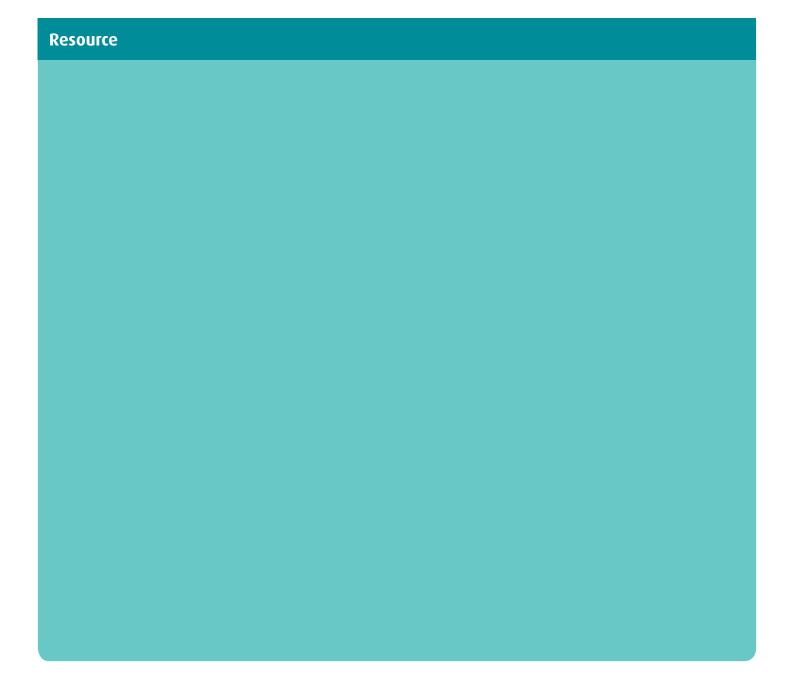


Schools and academies

Equality, self-belief and choiceImpartial careers education: implementing Principle 5

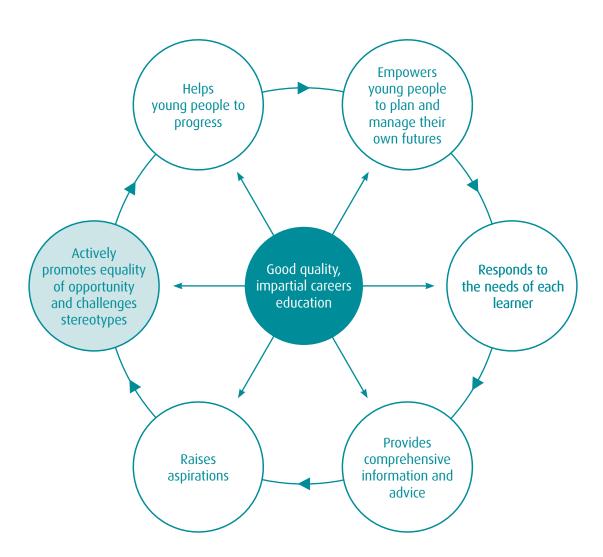
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The six Principles

Changes made by the Education and Skills Act 2008 require schools, in the delivery of their statutory requirement to provide careers education, to ensure that information about learning options and careers is presented impartially and that advice promotes the best interests of pupils.

The statutory guidance identifies six Principles of good quality, impartial careers education that are accompanied by short outcome focused statements that clarify the Principles and help schools to understand if they have been met.



This booklet focuses on **Principle 5**: actively promotes equality of opportunity and challenges stereotypes.

With thanks to all of the school, college and university contributors who were interviewed for this publication and to colleagues who offered constructive suggestions. In addition, particular thanks to LSIS (Learning and Skills Improvement Service) for permission to quote from a report from their 14-19 Learner Panel.

Tricia Sharpe

Impartial careers education: implementing Principle 5

The purpose of this booklet

The information in this booklet is designed to supplement the publication *Impartial careers* education: Principles into practice (October 2009). That publication used case study material derived from National College research to illustrate the new Principles within the DCSF statutory guidance for impartial careers education (October 2009). However, for one of the Principles in particular, it was difficult to identify examples. This was Principle 5: Good quality, impartial careers education actively promotes equality of opportunity and challenges stereotypes. So, it was decided to dedicate a second booklet to this theme.

About this research

Research was undertaken in early Spring 2010. To source contributors, recommendations were sought from National College 11-19 regional advisers and SEN leaders, SSAT IAG (Information, Advice and Guidance) Champions and other regional leaders of IAG, and through the National Association for Managers of Student Services in Colleges.

Interviews were conducted by telephone. Examples of approaches to leadership and practice were explored within nine 'institutions' including a primary school, two special schools, one 11-16 secondary school. one 11-19 girls secondary modern school and one 11-19 academy, one 11-16 school member of a 14-19 consortium and two FE colleges, plus an example of a university-based project. The roles of leaders ranged from headteachers, assistant heads with a 'careers' responsibility, and managers with more specialist 'careers' job titles. The premise of the interviews was that these institutions had practice of interest and value to share.

How to use this booklet

Findings have been structured into four sections:

- 1. outlines why this Principle is such a high priority, drawing on the views of young people themselves about one aspect: gender
- 2. pulls together key points about the needs that institutions have identified with the delivery approaches they are developing
- 3. presents approaches to staff development
- 4. summarises lessons for leaders.

Mini-case studies offer examples from the leaders interviewed as prompts for reflection and discussion.

Further information

- The full set of Principles is in Annex A and progression pathways in Annex B
- Impartial careers education: Principles into practice is on www.nationalcollege.org.uk/iag
- For resources to support the Principles see www.cegnet.co.uk - Statutory Guidance: Impartial Careers Education Resources Pack and Ways & Choices Interactive Lessons
- Case studies about challenging gender stereotyping can be found on www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/ genderequalityinterventionprojects
- A Nuts and Bolts Guide on Gender Equality within 14-19 is on www.14-19support.org/lmdp in resources
- Embedding equality in the Diploma from OCDA can be found by typing 27370 in the search box on www.gcda.gov.uk
- Examples of activities to challenge gender stereotyping associated with specific lines of learning can be found on www.teachernet.gov.uk/ publications:
 - Retail Business: 00025-2010BKT-EN
 - Hair & Beauty Studies: 00026-2010BKT-EN
 - Environmental and Land-based Studies: 00027-2010BKT-EN
 - Society, Health and Development: 00028-2010BKT-EN
- A toolkit on Equality and Diversity by STEM subject choice and careers - digital storecupboard can be found on www.digitalstorecupboard. tintisha-web.co.uk

Why is this Principle such a high priority?

Research repeatedly shows that students' decisions are frequently limited by their social and economic milieu, the experiences and 'received wisdom' or preferences of their family and peers and their own views of their powers of agency. Some students have disabilities and may assume that these will adversely affect their opportunities.

Principle 5 (see page 5) sets out the responsibilities of a school/PRU to actively promote equality of opportunity and challenge stereotyping. In order to fulfill this responsibility, a school's /PRU's hopes and expectations for all its students are critical. These are transmitted through culture and through its will and ability to counter potentially damaging assumptions and prejudices via appropriate programmes, interventions and action.

The impact of stereotyping on choices

Young people themselves can offer insights to help their schools and colleges develop strategies. This section draws on views expressed by the 14-19 Learner Panel (October 2009, LSIS) on the impact of gender on learning choices. In their words:

Some of us have hesitated about choosing a particular subject because we perceive it as 'female' or 'male'. A small number of us have decided not to do a course because of this perception. On the other hand, some of us have not hesitated at all and have always chosen the subject that interests or excites us the most. Many of us believe that whether we choose a subject, regardless of its gender balance, depends on how much passion and conviction we have for that subject.

'I hesitated about drama – because lots of people said it's more girl-orientated. My school said that, as well as my friends. I didn't choose it in the end. I don't know why really. ..The drama course at my school is now all girls and it always has been as far as I know.'

'I hesitated about doing both hairdressing and textiles but I did them anyway because I really wanted to - with textiles, my teacher said I wouldn't do well because it's very female-orientated and there would be only girls in the class, but I went on to get the highest mark in my class.'

In some of our personal experiences, our peers or families have made a misjudged connection between our course choices and our sexuality, a connection which does not exist in reality and which we think demonstrates their prejudice.

'When I said I was going to do childcare they said I must be gay. It was annoying listening to my mates' prejudice – it happens I'm not gay – and listening to their flak did start to put me off. But I still went ahead and did the course.'

Some of us have found that the information, advice and guidance (IAG) provided at our school and college was not impartial and was biased by staff's perceptions about gender. In our experience gender is one of several factors that can be an obstacle to unbiased IAG; another linked factor is perceptions about the status of academic and vocational subjects.

'I was made to hesitate about hairdressing because I was doing well academically, so my interest was unexpected; but also because my friends and teachers suggested it was 'girly'. I did get stick from my mates about the hairdressing.'

In our experience, there are three main groups of people who can sometimes influence our decisions about courses. Half of us are most influenced by peer pressure when it comes to gender. Some of us believe that men are likely to be teased more about doing a 'female' course than women are in the reverse situation. A smaller number of us are most influenced by our families and by staff at our learning provider. We also think there is a generation gap in attitudes to certain subjects. For example, we imagine that our parents' generation would view maths slightly more strongly as a male subject than our generation does.

'Doing engineering as a girl definitely puts me at an advantage - you have to learn you will take a bit of stick, but you get some great opportunities and get picked a lot for stuff.'

Principle 5: approaches and delivery models

This section outlines the needs related to equality of opportunity and stereotyping that have been identified by the institutions and the approaches that they are developing. A number of delivery models are then headlined with examples drawn from the interviews. These illustrations show how closely action on Principle 5 is linked to strategies to achieve Principle 4: raising aspirations

Remind me of Principle 5: actively promotes equality of opportunity and challenges stereotyping

Schools will meet this principle if young people:

- 5.1 are able to recognise and challenge stereotypical views of opportunities in learning and work
- 5.2 understand that stereotypical decisionmaking can have financial implications
- 5.3 consider learning and work options that are not generally associated with their school
- 5.4 consider learning and work options that are not traditionally associated with their gender, ethnicity, faith, learning or physical ability, cultural or socio-economic background
- 5.5 make successful transitions when they choose non-traditional opportunities
- 5.6 feed back that they recognise, and reject, learning and work stereotypes.

Needs and approaches

Institutions obviously have a strong grasp of the socio-economic characteristics of their communities. However, this does not necessarily translate into a comprehensive careers education and IAG strategy and interventions that seek to systematically challenge and, if necessary, reconstruct their pupils' received ideas and assumptions about the worlds of learning and work and their own capacities. Nor to engage parents or carers in these discussions.

Most schools are focused sharply on raising attainment and have designed approaches to encourage students to maximise their achievements. Some schools link improvements like this to activities that can change students' understanding of their own progression options and expand their horizons, for example using initiatives like AimHigher. But, fewer

have considered how to address or redress other aspects that touch on making equality of opportunity a reality.

Nationally for example, statistics show that there are clear gender divides in many subjects and courses taken by 14 to 19 year olds. Of the five new Diplomas offered in 2008–09, four attracted a very uneven mix of male and female students. For example, on the new Society, Health and Development Diploma 91.8% of the students are female and only 8.2% are male. On the other hand, on the Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment, 97% of the students are male and only 3% are female. It is not just the new Diploma subjects where there is a gender imbalance. There are similar imbalances amongst students taking certain kinds of apprenticeships, GCSEs, A Levels, BTECs and NVQs, and many other courses.

Characteristics of their catchment that institutions in the study commented on included:

- predominantly 'middle class' or 'blue collar' communities that assume that A levels are the thing to do
- communities that are multi-cultural and multi-faith whose aspirations may not be well-understood
- parents with little or no history of attending university or college
- students and parents who may be risk averse and or debt averse
- local labour market being traditionally 'male', or local 'female' jobs being in a restricted and traditional range
- reluctance of students to move beyond the familiar or away from their families
- changes in employment that have resulted in the need to travel further for work
- the limitations of the perceptions of employers and their reluctance to adapt, for example to the needs of potential employees with disabilities.

Some school leaders had scrutinised their intake data and students' final achievements and had asked themselves why it was that both attainment was not higher and destination choices more commensurate with student abilities. Their conclusions were that their schools' curriculum and support systems could be better matched to their students' interests and

potential, and most importantly, that there was lack of coherence and consistency in their messages and actions related to promoting equality.

Approaches instituted by schools that are having positive impact on expanding students' views of their choices are:

- development of a more diverse, frequently vocational, curriculum that is underpinned by effective careers education, and IAG at points of
- having a regular and substantial programme of PSHE education or personal development to promote self-awareness and self-esteem that integrates careers education and IAG where most relevant
- taking every opportunity for the language of aspiration to permeate the culture and felt experience of the school and to reinforce messages through both visual images and 'live'
- having IAG provision that is personalised and with staff willing and able to challenge choices that are insufficiently stretching or conversely that may be too unrealistic
- regular showcasing examples of effort and success of current and former pupils and the introduction of other positive models, such as local employers and undergraduate ambassadors
- using the school students who have disabilities to act as ambassadors to raise awareness of employers and in their communities of their particular needs, talents and aptitudes
- increasing level of contact and focus and style of discussions with parents and carers to enlist them in change.

Implications for delivery models

The examples that follow show ten different responses to the needs and challenges identified by the nine institutions. There are some parallels across the examples, but in every case the solution or solutions are highly individual. What is striking is the emerging successes in those schools that have recognised and acted on their belief that to raise aspirations and underpin progression a comprehensive strategy is required that knits together:

- impartial careers education (CE) and information, advice and guidance (IAG) that takes account of parents/carers as well as students
- action to promote student self-awareness, self-belief and aspirations
- a diverse and stimulating curriculum where progression opportunities are clear
- active and focused interventions that enable students to perceive and manage their future beyond their immediate socio-economic circumstances and background, and confront any barriers externally imposed by others' prejudices about gender, ethnicity, faith and disability

Where interventions tended to be 'one-off', the impact was generally much more limited, as evidenced at the point of choice.

The range of practice covered in these illustrations reflects the extent of the research undertaken. It was not possible to uncover examples to illuminate the whole of the territory encompassed by this Principle. Other examples can be found in booklet 1: Principles into practice.

Sections 3 and 4 focus on staffing, staff development and leadership.

`It's your choice - it's you who will be doing the role day in, day out - not your friends - do what you will enjoy!'

14-19 Learner Panel

1. A comprehensive approach to influencing self-belief and aspirations

This secondary modern school for girls serves the suburbs of a small county town. The diverse catchment has a stable population characterised as predominantly 'blue collar enterprise' plus commuters to office and managerial roles. Parents' education levels cover the entire spectrum of ability. Local opportunities are mostly in finance, retail, officebased and in the NHS and there are no Apprenticeship schemes, and only one Young Apprenticeship in Hair and Beauty.

The girls tend to perform well on courses appropriate to their needs. However, due to the selective system the school finds itself in, aspirations of some could be more ambitious. The school's key aim is to positively influence the expectations of students and parents and to get the girls to think beyond their immediate next step: 'to question what is possible and break the mould'. The senior leadership team uses all available data to help them profile their students and parents in order to design appropriate programmes and target their efforts.

One aspect of the school's approach is a comprehensive Personal Development Learning (PDL) programme into which careers education and IAG are fully integrated. All students from years 7 – 11 have one hour per week in a set of dedicated rooms with a faculty of trained staff. In addition, staffing includes a Careers and Business Partnerships Manager, a nonteaching post, invaluable as an information source for students and staff.

In year 7, girls are encouraged to develop their life skills and abilities, a theme that pervades the whole PDL curriculum; year 8 includes discussion of options and choice; year 10 looks at careers ahead of work experience, along with an introduction to equal opportunities and rights at work; and in year 11 students are helped with post-16 options. The focus throughout is on the development of each individual student and there is evidence that the programme is having on impact on self-esteem and students' sense of being more in control of what they are planning and doing. The skills they are developing are improving attainment across the curriculum. Students applying to higher education (HE) has increased on average by 23% yearly. Generally, HE subject choices

are 'traditional' but are slowly becoming more diversified.

The careers education and IAG elements are reinforced by assemblies that have outside speakers and the vertical tutoring system ensures one to one support at key transition points. Tutors are fully knowledgeable about and involved in the option process. The vertical tutor groupings also provide peer support and guidance opportunities.

At 14-19 choices are broadening with the introduction of Diplomas; Creative & Media and Retail Business are of particular interest. For students and their parents, one key to encouraging them to consider new pathways seems to be the existence of secure and known progression routes on from level 3. The school has a long-standing specialism in performing arts and has recently negotiated a formal 'progression agreement' with the Rose Bruford College (a specialist HE college for the performing arts). This offers students from the school a range of experiences and activities to support them in selecting and applying for appropriate courses, at Rose Bruford or with other providers. These new opportunities will include sessions on stage and properties design, lighting technology and about other functions that are not 'front of house' in order to expand students' understanding of job roles in the performing arts. In addition to school students attending Rose Bruford, HE students will visit the school. The Careers and Business Partnerships Manager is now considering a similar arrangement with a local university covering Health & Social Care.

The SLT continues to review the school's curriculum alongside emerging local, national and even global changes. The goal is to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes of each girl to help her become 'a rounded individual aware of her rights and responsibilities and role as a citizen. Global competences could be the next step.'

Contributors 1: Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher and the Careers and Business Partnerships Manager at a girls' secondary modern school with 1,236 students on roll in a shire county town

2. The interconnectedness of IAG, the curriculum and gender-based choices

This 11-19 academy is high achieving with 95% of students attaining at least five GCSEs at grades A*-C. One specialism is its vocational curriculum. The academy is located in a commuter area with local employment being mostly service industry. Most parents think of themselves as 'middle class' and there is little history of parental participation in higher education.

Over a number of years, the academy has systematically scrutinised the scores that students enter with and their final achievements. The Leadership Team's conclusion was that the curriculum needed to be much better tuned to student interests and aptitudes; this initiated substantial investment in a wide ranging vocational curriculum with delivery onsite rather than by training providers. For the last three years, at least 80% of each cohort has taken at least one vocational subject.

This has required parallel changes and investment in careers education and IAG. Students and parents tend to see vocational curriculum as 'not good enough' and gravitate towards traditional A levels. Despite highly visible, year on year success, the school has to tackle these expectations with each cohort annually.

The Coordinator has designed multiple interventions for years 7-11 including:

- a careers education programme in years 7-11 delivered by a trained team of tutors
- substantial work with all staff 'to get them to think they are teachers of careers education and quidance'
- subject involvement wherever possible, such as interview practice integrated within the science programme which is taken by all students. Students research science-related jobs and the Coordinator arranges external interviewers
- close relationship with the Connexions Adviser concerning those who need more specialist advice

Equality and diversity is part of the careers education and PSHE Education programmes. Some events have been run to raise awareness, for example a ConstructionSkills session for year 8 girls and an Industry Day with a focus on equal opportunities with female role models from the fire service and engineering. However, it is proving hard to influence traditional gender-based choices. There have been occasional successes such as boys taking up hairdressing and one progressing into mental health nursing. The Coordinator feels that some of the support that used to exist has been lost, or has become less explicit and has merged into general STEM-related activities. She has also noticed that producers of materials are not as vigilant on this matter as they need to be, for example, the Health and Safety DVD for work experience perpetuates gender stereotypes. In PSHE Education, students have considered the media and age stereotyping.

Contributor 2: Skills for Life and Community **Involvement Coordinator and Advanced Skills** Teacher for careers at an 11-19 academy with approximately 1,500 students

'The impact of these changes is that performance levels are continuing to rise. This indicates that young people are making more appropriate and motivating choices.... There are also high levels of vocational choice at post-18 plus more and more who want to go out into work.'

3. Transforming self-image and ambitions in primary education

This primary school and nursery are in a multi-cultural, multi-faith area of a Midlands city with white/British in the minority. Parents reflect the whole social and employment spectrum: many are aspirational for themselves and their children; some have never been in employment. The school encourages parents with their own study, offering NVQs and support for the graduate teaching programme as well as before and after school childcare. Some parents are now employed at the school as staff members, as are four ex-pupils. The staff profile reflects the cultural heritage of the school.

Permeating the language and activity of the whole school is a powerful belief in the potential of each individual child to succeed and progress. The approach immerses each child in positive messages about the opportunity to be what s/he wants to be and explicitly connects the achievements of every individual to an emerging picture of a possible future.

One example: from Reception onwards, there is a 'celebration assembly' each week with one child selected by their class teacher for an award. These awards are diverse – for good manners or being 'spic and span' as well as for aspects of learning. Each child has a chance to be a star and will be one at some point in the year. Winners are announced in the weekly newsletter that goes home and parents are invited in. The award might be presented by a former pupil or the headteacher. The significance here is that as well as praise, the presenter talks about the achievement in relation to their own development and success, perhaps referring to each step and longer term goals. This process connects the child's assuredness generated by their present attainment with a strong, motivating idea of moving forward and to a possible future that has a sense of feasibility locked in.

Talk about jobs and further learning occurs 'quite naturally' in every situation. As well as assemblies, staff are encouraged by the headteacher to respond to pupils' curiosity about staff's own pathways and, through staff meetings, are equipped to talk about other careers and courses. During lessons and assemblies staff and school leaders link skill development and subject learning to progression options. Posters around the school portray positive and anti-stereotyped role models; key stage 1 children role play being doctors. Other working adults contribute to school life, such as a local police officer accompanying children swimming once a week. There is a 'police day' including a dog handler and a van; the children take finger prints, play with the walkie talkies and act out the job wearing mini-uniforms.

'We can measure the impact when we talk with the children about their perceptions and self-esteem and see what they say about jobs and discuss their decision-making.... We want them to grow – we are planting ideas and seeds early on, implanting aspirations and a work ethic. They will need to be prepared for issues and barriers – we are equipping them to be the best they can be.'

Contributor 3: Headteacher at a 3-11 city-based primary school and nursery with about 350 children

'We are encouraging our children to be aspirational – not to fit into stereotyped boxes like the media portray. There are no glass ceilings. We want them to see they can be who they want to be.'

4. Challenging assumptions about the capabilities of students with special needs

This 4-19 special school in the North West serves 18 local authorities. Most students have visual or multiple impairments; 24 places out of the 42 are residential. Ability and potential are in a very wide range. One student currently taking A levels at the mainstream school next door is going to university on a scholarship; one former pupil has just completed a music degree and has a music career, another is the President of the RNIB: some have a short life expectancy. National statistics demonstrate a shocking level of inequality of opportunity. Despite new, enabling technologies, 78-80% of those adults who are registered and available for employment are not in jobs. Because the schools' intake is at the extreme end of the spectrum the likelihood of paid work for students at this school is very low indeed.

The headteacher's drive to challenge assumptions has two strands: to build the self-belief of the students themselves, and, where the school can, to reconstruct the limited perceptions of colleagues and pupils in neighbouring schools, in the community, of employers and sometimes of parents.

The school sees careers education and IAG as preparing students for life outside school and beyond: to be confident and independent and with the capacity and skills to make choices. IAG provision is bespoke and this same personalisation and focus on decision making – looking at implications and probabilities – are the salient characteristics of the whole curriculum and of work in the school's Independence Unit.

'Special schools offer highly personalised bespoke provision. We take this very seriously. But choices and routes seem to be diminishing.'

Depending on their needs and interests, work experience or experience of work in-house is arranged that students can access and that is challenging. This can start from year 7. The school vets external opportunities, takes the young person for a visit and then provides transport throughout the placement. The school's excellent relationship with the Connexions service contributes hugely to success. The Adviser acts as a champion for the young people. From their involvement in individual annual reviews they are familiar with the young person's aspirations and needs, they know the legislation and will build a case.

'They are in regularly, they know what is available and know the young people's needs inside out.'

In-house experiences include students staffing Reception, and a 'Take-over Day' when young people run the school including interviewing each other for the jobs and line-managing. According to one student, 'That's really hard that is.'

As part of its mission to influence widely, young people go out into the community to engage others and raise awareness. There are win-win links with primary schools and two mainstream community schools on group projects. Two young people sit on the Liverpool School Parliament.

Staff have real passion and commitment to developing each individual. They have a range of backgrounds and many are non-teaching. They too see themselves on a personal learning journey. All staff will play significant roles in implementing the new statutory quidance.

Young people are fighting disability which is sometimes deteriorating... They are extremely positive and optimistic, but when they go this can sometimes evaporate.'

Contributor 4: Headteacher of a 4-19 school for 42 students who primarily have visual impairments. Ofsted reports the school as outstanding.

5. Preparing students for the future: careers education in a special school

This special school has 110 pupils aged 4-19 of all intellectual ability, some of whom are residential, plus it supports about 650 pupils in mainstream schools. The students have mainly physical disabilities with associated communications, emotional and sensory difficulties that have a compounding effect. These students are at the 'extreme end' of the disability spectrum and 20% have a life-limiting condition. About a third of the pupils are from an ethnic minority. Some attend other schools and colleges; fewer than 5% progress to employment.

Careers education, advice and guidance permeate everything at the school.

'We are preparing young people for the world that exists post-school – for feeling they lead a purposeful life, with a love of learning for its own sake and a life-long curiosity."

Everything that is done is adapted fully to the abilities and capacities of each individual young person. The supportive and imaginative contributions of all staff make this a reality.

The focus always is on developing attributes and attitudes: 'we have to find ways of liberating what they can do'. The world of the school and immediate experience are used as the basis for learning: playing at roles such as 'what Mum does', in a shop and delivering the post and utilising every opportunities in the school to 'help young people contribute to our miniature society through serving each other our youngsters seem to have an innate respect for each other. All understand they have such difficulties'. The philosophy is to make the most of the moment.

The young people are also actively involved in promoting others' understanding of disabilities: they support training for trainee teachers – booking a room at the school for sessions, meeting and greeting, and delivering an introduction: 'they always get the best ratings on the feedback. People are captivated'. This activity contributes towards a BTEC in customer care. Students also advise employers about what to do to make the workplace more accessible.

Encouraging students' aspirations is a difficult balancing act. The school is dedicated to making youngsters feel valued irrespective of their disabilities: 'it's about how far forward they move not how high they jump'. But, some students have a low cognitive ability: 'nobody wants to jump on their dreams but you have to find a way to say, 'no - you can't do that'. Parents too can be over optimistic. The school tries to arrange experiences of work or visits that will 'gently re-direct without crushing' through showing the level of skills or qualifications required. The Connexions Adviser is 'exceptional' at getting to know the students and their families.

Employer attitudes are frequently pessimistic and their understanding limited. Students can be assessed as being capable and bright, and technological solutions often exist, but employers are not creative, or maybe not willing: 'we need to think more about accessing the work itself rather than about accessing the workplace'. The career prospects of a recent highest attaining former student now with an MA, for example, may be restricted to university-based research.

Looking towards the future, Building Schools for the Future (BSF) funding is giving the school the chance to re-look at its curriculum. It is investigating the potential of game technology to enable students to experience the world, including the world of work, through programmes like Second Life. This would make equal opportunity a real possibility for students whose physical conditions prevent 'live' participation.

Contributor 5: Headteacher of a special school serving five local authorities in the East Midlands. Ofsted has rated the school as 'outstanding' at the last four inspections.

Illustrating the influence of curriculum on choice

6. IAG at 11-16 to promote equality and diversity in curriculum choices

This 11-16 school in Yorkshire & Humber is in a community characterised by traditional gender roles. Old job certainties connected to the mining industry are now lost but many still hang on to their longstanding perceptions. There are new and emerging businesses but they are not in the immediate vicinity. Allegiance to vocational pathways is strong and the local authority has fully embraced Diplomas and is working hard with parents and employers.

The school's ultimate aim is that students are aware of all opportunities and are able to make choices: that they feel equipped and empowered to go out and get whatever further learning or training they want. The school sees the key to this as the experience of a very diverse school curriculum so that students not only build up knowledge and skills, but are able to develop their interests through sampling new subjects. Part of the groundwork is to open students' eyes through work on stereotyping.

The school curriculum has been transformed to become much more vocationally focused. There are lots of choices at age 13. Overseen by an assistant headteacher, IAG strategies include: information on options, assemblies on aspects such as Young Apprenticeships and gender, careers sessions in PSHEE, Connexions adviser quidance support, whole area taster sessions at a local sports centre and a Parents Day. Year 8, as part of 'Moving Up' (staying in education or training until the age of 18) also have tasters at the local college. One important message is that adults these days change their jobs and so flexibility and diversity of skills and the ability to process information and take decisions are critical.

Gender typical choices are still the majority, but there are some girls taking construction and technology with resistant materials; food and catering now has about 50:50 boys and girls; and dance has a small number of boys. Some aspects of modern culture are helping with male chefs in the media and reality TV shows showing male dancers. And, the school curriculum is enabling those who do make atypical choices to try courses out and be successful at key stages 3 and 4.

The impact has been very positive with GCSE results iumping up from 36% at grades A*-C in 2002 to 67% in 2009. This shows how much a more practical curriculum is engaging student interest, and IAG is helping students to make optimal choices. Feedback from a student focus group after the option process on what was good and what was not so good 'has been fantastic.'

None of this could have happened without collaboration. The joint delivery of vocational courses and Diplomas and a contiguous timetable has enabled students to make choices previously impossible. Students travel between venues on set days; sorting out transport issues has been tricky.

Post-16, the headteacher feels that the process is 'slightly out of our hands'. The quality of IAG that the school offers is dependent on the information they get from all providers: 'The idea of the Common Application Process (CAP) is fantastic but the use of it can be difficult, particularly for Level 1 students who need a lot of guidance.'

For the future, the headteacher can foresee further work to challenge gender perceptions. She believes that more action with parents will also be needed to make the issues more explicit and to show that those students who make atypical choices are just as likely to succeed, or are even perhaps more likely because of their determination. She would also like to extend student voice activity with year 9 to identify any gaps.

Contributor 6: Acting headteacher of a mixed 11-16 school with about 1,200 students in an ex-mining community

'Three professional female engineers came into school to talk. To be honest, everyone thought it was going to be a load of fat bald men, but we had three glamorous women who came in, impeccably dressed and earning lots of money in their jobs."

14-19 Leaner Panel

Illustrating interventions to raise aspirations at primary level

7. Aspiring to higher education: university programmes for primary schools

One Russell Group university located in an urban area that has low rates of participation in HE has appointed a Widening Participation Coordinator to develop primary initiatives. The university has been working on an 'ad hoc' basis with primary schools for some time but has now established a dedicated programme of initiatives, linking to their longstanding undergraduate placement programme of student ambassadors. It is clear that in areas like this. programmes that address themselves to influencing the attitudes of younger children may well be necessary as ideas about 'the kind of things people like me do' are formulated before children reach secondary education age.

Since autumn 2008, the university has been offering two new programmes, both for groups of about 30 children:

- Awareness raising days on the campus for year 6
- · Roadshows in individual schools for year 5

On the awareness raising days on campus, after a short introduction to what higher education is about, pupils work in one of two groups either on a guizbased tour with student ambassadors or in a 'meet the students' session for questions and answers. At both of these, pupils are encouraged to find out more about students' motivations to study and their life and job aims. The afternoon is generally led by a member of the academic staff and is an 'enrichment activity' focused on an area of curriculum or learning often new to the children, such as Chinese or pharmacy. The day ends with photos in graduation caps.

The Roadshow is a half day and starts with the Coordinator laying out giant jigsaw pieces of the university campus in the school hall. After the children have completed the campus map they participate in an interactive workshop with an academic staff member or post-graduate students, and work with student ambassadors on and around the 'map', first finding answers to location questions and then constructing and role playing 'A day in the life of a student' using the map elements. Again, children are encouraged to be curious about longer term goals of students as well as about the university itself.

So far, the programme is engaging 2-3 schools per week totalling 150-300 children per month. These primary schools are generally those that are linked to the secondary schools that the university works with proactively so there is potential over the longer term for the secondary coordinator to pick up the same children in a phased way. Impact evidence is anecdotal but powerful. Many staff attending with the children have reinforced the messages and further developed the activities. The university has developed online modules that are aligned to the KS2 curriculum to support school-based follow up. The Coordinator has received, for example, an accommodation brochure designed by one year 6 pupil and poems completed after an afternoon enhancement activity. Photos are displayed on school noticeboards and children continue to talk with interest months later and want to re-visit.

For the future, the Coordinator is hoping to run some larger community-based events, and days dedicated to particular subjects and careers, such as a 'medical' day. She is intending to develop the career element further and to include goal setting, for example, facilitated by a careers service staff member from the university.

Contributor 7: Widening Participation Undergraduate Coordinator

'It really got them talking and thinking about university together, which I'd not heard them do before.'

Year 5 class teacher

Illustrating an invention to challenge gender stereotyping at secondary level

8. Challenging gender stereotyping in Diploma choices

This small, mixed 11-16 school has specialist sports college status and is located in a semi-rural and suburban area characterised by an aspiring white middle class. As the Diploma is relatively new, the school identified the need to build up knowledge of this pathway beyond the small cohort of students already involved.

The 14-19 consortium of which the school is a member identified gender stereotyping as one Diploma recruitment issue. The first cohort showed:

- no pre-16 female Construction and the Built **Environment students**
- only two post-16 female Construction and the Built Environment students beginning the course
- pre-16 Creative and Media groups dominated by female students

The consortium secured funding for a taster scheme and offered the school the opportunity to participate in a set of progression workshops. Each year 9 and 11 student was asked to choose three workshops from a list of 12 with at least one that was a gender atypical career choice. The workshops were held on the school site on a carousel basis, staffed by the current or prospective lines of learning staff from the consortium. School staff provided support. Sessions were 'handson', for example models were available for the hair and beauty taster. Later, IAG activities in the school, such as parents' evenings picked up on the taster experiences.

The take-up of Diploma places has increased but there is no change in gender stereotypical choices. However, the full evaluation showed that the experience had

had some influence on the thinking of about half the participating students.

Contributor 8: Assistant headteacher for student support and guidance at a mixed 11-16 school with 750-770 students

'Atypical role models – people who are breaking the boundaries and going against society's attitudes with their career choices - will definitely inspire people who are on the borderline or hesitating with making their learning decisions."

14-19 Leaner Panel

Illustrating the promotion of equality, opportunity and progression in further education

9. Challenging assumptions about progression: IAG in further education

The Careers Coordinator leads an IAG team, including three Connexions Advisers with a Disability specialist, as part of the Student Services department at a large city-based further education college. The team's work is wide-ranging and demand is high for individual interviews, phone support, events, workshops and for the help desk at the drop-in centre.

The Coordinator monitors statistics of applications to college courses and has noted increases in recruitment to vocational courses. Interest has been stimulated through the activities of the Student Services marketing team who have been offering Women into Technology taster workshops incorporating the college's own women students. Boys have been actively encouraged to consider hairdressing and healthcare.

'I think it's important for us to see role models challenging gender stereotypes who are only a year or two older than us, who are doing a course we are considering now; not just role models who feature way in the future for us. Learner role models feel more real for me at the moment, in a way.'

14-19 Learner Panel

The IAG team is always on hand at events to provide impartial and comprehensive careers advice. These initiatives seem to be having some effect. All applicants for 14-19 courses are interviewed pre-entry and can drop-in or be referred to the IAG team at any point for additional information and guidance.

The Coordinator also uses data to identify where progression is not as expected and therefore where provision needs to be targeted. One particular concern has been with level 3 groups doing vocational courses who have not considered the option of higher education. The Coordinator designed a workshop to encourage these students to think about HE.

'I put out an offering to tutors. We didn't exclude anyone but we knew who we were targeting. Some tutors were less responsive than we'd hoped. I had to spell out what this would tick off on their tutorial schemes that term... Response improved - we were filled to capacity.'

Tutors also attended so that they were able to reinforce messages later. This provision was supplemented by workshops to help students with their personal statements and, on student request, the internal deadline for HE applications was brought forward to better accommodate last minute rushes. Data shows that there has been an increase in applications to HE from vocational courses – up from 422 to 500 just prior to the internal deadline and 79% more students have already met the deadline.

The college itself has aims and targets focused on raising aspirations across all groups and ensuring equality. It is taking highly visible steps to increase awareness across the college community. The student liaison team selects a theme each week for displays and campaigns, such as 'black history', or on gay, transsexual and transgender issues. Volunteers or staff have stands in college atriums to answer questions.

Students with physical or learning difficulties or mental health problems who used to be 'hidden away' are now integrated into the main site and use the library, canteen and other services. All IAG team members are trained in disability awareness and to screen and advise on applications support and challenge students, if appropriate. A specialist Connexions Adviser from the team is dedicated to students on the Skills Development courses (Entry levels and L1). These students have substantial special needs related to life and independence as well as education. 'If progression can be made it will be.'

Contributor 9: Careers Coordinator at a city-based further education college with about 20,000 students drawn from both urban and rural areas, with about 7,000 14-19 year old students

Illustrating the promotion of equality, opportunity and progression in further education

10. Supporting progression from further education to higher education

This urban college is one of the largest in the UK with a 16-19 cohort of nearly 5,000 out of a total of just over 12,000 full-time students. It serves some of the most deprived wards in the EU; most students are white/British but there have been increases in refugees particularly from the Congo and Nigeria. About 85% of parents have no experience of higher education.

The Higher Education and Progression Coordinator is part of a small college IAG team and works in partnership with other IAG professionals across the borough, including Connexions, and with IAG colleagues in colleges and universities. Her focus is informing and supporting young people's choices about post-18 opportunities. Currently over 90% of students have been successful in their HE applications. She has a level 4 IAG qualification and the same in adult literacy.

'I am not there to market the college but to help young people see all the opportunities around them ..There is pressure from demographics and the downturn, plus the reduction in HE places. Certain stereotypes need to be challenged – young people have to raise their game. We want them to make the highest and best and most successful and profitable choice for them.'

The Coordinator systematically analyses destination statistics, including the college database, to monitor internal progression; reviews feedback on satisfaction surveys and from learner voice activity and at the college's self-assessment. On the basis of these she will refine strategy and is proactive with her interventions. She will make a presentation in both years of every level 3 course to talk about options. Contact with universities and scanning the labour market each year ensures her information is up to date. Her aim is to make an early impact on student thinking and planning, for example, to become a strong candidate a student may need to build in work experience or volunteering and this will need to be incorporated in their programme. There can be an issue of student readiness to take this advice on. She can help with advice and applications – many students do not have parents who can help them

with research. She also works in partnership with vocational tutors to alert them to any changes related to progression.

One of the Coordinator's emerging concerns is the disadvantage that can be conferred by social class. More universities are interviewing and students with limited experiences and narrower social circles can be daunted, if not entirely put off, by this. The Coordinator has produced a PowerPoint presentation for the college virtual learning environment (VLE) to help students prepare. Feedback from girls is that one of the most useful aspects was the advice on what to wear: 'smart, not too formal, with a bold colour top that doesn't show sweat marks and that will help interviewers recall you easily.'

The Coordinator checks all tutor references to make sure that any student is not inadvertently misrepresented and to secure consistency of style and register. If needed, the Coordinator can meet with the tutor to talk about the student and then will produce the reference herself. There has been good feedback from universities on the quality achieved through this approach.

One aspect of the Coordinator's role is to support progression of students who have a disability: last year this was 12% of HE applicants. The Inclusive Learning Team provides her with a student profile so that she can help construct an application. This is achieved through a series of interviews with the student, that the student might invite an Inclusive Learning Team staff member to attend. The Coordinator uses a range of techniques, such as audio, to capture information. The college tries to win additional scholarships and has been successful at this, for example, a student was granted a Helena Kennedy Foundation Award last year. These bursaries are to support progression to HE for students in FE who have overcome significant obstacles to complete their education.

Contributor 10: Higher Education and Progression Coordinator at a large further education college serving an urban area of socio-economic deprivation

Approaches to staffing and staff development

The interviews illustrated the parallels between the implementation of delivery approaches and staff development strategy. Where provision is comprehensive, integrated and embedded, as you would expect, all staff need to be not just aware but informed and active in their contributions at some level. Where the approach is based on interventions, opportunities to involve staff and enlist their help are necessarily limited; and even so they are often not utilised. Action on CPD to progress this agenda would benefit from integration into wider CPD planning designed to achieve curriculum reforms.

Delivery by a trained team

The school has a faculty of three fulltime staff dedicated to the teaching of the Personal Development Learning (PDL) programme, supported by a Careers and Business Partnerships Manager (nonteaching post).

At the outset, when planning curriculum reform at a strategic level, the leadership team visualised the impact needed and made a conscious decision to take responsibility for delivery of the PDL agenda out of the hands of tutors. It was not easy to recruit to these new posts and the school is itself training the staff. This includes preparation for sessions on disability (years 8 and 9), diversity (year 8), prejudice and discrimination (year 9), discrimination, human rights and equal opportunities related to employment (year 9) and human rights (year 10). The standard of teaching and learning is very high, as are levels of student satisfaction. 'Their office has glass door so that all the kids know where they are.'

PDL is reinforced by tutors within the vertical tutoring system and by a programme of assemblies. All staff are made aware of the programme focuses and provided with the information they need to support elements such as option choice. CEIAG continues to be managed at a strategic level by a member of the Leadership Team.

Contributor 1

Delivery by a trained team

The college has aims and targets related to increasing gender equality in courses and raising aspirations across all groups. Equal opportunity training is mandatory for all staff and level 4 training for careers advisers provides them with skills and experience to challenge aspirations and decisions that may be based on students' narrow conceptions of ability, roles and options.

Contributor 9

School culture and staff development

All staff are very aware of the need to break down stereotypes and take every opportunity to build aspirations. Needs are discussed by staff informally and at meetings and experiences and knowledge about jobs are shared. Many staff have been at the school for a substantial time, some are ex-pupils who can stand as role models for progression. As new staff begin they are encouraged to embrace this ethos and practice.

Contributor 3

Helping all staff to contribute to CE & IAG

As well as training tutors and a dedicated team, the Coordinator:

- designs and runs INSET for all staff on changes on a 'drip-feed' basis, seeking to make CPD relevant and practical. For example, her most recent session has been on work-related learning and the new framework. She asked staff to conduct an audit and pointed out how IAG was built in. She is planning her next session on the new statutory quidance for impartial careers education and the linked resources, now they are available
- supports staff of vocational subjects to make sure they are familiar with associated careers and helps them to make employer links if needed
- provides each curriculum area with career-related information that comes in to her, such as posters and booklets from universities. She also encourages them to have a 'careers board'

Contributor 2

Training of staff

The school leaders interviewed were finding it difficult to recruit staff who have expertise and experience in these specific areas. The two secondary schools most concerned with the relevance and quality of careers education and IAG curriculum delivery and support were training staff themselves.

Connexions were mentioned as working with students, but no-one indicated any substantial contributions to staff development.

Background and training of leaders

The backgrounds of the leaders interviewed were an interesting mix. In further education, leaders of careers and IAG were professionally qualified at level 4 and one was also a qualified teacher who until recently continued to incorporate this into her role. FE leaders were the only ones who had had training in Equality and Diversity, as part of the core development programme run by their college.

In schools, only one leader had done further training specifically related to CEIAG. One school has established a non-teaching post of Careers and Business Partnerships Manager to act as a different source of information for students and staff. Another was employing former pupils and parents of former pupils in teaching and support roles. They provide real examples of aspirations made concrete.

It would seem that implementing this aspect of the curriculum merits lateral thinking when leaders are taking decisions on appropriate leadership and staff profiles. Judicious appointments can send out powerful equality messages.

'The school is constantly looking at the horizon. We used the ECM outcomes to create structures and looked for the best person to lead the strands. For this strand, it was someone with a non-teaching background. Students appreciate him as a different kind of role model.'

Contributor 1

Lessons for leadership and accountability

All the leaders interviewed had significant points to make for the benefit of other leaders. These are summarised below. The linked questions are offered as prompts for reflection and draw upon the experiences that have been described.

Identify and analyse data that can tell you about your students, their choices and their destinations. As well as hard data on attainment and destinations, vound people themselves can offer valuable perspectives.

- What factors seems to be limiting student success, limiting choice and limiting decisions?
- What approaches might promote equality more comprehensively?
- · What is the role of careers education and IAG within this approach?

As senior leaders, think strategically and don't be risk averse. If you are clear about the heart of what you wish to achieve – your core purpose – structures and curriculum will follow. Think about the big picture and about preparing students for the challenges that life and living may bring to bear on their sense of self, not just about preparation for learning and work.

- If achieving equality of opportunity at your school and a sense of agency within all students were to be your core purposes, for example, what would structures and curriculum look like?
- How does this fit within your strategy and plan for curriculum reform?

Audit what you have already got in place. This should not just be curriculum provision or specific interventions – including IAG – but activities to influence culture and hearts and minds.

- What is having the most impact? What evidence would you point to?
- · Which particular needs related to equality and stereotyping are you not touching at all, or very little?

Try to describe the impression someone new would have of how equality operates within your institution if they spent a day with you and your students. This will help provide a litmus test of your culture.

- What messages about equality are communicated explicitly – and subliminally? By whom and by what means?
- How do careers education and IAG support or contradict these messages?

'Cultural things are critical. When you conduct observations of teaching and learning, what comes over? Look at body language, vibes and tone. Don't give the impression you are writing kids off early -"the class clown" or "always late" – labelling can stick. Don't operate on assumptions and talk about the kind of people that do those kinds of jobs. Kids may count themselves in and count themselves out. ... Leaders should model these things.'

Parents can have a huge influence on choice and many have traditional attitudes and limited knowledge about opportunities and who does what.

- How effectively do you use existing contact with parents to raise both this agenda and active engagement generally
- How can you use your profiling of parents to develop communications and activities that are better targeted?

Whatever you decide to do, everyone has to be behind it. This means leadership and commitment from all senior managers, as well as a leader with specific responsibility for this area of work. And it also means making explicit the contributions that are required from all staff.

- As well as a curriculum plan, what staffing plan is in place?
- How can learner voice methods be used to provide feedback and inform development?
- What monitoring is in place to track that equality of opportunity is a reality?
- What specific evident of impact related to this area is contained in your SEF?

'There has been IAG representation on the SLT for a long time. It is central to our plan.'

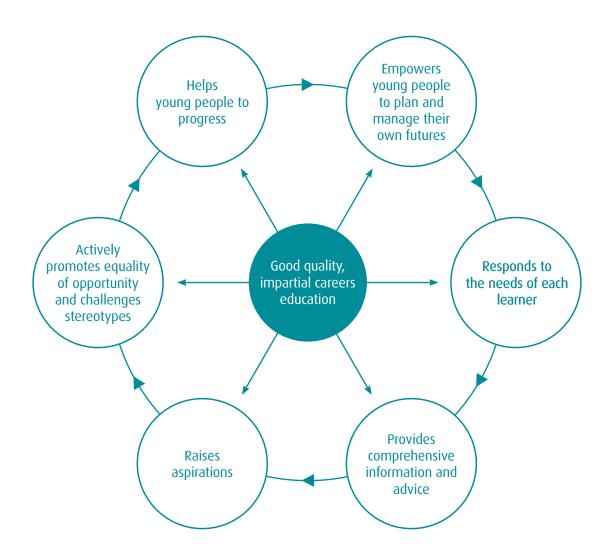
Contributor 1

ANNEX A The new Principles of impartial careers education

Changes made by the Education and Skills Act 2008 require schools, in the delivery of their statutory requirement to provide careers education, to ensure that information about learning options and careers is presented impartially and that advice promotes the best interests of pupils.

The statutory Guidance identifies six Principles of good quality, impartial careers education that are accompanied by short outcome focused statements that clarity the Principles and help schools to understand if they have been met.

The six principles



1. Empowers young people to plan and manage their own futures

Schools will meet this principle if young people:

- 1.1 are able to investigate opportunities for learning and work on their own
- 1.2 are able to interpret information and to identify partiality and bias
- 1.3 make challenging but realistic plans for their future learning and work
- 1.4 recognise barriers to the achievement of their plans and understand how these can be overcome
- 1.5 are able to review and adapt their plans in the light of changing personal, educational, social and economic circumstances
- 1.6 feed back that they have the skills that they need to plan and manage their careers.

2. Responds to the needs of each learner

Schools will meet this principle if young people:

- 2.1 understand what motivates them, their strengths and their learning/work preferences
- 2.2 know how to access personalised information, advice and guidance (including from specialist agencies) at times, and in formats, that reflect their needs
- 2.3 understand the skills and qualifications that they need to pursue their ambitions
- 2.4 have an individual learning plan (ILP) that they keep under review and update as they approach each transition
- 2.5 influence the design and delivery of careers education/information and advice services
- 2.6 feed back that they have received the personalised support that they have needed to make informed choices.

3. Provides comprehensive information and advice

Schools will meet this principle if young people:

- 3.1 understand the opportunities afforded by, and are provided with easy access to:
- the Connexions service
- **Connexions Direct**
- the local 14-19 prospectus
- Apprenticeships Vacancies online
- other information sources used locally
- the transition support team (for young people with special educational needs and disabilities)
- **Business Link**
- **UCAS** and Unistats
- 3.2 understand the full range of learning opportunities open to them within the school and elsewhere (including at the local college and with work based learning providers)
- 3.3 understand the opportunities for progression to further learning afforded by each course/ pathway, including to Higher Education
- 3.4 understand the work opportunities and rewards afforded by each course/pathway
- 3.5 understand the opportunities afforded by selfemployment
- 3.6 know how to access information about community and voluntary opportunities
- 3.7 understand, and are able to claim, the financial support that they are eligible to receive to support their learning
- 3.8 understand the concept of labour markets
- 3.9 are aware of opportunities within local, regional and national labour markets
- 3.10 understand their rights and responsibilities at work
- 3.11 feed back that they have had the information and advice that they have needed to make informed choices.

4. Raises aspirations

Schools will meet this principle if young people:

- 4.1 have been positively challenged to consider opportunities they might not otherwise have considered (e.g. by experiential learning or "taster" sessions and through visits to employers, work based training providers, universities etc.)
- 4.2 set challenging but realistic learning and work goals
- 4.3 understand the benefits of economic independence
- 4.4 have positive expectations of work
- 4.5 understand the benefits of remaining in learning (including in further education, Apprenticeships, other jobs with training and higher education)
- 4.6 recognise when advice provided from informal sources has been shaped by the life experiences of the advice giver and may be inaccurate or incomplete
- 4.7 feed back that they are excited by, and committed to, further learning.

5. Actively promotes equality of opportunity and challenges stereotypes

Schools will meet this principle if young people:

- 5.1 are able to recognise and challenge stereotypical views of opportunities in learning and work
- 5.2 understand that stereotypical decision-making can have financial implications
- 5.3 consider learning and work options that are not generally associated with their school
- 5.4 consider learning and work options that are not traditionally associated with their gender. ethnicity, faith, learning or physical ability, cultural or socio-economic background
- 5.5 make successful transitions when they choose non-traditional opportunities
- 5.6 feed back that they recognise, and reject, learning and work stereotypes.

6. Helps young people to progress

Schools will meet this principle if young people:

- 6.1 understand the relevance to their future lives of each part of the curriculum
- 6.2 understand the progression opportunities (in terms of learning and work) afforded by each part of the curriculum
- 6.3 understand the importance of Key Stage 4 and post-16 subject choices on long term work and career options
- 6.4 can follow applications procedures and prepare for interviews
- 6.5 understand that they are guaranteed an offer of a place in learning after Year 11 and Year 12, and know how to access this offer
- 6.6 understand and demonstrate the main qualities. attitudes and skills needed to enter, and succeed in, working life and independent living
- 6.7 understand the Common Application Process and are able to use it as required when applying for post 16 provision
- 6.8 progress smoothly into employment, education or training after leaving school
- 6.9 feed back, after leaving school, that they are satisfied with the decisions that they have made.

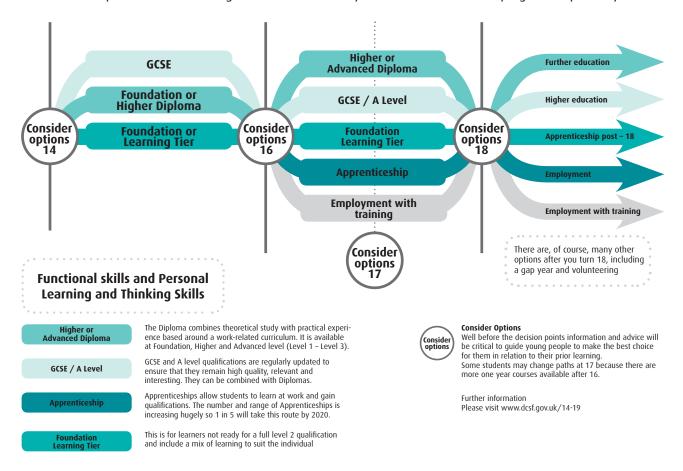
Definitions

In the statutory guidance the following definitions are provided:

- "Careers Education" helps young people to develop the knowledge, confidence and skills that they need to make well-informed, thought-through choices and plans that enable them to progress smoothly into further learning and work, now and in the future.
- "Information, advice and guidance" is used to refer specifically to personalised support on learning and work pathways and on other key issues that impact on young people's ability to develop and progress. Effective, personalised IAG -which may be delivered by a very wide range of people within the school/ PRU and externally- enhances and complements careers education.

ANNEX B The new Principles of impartial careers education

Many of the case studies made reference to the importance of enabling students to fully understand the options that are now open to them. The diagram below is currently in use to show the four progression pathways.



List of contributing organisations

- 1. Hillview School for Girls
- Greensward Academy
- St Mary's CE Primary School
- St Vincent's School
- 5. Ash Field School

- 6. Kirk Balk School
- University of Manchester
- Framlington Earl High School
- City College Plymouth
- 10. Wigan and Leigh College

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