



## Improving careers guidance for young people: revised statutory guidance for schools

In the six years since the Government closed down the Connexions service and transferred responsibility for careers guidance to individual schools and colleges, numerous reports and surveys have identified concerns that the provision of support for young people remains patchy and of inconsistent quality. This means that not all young people in England have access to the information, advice and guidance they need for their futures.

Over two years ago the Government promised a new strategy for improving careers guidance in schools, and this was eventually published in December. It has been quickly followed by revised and updated statutory guidance for schools. The 34-page document provides detailed guidance on each of the eight Gatsby benchmarks that schools are now expected to start using to develop and improve their careers programmes. It also includes details on the new requirement to ensure that providers of further education and training are given an opportunity to inform pupils about technical qualifications and apprenticeships. Importantly, the guidance sets out a timetable for schools to appoint a named Careers Leader – by September 2018.

If every school were to follow the guidance in full, every young person in school in England could be guaranteed good quality careers support. The Career Development Institute (CDI) is particularly pleased to see that the Department for Education expects schools to use qualified careers professionals to provide personal careers guidance and that schools are recommended to use our Register of Career Development Professionals to search for careers advisers.

Although supportive, CDI President Laura Bell, offers a note of caution: “It will be important for schools to understand the distinction between a careers adviser, who provides impartial advice and guidance, and a careers leader, who drives change and manages and coordinates the careers programme in school. Schools need to have both roles to achieve all the Gatsby benchmarks”.

Further, the CDI is pleased that schools are to be offered support for all eight benchmarks. To date The Careers & Enterprise Company has focused only on the two benchmarks concerned with employer engagement. We look forward to offering our experience and expertise to the Company as it extends its role in the coming months.

We therefore welcome the revised Statutory Guidance, which we believe represents a major step forward from previous versions. It sets out clear expectations for good careers education and guidance. However, in welcoming the guidance, we suggest four further measures that we think are needed to facilitate the implementation of the expectations into practice.

Firstly, the new, improved National Careers Service website, promised in the careers strategy, must be made available as soon as possible, to provide the high-quality careers information that underpins all good careers education and guidance.

Secondly, the Government should reinstate the previous statutory duty on schools to provide careers education in the curriculum. Schools have a statutory duty to secure access to independent careers guidance, but this needs to be complemented by a similar requirement to provide support for developing pupils' career management and employability skills.

Thirdly, all schools should be given an allocation of development funding to help them put into place the improvements demanded. Schools participating in the Gatsby pilot in the North East have had access to development funding and the evaluation of the project has demonstrated that significant improvements can be achieved with modest levels of financial support.

Fourthly, one of the flaws of a school-based model of careers guidance is that it assumes all young people are in school. But we know that several thousand young people in England are not in a school or a college. Some have been excluded, many others are home-educated. Where do these young people, who are often the most vulnerable, go to access high quality, impartial career guidance services and post-16 learning opportunities? They are not currently a priority group for the National Careers Service and local authority services vary considerably in terms of what they provide and who they see. Similarly, it is not at all clear where young people in work-based training and on apprenticeships, should go for careers guidance. A strategy that relies solely on schools and colleges securing access to careers guidance is not inclusive: a significant number of young people miss out.

These are challenging issues, but we believe that schools can use the Statutory Guidance to build a system that will provide young people in education with the help they need to progress successfully through school and onto further study and work that is right for them and a fast-changing economy.

Ends....

#### Notes

1. The Career Development Institute is the UK-wide professional body for the career development sector, with a membership of 4,250 career development professionals working in the public, private and voluntary and community sectors.
2. Our members work across the sector as career leaders, career teachers, career advisers, career coaches and career managers. Many also work in employability and employer engagement. We welcome new members – you do not need to be qualified but must agree to work to the CDI's Code of Ethics.
3. The CDI is the custodian of the National Occupational Standards for Career Development and the UK Register of Career Development Professionals. Both career advisers and career leaders may join the Register, although only career advisers may give personal careers guidance.
4. The CDI has recently updated the *Framework for careers, employability and enterprise education* and new copies will be available by the end of February 2018.
5. Our reports, press releases and publications are available through our website - <http://www.thecdi.net/Reports---Resources>
6. For more information on the work of the Career Development Institute please visit our website [www.thecdi.net](http://www.thecdi.net) or contact chief executive [jan.ellis@thecdi.net](mailto:jan.ellis@thecdi.net)