Academic guidance

Schools decide how to provide guidance on subjects and courses, which is usually referred to as educational guidance. However, under Ofsted’s Education Inspection Framework (EIF) [1], schools and further education providers are inspected on ‘the extent to which at each stage of education, the provider prepares learners for future success in their next steps’ (p. 11).

Most schools generally provide additional support for key events in a pupil’s school life, such as moving from one class to the next, through familiarisation sessions in the new class or talks by the new teacher.

Secondary schools [2] may designate a member of staff to have specific responsibility for primary-secondary school liaison. They visit the primary schools [3] from which pupils will be joining their school, arrange visits to the secondary school and activity sessions to help orientate incoming or new pupils.

Pupils in secondary schools may be divided into ‘tutor groups’ within their year groups, with a designated teacher who has pastoral care responsibilities. Pupils in secondary education also usually receive additional support and guidance when selecting subject and examination options. Key transition points include student choices related to which GCSE [4] subjects they will study and the move to post-compulsory sixth form [5] education when they are aged around 16.

Psychological counselling

Psychological counselling available to pupils includes provision in school through the local authority (LA) [6] educational psychology service, and through Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) provided by the National Health Service (NHS). The subheadings which follow provide further information.

In December 2017, the Department of Health and Social Care and the Department for Education launched a consultation about its Green Paper on young people’s mental health entitled Transforming children and young people’s health provision [7]. One of its key three key proposals was to incentivise and support all schools and colleges to identify and train a Designated Senior Lead for mental health. In May 2018, the Health and Social Care Committee published [8] a report [8] on the Green Paper, to which the Government responded [9] in July 2018. In the same month, the Government published its response to the consultation, outlining its commitment to all proposals in the Green Paper. The key proposals are due to be trialled in trailblazer areas by the end of 2019. Further information can be found in this July 2019 House of Commons Library briefing [10].
School-based measures

Schools are able to decide what mental health support they provide for their pupils. In January 2017, the Government announced [11] that staff in all secondary schools would be offered free training in mental health support under a national programme [12] in order to better identify the signs of mental health problems that young people might face. By the end of 2018, 929 members of staff had been trained and it is expected that over 3000 members of staff will have been trained by 2020. Work has also been carried out to strengthen partnerships between education providers and mental health services, including through a pilot which linked schools with single points of contact with child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) (source: House of Commons Library briefing [10], July 2019).

School-based counselling involves one-to-one support, provided in school, by a trained professional counsellor to children and young people who are experiencing problems, and who are usually referred for counselling by their pastoral care teachers. It is one of the most prevalent forms of psychological therapy used to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people: an estimated 52% of primary schools and 70% of secondary schools offer counselling services (source: House of Commons Library briefing [10], July 2019).

Non-statutory government guidance [13] for schools aims to help primary and secondary school leaders set up or improve existing school-based counselling services so that they achieve the best outcomes for children and young people. This guidance also sets out the expectation that, over time, all schools should provide access to counselling services.

The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) website [14] provides further information on school-based counselling. Similarly, the PSHE Association has published guidance [15] on teaching about mental health and emotional wellbeing, which was originally produced with Government funding.

Guidance [16] from the Government on mental health and behaviour in schools is available. This outlines that:

- schools have a central role to play in enabling their pupils to be resilient to support mental health and wellbeing
- schools’ approach to mental health and behaviour should be embedded in a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing
- although teachers cannot act as mental health experts, there are things that schools can do for all pupils to intervene early to strengthen resilience before serious mental health problems occur
- schools need to be aware of how mental health problems can underpin behaviour issues in order to support pupils effectively, working with external support where necessary
- schools should have clear systems in place for early intervention and identification, referral to skilled professionals and clear accountability systems; they should also have an understanding of the local services available and how and when to use them.

Educational psychologists

All local authorities (LAs) [6] employ educational psychologists (EPs), who are concerned with helping children and young people experiencing problems within an educational setting. They have a central role in the statutory assessment process for children who may need an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan) [17] (see the article on ‘Special Education Needs Provision within Mainstream Education’ [18]), and also contribute to behavioural support work and early intervention. An EP might work with single pupils or groups of pupils, and their work may involve those with learning difficulties
or social and emotional problems. They also advise teachers, parents, social workers and other professionals involved with the child. Information on training for EPs is available from the Department for Education.

Responsibility for accreditation for educational psychologists’ training in the UK is held by the British Psychological Society and, once qualified, all EPs must register with the Health and Care Professions Council, which is the regulatory organisation for educational psychologists.

See also the subheading ‘Educational Psychologists’ in the article on 'Education Staff Responsible for Guidance in Early Childhood and School Education'.

**Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)**

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are specialist mental health services for children and young people provided by the National Health Service (NHS).

Young people might be referred to CAMHS to help them deal with disorders or issues such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), anxiety, autism, behavioural problems, bullying, depression, eating disorders, obsessive compulsive disorder, psychotic disorders including schizophrenia, and substance abuse.

Teachers, doctors or nurses may refer a young person to CAMHS, whose staff include psychotherapists, mental health workers, family therapists, art therapists, doctors and nurses. Interventions might involve talking therapies (such as counselling, or cognitive behavioural therapy) or prescription medicine, or can depend on what local support is available. The services are usually based in clinics, but school or home visits are also possible. Services can be multi-agency and should have links with other relevant services, including schools, social services and counselling services. Ideally, parents and carers are also involved in the interventions. Additional services such as advocacy services, interpreters, or services providing assistance for those with communication difficulties and learning needs can be involved to make CAMHS more accessible.

The Government’s non-statutory guidance for schools on mental health and behavior provides advice on how and when to make a referral to CAMHS.

**Career guidance**

**Careers strategy for schools and colleges**

In December 2017, the Government published its *Careers strategy: making the most of everyone’s skills and talents*. This outlined a series of measures to be implemented between 2018 and 2020 to improve careers guidance in England. The main measures included the following.

- The use of the Gatsby Benchmarks (see below) by schools and further education colleges to improve careers provision by January 2018.
- Named Careers Leaders leading the careers programme in every school and college by September 2018. The careers programme should be published, so that pupils, parents, teachers and employers may access it. A guide on the role of the Careers Leader has been published by the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC).
- New approaches to careers provision being tested and evaluated throughout 2018 and 2019 to encourage young people (especially girls) to consider jobs in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM), understand what careers activities work in primary schools, and provide careers information and guidance to disadvantaged individuals.
Schools offering every young person seven encounters with employers from Years 7 to 13 (ages 11 to 18), and all schools and colleges having access to an Enterprise Adviser – a senior business volunteer who will work with a local school to help develop a practical careers plan – by the end of 2020.

The Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) [26], originally established in 2015 to help link schools and colleges to employers, plays a significant role in the Careers Strategy. It offers support across all of the Gatsby Benchmarks and publishes an annual State of the Nation report [27].

The Gatsby Benchmarks [28] are a framework of eight guidelines developed by the Gatsby Foundation and since adopted by the Government as part of its Careers Strategy. They are not statutory; instead, they enable schools and colleges to ensure that they are fulfilling their legal duties. The Government expects providers to be working towards the Benchmarks and meet them by the end of 2020.

The table below outlines the Benchmarks and their associated expectations for schools and colleges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. A stable careers programme</th>
<th>Every school and college should have an embedded programme of career education and guidance that is known and understood by students, parents, teachers, governors and employers.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Learning from career and labour market information</td>
<td>Every student / learner and their parents (where appropriate) should have access to good quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities. They will need the support of an informed adviser to make best use of available information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Addressing the needs of each student</td>
<td>Students / learners have different career guidance needs at different stages. Opportunities for advice and support need to be tailored to the needs of each. A school's careers programme should embed equality and diversity considerations throughout.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Linking curriculum learning to careers</td>
<td>All teachers should link curriculum learning with careers. Science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subject teachers should highlight the relevance of STEM subjects for a wide range of future career paths. In colleges, study programmes should also reflect the importance of maths and English as a key expectation from employers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Encounters with employers and employees</td>
<td>Every student / learner should have multiple opportunities to learn from employers about work, employment and the skills that are valued in the workplace. This can be through a range of enrichment activities including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes. In colleges, enrichment activities should include learners' own part-time employment where it exists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Experiences of workplaces</td>
<td>Every student / learner should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities, and expand their networks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Encounters with further and higher education

All students / learners should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them. This includes both academic and vocational routes and learning in schools, colleges, universities and in the workplace.

8. Personal guidance

Every student / learner should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a career adviser, who could be internal or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level. These should be available whenever significant study or careers choices are being made.

In colleges, they should be expected for all learners but should be timed to meet individual needs.

Compass [29] is an online self-evaluation tool for schools and colleges to assess how their careers support compares against the Benchmarks and the national average. Providers may also gain formal accreditation of their careers programme through the Quality in Careers Standard [30] - a national quality award for careers education, information, advice and guidance.

**Careers guidance in schools and colleges**

Under the Education Act 1997 [31], the governing body of each school must ensure that the independent careers guidance provided:

- is presented in an impartial manner
- includes information on the range of education or training options, including apprenticeships and technical education routes
- is guidance that the person giving it considers will promote the best interests of the pupils to whom it is given.

The Technical and Further Education Act 2017 [32] amended the 1997 Act, requiring the opportunity for a range of education and training providers to access all pupils in Years 8 – 13 (ages 12-18) for the purpose of informing them about approved technical qualifications or apprenticeships. This is supported by the provision of Jobcentre plus advisor support in schools, which was rolled out across England in 2017, as announced [33] in 2016.

As outlined in statutory guidance [34] for governing bodies, school leaders and staff, the following applies:

- Every year, from the age of 11, pupils should participate in at least one ‘meaningful encounter’ with an employer, in which the student has an opportunity to learn about what work is like.
- By the age of 14, all pupils should have accessed and used information about career paths and the labour market to inform their decisions on study options and should have had the opportunity to learn how the different STEM subjects help people gain entry to (and be more effective in) a wide range of careers.
- By the age of 16, every pupil should have had at least one experience of a workplace, additional to any part-time jobs they may have and should have had a ‘meaningful encounter’ with providers of the full range of learning opportunities, including sixth forms, colleges, universities and apprenticeship providers.
- By the age of 18, all pupils who are considering applying for higher education [35] should have
visited at least two universities.

- Every pupil should have at least one careers guidance interview by the age of 16, and the opportunity for a further interview by the age of 18.

As outlined in the Education Inspection Framework, which applies from September 2019 onwards, Ofsted, the inspectorate, must assess the careers programmes offered by schools under the ‘personal development’ key judgement area. Schools will be assessed with regards to their provision of ‘an effective careers programme in line with the government’s statutory guidance on careers advice that offers pupils: unbiased careers advice; experience of work; and contact with employers to encourage pupils to aspire, make good choices and understand what they need to do to reach and succeed in the careers to which they aspire’ (p. 59 of the School inspection handbook).

All further education (FE) colleges and sixth-form colleges must also secure access to independent careers guidance. This duty applies to students up to and including the age of 18, and to students aged 19-25 who have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan). Information should include higher education and employment options post-18, including apprenticeships. There is non-statutory government guidance for colleges to draw on in deciding on the most appropriate forms of independent and impartial careers guidance and other kinds of careers support for their students.

Schools and colleges are also expected to secure access to independent face-to-face careers guidance (usually from a specialist careers adviser) where this is the most suitable support for young people to make successful transitions. This applies particularly in the case of children from disadvantaged backgrounds or for those who have special educational needs (SEN), learning difficulties or disabilities. Providers should work with local authorities (see below) to identify vulnerable young people, including those with SEN and those at risk of not participating post-16, and the services that are available to support them.

Provision can include web-based and telephone services, and support provided by the National Careers Service (NCS) and the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC). The NCS provides people over 13 years of age, including children and young people in schools and colleges, with information, advice and guidance on learning, training and work opportunities. The service offers confidential, impartial advice supported by qualified careers advisers and services may be provided face-to-face, via telephone or online. The CEC brokers partnerships between schools, further education colleges and employers to give pupils aged 12 to 18 better access to advice and inspiration in finding a career. It also coordinates support for schools and colleges across all the Gatsby Benchmarks.

Following the passing of the Technical and Further Education Act 2017, since January 2018, Ofsted, the inspectorate, has been required to comment on careers guidance provided to students in further education colleges, sixth form colleges and designated institutions. Further information can be found in the Further education and skills inspection handbook.

Further information on careers advisers is provided in the article on ‘Education Staff Responsible for Guidance in Early Childhood and School Education’.

For further information on careers guidance in schools and colleges in England, see this (April 2019) House of Commons Library briefing paper.

Local authority responsibilities

Local authorities (LAs) have a statutory duty under the Education and Skills Act 2008* to
enable, encourage and assist young people’s participation in education and training up to age 19. This duty extends to age 25 for young adults with an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan) [17]. Statutory guidance [48] describes the LA duties in detail.

LAs are also required to maintain close links with Jobcentre Plus to ensure that young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) receive support to find employment or to re-engage in education or training. Jobcentre Plus is a government-funded agency that provides services to help people of working age to find employment. New Jobcentre Plus employment advisors have been introduced to work with schools and sixth-form colleges [39] to help improve young people’s ability to find work.

* The Education and Skills Act 2008 placed a new duty on young people to participate in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 18.

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Source URL:

Links
[3] https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/glossary-74_en#PrimarySchool
[5] https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/glossary-74_en#SixthForm
[6] https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/glossary-74_en#LocalAuthority(LA)