



National Audit Office

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Department for Education

# 16- to 18-year-old participation in education and training

## **Appendix Three**

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## Case studies

**1** Local authorities have 3 main statutory duties in relation to young people's education and training. These are the duty to:

- secure sufficient and suitable education and training for all young people in their area;
- support these young people's participation up to the age of 18; and
- identify those who do not participate.

**2** We conducted 6 case studies to understand how different local authorities approach these statutory duties. In our review, we did not attempt to draw conclusions about the performance of specific local authorities, nor did we attempt to draw wider conclusions about all local authorities.

### **Case study selection**

**3** 5 of the 6 case studies were selected in consultation with the Local Government Association, taking the following factors into consideration:

- the number of young people in the local area;
- the proportion of young people who were not in education, employment and training (NEET) or whose status was unknown to the local authority;
- geographical region; and
- local unemployment levels.

4 1 of the 6 local authority case studies contacted us directly, offering to tell us about what it did.

5 Our case study local authorities were:

- Brighton and Hove city council;
- Durham county council;
- Hertfordshire county council;
- Sheffield city council;
- Southend-on-Sea borough council; and
- Surrey county council.

6 For each, we explored:

- activities aimed at identifying 16- to 18-year-olds and maintaining knowledge about their activities;
- how data and information were used, including how they were shared with the Department, other local authorities and key stakeholders;
- activities aimed at supporting young people to engage with education and training, including programmes funded by the European Social Fund; and
- careers advice services.

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## Case study 1

### Brighton and Hove city council

#### Background

There were an estimated 6,685 young people living in Brighton and Hove in 2013.

Of those, the council:

- identified 6.9% as NEET (6.7% in 2012); and,
- was unaware of what a further 4.5% were doing (4.6% in 2012).

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#### How does the local authority promote participation and address the needs of young people who are NEET?

- a dedicated team of information, advice and guidance advisers provide one-to-one support for young people who are NEET;
- dedicated information, advice and guidance advisers are attached to social care teams to support looked after children;
- development of a Youth Early Help Pathway – a single point of referral for a range of youth support services;
- use of a range of social media to engage with and communicate with NEET young people including a smartphone application;
- a dedicated team organises and runs events in which employers and apprenticeship providers can engage young people;
- a local-authority-designed system identifies young people who are at risk of dropping out and becoming NEET so they can be targeted with specialist advice and support whilst still at school;
- the local authority delivers the Youth Contract as a local subcontractor of the regional contractor;
- a website provides employability advice for young people; and
- ongoing stakeholder engagement ensures that insights and best practice in relation to young people services are shared.

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#### How does the local authority track the education or training activities of young people?

- a dedicated team collects data on young people's education and training. The team uses telephone calls, text messaging, letters, emails and face-to-face visits to keep track of young people's activity, as well as social media websites, such as Facebook and Twitter; and
  - the local authority shares its data on young people's activities with neighbouring local authorities in order to cross-reference, improve accuracy and reduce the number of young people whose activity is unknown.
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## Case study 2

### Durham county council

#### Background

There were an estimated 17,653 young people living in Durham in 2013.

Of those, the council:

- identified 7.1% as NEET (10.4% in 2012); and,
- was unaware of what a further 7.5% were doing (9.6% in 2012).

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#### How does the local authority promote participation and address the needs of young people who are NEET?

- a partnership approach by the local authority to promoting participation and addressing the needs of young people who are NEET. For example, a comprehensive participation plan containing key strategic priorities and actions that the local authority and its partners are working towards is reviewed regularly at partnership strategic and operational groups;
- a local website dedicated to young people offers information, advice and guidance about careers;
- the local authority sells careers information, advice and guidance services to local education and training providers. 52% of local providers purchased the service in 2013-14;
- the local authority actively targets young people at risk of becoming NEET with specialist advice and support whilst they are still at school; and
- the local authority runs numerous programmes, funded by the European Social Fund, that target young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET. These include courses in subjects such as employability skills, English and maths, hygiene and food safety.

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#### How does the local authority track the education or training activities of young people?

- a dedicated team collects data on young people's education and training. The team uses telephone calls, text messaging, letters, emails and face-to-face visits to keep track of young people's activity;
  - the local authority shares its data on young people's activities with neighbouring local authorities in order to cross-reference, improve accuracy and reduce the number of young people whose activity is unknown;
  - the local authority also shares its data with local education and training providers to support actions to reduce the number of young people whose activity is unknown; and
  - the local authority is also developing an online system for providers to alert it, within 7 days, to the fact that a young person has dropped out, enabling the authority to contact the young person quickly and improve his or her chances of recommencing education or training.
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### Case study 3

#### Hertfordshire county council

##### Background

There were an estimated 38,307 young people living in Hertfordshire in 2013.

Of those, the council:

- identified 4.1% as NEET (4.5% in 2012); and,
- was unaware of what a further 4% were doing (4.5% in 2012).

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##### How does the local authority promote participation and address the needs of young people who are NEET?

- a service providing youth work, information, advice, guidance and support for young people aged 13 to 19 and offers numerous locations across the local authority where the service can be accessed as well as an email, twitter and phone service;
- a website dedicated to young people services including information on what raising the participation age means for them and opportunities to engage in learning and work;
- the local authority sells careers information, advice and guidance services to schools, colleges and training providers. 80% of local providers purchased the service in 2013-14;
- specific guidance for young people to use in certain situations, for instance *How to write a winning apprenticeship application*, which was subsequently distributed by the National Apprenticeship Service to all local authorities;
- the local authority is actively targeting young people who are at risk of dropping out and becoming NEET with specialist advice and support whilst they are still at school;
- convenes a NEET strategy group with other partners both internally and externally including stakeholders providing services targeted at vulnerable groups;
- works with partners to deliver and target programmes such as Youth Contract;
- the local authority runs numerous programmes such as CV building and 1 to 1 mentoring, targeted at young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET; and
- a travel card, at a cost of £20 per academic year, entitles learners to half-price travel on public bus services throughout the county.

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##### How does the local authority track the education or training activities of young people?

- a dedicated team collects data on young people's education and training. The service uses telephone calls, text messaging, letters, emails and face-to-face visits to keep track of young people's activity and to make sure young people are aware of relevant training and employment opportunities; and
  - the local authority shares its data on young people's activities with neighbouring local authorities in order to cross-reference, improve accuracy and reduce the number of young people whose activity is unknown.
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## Case study 4

### Sheffield city council

#### Background

There were an estimated 17,272 young people living in Sheffield in 2013.

Of those, the council:

- identified 6.6% as NEET (7.7% in 2012); and,
- was unaware of what a further 6.3% were doing (5.9% in 2012).

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#### How does the local authority promote participation and address the needs of young people who are NEET?

- Sheffield Futures, an independent trust part-owned by the local authority sells careers information, advice and guidance services to local education and training providers. 75% of local providers purchased the service in 2013-14;
- Sheffield Futures leads and hosts multi-agency Community Youth Teams that target, for outreach, group work and individual support, those at risk of disengagement and those who have become NEET;
- the local authority uses UCAS-Progress, its on-line post-16 applications system, and intelligence gathered by Sheffield Futures' engagement team to identify and contact young people as soon as they become NEET. They are assessed and Sheffield Futures works with them to construct a personal action plan within 4 weeks of their identification;
- the local authority has developed its own system to identify young people who are at risk of dropping out and becoming NEET so that they can be targeted with specialist advice and support whilst they are still at school;
- the local authority has developed tailored programmes to assist participation for specific groups such as young parents or youth offenders, by focusing efforts on addressing the specific cohorts' barriers;
- the local authority has developed a range of targeted programmes, previously funded by the European Social Fund, for those who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET under its Future:proof brand including innovative interventions for teen parents, care leavers and learners with learning difficulties and disabilities; and,
- a discount bus card entitles learners to a reduced fare.

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#### How does the local authority track the education or training activities of young people?

- a dedicated team collects data on young people's education and training. The team uses telephone calls, text messaging, letters, emails and face-to-face visits to keep track of young people's activity; and
  - the team has been integrated with the wider performance and analysis team at the local authority, allowing the tracking team access to other data sources and knowledge at dealing with young people's issues.
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## Case study 5

### Southend-on-Sea borough council

Background There were an estimated 6,217 young people living in Southend in 2013.<sup>1</sup>

Of those, the council:

- identified 6.2% as NEET; and
- faced difficulties in confirming the education, training or employment destination of 18.9%, with 69% of these aged 18 or over.

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How does the local authority promote participation and address the needs of young people who are NEET?

- has developed a website dedicated to young people services mainly offering Information, advice and guidance services relating to careers;
- the local authority sells careers information, advice and guidance services to local education and training providers. 78% of schools in Southend purchased the service in 2013/14. This service is also offered to providers outside Southend-on-Sea borough if the local authority does not have an offer in place (18 schools in South Essex used this service in 2013/14);
- support for businesses taking on apprentices in the form of salary subsidies for apprentices aged 16-18 taken on by employers in 2013/14;
- the local authority is actively targeting young people who are at risk of dropping out and becoming NEET with specialist advice and support whilst they are still at school; and
- the local authority runs numerous programmes funded by the European Social Fund, targeted at young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET, such as developing programmes for teenage parents to support them to access part-time and full-time learning, and helping young offenders to gain qualifications.

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How does the local authority track the education or training activities of young people?

- a dedicated team collects data on young people's education and training. The team uses telephone calls, text messaging, letters, emails and face-to-face visits to keep track of young people's activity.

#### Note

<sup>1</sup> Data for 2012 is not comparable with 2013 data due to changes in how this information was recorded.

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## Case study 6

### Surrey county council

#### Background

There were an estimated 29,226 young people living in Surrey in 2013.

Of those, the council:

- identified 1.8% as NEET (4% in 2012); and,
- was unaware of what a further 15.7% were doing (23.4% in 2012).

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How does the local authority promote participation and address the needs of young people who are NEET?

- the local authority focuses on identifying the young people who are NEET and providing a case manager for each one to support them into education, training or employment;
- the local authority is actively targeting young people who are at risk of dropping out and becoming NEET with specialist advice and support whilst they are still at school;
- the leader of the council has funded a Leaders Ready for Work programme which achieved over 500 apprenticeships and reduced the number of young people who are NEET to around 400;
- the local authority runs a series of community programmes and qualifications for young people who are NEET in order to prepare them for college, training or employment; and
- the local authority delivers the Youth Contract as a local subcontractor of the regional contractor.

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How does the local authority track the education or training activities of young people?

- a wider data collection team that also collects data on young people's education and training. The team uses telephone calls, emails and face-to-face visits to keep track of young people's activity. This is supported by information sharing agreements.
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