

Speech

Nicky Morgan: Leicester Enterprise Adviser Network launch

From: [Department for Education](#) and [The Rt Hon Nicky Morgan MP](#)
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The Education Secretary speaks about careers advice provision at the launch of the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Adviser Network.



Good morning ladies and gentleman, and thank you Corin [Crane, Director, Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership] for that introduction.

Both as the Secretary of State for Education and as a Leicestershire MP, it's such a delight to be here today, launching the Leicester and Leicestershire Local Enterprise Partnership's local Enterprise Adviser Network in partnership with the Careers and Enterprise Company.

And it's a real pleasure to welcome the Careers and Enterprise

Company's Chief Executive, Claudia Harris, here this morning.

As a government we have made it a priority to make sure the education system is better linked to the world of work, with emphasis on young people mastering the skills the economy needs and relevant qualifications respected by employers who are able to have greater influence on the curriculum and how it is delivered.

This government wants to see real and long-lasting improvements to the quality of careers advice and guidance, with schools and employers working more closely together.

Getting this right means opening a world of opportunity for young people, making sure each and every one of them has the chance to succeed in life, and is a key component of our commitment to govern as one nation and deliver social justice.

We know we have made great strides forward since 2010, with the latest national figures showing 7.3% of 16- to 18-year-olds not in education, employment or training (NEET) - that is the lowest level since consistent records began.

However, in parts of our local area NEET levels are significantly higher than others, so we cannot rest on our laurels, and we have to continually commit ourselves to helping all young people to reach their potential.

By working together - government, schools, colleges, universities and employers - we can all play a part in the success of young people, setting them up with the tools to find a career that suits them and delivers the financial security of a prosperous future.

It's vital for individuals, but actually it's vital for the economy as a whole too. That's why the careers strategy we're publishing this year will rightly recognise the importance of careers provision.

I'm proud that this government has committed £70 million throughout this Parliament to transform careers provision - and we're investing an additional £20 million to increase mentor numbers for those at risk of underachieving, so that they can get the high-quality mentoring that will give them the guidance and

the confidence that will allow them to succeed.

Many organisations are already offering excellent careers and enterprise activities for schools, employers and young people, but access is inconsistent and coverage is patchy.

That's why we backed the [creation of the Careers and Enterprise Company](#), so that it could test and share evidence on what works, address inconsistencies and deliver targeted support where it is most needed, invest in and facilitate young people having more contact with employers during the crucial period when they are making decisions about their future, and create the lasting connections between schools and local employers that will make careers guidance meaningful and matched to local need.


The Careers and Enterprise Company has made excellent progress to date, launching its £5 million careers and enterprise fund, benefiting a number of national projects and of which £184k has been specifically awarded to excellent local initiatives.

Bridge to Work, based at Loughborough College, an initiative I have been delighted to support as a local MP, is one of the recipients.

It offers flexible courses, work experience, interview training, employability and job coaching, as well as intensive courses in vital English, maths and ICT skills. Its focus on the skills gap is helping young people to make a smooth transition from education to the world of work.

In October last year I was thrilled to be able to attend one of their careers events, alongside Claudia Harris of the Careers and Enterprise Company.

Bridge to Work is not alone, with other local schemes like the Engineering Development Trust, Founders for Schools, Twenty Twenty and World Skills UK also benefiting from the fund.

The [Careers and Enterprise Company](#)  has made other progress too, publishing its 'what works' toolkit and announcing

that it will lead a new mentoring campaign with the aim by 2020 for 25,000 young people a year to receive mentor support.

Enterprise education is about teaching young people to recognise and develop the skills of innovation, creativity, risk-taking and management and - while it is for schools to decide how best to provide entrepreneurship education - we know that contact with entrepreneurs and businesses is key, because modern careers guidance is as much about fostering aspiration and building confidence in young people as it is about making sure they have access to meaningful advice.

I am delighted that the Enterprise Adviser Network, launched by the Careers and Enterprise Company in September 2015, has been such a success.

Local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) up and down the country have embraced this opportunity to help deliver their skills plans by bringing schools, colleges, local employers and other organisations together.

The hard work of people like Corin, Abdul [Bathin, Enterprise Co-ordinator, Leicester and Leicestershire Local Enterprise Partnership] and the fabulous team at the Careers and Enterprise Company has got the network off to a flying start and it is already making a difference.

There are now 59 enterprise co-ordinators in 35 local enterprise partnerships, with 340 enterprise advisers signed up.

And it's set to grow rapidly, with the remaining local enterprise partnerships signing up and the recruitment of more coordinators and many more volunteer advisers.

As you know, the Enterprise Adviser Network is able to pair senior business volunteers with senior leadership teams in schools and colleges, with the volunteers supporting those schools to build employer engagement and careers and enterprise plans.

The network is underpinned by the enterprise co-ordinators working in clusters of 20 schools and colleges, knocking on

employers' doors and making it their mission to understand offers from service providers, significantly decluttering the work-facing schools and colleges trying to build engagement plans.

The success of the Enterprise Adviser Network depends on business volunteers giving up their time to work with schools and inspire young people, opening their eyes to opportunities available to them and helping them to take control of their futures.

I want to say a massive thank you to those who have volunteered already - it's such an important role, and I think there's something to be gained for the volunteers too, with the potential to inspire young people into their own sectors and contribute to the way their local economy adds to its workforce with the kinds of skills it really needs.

Evidence indicates, for example, that manufacturing employers find it difficult to fill vacancies because of a lack of applicants with the requisite skills.

This is a particular challenge here in Leicester and Leicestershire because we have higher-than-average concentrations of manufacturing with 14% compared to 9% nationally.

In other industries we have higher-than-average logistics and public sectors too, so we need to make sure we are taking steps to address that in the way we train and advise our young people on careers.

The Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Adviser Network was created to build the lasting connections between local employers, and schools and colleges that Leicester and Leicestershire really needs.

I'm so pleased that the Leicester and Leicestershire Local Enterprise Partnership has been so quick off the mark, recruiting one enterprise co-ordinator already, with 17 local schools and colleges signed up, and 14 enterprise advisers recruited to the programme, which it is now seeking to match.

The network ambitiously aims to have 20 schools signed up and

20 enterprise advisers recruited by the end of this month, and to have another enterprise co-ordinator in post, and 40 schools and enterprise advisers involved by September.

And I think that approach is absolutely right because we have to be ambitious for every young person and stretch the network's reach as far as we can.

I'm really pleased that established and successful local provision like the Leicestershire Education Business Company and Leicestershire Cares are at the heart of the local enterprise partnership's development of the Enterprise Adviser Network.

The network is already a fantastic example, building on the excellent practice that exists and stripping out unnecessary duplication, making it easier for schools and colleges to connect with local employers and careers and enterprise providers across the country.

I want to take this opportunity to wish Abdul well in his role as Enterprise Co-ordinator and ask that you work with him in the coming months and years, as he seeks, with his wealth of experience working with local businesses and young people, to grow the network and make it a success.

I'm so excited to see the Enterprise Adviser Network operating here in our local area.

The guidance, support and opportunities it can and will offer to young people here in Leicester and Leicestershire is crucial to making sure they are able to make informed decisions about their future careers, while at the same time matching them with the needs of our local economy.

Armed with the right information those young people can make choices that suit them and their skills, setting them up for the futures they really want.

Thank you.

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The Rt Hon Nicky Morgan MP

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