# Michael Gove's peerage sparks controversy and criticism amid accusations of cronyism



Michael Gove has received a peerage in Rishi Sunak's delayed resignation honours list, a move that has stirred significant controversy and criticism. The former Cabinet minister, who has held various high-profile government positions over nearly two decades, joins other notable figures such as Jeremy Hunt and James Cleverly, who also received knighthoods in this honours list.

The awarding of peerages has triggered accusations of "shameless cronyism" from opposition parties, who suggest that Mr Sunak's decisions amount to "rewards for failure." Gove's tenure as Education Secretary from 2010 to 2014 was particularly scrutinised, with education unions vehement in their disapproval of his elevation. Daniel Kebede, General Secretary of the National Education Union, was quoted by The Mirror, stating that Gove’s peerage was a "slap in the face" for those impacted by his policies, particularly noting the deterioration of student mental health and the challenging environment for teachers during his administration. He asserted, "Michael Gove inflicted deep harm to our education system, and we are living with his legacy to this day."

During a career that has included roles in the Environment Department, the Ministry of Justice, and as Housing Secretary, Mr Gove has been no stranger to controversy. His reputation as a polarising figure is underscored by several incidents throughout his political career. For instance, in 2022, he was criticised after mimicking a Scouse accent while discussing the cost of living crisis, which Labour's Lisa Nandy lambasted as inappropriate given the seriousness of family financial struggles.

His contentious period as Education Secretary also saw him labelled as "The Blob" by critics, a term he used to characterize unions and teachers who opposed his reforms. Pepe Di’Iasio, General Secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, acknowledged Gove's controversial methods but noted his commitment to high educational standards, describing him as a "controversial Education Secretary."

In the realm of personal conduct, Mr Gove's appearances on the dancefloor have also attracted attention, with reports of him dancing to disco music and jungle beats at clubs an unexpected counterpoint to his political persona. In recent years, he was observed dancing late into the night in Aberdeen, moments that appeared to clash with the serious nature of his governmental responsibilities.

Accusations of hypocrisy have also marked Mr Gove’s career. In 2019, he admitted to previously using cocaine, despite having publicly condemned middle-class drug users in a resurfaced opinion piece from 1999. This admission brought to light inconsistencies in his approach to drug policy, further fuelling criticism against him.

Moreover, Mr Gove's decision to cancel the comprehensive school building programme shortly after taking office was met with backlash and legal challenges, which described his actions as an "abuse of power". He later conceded that the manner of executing these decisions was "crass and insensitive."

Issues during his tenure as Housing Secretary also came under fire. Mr Gove's failure to fulfill promises regarding banning "no-fault" evictions drew criticism, particularly as numbers of child homelessness soared, and the Labour Party proceeded with their own renters' rights legislation.

Gove's role in the Brexit campaign further cemented his controversial status, especially after he diverged from then-prime minister David Cameron's pro-Remain stance and subsequently undermined Boris Johnson's ambition to be Prime Minister. His actions during this period have been heavily scrutinised, with Labour MP Stephen Kinnock suggesting his decisions have caused "huge damage" to the nation.

Additional controversies include remarks made about the rapper Stormzy and Gove's involvement in lapses surrounding the declaration of VIP hospitality. In a historical context, resurfaced comments from his university days highlight instances of crude jokes and derogatory stereotypes that have prompted significant backlash.

As Gove prepares to join the House of Lords, public and political sentiment remains divided, reflecting on his lengthy and often contentious career within the UK's political landscape.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://news.sky.com/story/veteran-cabinet-minister-michael-gove-awarded-peerage-in-rishi-sunaks-resignation-honours-13346250> - This article reports on Michael Gove receiving a peerage in Rishi Sunak's resignation honours, highlighting Gove's various cabinet roles and his influence on Conservative governments.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/rishi-sunak-peerages-resignation-honours-gove-b2731507.html> - The article provides details on other notable figures who received honours, including Jeremy Hunt and James Cleverly, and discusses traditional practices of outgoing prime ministers awarding peerages.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/michael-gove-rishi-sunak-peerage-b2731425.html> - This piece further elaborates on Gove's career, his influence in Conservative governments, and the controversy surrounding his peerage.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2015/jul/02/michael-gove-education-reforms-uk-schools-gcse> - Although not directly referenced, this link would typically discuss Gove's education reforms, highlighting the reactions from unions and students, providing context for his controversial tenure as Education Secretary.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/jun/11/michael-gove-confesses-to-taking-cocaine> - This article reports on Gove's admission to using cocaine, highlighting inconsistencies in his public stance on drug policy.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-58720992> - Although not directly referenced in search results, this link typically would cover Gove's political career and controversies, providing additional context for public and political scrutiny.
* <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/michael-goves-most-controversial-moments-35037417> - Please view link - unable to able to access data