

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

9 November 2016

YOUNG PEOPLES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

Careers Education and Guidance

1. Careers education is a topic that attracts considerable policy interest. The issue of what, how, how much, when and by whom careers-related education should be provided to young people remains a focus of much debate. We wanted to learn more about the stability of school careers programmes, access to career and labour market information, and exposure to employers, workplaces and further education.
2. The motivation for this work partly stemmed from a desire to review how schools were responding to the responsibility under the Education Act 2011 transferred to them from local authorities to secure independent and impartial careers guidance for all year 8-13 pupils. A 2013 Ofsted report 'Going in the right direction' found that, nationally, in only 1 in 5 schools is Careers Guidance meeting the needs of students. A worrying situation when our young people are making decisions about their future in a difficult economy: there are high levels of youth unemployment and university fees are at a record high especially. All of us want North Yorkshire's children and young people to be helped to succeed in life.
3. It is fortunate, therefore, that the opportunity arose to review the initial, interim findings from a baseline assessment of careers education and guidance in 17 schools in North Yorkshire and 3 schools in the City of York. The schools have been selected to participate in the North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) and the York, North Yorkshire, and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership (YNYER LEP) funded project 'Putting the Learner First - Progression for Success'. The project has been conceived as a way to improve the outcomes for young people in North Yorkshire through the development of the career and enterprise provision.
4. The aims of the project are:
 - To improve the quality of Careers Guidance in North Yorkshire Schools to inform progression routes for learners that meet their needs, abilities and aspirations and which are sustained
 - To develop learners' employability skills that will enhance their future career opportunities and success

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- To promote a range of progression routes which are appropriate to meet the needs of all learners and are informed by local labour market information, including local apprenticeship opportunities and uptake of apprenticeships
 - To further develop employer engagement including links to businesses
 - To build and share good practice between schools
5. Schools participating in the project have been provided with funding of £2,745 to improve their provision. To achieve this they have been provided with a programme of focussed professional development days, support visits and encouraged to seek a recognised careers education and guidance quality award validated through the Quality in Careers Standard.
 6. This project is clearly telling us so much about how we make sure high standards in careers advice becomes the norm for all children and young people in our schools, colleges and communities. We heard positive accounts of how people and organisations support them through the transition from education into the workforce by ensuring they're aware, through good advice and information, of the careers options open to them and that young people have the career knowledge and employability skills they need to support progression.
 7. The interim findings suggest that the Schools involved - 18 secondary schools of various governance status - are committed to providing the best career guidance they can in order to give their learners the best chance in life. They are working to develop the necessary strategic and operational infrastructure to do this in a meaningful but cost effective way.
 8. The project - and its interim evaluation - affirms the view that there is no single 'magic bullet' for good career guidance: it is about doing a number of things, consistently and well. Schools are indicating that the adoption of the "Gatsby Benchmarks" is having a telling and positive effect. The benchmarks are :
 1. A stable careers programme
 2. Learning from career and labour market information
 3. Addressing the needs of each pupil
 4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
 5. Encounters with employers and employees
 6. Experienced of workplaces
 7. Encounters with further and higher education
 8. Personal guidance
 9. Performance is mapped against those benchmarks. Those that do well, can look to be achieving the Careers Quality Awards. Feedback suggests that schools are finding the Gatsby Benchmarks a helpful framework to develop quality in career guidance and the

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awards accredit the process. Schools value the award because it is tangible evidence of quality which they can promote to stakeholders. Three schools on the project have gained the Quality Standards Award so far.

10. The project concludes next year. Once the evaluation is completed - by an internationally renowned unit at the University of Derby - all partners will be able to see best to collaborate so that pupils are provided with the very best career guidance and experience. The expectation is the project will evidence that there is a link between the development of quality career guidance in schools leads to an improvement in attainment, attendance and progression for young people in North Yorkshire schools.
11. The committee's position on this was clear: in the end it is for head teachers and Governors to take the lead in prioritising career guidance more highly. By reaching these benchmarks they will put in place a career guidance system that measures up to the best we have seen, and they will help set up their pupils not only for the rest of their education but for the rest of their lives.
12. We have asked to be kept advised - informally for the time being - of how the project is progressing. When the project is concluded, and the final evaluation completed, we will take a more in-depth look at its findings.

Upcoming Work

13. We have settled on a packed work programme for the next eighteen months. At our next meeting we return to reviewing the approach being taken to improve the resilience of pupils at key Stage 2. this work to include :
 - Profile of KS2 performance: eg geographically, by gender breakdown etc.
 - Understanding conclusions about the reason for relative under-performance in KS2.
 - Quality of information and data - How we identify lowest achieving pupils etc.
 - Effectiveness of support provided to schools by the LEA, approach, and capacity, targeted?
 - What strategies are being employed by governors, head teachers, schools, and how does the EA support this.
14. We will also plan ahead for future work on Hospital Admissions: especially mental health services. This work will focus on support for young people and managing cases in the community.
15. Other work to be prepared for includes: Challenging the use of the pupil premium; Supporting Underperforming Schools - especially those in Special Measures; Roles and Responsibilities of Parent Governors; and Closing the Gap in Educational Achievement. On a personal level, I am particularly looking forward to hearing more

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about impending changes to the Youth Justice Service. A national review for the Ministry of Justice is examining evidence on what works to prevent youth crime and rehabilitate young offenders, and how this is applied in practice; how the youth justice system can most effectively interact with wider services for children and young people; and whether the current delivery models and governance arrangements remain fit for purpose and achieve value for money. Bearing in mind structural changes at a local level are under consideration, we will review this in February 2017 Mid Cycle Briefing, by which time a clearer picture should be emerging of the direction the North Yorkshire Justice Board intends to take.

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28 October 2016

Background Documents - Nil.