



House of Commons
Education Committee

Careers guidance for young people: The impact of the new duty on schools

Seventh Report of Session 2012–13

Volume I



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minutes*

Volume 2: Oral and Written evidence

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The Education Committee

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Summary

Access to good quality independent and impartial careers guidance is essential for all young people, particularly given factors such as the raising of the participation age, the expanding range of educational choices available and high levels of youth unemployment.

The Education Act 2011 introduced a statutory duty on schools in England to secure access to independent, impartial careers guidance for their pupils in years 9–11. The duty came into force in September 2012 and we decided to hold an inquiry to coincide with this, to see how schools were responding to their new duty.

The Government's decision to transfer responsibility for careers guidance to schools is regrettable. We have concerns about the consistency, quality, independence and impartiality of careers guidance now being offered to young people. We heard evidence that there is already a worrying deterioration in the overall level of provision for young people. Urgent steps need to be taken by the Government to ensure that young people's needs are met.

We recognise that there must be room for innovation and variation, but we believe that all young people must have access to good quality advice and guidance. We believe that the Government could do more to promote consistency in the offer to young people through central guidance and we recommend that the Government's statutory guidance and practical guide should be combined into a single publication to assist a consistent approach by schools.

We believe that vulnerable young people in particular need careers guidance support and that at present there is too much variation in which groups of young people receive the service. We recommend that the Government promotes the activities of the best performing local authorities so that best practice in identifying and delivering services to targeted young people is shared.

We welcome the Government's decision to extend the duty to young people in year 8 and to 16 to 18 year-olds in school or college, which was announced during the course of our inquiry. The fact that some young people are now required to make decisions about their future in Year 8—for entrance to UTCs and Studio Schools, for example— means that it is necessary for advice and guidance to be offered earlier.

The quality, independence and impartiality of careers guidance offered to young people was a central concern. To help ensure quality, we recommend that schools are required to work towards the Quality in Careers Standard, and to procure guidance services only from qualified providers and individuals.

We believe that face-to-face guidance is an integral part of good quality careers guidance and we recommend that a minimum of one personal careers interview with an independent adviser should be available for every young person.

There must be accountability measures to ensure that schools provide a good quality careers guidance service for their pupils. While we welcome Ofsted's thematic review, we

are not convinced that this offers sufficient incentive for schools to prioritise the provision of careers guidance. Furthermore, we do not think that either destination measures—as they currently stand—or Ofsted inspections are the answer. We recommend that all schools are required to publish an annual careers plan, which would provide transparency about what could be expected in terms of careers work and would set out the resources allocated to these activities.

We recommend that the National Careers Service's remit be expanded to include a capacity-building and brokerage role for schools. This role would include assisting schools in designing their annual careers plan, the dissemination of local labour market information and the promotion of quality standards.

Independent careers advice and guidance has never been as important for young people as it is today. Too many schools lack the skills, incentives or capacity to fulfil the duty put upon them without a number of changes being made. Young people deserve better than the service they are likely to receive under the current arrangements. Schools cannot simply be left to get on with it.

1 Introduction

Background to inquiry

1. The Education Act 2011 introduced a statutory duty on schools in England to secure access to independent, impartial careers guidance for their pupils in years 9–11. This duty came into force in September 2012. Previously the responsibility for careers guidance rested with local authorities and was delivered through the Connexions service. At the same time, schools were released from the statutory duty to provide careers education and work-related learning.

2. Good quality, independent and impartial guidance is an essential service for all young people, especially given the current levels of youth unemployment, the forthcoming introduction of the Raising of the Participation Age and the increasing range of educational and training choices. We therefore decided to hold an inquiry into careers guidance for young people to see how schools were responding to the new duty.

Terms of reference

3. We announced our inquiry in June 2012 with the following terms of reference:

- the purpose, nature, quality and impartiality of careers guidance provided by schools and colleges, including schools with sixth forms and academies, and how well-prepared schools are to fulfil their new duty;
- the extent of face-to-face guidance offered to young people;
- at what age careers guidance should be provided to young people;
- the role of local authorities in careers guidance for young people;
- the effectiveness of targeted guidance and support offered to specific groups, such as Looked After Children, children eligible for Free School Meals, teenage parents, young offenders, those with special educational needs or disabilities and those at risk of becoming NEET;
- the link between careers guidance and the choices young people make on leaving school;
- the overall coherence of the careers guidance offered to young people.

Evidence base for our inquiry

4. We received 83 submissions from a range of organisations and individuals. This includes evidence from employers, career counsellors and career guidance organisations, local

authorities, professional associations, academics in the field, Ofsted and the Department for Education (DfE).

5. We held three formal oral evidence sessions, where we heard from a range of witnesses. These were:

- representatives from post-16 destinations, industry-sector bodies and employers/employer organisations;
- representatives of local authorities and organisations involved in providing targeted guidance and support to vulnerable young people;
- representatives of a range of schools and the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL);
- representatives of careers guidance professionals and the careers sector; and,
- the responsible Minister (Matthew Hancock MP).

6. As part of our inquiry we visited Bradford, where we held informal meetings with: the local authority to discuss its support for the new duty on schools in general, and its support for vulnerable groups in particular; groups of students at Bradford College to hear about their experience of careers guidance and what they would like to get out of it; and local employers at the Bradford Chamber of Commerce.

7. In addition, we held a private seminar with young people involved with the British Youth Council, Centrepoint Parliament, North Tyneside Youth Council, The Prince's Trust, UK Youth and Who Cares? Trust.

8. Notes of these meetings are summarised in annex 1 and annex 2 to this report.

9. The Committee has benefited from the involvement of its specialist adviser, Dr Tristram Hooley of the University of Derby, and we are grateful to him for sharing his expertise.¹

Background information

Current landscape

10. From September all schools—including Academies and Free Schools—have had a statutory duty under the Education Act 2011 to secure access to independent, impartial careers guidance for pupils in years 9–11. At the same time, schools have been relieved of the duty to provide a programme of careers education and work-related learning.

11. Although the duty to secure independent and impartial careers guidance was transferred to schools from local authorities, the funding did not follow. Schools are expected to provide the service from their existing budgets.

¹ Dr Tristram Hooley declared interests as a member of the Career Development Institute and a member of the Careers Sector Strategic Alliance. He is also a member of the Green Party.

12. Local authorities are no longer expected to provide a universal careers service. However, the statutory responsibility requiring local authorities to “encourage, enable and assist the participation of young people in education or training”² remains unchanged. The DfE has advised that local authorities will be required to assist the most vulnerable young people and those at risk of disengaging with education or work.³

13. The DfE published statutory guidance for schools on their new duty in March 2012, which schools are expected to have regard to when deciding on the most appropriate form of careers guidance for their pupils. The guidance states that schools are expected to comply with the requirement to secure careers guidance from an external source but are “free to make arrangements for careers guidance that fit the needs and circumstances of their pupils”. Schools “will be expected to work, as appropriate, in partnership with external and expert providers.”⁴ The guidance explains that, under the statutory duty, careers guidance:

must be presented in an impartial manner and promote the best interests of the pupils to whom it is given. Careers guidance must also include information on all options available in respect of 16-18 education or training, including apprenticeships and other work-based education and training options.⁵

14. The statutory guidance was followed by a practical guide for schools, which was published by the DfE in July 2012. The purpose of this document is to offer additional information that schools may wish to draw on when interpreting their new responsibilities and deciding upon the most appropriate forms of independent careers guidance for their pupils. The practical guide highlights issues such as the importance of face-to-face careers guidance, the need to consider a programme of careers activities and the availability of the National Careers Service (see below).⁶

15. The Government has asked Ofsted to carry out a thematic review of careers guidance to identify good practice and establish a baseline for future improvements in the quality of provision. This will report in summer 2013. In addition, Ofsted’s new inspection arrangements will include an evaluation of a school’s effectiveness in preparing pupils and students for the next stages of their education. According to the DfE, “an important component of this will include consideration of the quality of independent careers guidance.”⁷

National Careers Service

16. On 5 April 2012 the National Careers Service (NCS) was launched, jointly funded by the DfE and by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). Through the

2 Education and Skills Act 2008, section 68

3 Statutory Guidance for Headteachers, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities, DfE, 2012

4 *Ibid.*

5 *Ibid.*

6 Securing Independent Careers Guidance: A Practical Guide for Schools, DfE, 2012

7 Eighth Special Report from the Education Committee, Session 2010–12, *Participation by 16-19 year olds in education and training: Government Response to the Committee’s Fourth Report*, HC 1572

NCS young people have access to careers information from the NCS website and advisers via the telephone, email, text and other online support. Young people do not, however, have access to any face-to-face guidance provision by the NCS and its remit does not extend to working with schools.

Terminology

17. Professionals in the careers guidance field use a range of different terminology. It can be difficult to agree on exact definitions and there is clearly some overlap. Nonetheless, the following serve as working definitions:

- **Careers education** is the delivery of learning as part of the curriculum. Careers education is often closely related to work-experience and other forms of work-related learning.
- **Work-related learning** is the provision of opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding of work and to develop skills for employability through direct experiences of work.
- **Careers information** is the provision of information and resources about courses, occupations and career paths.
- **Careers advice** is more in-depth explanation of information and how to access and use information.
- **Careers guidance or careers counselling** is a deeper intervention in which an individual's skills, attributes and interests are explored in relation to their career options.

Why careers guidance matters

18. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2004) sets out three main public-policy rationales for the delivery of careers education and guidance⁸: first, that it supports engagement with learning and improves the functioning of the education and training system; secondly, that it contributes to the effective operation of the labour market; and thirdly, that it supports social equity and facilitates both social inclusion and social mobility.

19. Steve Stewart, Chairman of Careers England, identified two reasons why good quality guidance was important: first, “there is a moral-principle issue that, as a civilised nation, we should give our very best support to young people to help them make the very best decisions in life [...] the second issue is simply the purely economic issue. As a nation we cannot afford to have too many of our young people in the wrong places doing the wrong things and not contributing”.⁹ The financial cost to the nation was estimated by Dr Deirdre

8 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2004). *Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap*. Paris: OECD.

9 Q 169

Hughes, Chair of the National Careers Council, as a potential loss of £28 billion to the economy if young people are not guided to the right destinations.¹⁰ Careers England estimated that the potential cost of young people making the wrong course choices after year 11 could be as high as £200million per annum.¹¹

20. The responsible Minister, Matthew Hancock, while not placing a figure on the cost of poor choices by young people, agreed that careers guidance has an important impact on the nation's economy and the individual's well-being. He told us that "it is vital in order to help everybody to perform at their best in our country, which is critical if we are going to succeed both as a nation and as an economy, but also for every single individual to achieve their best."¹²

21. We have not tested the profession's estimates of the economic cost of poor choices, but we agree that there is undoubtedly a price to pay for young people who make poor decisions for both the individual and the public purse. The current levels of youth unemployment add to the case for the necessity of good quality guidance for young people. The question we address in this report, therefore, is how to ensure that they receive such guidance under the new arrangements.

10 Q 171

11 Ev 92 Annex A

12 Q 236

2 Transfer of the statutory duty

Rationale for the transfer of the duty

22. The DfE explained its rationale for the transfer of the duty in the context of the failure of the Connexions service to deliver high quality careers guidance for all young people.¹³ The effectiveness of Connexions was generally held to have suffered as a result of its broad remit, which led to resources being focused more on its targeted youth support role than on universal careers guidance. An Ofsted thematic survey in 2010 identified inconsistencies in provision, and a survey of young people in the same year found around half felt that the careers provision was not meeting their needs.¹⁴ The Panel on Fair Access to the Professions also reported in 2009 on the low level of satisfaction with the Connexions service's careers work.

23. While we heard from witnesses that Connexions had provided a quality careers guidance service in parts of the country, there were no calls for its return. The young people we met had mixed views on its effectiveness in providing careers guidance, with the most enthusiastic proponents being those who had accessed the youth support service. Councillor David Simmonds, representing the Local Government Association, cited research carried out with young people:

Some said Connexions was absolutely brilliant; it put them back on the right track, gave them a chance of a job and training that they needed. Others said it was a complete waste of time and they think getting rid of it was the best decision ever made.¹⁵

24. The rationale for transferring the responsibility to schools—and the evidence that it will work in the best interests of young people—is less clear. The Minister framed the transfer of responsibility as part of the overall policy direction of increasing schools' autonomy and accountability. He told us that the Government are “giving, as in many other areas, the responsibility to schools, but then, crucially, holding them to account to deliver on it”.¹⁶ We note, however, that in neither the written evidence nor the Minister's oral evidence to the Committee was a case made that schools are best placed to provide independent and impartial guidance for young people.

25. We looked elsewhere for evidence on the effectiveness of the school-based model for the provision of careers guidance. There is a considerable research base around the practice of careers education and guidance in schools. A recent literature review¹⁷ found that

13 Ev 80

14 *Ibid.*

15 Q 45

16 Q 214

17 Hooley, T., Marriott, J. & Sampson, J.P. (2011). *Fostering College and Career Readiness: How Career Development Activities in Schools Impact on Graduation Rates and Students' Life Success*. Derby: International Centre for Guidance Studies, University of Derby.

careers work in schools could have positive outcomes on the retention of students in the school system¹⁸, on enhancing the academic achievement of students¹⁹, on supporting smooth transitions to learning²⁰ and work²¹ and on career and life success. However, research suggests that the integration of a variety of careers interventions with each other and with the wider school curriculum leads to more effective outcomes.²² Careers work is most effective when it starts early and is delivered by a mix of professional guidance practitioners, teachers and other key stakeholders, and when delivery is supported by appropriate tools and technologies.²³ Finally, the OECD has highlighted the limitations of a purely school-based model, which include a lack of impartiality; weak links with the labour market; and inconsistency.²⁴

26. Witnesses to our inquiry expressed significant doubt about the school-based model as adopted in England. Professor Tony Watts, for example, described the Government's policy as "not delegation to schools; it is abdication".²⁵ He went on to comment that "no high-performing country is abdicating in the way that we are. No country leaves it to schools to do what they wish—none of them."²⁶ In written evidence, he explained:

The Coalition Government's policies on school autonomy are based significantly on claims based on international evidence that this is a feature of high-performing countries in terms of school performance. But while this may be so for pupil attainment, a review of the relevant international evidence indicated clearly it was not the case in relation to support for students' career decision-making: indeed, all the evidence was to the contrary.²⁷

27. There are two countries—the Netherlands and New Zealand—which have transferred the responsibility for careers guidance for young people to schools. In both these cases,

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- 18 Howard, K.A.S. & Solberg (2006) School-based social justice: The achieving success identity pathways program. *Professional School Counseling*, 9(4), pp. 278-287; Plank, S., DeLuca, S. & Estacion, A. (2005) *Dropping out of High School and the Place of Career and Technical Education: A Survival Analysis of Surviving High School*. St. Paul, MN: National Research Center for Career and Technical Education, University of Minnesota.
- 19 Evans, J. & Burck, H. (1992) The effects of career education interventions on academic achievement: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 71(1), pp. 63-68; Gysbers, N.C. & Lapan, R.T. (2001) The implementation and evaluation of a comprehensive school guidance programs in the United States: Progress and Prospects. *International Journal for Vocational Guidance*, 1(1), pp. 197-208.; Brigman, G.A. & Campbell, C. (2003) Helping students improve academic achievement and school success behavior. *Professional School Counseling*, 7(2), pp. 91-98.
- 20 See for example Smith, D., Lilley, R., Marris, L. & Krechowicka, I. (2005). A Systematic Review of Research (1988–2004) into the Impact of Career Education and Guidance During Key Stage 4 on Young People's Transitions into Post-16 Opportunities. London: EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education; Nicoletti, C. & Berthoud, R. (2010). *The Role of Information, Advice and Guidance in Young People's Education and Employment Choices* (DfE Research Report 019). London: DfE.
- 21 Baker, S. & Taylor, J. (1998) Effects of career development interventions: A meta-analysis. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 46(4), pp. 376-385.; Lapan, R.T., Aoyagi, M. & Kayson, M. (2007) Helping rural adolescents make successful postsecondary transitions: A longitudinal study. *Professional School Counselling*, 10(3), pp. 266-272.
- 22 Hooley, T., Marriott, J., Watts, A.G. and Coiffait, L. (2012). *Careers 2020: Options for Future Careers Work in English Schools*. London: Pearson.
- 23 Hooley, T., Marriott, J. & Sampson, J.P. (2011). *Fostering College and Career Readiness: How Career Development Activities in Schools Impact on Graduation Rates and Students' Life Success*. Derby: International Centre for Guidance Studies, University of Derby.
- 24 OECD (2004) *Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap*.
- 25 Q 177
- 26 Q 177
- 27 Ev 107

Professor Watts told us, “the outcome was a significant reduction in the extent of career guidance provision, and also in its quality (including its impartiality).”²⁸ The Minister added to these examples that of Ireland which he claimed had recently made a similar move.²⁹

Funding

28. In the case of both the Netherlands and New Zealand the relevant funding for careers guidance was transferred to schools along with the responsibility for ensuring its provision. In England, it is estimated that the careers guidance element of the Connexions service received funding of £196m in 2010/11;³⁰ none of this has been passed on to schools. Fiona Hilton, of Trafford Council, estimated that schools were being asked to make an investment of £25,000 each “for something they had for free last year”.³¹ Many witnesses were doubtful that schools would be able or willing to allocate such resources to careers guidance. We were told by Robert Campbell, the Principal of Impington College in Cambridgeshire, that while schools were aware of the responsibility, for many the provision of independent careers guidance was low on a list of priorities, particularly where there were other funding issues.³²

29. Steve Stewart, Chairman of Careers England, reported on a survey of their members which indicated that only one in six schools had the same level of investment in careers activities as they did a year ago. The survey was unable to find a single school that had increased the level of investment.³³ Representatives from local government agreed that the amount of advice and guidance available to young people today was considerably less than it had been two years ago.³⁴ There was also agreement among the representatives of schools that the absence of funding was already leading to a fall in the quality of careers guidance for young people.³⁵

30. The Minister rejected the proposition that the careers guidance provision was being left unfunded. He argued that “When you say there is no money, actually that is not true, because the schools have freedom over how to spend their budget [...] They can choose how much money to spend on it within their school budgets”.³⁶

Our conclusion on the transfer of responsibility

31. The Government’s decision to transfer responsibility for careers guidance to schools is regrettable. International evidence suggests such a model does not deliver the best

28 Ev 107.

29 Q 213

30 Ev 107

31 Q 53

32 Q 125

33 Q 175

34 Q 54-55

35 Q 119, Q 125, Q141

36 Q 220

provision for young people. The weaknesses of the school-based model have been compounded by the failure to transfer to schools any budget with which to provide the service. This has led, predictably, to a drop in the overall level of provision.

32. Nonetheless, we recognise that the new responsibility is now in place and further change would lead to greater uncertainty and upheaval, with a detrimental impact on young people. Whilst funding remains a concern, schools need to make careers guidance a priority within their budgets and we do not, in the current financial climate, recommend that additional funding be provided directly to schools. We believe that, instead, urgent steps must be taken by the Government to ensure that the current settlement meets the needs of young people. More precisely, we believe that the situation could be rescued by a combination of improved accountability and an enhancement of the role of the National Careers Service, including additional funding for that. We return to these recommendations later in the report.

Extension of the statutory duty

33. We invited evidence on the appropriate age for the provision of careers guidance. Witnesses were overwhelmingly in favour of the duty being extended up to 16-18 year-olds and down to at least Year 8 (12-13 year-olds). Indeed, many witnesses—including employers, young people, and local authority representatives—supported the extension of the duty to Year 7,³⁷ with some more limited support for even earlier in primary school. The fact that the school system now requires some young people to make decisions in Year 8—for entrance to UTCs and Studio Schools for example—means that it is not only desirable but necessary for advice and guidance to be offered earlier.³⁸

34. Concurrently with our inquiry, the DfE held a consultation on the extension of the duty to Year 8 and to 16-18 year-olds. The Minister announced at his appearance before us that, following the consultation, the Government had decided to extend the statutory duty in both directions from September 2013.³⁹

35. We welcome the Government's decision to extend the duty to young people in Year 8 and to 16 to 18 year-olds in school or college.

37 Q 12, Q 29, Q 42, Q 43

38 Q 158

39 Q 239, Q 155-6

3 Coherence and consistency

Current provision

36. We called for evidence on the overall coherence of the careers guidance offered to young people. Most witnesses interpreted coherence to mean the consistency—in terms of both the quality and amount of guidance—of the offer to young people across different settings and areas. The most common response was that there was no consistency in the careers guidance offer made to young people: a phrase that we heard continually was that it was a “postcode lottery”, or even “more random than a postcode lottery”,⁴⁰ with the extent and quality of the offer to young people varying not only between local authorities but also between schools. David Andrews, an independent education consultant who specialises in careers education and advice, explained that “the careers guidance a young person receives will depend largely on what his or her school chooses to make available and buy in.”⁴¹ London Councils argued that: “as more schools commission providers directly from the careers guidance market, it is likely that there will be a lack of a coherent offer available to young people attending schools in the same area and borough.”⁴²

37. *The Department for Education should encourage local authorities to promote greater consistency in the provision of careers advice and guidance in their areas so that, while there is room for innovation and variation, all young people have access to good quality, independent and impartial careers guidance, regardless of where they live or which school they attend.*

Government guidance

38. One way of encouraging greater consistency is through central guidance but, in keeping with the philosophy of greater school autonomy, the DfE's statutory guidance states that “The Government’s general approach is to give schools greater freedom and flexibility to decide how to fulfil their statutory duties in accordance with the needs of their pupils” and that it is “for schools to decide the provision to be made available, based on the needs of pupils and the opportunities available”.⁴³ Schools are only expected to “have regard to” the guidance.⁴⁴ Similarly, the practical guide aims to “offer additional practical information that your school *may wish* [emphasis added] to draw on when interpreting your new responsibilities and deciding on the most appropriate forms of independent careers guidance for your pupils.”⁴⁵

39. The Government’s approach to issuing guidance received a mixed welcome from witnesses to our inquiry. Although we heard that schools had found the guidance useful—

40 Ev 91

41 Ev 163

42 Ev 114

43 Statutory guidance, DfE, para 3

44 *Ibid.*

45 Practical Guide, DfE, introduction

in particular the practical guide⁴⁶—a number of criticisms were made, including that the guidance was too permissive and did not go far enough in enforcing standards.⁴⁷ For example, David Walrond, Principal of Truro and Penwith College, was concerned that earlier drafts of the guidance were firmer on the need for schools to allow access to alternative providers for post-16 education.⁴⁸ This is not explicit in the published version.

40. We welcome the publication of the statutory guidance and practical guide for schools. However, the statutory guidance is seriously weakened by its permissive tone and the practical guide can be disregarded by schools, should they so wish. The fact that the guidance for schools is spread across two separate documents further diminishes its impact and authority.

41. We believe that Government could do more to promote consistency in the offer to young people through central guidance. We note that the Minister was not opposed to the proposition of combining the two documents into one, if there was “broad consensus around that”.⁴⁹ We consider that this would help to encourage consistency between what was offered in different schools and different areas, and therefore we recommend that the statutory guidance and practical guide be combined in a single document. References to “statutory guidance” in the rest of this report should be taken to mean this unified document.

Approaches to collaboration

42. It was put to us by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers that “the collaboration of all key stakeholders and delivery partners in shaping integrated CEIAG [Careers education, information, advice and guidance] [...] is crucial”.⁵⁰ In considering coherence and consistency, we looked particularly at collaboration between local authorities and schools and collaboration between schools.

Local Authorities

43. There are differing views on the ways in which local authorities are working to support schools under the new statutory regime. The Local Government Association identified the support of schools as part of the new role for local authorities in assisting the delivery of careers guidance for young people. London Councils suggested that the role of the local authority should be to broker “relationships between schools, providers and employers”.⁵¹ The NASUWT went further in arguing that the local authority acting as a third party to buy in services could “help to maintain an economy of scale that will otherwise be lost.”⁵²

46 Practical Guide, DfE

47 Ev 104, Ev w163

48 Q 25

49 Q247

50 Ev w2

51 Ev 114, Ev w125 (also Ev w171)

52 Ev w63

44. This is played out on the ground in what the Institute of Career Guidance told us was “a diverse and sometimes confusing range of practice” across the country.⁵³ Some local authorities are leading on the establishment of partnerships with schools; others are restricting their involvement with the provision of careers guidance services to their duty towards targeted groups.⁵⁴ The DfE drew attention to the example of local authorities which were “drawing on their expertise to offer services to schools on a traded basis”.⁵⁵ It also highlights in its practical guidance a case study from Blackburn with Darwen, where careers guidance services have been commissioned in a partnership between schools with the support of the local authority.⁵⁶

45. We visited Bradford Metropolitan District Council which is one of a small number of local authorities commissioning a careers guidance service for schools that wish to buy into the arrangement. The Council has procured careers services for 29 of its 32 schools.⁵⁷ We were told by the Council that this approach had “ensured that we are able to both target our resource at those most in need whilst retaining a consistently good level of universal provision for all participating schools and FE colleges.”⁵⁸ A similar model is being used by Gloucestershire County Council.⁵⁹

46. We commend the efforts made by some local authorities to support their schools in taking on the new duty, particularly by working with them to form consortia and partnerships to procure independent and impartial careers guidance. We recommend that the Government’s statutory guidance is strengthened to emphasise the benefits of this approach. We also recommend that the Government promotes the activities of the best performing local authorities so that best practice can be shared.

Schools consortia

47. We also heard evidence of schools working together to realise the benefits of economies of scale. We were told by Robert Campbell, Principal of Impington College that “clusters and consortia of schools are increasingly working together” to commission services.⁶⁰ Heather Morris from Thamesmead School explained that her school is working in a consortium of six, which together have bought in a careers adviser to work across all of the schools.⁶¹

48. The DfE has recognised the advantages of school consortia in commissioning of careers guidance services and highlighted in its practical guidance two examples, in Sutton and

53 Ev 104

54 Ev 163

55 Ev 80

56 Practical guide, DfE

57 The total cost of the contract is around £2.3million, made up of £290,000 contributed by schools and FE colleges and a further £2.01million from the local authority. The latter amount includes £500,000 to provide a high needs intensive support service as part of the youth service.

58 Ev 188

59 Ev w163

60 Q 116

61 Q 123

Slough.⁶² We note, however, that the statutory guidance does not actively encourage schools to form consortia or partnerships, stating only that “Schools *may* [our italics] work individually or in consortia/partnerships to secure careers guidance services.”⁶³ The practical guide similarly advises schools that they “*could* [our italics] consider forming a consortium with other local schools and education and training providers to commission a shared, independent, expert resource.”⁶⁴

49. We conclude that a collaborative approach to commissioning careers guidance services has many advantages for schools, particularly in promoting consistency and quality and in realising economies of scale. We recommend that the statutory guidance is strengthened better to reflect the benefits of this approach.

62 Practical Guide, DfE

63 Statutory Guidance, DfE

64 Practical Guide, DfE

4 Accountability

The need for accountability

50. A consistent theme throughout our inquiries and evidence sessions as a committee, examining many different areas of policy, is the central importance—and potentially distorting effects—of accountability measures. Schools tend to focus on those accountability measures that may trigger intervention: for secondary schools this is the attainment by pupils of five grade A*–C GCSEs. If careers guidance is to be delivered to a good standard, schools must be incentivised through robust accountability measures. We agree with the National Careers Council that there need to be explicit “performance measures that demonstrate both relevance and impact.”⁶⁵

51. With so many competing demands on a school’s time and resources, witnesses considered that it would be unusual for school leadership to prioritise spending time and money on careers guidance without there being an incentive to do so.⁶⁶ For example, Suffolk County Council told us that over half (55%) of schools in their area had not yet decided what provision they were going to make for their pupils, with some of this number saying that they would “make no provision until they are forced into a stronger position to do so”.⁶⁷ We were also told of a headteacher, who, when faced with the option of either buying careers guidance or extra tutorial support for maths and English, commented “If I do not hit the floor targets, I get fired. If I do not do careers, I am not sure that I do get fired.”⁶⁸ Paul Jackson, Chief Executive of Engineering UK, told us that “if Ofsted are not overseeing it and grading it, or if it is not appearing in a league table, then it will not get those hours”.⁶⁹ The Careers Sector Strategic Alliance noted that where schools are failing to meet the duty, “there are seemingly no grounds for challenge and remedial action”.⁷⁰

52. In oral evidence, the Minister agreed that the accountability of schools and head teachers was critical and he assured us that, if schools were not following the statutory duty, he would “take that very seriously.”⁷¹ The DfE’s written submission was equally robust that the Government had developed a “clear accountability framework through the introduction of destination measures and a revised Ofsted framework”.⁷² We examined both of these in some detail to see how far they met the crucial need for school accountability to ensure the provision of careers guidance.

65 Ev 67

66 Ev w151, Ev w158

67 Ev w88

68 Q179

69 Q40

70 Ev w49

71 Q281

72 Ev 80

The Ofsted framework

53. Ofsted is to carry out a thematic review of careers guidance in schools, which is due to report in the summer of 2013. Beyond this, we were struck by the lack of clarity around the role that Ofsted would play through its inspection framework in ensuring that schools provide independent and impartial careers guidance. We heard from several witnesses that the current oversight by Ofsted was not sufficient to hold schools to account.⁷³ Employers, school leaders and local authority representatives all suggested that it was necessary for Ofsted to be charged with making explicit checks on the extent to which schools meet their duty.⁷⁴ By contrast, the Minister assured us that it was already the case that Ofsted would take a school's delivery of careers guidance into account under the new inspection framework. He saw this as a key accountability measure for schools.⁷⁵

54. We sought clarification from Ofsted who told us:

When considering leadership and management in a school, inspectors take account of a wide range of evidence; this includes evaluating the extent to which 'pupils have gained a well-informed understanding of the options and challenges facing them as they move through the school and on to the next stage of their education and training'. In order to be judged at least good [...] a school should ensure pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment.

However, there are no 'sub-judgements' and no separate grade for careers education and guidance [...] In addition, schools which were judged outstanding overall at their last inspection are now exempt from routine inspection unless risk assessment identifies a concern. Many schools judged good have up to five years between inspections [...]⁷⁶

55. We welcome the undertaking that Ofsted is to conduct a thematic survey of careers guidance provision in schools which will report in the summer of 2013.⁷⁷ We also welcome the Minister's assurance that he will take the findings of this survey seriously.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, a survey of provision cannot provide sufficient incentives to encourage individual schools to implement a good quality, independent and impartial careers guidance service.

56. We note the disconnect between the Minister's view of the role of Ofsted in enforcing accountability on schools through its inspection framework, and Ofsted's own view. The limitations which Ofsted set out to us—the fact that its inspections do not make a clear judgement on careers guidance provision in schools, that it does not inspect against statutory compliance in this area and that it does not routinely inspect

73 Q 40, Q73-4, Q192, Q 194, Q199

74 Q28, Q75, Q 168

75 Q 214, Q 216

76 Ev w102

77 Ev w100

78 Q 267

all schools—means that the Ofsted framework is not a credible accountability check on the provision of careers guidance by individual schools.

Destination measures

57. In July 2012, the Government published Key Stage 4 and 16–18 destination measures for the first time. The measures report the proportion of a school or college’s students that went on to participate in education or training the year after they left KS4 or took A level or equivalent qualifications. The DfE stated that “destination measures provide clear and comparable information on the success of schools and colleges in helping all their students take qualifications that offer them the best opportunity to continue in education or training. They will also encourage schools and colleges to support and prepare their students to take up education or training which offers good long term prospects.”⁷⁹ The DfE acknowledged that “the destination measures data do not enable a direct link to be made between careers guidance and the destinations of former students” but goes on to argue that “young people who receive high quality independent and impartial careers guidance and transition support are more likely to make the right choice of post-16 education or training”.⁸⁰

58. The Government’s measures were generally regarded by witnesses as a useful tool, albeit one with limitations. As Professor Watts explained, the measurement of destinations “is valuable and it is worth doing, but it is a very crude indicator in relation to this [careers guidance]. It measures students who have found a destination. It does not say anything about the quality of that destination in terms of their distinctive aspirations and so forth.”⁸¹ Furthermore, the fact that measures are taken only two terms after leaving a school or college means that there is not a long enough timeframe to show the effectiveness or otherwise of careers guidance. The Minister agreed that the timeframe of destination measures should be expanded, recognising that “it takes a few years for pupils to reach their destination.”⁸² He also confirmed that the DfE is continuing to work on introducing employment destinations as part of the statistical release for 2013.⁸³

59. We conclude that destination measures as they currently stand are not effective for ensuring that schools meet their statutory duty. Measures taken too soon do not provide a complete picture while those taken later remove the direct accountability on schools, as other factors may have influenced an individual’s destination. Furthermore, the measures do not show the quality of the careers guidance provision in a school.

60. *There is therefore no immediate prospect for schools to be held to account for their provision of careers guidance by means of destination measures. Nevertheless, we recognise that the measures could be beneficial in other ways. We recommend that the Department for Education continues to pursue the inclusion of employment as well as*

79 Destination Measures General Brief, DfE, July 2012

80 *Ibid.*

81 Q 178

82 Q 287

83 Q 289

improved education destination measures to make the data more meaningful. We also welcome the Minister's ambition to expand the timeframe of the destination measures in the future.

School careers plan

61. Our doubts over the adequacy of Ofsted inspections and destination measures to ensure school accountability for the provision of high quality, effective careers guidance have led us to seek out other potential mechanisms to achieve the same goal. One solution, offered by Professor Tony Watts, was to require schools to publish and seek feedback on an annual careers plan. This statement of provision would allow transparency about what could be expected in terms of career work (including careers education, guidance and information) and would set out the internal and external resources allocated to these activities. A similar model is used effectively in Finland and Ontario, Canada.⁸⁴ As Professor Watts explained:

What [schools] put in that plan can be up to them, but it should be transparent and visible to the key constituencies to whom this really matters, which are students, parents, employers and other learning providers. [...] there should be some feedback from all of those groups that is used as part of a systemic review process.⁸⁵

62. When asked, the Minister was not opposed to the suggestion that schools should have a duty to produce a careers plan showing how they intend to deliver and resource their careers guidance activities. He confirmed that he would consider including the requirement in updating guidance to schools.⁸⁶

63. We recommend that the Department for Education introduces into the statutory guidance a requirement for schools to publish an annual careers plan, to include information on the support and resources available to its pupils in planning their career development. Schools should be required to review the plan systematically on an annual basis, taking into account the views of students, parents, employers and other learning providers.

84 Ev 107

85 Q 192

86 Q 290

5 Schools and the National Careers Service

Current provision of services to young people

64. The National Careers Service (NCS) was launched in April 2012. The NCS website provides information for all ages, but its provision of advice and guidance is not universal, with only adults having access to face-to-face support through the service. The DfE justifies this position on the basis that young people will have such support through their school.⁸⁷

65. The lack of face-to-face support for young people through the NCS was much criticised during our inquiry. One witness referred to it as a “wasted national resource”.⁸⁸ Questions were also raised about the restrictions on the provision by the NCS of any service to schools other than the website and telephone helpline for individual pupils.⁸⁹ Its providers are not even permitted to market themselves to schools as the NCS,⁹⁰ although as the Minister explained, schools are free to commission the NCS contractors independently.⁹¹

66. Perhaps as a result of this, the NCS lacks a strong profile among young people. Judith Denyer, from Prospects, told us that, in her view, young people do not see the NCS as a service for them. She said “I have not had one request from a young person asking how to get on to the National Careers Service [...] it is just not on people’s radar. It is deemed as a service for adults and not young people”.⁹² The very limited funding for marketing the service undoubtedly also contributes to the lack of awareness of the NCS among young people. Steve Stewart, Chairman of Careers England, explained:

The reality is that we are trying everything we possibly can in terms of free media to try to get the message across [...] it is one of the best-kept secrets. The service has huge potential; it is doing great things. However, unless you are in the trade or you come across it, you would not know about it.⁹³

67. The importance of the part played by local labour market information within good quality advice and guidance was impressed upon us during our inquiry. While the NCS has the local framework to build up accurate labour-market information, there are no mechanisms for this information to be passed onto schools.⁹⁴ Careers England describes the denial of full access to NCS’s services by young people as “a national policy failure”.⁹⁵

87 Ev 80

88 Ev 88

89 Ev w2, Ev w146, Ev w168

90 Q 207

91 Q 269

92 Q 63-64

93 Q 189

94 Q 207

95 Ev 88

Opportunities for the better use of NCS resources

68. The possibility of expanding the role of the NCS was welcomed by many witnesses. As Robert Campbell, Principal of Impington College, told us, “if there were a national service that enabled you to provide access and would regulate, mediate and provide that access to independent and impartial information, I would welcome that”.⁹⁶ There are various ways in which this could be done. Professor Watts outlined two models in particular: first, a model where the NCS becomes involved in service delivery—that is delivering independent and impartial face-to-face guidance in schools; and, second, a model where the NCS is involved in capacity-building.⁹⁷

69. There was support from other witnesses for both proposals. Some, such as Mary Vine-Morris of London Councils, considered that expanding the NCS’s remit to include service delivery (such as providing independent and impartial face-to-face careers guidance to young people in schools) would be a good solution to the problem of providing universal independent and impartial guidance. Ms Morris considered that since the infrastructure was already in place for adults, it would simply take the resources to extend it.⁹⁸

70. Dr Deirdre Hughes, Chair of the National Careers Council, expressed interest in Professor Watts’ second model, arguing that the NCS has “huge potential in terms of helping build capacity in schools and local communities around having stronger labour-market intelligence”.⁹⁹ Careers England outlined in more detail what a capacity-building role for NCS would involve, including consultancy support to schools; an independent assessment of quality of guidance; and, brokerage between employers and local schools.¹⁰⁰ We note that Professor Watts linked the idea of the NCS having a role in capacity-building for schools to the recommendation of school plans for careers guidance: he thought that the NCS’s role could be “about supporting the school in developing its own plans and resources and providing that crucial link with the labour market”.¹⁰¹

71. It seems sensible to us that the NCS’s undoubted expertise should be used for the benefit of young people in schools. Of the two models suggested to us—service delivery or capacity-building and brokerage—both would require additional funding from the Government. The first option would meet the need for independent and impartial advice. It would also, to a certain extent, represent a move back to the Careers Service model that existed prior to Connexions and would be more expensive. The second option would harness both the NCS’s expertise in careers guidance and its understanding of local employment and learning opportunities. It would involve the NCS producing a regular information stream on the labour and learning market, brokering employer/education activities and supporting schools in the development of their own careers programmes.

96 Q 152

97 Q207 (Prof Watts)

98 Q 65

99 Q 206

100 Ev 104

101 Q 207

Such a capacity-building and brokerage model would be flexible; it could be shaped to individual schools' needs and requirements; and it would be less costly than the first model.

72. We recommended in our Fourth Report of session 2010–12, *Participation by 16–19 year olds in education and training*, that an “all age careers service should be funded by the Department for Education for face to face career guidance for young people.”¹⁰² Our view on this has not changed. However, given the statutory duty has only recently been passed to schools, we believe that the best way of delivering the Government’s vision and providing the service that young people need is through the capacity-building and brokerage model.

73. We have not carried out our own research into the cost of extending the remit of the NCS. Careers England estimated that creating a capacity-building and brokerage role would be around £120million per annum.¹⁰³ While this is clearly a significant sum, we believe that it should be weighed against the likely cost for the nation of young people making the wrong choices as a result of a deficiency in the careers guidance service. The estimates should, of course, be checked thoroughly.

74. We recommend that the remit of the National Careers Service is expanded to enable it to perform a capacity-building and brokerage role for schools. As part of its capacity-building role, the National Careers Service should work with individual schools in designing their annual careers plan of provision for careers guidance as well as provide schools with local labour market information. Clearly, this would have funding implications and so we further recommend that the Department of Education instructs the Skills Funding Agency to cost the options of the National Careers Service remit being expanded in this way.

102 Fourth Report from the Education Committee, Session 2010–12, *Participation by 16-19 year olds in education and training*, HC 850-I, para 156

103 Ev 104

6 Quality of careers guidance

75. The quality of careers guidance provided in schools was raised as a concern by many witnesses. This was expressed in terms of the form the guidance takes, its independence and impartiality, the limitations of those providing guidance and quality assurance.

Forms of guidance

Face-to-face guidance

76. The vast majority of the evidence presented to us, from a variety of witnesses, suggested that face-to-face guidance was an essential part of any careers offer.¹⁰⁴ The Careers Sector Stakeholder Alliance outlined the findings of an Institute of Careers Guidance (ICG) survey which found that 98% of schools thought face-to-face guidance was either ‘very important’ or ‘quite important’.¹⁰⁵ Of all forms of support available, face-to-face guidance from an independent careers adviser remained the most popular choice.¹⁰⁶

77. This was reinforced by the young people whom we met individually and by their representative groups:¹⁰⁷ one of the North Tyneside Youth Council’s recommendations to us was that young people should have more opportunities to have face-to-face meetings with professional advisers.¹⁰⁸ Centrepont argued that “for those with no parental support, poor literacy or other support needs, face-to-face support is crucial to help young people fully understand their options”.¹⁰⁹

78. This unequivocal response in support of face-to-face guidance added to concern about the future provision of such guidance in schools. The Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) cited a survey of its members in 2011 which indicated that while 42% were still making face-to-face guidance from a qualified professional available to any student in need of it, 30% were extremely concerned about their capacity to meet the new requirements. ASCL believed that the provision of face-to-face guidance was likely to decrease and commented that “it is hard to see how such an entitlement could be universally honoured in the future”.¹¹⁰ In oral evidence, ASCL’s General Secretary, Brian Lightman, explained that although he did not think there should be a “sheep dip”¹¹¹

104 Ev w1, Ev w2, Ev w14, Ev w21, Ev w23, Ev w42, Ev w49, Ev w61, Ev w83, Ev w125, Ev w139, Ev w146, Ev w171

105 Ev w49

106 Ev w61, Ev 88

107 Annex 2

108 Ev w59

109 Ev w103

110 Ev 112

111 Q149 (Brian Lightman)

approach to face-to-face guidance, where all pupils have an interview whether they need it or not, he did believe that access to it should be available to all.¹¹²

79. The DfE statutory guidance states that schools can choose to secure access to face-to-face guidance where they believe it to be the most suitable option for the young person but it does not suggest that they should always do so. The Minister confirmed that it was his view that that “face-to-face with a professional careers adviser is not always and in every circumstance necessary”.¹¹³

80. As mentioned previously, we recommended in our Fourth Report of session 2010–12 that the careers service should provide face-to-face career guidance for young people.¹¹⁴ Our view on the necessity of face-to-face guidance has not changed.

81. *Access to face-to-face guidance is an integral part of good quality careers guidance. All young people should have access to such provision from a qualified, independent provider, should they choose to take up the opportunity. We recommend that a minimum of one personal careers interview with an independent adviser who is not a teacher should be available for every young person and that this is made explicit in the statutory guidance.*

Online information

82. Online sources of information are a useful addition to the range of tools available to young people. However, as currently configured, the NCS website and other similar sources of information do not provide a replacement for a well-integrated schools careers programme. Several witnesses expressed concern at the limitations of online information.¹¹⁵ Their number included the NASUWT who told us that “computer-delivered interventions and other counsellor-free approaches are the least effective”.¹¹⁶

83. Concerns centred on the sheer amount of information available as well as the way in which it is presented. Navigating a way through online careers information was likened by Dr Deirdre Hughes, Chair of the National Careers Council, as “drinking water from a fire-hose”.¹¹⁷ Young people—even those who described themselves as “tech-savvy”—spoke to us about the difficulties of finding the right information and of working their way through the vast number of available websites. Other witnesses raised concerns about the quality and impartiality of some websites and young people’s ability to interpret the information on their own.¹¹⁸ Heather Morris, Careers Co-ordinator at Thamesmead School, told us that websites are:

112 Q 149

113 Q 272

114 Fourth Report from the Education Committee, Session 2010–12, *Participation by 16-19 year olds in education and training*, HC 850-I

115 Ev 22, Ev w38, Ev w42

116 Ev w63

117 Q 179

118 Ev w38, Ev 88

a useful source of information, but they cannot give guidance because you are relying on the student engaging with that information, sifting it, sorting it and, however good their careers programme is, they will not necessarily be able to extract the information that they need from that.¹¹⁹

84. Fears were expressed that, despite the shortcomings of online information, many schools would rely upon websites to provide the independent and impartial element of their careers provision.¹²⁰ Witnesses were disappointed that the statutory guidance and practical guide issued by the DfE did not make it explicit that a referral to a website was not sufficient to meet the statutory duty to provide independent and impartial guidance.¹²¹

85. When questioned about the use of websites, the Minister praised the National Careers Service website as a source of information. He also described the Government's new website for young people, Plotr¹²², as "brilliant" and "exciting".¹²³ The Minister acknowledged that websites alone were insufficient but, in contrast to other witnesses, he considered that the guidance was clear that "pointing to a website is not enough".¹²⁴

86. *Websites are a valuable source of information about careers for young people. They cannot, however, replace face-to-face guidance, nor are they sufficient in themselves to fulfil the requirement on schools to provide independent, impartial guidance. To ensure that schools do not over-rely on directing their students to websites, we recommend that the Department for Education amends the statutory guidance to schools to make it clear that the signposting of independent websites is insufficient to meet their statutory duty.*

Independence and impartiality

87. Evidence pointed to inherent problems in passing the responsibility to schools to provide *independent* and *impartial* guidance, because of a conflict of interest between that of the school and that of the individual learner. In an environment where schools are anxious to retain student numbers in post-16 provision, it may not be in their interest to advise students to study elsewhere.¹²⁵ The main reason for this was competition for pupil funding. As Robert Campbell, Principal of Impington College explained to us:

you do have this tension [...] in schools between wanting a healthy vibrant sixth form so that your numbers are sustained and your school continues to be successful, and, on the other hand [...] doing the right thing for the children.¹²⁶

This drive for "bums on seats"¹²⁷, as it was described by one oral witness, has led to schools with provision up to the age of eighteen facing, at times, a conflict between the interests of

119 Q 150

120 Q 181, Ev 249, Ev w107, Ev w178, Ev w42, Ev w61, Ev 73

121 Ev 107, Ev w139

122 Ev 80, www.plotr.co.uk

123 Q 236

124 *Ibid.*

125 Q 24, Q 26

126 Q132

their learners and the school's interest in trying to keep learners with them because of funding.¹²⁸

88. This tension is particularly acute where there are alternative education providers “in competition” for the funding. The DfE statutory guidance says that schools have a responsibility to act impartially and recognise where it may be in the best interest of some pupils to pursue their education in further education colleges or UTCs. It requires schools “to establish and maintain links with local post-16 education and training providers, including further education colleges and work-based education and training providers”.¹²⁹ Despite this, we heard evidence from a number of sources, including in oral evidence from the Principal of Truro and Penwith College, that schools with sixth form provision tend to restrict access to their pupils by rival post-16 providers.¹³⁰ A survey of colleges carried out by the Association of Colleges in March 2012 found that only 18% reported having significant access to school pupils to inform them of the courses they offer. 74% of colleges said that schools would not even distribute their prospectuses.¹³¹ The ASCL, in their written evidence, agreed that “an increasingly competitive environment has increased tensions between institutions”.¹³²

89. This creates a conflict for many teachers as well in performing the new duty to provide independent and impartial guidance. A report published by the Association of Colleges in November 2012 found that 57% of the 500 teachers polled felt obliged to encourage pupils to stay on at their school post-16 with 26% blaming this on overt pressure from school leaders.¹³³ We also heard from young people we met that they felt the careers advice in schools is devised to get them to stay on in that institution.¹³⁴

90. It is cause for concern if young people are not getting the necessary access to independent information about alternative education pathways. It is important that schools are made accountable for their activity in this area in order to encourage them to open their doors to alternative providers. ***We recommend that, as part of an overall careers plan, schools are required to publish details of the alternative providers they allow to meet with their pupils, including the name of the provider and the nature of the contact.***

91. We also heard evidence that employers were not being given access to schools to talk to young people. The interaction between businesses and schools was described to us by Paul Jackson, Chief Executive of Engineering UK as “piecemeal”.¹³⁵ He added that “engaging

127 Q 36

128 Q 24

129 Statutory guidance, DfE

130 Ev w45, Ev w79, Ev w146 ; Q7

131 Ev w79

132 Ev 112

133 TES 9 November 2012 p50-51

134 Annex 1

135 Q5

with business as part of careers information advice and guidance is fundamental, but it will not happen if it is left to a random process".¹³⁶

92. The Government has taken steps to encourage businesses into schools and we welcome the enthusiasm with which the Minister spoke about it. He told us that the Government is “doing a huge amount of work to get companies and businesses into schools, to get careers advice from a whole broad range of people who can be inspiring.”¹³⁷

93. *We welcome the Government’s support for the increased involvement of local employers in careers guidance in schools, which is vital for effective careers provision. We recommend that schools be required to set out in their careers plans their arrangements with local employers and how they intend to enhance them.*

Teachers and careers guidance

94. Under the new duty, the responsibility for providing careers advice and guidance may often fall to teachers.¹³⁸ A survey by the Institute of Careers Guidance in 2011 found that 34% of schools were planning to use teachers or non-teaching staff to deliver career guidance.¹³⁹

95. We heard from young people that they value the advice and guidance they are given by teachers and school staff.¹⁴⁰ As the Gatsby Foundation told us, “subject teachers are trusted by learners, and have abundant opportunities to bring careers awareness into their lessons”.¹⁴¹ Teachers can therefore be important partners for careers professionals, but there are dangers if teachers are expected to take on this role alone and without training and support. The Association for Careers Education and Guidance told us: “unless these teachers/tutors receive specialist training in maintaining impartiality and are regularly updated with information about all courses, employment or training opportunities available to their pupils they will be unable to meet the demand” to deliver the statutory duty.¹⁴² The AOC survey, referred to above, found that 44% of teachers admitted giving a pupil bad or uninformed advice in the past, while 82% said they did not feel as though they had the appropriate knowledge to dispense careers advice.¹⁴³ Other research, carried out by City & Guilds in 2011, highlighted a perceived bias in advice given by teachers towards their own subjects. It also found “a widely held view across the 14–16 and 16–18 age groups that teachers could only advise on one thing: how to be teachers”.¹⁴⁴

136 Q5

137 Q215

138 Ev 29, Ev w34, Ev w45

139 Ev w49

140 See Annex 2

141 Ev w148 para 10

142 Ev w142

143 TES, 9 November 2012, pp 50-51

144 Ev w84

96. Many witnesses expressed concern at the ability of teachers to provide independent and impartial guidance, given the limits of their knowledge of the world of work and of alternative paths, including apprenticeships. Peter Searle, Chief Executive Officer of Adecco, told us that “many of our teachers today don’t actually have any experience of industry themselves. They do not know what happens in a company or anything about the structure and the jobs that are available. They are therefore not personally able to inspire students themselves.”¹⁴⁵ The suggestion was made by a wide range of witnesses that teachers should undertake professional development in industry and other workplaces to enable them to provide better quality careers support.¹⁴⁶

97. There was also evidence that, despite the statutory guidance that information on all options, including apprenticeships,¹⁴⁷ should be given, many young people were not receiving this. Research by the Edge Foundation found that one third of students had not discussed the option to start a vocational course.¹⁴⁸ An Ofsted report, *Apprenticeships for Young People*, found that the advice and guidance offered to young people on alternative paths was not of a good quality.¹⁴⁹ Similarly, the Business, Innovation and Skills Committee said in their recent report on Apprenticeships that they found that awareness and resources about apprenticeships in schools and colleges was lacking.¹⁵⁰

98. The DfE acknowledges the apparent shortfall in teachers’ knowledge of apprenticeships in its practical guide. It states that “the new duty sets no expectation that teachers need to become experts in Apprenticeships” and encourages teachers to point young people towards the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS).¹⁵¹ At present, the NAS’s remit does not currently extend to it operating in schools and there was consensus among our witnesses that this should change.¹⁵² The Minister was not adverse to the suggestion of the NAS’s remit being extended to provide direct services in schools, agreeing that the DfE would consider it.¹⁵³

99. We acknowledge the important role that teachers play in guiding and advising young people. We also recognise the constraints that they are under when performing the role and that they cannot substitute for fully-qualified, independent and impartial advisers.

100. We agree with witnesses from business that it would be beneficial for teachers to have a greater understanding of the world of work, particularly that of the local labour market, and we recommend that teachers should undertake regular professional development to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the work place. The local focus and

145 Q 14

146 Ev w2, Ev w 42, Ev w83 and Ev w148

147 Statutory guidance, DfE

148 Ev w42

149 Ofsted, *Apprenticeships for Young People*, April 2012

150 Fifth Report from the Business, Innovation and Skills Committee, Session 2012–13, *Apprenticeships*, HC83–I

151 Practical Guide, DfE

152 Q 137 (Brian Lightman)

153 Q 278

infrastructure of the National Careers Service could be invaluable in enabling this, and we recommend that this is incorporated within the NCS capacity-building role outlined above.

101. *We concur with our colleagues on the Business, Innovation and Skills Committee that awareness of apprenticeships is limited within schools. We recommend that the National Apprenticeship Service’s remit be extended to include the promotion of apprenticeships in schools.*

Ensuring quality

102. The DfE’s practical guide highlights the three quality assurance standards, known as the “three pronged approach”, that schools may wish to take into consideration:

- The Quality in Careers Standard for schools.
- The Matrix Standard for careers guidance providers.
- A newly developed set of professional standards for careers advisers.¹⁵⁴

103. In its written evidence, the DfE referred to the different quality standards but made it clear that schools have the freedom to make use or not of the standards as they wish. The statutory guidance further states that careers advisers ‘could be qualified’ rather than ‘should be qualified’. David Milton, Chair of the Institute of Career Guidance, expressed his disappointment at this permissive wording, adding that requiring the use of qualified advisers “would have made a difference.”¹⁵⁵

104. We welcome the moves to introduce quality standards to the careers market. This is a good way to improve the quality of the service; it can assist schools in their procurement decisions; and it can provide a clear accountability structure for schools. We believe, however, that the Government has not gone far enough to incentivise schools to follow the approach and that many will therefore neither aim to reach the Quality in Careers Standard, nor look to commission advice and guidance from quality-assured providers or qualified professionals. We believe that there is a role here for the NCS in helping schools to work towards the standards.

105. *We recommend that the Government requires schools to:*

- *achieve the Quality in Careers Standard,*
- *secure independent careers guidance from a provider with the Matrix standard; and,*
- *ensure that advice is provided by a level 6 qualified careers advisers.*

We further recommend that the National Careers Service’s role should be expanded to include a duty to promote to schools the benefits of working to these quality standards.

¹⁵⁴ This standard was developed following work by the Careers Profession Taskforce. It was recommended by the Careers Profession Alliance, and endorsed by Government, that careers practitioners should be qualified to a level 6.

Careers education and work-related learning

106. The Education Act 2011 also removed the statutory duty for schools to provide careers education and work-related learning (WRL) was removed by statutory instrument in August 2012. The dispensing of WRL at Key Stage 4 was a recommendation in the Wolf Report but when put out to public consultation, 89% answered “no” to the question of whether work-related learning should be removed as a statutory duty.¹⁵⁶ Careers education was removed as a statutory duty without any public consultation.

107. We received evidence from various sources which supported the need for careers education and WRL. We were told by The Work Foundation that “careers education prepares young people for school-to-work transitions.”¹⁵⁷ Employers whom we met in Bradford were unanimous in regarding young people as lacking in soft skills and knowledge of the workplace¹⁵⁸—exactly the sort of skills that careers education and WRL were in place to provide. This was echoed by the CBI, Business in the Community and the Association of Employment and Learning Providers.¹⁵⁹ Young people also spoke to us about the benefits they gained from work experience.¹⁶⁰

108. The Government’s statutory guidance says that “schools should consider a range of wider careers activities such as engagement with local employers and work-based education and training providers to offer all young people insights into the world of work”.¹⁶¹ The wording of the guidance was criticised by witnesses for being permissive, leaving it to schools to determine the extent to which they will include such activities.¹⁶²

109. The Government’s decision to remove the statutory duty on schools to provide careers education and work-related learning has been heavily criticised by witnesses to our inquiry. We are persuaded of the benefits of both these former provisions and we recommend that the Government’s statutory guidance to schools is strengthened to require schools to provide careers education and work-related learning as part of their duty.

¹⁵⁶ Explanatory memorandum to the draft Education (Amendment of the Curriculum Requirements for Fourth Key Stage) (England) Order 2012

¹⁵⁷ Ev w61

¹⁵⁸ See Annex 1.

¹⁵⁹ Ev w175, Ev 29, Ev w 139

¹⁶⁰ Annex 2

¹⁶¹ Statutory guidance, Department for Education

¹⁶² Ev w139, Ev 121

7 Targeted support

Role of local authorities

110. Following the Education Act 2011, the role of local authorities in careers guidance is limited to assisting the most vulnerable young people and those at risk of disengaging with education or work. These groups often require greater levels of career support and services targeted to their needs.¹⁶³ Vulnerable young people are less likely to have access to informal sources of careers advice and guidance and are more likely to become NEET (not in education, employment or training). Interim findings of a survey by the Prince's Trust indicated that 69% of respondents felt that careers information, advice and guidance provided to their target group (care leavers, teenage parents, young offenders, those with special educational needs or disabilities and those at risk of becoming NEET) was ineffective or very ineffective.¹⁶⁴

111. Guidance provided for local authorities by the DfE sets out that they have a statutory duty to encourage, enable and assist young people's participation in education or training. The guidance says that it expects local authorities to utilise the Early Intervention Grant to "support young people to engage in education and training, intervening early with those who are at risk of disengagement". But the guidance is clear that it is for local authorities themselves to determine "what services are necessary to fulfil their statutory responsibility".¹⁶⁵

112. We heard evidence of a wide variation in the support offered by local authorities to targeted groups across the country. Judith Denyer of Propects explained to us: "Some local authorities' interpretation of their statutory duties is basically, 'I am just going to do something with LDD [learning difficulty and disability] young people,' and even other vulnerable groups are not getting the level of access they would have had before."¹⁶⁶ She added that she had some targeted support contracts worth five times more in one borough than in a neighbouring borough.¹⁶⁷ In a similar vein, Mary Vine-Morris of London Councils said that only around 30% of 16-18 year-old NEETs in London were receiving the local authority targeted provision.¹⁶⁸ A report by the Local Government Association (LGA) quotes a local authority officer from Greater Manchester, who was concerned that some local authorities were only targeting their support at "traditional" vulnerable groups, and that "some vulnerable young people will not be detected, including those who 'fall in and out of vulnerability'".¹⁶⁹

163 Ev w63, Ev w92 para 5.1

164 Ev w48

165 Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on Targeted Support Services for Young People, DfE, April 2011

166 Q 69

167 Q 109 (Judith Denyer)

168 Q 109 (Mary Vine-Morris)

169 Filmer-Sankey, C and McCrone, T (2012), *Hidden Talents: Examples of Transition of Careers Guidance from Local Authorities to Schools* (LGA Research Report), Slough: NFER

113. More positively, the LGA also indicated that some local authorities are working hard to redesign services for targeted groups, citing Leeds City Council and County Durham as examples where this work is taking place.¹⁷⁰ Councillor David Simmonds of the LGA added in oral evidence that Kent County Council was working to develop its own Risk of NEET indicators.¹⁷¹

114. The Minister reinforced the importance of targeted services for vulnerable young people, with particular reference to those who are likely to become NEET. He said:

This is a really important area, and the link-up between schools and local authorities on early targeting and data-sharing on which pupils are likely to become NEET, and then on putting in place early steps to deal with it, is absolutely crucial [...] It is their [local authorities'] responsibility to work with schools in their area, whether they are academies or not, to identify who is likely to go into that category and to deal with it. I think that is really important.¹⁷²

115. *We believe that careers guidance services are an integral part of the support package needed by vulnerable young people. We are concerned that there appears to be too much variation in local authorities' interpretation of what constitutes a targeted group. We recommend that the Department of Education promotes the activities of the best performing local authorities so that best practice in identifying and delivering services to targeted young people is shared.*

Youth contract

116. The Youth Contract provides £1 billion to supplement the role of schools and local authorities with a range of opportunities to help young people access education, training and work. Within this, there is a discrete provision (worth £126 million over three years) for 16–17 year olds who are not in education, employment or training and who are at greatest risk of long term disengagement.¹⁷³ The Government has awarded contracts for this work regionally to private companies and third sector organisations. In a small number of areas the Government has devolved the funding to City Deals to buy services on a local level.¹⁷⁴

117. The DfE told us that the focus of the programme ensures that the “Youth Contract targets those who most need support”.¹⁷⁵ It informed us that the programme was being managed by the Education Funding Agency to ensure coherence with other local initiatives. It also said that providers will “need to work alongside local authorities to agree priorities”.¹⁷⁶

170 Ev 58

171 Q 97

172 Q 291

173 <http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/participation/a00203664/youth-contract>

174 <http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/participation/a00203664/youth-contract>

175 Ev 80

176 *Ibid.*

118. Criticisms of the regional commissioning of the programme were made by local authorities. For example, we were told that the Youth Contract was awarded in areas without local authorities being consulted by the successful bidder on the needs of the young people within the area.¹⁷⁷ The LGA claimed that:

the nationally commissioned model has offered minimal engagement with councils [...] As a result, there is a risk that provision will not be integrated with exiting local activity [...] the consequence of this is that this element of the Youth Contract will sit outside existing efforts and investments in all local areas making the offer to young people complicated and confusing.¹⁷⁸

119. The Minister agreed that more needed to be done to bring local authorities into the delivery of the Youth Contract. In response to questioning on the lack of local authority involvement in the letting of the Youth Contracts, he told us that “the best practice is where local authorities are involved, and it is very clear that, in some areas, that works really well”.¹⁷⁹ He did not, however, accept the criticism that local authorities were not consulted in the letting of regional contracts.¹⁸⁰

120. We welcome the Minister’s assurance that the Government is in discussion with the LGA about the Youth Contract.¹⁸¹ While it may be too early to judge the effectiveness of the Youth Contract, we have concerns that the national providers are not sufficiently linked into the local networks and that this risks a duplication of services and young people falling between the cracks.

121. We recommend that the Government ensures that discussions take place between local authorities and the regional Youth Contract providers about the delivery of the Youth Contract on a local level.

177 Ev 121

178 Ev 64

179 Q 292

180 Q 293

181 Q 294

8 Conclusion

122. Independent careers advice and guidance has never been as important as it is now. Careers advice has to be seen in the context of the proliferation in post-14 educational settings—UTC's, studio schools, free schools, academies, further education colleges, sixth form colleges, apprenticeships—together with the introduction of higher university tuition fees and an increasingly complex labour market in which SMEs are the major employer. In addition, careers advice has to play its role within a policy context of a rising compulsory participation age and high levels of youth unemployment. Too many schools lack the skills, incentives or capacity to fulfil the duty put on them without a number of changes being made. We do not think that schools can simply be left to get on with it.

123. We agree with Brian Lightman of the Association of School and College Leaders when he told us:

there is a bewildering range of choices for young people today. It is a confusing world, and to expect a 14-year-old or a 15-year-old to know where to look—to go to the right place and to navigate their way through that without some professional assistance—is just misguided.¹⁸²

124. The evidence submitted to us suggests that the careers advice and guidance service to young people is deteriorating. Our inquiry has highlighted grave shortcomings in the implementation of the Government's policy of transferring responsibility for careers guidance to schools, not least the inadequacy of the means by which schools can be held accountable for their fulfilment of this duty. These issues must be addressed as a matter of urgency, drawing on the existing resource of the National Careers Service where at all possible and giving schools the direct guidance they need without encroaching on their ability to respond flexibly to their own circumstances and priorities. Young people deserve better than the service they are likely to receive under current arrangements, and schools must be enabled and empowered to, and held accountable for, the provision of the high quality, focused careers guidance required by all their students to help them meet the challenges of today's world of work.

Conclusions and recommendations

In the report conclusions are shown in **bold**; recommendations are shown in *bold italics*. In this list, recommendations are shown in italics.

Transfer of the statutory duty

Our conclusion on the transfer of responsibility

1. The Government's decision to transfer responsibility for careers guidance to schools is regrettable. International evidence suggests such a model does not deliver the best provision for young people. The weaknesses of the school-based model have been compounded by the failure to transfer to schools any budget with which to provide the service. This has led, predictably, to a drop in the overall level of provision. (Paragraph 31)
2. *Nonetheless, we recognise that the new responsibility is now in place and further change would lead to greater uncertainty and upheaval, with a detrimental impact on young people. Whilst funding remains a concern, schools need to make careers guidance a priority within their budgets and we do not, in the current financial climate, recommend that additional funding be provided directly to schools. We believe that, instead, urgent steps must be taken by the Government to ensure that the current settlement meets the needs of young people. More precisely, we believe that the situation could be rescued by a combination of improved accountability and an enhancement of the role of the National Careers Service, including additional funding for that.* (Paragraph 32)

Extension of the statutory duty

3. We welcome the Government's decision to extend the duty to young people in Year 8 and to 16 to 18 year-olds in school or college. (Paragraph 35)

Coherence and consistency

Current provision

4. *The Department for Education should encourage local authorities to promote greater consistency in the provision of careers advice and guidance in their areas so that, while there is room for innovation and variation, all young people have access to good quality, independent and impartial careers guidance, regardless of where they live or which school they attend.* (Paragraph 37)

Government guidance

5. We welcome the publication of the statutory guidance and practical guide for schools. However, the statutory guidance is seriously weakened by its permissive tone and the practical guide can be disregarded by schools, should they so wish. The fact that the guidance for schools is spread across two separate documents further diminishes its impact and authority. (Paragraph 40)

6. *We believe that Government could do more to promote consistency in the offer to young people through central guidance. We note that the Minister was not opposed to the proposition of combining the two documents into one, if there was “broad consensus around that”. We consider that this would help to encourage consistency between what was offered in different schools and different areas, and therefore we recommend that the statutory guidance and practical guide be combined in a single document. References to “statutory guidance” in the rest of this report should be taken to mean this unified document. (Paragraph 41)*

Approaches to collaboration

7. *We commend the efforts made by some local authorities to support their schools in taking on the new duty, particularly by working with them to form consortia and partnerships to procure independent and impartial careers guidance. We recommend that the Government’s statutory guidance is strengthened to emphasise the benefits of this approach. We also recommend that the Government promotes the activities of the best performing local authorities so that best practice can be shared. (Paragraph 46)*
8. *We conclude that a collaborative approach to commissioning careers guidance services has many advantages for schools, particularly in promoting consistency and quality and in realising economies of scale. We recommend that the statutory guidance is strengthened better to reflect the benefits of this approach. (Paragraph 49)*

Accountability

The Ofsted framework

9. We welcome the undertaking that Ofsted is to conduct a thematic survey of careers guidance provision in schools which will report in the summer of 2013. We also welcome the Minister’s assurance that he will take the findings of this survey seriously. Nevertheless, a survey of provision cannot provide sufficient incentives to encourage individual schools to implement a good quality, independent and impartial careers guidance service. (Paragraph 55)
10. We note the disconnect between the Minister’s view of the role of Ofsted in enforcing accountability on schools through its inspection framework, and Ofsted’s own view. The limitations which Ofsted set out to us—the fact that its inspections do not make a clear judgement on careers guidance provision in schools, that it does not inspect against statutory compliance in this area and that it does not routinely inspect all schools—means that the Ofsted framework is not a credible accountability check on the provision of careers guidance by individual schools. (Paragraph 56)

Destination measures

11. We conclude that destination measures as they currently stand are not effective for ensuring that schools meet their statutory duty. Measures taken too soon do not provide a complete picture while those taken later remove the direct accountability on schools, as other factors may have influenced an individual’s destination. Furthermore, the measures do not show the quality of the careers guidance provision in a school. (Paragraph 59)

12. *There is therefore no immediate prospect for schools to be held to account for their provision of careers guidance by means of destination measures. Nevertheless, we recognise that the measures could be beneficial in other ways. We recommend that the Department for Education continues to pursue the inclusion of employment as well as improved education destination measures to make the data more meaningful. We also welcome the Minister's ambition to expand the timeframe of the destination measures in the future. (Paragraph 60)*

School careers plan

13. *We recommend that the Department for Education introduces into the statutory guidance a requirement for schools to publish an annual careers plan, to include information on the support and resources available to its pupils in planning their career development. Schools should be required to review the plan systematically on an annual basis, taking into account the views of students, parents, employers and other learning providers. (Paragraph 63)*

Schools and the National Careers Service

14. *We recommended in our Fourth Report of session 2010–12, *Participation by 16–19 year olds in education and training*, that an “all age careers service should be funded by the Department for Education for face to face career guidance for young people.” Our view on this has not changed. However, given the statutory duty has only recently been passed to schools, we believe that the best way of delivering the Government's vision and providing the service that young people need is through the capacity-building and brokerage model. (Paragraph 72)*
15. *We recommend that the remit of the National Careers Service is expanded to enable it to perform a capacity-building and brokerage role for schools. As part of its capacity-building role, the National Careers Service should work with individual schools in designing their annual careers plan of provision for careers guidance as well as provide schools with local labour market information. Clearly, this would have funding implications and so we further recommend that the Department of Education instructs the Skills Funding Agency to cost the options of the National Careers Service remit being expanded in this way. (Paragraph 74)*

Quality of careers guidance

Forms of guidance: Face-to-face guidance

16. *Access to face-to-face guidance is an integral part of good quality careers guidance. All young people should have access to such provision from a qualified, independent provider, should they choose to take up the opportunity. We recommend that a minimum of one personal careers interview with an independent adviser who is not a teacher should be available for every young person and that this is made explicit in the statutory guidance. (Paragraph 81)*

Online information

17. *Websites are a valuable source of information about careers for young people. They cannot, however, replace face-to-face guidance, nor are they sufficient in themselves to fulfil the requirement on schools to provide independent, impartial guidance. To ensure that schools do not over-rely on directing their students to websites, we recommend that the Department for Education amends the statutory guidance to schools to make it clear that the signposting of independent websites is insufficient to meet their statutory duty. (Paragraph 86)*

Independence and impartiality

18. *We recommend that, as part of an overall careers plan, schools are required to publish details of the alternative providers they allow to meet with their pupils, including the name of the provider and the nature of the contact. (Paragraph 90)*
19. *We welcome the Government's support for the increased involvement of local employers in careers guidance in schools, which is vital for effective careers provision. We recommend that schools be required to set out in their careers plans their arrangements with local employers and how they intend to enhance them. (Paragraph 93)*

Teachers and careers guidance

20. *We acknowledge the important role that teachers play in guiding and advising young people. We also recognise the constraints that they are under when performing the role and that they cannot substitute for fully-qualified, independent and impartial advisers. (Paragraph 99)*
21. *We agree with witnesses from business that it would be beneficial for teachers to have a greater understanding of the world of work, particularly that of the local labour market, and we recommend that teachers should undertake regular professional development to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the work place. The local focus and infrastructure of the National Careers Service could be invaluable in enabling this, and we recommend that this is incorporated within the NCS capacity-building role outlined above. (Paragraph 100)*
22. *We concur with our colleagues on the Business, Innovation and Skills Committee that awareness of apprenticeships is limited within schools. We recommend that the National Apprenticeship Service's remit be extended to include the promotion of apprenticeships in schools. (Paragraph 101)*
23. *We recommend that the Government requires schools to:*
 - *achieve the Quality in Careers Standard;*
 - *secure independent careers guidance from a provider with the Matrix standard; and*
 - *ensure that advice is provided by a level 6 qualified careers advisers.*

We further recommend that the National Careers Service's role should be expanded to include a duty to promote to schools the benefits of working to these quality standards. (Paragraph 105)

Careers education and work-related learning

24. *The Government's decision to remove the statutory duty on schools to provide careers education and work-related learning has been heavily criticised by witnesses to our inquiry. We are persuaded of the benefits of both these former provisions and we recommend that the Government's statutory guidance to schools is strengthened to require schools to provide careers education and work-related learning as part of their duty. (Paragraph 109)*

Targeted support

25. *We believe that careers guidance services are an integral part of the support package needed by vulnerable young people. We are concerned that there appears to be too much variation in local authorities' interpretation of what constitutes a targeted group. We recommend that the Department of Education promotes the activities of the best performing local authorities so that best practice in identifying and delivering services to targeted young people is shared. (Paragraph 115)*

Youth contract

26. *We recommend that the Government ensures that discussions take place between local authorities and the regional Youth Contract providers about the delivery of the Youth Contract on a local level. (Paragraph 121)*

Annex 1

Note of Committee's visit to Bradford

22 October 2012

The Committee undertook a visit to Bradford as part of its inquiry into Careers Guidance for Young People. During the course of the day it met with: Bradford Metropolitan District Council; students and members of the senior leadership team of Bradford College; and local employers at Bradford Chamber of Commerce.

Bradford Metropolitan District Council

The Council discussed the partnership it had established with a number of schools to provide universal and targeted careers guidance services for young people. The following points were made:

- The partnership approach allowed economies of scale to be realised.
- The Council had negotiated a flexible contract which gave schools a minimum level of provision but also the ability to purchase more should they wish to. The contract also allowed the Council to fully meet its responsibility to targeted groups.
- Each school in the partnership provided a minimum of £10,000 to the partnership with the Council providing a much larger sum of money for targeted services.
- There was some concern around the future funding of the partnership. As schools did not have any additional budget given to them to perform the duty, it was unclear whether or not they would continue to put money into careers guidance services. The schools were only committed on a yearly basis and the Council had to wait to see how many would sign up for future years.
- Representatives of the schools in the partnership commented that they found it difficult to see how schools could provide the level of service without the local authority's partnership. They saw the partnership as a particular strength and commented that the contract was well-negotiated and provided best value for money. However, the provision being bought into schools was described as "adequate", with around one and a half days a week being given to each school. This was compared to the previous provision of two days a week in the last year and four days a week prior to that.
- There is performance management of the contract and the provider is obliged to seek feedback on itself. This is one way that the impartiality and quality of the contract is monitored.
- The Council had encouraged schools to maintain work-experience and work placements for students both pre- and post-16. It had also encouraged the promotion of apprenticeships to young people in schools.
- There is a tension over whether a contractor can deliver truly independent advice and guidance—which may include advice to not remain at an institution—when they are paid by that institution.

- It was commented that the guidance provided by the DfE was written in such a way that some head teachers will conclude that it is acceptable to “give young people a leaflet” to meet the duty for independent and impartial guidance.
- There was broad agreement that the expansion of the National Careers Service’s role to provide face-to-face support to young people would be a good thing. This view was accompanied, however, by a very strong feeling that the support to young people needed to be rooted in the locality. This way local labour market information can be fed into the information, advice and guidance that young people receive.

The targeted support and Youth Contract provision in Bradford was also discussed.

- Under the Youth Contract, three NEET groups were being targeted: pupil referrals, young offenders and young parents. Key workers will work closely with personal advisors from Connexions and the young people will be identified through common assessments.
- Bradford had developed its own risk of NEET indicator system and this was being used to ensure early intervention.

Bradford College—senior leadership team

The Committee met first with members of the senior leadership team, and the following points were made:

- The College receives a high number of entrants aged 17, who arrive after having studied a year of A levels. This was as a direct result of young people receiving poor advice in year 11.
- Many schools were not giving impartial, independent advice to their pupils – and it was not possible for them to do so because of their own vested interest in retaining pupils.
- The College has a school liaison team, which had built good relationships with some schools while there was more difficult relationships with others. The College had been denied access to talk to pupils at a number of local schools. An example was given of one Ofsted outstanding school to which the College had never been invited to give information to its pupils. This school retains 87% of its pupils into its own sixth form.
- It was suggested that one way of making head teachers more accountable for the quality of the careers advice and guidance would be through tracking of 20 to 25 year olds—in other words, long term destination measures.
- It was recommended that the statutory duty to provide independent and impartial careers guidance should be removed from schools.

Bradford College—students

Asked about their experience of careers guidance, the students made the following points:

- A student had spoken to someone in year 11 and as a result had done a year of sixth form. There had been no guidance at the end of that. Many felt that they had wasted a year in this way. They had stayed on because it was the easiest option and was promoted by the school.
- Similarly, a number of other students felt that the advice they received from Connexions advisers in year 11 had been poor and that they had spent a year doing courses which did not help them achieve their career goals. This too was described by many as a “wasted year”.
- There was general agreement that you did not get advice if you were not staying on at school. All present had found their courses by themselves without guidance. Two students said that they had never spoken to anyone about careers.
- All agreed that any advice given was on jobs and not how to get there. It was all about what you want to do and not about what skills you have and what you could do.
- For some students, the main source of advice was their parents.
- Once you left school, you had to know about advice centres and what to say when you got there. Former schoolmates who had left school without advice were now “lost”, doing nothing.
- Once you leave education, there is no help available to get back into it. There should be more help for those who leave VI form after one year.
- Labour market information was regarded as important by the students although there was agreement that this was lacking. Some commented that they would have liked to have been given more information on the post-course employment rate before they enrolled.
- Asked about careers guidance at the FE college, only one student had been to see the adviser. The others present were not aware that there was such a person.

On the question of how careers guidance could be improved the following points were made:

- Schools should provide as much information as they can about your future, including that college is not just for those who can't get into sixth form.
- One student argued that the main purpose of schools was to deliver in terms of education. They should not be telling you where you should go next. However, there was some support for the concept that schools should give careers advice: “because teachers know you”.
- Young people should not have to choose a career in year 11. They should wait until they have better information.
- It would be a good idea to have more open days and workshops at colleges so students could see what it was like. Teachers should know more about courses. Schools should also give colleges a platform. There should be a careers day with different colleges attending.
- Another idea was motivational talks in schools about what you could do.

- Schools should give students information on what is available and the consequences if you leave at 16, 17, 18 etc. For example, they should tell you that you have to pay the full amount to do an apprenticeship at 24. At present, there was no information on what you could do or possible avenues.
- Schools should also collaborate with businesses: no information had been available through schools about the big companies in Bradford and what they were doing.

Those present suggested the following recommendations:

- Get knowledge across to children in year 10 at the latest
- Year 9 when students pick their options would be even better.
- There should be more promotion of different courses and careers.
- Face-to-face advice was definitely more important than other types of advice. It was not good enough to have advice available only on the phone or online.
- There should be opportunities to meet careers advisers and those doing the jobs.

Bradford Chamber of Commerce

The following points were made to the Committee by local employers:

- There was general agreement that careers advice for young people was “limited, unimaginative and of poor quality”. It was also widely felt that engaging with schools was very difficult.
- Schools need to be given more capacity to take on the careers guidance duty.
- The focus of advice appeared to be on getting young people to go to university rather than on how to get into a particular career or job.
- Young people’s lack of knowledge of what employers require was a concern shared by all delegates. There was a strong feeling that the education system was biased towards qualifications rather than giving young people workplace and “soft” skills. It was this that employers thought was most important to have in young recruits—particularly for SME employers. One delegate thought that the awareness of the world of work should be part of the curriculum.
- There was agreement that teachers should have local labour market training as part of their continuous professional development. In addition, teachers should undertake work placements to increase their understanding of business and other work-place environments. Many teachers have gone straight to teaching from university and have not experienced the wider world of work.
- The current work placement model doesn’t work for employers. One person mentioned the amount of red tape involved in taking on work experience students. For this reason he was hesitant to continue providing this opportunity.
- A number of delegates felt that the quality of careers guidance should be a key performance indicator under Ofsted inspections.
- Many felt that careers advice and guidance needed to be demand-led not supply-led and to take into account local business needs.

Annex 2

Note of the Committee's seminar with young people 7 November 2012

This note is a record of a seminar held by the Committee with 23 young people. The purpose of the seminar was to gather the views of young people on their experience of careers advice and guidance and what they would hope and expect to get out of careers advice and guidance activities. The young people who attended were involved with a number of organisations representing young people from different backgrounds. The organisations were British Youth Council, Centrepoin Parliament, North Tyneside Youth Council, The Prince's Trust, UK Youth and the Who Cares? Trust.

What is your experience of careers advice and guidance?

The discussion began by looking at how careers advice and guidance was provided, and by whom. Most of the young people felt that having a largely internet-based service was far from ideal. They felt that young people were left “too much to their own devices”, and that input from teachers and other professionals was of greater value.

The young people spoke about the absence of careers advice and guidance in schools. Experiences varied but were generally not positive. One student had not had any careers advice. She had asked the teachers for information but they either could not offer anything or tried to steer her down a safe path. When she asked where else she could go, the school suggested Connexions but she found that it had closed down. It was confusing. Later, she also explained that she felt that advisers believe “you can't fly that high”; they should always expect the best and not tell you to be “more sensible”. The young people wanted a service that was more enthusiastic and encouraging. Too often, young people reported, the focus of careers advice sessions was on earning potential, or on themes and pathways with which advisers themselves were most familiar.

Many agreed that if you want to do well and are motivated, you will talk to your teachers and get help. There was less available for non-academic students. There was a split between those who knew what they wanted to do and those who didn't, and schools had limited information for the latter. Many students were pushed towards the traditional A level/VI form route and there was not a lot of information about BTecs and other vocational courses.

More positively, one young person mentioned that at her school, tutorial time was set aside every week for careers education work. She had found this to be very effective; it was regular, in bite-sized pieces and delivered by a teacher who knew the young person.

Connexions

Connexions was a “brand” that all the young people were familiar with, although there was a strong view that it tended to focus on personal issues and gave little attention to careers advice and guidance.

Experiences of Connexions were varied: some reported significant time spent with personal advisers, where others had had just an hour of advice, in-school, or even “ten minutes in Year 10”. It was felt that the Connexions offer of a single session was insufficient in itself and delivered only very basic information. One young person described the careers service provided by Connexions as “rubbish”. A student who was just starting GCSEs explained that Connexions came into the school and gave one-to-one sessions but this was very basic, unspecific information (for example, website links) and nothing to take them further. After this one meeting, the young person was told to make an appointment if they wanted to see an adviser again, but that proved difficult to arrange.

Some of the young people had benefitted from Connexions’ wider advice, for example around personal and family issues. These young people spoke more positively about the service than others.

There was general agreement, though, that improving the weaker Connexions services would have been preferable to shutting down the entire organisation.

What sort of careers advice and guidance do you want?

None of the young people thought that schools currently provide sufficient careers guidance and advice. It was agreed that careers education should be in the curriculum and that steps should be taken to avoid the varying practice across different schools and enhance the consistency of provision. Both quality and quantity of careers advice and guidance were seen as important.

There were differing views on whether careers guidance should be provided by teachers. Some felt strongly that the advice they received from teachers was very valuable because of the established relationship with them. Others thought that outsiders were better because they were more objective. Many young people agreed that schools were the right place to provide advice because of the knowledge they hold of the young person’s interests, abilities and ambitions. However, it was felt by some that teachers should have more training to be able to provide higher quality guidance and advice.

It was agreed by all that impartiality and independence was a key component that young people wanted. Face-to-face guidance was also regarded as an essential part of any provision for all young people. The most popular request was more face-to-face advice. Telephone and website consultations were not enough because of difficulties over access

and cost. Face-to-face also allowed for a better connection to be formed. The interview should be with a careers person who can point you in the direction of jobs and careers you would either be good at or interested in.

One young person spoke about his experience of being given advice through an online programme, where information was fed in and possible careers options were given. He found this to be unhelpful as he was not interested in any of the careers that the software had suggested. He compared this to a face-to-face interview with a career counsellor the following year, which he found to be very useful.

There was general agreement that navigating the numerous websites was difficult and that it needed simplifying. One young person, talking about their use of career websites, said: “I am tech-savvy, but found it too much”. Another said that while the “web can be powerful, it needs to be a process—young people need interaction”.

The whole group was invited to give a view on the age at which careers work should begin. The majority of the group agreed that years 7 and 8 were around the right time, with a few settling on slightly earlier (year 6) and others thinking that year 9 was most appropriate. It was felt that the system should also be flexible for young people who might need advice and guidance at different stages.

The young people were attracted by a suggestion that there should be better co-ordination of careers advice, guidance, and work experience into a curriculum package which included citizenship and life skills, such as CV-writing. Current provision was seen as inconsistent and patchy, and dependent on your own school or college or local service provider. Building a package into the curriculum could help resolve this, it was felt, as well as helping to ensure equality for young people.

Work experience and work-related learning.

The general consensus was that work experience was very valuable in teaching life lessons and skills. Some young people argued that work experience’s real value had been suggesting careers they would *not* want to pursue, and that it could serve as an incentive to work harder in school to gain qualifications for a career they would rather pursue.

Placements sometimes seemed irrelevant to individuals’ own ambitions. A number of the young people who had work experience in the past said that they had got “nothing out of it”. It was felt that too often young people were “palmed off to retail” businesses and it was described as “free labour” by some of the delegates.

Most of those present had had work experience while at school. In a few cases it was arranged through family or organised by the student themselves but for most it was through the school. The best experience, where the school had arranged it well, involved the students in year 11 receiving a list of local businesses and then applying for places.

Teachers checked up on the students twice during the fortnight and the students also had booklets to fill in (a common element). At the end the students received references.

It was suggested that organisations offering work experience should receive some training on how to host young people (and perhaps offer mentoring as part of the experience). It was also felt strongly by most delegates that work experience was more valuable when spread across a longer period of time—perhaps a day per fortnight—rather than being completed in a block. The potential for workplaces to be ‘accredited’ for their work experience placements was discussed, although young people suggested this could actually deter some good firms which didn’t want administrative hassle.

Knowledge of the labour market varied. Some felt that they knew the types of jobs which were available to them. Others pointed out that many students put off worrying about such decisions until after A levels or after their degree.

The group also discussed the impact of youth unemployment, agreeing that this was mainly a question of having the right skills. One suggested that NEETs “don’t know how to start, where to start or what to do”. Work-based learning would help to develop skills in these cases.

When the views of employers on the employability skills of young people were put to the group, the response was that employers forgot what it was like to be young and looking for a job. It was hard to get experience when you hadn’t already got it.

Formal Minutes

Tuesday 15 January 2013

Members present:

Mr Graham Stuart, in the Chair

Neil Carmichael
Alex Cunningham
Pat Glass
Charlotte Leslie

Siobhain McDonagh
Ian Mearns
David Ward

Draft Report (*Careers Guidance for Young People: The impact of the new duty on schools*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 124 read and agreed to.

Annexes 1 and 2 agreed to.

Summary agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Seventh Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

Written evidence was ordered to be reported to the House for printing with the Report (in addition to that ordered to be reported for publishing on 11 September 2012).

[Adjourned till Wednesday 16 January at 9.00 am

Witnesses

Wednesday 31 October 2012

Page

David Pollard, Chair, Education, Skills and Business Support Policy Group, Federation of Small Businesses, **David Walrond**, Principal, Truro and Penwith College, **Paul Jackson**, Chief Executive Engineering UK, and **Peter Searle**, CEO of Adecco Group UK & Ireland

Ev 1

Judith Denyer, Operations Director, Prospects, **Mary Vine-Morris**, Director of Young people's Education and Skills, London Councils, **Fiona Hilton**, 14-19 Officer IAG/NEET/Transition Connexions/School Improvement, Trafford Council, and **Councillor David Simmonds**, Deputy Leader of Hillingdon Council and Chair, Children and Young People Board, LGA

Ev 10

Wednesday 21 November 2012

Robert Campbell, Principal, Impington College, **Heather Morris**, Careers Co-ordinator, Thamesmead School, **Sally Long**, Upper Phase Manager, St Nicholas at Canterbury College, and **Brian Lightman**, General Secretary, ASCL

Ev 22

Professor Tony Watts, Visiting Professor, University of Derby and Canterbury Christ Church University, **Steve Stewart**, Chairman, Careers England, **David Milton**, President, Institute for Career Guidance, and **Dr Deirdre Hughes**, Chair, National Careers Council

Ev 32

Wednesday 28 November 2012

Matthew Hancock MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education and Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

Ev 43

List of printed written evidence

1	Adecco Group	Ev 54
2	Local Government Association	Ev 58
3	EngineeringUK	Ev 65
4	National Careers Council	Ev 67
5	Prospects Services	Ev 73
6	Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)	Ev 76
7	Department for Education	Ev 80
8	Careers England	Ev 88
9	Presidential team of the Institute of Career Guidance (ICG)	Ev 104
10	Professor Tony Watts, OBE	Ev 107
11	Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)	Ev 112

12	London Councils	Ev 114
13	Fiona Hilton, Trafford Council	Ev 121

List of additional written evidence

(published in Volume III on the Committee's website www.parliament.uk/educom)

1	Colin Dickerson	Ev w1
2	Nick Von Behr, behr outcomes	Ev w1
3	Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL)	Ev w2
4	Prisoners Education Trust	Ev w6
5	Which?	Ev w9
6	YMCA England	Ev w14
7	Royal Geographical Society with the Institute of British Geographers	Ev w17
8	Stonewall	Ev w19
9	Durham County Council	Ev w21
10	Sheffield Futures and Sheffield City Council	Ev w21
11	Hilton Worldwide	Ev w23
12	Working Links	Ev w25
13	The Royal College of Psychiatrists	Ev w28
14	Business in the Community	Ev w29
15	City and Guilds, and the City and Guilds Centre for Development	Ev w34
16	The Bridge Group	Ev w38
17	CITB-Construction Skills	Ev w42
18	Education for Engineering (E4E)	Ev w45
19	Prince's Trust	Ev w48
20	Careers Sector Stakeholders Alliance (CSSA)	Ev w49
21	National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE)	Ev w54
22	Cambridge Assessment	Ev w55
23	vInspired	Ev w58
24	North Tyneside Youth Council	Ev w59
25	The Work Foundation	Ev w61
26	NASUWT	Ev w63, Ev w189
27	City of York Council	Ev w68
28	Careers Solutions	Ev w69
29	Joint UK Geoscience Community	Ev w73
30	Mike Hoyer	Ev w76
31	Creative & Cultural Skills—The National Skills Academy	Ev w77
32	Association of Colleges (AoC)	Ev w79
33	EEF	Ev w83
34	Suffolk County Council	Ev w88
35	CfBT Education Trust	Ev w91
36	Andrew J McGregor	Ev w92

37	Melanie Jameson, Dyslexia Consultancy Malvern, and Christopher Rossiter, British Dyslexia Association	Ev w94
38	Bryan Summers	Ev w95
39	Warwick Institute for Employment Research (IER)	Ev w96
40	Ofsted	Ev w100, Ev w189
41	Centrepoint	Ev w103
42	National Governors' Association (NGA)	Ev w106
43	National Care Advisory Service (NCAS)	Ev w108
44	Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR)	Ev w113
45	The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT)	Ev w115
46	ANSBURY	Ev w117
47	The Science Council	Ev w121
48	UNISON	Ev w125
49	National Foundation for Education Research (NFER)	Ev w129
50	Newcastle City Council, Children's Services	Ev w133
51	The Institute of Mathematics and its Applications	Ev w137
52	Think Global and the British Council	Ev w138
53	Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP)	Ev w139
54	Association for Careers Education and Guidance (ACEG)	Ev w142
55	Association of South East Colleges	Ev w146
56	Gatsby Charitable Foundation	Ev w148
57	Greater Merseyside Connexions (GMCP)	Ev w151
58	Adviza	Ev w155
59	The Russell Group	Ev w156
60	The Wellcome Trust	Ev w158
61	Careers South West	Ev w159
62	David Andrews, OBE	Ev w163
63	British Youth Council	Ev w166
64	City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, Department of Children's Services	Ev w168, Ev w188
65	National Union of Teachers (NUT)	Ev w171
66	Barry Jackson, BWJ Enterprise (Trading as Aspire Academy)	Ev w172
67	Confederation of British Industry (CBI)	Ev w175
68	National Children's Bureau	Ev w178
69	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)	Ev w180
70	Pearson Think Tank and the International Centre for Guidance Studies	Ev w183
71	Bradford and Keighley Youth Parliament	Ev w185
72	FutureYou	Ev w185

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

The reference number of the Government's response to each Report is printed in brackets after the HC printing number.

Session 2010-12

First Special Report	Young people not in education, employment or training: Government Response to the Children, Schools and Families Committee's Eighth Report of Session 2009-10	HC 416
Second Special Report	The Early Years Single Funding Formula: Government Response to the Seventh Report from the Children, Schools and Families Committee, Session 2009-10	HC 524
Third Special Report	Transforming Education Outside the Classroom: Responses from the Government and Ofsted to the Sixth Report of the Children, Schools and Families Committee, Session 2009-10	HC 525
Fourth Special Report	Sure Start Children's Centres: Government Response to the Fifth Report from the Children, Schools and Families Committee, Session 2009-10	HC 768
First Report	Behaviour and Discipline in Schools	HC 516-I and -II (HC 1316)
Second Report	The role and performance of Ofsted	HC 570-I and II (HC 1317)
Fifth Special Report	Looked-after Children: Further Government Response to the Third Report from the Children, Schools and Families Committee, Session 2008-09	HC 924
Third Report	Services for young people	HC 744-I and -II (HC 1501)
Fourth Report	Participation by 16-19 year olds in education and training	HC 850-I and -II (HC 1572)
Fifth Report	The English Baccalaureate	HC 851 (HC 1577)
Sixth Report	Services for young people: Government Response to the Committee's Third Report of Session 2010-12	HC 1501 (HC 1736)
Seventh Report	Appointment of HM Chief Inspector, Ofsted	HC 1607-I
Eighth Report	Chief Regulator of Qualifications and Examinations	HC 1764-I and -II
Ninth Report	Great teachers: attracting, training and retaining the best	HC 1515-I

Session 2012–13

First Report	The administration of examinations for 15–19 year olds in England	HC 141-I (HC 679)
Second Report	Appointment of Chair, Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission	HC 461-I
Third Report	Governance and leadership of the Department for Education	HC 700
Fourth Report	Children first: the child protection system in England	HC 137-I
Fifth Report	Support for Home Education	HC 559-I
Sixth Report	Pre-legislative scrutiny: Special Educational Needs	HC 631-I
