

**STATISTICS OF
EDUCATION**
*Survey of School-
Business Links in
England in 1997/98*

SURVEY OF SCHOOL-BUSINESS LINKS IN ENGLAND IN 1997/98

Introduction

1 Broadening all pupils' understanding of the world of work and helping them to see the relationship between their education at school and the competencies and skills they will need in later life is vitally important. Links with business, through mentoring, visits, provision of materials and work experience for pupils for instance, not only broaden young people's understanding of the world of work, and the key skills required, but can increase motivation and achievement. Such understanding is further enhanced by teachers who have themselves an up to date and rounded understanding of the business environment. Placements of serving teachers with business partners helps grow and sustain this understanding.

2 It is important to note that businesses can also benefit from this activity. For instance many company employees see school link activity as a way of providing good staff development opportunities to improve their communication, interpersonal and organisational skills.

3 In response to concerns that there was a loss of momentum on this agenda, the Government announced in the White Paper "Excellence in schools" that it intended to add a new drive to school business links, both locally and nationally. The Government believes partnerships between business and education are essential if we are to raise standards in education, help young people improve their employability in a fast changing labour market, ensure high skill levels to improve the nation's competitiveness and encourage more interest in entrepreneurial activity.

4 As part of its strategy to foster more school business links the DfEE undertook a consultation exercise in Autumn 1998 to explore how to achieve a more integrated and strategic approach to this area. The consultation drew responses from a range of businesses and other organisations.

5 Recommendations are due to be announced in Spring 1999, but the consultation exercise itself has already increased awareness and commitment to link activity and created a consensus for action. For example, there was broad agreement about the issues to address and desired outcomes. Employers are keen to see schools open up more to outside influence and to recognise the importance of work-readiness as well as academic qualifications. They would like a greater focus of outputs from business involvement in education.

6 Education Business Partnerships and others involved in brokering current arrangements would like to see more explicit links with existing frameworks e.g. the national curriculum and school development plans; and better integration within schools of the various

activities in which they are involved. They also favour stronger local frameworks for establishing and maintaining contacts and activities.

7 The consultation paper therefore concentrated on three areas – strategy, structure and measurement. It proposed:

- four broad objectives for all school business link activity;
- development of a mechanism for identifying and disseminating good practice;
- provision of guidance for practitioners; and
- more evaluation of specific activities, e.g. work experience.

8 This statistical bulletin of the survey of school business links, carried out in March 1998 gives an indication of business link activity at that time. The figures show that much has been achieved already, but also, that in some areas more needs to be done. These quantitative data when linked to the recommendations from the consultation will provide a firm basis on which to take forward partnerships between education and business.

9 The 1997/98 survey and earlier surveys¹ have all been concerned with both pupil and teacher involvement and the extent to which local business had provided help or support to schools, and vice versa. *Care, however, should be taken when comparing the results from different surveys due to changes in the wording of certain questions.*

10 This Bulletin summarises the results of the survey, carried out in March 1998 covering the 1997/98 academic year, on a nationally representative sample of 850 primary and 545 secondary schools. A total of 630 primary and 411 secondary schools replied, giving response rates of 74 per cent and 75 per cent respectively. For information, a copy of the secondary schools' questionnaire is included in the back of the Bulletin. This is similar to that for primary schools with the addition of questions on work experience. A copy of the primary schools' questionnaire is available on request.

11 For the purposes of the survey the following definitions apply:

- **'business'** is defined as 'the provision of goods and services which people need and want', in other words both manufacturing and service businesses.
- **'Work experience'**² is defined as a placement on employers' premises in which a pupil carries out a

1 Survey of School-Business Links 1988/89 (Issue no. 10/90), Survey of School-Business Links 1991/92 (Issue 10/93) and Survey of School-Business Links 1994/95 (Issue 3/96).

2 This has been extended to the last 2 years of compulsory schooling (School Standards and Framework Act 1998).

particular task or duty or range of tasks and duties more or less as would regular employees, but with the emphasis on the learning aspects of the experience. It is undertaken by a pupil in the last year of compulsory education and is approved by the Local Education Authority or, in the case of Grant-Maintained schools, by the governing body.

Summary of the main findings

12 The main findings of this survey are that in the academic year 1997-98:

Primary schools

- Forty-eight per cent of primary schools reported they had links with business (excluding teacher placements);
- Six per cent of schools had full-time teachers placed in, or seconded, to business;
- The average length of placement / secondment per teacher was 3 days;
- The most common business link for primary schools was visits to businesses, with 30 per cent of schools participating;
- One in two primary schools reported that their link activities only involved small firms or organisations.

Secondary schools

- Ninety two per cent of secondary schools had links with business (excluding work experience and teacher placements)
- Thirty-one per cent of schools had full-time teachers placed in, or seconded, to business;
- The average length of placement/secondment per teacher was 3 days;
- The most common business link for secondary schools, apart from work experience, was visits to businesses, with 80 per cent of schools participating;
- Forty-eight per cent of secondary schools reported that they had link activities with small, medium and large firms or organisations.
- Sixty-six per cent of secondary schools said that work experience had contributed to assessed GCSE course work;
- Ninety-eight per cent of pupils in their final year of compulsory schooling were involved in work experience placements;
- The most common months for pupils to undertake work experience placements were June and July reported by 23 per cent of secondary schools in each month;

SCHOOL-BUSINESS LINKS ACTIVITIES

(excluding work experience and teacher placements)

Extent of schools' links with local business (excluding work experience and teacher placements)

13 Table 1 shows that forty-eight per cent of primary schools and ninety-two per cent of secondary schools had links or contacts with local business (excluding work experience and teacher placements). If those schools with teacher placements as the only form of business links are taken into account, then 50 per cent of primary schools reported they had links with business. The results relating to work experience are detailed in paragraphs 27 to 35. Those for teacher placements are detailed in paragraphs 38 to 40.

14 Table 1 also shows that primary schools' involvement in link activities was more common amongst pupils in higher year groups, with 48 per cent of schools involving Year Group 6 pupils (10/11 year olds) compared with 28 per cent of schools involving Year Group 4 pupils (8/9 year olds). On average, in those primary schools with link activities, 85 per cent of pupils were involved.

TABLE 1:
School and pupil involvement in business links, by year group, 1997/98

	Percentage of schools with business links # S	Percentage of pupils involved in link
Primary schools		
Year Group*		
1 (age 5/6)	31	90
2 (age 6/7)	31	87
3 (age 7/8)	30	81
4 (age 8/9)	28	78
5 (age 9/10)	38	84
6 (age 10/11)	48	84
7 (age 11/12)	2	100
All year groups	48	85
Secondary Schools		
Year Group*		
5 (age 9/10)	2	75
6 (age 10/11)	2	76
7 (age 11/12)	20	66
8 (age 12/13)	27	66
9 (age 13/14)	47	82
10 (age 14/15)	76	68
11 (age 15/16)	69	62
12/13 (age 16/17)	46	51
All year groups	92	66

* Year groups 4-9 include middle deemed primary and middle deemed secondary schools as appropriate

excluding teacher placements

S excluding work experience (secondary schools only)

15 In secondary schools, pupils in Year Group 10 (14/15 year olds) had the greatest involvement in link activities (excluding work experience), with 76 per cent of schools involved. On average, in those secondary schools with link activities, 66 per cent of pupils were involved.

TABLE 2:
Schools' participation in business link activities, by type of link, 1997/98

	Percentage of schools
Primary Schools	
Visits to businesses	30
Curriculum development	27
Talks by business community	16
Literacy/numeracy	13
Community projects	10
Mini enterprises	9
Work observation	7
Other activities	5
Problem solving projects	4
Twinning with local company	3
Mentoring	3
Secondary Schools	
Visits to businesses	80
Talks by business community	78
Curriculum development	67
Problem solving projects	44
Mini enterprises	35
Mentoring	32
Work observation	32
Work based activities on employers' premises	32
Work shadowing	30
Mini enterprises	30
Community projects	27
Twinning with local company	22
Other activities	15

– Schools' participation in link activities by type of link

16 Table 2 shows that, for primary schools, visits to businesses was the most common link activity, with 30 per cent of schools participating, followed by curriculum development involving 27 per cent of schools.

17 The most common link activities in secondary schools were visits to businesses, involving 80 per cent of schools, and talks by members of local business community, with 78 per cent of schools participating.

18 Eighty seven per cent of primary schools involved in link activities reported using at least one of the education-business link organisations cited in Table 3. The local Education Business Partnership and Training and Enterprise Council were used the most.

19 Nearly all secondary schools with business links reported using at least one of the organisations listed. The local Careers Services, Education Business Partnership, and Training and Enterprise Council were used the most.

Number of business-link activities, by school sector

20 Figure 1 shows that secondary schools were more extensively involved in link activities than primary

TABLE 3:
Percentage of schools which used education-business link organisations, 1997/98

Name of business link organisation	Percentage of schools	
	Primary schools	Secondary schools
Banking Information Service	2	17
British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS)	2	6
British Institute of Management	.	3
Business in the Community	8	9
Careers Research and Advisory Centre	-	36
Careers Service	4	90
Centre for Education and Industry / SCIP	2	17
Community Education Development Centre	2	8
Compact	.	32
Creativity in Science and Technology	.	16
Education Business Partnership	47	79
National Mentoring Network	-	4
Science and Technology Regional Organisation	7	21
Teacher Placement Service	15	43
The Engineering Council	1	24
The Industrial Society	.	11
The Science, Engineering Technology Mathematics Network	1	3
Training and Enterprise Council	25	74
Trident	18	24
Understanding Industry	.	16
Young Engineers	0	26
Young Enterprise	.	38
Other	33	22

- less than 0.05 (negligible)

. not applicable

schools. Forty-one per cent of secondary schools had 4 or more link activities, whilst 24 per cent had 8 or more. Eleven per cent of primary schools had 4 or more links.

Size of firm or organisation involved in links with schools

21 Schools were asked to give an estimate / indication of how they would attribute their business link activities according to the size of the firm involved.

22 Figure 2 shows that the business links activities of fifty-one per cent of primary schools exclusively involved 'small' firms or organisations.

23 Secondary schools were more likely to have links with firms or organisations of different sizes – 'small', 'medium' and 'large'. Forty eight per cent of secondary schools reported such links compared to eleven per cent of primary schools.

– Practical help from local business

24 Schools were asked what practical help local businesses would provide during the academic year and the type of help that would be provided.

25 Forty per cent of primary schools and 87 per cent of secondary schools indicated that they received practical help from local business. Figure 3 shows that in

FIGURE 1:
School-business links activities, 1997/98

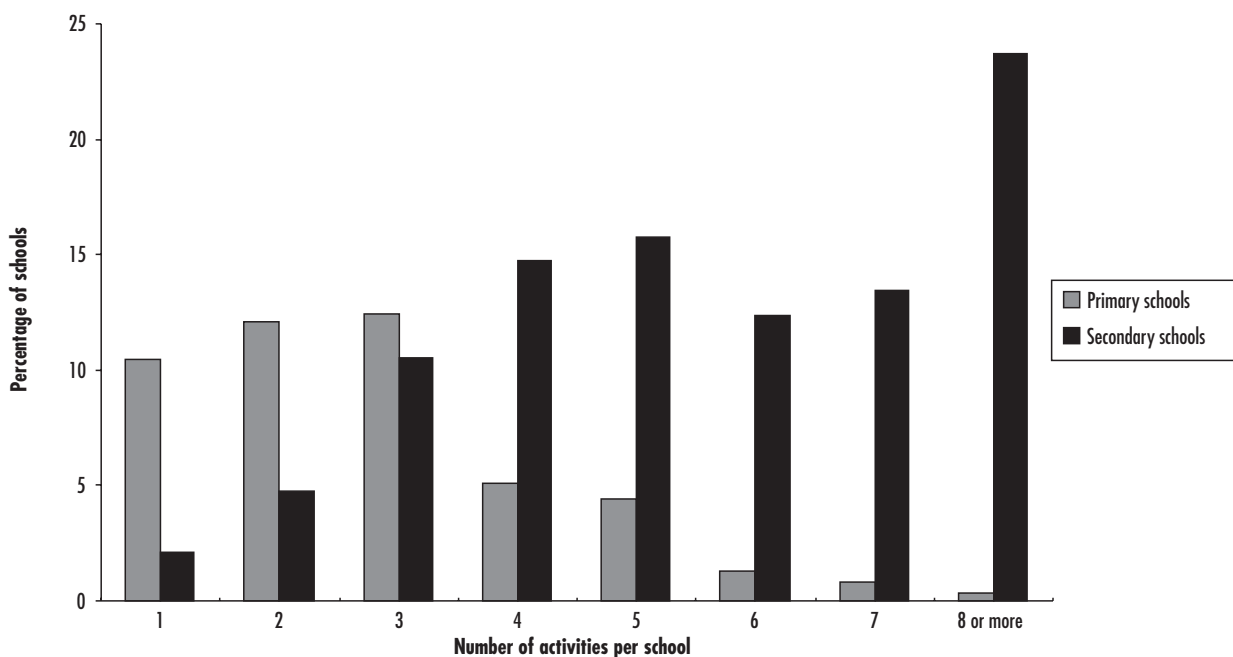
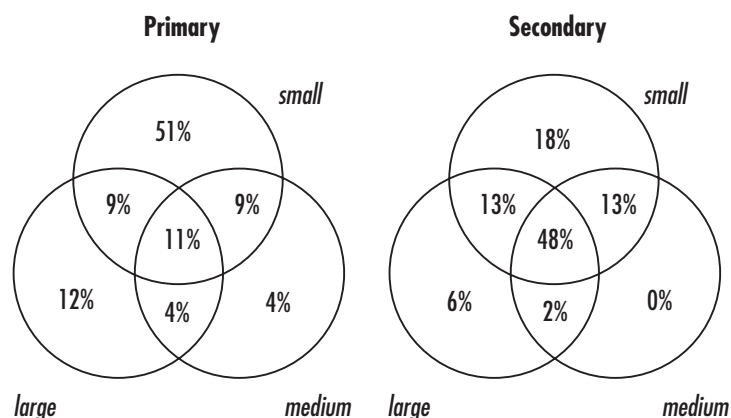


FIGURE 2:
Percentages of maintained primary and secondary schools by size of business (combinations of small, medium and large sized businesses), 1997/98



primary schools the most common forms of practical help were donations of equipment and donations of cash reported by 24 per cent and 19 per cent of schools respectively. In secondary schools, technical advice was the most common form of practical help, with 52 per cent of schools indicating that they had received this kind of assistance, followed by donations of equipment reported by 47 per cent of schools.

– Services to local business by secondary schools

26 Thirty-six per cent of secondary schools reported that they had provided at least one service to local business. Information technology services was the most common service identified, provided by 15 per cent of secondary schools, followed by design work (12 per cent) and market survey work (8 per cent). Eighteen per cent of secondary schools provided other services.

WORK EXPERIENCE

27 Work experience placements were defined as ‘placements on employers’ premises in which a pupil carries out a particular task or duty, or range of tasks and duties, more or less as would regular employees, but with the emphasis on the learning aspects of the experience’.

28 Table 4 confirms that virtually all secondary schools (rounded up to 100 per cent) with eligible pupils were involved in work experience placements. Nationally, in those schools, 98 per cent of the total number of pupils in their last year of compulsory schooling undertook such placements.

29 Sixty-one per cent of pupils undertook placements whilst they were in Year Group 10, and 39 per cent

FIGURE 3:
Practical help from business, 1997/98

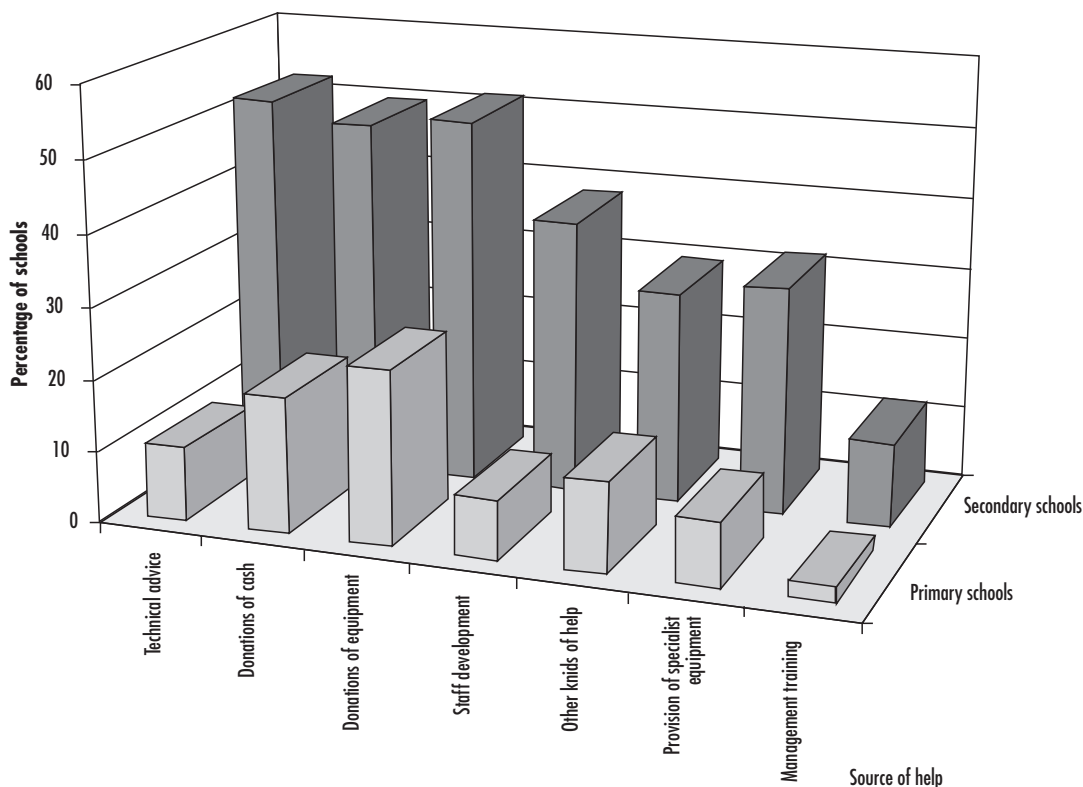


TABLE 4:
Percentage of maintained secondary schools (1) and pupils involved in work experience by year group and month, 1997/98

	1998
percentage of schools involved in work experience	100
percentage of pupils in their last year of compulsory schooling who undertake such placements	98
of which percentage of pupils in :	
year group 10	61
year group 11	39
Average length of placement (days)	9
Percentage of schools who reported that their pupils undertook work experience during the following months	
January	4
February	5
March	3
April	4
May	9
June	23
July	23
August	1
September	7
October	12
November	6
December	4

(1) where schools have both year 10 and year 11 pupils.
(The majority of schools place pupils in work experience from one year group only).

whilst they were in Year Group 11. The average length of placement per pupil was 9 days.

30 The most common months in which pupils normally undertook work experience placements were June and July. Forty six per cent of maintained secondary schools reported that their pupils undertook placements during these months.

– Organisation of work experience placements

31 Schools were asked who was the main organisation that organised work experience placements in their schools.

32 Figure 4 shows that in 45 per cent of schools involved in work experience, the school itself was the principal organisation which arranged such placements. In one in five schools (19 per cent), placements were organised by the Trident Trust.

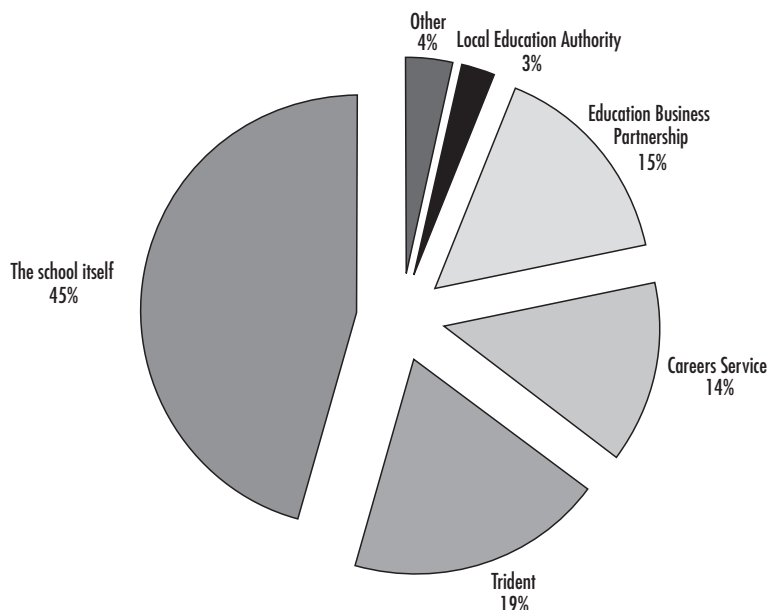
33 Teachers with responsibility for work experience spent, on average, 38 days making arrangements for placements. Where placements were arranged by the schools themselves, the average amount of time spent by teachers was 39 days, compared with an average amount of time of 38 days where placements were arranged by other organisations.

– Contribution of work experience to assessed GCSE course work

34 Sixty-six per cent of secondary schools reported that work experience had contributed to assessed GCSE course work. Table 5 shows that English, identified by

FIGURE 4:

Bodies responsible for organisation of work experience placements in maintained secondary schools, 1997/98



56 per cent of schools, was the subject to which work experience most often contributed, followed by Business Studies (31 per cent) and Information Technology (23 per cent).

– Work experience placements abroad

35 Eighteen per cent of all secondary schools with pupils eligible for work experience reported that, during 1997/98, pupils had taken part in placements abroad. Less than one per cent of pupils in year group 10 and year group 11 who had a work placement undertook this abroad.

Other business link activities

– Business representatives on school governing bodies

36 Fifty-six per cent of primary schools and 78 per cent of secondary schools reported that they had representatives from local businesses on their governing body, either as co-opted governors, sponsor governors or others. **Table 6** shows that 21 per cent of primary schools had one representative from local businesses, with 20 per cent having 3 or more such representatives. In secondary schools, 12 per cent had one and 47 per cent had 3 or more such representatives.

– Competitions entered

37 Twenty-three per cent of primary schools and 54 per cent of secondary schools had entered competitions linked with business. The average number of competitions entered was 2.1 per primary school and 2.4 per secondary school.

– Teachers’ links with business

38 About 16 per cent of all schools had full-time teachers placed in, or seconded to, business, comprising 6 per cent of primary schools and 31 per cent of secondary schools. The overall percentage of full-time teachers

TABLE 5:

Contribution of work experience to assessed GCSE course work, by subject, 1997/98

Percentage of schools reporting positive contribution of work experience	
	66
percentage of schools reporting contribution to following subject area:	
English	56
Mathematics	9
Science	9
Technology	16
Information Technology	23
Modern Languages	7
Geography	7
History	3
Art	9
Music	4
PE	5
Business Studies	31
Social Studies	5
Home economics	9
Other	22

TABLE 6:

Business representatives on school governing bodies, 1997/98

No. of representatives	percentage of schools			
	0	1	2	3 or more
Primary	44	21	16	20
Secondary	22	12	20	47
All Schools	35	17	17	30

placed in, or seconded to, business was just over 2.5 per cent, with just under 1 per cent of primary teachers and just over 3 per cent of secondary teachers.

39 The average length of placement/secondment per teacher in both maintained primary and secondary schools was 3 days.

40 Fifty nine per cent of primary schools and 91 per cent of secondary schools reported that they had teachers (full-time or part-time) who had held a job in business before beginning their teaching career. The average number of such teachers per school was just over 1 per primary school and just over 6 per secondary school. These figures represent around 11 per cent of all full-time and part-time teachers in primary schools and 13 per cent in secondary schools.

– Representatives from business acting as teachers or advisors

41 Twenty-eight per cent of primary schools and 62 per cent of secondary schools reported that representatives from business had acted in a teaching or advisory capacity. **Table 7** shows that the subject most frequently taught/advised upon in primary schools was information technology (12 per cent of schools); in secondary schools, business studies (36 per cent of schools) and technology (35 per cent of schools) were the subjects most frequently taught or advised upon.

– Business links co-ordinators

42 Schools were asked whether they had any members of staff with a clearly designated role for co-ordinating school-business links. Twenty two per cent of primary schools and 67 per cent of secondary schools reported that they had such members of staff with a clearly designated role for co-ordinating school-business links activities within the school.

– Local Education Authority appointed school-business links officers

43 Thirty nine per cent of primary schools and 38 per cent of secondary schools were aware that their LEA had appointed a school-business links officer or similar. On average this officer will make 2.3 visits to each primary school and 4.2 visits to each secondary school during the academic year. Twelve per cent of maintained primary schools and 25 per cent of maintained secondary schools reported that to their knowledge no such officer had been appointed, whilst the remaining schools did not know.

44 Thirteen per cent of primary schools and 26 per cent of secondary schools stated that they had been visited by their LEA's school-business links officer. Sixty-seven per cent of the primary schools and 32 per cent of the secondary schools which were aware of the appointment

TABLE 7:
Activities of business representative acting as teachers or advisors to schools, 1997/98

	Percentage of	
	primary schools	secondary schools
Percentage of schools with business representative	28	62
Percentage of schools reporting contribution of the business representative to the following subject areas:		
English	7	9
Mathematics	5	7
Science	11	18
Technology	9	35
Modern Languages	0	4
Geography	4	12
History	3	3
Art	4	9
Music	3	6
Physical Education	3	8
Business Studies	1	36
Social Studies	3	8
Home Economics	1	14
Information Technology	12	24
Other	6	29

of a LEA school-business links officer, reported they had not been visited during the year.

– Careers services officers/careers education staff

45 Ninety per cent of secondary schools stated that they had Careers Service officers nominated to support their school.

46 Five per cent of primary schools and 89 per cent of secondary schools reported that they had member(s) of staff with responsibility for careers education. On average, the weekly amount of time spent by such staff on careers activities was 4 hours in primary schools and 11 hours in secondary schools.

Further Information

47 Enquiries on the contents of this bulletin should be addressed to David Collinge at Analytical Services, Room 113, Department for Education and Employment, Mowden Hall, Darlington, SL3 9BG (Tel: 01325 392375). Press enquiries should be made to the Department's Press Office at Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, Westminster, London, SW1P 3BT (tel: 0191 925 5098). Copies of earlier issues of this bulletin can be obtained from The Stationery Office (tel: 0171 873 9090).