



**Children and Young People
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**
10 October 2013

**Report from the Director of
Children and Families**

For Information

Wards Affected:
ALL

Careers Advice for Young People in Brent

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on careers advice for young people in Brent, as requested by the Brent Youth Parliament. The report outlines the significant legislative changes from 2012 which impact the arrangements for the delivery of careers guidance services.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the changes to the responsibilities for the delivery of careers information, advice and guidance for young people and to consider the report.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 Careers guidance refers to services and activities, intended to assist individuals of any age and at any point throughout their lives, to make education, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers. The activities may take place on an individual or group basis and may be face-to-face or at a distance (including help lines or web based services). They include careers information provision, assessment and self-assessment tools, counselling interviews, careers education programmes, taster programmes, work search programmes and transition services¹.

¹ Statutory Guidance The duty to secure independent and impartial careers guidance for young people in schools March 2013

- 3.2 The provision of careers information, advice and guidance (IAG) for young people in Brent and nationally has changed significantly under the terms of the Education Act 2011. From September 2012, the Education Act 2011 placed a duty on schools to secure and fund through the Designated Schools Grant access to independent, impartial careers guidance for their students in years 9-11. The duty to secure independent and impartial careers guidance for students in schools has since been extended down to year 8 and up to years 12 and 13 with effect from September 2013. The Department for Education (DfE) intends to extend an equivalent requirement to Further Education Colleges and Sixth Form Colleges through their funding agreements. There will be separate guidance to colleges.
- 3.3 Statutory Guidance from the Department for Education, updated in March 2013, sets out the duties for schools to secure independent and impartial careers guidance for young people. Academies and Free Schools are subject to the same requirements through their Funding Agreements. Apart from the elements identified in the statutory guidance, it is for schools to decide the careers guidance provision to be made available based on the needs of pupils and the opportunities available.
- 3.4 The statutory duty for Local Authorities to provide careers information, advice and guidance for young people in schools ceased on 31 March 2012. From September 2012, there is no longer an expectation that local authorities should continue to provide a universal careers guidance service for young people. The National Careers Service provides a website, telephone helpline, e-mail and webchat advice services but does not offer face to face Information Advice and Guidance services for young people under 19.
- 3.5 Under the Education Act 2011, Local Authorities have retained a number of statutory duties:-
- The duty under Section 68 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 to make available to young people below the age of 19 and relevant young adults (i.e. those aged 20 and over but under 25 with learning difficulties) support that will encourage, enable or assist them to participate in education and training, including young people at risk of disengagement. Support for young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and who are in special schools or out of borough education provision, includes completion of statutory reports on the support they need to succeed in post-16 education or training or higher education (known as learning difficulty assessments). It is under this duty that the local authority provides Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) for young people in the NEET group or at risk of becoming NEET.
 - To track and record young people's participation post-16 on the Client Caseload Information System (CCIS) database in order to ensure there is reliable data available centrally on young people at risk of being NEET.
 - To continue the process of ensuring that all 16 and 17 year olds receive suitable offers to continue in education or training (the September Guarantee). Achieving the delivery of the September Guarantee involves

extensive contact and follow-up of young people, as well as the recording of their offer status on the (CCIS) database.

- To maintain close links with Jobcentre Plus to ensure that 16-17 year olds eligible for benefits are given appropriate support.

In addition, the Education and Skills Act 2008 places two new duties on local authorities from June 2013 in respect of 16-18 year olds in relation to the raising of the participation age:

- To promote the effective participation in education and training of young people covered by the duty to participate
- To have in place arrangements to identify those who are not participating.

The Council's Strategic Lead School Improvement (Secondary) is working in partnership with education providers and the Youth and Connexions Service to put in place arrangements in relation to the raising of the participation age.

3.6 The local authority meets the responsibilities outlined above through three main provisions:

- An in-house team of eight Connexions Advisers (Intensive support) who work in educational settings, in targeted areas such as working with young people who have offended, care leavers, young people newly arrived in the UK and teenage parents and with young people in the NEET group and by contracting additional delivery.
- A Connexions Services contract, which is currently out to tender for the period 2014 to 2017 in the first instance with the option to extend for periods up to a further two years.
- Maintenance of the Integrated Youth Support database, including CCIS, maintained by Ealing Council on behalf of the West London Boroughs and the Pan-London database maintained by Central London Connexions.

3.7 On 10 September 2013 Ofsted published a report 'Going in the right direction? Careers guidance in schools from September 2012'. Ofsted looked at the extent to which young people in the 14-16 age-range in the 60 schools that inspectors visited were receiving impartial careers advice in order to make informed decisions about their future. Ofsted concluded that the new arrangements for careers guidance in schools were not working well enough and that in three quarters of the secondary schools and academies visited were not implementing their duty to provide impartial careers advice effectively. The survey also found that the guidance for schools on careers advice is not explicit, the National Careers Service is not promoted well enough and there is a lack of employer engagement in schools. Further, very few of the schools visited knew how to provide a service effectively or had the

skills and expertise needed to provide a comprehensive service. Few schools had bought in adequate service from external sources.

3.8 However, in Brent, the majority of secondary schools, including Special Schools and alternative education providers, have agreed to commission careers information, advice and guidance through Brent Council's Youth and Connexions Service, as a discrete service linked to the Council's provision of Connexions Services through the contracted provider, Prospects Services Ltd. This arrangement provides a cohesive independent and impartial advice service for schools and pupils that is also linked to on-going support through the post-school elements of Youth and Connexions Service careers provision. In two of the schools who have not joined this arrangement there is provision either via an externally commissioned provider or by an adviser employed directly by the school. Arrangements for pupils in the third school are not currently known.

3.9 Performance

3.9.1 The level of service contacts provided by the Connexions Service in Brent is good, with a total of 30,503 personal contacts delivered in 2012-2013. In addition there were 15,965 other contacts including contact via group sessions and telephone follow-up work.

3.9.2 The Youth and Connexions service achieves consistently the key performance target for the number of 16-18 year olds in the NEET group. Over the three key months of November 2012 to January 2013 when the target is measured the service achieved a performance of 2.4%. The London average was 4.7%. Brent's performance was the second best in England and an improvement on our 2011-2012 performance as joint 10th best in England. This performance reflects the work of Brent schools in preparing young people to participate in education and training, the Youth Support Services targeted work (including Youth and Connexions), the efforts made to keep in touch with young people, tracking outcomes and re-engagement, and the partnership work with all local post-16 education and training providers to keep young people engaged and achieving. Although this performance was strong, the 2013 performance still represents an average of 250 young people at that time who were yet to find and sustain places in education employment or training. The service continues to put in measures to support this group of young people to progress as shown in the examples given in 3.10 below.

3.9.3 Over the same period, the percentage of young people aged 16-18 (Academic Ages Year 12 to Year 14) whose situation was unknown was 3.2%. The London average was 11.6%. Again this performance is as a result of a wide range of organisations working together effectively to achieve the outcome required. The Connexions work with schools also forms a vital part of the approach, by providing young people with the opportunity to access the support they need to continue in learning and prevent them from moving into the NEET group.

3.9.4 In June 2012 the proportion of 16-17 year olds recorded in education and training in Brent was 93.6%. This exceeded the national average of 86.9%

and the London average of 89.6% and represented the joint sixth highest performance by a local authority for 16 year old participation and the fourth highest for 17 year old participation.

- 3.9.5 The September Offer is a government commitment to 16 and 17 year old young people to offer a place in education, employment or training after year 11 or year 12. Local authorities are responsible for ensuring this commitment is met. Brent has reported success year on year against this activity. For 2012 Brent exceeded the target achieving 97.8% for 16 year olds and 97.6% for 17 year olds.
- 3.10 The Youth and Connexions Service has responded to the new arrangements by developing the service delivery to reflect the changing role for the local authority.
- 3.10.1 Following the closure of the Connexions Centre in Willesden on 31 August 2012, the Youth and Connexions Service has developed a number of access points across Brent:
- Roundwood myplace Youth Centre, Monday to Friday 13.00 to 17.00
 - Stonebridge Hillside Hub, Wednesday 10.00 to 16.00 and Thursday 13.30 to 16:30
 - Willesden Library Wednesday 13.00 to 15.00
 - Brent Civic Centre Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 13.00 to 17.00, with additional drop-in at the Civic Centre Library Tuesday, 10.00 to 12.00
 - P3 Navigator Kilburn Tuesday 12.00 to 17.00

These are publicised via Bmyvoice and are becoming well established.

- 3.10.2 Some examples of careers advice delivery over the past year are given below:
- 3.10.3 In March 2013, an opportunities event was held at the Roundwood Youth Centre for year 11 and 12 students without a September offer of education, employment or training and young people in the NEET group. Twenty five organisations attended, including CNWL, local apprenticeship providers and employers. Two hundred and sixty six Brent young people attended with their parents and many decided to sign up for the opportunities on offer. This was significant in helping to reduce the numbers of young people reaching the end of the academic year without an offer of a place in education, training or employment for September.
- 3.10.4 In July 2013 a transition event for young people with Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities 'Branching Out' was held at the Roundwood myplace Youth Centre. The event was aimed at young people likely to be leaving school or college over the next few years and offered a range of activities including Yoga. Over 20 organisations attended and offered a range of opportunities such as summer work experience, employment, training, education and leisure activities. The event was a tremendous success with parents, young people and providers praising the quality of the event. Three hundred and sixty six young people and parents/carers attended the event. On the day, 45 young people signed up for work experience over the summer;

31 young people signed up with a youth contract provider, HAFAD, 25 young people signed up for employment opportunities and all local colleges made appointments for young people seeking college courses in September.

- 3.10.5 Brent Connexions have organised a series of apprenticeship events and master classes for young people in the NEET group which have been well attended. One of the events, held on 30 July featured opportunities in construction and motor vehicle mechanical apprenticeships offered by providers in Brent through CITB and MIT training. Ten young people attended who were either in the NEET group or leaving school this summer without an offer for of a place for September. All the young people who attended submitted applications and several have interviews arranged as a result.
- 3.10.6 From December 2012, Connexions Advisers have been running job search sessions from local Jobcentres (Kilburn, Willesden and Harlesden). The sessions cover job search skills such as CV preparation, how to find work and methods of job search. In line with the Local Authority's statutory duties, these sessions are intended to support young people in developing the skills needed to find employment from the moment they register for benefits, thus preventing long term unemployment. The Services has supported 47 young people to date from the Jobcentres.
- 3.10.7 In January 2013 the Connexions Service delivered a Careers Event in conjunction with P3 for Kilburn residents. Around 50 young people in the NEET group attended this event.
- 3.10.8 Since January 2013 Connexions has delivered two Going4Gold programmes aimed at teenage parents who are in the NEET group. Each programme was delivered from a Children's Centre and ran for eleven weeks with a group of eight to ten young parents. The young people attended regularly and engaged actively with the programme, with twelve young people achieving a Level 1 qualification in childcare and a further four achieving units towards the level 1.
- 3.10.9 The Youth and Connexions Service works closely with the School Improvement Service to promote high quality careers information, advice and guidance in schools. The School Improvement Service leads Brent 14-19 Partnership which includes all local education and training providers. A key priority of the partnership is to ensure access for all young people to high quality impartial information, advice and guidance (IAG). The delivery of IAG is therefore a regular item for discussion at meetings providing schools and other institutions with the opportunity to share best practice. As a consequence, one local education institution is setting up a forum for all school careers advisers to work together to improve practice and to ensure expertise in the advisers' knowledge and understanding of current and future labour markets. The 14-19 Partnership also works to ensure that Brent young people achieve the high quality qualifications they need to successfully progress to the further and higher education courses, which will meet their employment aspirations.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The council's Connexions team is funded through the General Fund, £1,278,375.15 in 2013 2014. The schools fulfil their obligations using their delegated budgets.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 None

6.0 Diversity Implications

- 6.1 None

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications

- 7.1 None

8.0 Child Poverty Implications (required by Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

- 8.1 Good quality impartial and independent information advice and guidance about learning and work options assists young people to reach their potential, make informed choices and successful transitions, improving life chances sustained into adulthood and parenthood.

Background Papers

Statutory Guidance The duty to secure independent and impartial careers guidance for young people in schools March 2013

<http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/s/careers%20guidance%20for%20schools%20-%20statutory%20guidance%20-%20march%202013.pdf>

Going in the right direction? Careers guidance in schools from September 2012 Ofsted 10 September 2013

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/going-right-direction-careers-guidance-schools-september-2012>

National Careers Service

<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/youngpeople/Pages/Youngpeople.aspx>

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