



House of Commons

Children, Schools and Families
Committee

Young people not in education, employment or training

Eighth Report of Session 2009–10

Volume I



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The Children, Schools and Families Committee

The Children, Schools and Families Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Department for Children, Schools and Families and its associated public bodies.

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Committee staff

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Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk of the Children, Schools and Families Committee, House of Commons, 7 Millbank, London SW1P 3JA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 6181; the Committee's e-mail address is csfcom@parliament

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Conclusions and recommendations

Who are “NEETs”?

1. We accept that the term “NEET” is imperfect. In particular, its use as a noun to refer to a young person can be pejorative and stigmatising. It is, however, a commonly used statistical category, and—in the absence of an appropriate alternative—we have accepted it as a first step in understanding the issues. (Paragraph 18)

What action has the Government already taken?

2. There have been substantial changes to the provision of information, advice and guidance, not least of which is a greater role for local authorities. The Government must monitor the quality of delivery of information, advice and guidance across England. (Paragraph 30)

What more needs to be done?

3. Young people make progress at different rates. Policies and funding mechanisms should not disadvantage those who work at a different pace from the majority of their peers. We welcome the work that the Government has already done to introduce flexibility into its Strategy for young people; we recommend that greater stress should be placed on the creation of an over-arching and seamless strategy for 16–24 year olds. (Paragraph 35)
4. We recommend that the Government consider extending the September and January Guarantee to those 18 year olds for whom further education or training is appropriate. However, these Guarantees have to have been delivered successfully for 16 and 17 year olds before any extension to 18 year olds is considered. (Paragraph 36)
5. We recommend that the Government provide a scheme of work placements for 16 and 17 year olds in projects of benefit to the community, such as those offered through the Community Task Force. Young people taking part in such a scheme should receive any benefits to which they would otherwise be entitled. Such an initiative is essential if the Government is to properly plan for the raising of the participation age to 17 in 2013 and to 18 in 2015. (Paragraph 40)
6. Young people who are NEET often face a number of barriers to participation and need to access support from a variety of sources. The co-location of services such as healthcare, housing support, access to benefits and financial support and careers advice and guidance in a joined-up approach could help young people to access more easily the help they require. Such provision could prove to be more cost-effective than current structures. We recommend that the Government take steps to commission a number of pilots, in order to assess the costs and benefits of the “one-stop-shop” approach. (Paragraph 44)

7. Not all young people will be in a position to begin a training course in September or January of a given year; some may drop out of education or training during the academic year and wish to begin a new course. We recommend that the Government set aside some of the funding for the September and January Guarantees to support local authorities in offering places in education and training to young people throughout the year. (Paragraph 47)
8. We were struck by the approach taken in the Netherlands, in which relatively generous levels of benefits and other support are offered to young people in exchange for greater compulsion to take up education, training or work. We recommend that the Government consider the merits of this approach. (Paragraph 52)
9. We welcome the fact that the Government is undertaking a cross-departmental review of the financial support offered to 16–18 year olds. We urge the Government to bring forward changes to the benefit arrangements for young people living in supported housing, in order to enable them to access all appropriate opportunities for training and employment. We also urge the Government to address the barriers that risk preventing young people on benefits from improving their skills through unpaid work or full-time volunteering. We expect the Government to examine closely the provision made for 16 and 17 year olds in severe hardship, and to ensure that these young people are not deterred from pursuing opportunities in education and training by the constraints of the benefits system. (Paragraph 53)
10. Local authorities play a central role in delivering initiatives intended to increase rates of participation among 16–18 year olds. We are concerned that existing rewards for good progress are not sufficient to drive the necessary improvements in local authorities' performance. We urge the Government to review the mechanisms by which local authorities are rewarded for significant increases in the rates of participation of 16–18 year olds. In particular, we recommend that the Government give consideration to linking such rewards with savings made by the Department for Work and Pensions when an increase in participation in education, employment and training leads to a reduction in the number of young people claiming benefits. (Paragraph 57)
11. We recognise that future solutions to reduce the proportion of young people not in employment, education or training will have to be more cost-effective and will require efficient, joined-up working at a local level. To this end, we warmly welcome the piloting of the Total Place programme and strongly encourage the Government's stated objective of achieving a "whole area" approach to public services. (Paragraph 59)

Summary

The proportion of 16–18 year olds not in education, employment or training has changed relatively little over the past decade, despite a succession of government policy initiatives intended to increase rates of participation among this age group. The Government's most recent strategy to increase rates of participation, *Investing in Potential*, is welcome, but more radical change is needed if it is to be more successful than earlier government interventions.

In the course of our inquiry we visited the Netherlands, a country with consistently low rates of youth unemployment. We were struck by a number of features of the Dutch approach: the fact that support for young people was available to those up to the age of 27; the fact that payment of a benefit equivalent to our Jobseeker's Allowance was dependent on participation in education, employment or training; and the provision of support and guidance in "one-stop shops".

One such lesson is that young people make progress at different rates, and that many require tailored provision well beyond the age of 18. The Government has made some progress towards developing a strategy for 16–24 year olds, and this is welcome. However, few of the provisions described in *Investing in Potential* actually apply to all 16–24 year olds. The Government could enhance the benefits of its strategy by extending current policies to a wider range of young people.

Substantial changes have been made in recent years to the provision of information, support and guidance to young people. The Government should closely monitor the success of such changes. But young people do not only need to access advice on the opportunities for employment or education and training: many need advice on claiming benefits, on housing support, or on health matters. A joined-up approach to the provision of such services in a "one-stop shop" would enable local authorities and their partners to support young people more effectively, and could prove more cost-effective than current structures.

The Government is conducting a review of the financial support offered to 16–18 year olds. It is crucial that young people, particularly those who are most disadvantaged, should not be deterred by the benefits system from accessing opportunities in education and training. We urge the Government to give consideration to the approach taken in the Netherlands, in which relatively generous levels of benefits and other support are offered to young people in exchange for greater compulsion to take up education, training or work.

Local authorities play a central role in raising the rate of participation in education, employment or training. We were deeply impressed by the work done by some local authorities, but we are concerned that existing rewards for good progress are not sufficient to drive widespread improvement of local authority performance. We urge the Government to consider strengthening the incentives offered to local authorities who are successful in raising rates of participation.

Introduction

1. The number of young people who choose to continue their education beyond the age of 16 has been rising steadily for a number of years. In 1985, 32% of 16–18 year olds in England were in full-time education; by the end of 2008, this figure had risen to 64.1%. But in spite of ever increasing levels of participation in education, the proportion of 16–18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (“NEET”) has fluctuated between 8 and 14% over the same period, with no discernible trend. The question of how to reduce the size of this group has attracted attention from policymakers, think tanks, the third sector and many others.

2. Necessarily, in view of the impending general election, our own inquiry into this subject has had to be brief. We issued a call for written evidence on 30 October 2009, and our work has been greatly assisted by the nearly 70 written submissions we received in response. We held five oral evidence sessions early in 2010, and we are very grateful to all those who took part; a list is published at the end of this report. We also met informally with a group of young people who had been, or had been at risk of becoming, NEET in order to discuss their experiences; we are extremely grateful to them for their willingness to help us in our work. Our inquiry was also informed by a visit to the Netherlands, a country with consistently low rates of youth unemployment.

3. We would like to extend our thanks to our Specialist Advisers for the inquiry, Professor Alan Smithers, Director of the Centre for Education and Employment Research, University of Buckingham, and Professor Geoff Whitty, Director of the Institute of Education, University of London.¹

4. Time has not allowed us to produce a full report on this subject. The scope of this matter is so broad that many of our other inquiries and reports are either directly or indirectly relevant. In particular, our recent report on Sure Start Children’s Centres addresses the question of early intervention with young children at risk of becoming NEET later in life.² Our report on looked-after children addressed the needs of a group of young people disproportionately likely to become NEET.³ We conducted pre-legislative scrutiny of the Draft Apprenticeships Bill, a measure designed to improve the provision for young people for whom classroom-based learning is not an attractive option.⁴ In this report we hope to make a useful contribution to particular areas of the debate surrounding provision for 16–18 year olds who are already NEET.

¹ Professor Geoff Whitty declared interests as Director of the Institute of Education, Member of Trustees, IFS School of Finance, Member of Trustees, University of London, and Member, Universities UK.

² Children, Schools and Families Committee, Fifth Report of Session 2009–10, *Sure Start Children’s Centres*, HC 130-I

³ Children, Schools and Families Committee, Third Report of Session 2008–09, *Looked-after Children*, HC 111-I

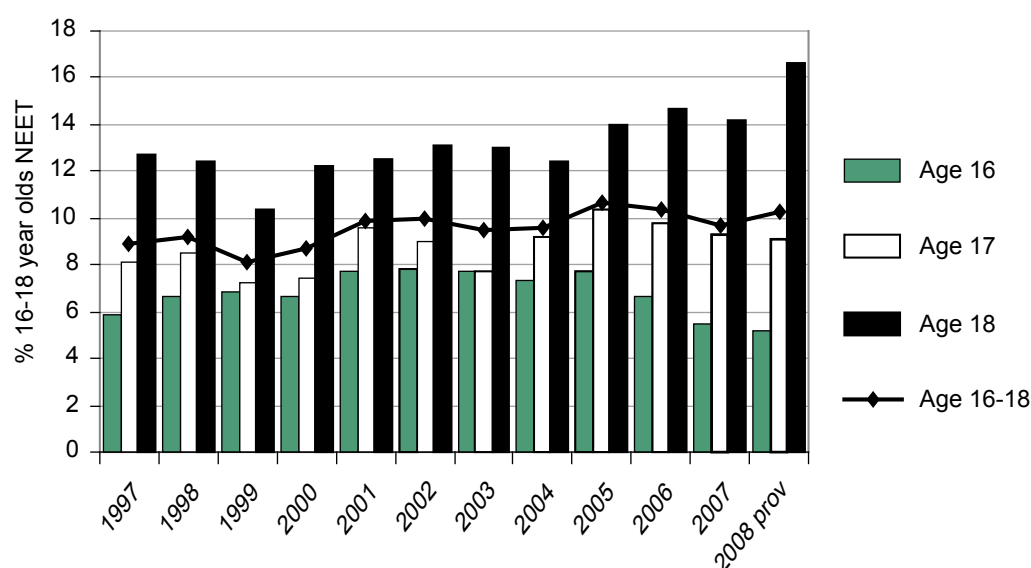
⁴ Children, Schools and Families Committee, Fourth Report of Session 2007–08, *The Draft Apprenticeships Bill*, HC 1082

1 Who are “NEETs”?

5. There are a number of options open to young people when they reach the age of 16. Many choose to continue in full-time education in schools and colleges, studying for A-levels, Diplomas, or vocational qualifications. Some choose to undertake work-based learning, either in the form of an Apprenticeship or in employment with accredited training such as NVQs. Others will choose to participate in employment with no formal training component. The remainder—including those on gap years or who are full-time volunteers—are classed as being “not in education, employment or training”.⁵

6. The proportion of 16–18 year olds not in employment, education or training has changed very little since 1995. In that year, 9.2% of the cohort were not in employment, education or training; at the end of 2008, this figure was 10.3%.⁶ In the intervening years, the proportion of 16–18 year olds who were NEET fluctuated between 8% and 11%; research undertaken by the National Audit Office for this Committee notes that there was “no clear trend across the period”.⁷ The same research also notes that this proportion was “at its lowest in 1999 (8.1%) and peaked in 2005 (10.7%)”.⁸ Figure 1 shows the proportion of 16, 17 and 18 year olds not in education, employment or training since 1997.

Figure 1: Proportion of 16, 17 and 18 year olds NEET



Source: Department for Children, Schools and Families⁹

7. The Department for Children, Schools and Families has a Public Service Agreement (PSA) target to reduce the proportion of 16–18 year olds not in employment, education or

5 16–18 year olds who are residing in a custodial institution or who are refugees or asylum seekers not yet granted citizenship are neither EET nor NEET.

6 Department for Children, Schools and Families, *Statistical First Release: Participation In Education, Training And Employment By 16–18 Year Olds In England*, June 2009. Figures for end 2008 are provisional.

7 Memorandum from the National Audit Office (NEET 01), November 2008, paragraph 1.18

8 Ibid.

9 Ev 129

training (NEET) by 2% points, from 9.6% in 2004 to 7.6% by 2010. Data published in June 2009 in the Statistical First Release (SFR) “Participation in Education, Training and Employment by 16–18 Year Olds in England”¹⁰ suggest that the Government is unlikely to meet this target: the proportion of 16–18 year olds NEET at the end of 2008 was 10.3%. Moreover, the proportion has not fallen below 9.6% since 2004: in 2005, it was 10.7%; in 2006, 10.4%; and in 2007, 9.7%.

8. The proportion of 18 year olds who are NEET is considerably higher than the proportion of 16 or 17 year olds. The National Audit Office, drawing on data for 2007, noted that “the proportion of 18 year olds NEET is more than twice that of 16 year olds”.¹¹ By the end of 2008 the difference was even greater: the proportion of 16 year olds NEET was 5.2%, while for 18 year olds the figure was 16.6%.¹²

9. The group of young people who fall into this category is far from homogenous. The National Audit Office has, however, identified a number of trends. It found that:

- A higher proportion of white young people are NEET than is seen among most ethnic minority groups.
- Young people who are NEET are more likely than their peers to have a disability or longer term health problem.
- Children in local authority care are much more likely than their peers to be NEET.
- 16/17 year olds who are NEET are more likely to have engaged in risky behaviours (smoking or vandalism, for example) by age of 13/14.
- Disadvantage in its many forms is a more common feature of early life for 16/17 year olds who are NEET.¹³

10. Research undertaken by the Audit Commission shows that there are three distinct groups of young people within the overall cohort who are NEET. It suggests that 41% are “open to learning” and require “modest interventions”. A further 22% are “undecided”, and require “good information, advice and guidance to help them”. The remaining 38% constitute the “sustained NEET group” and have “complex needs that must be tackled before they can progress to education, employment or training”.¹⁴ Particularly disadvantaged are those young people who have multiple or complex needs; for example, those with special educational needs and young women who are mothers.

11. The proportion of 16–18 year olds who are NEET also varies significantly between regions. The final report of the Engaging Youth Enquiry, a study conducted by Rathbone and the Nuffield Review Team, notes the scale of the differences in 2007:

10 Department for Children, Schools and Families, *Statistical First Release: Participation In Education, Training And Employment By 16–18 Year Olds In England*, June 2009

11 Memorandum from the National Audit Office (NEET 01), November 2008, paragraph 8

12 Department for Children, Schools and Families, *Statistical First Release: Participation In Education, Training And Employment By 16–18 Year Olds In England*, June 2009

13 Memorandum from the National Audit Office (NEET 01), November 2008, paragraphs 9–12

14 Written evidence from the Audit Commission (NEET 13), paragraph 10

Nationally, the level of local variation in the 16–18 year old ‘NEET’ rate is stark—from 15% in Knowsley on Merseyside and 13.3% in Stoke-on-Trent to 2.6% in Richmond upon Thames. The variation between London boroughs is from Richmond at 2.6% to 11.7% in Hackney.¹⁵

The same study notes that there can also be huge differences within regions, using as an example data from 2007 relating to Yorkshire and the Humber: the percentage of NEETs ranged from 3.8% in North Yorkshire to 11.3% in Kingston upon Hull.¹⁶

12. Although there have been no major changes in the overall proportion of 16–18 year olds who are NEET, witnesses repeatedly drew our attention to changes beneath the headline figure.¹⁷ The rate of participation in full time education, for instance, has risen from 57.9% in 1995 to 64.1% in 2008. The rate of participation in work-based learning, on the other hand, has declined from 10.4% in 1994 to 6.5% in 2008. More recently, the rate of employment for this age group has also declined, from 15% in 2001, to 12.8% in 2005, to 10% at the end of 2008.¹⁸

The term “NEET”

13. The phrase “not in education, employment or training” is—as we ourselves have already demonstrated—commonly abbreviated to “NEET”. People who are not participating in education, employment or training—especially those between the ages of 16 and 24—are sometimes known as “NEETs”. During the course of this inquiry, it has become apparent that this term attracts a certain amount of controversy. The reasons for this are twofold: first, that it is a negative term that risks stigmatising the young people to whom it is applied; and second, that it is a residual statistical category that encompasses a wide range of young people with very different needs.

14. On the first point, a number of witnesses were concerned about the negative connotations of the term “NEET”. Professor Jocey Quinn of London Metropolitan University told us that use of the term NEET turned young people into “an alien species”.¹⁹ The Association of Learning providers suggested that the term can “often be seen as pejorative and thus unhelpful”.²⁰ The Local Government Association noted that the term was “often used to stigmatise young people” and argued for its abolition. Few witnesses, however, were able to suggest alternatives. Judith Hay, Head of Positive Contribution & Economic Well-being, Children’s Services, Sunderland City Council, proposed “SEET”—that is, “seeking education, employment and training.”²¹ Peter Lister of the Prince’s Trust offered “PWUPs”—“people with untapped potential.”²²

15 Rathbone and Nuffield Review, *Engaging Youth Enquiry: Final Report*, p 15

16 Rathbone and Nuffield Review, *Engaging Youth Enquiry: Final Report*, p 14

17 See, for example, Q 15, Q 133.

18 Department for Children, Schools and Families, *Statistical First Release: Participation In Education, Training And Employment By 16–18 Year Olds In England*, June 2009

19 Q 1

20 Written evidence from the Association of Learning Providers (NEET 14), paragraph 4

21 Q 266

22 Q 124

15. Other witnesses were more pragmatic. Shaks Ghosh, Chief Executive of the Private Equity Foundation, told us: “NEET is fairly factual. It is what it says on the tin: people who are not in education, employment or training”.²³ Sonia Sodha of Demos was concerned that any alternative “would just take on the same status as the term NEET.”²⁴ Professor Rob MacDonald, Professor of Sociology at Teesside University, told us that “NEET” was not used as a derogatory term among young people themselves: “in my experience, [the term] has absolutely no currency with the people whom we might call NEETs”.²⁵

16. The question of whether government policy should address these young people as a group is more complex. The diversity of the group is undeniable. Witnesses from local authorities told us that the most successful means of reducing the proportion of 16–18 year olds not in education, employment or training was a full understanding of the diverse needs of the “NEET” group. Judith Hay, Head of Positive Contribution & Economic Well-being, Children’s Services, Sunderland City Council, underscored the importance of data segmentation—that is, “knowing exactly where your NEETs are and why they are NEET”.²⁶ Mark Sanders, Chief Executive of Bury Council, told us that it was crucial that local authorities did not seek to impose “one solution on all”. He added:

For this group of youngsters in particular, it is about bespokeing what we are able to do and applying that to the particular needs of an individual at different ages and at different times, perhaps by simply repeating things, and then being able to slot people into a complex system that suits their individual needs.²⁷

Shaks Ghosh argued that the term should be retained, “as long as we understand [...] that it is a very big bucket and that segmentation is absolutely critical.”²⁸

17. In 2007, the Government published *Reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET): The Strategy*. The Government’s most recent policy document in this area, *Investing in Potential*, is described not as a “NEET Strategy” but rather as a “Strategy to increase the proportion of 16–24 year olds in education, employment or training.”

18. We accept that the term “NEET” is imperfect. In particular, its use as a noun to refer to a young person can be pejorative and stigmatising. It is, however, a commonly used statistical category, and—in the absence of an appropriate alternative—we have accepted it as a first step in understanding the issues.

23 Q 86

24 Q 86

25 Q 9

26 Q 268

27 Q 264

28 Q 86

2 What action has the Government already taken?

19. The 2004 Spending Review set out a number of new Public Service Agreement targets for the then Department for Education and Skills, including the target to “reduce the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training by 2 percentage points by 2010”.²⁹ Since that time, the Government has brought forward a number of initiatives and strategies, including its 2007 publication “Reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET): The strategy”.³⁰ This section sets out some of the most significant recent policy developments intended to increase the proportion of 16–18 year olds participating in education, employment or training.

The September and January Guarantees

20. The September Guarantee is an offer, by the end of September, of a “suitable”³¹ place in learning to young people completing compulsory education. The Guarantee was implemented nationally in 2007 for 16 year olds and extended to 17 year olds in 2008. The offer must be one of the following:

- full or part-time education in school, sixth form college, independent learning provider, or FE college;
- an apprenticeship or programme-led apprenticeship. This must include both the training element and a job or work placement, where this is a requirement of starting the apprenticeship;
- Entry to Employment (E2E)³² or Foundation Learning; or
- employment with training to NVQ Level 2.

21. In November 2009, the Prime Minister announced plans to build on the September Guarantee approach by offering a place in learning to all 16 and 17 year olds not in employment, education or training in January. The Guarantee is principally intended to offer places on Entry to Employment courses; guidance prepared by the Department stated that the Government was “allocating £25.6m to provide funding for an additional 10,000 places with Entry to Employment providers”.³³ It added, however, that “Connexions

29 HM Treasury, *2004 Spending Review*, July 2004, p 87

30 Department for Children, Schools and Families, *Reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET): The strategy*, November 2007

31 Department for Children, Schools and Families, *Reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET): The strategy*, November 2007, paragraph 34

32 Entry to Employment courses offer training in three core areas: basic and key skills, vocational development, and personal and social development.

33 Department for Children, Schools and Families, *Guidance on the January Guarantee*, November 2009, paragraph 4

should also consider whether there are suitable opportunities in [...] mainstream provision for young people who are NEET in January to reengage in learning.”³⁴

The Young Person's Guarantee

22. In the 2009 Budget the Government announced the Young Person's Guarantee.³⁵ Under the Guarantee, 18–24 year olds who have been claiming Jobseeker's Allowance for six months will be guaranteed access to one of the following:

- a job through the Future Jobs Fund, a programme of investment intended to create 170,000 additional jobs in the public, private and third sectors;
- additional support to help them to compete for existing jobs through programmes called Routes into Work (preparing young people for jobs in economic growth sectors such as retail and hospitality) and Care First Careers (jobs in the care sector);
- work-focused training; or
- a work experience place delivered through a Community Task Force.³⁶

The Government has confirmed that the Young Person's Guarantee has been fully available in all local authorities since 25 January 2010.³⁷

Raising the participation age

23. The Education & Skills Act 2008 provides for the raising of the participation age in England: all young people in England will be required to continue in education, training or employment with formally recognised training to 17 in 2013. In 2015 this will rise to 18. To coincide with these changes, the Government has brought forward a programme of reform of 14–19 education. It anticipates that learning for young people will lead to qualifications from one of four routes: Apprenticeships; Diplomas; Foundation Learning and General Qualifications, e.g. GCSEs and A levels. The Government also expects that “young people will be able to study qualifications that do not fall under these four routes where there is a clear rationale to maintain them in learners' interests, and some young people will study informal unaccredited provision to re-engage them.”³⁸

24. The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 placed the Apprenticeships programme on a statutory footing and guaranteed that all suitably qualified young people would be entitled to an apprenticeship place. *Investing in Potential* states that the Government is “creating an additional 35,000 Apprenticeship places,

34 Department for Children, Schools and Families, *Guidance on the January Guarantee*, November 2009, paragraphs 4–7

35 HM Treasury, *Budget 2009*, HC 407, paragraph 1.24

36 Department for Children, Schools and Families, Department for Work and Pensions and Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Investing in Potential*, December 2009, paragraph 6.12

37 HC Deb, 12 March 2010, col 503W

38 Department for Children, Schools and Families, *Delivering 14–19 Reform: Next Steps—Summary*, October 2008, p 6

including 21,000 in the public sector³⁹ and will provide employer subsidies to support more 16 and 17 year olds to take up an Apprenticeship place.⁴⁰

25. Diplomas are designed as an alternative to GCSEs/A levels and Apprenticeships. They consist of three elements:

- Principal learning, which focuses on developing the knowledge and skills that are needed for the Diploma subject chosen, with an emphasis on learning by doing;
- Generic learning (which is the same for all Diplomas), intended to help students gain a good standard in English, maths and ICT skills as well as developing personal, learning and thinking skills; and
- Additional and specialist learning, leading to qualifications which may be directly related to the chosen Diploma subject or may simply reflect other interests and ambitions.

Students also need to complete at least 10 days' work experience to help develop employability skills. Ten Diploma "lines of learning" are now on offer.

26. Foundation Learning qualifications are intended to enable learners who are not yet ready to learn at Level 2 to follow tailored learning programmes at a pace that meets the needs of the learner and enable progression to higher levels of learning. With practitioners, learners agree an intended 'destination', wherever possible at Level 2 (Diplomas, Apprenticeships, GCSEs) or for some, independent living or supported employment. Learning programmes integrate vocational/subject learning, personal and social development, and functional skills.

"Investing in Potential"

27. In December 2009 the Government published Investing in Potential, its "Strategy to increase the proportion of 16–24 year olds in education, employment or training". The Strategy announced government plans to increase investment in post-16 participation in 2010–11 by £202m. It further announced that the Government would:

- Provide employer subsidies to support more 16 and 17 year olds to take up an Apprenticeship place.
- Better integrate the services offered by Jobcentre Plus and Connexions for 16 and 17 year olds who are looking for work, including providing 16–17 year olds who are NEET with access to Local Employment Partnership⁴¹ vacancies, with training or as an Apprenticeship where possible.

39 Department for Children, Schools and Families, Department for Work and Pensions and Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Investing in Potential*, December 2009, p 6

40 Ibid., p 7

41 Local Employment Partnerships (LEPs) are provided by Jobcentre Plus (JCP) and offer opportunities for benefit claimants to return to work by partnering companies with suitable applicants. LEPs offer a range of support, including pre-employment training, guaranteed interviews, work trials and mentoring.

- Continue the Activity Agreement and Entry to Learning pilots in 2010–11.⁴²
- Work with Connexions services and Jobcentre Plus to explore the introduction of group advice sessions for 16–17 year olds.
- Provide young job seekers with access to a dedicated personal adviser from day one of their unemployment claim, more time with an adviser throughout their claim, and more opportunities to be fast tracked to the support available from six months.
- Bring forward the Young Person's Guarantee so that all 18–24 year olds still unemployed after six months would be guaranteed access to a job, training or work experience.
- Introduce a Graduate Guarantee that all new graduates still unemployed at six months would have access to an internship, training or help to become self employed.
- Make available over 100,000 additional government funded training, internship, work experience and job opportunities to help deliver the guarantee. This includes a target of 16,000 apprenticeship places through the Future Jobs Fund.
- Introduce a requirement that all young job seekers take up one of the places on offer before they complete ten months on JSA.⁴³

Information, advice and guidance

28. The Government's strategy for young people's information, advice and guidance, *Quality, Choice and Aspiration*, was published in October 2009.⁴⁴ This document sets out the terms of the "IAG Guarantee", stating that young people in schools are entitled to:

- Support from a Personal Tutor who knows them well and who can help them to access specialist advice and ensure any learning needs or issues are quickly addressed;
- High quality programmes of careers education which help young people to plan and manage their own careers;
- Impartial information, advice and guidance about learning and work options including about Apprenticeships, Diplomas, Foundation Learning and GCSEs/A levels;
- Information, advice and guidance about the benefits of higher education and how to access the opportunities that it affords; and

42 Under the Activity Agreement pilots, young people were offered a weekly allowance in return for committing to a plan and completing agreed activities intended to reintegrate them back into learning and/or employment. The Entry to Learning pilots aim to support local authorities in strengthening the progression between third sector re-engagement activity and formal learning, by providing funding for mentors, intermediate provision and financial incentives for young people.

43 Department for Children, Schools and Families, Department for Work and Pensions and Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Investing in Potential*, December 2009, p 7

44 Department for Children, Schools and Families, *Quality, Choice and Aspiration*, October 2009

- A programme of work related learning (in Years 10 and 11), giving young people direct insights into the world of work.

29. *Quality, Choice and Aspiration* also notes that all young people are entitled to access, through wider commissioned services:

- One to one advice and support from a local specialist Connexions adviser when needed;
- Information and advice by telephone and on-line every day (including evenings and weekend) through Connexions Direct;
- Further specialist support from local services as needed;
- Information on all local learning programmes for 14–19 year olds via their local 14–19 prospectus;
- Support for young people to move to adult information, advice and guidance services when they reach the appropriate age;
- The ability to apply for post-16 learning opportunities on-line through a Common Application Process by 2011.⁴⁵

30. There have been substantial changes to the provision of information, advice and guidance, not least of which is a greater role for local authorities. The Government must monitor the quality of delivery of information, advice and guidance across England.

45 Department for Children, Schools and Families, *Quality, Choice and Aspiration*, October 2009, p 15

3 What more needs to be done?

31. It is striking that the overall proportion of 16–18 year olds not in education, employment or training, despite numerous policy initiatives, has changed relatively little over the last decade. None of our witnesses was able to identify a clear reason for this. But some themes did emerge during the course of our inquiry. One in particular lies well outside the remit of this Committee: some witnesses attributed the problem to structural change in the economy.⁴⁶ Others argued that interventions had not lasted for long enough to make a real change to the lives of young people: Richard Williams, Chief Executive of Rathbone, argued that a focus on the problem of NEETs “has led to a great spawning of initiatives and short-term measures”⁴⁷ which had served only to cause young people to move repeatedly in and out of the NEET group. Still others argued that fundamental problems in the education system were to blame: Sonia Sodha, Head of the Capabilities Programme at Demos, emphasised the fact that “eight in 100 children leave primary school each year without the basic reading and numeracy skills”.⁴⁸

32. It is not within the scope of this report to address perceived deficiencies in the education system as a whole, nor to examine in detail the long history of policy interventions in this area. In the paragraphs that follow we set out a series of proposals intended to address areas of concern identified during the course of our inquiry.

Age barriers

33. Many witnesses identified the rigid age barriers entrenched in policy as barriers to participation. Professor Jocey Quinn, Professor of Education at the Institute for Policy Studies in Education, London Metropolitan University, told us that “the kinds of advice and funding that are available for people aged 14–19 are not there for them when they are older”.⁴⁹ Peter Lister, Senior Head of Strategic Partnerships at the Prince’s Trust, agreed, saying that “one of the most unhelpful things, in our view, is artificial age barriers, such as the age of 19 for the Connexions service 14–19 agenda, when in fact many of the young people we support require the same form of support until their early 20s, and maybe up to 24 or 25.”⁵⁰ Adrienne Carmichael, County Manager Continuous Learning, Children’s Services, Cumbria County Council, expressed succinctly the problem with this approach, asking: “Why does your 18th birthday mean that your individual needs are no longer of interest or concern?”⁵¹ In the Netherlands, the definition of “young people” extends to the age of 27 for the purposes of providing support for training and employment.

34. Although we welcome the Government’s new emphasis on 16–24 year olds, few of the provisions described in *Investing in Potential* actually apply to all 16–24 year olds. Educational reforms mainly affect 14–19 year olds; the September and January Guarantees

46 See, for example, Q 27, Q 128.

47 Q 85

48 Q 1

49 Q 57

50 Q 124

51 Q 272

apply to 16 and 17 year olds; only 18–24 year olds are entitled to the Young Person's Guarantee. The Strategy does include some commitments designed to support 16 and 17 year olds who are seeking employment or work-based learning, including subsidies for employers who take on 16 and 17 year old apprentices and improved integration of the services offered by Connexions and Jobcentre Plus for this age group. For young people aged 18 and above who have left education, however, most provision consists of opportunities for employment or work-focused training.

35. Young people make progress at different rates. Policies and funding mechanisms should not disadvantage those who work at a different pace from the majority of their peers. We welcome the work that the Government has already done to introduce flexibility into its Strategy for young people; we recommend that greater stress should be placed on the creation of an over-arching and seamless strategy for 16–24 year olds. We set out below a series of policy changes that would drive Government progress towards this aim.

Extension of the September and January Guarantees

36. The September Guarantee applied only to 16 year olds when it was first introduced, and was extended to 17 year olds in 2008. We see no reason of principle why this offer should not be extended to 18 year olds who are not yet ready to finish their education. **We recommend that the Government consider extending the September and January Guarantee to those 18 year olds for whom further education or training is appropriate. However, these Guarantees have to have been delivered successfully for 16 and 17 year olds before any extension to 18 year olds is considered.**

Extension of the Community Task Force

37. There will be some 16 and 17 year olds for whom progression to Level 3 (or even to Level 2) is not immediately appropriate.⁵² It can, however, be difficult for these young people to find meaningful and sustainable activities in which to participate. Professor Rob MacDonald, Professor of Sociology at Teesside University, told us that these young people were keen to work, but the employment offered to them was often “low-skilled, low-quality and insecure”.⁵³

38. The Community Task Force (CTF) is a work experience programme, introduced by the Government as part of the Young Person's Guarantee for 18–24 year olds. Placements within the CTF will be offered by private, public and voluntary organisations through contract with the Department for Work and Pensions and will consist of 25 hours work experience and 5 hours “job search activity” per week. The Government states that placements “will be in projects that are of genuine help to local communities” and that the programme is “designed to increase a customer's chances of entering sustained employment and improve their work-related skills, whilst providing some benefit to the

52 Level 2 qualifications include GCSEs at grades A*–C and their equivalents. Level 3 qualifications include A-levels and their equivalents.

53 Q 25

community”.⁵⁴ Participants in the CTF receive a training allowance equivalent to their Jobseeker’s Allowance and a further £15.38 per week “to encourage them to remain engaged with the programme”.

39. The opportunities offered within the framework of the Community Task Force would also be of benefit to some 16 and 17 year olds. Such placements would allow these young people to demonstrate their readiness to work, to acquire skills, and to access valuable personal development opportunities—while also giving them the satisfaction of undertaking meaningful work of benefit to their local community.

40. We recommend that the Government provide a scheme of work placements for 16 and 17 year olds in projects of benefit to the community, such as those offered through the Community Task Force. Young people taking part in such a scheme should receive any benefits to which they would otherwise be entitled. Such an initiative is essential if the Government is to properly plan for the raising of the participation age to 17 in 2013 and to 18 in 2015.

Integrated support and guidance

41. The CBI, in its report *Towards a NEET solution*, recommends that support services for young people should be more closely integrated. It suggests that:

An integrated one-stop-shop support strategy for young people could help make spending on youth services more efficient by including multiple services as part of a joined-up package. [...] This should include careers guidance, health information and advice, legal and housing support, access to internet and other essential services.⁵⁵

Richard Wainer, Head of Education and Skills at the CBI, told us that the Government had made some progress on this, saying that “it happens in pockets”. In our recent report on Sure Start Children’s Centres, we noted that services for young people “could benefit from the same joined-up thinking which has been introduced in early childhood services.”⁵⁶

42. While in the Netherlands, we visited Werkplein Sorghvliet, a “one-stop-shop” of the kind proposed by the CBI. Young people (those aged 18–27) who came to claim benefits were able to: access medical practitioners; obtain support with housing needs; meet representatives of the local college to discuss options for training and education; access information about job vacancies and use the internet. The centre also had a training restaurant, in which young people were able to work and acquire skills.

43. We asked Iain Wright MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for 14–19 Reform and Apprenticeships, whether such provision was something to which the Government should aspire. He agreed that integrated support was very important for young people, and told us that a “one-stop-shop” approach was “certainly something we could consider” and

⁵⁴ Department for Work and Pensions, Explanatory Memorandum to the Social Security (Community Task Force) Regulations 2010 (SI 2010/354), paragraph 7.5

⁵⁵ Confederation of British Industry, *Towards a NEET solution*, October 2008, p 8

⁵⁶ Children, Schools and Families Committee, Fifth Report of Session 2009–10, *Sure Start Children’s Centres*, HC 130-I, paragraph 35

that it “could certainly happen”.⁵⁷ We acknowledge that this may be more difficult to deliver in the UK, due to local fragmentation and greater centralisation.

44. Young people who are NEET often face a number of barriers to participation and need to access support from a variety of sources. The co-location of services such as healthcare, housing support, access to benefits and financial support and careers advice and guidance in a joined-up approach could help young people to access more easily the help they require. Such provision could prove to be more cost-effective than current structures. We recommend that the Government take steps to commission a number of pilots, in order to assess the costs and benefits of the “one-stop-shop” approach.

Flexibility in education and training

45. Some witnesses identified a need for greater flexibility in education and training courses for young people, noting that if a young person begins a course in September or January and drops out only a few weeks or months later, they risk remaining NEET until the following September. The Government acknowledges in its *New Opportunities* White Paper that “any prolonged period outside education or the labour market is particularly damaging to a young person’s life chances.”⁵⁸

46. Representatives of colleges told us that they did run programmes with flexible start dates, but that they faced problems with funding mechanisms. Matt Atkinson, Principal of City of Bath College, told us that the college received an allocation of money for 16–18 year olds. That allocation was spent in September, leaving the college with no money to run programmes starting at other times. In spite of this, he said, the college ran “roll-on, roll-off programmes—‘start when you want’” to allow young people to begin courses during the year; he added, “we fund it ourselves, and that is the commitment that we make locally”.⁵⁹

47. Not all young people will be in a position to begin a training course in September or January of a given year; some may drop out of education or training during the academic year and wish to begin a new course. We recommend that the Government set aside some of the funding for the September and January Guarantees to support local authorities in offering places in education and training to young people throughout the year.

Financial barriers to participation

48. There is an extensive system of financial support for 16–18 year olds who are in education and training. *Investing in Potential* notes that the Government is investing more than £650m in 2009–10 on financial support for 16–18 year olds, including Education Maintenance Allowance, Care to Learn and discretionary learner support funds.⁶⁰ The

57 Q 339

58 Cabinet Office, *New Opportunities: Fair chances for the future*, Cm 7533, January 2009, paragraph 5.4

59 Q 238

60 Department for Children, Schools and Families, Department for Work and Pensions and Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Investing in Potential*, December 2009, p 6

Government is undertaking a cross-departmental review of the financial support offered to 16–18 year olds and intends to publish its final report in spring 2010.⁶¹

49. The most disadvantaged 16 and 17 year olds may also be eligible to access other forms of financial support. In the course of our inquiry, we heard that an unintended consequence of such support is that some groups of young people face particular barriers to education and training within the wider benefits system. Bury Council drew our attention to the situation of young people in supported housing—a particularly vulnerable group—who “face the withdrawal of all or part of their housing benefit if they enter an Apprenticeship”.⁶² The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for 14–19 Reform and Apprenticeships, Iain Wright MP, pledged to raise this issue with Ministerial colleagues in the Department for Work and Pensions.⁶³

50. Witnesses also told us that young people who seek to improve their skills by undertaking unpaid work or full-time volunteering can face difficulties with the benefits system. Shaks Ghosh, Chief Executive of the Private Equity Foundation, explained that “one of the problems in helping young people to spend a year in full-time national [voluntary] service is that they fall across all the issues around benefits and the problem of being NEET”.⁶⁴ The Prince’s Trust suggested that there “needs to be clear guidance on benefits for young people who choose to access unpaid opportunities in order to ensure that they do not miss out on financial support when they are entitled to it”.⁶⁵

51. Claimants of Jobseeker’s Allowance have limited opportunities for training for more than 15 hours a week. For the most part, this affects those over 18; but young people aged 16 and 17 who find themselves in severe hardship are, in some cases, eligible for Jobseeker’s Allowance. The *New Opportunities* White Paper announced that the Government would “consider how benefits for 16–18 year olds can best enable young people to participate in education and jobs with training”.⁶⁶ It is particularly important that the most disadvantaged 16 and 17 year olds should not be deterred from pursuing opportunities in education and training by the constraints of the benefits system. We note that the Government’s consultation on financial support asks respondents whether Jobseekers’ Allowance is “still an appropriate way of addressing the support needs of 16 and 17 year olds in hardship”.⁶⁷

52. We were struck by the approach taken in the Netherlands, in which relatively generous levels of benefits and other support are offered to young people in exchange for greater compulsion to take up education, training or work. We recommend that the Government consider the merits of this approach.

61 Cabinet Office, *New Opportunities: Fair chances for the future*, Cm 7533, January 2009, paragraph 5.18ff

62 Ev 110

63 Q 338

64 Q 87

65 Ev 56

66 Cabinet Office, *New Opportunities: Fair chances for the future*, Cm 7533, January 2009, paragraph 5.19

67 Department for Children, Schools and Families, *Cross-government review of financial support for 16–18 year olds: Call for evidence*, November 2009, p 3

53. We welcome the fact that the Government is undertaking a cross-departmental review of the financial support offered to 16–18 year olds. We urge the Government to bring forward changes to the benefit arrangements for young people living in supported housing, in order to enable them to access all appropriate opportunities for training and employment. We also urge the Government to address the barriers that risk preventing young people on benefits from improving their skills through unpaid work or full-time volunteering. We expect the Government to examine closely the provision made for 16 and 17 year olds in severe hardship, and to ensure that these young people are not deterred from pursuing opportunities in education and training by the constraints of the benefits system.

Rewarding local authorities

54. While the Department for Children, Schools and Families has responsibility for the national target for young people's participation in education, employment and training, local authorities bear much of the responsibility for delivering policy. Local Area Agreements (LAAs) set out the priorities for a local area agreed between central government and the local authority and other key partners at the local level. Of the indicators which local authorities can choose to include in their Local Area Agreements, the national indicator on NEET (NI 117)—that is, the percentage of 16–18 year olds not in education, employment or training—is the most frequently selected. One hundred and fifteen local authorities (that is, 76%) have selected this indicator as a Local Area Agreement priority.⁶⁸

55. Witnesses expressed some concerns about the extent to which local authorities were incentivised to perform well against their targets. Under the Local Area Agreement framework, local authorities who perform well receive a performance reward grant. Adrienne Carmichael of Cumbria County Council told us that “we [Cumbria County Council] did get a performance reward grant for exceeding our stretch target on the local area agreement for NEET. Unfortunately, because of the way in which the funding mechanisms work, it did not get reinvested back into children's services or the children's trust partners. It went elsewhere”.⁶⁹

56. Mark Sanders, Chief Executive of Bury Council, suggested that local authorities should be further incentivised to reduce the number of young people who are on benefits. He described an arrangement that exists between the Department for Work and Pensions and private and voluntary sector organisations engaged in the provision of support to claimants of Jobseeker's Allowance. Under this scheme, organisations are offered cash incentives when they are successful in moving those who have been claiming JSA for a year into sustained employment. Mr Sanders noted that “we [local authorities] are not incentivised in that way at all” and argued that such an approach could be successful, “if the money is invested wisely”.⁷⁰

68 Local Government Association, *hidden talents: re-engaging young people*, p 26

69 Q 283

70 Q 284

57. Local authorities play a central role in delivering initiatives intended to increase rates of participation among 16–18 year olds. We are concerned that existing rewards for good progress are not sufficient to drive the necessary improvements in local authorities' performance. We urge the Government to review the mechanisms by which local authorities are rewarded for significant increases in the rates of participation of 16–18 year olds. In particular, we recommend that the Government give consideration to linking such rewards with savings made by the Department for Work and Pensions when an increase in participation in education, employment and training leads to a reduction in the number of young people claiming benefits.

58. We were deeply impressed by evidence from local authority witnesses demonstrating how strong leadership and innovative policies could work to substantially reduce the proportion of young people who were NEET in a local area, against a national trend of a slight increase in numbers. We were particularly struck by evidence from Judith Hay, Head of Positive Contribution & Economic Well-being, Children's Services, Sunderland City Council, who described an extremely successful programme of youth work on a budget of just £25,000. She attributed the success of this work to strong partnerships established between local authority agencies, the police and businesses in the local area.⁷¹

59. Budget 2009 announced the beginning of the Total Place programme,⁷² an initiative described by the Government as “an ambitious approach to considering how a ‘whole area’ approach to public services can lead to better services for the customer at less cost.”⁷³ The programme seeks to use collaboration and local leadership to reduce costs and introduce more innovative ways of working. Thirteen pilots have been established across England. The pilot areas have undertaken a three stage process: a mapping of public spending in a local area; the identification of the needs of ‘customers’ in that area; and, finally, an examination of the potential for savings to be made by redesigning services and by identifying barriers in local and national delivery structures that work to prevent local authorities delivering services cost-effectively. **We recognise that future solutions to reduce the proportion of young people not in employment, education or training will have to be more cost-effective and will require efficient, joined-up working at a local level. To this end, we warmly welcome the piloting of the Total Place programme and strongly encourage the Government's stated objective of achieving a “whole area” approach to public services.**

71 Q 283

72 HM Treasury, *Budget 2009*, April 2009, paragraph 6.35

73 Department for Communities and Local Government, *Total Place*, <http://www.communities.gov.uk/localgovernment/efficiencybetter/totalplace/>

Formal Minutes

Wednesday 24 March 2010

Members present:

Mr Barry Sheerman, in the Chair

Annette Brooke
Mr David Chaytor

Paul Holmes
Mr Edward Timpson

Draft Report (*Young people not in education, employment or training*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the Chair's draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 59 read and agreed to.

Summary agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Eighth Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chairman make the Report to the House.

Written evidence was ordered to be reported to the House for placing in the Library and Parliamentary Archives.

Ordered, That the following written evidence be reported to the House for publication on the internet:

NEET 64 Rosemary Smith
NEET 65 North Lancs Training Group Ltd

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

[Adjourned till Monday 29 March at 3.30 pm.]

Witnesses

Monday 25 January 2010

Page

Professor Rob MacDonald, Teesside University; **Dr Sue Maguire**, Warwick University; **Professor Richard Pring**, Oxford University, and **Professor Jocey Quinn**, London Metropolitan University

Ev 1

Wednesday 27 January 2010

John Copps, Head of Sector Research, New Philanthropy Capital; **Shaks Ghosh**, Chief Executive, Private Equity Foundation; **Sonia Sodha**, Head of the Capabilities Programme, Demos, and **Dr Richard Williams**, Chief Executive, Rathbone

Ev 26

Monday 8 February 2010

David Congdon, Head of Campaigns and Policy, Mencap; **Peter Lister**, Senior Head of Strategic Partnerships, The Prince's Trust; **Chris Murray**, Team Manager, Hackney, Fairbridge, and **Anne Pinney**, Assistant Director, Policy and Research, Barnardo's

Ev 57

Alison Ashworth-Brown, Head of Engineering Academy, NG Bailey; **Andy Palmer**, Head of Skills, BT; **Richard Wainer**, Head of Education and Skills, CBI, and **Tom Wilson**, unionlearn Director, TUC

Ev 74

Wednesday 24 February 2010

Matt Atkinson, Principal, City of Bath College (for the Association of Colleges); **John Fairhurst**, Vice-President, Association of School and College Leaders; **Maggie Galliers**, Principal, Leicester College, and **John Morgan**, President, Association of School and College Leaders

Ev 94

Kostas Androulakis, Birmingham City Council; **Adrienne Carmichael**, Cumbria County Council; **Judith Hay**, Sunderland City Council, and **Mark Sanders**, Chief Executive, Bury Council

Ev 112

Monday 1 March 2010

Mr Iain Wright MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for 14–19 Reform and Apprenticeships, Department for Children, Schools and Families, and **Chris Heaume**, Chief Executive, Central London Connexions

Ev 132

List of written evidence

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| 1 | Private Equity Foundation | Ev 20 |
| 2 | Rathbone | Ev 23 |
| 3 | Barnardo's | Ev 42 |
| 4 | Mencap | Ev 47 |
| 5 | The Prince's Trust | Ev 53 |
| 6 | Trades Union Congress (TUC) | Ev 70 |
| 7 | Association of Colleges | Ev 83 |
| 8 | Association of School and College Leaders | Ev 87: Ev 106 |
| 9 | Leicester College | Ev 90: Ev 107 |
| 10 | Bury Council | Ev 109: Ev 121 |
| 11 | Cumbria County Council | Ev 121 |
| 12 | Sunderland City Council | Ev 123 |
| 13 | Department for Children, Schools and Families | Ev 127: Ev 140 |

List of unprinted evidence

The following written evidence has been reported to the House, but to save printing costs has not been printed and copies have been placed in the House of Commons Library, where they may be inspected by Members. Other copies are in the Parliamentary Archives (www.parliament.uk/archives), and are available to the public for inspection. Requests for inspection should be addressed to The Parliamentary Archives, Houses of Parliament, London SW1A 0PW (tel. 020 7219 3074; email archives@parliament.uk). Opening hours are from 9.30 am to 5.00 pm on Mondays to Fridays.

David Wreathall
 Steven Walker
 Bertie Everard
 Our Celebration
 Association of Panel Members
 Community Matters
 Careers South West
 Bury Council
 West Nottinghamshire College
 Motor Cycle Industry Association (MCI)
 CASCAiD
 Audit Commission
 Association of Learning Providers
 Youth Access
 Chartered Institute of Personal Development (CIPD)
 157 Group
 Ofsted
 University and College Union
 Skill—National Bureau for Students with Disabilities

Henry James Riley, The Allison Riley Memorial Foundation
A4e
Unite
Highbury College
Financial Services Authority
Mentoring and Befriending Foundation
Learning and Skills Council
Engineering UK
Catch 22
National Care Advisory Service
MyBnk
Pearson Education UK
Association of Teachers and Lecturers
CFE
Special Educational Consortium and Transition Information Network
Action for Children
UK Youth and Teesside University, Social Futures Institute
V
City and Guilds Centre for Skills Development
Connect South West Ltd
Local Government Association
Centrepont
100% Participation Group
Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists
UNISON
TreeHouse
Youth Justice Board
Child Poverty Action Group
Reed in Partnership
ADCS
RNIB
National Union of Students
Equality and Human Rights Commission
Rosemary Smith
North Lancs Training Group Ltd

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

The reference number of the Government's response to each Report is printed in brackets after the HC printing number.

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| First Report | School Accountability | HC 88-I and II (<i>HC 486</i>) |
| Second Report | Elective Home Education | HC 39-I and -II (<i>HC 423</i>) |
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| Fourth Report | Training of Teachers | HC 275-I and -II |
| Fifth Report | Sure Start Children's Centres | HC 130-I and -II |
| Sixth Report | Transforming Learning Outside the Classroom | HC 418 |
| Seventh Report | The Early Years Single Funding Formula | HC 131 |
| Eighth Report | Young people not in education, employment or training | HC 316-I and -II |
| Ninth Report | From Baker to Balls: the foundations of the education system | HC 422 |

Session 2008–09

| | | |
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| Second Report | The Work of the Committee in 2007–08 | HC 47 |
| Third Report | Looked-after Children | HC 111-I and II (<i>HC 787</i>) |
| Fourth Report | National Curriculum | HC 344-I and II (<i>HC 645</i>) |
| Fifth Report | Allegations Against School Staff | HC 695 (<i>HC 1000</i>) |
| Sixth Report | Policy and delivery: the National Curriculum tests delivery failure in 2008 | HC 205 (<i>HC 1037</i>) |
| Seventh Report | Training of Children and Families Social Workers | HC 527-I and II (<i>HC 358 of Session 2009–10</i>) |
| Eighth Report | Appointment of the Children's Commissioner for England | HC 998-I and II |

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| First Special Report | Creative Partnerships and the Curriculum: Government Response to the Eleventh Report from the Education and Skills Committee, Session 2006–07 | HC 266 |
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| Second Special Report | Special Educational Needs: Assessment and Funding: Government Response to the Tenth Report from the Education and Skills Committee, Session 2006–07 | HC 298 |
| First Report | Children and Young Persons Bill [Lords] | HC 359 (<i>HC 711</i>) |
| Second Report | The Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Children's Plan | HC 213 (<i>HC 888</i>) |
| Third Report | Testing and Assessment | HC 169-I and II (<i>HC 1003</i>) |
| Fourth Report | The Draft Apprenticeships Bill | HC 1082 (<i>HC 259 of Session 2008–09</i>) |