursue projects and leading sessions to be as inclusive and fun as possible. Project Pheonix: Green Gateshead will also aim to encourage primary school students to get involved in social action, and will hopefully inspire them to join the Gateshead Youth Assembly when they get to secondary school. Not only this, but on my website, I will create a blog with the aim of informing young people about activism and social action in the UK, but also allow them to write pieces to be shared on the website. This is significant as I have felt at times excluded and unsure how to navigate youth activism in the UK, and don't want other young people to feel the same.

Empowering young people to feel like they can have a say in politics and give them a purpose, can improve mental health and general wellbeing. While many young people feel understandably pessimistic about their future, it is important now more than ever to show young people they are important and can make a significant difference.