

Careers education in England's schools and colleges 2020

Working together for young people's futures



Publication information

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About this report

For the past three years, we have published a 'State of the Nation' report to chart the progress made in careers education across the country.¹ The data to inform these reports has been gathered using the Compass evaluation tool which, since its introduction in 2016, has enabled schools and colleges to assess their careers provision against a national framework for quality careers education: the Gatsby Benchmarks.²

This year, we are taking a broader view of the state of careers education in England's schools and colleges. As well as Compass data, we refer to a wide range of evidence including surveys of the school workforce, independent evaluations of workforce training and school support structures, and data on the impact and outcomes for students.

As well as performance this year, we review the position since the launch of the Careers Strategy in December 2017 and since the inception of The Careers & Enterprise Company five years ago. Now is a timely moment to review careers education in England's schools and colleges, as part of the process to establish future priorities.

Looking ahead, the independent panel for the review of post-18 education and funding made careers policy recommendations for Government consideration,³ and the Government has already announced its intention to deliver a Further Education and Skills White Paper in 2020.

We hope this report provides not just a valuable assessment of the current state of affairs, but also useful recommendations for how the progress it charts can be built upon over the coming years, which will be critical in supporting young people and contributing to the country's economic recovery.

1. Tanner, E., Percy, C. (2019). State of the Nation 2019. Careers and enterprise provision in England's secondary schools and colleges. London: The Careers & Enterprise Company.

2. The Gatsby Foundation (2014). Good Career Guidance.

3. Augar, P. (2020). The independent panel report to the review of post-18 education and funding.

The eight Gatsby Benchmarks for Good Career Guidance

1. A stable careers programme	Schools and colleges should have an embedded programme of careers education and guidance.
2. Learning from career and labour market information	Every student/learner in schools and colleges, and their parents, should have access to good-quality information about labour market opportunities.
3. Addressing the needs of each student	Opportunities for advice and support need to be tailored to the needs of each student/learner.
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers	In schools, all teachers should link curriculum learning with careers. In colleges, all subject staff should link curriculum learning with careers, even on courses that are not specifically occupation-led.
5. Encounters with employers and employees	Every school student should have multiple opportunities to learn from employers about work, employment and the skills that are valued in the workplace. Every college learner should have multiple opportunities to learn from employers about work, employment and the skills that are valued in the workplace.
6. Experiences of workplaces	Every student/learner should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience.
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.
8. Personal guidance	Every student/learner should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a career adviser. These should be available whenever significant study or career choices are being made.

Forewords



The Rt Hon Baroness Nicky Morgan of Cotes, Trustee of The Careers & Enterprise Company and former Education Secretary (2014-16)

When I became Secretary of State for Education in 2014,

the country was still recovering from the financial crisis. We were facing levels of youth unemployment not seen in a generation. Tackling this was an absolute priority for Government, and we were looking for solutions to this deep-rooted problem.

We believed that careers education could be an important part of the answer. It had the potential to both drive down youth unemployment and drive up social mobility.

At the same time, we knew that careers education in England was recognised to be inconsistent and patchy in quality. Employers told us that young people arrived in the workplace without the skills they needed to thrive. Young people told us they did not feel supported to enter the world of work.

In response, we knew we had to change how we do careers education in this country. Most of all, based on my experience as both an employer and as a constituency MP, we needed to build a bridge between the worlds of education and employment.

Since 2014 we have seen a stronger alliance between schools, colleges, employers and careers professionals, underpinned by renewed public investment, meaning we are better able to support young people to broaden their horizons and be ready for work.

More employers than ever before are now involved with schools and colleges in their local communities. Schools and colleges are enthusiastically taking up the challenge of driving forward careers education, and for the first time, we have a shared vision for what high quality careers support looks like. As the report says, “England now has the foundations of a coherent and well-established careers education programme”.

This report provides a timely snapshot of progress over these last five years. Undeniably, much has changed with the outbreak of an unprecedented global pandemic. This has created huge challenges to the economy, to education, and to the opportunities open to young people. My belief hasn't changed - just as in 2014, I remain confident that careers education has the potential to be part of the answer. While we have come a long way over the last five years, we will need to redouble our efforts, building on our infrastructure and local partnerships, to meet the challenge of the next five.

Since joining the Board of The Careers & Enterprise Company, I have seen the tireless work of schools, colleges and employers to keep things going over the last six months. It is that same innovation and fortitude that will move us forward into a new era for careers support, enabling us to adapt quickly to serve the best interests of young people at this vital time.

Forewords



Sir John Holman, Senior Adviser to the Gatsby Foundation and Emeritus Professor of Chemistry at the University of York

With colleagues from the University of Derby, I created the Gatsby

Benchmarks for Good Careers Guidance in 2014 because we saw that across the country, young people were not getting the support and opportunities they needed to thrive in the world of work.

We knew careers guidance had the power to be transformative when done well. So with the support of the Gatsby Foundation, we researched how leading education systems from around the world were delivering careers support to young people.

The results of that research – the Gatsby Benchmarks – aim to set out a blueprint for what a world-leading careers education looks like for a young person today. It's a holistic picture, covering everything from work experience and careers guidance, to engagement with employers, colleges, universities and training providers.

Since the launch of the government's Careers Strategy for England in 2017, which made clear that all schools and colleges should be working towards the benchmarks, I've watched as secondary schools and colleges have taken on the challenge and made great progress, with Careers Leaders at the fore.

What I'm particularly pleased about is that schools and colleges have realised that careers cannot work as an isolated, ad hoc activity. It needs a senior leadership team that fully backs the programme, and it needs the support of the wider network of Careers Hubs and Enterprise Advisers and the many services provided by The Careers & Enterprise Company.

All this was true before the pandemic, and is especially true now. There are many strategic decisions that need to be taken about the future, about blended learning and digital infrastructure, for example. If schools and colleges think about how careers will be integrated into these decisions, we can build on the great progress that has been made over the last four years.

As we enter the economic recession, students leaving schools and colleges will need to be able to look critically at the job market, assess opportunities and make well-informed choices. Careers is the part of education that gives students these skills, arming them with knowledge about work and about future study and training routes.

I urge senior leaders to back their careers team, especially their Careers Leaders, and continue delivering the careers programme that your students need now more than ever.

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

Careers education for young people in England has gone through seismic change in the last five years. This report provides the most comprehensive picture of improvement to date, and shows that schools and colleges continue to make progress towards delivering excellent careers and enterprise education for their students.

Previously, careers provision in England for young people was widely recognised to be patchy and inadequate, underlined by an unhelpful lack of consensus between business and education about what was needed to drive improvement and who was responsible.⁴

Modern careers support places both employers and education in the driving seat. England now has the foundations of a coherent and well-established careers education system, driven nationally by the internationally recognised Gatsby Benchmarks,² and delivered locally through The Careers & Enterprise Company's strategic partnerships with Local Enterprise Partnerships, Mayoral combined authorities and Local Authorities. The value of this systematic approach is gaining wider recognition, with countries including Norway, Spain and Hong Kong looking to adopt the benchmarks in their education system.

Schools, colleges and businesses now work together on a national scale and are highly engaged

School and college leaders identify school/college improvement as one of the key drivers for embedding careers education within the curriculum. A growing focus - especially in Careers Hubs - on destination choices is also placing a stronger emphasis on vocational and technical learning and pathways. Teachers indicate workplace skills to be of equal or higher value than academic qualifications in preparing school and college leavers for the post-Covid world of work,⁵ a view also held by many employers.

Over the last three years, employers have supported young people's careers aspirations in greater numbers than ever before. More than four in five business leaders believe it is important for employers to work with young people in schools and colleges to inspire and inform them about the world of work, with 79 per cent saying it's an important part of their CSR programme.⁶ More widely, Local Enterprise Partnerships and Mayoral combined authorities anchor careers support within regional economic strategies, viewing them as key drivers to skills and growth.

4. Ofsted (2016). Getting ready for work.

5. The Careers & Enterprise Company (2020). Workplace Skills Now More Important than Exam Results in Post-Covid Jobs Market Say Teachers.

6. Savanta ComRes (2020). Employability of Young People in Light of Covid-19.

2. The value of careers education

Young people are now benefiting from a world-class careers education system

We have learnt that well-resourced, nationally coordinated and locally tailored provision, with active employer involvement, unlocks opportunity for young people.

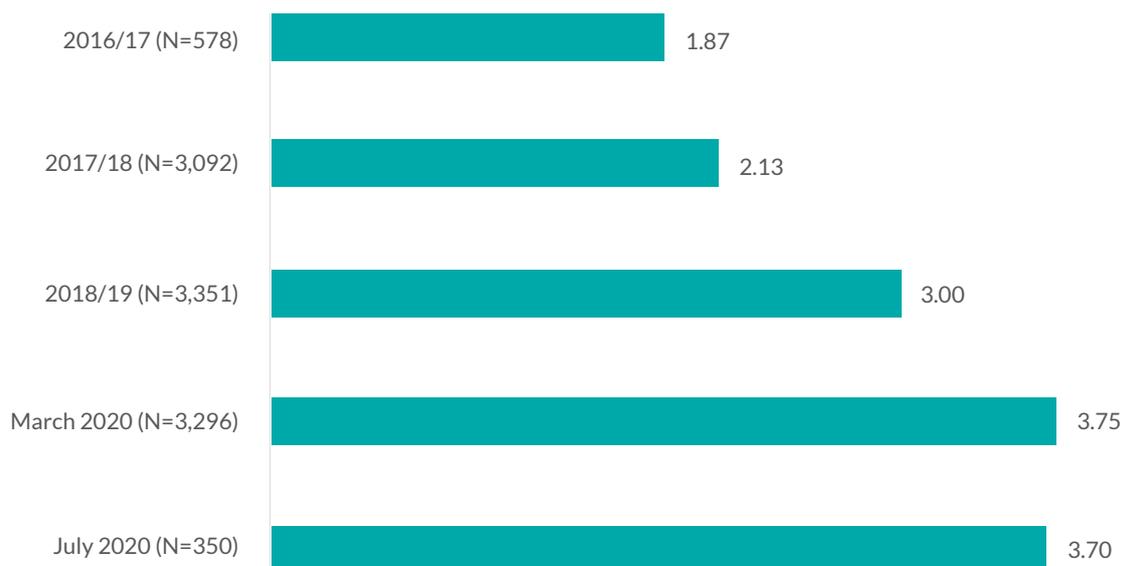
The evidence shows a transformation in the meaningful encounters young people now have with employers and other pathways, with 3.3 million young people now having regular encounters with employers - up 70 per cent in 2 years.

Young people's skills and work readiness improve as a result of the Gatsby Benchmarks. Nearly three quarters (73 per cent) of young people say they are more aware of different careers as a result of careers provision. 65 per cent say they have more ideas about their future career and nearly seven in ten (69 per cent) say they have a clearer understanding about what they need to do to achieve their ambition.⁷

Public investment has made a difference

From a low base, we are seeing careers education improving across England with overall performance doubling since 2016/17; with achievement rising from 1.87 to 3.75 benchmarks (out of 8).⁸

Average number of benchmarks fully achieved nationally, 2016-2020



7. Tanner, E. (2020). *Young People's Career Readiness and Essential Skills: Results from the Future Skills Questionnaire 2018/19*. London: The Careers & Enterprise Company.

8. The small decline between March and July 2020 reflects changes in careers provision as a result of Covid-19. July 2020 data includes schools and colleges that completed Compass between April and July and reported delivered activity only.

A key factor has been Government's investment in infrastructure on a national scale which has been the prime catalyst for engagement amongst schools and colleges. From a standing start in 2015 there are now more than 4,000 schools and colleges in the Enterprise Adviser Network – 81 per cent of the state funded sector - driving improvements in the Gatsby Benchmarks through local collaboration.

Digital transformation is delivering personalised support

Four in five schools and colleges are driving performance against the world-class careers education standards through The Careers & Enterprise Company's digital platform, Compass. In the last year we have developed an upgrade, Compass+, which allows schools to track an individual pupil's careers education and plan personalised careers programmes accordingly. Schools are able to identify and pinpoint the right careers education intervention at the right time, crucially enabling targeted support for the most disadvantaged young people.

Targeted investment has created rapid and accelerated progress in areas of disadvantage

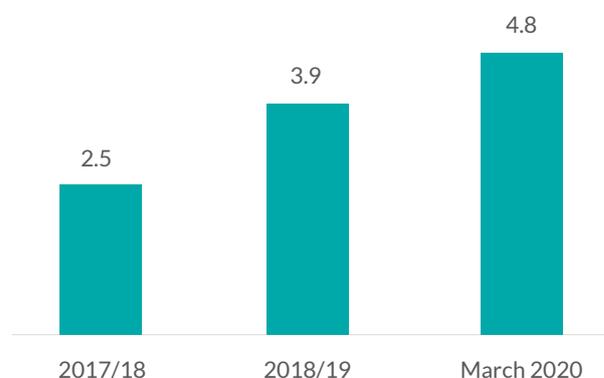
The focus on disadvantage began with early investment in 'Cold Spots'.⁹ Areas like Blackpool and Burnley in Lancashire and Darlington and Stockton in Tees Valley now rank amongst the highest performing in the country for careers provision.

Progress in areas of disadvantage has been accelerated through **the creation and roll-out of Careers Hubs** – dynamic partnerships of schools and colleges working with local employers, careers professionals, universities and training providers, to pool their expertise on improving careers education in their area against the gold standard of the Gatsby Benchmarks.¹⁰

By harnessing powerful relationships with employers, Careers Hubs provide young people with the opportunity to connect closely to local skills and economic need. The stronger performance of Careers Hubs is evident across all eight benchmarks and across different types of institution. Special schools, in particular, benefit from being in a Careers Hub, indicating that additional investment has especially supported young people who need it the most.

45 per cent of all schools and colleges in England are now located in Careers Hubs. Those in the first wave of Careers Hubs have improved performance on careers provision by 92 per cent in two years, achieving 4.8 benchmarks in 2020, up from 2.5 in 2018.

Average number of benchmarks fully achieved in Wave 1 Hubs, 2018-2020

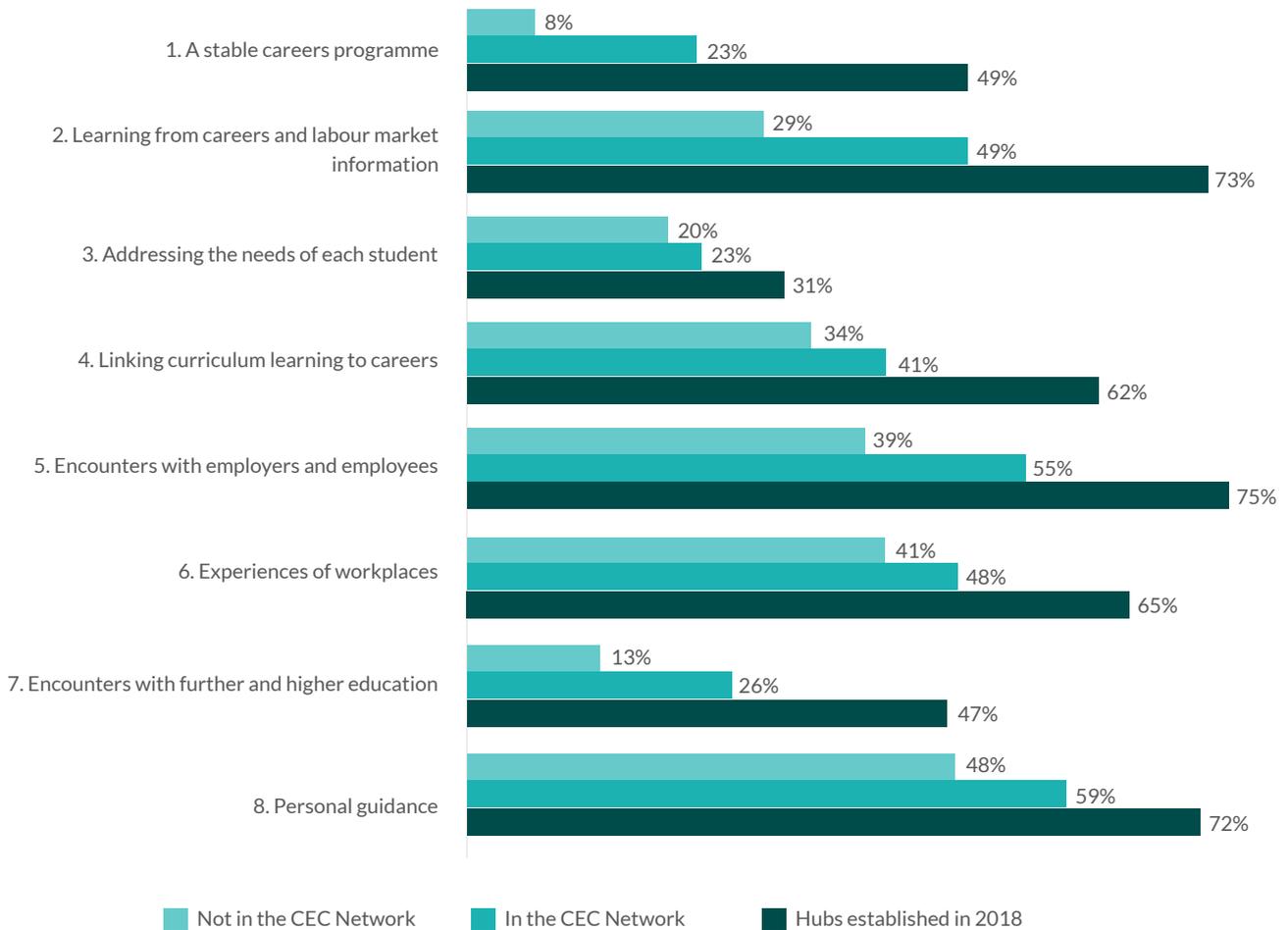


9. The Cold Spots model used a range of indicators from education and the labour market. Individual areas could look to see how they performed relative to the rest of the country in data including the percentage of STEM subjects studied by girls, or the amount of work experience offered by local businesses.

10. SQW (2020). Evaluation of the Enterprise Adviser Network and Careers Hubs.

These schools and colleges are performing at more than twice the level of those outside The Careers & Enterprise Company's network and delivering accelerated progress across all measures of careers provision. A particular feature of schools and colleges in the Enterprise Adviser Network and Careers Hubs is that they are far more likely to ensure young people encounter and understand apprenticeships, and so are exposed to a wider range of labour market information and choices.

Percentage of schools and colleges fully achieving each of the Gatsby Benchmarks, March 2020 (N=3,296)



Professional careers leadership is driving improved quality and performance

Leadership in schools and colleges is crucial to improving careers provision. Evidence shows a close correlation between professional careers leadership and performance. Support is now in place for an engaged and trained cohort of Careers Leaders to become a recognised professional workforce within their schools and colleges. 85 per cent of Careers Leaders in schools are either senior leaders or report directly into the senior leadership team.¹¹

More than nine in ten Careers Leaders (92 per cent) say careers provision has improved since the Government's Careers Strategy (2017-2020), with the Gatsby Benchmarks being identified as a game changer. 94 per cent of schools say the benchmarks have helped improve careers provision and 96 per cent of colleges say they add value. The amount of time Careers Leaders now devote to their role is double (14.5 hours a week) that spent by careers coordinators ten years previously.

It is now easier for employers to engage with education

Infrastructure now exists for business of all sizes to engage strategically and deliver careers activities in all parts of the country. This has resulted in a surge in employer engagement with young people. 94 per cent of large employers now have links with schools, colleges and universities; in 2019, 60 per cent of employers had expanded their ties with secondary schools over the last year.¹²

260 Cornerstone Employers (businesses that are experienced in engaging with education and provide strategic support to schools and colleges in their local communities) are targeting support for young people in areas of disadvantage. Over 3,600 Enterprise Advisers, senior business professionals, are working with schools and colleges across the country through the Enterprise Adviser Network to help them develop their strategic careers and employer engagement plans.



11. Tanner, E., Percy, C. and Andrews, D. (2019). *Careers Leaders in Secondary Schools: The First Year*. London: The Careers & Enterprise Company.

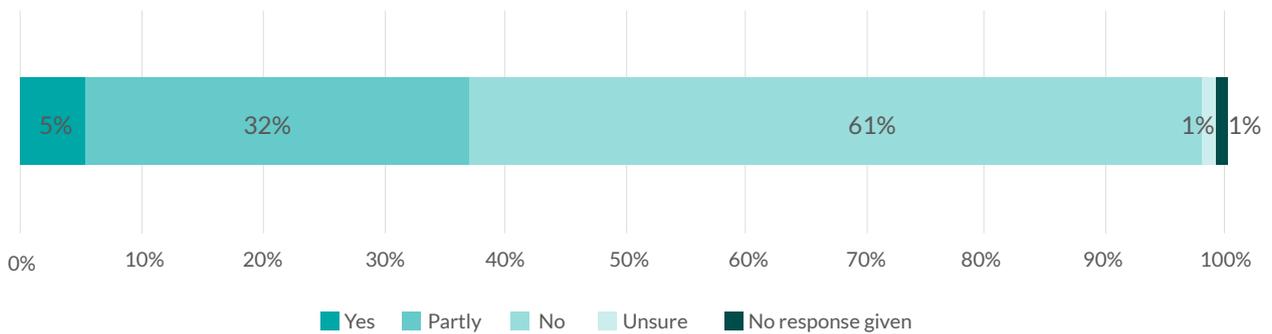
12. CBI and Pearson (2019). *Education and Learning for the Modern World: CBI/Pearson Education and Skills Survey Report 2019*.

3. The impact of Covid-19 on careers education

Covid-19 and the resulting lockdown have caused inevitable disruption to schools and colleges' ability to deliver the same levels of careers provision that they would have in the absence of the pandemic.

The impact of Covid-19 has not been even across all aspects of careers support. Unsurprisingly, the hardest hit areas of provision have been those requiring the involvement of external stakeholders and particularly direct engagement with employers on work experience and workplace visits.

Whether schools and colleges in the Network were able to deliver the same quality of careers provision as prior to Covid-19



Covid-19 has reinforced the importance of public investment

Despite those constraints, schools and colleges have prioritised careers education within their overall efforts to support students during lockdown and re-opening, focusing their efforts on pupils and students on the cusp of transition choices (in particular, Year 11 and 13).



The effectiveness of the short-term, agile measures that The Careers & Enterprise Company and others have taken to support young people during lockdown has been supported by longer-term Government strategy and investment, which have created a resilient careers system and demonstrated by:

- The strength and resilience of Careers Hubs to adapt and provide rapid careers support to schools and colleges during the pandemic, particularly in deploying targeted support to students facing key transition choices during the period.
- Investment in the professional development of Careers Leaders, enabling them to take a leadership role, marshalling and influencing careers provision within their schools and colleges to ensure all students are supported. School heads report to The Careers & Enterprise Company that Careers Leaders have been amongst the busiest and most important of their staff.
- Accrued goodwill amongst employers which has seen them remain active in supporting careers education on a national scale, despite the business challenges they face. This is highlighted through The Careers & Enterprise Company's initiatives such as Work It, My Week of Work and My Choices, which have engaged hundreds of thousands of young people in career guidance, employee encounters and work experience delivered via online channels.
- Investment in digital infrastructure, which has provided the connectivity to pinpoint and react to need quickly.
- The Careers & Enterprise Company deploying their assets flexibly to support providers to innovate and adapt their provision during school and college closures.

4. The future of careers education

Evidence shows that good career guidance in school and college supports young people to develop an understanding of the world of work, and the self-development and career management skills they need to achieve positive employment destinations. These attributes contribute to positive national outcomes such as skills alignment, youth employment, productivity and social equity.

Nearly three quarters (72 per cent) of school and college leaders believe career guidance has become even more important as a result of Covid-19, with the same proportion saying it will be either their top priority or among their top five priorities in the 2020/21 academic year.¹³

In the current economic context there is a huge amount at stake. The latest employment figures show youth unemployment is increasing at a perilous rate. Young people themselves are pessimistic and uncertain about the future. This raises fears of deepening disadvantage and long-term damage to their employment and earnings prospects.

The Careers & Enterprise Company's infrastructure will support young people in the recovery

As we move into recovery and the ongoing uncertainty of how long that will take, The Careers & Enterprise Company's mission – supporting young people to transition into the world of work – is more urgent than ever.

The assets The Careers & Enterprise Company has established must now be deployed and adapted to make sure that, as young people transition from education during these difficult times, they are supported to make choices that relate to real opportunities. Those choices should include genuine opportunity for young people to understand and consider technical and vocational education and training, and to access related jobs and careers, as well as meet the needs of the wider economy.

A new era for careers education

The next phase of Government strategy on careers education should build on momentum of the last three years, drawing on frontline insight of what works.

Careers Hubs are the bedrock for future provision and there should be a relentless focus on national roll-out and coverage. The powerful place-based partnerships Careers Hubs bring together, centred on regions and local communities mean they are well-positioned to be a key agent in shaping and responding to local economic recovery plans.

The professional status of Careers Leaders is now established and recognised. Continuing investment in training and professional development will further enhance their capacity and capability.

13. Pye Tait Consulting (2020). Secondary School and College leadership views on the impact of the Covid 19 Pandemic on Careers Guidance: A report commissioned by the Gatsby Foundation.

The expansion of Compass+ is key to schools developing greater precision in targeting careers support at an individual student level and supporting social mobility for young people in disadvantaged communities. It will also enable more robust and precise processes for tracking student destinations and demonstrating impact. Nationwide adoption is expected during this academic year.

We must also find a solution, at scale, to the continued need amongst young people to interact with employers. The 260 Cornerstone Employers and over 3,600 Enterprise Advisers we have activated must be rallied to provide accessible, remote business engagement for young people. We must also engage new employers including Small and Medium-sized Enterprises to support more young people in the wake of the recovery.

There is also a critical need to join forces at a national and local level to ensure coherence of provision on offer and to guarantee that help reaches the young people that most need it. This includes alignment to local and regional economic recovery plans, as well as the wider youth employment measures announced by Government over the summer. The relationship between The Careers & Enterprise Company and the National Careers Service is particularly important, and the two organisations will continue to build their collaboration at the national and local level.

Through continuing to build on these firm foundations, there is huge potential to strengthen the careers education system further and rise to the significant economic challenges ahead.



The Careers & Enterprise Company and the National Careers Service

The Careers & Enterprise Company will continue to provide strategic coordination, working through schools, colleges, employers and local partners, to help them to deliver high quality careers support to young people.

The National Careers Service offers direct access to careers advice for individual citizens, targeted primarily at adults, through its digital and phone services to individuals aged 13 and above. The Careers & Enterprise Company's network provides a local infrastructure within which the National Careers Service can link better with schools and colleges.

Within those networks of schools and colleges, Careers Leaders have been supported through training and their continued professional development to understand relevant careers-related services, including exam results helplines and virtual job fairs, and the help offered by National Careers Service providers, through their engagement with Careers Hubs and local Skills and Employment Boards.

1 | The national picture: public investment is making a difference to young people

The Careers & Enterprise Company's ambition is that every young person, regardless of their background or where they live, has access to the best careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG).¹⁴ Careers education is a powerful tool to improve young people's personal, employability, and career management skills, which can support them to transition to employment and navigate career options throughout their lives.

Public investment over the past five years has vastly improved the quality of careers education available to young people. A national infrastructure has been established, supported by schools, colleges and employers, to raise young people's aspirations and improve outcomes for them and for society.

Young people today access careers provision that is much better than five years ago

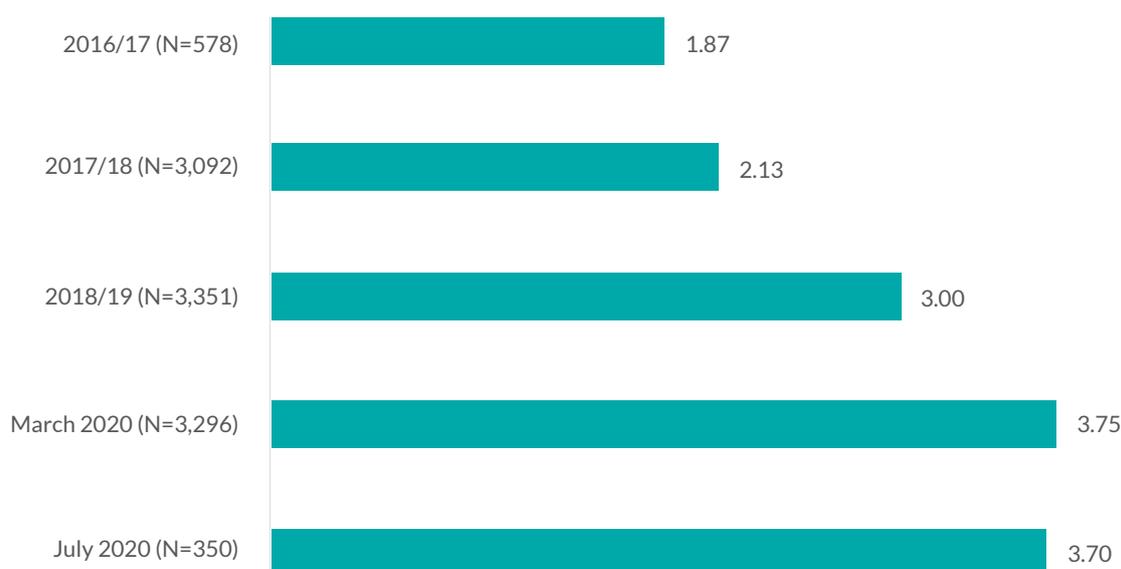
Schools and colleges continue to make sustained progress towards the Gatsby Benchmarks. Each benchmark sets a number of exacting standards. On average, schools and colleges in England now fully achieve close to half of the eight benchmarks, with the vast majority at least partially achieving each of them. As a result of this, young people are accessing high quality career guidance that is embedded across the school or college, providing them with timely information about careers and learning pathways, encounters with employers and education providers, and individual plans.

During the period of Covid-19 and school and college closure in summer 2020, the majority of Careers Leaders did not update their Compass evaluation to reflect the activity successfully delivered. As a result, we do not report the Compass results for all schools and colleges at the end of July as we have done in the past. Instead, we report the results up to the end of March 2020 and for the 350 schools and colleges that did update their Compass evaluations in the summer to reflect what actually took place.¹⁵

14. We use the terms CEIAG, careers education, career guidance and careers provision interchangeably through this report.

15. For details on the analysis of Compass data for academic year 2019/20, please see annex.

Average number of benchmarks fully achieved nationally, 2016-2020¹⁶



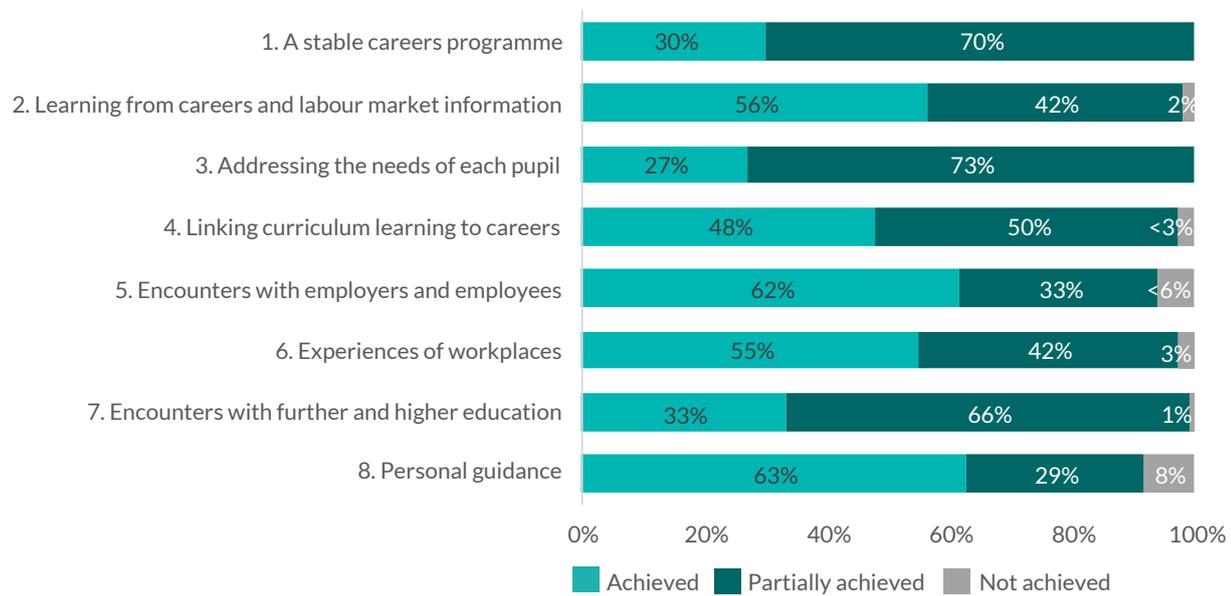
The Compass Tool

Compass is a self-assessment tool which allows schools and colleges to compare their provision to both the Gatsby Benchmarks and to other providers. The self-assessments completed by schools and colleges through Compass have an important secondary benefit. As well as driving the improvement of practice in schools and colleges, Compass also provides us with the clearest picture that we have ever had of the strengths and weaknesses of careers work in England's schools and colleges. The Careers & Enterprise Company uses this data to explore what provision looks like, and to inform and improve the support offered to schools and colleges.

16. Unless otherwise stated, figures are based on state-funded schools and colleges that last completed Compass during a given academic year, starting on 1st of August and ending on 31st of July. March 2020 data includes completions from fewer establishments than in 2018/19 because it is based on the completions during the academic year and some schools and colleges did not update Compass until the summer term. The small decline between March and July 2020 reflects changes in careers provision as a result of Covid 19.

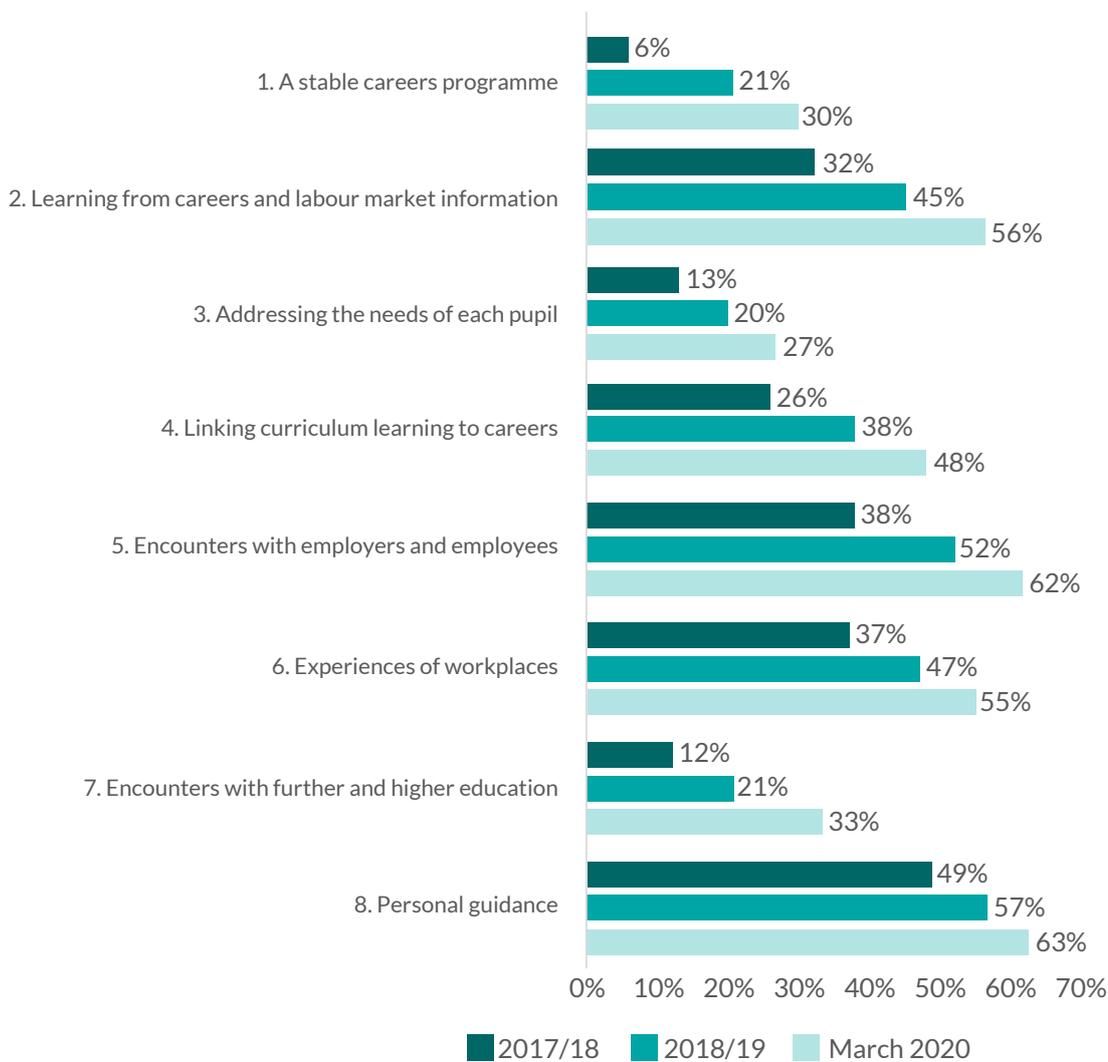
March 2020 data demonstrates that plans made by Careers Leaders before the pandemic showed improvement across every benchmark. 62 per cent of schools and colleges planned for all or an overwhelming majority of young people across all age groups to experience regular encounters with employers.

Percentage of schools and colleges achieving each benchmark during 2019/20, March 2020 (N=3,296)



While 2020 Compass data is not comparable to that for previous years, we have seen a continued increase in the proportion of schools and colleges fully achieving each benchmark.

Proportion of schools and colleges fully achieving each benchmark, 2017-2020¹⁷

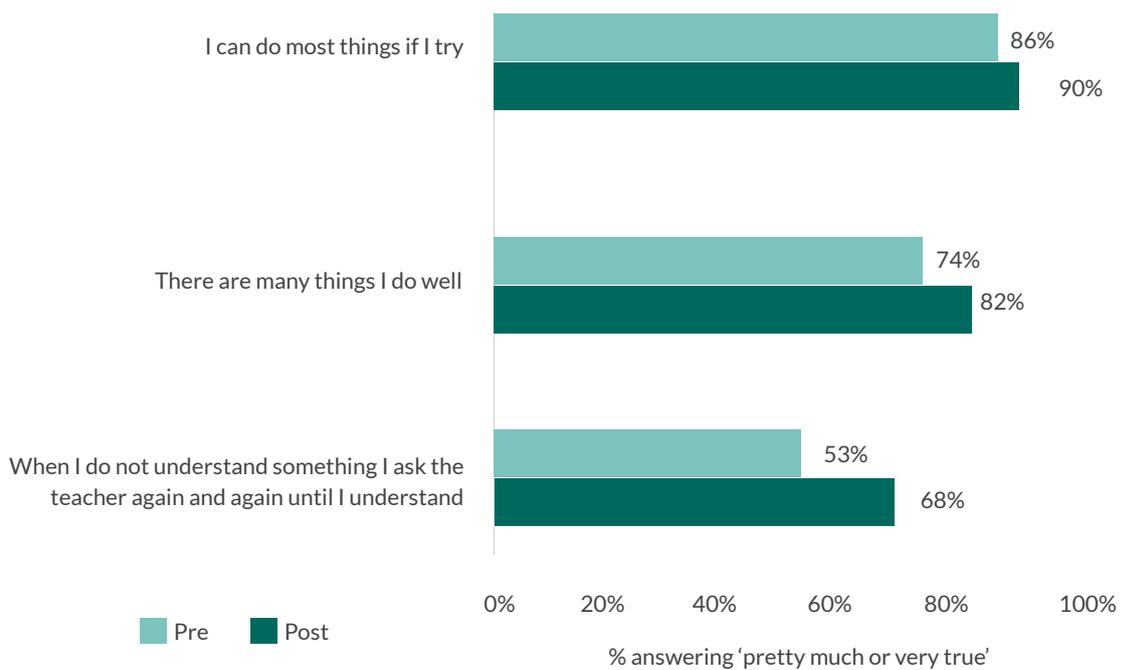


17. Due to a change in methodology, data used in this chart is not comparable to 'progress analysis' in previous years' State of the Nation reports. The chart is based on all Compass completions during each academic year, so the base size changes over time.

As a result, young people are better equipped to face a changing labour market and to lead fulfilling lives

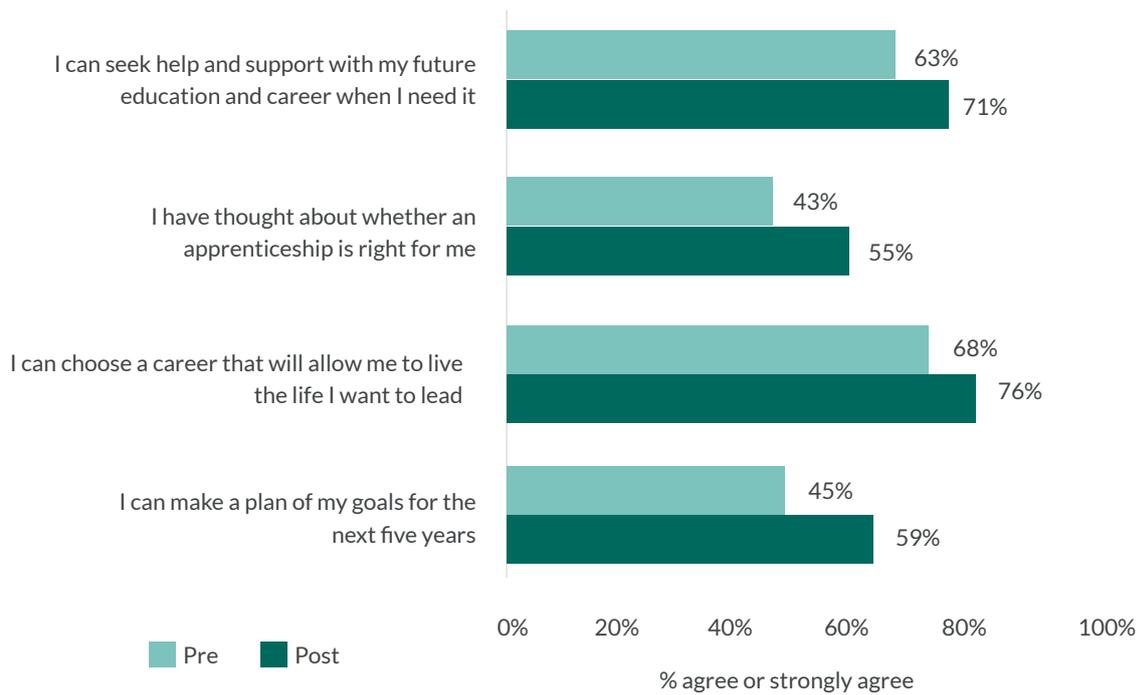
Data from over 2,000 young people who took part in The Careers & Enterprise Company-funded careers activities shows **substantial improvements in young people's skills following participation in those activities:** ^{7 18}

Personal effectiveness. A higher proportion of young people showed higher self-confidence after the activity than they had before, across all eight dimensions of personal effectiveness.

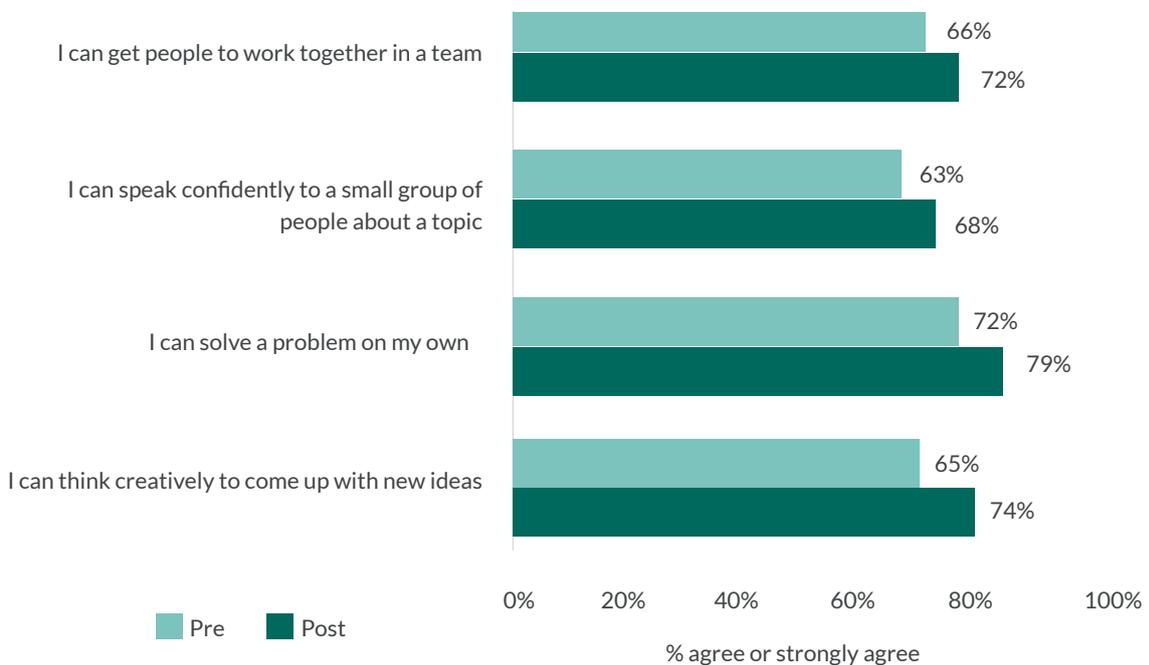


18. The charts in this section show a selection of results only.

Career readiness. Substantial improvement against most career readiness indicators suggest that young people are better prepared to make informed choices about their careers as a result of careers activities.



Essential skills. Careers activities help young people develop transferrable and employability skills that will prepare them to navigate a rapidly changing labour market.



An evaluation of the Gatsby Benchmarks pilot in 16 schools and colleges in the North East of England also found that careers provision was associated with better career readiness.¹⁹

This broad set of skills is associated with better outcomes for young people, and even marginal gains over a number of measures result in significant cumulative impacts. International evidence suggests that career guidance leads to improvement in skills that result in higher educational attainment, wage premiums, and lower chances of being unemployed, thereby driving social mobility.^{20,21} A recent evidence review by the Centre for Education and Youth and the Skills Builder Partnership found that essential skills were associated with higher wages, higher performance in the workplace, and improved social and emotional wellbeing.²²

Evidence of the positive link between career guidance and attainment and destinations during the era of the Gatsby Benchmarks has also begun to emerge. Analysis based on a small number of schools and colleges shows that better careers provision is associated with more positive destinations at Key Stage 4, and that being part of The Careers & Enterprise Company's Enterprise Adviser Network is linked to positive destination outcomes both at Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5. This is early evidence that the Enterprise Adviser Network plays a vital role in reducing the number of young people who are NEET (not in education, employment, or training).²³ This evidence base will only grow stronger over time and we will use it to inform our support and strengthen the system further.



19. Hanson, J., & Neary, S. (2020). 'The Gatsby benchmarks and social mobility: impacts to date'. IAEVG Conference Proceedings Career Guidance for Inclusive Society. Bratislava, Slovakia 11-13 September 2019. IAEVG: Slovakia, pp. 168-185.

20. Hughes, D. et al (2016). Careers Education: International Literature Review. London: EEF.

21. Pauline Musset, P. & Kurekova, L.M. (2018). Working It out: Career Guidance and Employer Engagement.

22. The Centre for Education and Youth & Skills Builder Partnership (2020). How do essential skills influence life outcomes? An evidence review. London.

23. The Careers & Enterprise Company carried out initial analysis to test the link between career guidance and destinations and attainment, based on students in Year 11 in 2016/17. This analysis is has not been published yet.

A robust careers infrastructure is helping schools and colleges to support young people who need it most

High quality career guidance can improve opportunities for those who, for different reasons, find it harder to access the labour market. This includes young people who, because of their backgrounds, do not have networks and connections to help them access opportunities and realise their career aspirations, and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Disadvantage

The Careers & Enterprise Company targets disadvantage across all its work. We have identified careers cold spots to determine the areas of greatest need and then invested specific funds to scale-up the best careers and enterprise programmes in areas of disadvantage. Since 2015, over £25m of public funds has been invested in 300 careers support programmes (see chapter 5). As a result of this targeted investment, areas like Blackpool and Burnley in Lancashire and Darlington and Stockton in Tees Valley now rank amongst the highest performing in the country.

Investment in employer encounters and wider careers activities has also targeted support for young people in the Government's 12 Opportunity Areas²⁴ and helped to shape future thinking about effective ways to deliver place-based approaches to local engagement. The Careers & Enterprise Company has also funded employer encounters for specific groups of young people including looked-after children and Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller young people.

That investment through funded activity has then been doubled to set-up Careers Hubs, which are specific areas of the country that have demonstrated a need for additional support. Careers Hubs, which are discussed in detail in the next chapter, comprise clusters of local schools and colleges, employers, alongside other education, careers, and local support organisations, to pool their expertise on improving careers education. This model is seeing the fastest improvement on careers performance in the country.

In addition, we have enhanced support for schools and colleges to address the needs of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. This includes:

1. Developing tools and resources to support Careers Leaders to target and tailor provision

A key element of The Careers & Enterprise Company's funding for Careers Leaders training has been to help Careers Leaders understand how career guidance can be tailored to the needs of young people. 1,300 Careers Leaders have completed the training and an additional 650 Careers Leaders will receive funded training this academic year.

The other significant breakthrough has been the development of Compass+²⁵, a digital careers management tool that integrates with school Management Information Systems to enable Careers Leaders to track an individual pupil's careers education and plan personalised careers programmes accordingly. It is this personalisation that enables identification, targeting and tailoring of careers education for the most disadvantaged young people. Compass+ was launched for secondary schools, special schools, sixth-forms and PRUs in England in September 2019.

24. West Somerset, Norwich, Blackpool, North Yorkshire coast, Derby, Oldham, Bradford, Doncaster, Fenland and East Cambridgeshire, Hastings, Ipswich, Stoke-on-Trent.

25. <https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/schools-colleges/compass-plus>

2. Support for young people with special educational needs and disabilities

Schools and colleges have been provided with resources to ensure that disadvantaged young people can access tailored and specialist support. A particular focus has been young people with SEND, who are invariably those furthest from the labour market. Their education takes place in a range of settings, and they sometimes fail to receive appropriate and targeted solutions that are accessible and meet their needs. This has a significant detrimental effect on their careers and lives. To address this challenge, we have created a more inclusive and targeted approach, bringing together The Careers & Enterprise Company's expertise, networks and assets to ensure that young people with SEND are given more appropriate, enhanced support. This has been done in partnership with Talentino, a social enterprise working with special schools around the country. The key features are:

- **SEND Enterprise Coordinators (ECs)**, who work with groups of around 20 local schools and colleges, offering specialist support, tailored to the needs of each establishment. SEND ECs also link schools with SEND Enterprise Advisers, who support the school or college's careers plan. In addition, ECs from every Local Enterprise Partnership area have received a SEND Masterclass training course.²⁶
- **SEND Gatsby Toolkit**, which supports Careers Leaders to deliver career guidance and achieve the Gatsby Benchmarks in a way that is meaningful for young people with SEND, regardless of the setting.²⁷

- **Compass for Special Schools** is a version of the Compass tool released for special schools in January 2020. It recognises that these schools' provision goes up to Year 14 and that they can cater for young people up to age 25. By the end of July 2020, 366 schools had used Compass for Special Schools.
- **SEND Community of Practice** which supports the progress of special schools and colleges and other educational provision with a high proportion of young people with SEND towards achieving the Gatsby Benchmarks. A series of Careers Hub-led activities target areas of challenge, encourage sharing of best practice across all geographical Hub areas and development of resources to meet identified needs for the benefit of the wider network. The project also offers funding for innovation and best practice development.
- **Investing in employer encounters for young people with special educational needs and disabilities.** The Careers & Enterprise Company has funded third party providers to test new approaches for young people with SEND to broaden aspirations and raise awareness of pathways into training and work.

Overall, this concerted approach is enabling us to improve outcomes for young people with SEND, bringing those currently furthest from the labour market in closer proximity to employment opportunities.

26. The Careers & Enterprise Company, 'Support for SEND' <<https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/schools-colleges/support-send>>.

27. The Careers & Enterprise Company, The SEND Gatsby Benchmark Toolkit Practical Information and Guidance for Schools, Special Schools and Colleges.

2 | Careers Hubs: delivering for young people through targeted support

Careers Hubs show how additional levels of targeted support and increased collaboration can improve and accelerate the quality of careers provision and associated outcomes for young people.

A national network of Careers Hubs is now delivering accelerated levels of careers education performance, and areas of disadvantage are amongst the best performing. More than 2,265 schools and colleges (45 per cent) are now in Careers Hubs, and in 11 Local Economic Partnership areas, Hubs now encompass all secondary schools and colleges.

Schools and colleges in Careers Hubs benefit from higher levels of support

The Careers Hubs pilot was announced in the Government's Careers Strategy (published December 2017) to expand the successful approach tested in the North East Local Enterprise Partnership area between 2015 and 2017. Several features were added in Careers Hubs which distinguish them from the Enterprise Adviser Network, including Hub Leads, Lead Schools/Colleges and Cornerstone Employers. A small Central Hub Fund was established to support each Careers Hub in delivering its goals, amounting to c. £1,000 per school/college in the Hub. In addition, The Careers & Enterprise Company and Local Enterprise Partnerships continued to share funding for the Enterprise Coordinators. Within a Careers Hub, support from Enterprise Coordinators is more intensive than in the Network, with each Coordinator supporting around 15 schools and colleges (rather than 20 in the wider Network model).

Support available to schools and colleges in Careers Hubs

- 1** | A Hub Lead who works alongside Enterprise Advisers and Enterprise Coordinators to provide a unified management system to deliver against the Gatsby Benchmarks.
- 2** | Enterprise Coordinators who work with clusters of approximately 15 schools and colleges to build careers plans and connect with employers.
- 3** | Enterprise Advisers who are volunteers from business working closely with the Senior Leadership Team of a school or college to provide strategic support.
- 4** | Lead School or College (or more than one) that works more closely with Enterprise Coordinators and Hub Leads to build capacity throughout the Hub.
- 5** | Access to training bursaries for the Careers Leader to participate in one of the face-to-face training programmes.
- 6** | A Central Hub Fund to benefit schools/colleges across the Hub. Around half of the schools and colleges in Careers Hubs also received a 'virtual wallet' fund to support their careers programme.
- 7** | Cornerstone Employers, representing a range of business sizes and sectors, who work with their networks, the wider business community and the local Hub Lead. Cornerstone Employers drive leadership and strategic support within their communities to galvanise business effort and engagement with local schools and colleges.

The 2017 Careers Strategy established that the Careers Hubs would be **focused on groups of young people and areas most in need** of targeted support, to help deliver improvements in social mobility.²⁸ Having now established the effectiveness of the model, the ambition now is for all schools and colleges to be part of a Careers Hub.

Careers Hubs have been launched in three waves:

- September 2018, 704 schools & colleges
- September 2019, 618 schools & colleges
- September 2020, 943 schools & colleges

A total of 171 colleges and 2,094 schools are now in Careers Hubs.



Careers Hubs have driven improvement in careers provision

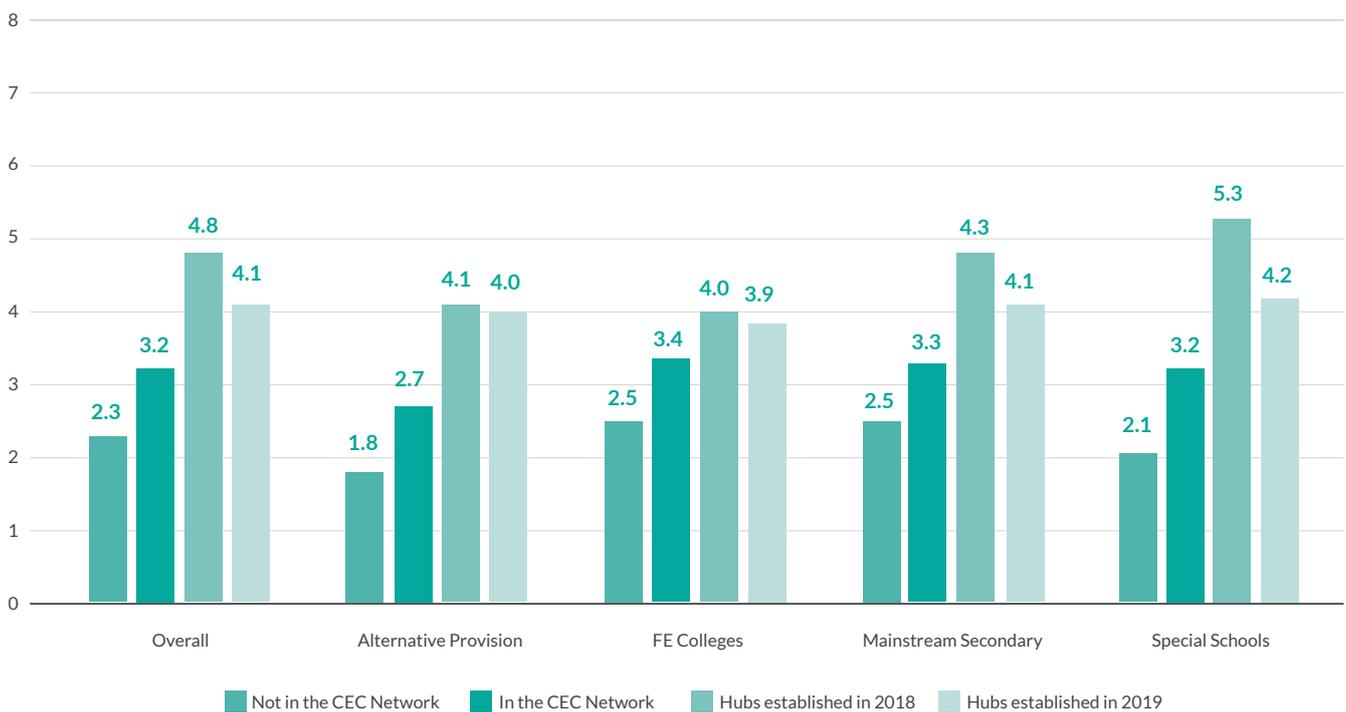
Investment has driven improvement in careers provision. Schools and colleges in Careers Hubs have made the fastest progress towards achieving the eight Gatsby Benchmarks, followed by those in the Enterprise Adviser Network that lie outside of a Careers Hub.

Schools and colleges outside the Enterprise Adviser Network achieved 0.4 benchmarks more in 2020 than they did in 2018, whereas those in the Network achieved 1 benchmark more in 2020 than in 2018. Wave 1 Hubs almost doubled the number of benchmarks achieved, achieving an additional 2.3 benchmarks.

The stronger performance of Careers Hubs is evident **across all the eight benchmarks and across different types of institution. Furthermore, the longer the Careers Hub has been in operation, the more significant the improvement.** Special schools, in particular, are benefitting from being in a Careers Hub. The progress made by special schools in Careers Hubs suggests that additional investment has especially supported young people who need it the most.

28. Department for Education (2017). Careers Strategy: Making the Most of Everyone's Skills and Talents.

Average number of Gatsby Benchmarks achieved, by provider type, March 2020¹⁰



Stronger communities enabled by Careers Hubs have given Careers Leaders greater ability to improve careers provision

Careers Hubs are **connecting schools and colleges with their local networks**, thereby facilitating partnerships between schools, colleges, employers, learning providers, local government leadership, and other initiatives, schemes, and stakeholders in the careers education space. The governance of Careers Hubs elevates careers

support from existing at the margins of education to being a key driver for future economic development. An independent evaluation by SQW based on quantitative and qualitative insights including over 140 interviews with Careers Leaders, Enterprise Advisers, Enterprise Coordinators and Hub Leads, shows that Careers Hubs have unified local structures and brought together individuals that were previously working in silos and that this is leading to connections to new employers.¹⁰

Careers Hubs have built strong networks where Careers Leaders can more easily work with a broader range of stakeholders, including **Local Authorities' skills teams and Local Enterprise Partnerships, who can provide up to date labour market information.** This information flow has become even more important since the beginning of the pandemic.

Hub Leads have a strategic focus bringing about alignment of careers activity across a geographical area with the local skills strategy. Under their strategic direction, Careers Hubs make support more easily accessible to schools and colleges and provide opportunities to replicate and scale successful approaches to career guidance.

The evaluation also found that being a 'Careers Hub school or college' was a good **driver of Senior Leadership Team** support, as was the opportunity to work with experienced employers committed to careers education, such as Cornerstone Employers.



Having a community of practice is the single biggest thing that has made a difference. This means that we are up-to-speed with what is going on and can share that rapidly with people in our area.

Hub Lead, 2020

Careers Hubs have helped Careers Leaders create **communities of practice**, where learning can be rapidly shared and Careers Leaders can benefit from what others in the sector are doing. Examples of ways in which connections between Careers Leaders are being facilitated include:

- Setting up collaborative working groups to develop ideas and resources.
- Offering formalised peer-reviewing and shadowing mechanisms.
- Holding Hub meetings in different establishments each time, with the hosting school or college being invited to share their approaches to careers provision.
- Enabling online portals where schools and colleges can share resources.
- 'Buddying up' schools who have opposing strengths and weaknesses to work together.

As a result of stronger relationships, Careers Leaders are sharing ideas and resources, and engaging additional employers through newly created connections.²⁹



Case Study – Peer mentoring scheme, Black Country Careers Hub

The Black Country Careers Hub has set up a 'pillar of best practice' peer mentoring scheme for schools and colleges. Three Lead Schools have become peer mentors for schools and colleges who have new Careers Leaders or who are struggling to meet the Gatsby Benchmarks. It is a six-weekly programme where the Lead School meets with their Careers Leader mentee once a week. The Lead Schools help mentee schools develop an action plan to improve their progress against the benchmarks and gives them the support to meet each action. Lead Schools are paid an allowance of £2,000 a year to be a peer mentor.

Schools have benefited from peer mentoring – so much so that two schools have asked if they can continue to take part in the programme, so they can develop further. Other schools have also asked to take part to accelerate their progress towards meeting the benchmarks. The programme allows Careers Leaders to focus on specific actions they may not have considered before and improves their overall confidence and impact.

3 | Professional careers leadership is driving quality and performance

For the past two years, schools and colleges in England have been required to have a named Careers Leader. The strategy set out that Careers Leaders are responsible for developing and embedding an institution-wide careers strategy and need to:

- **Have the appropriate skills and experience.**
- **Be sufficiently senior to lead the implementation of all eight of the Gatsby Benchmarks.**
- **Have buy-in from Governors and the Senior Leadership team.**
- **Work with subject teachers across the school so that careers provision is embedded within the curriculum.²⁸**

While the focus of the Careers Leader role varies between schools and colleges, in all cases it involves planning, implementing and quality assuring a careers programme; managing the delivery of career guidance; networking with external partners, including employers; coordinating the contributions of careers advisers, subject teachers, and other internal stakeholders.^{30 31} In order to develop the right skills for the job and to keep up with best practice in careers leadership, Careers Leaders are also required to take ownership of their professional development.

The Careers & Enterprise Company is helping to build the Careers Leader profession through training, resources, peer learning, business connections and wider networks.

30. The Careers & Enterprise Company and Gatsby Charitable Foundation (2018). Understanding the Role of the Careers Leader. A Guide for Colleges.

31. The Careers & Enterprise Company and Gatsby Charitable Foundation (2018). Understanding the Role of the Careers Leader. A Guide for Secondary Schools.

Careers Leaders are being developed through funded training

Since 2018, The Careers & Enterprise Company has been funding training for Careers Leaders to help them deliver their school or college's careers provision. Currently, the training catalogue includes 12 training providers, so that Careers Leaders can find the option that best suits their needs, availability, and previous knowledge.³² This training was successfully moved online at the start of lockdown in spring 2020.

The Careers & Enterprise Company funds the Careers Leader's place in the training programme of their choice, and awards their school or college a £1,000 bursary.

As of October 2020, 1,300 Careers Leaders benefited from funded training. An independent evaluation carried out by the Institute for Employment Studies showed that **investment has improved practice in schools and colleges. Careers Leaders reported high levels of satisfaction with training and perceived it to have a substantial impact:**

- 84 per cent of Careers Leaders said that as a result of the training, their institution had made better progress towards the Gatsby Benchmarks.
- 92 per cent believed that they had become **more effective Careers Leaders**.
- 96 per cent said that it helped them to identify actions to **improve their practice**.
- 91 per cent of Careers Leaders were **satisfied or very satisfied** with the training.³³

In addition to the face to face training, The Careers & Enterprise Company partnered with Teach First to develop a shorter online Careers Leader training programme free of charge, with similarly high levels of satisfaction and perceived impact.³⁴ The course has been open to anyone involved in careers leadership from September 2019. Over 2,400 individuals have engaged with the training so far.



32. The Careers & Enterprise Company, 'Careers Leader Training. Transform Your Careers Programme' <https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/sites/default/files/uploaded/1347_careersleadertraining_main_catalogue.pdf>.

33. Williams, J. et al (2020). Evaluation of the Careers Leader Training. London: The Careers & Enterprise Company.

34. Based on a survey of 150 respondents, 84 of which were Careers Leaders. This analysis has not been published yet.

Careers Leaders are positive about careers provision, the Network, and impact on young people

Survey results from summer 2020 show that **92 per cent of schools and colleges say that their careers provision has improved** since the introduction of the Government's Careers Strategy in 2017.³⁵ This is supported by a consistent and continued increase in the average number of benchmarks achieved by schools and colleges, as shown above. In addition, **93 per cent of schools and colleges feel positive about the future of careers provision** in their school or college, despite the disruption caused by the pandemic. A survey by the Association of Colleges suggested that this sentiment is shared across the FE sector.³⁶ 99 per cent of senior leaders in schools and colleges feel that the Gatsby Benchmarks remain a useful framework.¹³

An overwhelming majority of schools and colleges are positive about the impact of being part of the Network on careers provision:

- 77 per cent said that careers provision in their school/college had improved (84 per cent of those in Careers Hubs).
- 70 per cent believed that their school/college had a more strategic approach to careers (77 per cent in Careers Hubs).
- 73 per cent reported working with additional employers as a result of joining the Enterprise Adviser Network or a Careers Hub.

More importantly, these improvements in careers provision in schools and colleges have translated into **positive impact on young people**. Responses to the same survey highlighted that:

- 55 per cent believed that young people had **better employability skills** as a result of joining the Enterprise Adviser Network (61 per cent of those in Careers Hubs).
- 48 per cent said that young people in their school or college were more **likely to consider apprenticeships** (52 per cent in Careers Hubs), and 42 per cent that they were more likely to consider **vocational career pathways** (45 per cent in Careers Hubs).
- 36 per cent of respondents said that young people were **less likely to be NEET** as a result of being part of the Enterprise Adviser Network (40 per cent in Careers Hubs).³⁵

As a result, there is widespread **support for and satisfaction with the Enterprise Adviser Network:**

- 84 per cent of schools and colleges are satisfied with the support they receive from their Enterprise Adviser.
- 81 per cent are satisfied with the support they receive from their Enterprise Coordinator.
- 83 per cent of schools and colleges would recommend the Enterprise Adviser Network to another school or college (89 per cent of those in Careers Hubs).

35. The Careers & Enterprise Company and SQW (forthcoming). Evaluation of the Enterprise Adviser Network: School and College Survey 2020

36. Association of College (2020). Association of Colleges careers survey report – March 2020.

Careers leadership is now established in schools and colleges

Given the increasingly prominent role that careers education plays in schools and colleges, and the urgency of the challenges for young people entering the world of work, schools and colleges' **commitment to careers has not declined despite the pandemic; if anything, it has increased.** In a survey answered by 369 secondary school and college leaders between June and July 2020, respondents were positive about careers provision in 2020/21:

- 72 per cent of respondents said that careers education was at least within their five top priorities for the new academic year.
- Only 6 per cent expected budget for careers to decrease, while 66 per cent thought it would stay the same and 9 per cent that it would increase.
- 22 per cent expected pupil time for careers would increase, while 52 per cent expected it to stay the same and only 14 per cent said it would go down.
- 19 per cent believed that staff time for careers would increase, while 74 per cent thought it would stay the same and only 3 per cent expected it to decrease.¹³

Careers Leaders need ongoing support

While careers education is now much better embedded into schools and colleges' ethos and the Careers Leader workforce is better equipped to deliver quality career guidance than they were five years ago, ongoing support is needed as Careers Leaders develop and new people take on the role.

The Careers & Enterprise Company will continue to support Careers Leaders and schools and colleges through a number of activities, including **training an additional 650 Careers Leaders** through high-impact Careers Leader Training funded by The Careers & Enterprise Company. We will also enable **additional CPD opportunities**, building on the positive experience of delivering benchmark masterclasses to support Careers Leaders, and will continue to enable Enterprise Coordinators to lead CPD opportunities with Careers Leaders.

4 | Engaging with employers to prepare young people for the future economy

Employers engaging in careers provision are making a difference to young people and the economy

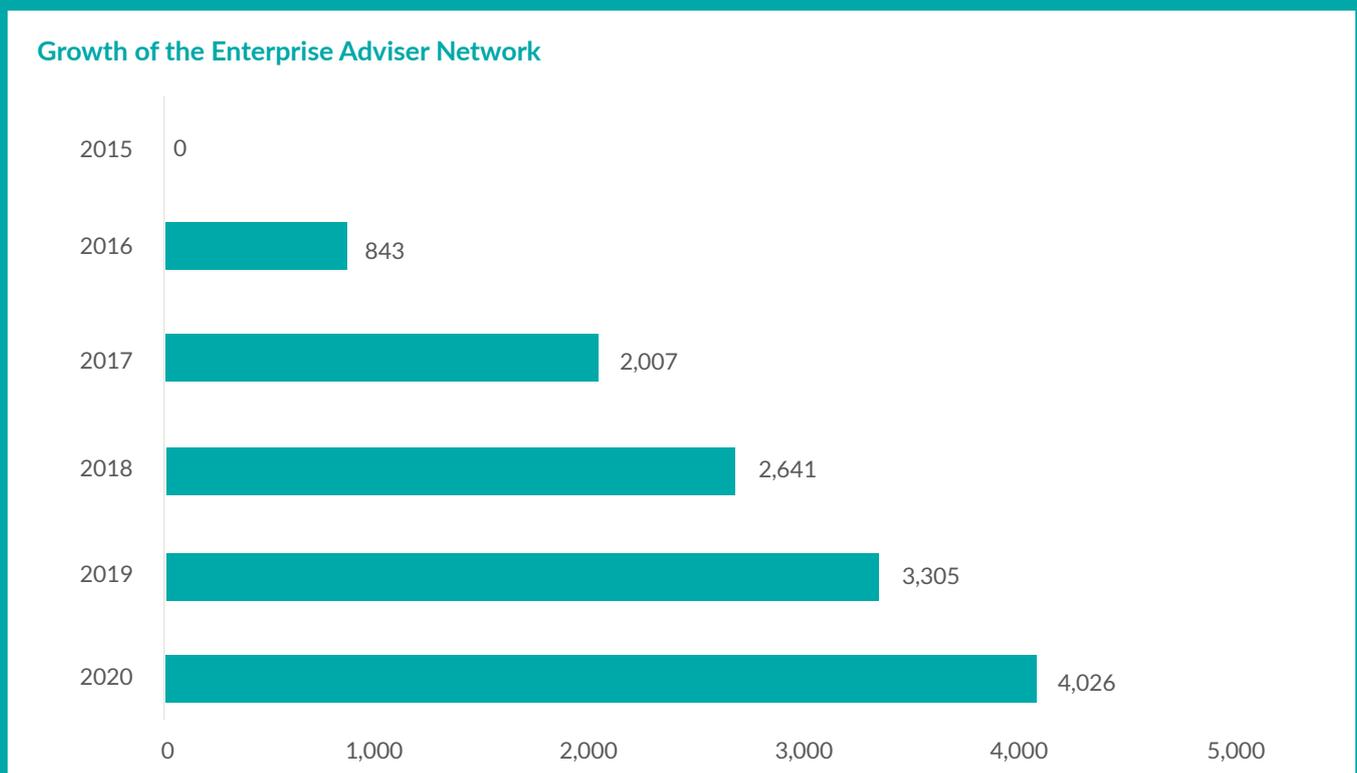
3.3 million young people are now regularly meeting employers, up 70 per cent in 2 years. A key focus of The Careers & Enterprise Company's work is to build networks between employers and schools and colleges by developing strategic relationships and increasing employer engagement with young people, supported through public investment.

Enterprise Advisers

The Careers & Enterprise Company's Enterprise Adviser Network enables collaboration between schools, colleges, and employers by recruiting volunteers

(Enterprise Advisers) from a range of business sectors to play a pivotal strategic role in helping those education institutions to deliver high-quality careers education plans. Enterprise Advisers are mostly senior leaders (33 per cent) or middle managers/professionals (43 per cent); 12 per cent are self-employed and 11 per cent are at supervisory/officer level.³⁷ A network of full time Enterprise Coordinators, co-funded with Local Enterprise Partnerships or Local Authorities, recruit and match Enterprise Advisers to work with a school or college's Careers Leader.

Since The Careers & Enterprise Company's inception in 2015, most state-funded schools and colleges have joined the Enterprise Adviser Network. **By November 2020, over 4,000 schools and colleges were part of the Enterprise Adviser Network, accounting for 81 per cent of all state-funded schools and colleges in England.**



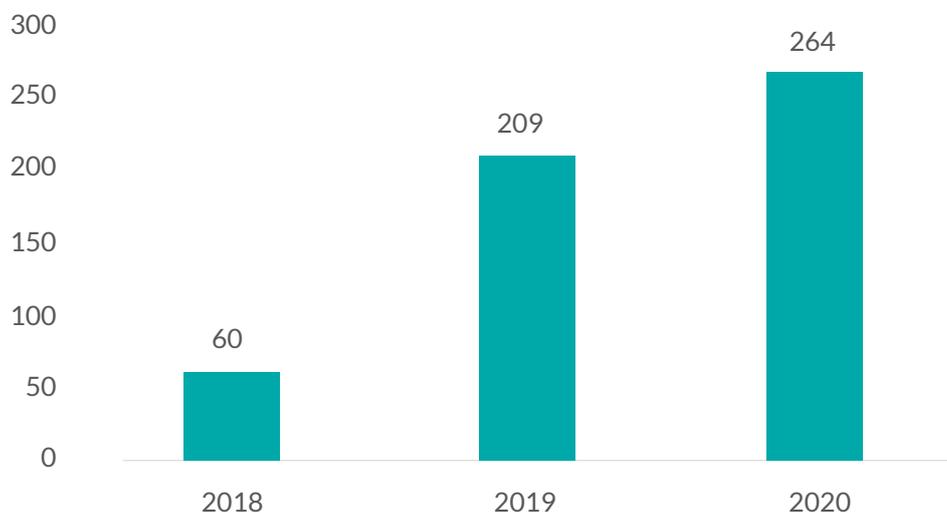
37. The Careers & Enterprise Company and SQW (2020). Evaluation of the Enterprise Adviser Network. Enterprise Adviser Survey.

Enterprise Advisers say their work is having a real impact on young people, schools and colleges, and the wider society. A survey of 812 Enterprise Advisers in early 2020 found that:

- 69 per cent believe they **contribute to the community**.
- 67 per cent believe that they are helping **improve the outcomes of young people**.
- 53 per cent are confident that they **raised awareness of their sector or organisation**.³⁷

This impact is achieved by Enterprise Advisers engaging with schools and colleges in many ways. In the same survey, over half (56 per cent) said that they connected the school/college to other local employers; that they advised the school/college on their careers plan (58 per cent); that they supported the school/college to evaluate their careers plan (59 per cent) and that they delivered a careers activity to pupils (60 per cent).

Growth in Cornerstone Employers



The survey reinforces the need for a long-term systemic approach to building partnerships between employers and educational settings. The longer Enterprise Advisers have been in the role, the more impact they perceive they have. While 35 per cent of those who had been in the post between 6 months and a year reported improvement in the school/college career plan, 85 per cent of those who had been in the role for over 4 years did so.

Cornerstone Employers

The growing number of Cornerstone Employers involved in Careers Hubs demonstrates increasing support for career guidance from the world of work. Cornerstone Employers are businesses that are experienced and have established a good track record in engaging with education. Their role is to drive leadership and strategic support within their communities to galvanise business effort and engagement with local schools and colleges. Starting with a focus on Opportunity Areas, the network of Cornerstone Employers has now expanded to over 260 businesses working across Careers Hub areas. With the scale-up of Careers Hubs in September 2020, their role will continue to expand.

A recent survey of Cornerstone Employers showed that they engage with schools and colleges through a range of activities such as: careers fairs and workplace experiences (49 per cent), careers talks and mock interviews (36 per cent) and CV workshops and mock assessment centres (34 per cent).³⁸

An overwhelming majority of respondents (94 per cent) believed that they were having **more of an impact working as a group than they would have separately**.³⁹ Collaboration will be particularly valuable in supporting schools and colleges in the current academic year, when traditional forms of engagement are not possible. Some Cornerstone Employers have been adapting engagement activities to work online, including through the 'My Week of Work' online work experience in June 2020.⁴⁰

Businesses were positive about the benefits to them of being a Cornerstone Employer:

- 69 per cent said that being a Cornerstone Employer helped them **to work with and learn from like-minded employers** across various sectors.
- 61 per cent believed that it helped them support **growth in the local economy** and give back to the community.
- 55 per cent said that it helped them **diversify their talent pipeline and support social mobility**.⁴¹
- **82 per cent felt confident that the Cornerstone Employer community will improve their organisation's ability to meet its skills requirements in a post-Covid world, and 93 per cent have recommended or will recommend being a Cornerstone Employer to other businesses.**

38. Findings from a survey of 85 Cornerstone Employers in summer 2020. This analysis has not been published yet.

39. Either 'agreed a lot' or 'agreed a little'.

40. <https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/news/leading-employers-line-support-young-peoples-careers-education-during-lockdown>.

41. Percentages show employers saying it helped 'a lot'.



Case Study: Cornerstone Employer - Anglian Water

About Anglian Water: Anglian Water is a utility company with approximately 4,500 employees. They supply water and water recycling services to more than six million domestic customers in the East of England. Anglian Water's education outreach programme takes students on a journey through the water cycle focusing on STEM. Lessons are tailored to meet curriculum needs and to address new technology, employability skills and the impacts of regional growth and climate change.

Industry Collaboration Event at Thomas Clarkson Academy: Anglian Water worked specifically with staff members as part of their teacher CPD. The objectives of the Industry Collaboration Event were:

- To support Thomas Clarkson Academy to raise student aspiration and attainment;
- To develop closer relationships with the school and assist them to deliver the Gatsby Benchmarks by embedding careers in the curriculum;
- Through working with the staff of Thomas Clarkson Academy, raise the profile of STEM careers.

The Industry Collaboration event featured a short introduction by Peter Simpson, CEO of Anglian Water. This was followed by a showcase session where employees of Anglian Water explained their role and discussed with teachers how the various occupations can be linked to the curriculum. Anglian Water employees and all teaching staff then took part in two workshops aimed at linking the business to the curriculum, with discussions based around specific curriculum topic areas.

What impact did the Industry Collaboration event have? The event enabled the school staff to find out more about the different areas of, and careers at Anglian Water, ranging from sustainability, engineering, IT, Human Resources, marketing, recreation and media. The workshops provided teaching staff with time to explore links to their curriculum areas and identify activities, resources or topics that could be developed.

The Careers & Enterprise Company will keep working with employers to support productivity and economic growth

By the end of the 2019/20 academic year, approximately four out of five young people at school and college were meeting employers every year to learn about the world or work, and two out of three were leaving school or college having had an experience of the workplace.⁴²

The Careers & Enterprise Company's ambition is that every young person in England will be able to meet employers and have experiences of workplaces. To support this, our goal is that every school and college will be matched to an Enterprise Adviser, and that, as the Careers Hub model expands, more Cornerstone Employers will be able to support all local communities.

While the economic shock brought about by Covid-19 is having a major impact on the labour market, and opportunities for young people may become more scarce, employers are ready to play their part in preventing a 'lost generation' of young people. Despite the adverse economic climate, a survey of senior business leaders showed that:⁴³

- 82 per cent believe it is important for employers to work with schools and colleges to inspire and inform young people about the world of work.
- 79 per cent say working with schools and colleges should be an important part of the businesses' CSR programme.
- 77 per cent believe employers have a responsibility to ensure young people leaving school in the current environment do not become a lost generation.
- 77 per cent say employers should now be looking to increase apprenticeship places for young people.
- 76 per cent say there is now an increased need for employers to support young people entering into the world of work.

42. Percy, C. and Tanner, E. (2020). Closing the Gap: Employer Engagement in England's Schools and Colleges in 2019. London: The Careers & Enterprise Company.

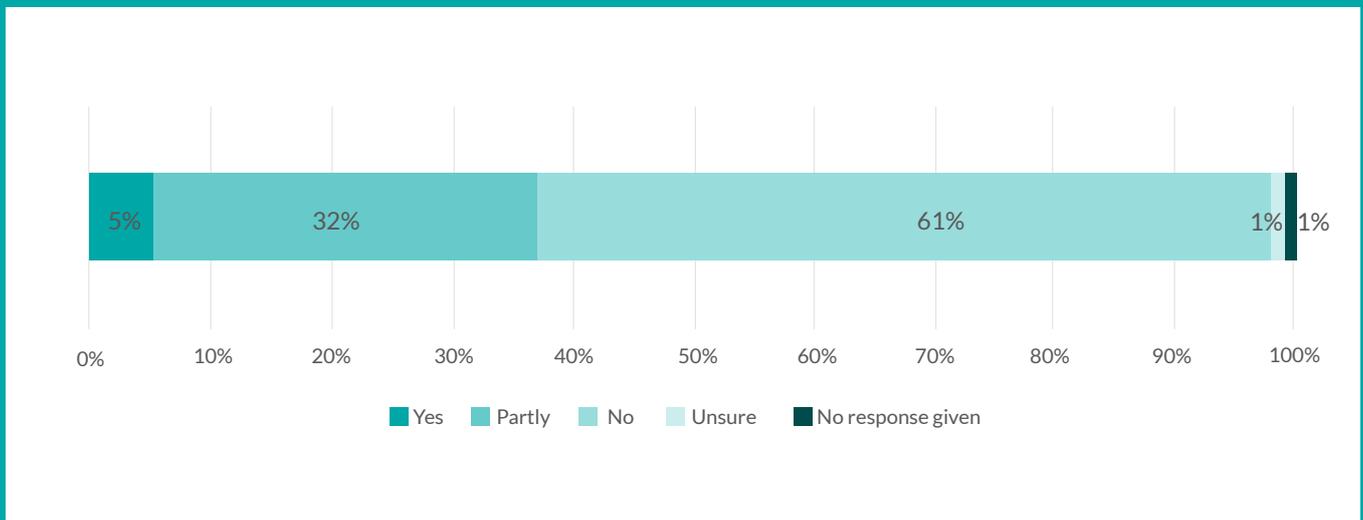
43. Savanta ComRes (2020). Employability of Young People in Light of Covid-19.

5 | The impact of Covid-19 and support through career guidance

All aspects of education were affected by Covid-19 in summer 2020, not least schools and colleges' ability to maintain the quality of career guidance during the period of lockdown and home-schooling.

The survey of schools and colleges carried out in the summer term as part of the evaluation of the Network demonstrated the scale of the disruption.³⁶ The majority of Careers Leaders (61 per cent) said that they had not been able to deliver the same quality of careers provision as prior to Covid-19. 32 per cent said that they had been able to partly. Only 5 per cent reported that they had been able to deliver the same quality of careers provision as they would have without Covid-19.

Whether schools and colleges in the Network were able to deliver the same quality of careers provision as prior to Covid-19



Pye Tait Consulting's survey of school and college leaders carried out in June/July 2020 explored the impact of the pandemic and highlighted the level of adaptation made to career guidance. Just under one-fifth of schools and colleges (17 per cent) had put careers provision on hold, but 57 per cent had shifted provision online, and 26 per cent had delivered different or extra activities because of the pandemic.¹³

The impact of Covid-19 has not been even across all aspects of careers education. Unsurprisingly, the hardest hit benchmarks are those requiring the involvement of external stakeholders and particularly employers. 76 per cent of Careers Leaders reported through Compass that Covid-19 had negatively impacted experiences of workplaces, closely followed by meaningful encounters with employers (70 per cent) and encounters with further and higher education (57 per cent). At the other extreme, only 21 per cent of Careers Leaders reported that benchmark 1 (planning a stable careers programme) had been affected.

As the pandemic and lockdown were affecting education provision, the direct impact on young people was also becoming apparent. **Rising unemployment as a result of Covid-19 has affected 16-24 year-olds the most out of any age group.** The proportion of 18-24 year-old unemployment claimants more than doubled from 6 per cent in March to 14 per cent in July.⁴⁴ It is unsurprising, as a result, that a recent survey to 2,000 16-24 year-olds showed that **young people feel uncertain and pessimistic about the future:**

- 36 per cent said that they had lost hope for the future.
- 38 per cent felt that they will never succeed in life; 48 per cent among those who had been eligible for Free School Meals.
- 39 per cent said that they had abandoned their aspirations for the year ahead; 44 per cent among those who are NEET.
- 44 per cent said that their aspirations are now lower because of the pandemic.⁴⁵

44. Institute for Employment Studies (2020). Labour Market Statistics, September 2020.

45. The Prince's Trust (2020). The Aspiration Gap.

The Careers & Enterprise Company coordinated a national response to support young people

From the outset of the pandemic, The Careers & Enterprise Company was in regular dialogue with 5,000 Careers Leaders to understand school and college priorities. Within those conversations, Careers Leaders said they needed support most of all with students in transition years.

In response, The Careers & Enterprise Company:

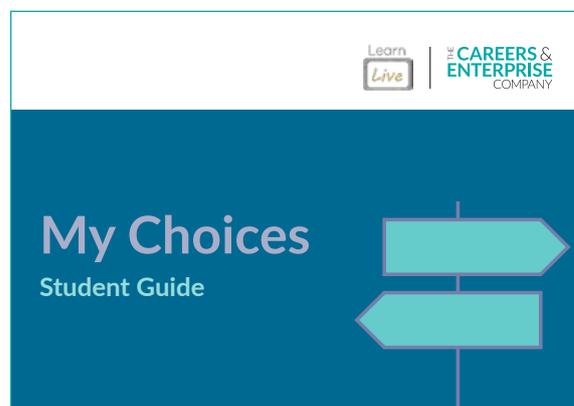
1. **Created a 'Work It' series** of video career talks by young people for young people aimed at Year 11 and 13, with a focus on diversity of backgrounds and progression routes (including apprenticeships and degree apprenticeships) across several sectors of the economy. As of 27 October 2020, 'Work It' videos had received 10,300 views in total.



2. **Staged 'My Week of Work'** with Oak National Academy and Learn Live UK to facilitate employer engagement, and as an immediate substitute for lost work experience. 100,000 users registered to take part.



3. **Launched a 'My Choices' programme**, a collection of resources brought together in one comprehensive guide to support Careers Leaders in helping young people as they prepare for their next stages of education, employment or training. Developed in collaboration with Learn Live UK, it consisted of 'on-demand' virtual events where young people heard directly from employers and apprenticeship providers about the opportunities available to them. Funding was also provided to Careers Hubs and Local Enterprise Partnerships for an ongoing series of local My Choices careers events. Specific guides for Careers Leaders, students, and parents/carers were developed and are available on our website alongside other resources.⁴⁶



4. **Worked with providers to repurpose their funded activity** and support the delivery of alternative programmes to support young people during the outbreak. As part of our Covid-19 response, 118 contracts (£4.3m) have been renegotiated to provide delivery extensions for 87 providers. £3.5m of this activity was redesigned and reprofiled to adapt it to Covid-19 measures in over 1,000 schools and colleges.

46. <https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/browse-category/my-choices>

The Careers & Enterprise Company Investment Funds

One of the most direct ways The Careers & Enterprise Company supports young people is through our investment funds. The focus of these funds is to scale up successful careers and enterprise activities and to ensure that funded programmes are delivering for young people. To date, The Careers & Enterprise Company have supported more than 300 proven programmes. These programmes cover a variety of careers-centred engagements with employers which range from mentoring and work experience through to CV workshops.

<p>Careers & Enterprise Fund 2018 Part A: Employer Encounters</p> <p>Goal: To support employer encounters for young people aged 11-18 in England through 10 Careers Hubs and 25 disadvantaged areas.</p> <p>Reach: 140,000</p> <p>Projects supported: 38</p> <p>Delivery commenced: January '19</p>	<p>Careers & Enterprise Fund 2018 Part B: Disadvantaged Groups</p> <p>Goal: To test new approaches for disadvantaged groups, specifically SEND, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities and looked after children, to broaden aspirations and raise awareness of pathways into training and work.</p> <p>Reach: 1,845</p> <p>Projects supported: 20</p> <p>Delivery commenced: January '19</p>
<p>Mentoring Fund and Mentoring Extension Fund</p> <p>Goal: To support Year 8-10 students at risk of disengaging from education by scaling up proven mentoring organisations.</p> <p>Reach: 22,500</p> <p>Projects supported: 39</p> <p>Delivery commenced: January '17</p>	<p>Opportunity Areas Fund and Opportunity Areas Extension Fund</p> <p>Goal: To support the delivery of employer encounters for young people from disadvantaged areas in the second wave of the Government's Opportunity Areas and a further year of funding to cover both wave 1 and 2.</p> <p>Reach: 145,000</p> <p>Projects supported: 24</p> <p>Delivery commenced: September '18</p>

<p>Personal Guidance Fund</p> <p>Goal: To support the development of innovative, cost-effective models for personal career guidance in schools and colleges, harnessing learning and best practice that can be disseminated to the sector.</p> <p>Reach: 31,335</p> <p>Projects supported: 18</p> <p>Delivery commenced: September '18</p>	<p>Primary Fund</p> <p>Goal: To build the evidence base to better understand the impact of career-related learning activities with primary school children, including good practice to be promoted at primary level.</p> <p>Reach: 90,000</p> <p>Projects supported: 27</p> <p>Delivery commenced: May '19</p>
<p>Careers & Enterprise Fund 2016 Part A: Employer Encounters</p> <p>Goal: To support the delivery of employer encounters for young people from disadvantaged areas in the first wave of the Government's Opportunity Areas.</p> <p>Reach: 100,000</p> <p>Projects supported: 17</p> <p>Delivery commenced: July '17</p>	<p>Careers & Enterprise Fund 2016 Part B: Scaling up best practice</p> <p>Goal: To support best practice in careers and enterprise activities through scaling up, testing and evaluating common careers activities.</p> <p>Reach: 145,000</p> <p>Projects supported: 36</p> <p>Delivery commenced: July '17</p>

To help Careers Leaders navigate the wide array of online support and resources offered during Covid-19, The Careers & Enterprise Company developed:

1. **Resource Directory** - a curated, one-stop shop of tools, guidance and information to provide the highest quality, trusted careers resources. As of 3 November 2020, the Resource Directory had received 7,000 unique visits.⁴⁷

The screenshot shows the homepage of the CEC Resource Directory. At the top, there is a teal header with the logo on the left, a search bar in the center, and 'Contact' and social media icons on the right. Below the header, there are three navigation links: 'See all resources', 'Browse by category', and 'Find further support'. The main content area features a large teal banner with a photograph of two young women smiling. The banner text reads: 'Welcome to the CEC Resource Directory. Inspire and prepare young people for the fast-changing world of work, with the help of our carefully curated Resource Directory. Developed with you in mind, we've made it easy to quickly find the trusted, high quality resources you need to make a difference. Ready?' Below this text is a search box labeled 'Get started:' with a magnifying glass icon and a 'Browse our resources' button. To the right of the search box is an illustration of a person at a desk with a laptop and various icons. Below the banner, there is a section titled 'We're here to help' with three service cards:

- Backing the Gatsby Benchmarks**: We've identified - and regularly update - the
- Opening the possibilities**: Our resources are conveniently matched to each key stage, yet easily adaptable to your
- Developing skills and knowledge**: if you're new to the Careers Leader role, or

47. <https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/>

2. Careers in Context 2020: A Can-do Guide developed in collaboration with The Gatsby Foundation to give Careers Leaders the confidence to drive good career guidance in the context of Covid-19. It provides resources and innovative examples, showcasing how practice can be adapted to meaningfully meet the needs of students. Tailored guides have also been developed for employers and providers.⁴⁸ As of 22 October 2020, the Careers Leader guide had been downloaded 1,185 times, the employer guide, 133, and the provider guide, 102.



The careers in context guide was a ray of sunshine after the last few months – which have felt like an overwhelming torrent of careers resources, suggestions, videos, LMI info, podcasts, webinars and CPD opportunities all whilst trying to grapple with how on earth I can keep careers (a) on the agenda when schools are facing such a challenging time and (b) how I can maintain the enthusiasm for careers in my school that I have worked so hard to build up over the last few years. It helps raise the awareness of the significance of careers at senior level and is a go-to guide for strategic planning and specific queries.

Careers Leader

48. The Careers & Enterprise Company (2020). Careers in Context 2020: A Can-Do Guide.

6 | Careers education – a firm foundation for future progress

The data and evidence in this report point to clear momentum behind the strategic approach to careers education in England, supported by national progress and accelerated improvement in areas of disadvantage.

In our local communities and on the frontline, schools, colleges, teachers, employers, and regional and local agencies also report that this developing careers system, fortified by the Gatsby Benchmarks, is working and delivering positive results and outcomes for young people.

Consensus around progress is equalled by collective recognition that there is much more to do

The longer-term response to Brexit, including our global competitiveness and the solution to local growth, together with the economic recovery from Covid-19, will require a sustained national effort, building on the evidence and knowledge of what works in careers education. The previous and current Government piloted what a high impact careers system could be. We now have an opportunity to embed institutional change for the benefit of young people at national scale and by the end of this Parliament.

An ambitious future vision could deliver a universal offer for all young people

The infrastructure Government has invested in provides a blueprint for a nationally driven careers system to support young people from all backgrounds to fulfil their potential. A nationally functioning careers system also offers a spur for achieving wider national outcomes including a high-skilled economy, an answer to regional disparity and greater parity in education choices between academic and vocational pathways.

The Careers & Enterprise Company sees three areas where incremental investment through this infrastructure could make a significant impact:

1. **Expand Careers Hubs:** the continuing expansion of Careers Hubs should be the bedrock of future careers education provision. This would generate:
 - Better education and business links, with sector skills and local labour market information at their heart, extended across the whole country. This would include employers directly connected to young people, and utilising Careers Hubs as an enabler for driving high skills and diverse talent pools.
 - Greater coherence between national and local provision of careers support including stronger coordination with key public programmes such as the National Careers Service.
 - Better customisation of careers programmes for the specific needs of students including greater exposure to pathways into technical and vocational education.
 - Opportunity for primary school integration using Careers Hubs as a focal point and as a highly efficient way to drive engagement amongst primary pupils, with a focus on transition to Year 7.
2. **Empower Careers Leaders:** recognition of the Careers Leader role and its importance has increased rapidly over the last three years. There is now an opportunity to deepen their professional status **and increase capacity and capability:**
 - The foundation for this has been the training programmes and CPD opportunities delivered to grow knowledge, skills and competencies among Careers Leaders. With additional investment, the opportunity beckons for a fully trained Careers Leader in every education establishment as an integral part of school and college improvement.
 - There is also opportunity to create a more differentiated Careers Leader training offer for each type of Careers Leader, such as those working in different types of institution and those with different levels of experience, and to cement career guidance across the curriculum by including careers awareness in Initial Teacher Training and National Professional Qualifications.

3. Drive data and digital transformation to enhance choice:

- enabling stronger destinations tracking to enable young people to make better decisions about career choices. Data transformation is key to achieving higher levels of engagement amongst schools and colleges and to enable them to pinpoint what effect careers support is having on their students' career prospects.
- Compass+ can provide an analytics engine for a renewed careers strategy - bringing currently diverse datasets, owned by different actors, into a centralised framework.
 - The aggregated datasets will create new intelligence on 'cold spots' across the country to aid regional level targeting of resources. It will also enable a greater focus on labour market information, the skills that young people are acquiring to make successful transitions and their destinations.
 - At a micro level, increased intelligence and richer data will enable Careers Leaders to identify and focus on groups of young people who require greater levels of support and prioritise individual students within their institutions.
 - Compass+ can draw on student-level data on careers activity, skills and intended destinations, and combine this with data on local labour markets and opportunities. Careers Leaders will be able to surface relevant information for individual young people and their parents or carers, in ways that are meaningful and engaging.

Working towards consistent high quality provision

Statutory Guidance crystallises what is required by schools and colleges and Ofsted has recognised with increased rigour the importance of high-quality careers education.^{49 50} The Baker Clause also serves to ensure that schools make provision for training providers to access their pupils and showcase what technical education and apprenticeships can offer.

The roll-out of Careers Hubs and the provision of Careers Leaders training provide an opportunity to create equity of provision nationally and are critical first steps before judgements about performance can become stronger accountability measures. An enhanced digital infrastructure is supporting increasingly targeted provision, facilitating monitoring and, as a result, providing tools for stronger accountability.

There is already a high level of engagement amongst schools and colleges on the importance of careers education programmes. 85 per cent of mainstream schools and colleges are driving performance against the Gatsby Benchmarks. We would also expect to see the most established Careers Hubs continue to increase their performance against the Gatsby Benchmarks including those that address measures to support compliance with statutory requirements and the Baker Clause.

The Careers & Enterprise Company will continue to support schools and colleges on this journey. We will continue to build on the achievements and learning in this report, strengthening the careers education system through funded Careers Leader training, facilitating local careers networks through the roll-out of Careers Hubs, and by continuing to build a powerful digital infrastructure.

49. Ofsted (2019). School inspection handbook.

50. Ofsted (2019). Further education and skills inspection handbook.

Annex. Interpreting the Compass data in 2019/20

State of the Nation reports over previous years have presented the progress made by schools and colleges towards the Gatsby Benchmarks using the latest Compass evaluations within a given academic year up to 31st July. In summer 2020, as a result of Covid-19, the Compass data did not present a reliable picture of the career guidance that actually took place since some planned activities underpinning schools' and colleges' evaluations was unable to be delivered. This insight was captured through additional questions added to the Compass tool at the start of June 2020 about the impact of the pandemic.

As a result, end-of-July Compass data for the academic year 2019/20 can be grouped into three categories:

- Latest evaluations completed prior to the start of June when the Covid-19 impact questions were added. For these schools and colleges, we do not know whether any of the planned activity was adversely affected by the pandemic (N=1,648, 44.8 per cent).
- Latest evaluations completed in June or July and including some planned activity that may not be delivered (N=1,679, 45.7 per cent).
- Latest evaluations completed in June or July and based on activity that was confirmed to have taken place (N=350, 9.5 per cent).

Because of the uncertainty in the end of July 2020 data, this report presents snapshots of Compass data from March 2020 as well as July 2020.

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