

Children & Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee

25 June 2015



Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training

Report of Rachael Shimmin, Corporate Director of Children & Adult Services

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an introduction to a presentation regarding young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). The presentation will be delivered by Stephen Crass, Policy, Planning and Partnerships Officer, Improving Progression of Young People Team, Children and Adult Services (on behalf of Linda Bailey, Strategic Manager – Progression and Learning, Children and Adults Services).

Background

2. The Local Authority has a number of statutory responsibilities to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate in education or training. As part of these responsibilities, the Local Authority is required to track young people's participation in education, employment or training. To do this effectively, the Local Authority has arrangements in place in order to collect information about all young people so that those who are NEET can be identified and given support to help them to re-engage.
3. The Department for Education monitors performance in terms of the proportion of 16-18 year olds who are NEET; the proportion of 16-18 year olds whose destination is not known; and the proportion of 16-18 year olds who are participating in learning. Local Authorities with high rates of young people who are NEET or whose destination is not known receive increased scrutiny from Government.
4. Members of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive quarterly performance data which includes information on the proportion of 16-18 year olds in County Durham who are NEET.
5. Historically, County Durham and the North East region as a whole have had higher rates of young people who are NEET compared to the average for England. This has resulted in a number of reviews at different times in order to explore options to reduce the number of young people in County Durham who are NEET. For example, in 2008 a Joint Scrutiny Working Group conducted a scrutiny review into young people who are NEET. In 2012, the Local Authority participated in a Peer Review with Wakefield Local Authority.

6. The consequences of being NEET for a sustained period of time can be devastating for young people. Research suggests that future employment prospects and income levels can be permanently impaired, as well as an increased risk of poor physical and mental health for individuals.

Statutory Responsibilities

7. The Local Authority's statutory responsibilities are set out in the following duties:
 - Secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all young people aged 16 to 19 and for those up to age 25 with a Learning Difficulty Assessment (LDA) or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan in their area¹.
 - Make available to all young people aged 13-19 and to those up to age 25 with an LDA or EHC plan, support that will encourage, enable or assist them to participate in education or training².

In addition, the Education and Skills Act (ESA) 2008 placed two duties relating to the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA) on Local Authorities:

- Local Authorities must promote the effective participation in education and training of 16 and 17 year olds in their area with a view to ensuring that those persons fulfil the duty to participate in education or training³.
 - Local Authorities must make arrangements to identify 16 and 17 year olds who are not participating in education or training⁴.
8. In order to meet its statutory duties, the Local Authority has developed a plan: 'Believe, Achieve and Succeed: Increasing the Participation of Young People in Learning 2013-2016.' It sets out a number of strategic priorities to increase the participation of young people in education or training and to reduce the number of young people who are NEET. A number of actions have been implemented, including the sharing of enhanced information about young people who are NEET with partners so that resources are deployed effectively; introduction of a RONI (Risk of NEET Indicators) process across schools, so that measures can be put in place to support young people at key transition points; as well as introducing new more cost effective approaches to track and engage young people.

Programmes to support young people

9. There are a number of programmes that have supported / continue to support young people who are NEET (in addition to opportunities such as Apprenticeships, and 16-19 Study Programmes). These include the ESF LA7 Youth Participation Project; the Youth Contract for 16 and 17 year olds; Generation North East; Talent Match; and a Jobcentre Plus pilot for 16 and 17 year olds.

1 Sections 15ZA and 18A of the Education Act 1996 (as inserted by the Apprenticeships, Skills and Children and Learning Act 2009) and from 1st September 2014, Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

2 Section 68 Education and Skills Act 2008 as updated by Section 20 in Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014

3 Section 10 Education and Skills Act 2008.

4 Section 12 Education and Skills Act 2008

10. County Durham has been identified as eligible for the Youth Employment Initiative. This is European funding that will be directed at 16-24 year olds who are NEET. The total amount available is £17.87m and it is expected that delivery will commence in autumn 2015 and continue until summer 2018.

Performance Data

11. The table below shows performance in County Durham, the North East and England in relation to the proportion of 16-18 year olds who are NEET, the proportion of 16-18 year olds whose destination is not known, and the proportion of 16-18 year olds who are in learning. Data covering the period November to January (average) is used for year on year comparisons because this is considered to be the period in the calendar year when the 16-18 year old cohort is at its most stable.

	County Durham			North East			England		
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training ¹	10.4%	7.1%	6.7%	8.3%	7.6%	7.0%	5.8%	5.3%	4.7%
16-18 year olds whose destination is not known ¹	9.6%	7.5%	4.6%	9.6%	6.4%	5.0%	10.8%	9.2%	9.0%
16-18 year olds in learning ¹	76.6%	81.1%	83.6%	79.5%	82.4%	84.4%	78.7%	80.8%	81.8%

¹November to January average, Local Authority CCIS, Department for Education

12. The latest monthly data that has been verified by the Department for Education is for April 2015. It shows that the proportion of 16-18 year olds who are NEET in County Durham was 6.4%, compared to 7.0% in the North East and 4.8% in England; the proportion of 16-18 year olds whose destination is not known in County Durham was 2.5%, compared to 3.5% in the North East and 6.7% in England; and the proportion of 16-18 year olds in learning in County Durham was 84.9%, compared to 85.1% in the North East and 83.2% in England.
13. The presentation will focus on the following areas:
- The Local Authority's statutory responsibilities in relation to the participation of young people in education or training.
 - Current performance in relation to 16-18 year olds who are NEET and whose destination is not known.
 - Current and future programmes to support 16-18 year olds who are NEET.

Recommendations

14. Members of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee are requested to receive the presentation and comment accordingly.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – None

Staffing – None

Risk – None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty –None

Accommodation – None

Crime and Disorder - None

Human Rights - None

Consultation – None

Procurement - None

Disability Issues – None

Legal Implications – None