

# National Evaluation of Key Stage 4 Work-related Learning Demonstration Projects

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and John Ferguson  
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Education and Employment

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of Key Stage 4  
Work-related Learning  
Demonstration Projects***

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### **Student attainment**

1. Students in the project group generally attained GCSE results at around the same level as the average year cohorts for their schools. Since disaffection was a criterion in selection for several project groups, this represents a considerable achievement. Many students successfully completed units (and/or full awards) in Key Skills, NVQs and GNVQs.
2. There are some dramatic examples of progress from KS3 to KS4 in some schools, but overall the extent of distance travelled by project students is not dissimilar to that of the full year cohorts. This, too, represents considerable progress (see previous point).
3. Among project group students, there were slightly lower percentages (-2%) for progression into full time education post-16, and slightly higher percentages (+4%) for entry into the work-based route, than the averages for the full year cohorts.

### **Student motivation**

4. Evidence from the national data suggests that unauthorised absence rates for project groups improve (ie. reduce) over the life of a project, such that the rates in Year 11 are better than those for both comparator groups and year cohorts. At project level, there is evidence of students' attendance and behaviour improving, following participation in the project.
5. The overwhelming feedback from teachers was that practical, work-based and work-related learning secures improvement in student behaviour. Work-related learning can enhance *mainstream National Curriculum subjects* as well as forming the basis of a *specific learning programme*.
6. For many students, the biggest boost to self-esteem and confidence was being selected for what was seen to be a high status initiative. Events such as residentials, conferences, workshops or visits were generally well received; they typically involved journeys off-site and involvement with adults other than teachers.

### **Other impacts**

7. Several schoolteachers received training for D32/D33/D34 qualifications through the projects. Staff development, and raising awareness of the work-related curriculum generally, were regular features and well received. There would be merit in capitalising on lessons learned by teachers to date by means of an ongoing INSET strategy.
8. Timetabling changes required a long lead-time, and sometimes also a campaign of 'winning the hearts and minds' of senior managers and teachers not directly involved with the project. It was not realistic to expect students who lack motivation in the first place to put in the additional time required to catch up with course work, out of taught periods.
9. Feedback on piloting Key Skills (whether or not the programmes were accredited formally) was positive, although cost was a major constraint to accreditation. Support from awarding bodies for schools piloting new courses and assessment techniques was patchy. Often local post-16 providers were a source of more ready advice. In some areas, support from employers for Key Skills was outstanding.
10. Employers were often willing to make important contributions but they did not always appreciate the 'big picture'. The most productive contacts tended to be with local employers where there was a link between the curriculum content and the nature of the employers' business. A major source of frustration over student placements at local opportunity providers was insufficient attention paid to practical arrangements (eg. concerning travel or passing on information about student absences).

### **Sustainability and replicability**

11. There was generally a commitment to local embedding and dissemination. Whilst some enhancements do not require major new funding (eg. updating curriculum materials), others carry a unit cost which cannot be significantly reduced (eg. residential events).
12. Many models could be replicated fairly easily, but would still need customising to different situations. Training for teachers would also be required in the new areas.

### **Management issues : school level**

13. Whole school planning was a determinant of effective implementation. This involved a coherently argued and explicitly stated curriculum philosophy, support from senior managers and the whole-hearted support of a critical mass of teachers. The role of lead teacher was crucial. Key qualities included enthusiasm, commitment and the ability to communicate well.

### **Management issues : project level**

14. Successful projects were clear from the outset as to what precisely they wanted to achieve. It was essential to be clear as to which features were mandatory (eg. the year groups to be involved or the training to be supplied to lead teachers), and which were negotiable (eg. timetabling arrangements in participating schools). Building on other local initiatives was often helpful, although it could constrain creativity and make evaluation more complex.
15. The professional leadership of the project manager/co-ordinator was crucial. Support structures were also important: no individual has the full range of skills, knowledge and experience required. Using local steering groups effectively required both prior planning and imagination. It was vital to consult with, and secure the ownership of, practitioners.
16. Several special schools and pupil referral units participated in local projects and made important contributions. Indeed, the greater flexibility applied to curriculum planning and management at such institutions made some enhancements easier to incorporate than in mainstream schools.

### **Management issues – national level**

17. For the future, DfEE should specify evaluation requirements in greater detail and include them in the contractual arrangements. There would be merit in DfEE and Ofsted reviewing carefully the arguments for including schools experiencing difficulties (eg. as evidenced by Special Measures) in initiatives of this type.
18. If Key Skills had been retained pre-16, it would have been essential that accredited outcomes had been taken into account in the calculation of school performance at KS4; and that Examination Boards had reviewed the scope and style of support provided to schools for pre-16 Key Skills work. However, schools were disappointed that approval to continue offering generic Key Skills pre-16 would only be forthcoming during the life of pilot projects. This appeared to place in question the rationale for embarking on some of the pilots.

# **I: BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY**

## **INTRODUCTION**

- 101 This report has been prepared by SWA Consulting (SWA) for the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE). It is the final report for the project entitled National Evaluation of Key Stage Four Vocational and Work-related Learning Demonstration Projects (KS4 DPs).
- 102 The main report is in three parts:-
- an executive summary (see above);
  - the substantive text (of which this is the first chapter);
  - 'pen pictures' of all 35 DPs (as appendices).
- 103 Six individual papers have also been written up on the DPs selected to act as case studies. These were Aztec (Merton), Countec (Milton Keynes), Leicester, Stoke-on-Trent, Sunderland and Trafford. The individual case studies will be made available to the relevant local partners, but not published in the full sense of the term. Case study DPs may be willing to make copies of their reports available to others on request, but that is a matter for each project.
- 104 This opening chapter:-
- sketches in the background to the study;
  - sets out its objectives;
  - summarises the national evaluation strategy and data sources;
  - comments on causality and the terminology used throughout.

## **BACKGROUND**

- 105 The prospectus inviting bids for DPs was published in 1997, following the previous year's consultation document entitled 'Equipping Young People for Working Life'. The broad aim of local projects was defined as 'to develop additional programmes of work-related learning at KS4, supported – as appropriate – by employers and/or Further Education Colleges/training providers'.
- 106 At the next level of detail, the national objectives were defined as:-
- (a) 'to improve young people's motivation and attainments;
  - (b) to prepare young people for working life by giving them an awareness of the skills and attitudes required by employers;
  - (c) to provide young people with the opportunity for work-related learning;
  - (d) to help young people make an effective transition from school to post-16 options;
  - (e) to promote Key Skills and, wherever possible, to test the certification of the NCVQ Key Skills Units in Working With Others and Improving Own Learning and Performance;
  - (f) to forge and/or enhance links between schools and colleges/training providers and employers.'
- 107 In practice, the range of activities undertaken within local projects was extensive. Purely to give an initial feel for the sort of components to be found in DPs, we add the following examples:-
- work experience placements enhanced to provide direct links with KS4 course work (eg. linked to "mainstream" National Curriculum GCSEs or GNVQs);
  - regular timetabled (eg. half a day per week) placements with opportunity providers (eg. an employer or FE college), extending over a full academic year;
  - piloting courses new to the pre-16 curriculum (eg. Key Skills);

- different teaching styles, including project work;
- residential experiences;
- greater emphasis on recording of achievement (including Progress Files), portfolio building and mentoring.

108 Further details of the projects in summary format are given in Chapter II. In addition, "pen portraits" of individual projects have been prepared and enclosed as appendices.

## **OBJECTIVES**

109 The national aim and objectives for local projects were set out above. A parallel set of objectives was defined for the national evaluation, however. These were as follows:-

- (a) 'to identify the impact of the projects. This will involve assessing the impact on young people in terms of the objectives of the initiative, the impact on links between schools and employers, colleges and trainers and, where relevant, the testing of the certification of NCVQ Key Skills Units;
- (b) to explain the factors which influence the relative success or failure of projects;
- (c) to analyse and validate the management information and performance indicators used on projects;
- (d) to assess any relevant externalities;
- (e) to assess, so far as is possible, the extent to which projects are likely to be capable of local or national replication.'

## **NATIONAL EVALUATION STRATEGY**

110 The national evaluation strategy was designed to enable authoritative judgements to be made on progress against these objectives. There were three main components:-

- management information, completed by each project, with quantitative data on participating schools and students, including performance at Key Stages 3 and 4, attendance records and destination (post-16) statistics;
- reports prepared by each project covering general progress on a termly basis, but with greater depth at the baseline, year-end and project-end stages;
- case studies (of six projects only) prepared by SWA, in partnership with local projects (and/or local evaluators). These were designed to explore qualitative aspects in greater depth and were selected to obtain as balanced a view as possible across the dimensions of geography, type, duration, objectives, partnerships and focus.

111 This report builds on material from all these sources, although in practice, most is derived from the project reports and case studies. The wide divergence in the scope of DPs, together with difficulties experienced by project managers in extracting comprehensive and consistent data from participating schools, resulted in the national management information being less comprehensive than hoped for. Nevertheless, quantitative data is presented in the text, wherever it is able to support key findings.

## **CAUSALITY**

112 We have stressed throughout this study – and repeat here – that extreme care is needed in interpreting the findings from evaluations of this type. For example, the reasons for changes in student attainment or attendance are complex. Simply because improvements are (or deterioration is) evident, it cannot be assumed that the change is exclusively attributable to the DPs. Other factors will almost definitely be playing a part (eg. changes in school personnel or parallel, but unrelated, curricular initiatives). This is why emphasis has been placed on plotting the parallel experiences of comparator groups and exploring process points in greater depth with case studies.

## TERMINOLOGY

113 Throughout this report, the following terminology is used consistently:-

- **cohort** refers to year groups such as the Year 10 cohort in a particular school;
- **project group** refers to the group of students who have been identified as receiving the enhancements introduced through the DPs. In some cases, the 'project group' may be the entire 'year cohort', but in most cases, it is a subset of the latter;
- **comparator group** refers to a parallel group of students who have been identified as having similar characteristics to the project group, but who are not receiving the enhancements introduced through the project;
- **study** refers to this national evaluation study (as opposed to local DPs).

## II: THE PROJECTS

### KEY POINTS

- **The projects varied widely in scope, duration, approach and impact.**
- **Rich qualitative data has been obtained, but the extent and robustness of quantitative data is disappointing. The comparator group data seems not wholly reliable.**
- **A major factor influencing the approaches taken was whether work-related learning was conceived as a response to student underachievement, or a valid curriculum path in its own right, with a relevance to students of all abilities.**

### INTRODUCTION

201 This chapter provides an overview of the 35 projects. The first sections summarise the data at school and project/comparator group level; subsequent sections provide a flavour of the content and management of local projects.

202 The sections are headed:-

- participating schools;
- project and comparator groups;
- focus and timing;
- selection of students;
- activities/content;
- co-ordination.

### PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

203 Across the initiative as a whole, there were 225 participating schools. The total number in each project varied from 1 in Camden to 11 in Tameside.

204 Of these schools, for which supplementary data has been supplied:-

- 85% are LEA, 7% are voluntary aided or controlled, 6% are grant maintained and 2% are 'other' - data held for 93% of schools;
- 60% are 11-16, 20% are 11-18, and 20% are 'other' - data held for 96% of schools;
- 92% are mixed gender, 5% are single sex (female) and 3% single sex (male) - data held for 87% of schools;
- 19 (9%) are special schools and 5 (2%) are pupil referral units.

### PROJECT AND COMPARATOR GROUPS

205 Data from 33 of the 35 DPs shows a total of 10,918 students in the project groups and 8,522 students in the comparator groups. The project groups range in size from 12 (Camden) to 1,540 (Cheshire). The spectrum for comparator groups is even wider from nil (some projects did not identify a comparator group at all) to 4,653 (for Croydon, the comparator group was the year cohort across all LEA schools).

206 Some ethnicity data is held but there are too many gaps to be able to undertake any reliable aggregation or averaging. For those projects where robust data has been supplied, the highest proportion of students from ethnic groups were in Newham (project group 69%, comparator group 61%), Southwark (project group 59%, comparator group 70%) and Leicester (project group 48%).

## FOCUS AND TIMING

207 Local projects varied considerably in their coverage and scope. For example:-

- the school years which provide the principal focus for the project were mostly Years 10 and 11 (over 70%), although others focused on Year 10 only (about 20%). In addition, some projects included Year 9 (on the grounds that preparation for option choices was a constituent part of a KS4 project);
- approximately one third of the projects were designed to be completed in one year only (ie. 1997/98), but the majority were conceived over two years (ie. 1997 to 1999).

Table 2.1 overleaf summarises the position.

208 While all projects were ultimately student-focused, some allocated significant time in the early stages in preparatory activities such as:-

- developing a new local partnership that would ultimately be required to deliver the chosen programme;
- commissioning the preparation of teaching/learning/assessment materials;
- planning how the programme would be integrated into individual school curricula and timetables.

209 In practice, therefore, some projects took the first term or two as a groundwork period for capacity building of various kinds – sometimes only introducing the programme to students in year two. In other projects, however, no substantial preparatory work on the partnership itself or on staff/curriculum development was necessary and students were able to start on their programmes in September 1997 or January 1998.

210 But there was another distinction, beyond the length of the lead period needed before the student programmes could get underway. This was that some projects deliberately adopted a policy of *piloting* their chosen approach in year one before introducing a modified version to a larger project group in year two. The Countec/Trident Trust project went even further by restricting early activity within the period of the whole DP to a limited number of students but building in what were called 'multiplier strategies'. In this way, the project was able to apply what had been learned (about using ideas for enhanced work experience to boost achievement in core National Curriculum subjects) to a much larger number of students in subsequent years.

**Table 2.1: Overview of DPs by duration and year group of participants**

| Project              | 1yr project | 2yr project | Year cohorts involved |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Aztec                | ✓           |             | 9 & 10                |
| Barking & Dagenham   |             | ✓           | 10 & 11               |
| Barnsley             |             | ✓           | mainly Year 10        |
| Camden               |             | ✓           | 10 & 11               |
| Cheshire             |             | ✓           | 10 & 11               |
| Countec              | ✓           |             | 10                    |
| Coventry             |             | ✓           | 10 & 11               |
| Croydon              |             | ✓           | 10 & 11               |
| Devon & Cornwall     |             | ✓           | 10 & 11               |
| Gloucestershire      |             | ✓           | 10 & 11               |
| Gt. Nottingham       | ✓           |             | 10 & 11               |
| Greenwich            |             | ✓           | 10 & 11               |
| Hereford & Worcester |             | ✓           | 9, 10 & 11            |
| Humberside           |             | ✓           | 10 & 11               |
| Kirklees             |             | ✓           | 10 & 11               |
| Leicester            | ✓           |             | 10                    |
| Lewisham             |             | ✓           | 9, 10 & 11            |
| Merseyside           | ✓           |             | 10 & 11               |
| Merton               |             | ✓           | 10                    |
| Newham               |             | ✓           | 10 & 11               |

|                                 |   |   |                  |
|---------------------------------|---|---|------------------|
| Norfolk                         |   | ✓ | 10 & 11          |
| Oldham                          |   | ✓ | 10 & 11          |
| Rotherham                       | ✓ |   | 10               |
| Sandwell                        |   | ✓ | 10               |
| Sheffield                       | ✓ |   | 10 & 11          |
| Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin |   | ✓ | 10 & 11          |
| Southwark                       | ✓ |   | 10               |
| St Helens                       | ✓ |   | 10               |
| Stockport & High Peak           |   | ✓ | 10 & 11          |
| Stoke-on-Trent                  |   | ✓ | 10 & 11          |
| Sunderland                      |   | ✓ | 10 & 11          |
| Tameside                        |   | ✓ | 10 & 11          |
| Trafford                        |   | ✓ | 10 & 11          |
| Tyneside                        | ✓ |   | no data supplied |
| Wigan                           |   | ✓ | 10 & 11          |

- 211 Another model was demonstrated by Barnsley which ran its Key Skills development programme for Year 10 students twice – with 5 schools in the first year and 3 in the second year, only one of which (a special school) was the same in both years. It is interesting that the opportunity was taken to make fairly substantial changes at the end of year one, especially in the wording and organisation of the portfolio building materials (cutting down on the volume of paperwork) and in the system for engaging with employers.
- 212 In some instances (eg. one school in Trafford and the project as a whole in Sunderland), experiences in the first year resulted in a change of focus for year two. Where the redefined project group was a (new) Year 10 group, this resulted in no KS4 data being available in summer 1999; these students will not be completing their courses until summer 2000.
- 213 Our overall impression is that, with a few exceptions only, one-year projects found it highly challenging to organise the necessary preparation, student programmes and evaluation in the course of twelve months. As Sheffield put it – ‘it is difficult to undertake a potentially three year project in one year’.

## SELECTION OF STUDENTS

- 214 The general theme of wide divergence between projects applied to the selection of students for the project groups, too. Indeed, within some projects, there were dissimilar approaches between schools. The criteria applied most consistently were:-
- students identified by teachers on *subjective* grounds (eg. poor attitudes, likelihood of benefiting from a different approach);
  - students identified on *objective* criteria (eg. YELLIS scores, unauthorised absences);
  - an entire year cohort in one or more schools;
  - students volunteering for a new curriculum offer (eg. a vocational GCSE).
- 215 Mention was made above of differences within the same project. Among the four schools in the Trafford DP, for example:
- the project groups in two schools were defined by those participating in MPower, an SRB-funded initiative managed by Manchester TEC and the Trafford Business Education Partnership. This provides extended work experience on a full or half-day release model, linked to the attainment of NVQ awards (full or selected units);
  - the project group in one school (for pupils with moderate learning difficulties) was the entire school year;
  - the project group in the fourth school was defined by those opting for a specific course, accredited by Edexcel (Professional Development Award in Computer Studies). These students were also in a *different school year* (Year 10 in the second year of the project, whereas participants in the other schools were by then in Year 11).

- 216 Even where there were general criteria agreed across the projects as a whole, there was often considerable flexibility as to the way in which schools *applied* the criteria. Thus, some students were clearly identified - or at least strongly steered towards the project group – by teaching staff, while others were given much more of a free choice. Occasionally, when the opportunity was regarded by staff, students or parents as being particularly attractive, there was a difficult local debate on the issue of equality of opportunity. In one school, the initial position taken by the headteacher was that the opportunity concerned had to be offered to the whole year cohort (although this was logistically impossible) or no-one at all.
- 217 The principal criterion for selection of students in Stoke-on-Trent was *under-aspiration*. This was categorically not seen as a criterion interchangeable with underachievement; indeed, the project group included students with a range of abilities. YELLIS data was used to suggest participants. Students' responses to questions on intended next steps were compared with test results, to identify those whose aspirations were significantly below the potential indicated by the scores. In several cases, the lists produced in this way surprised school staff. Nevertheless, the breadth of students within the project group was seen as a strength over time.
- 218 Several projects made determined efforts to break down gender stereotyping. In Aztec, for example, some places were reserved for girls on the project's Trowel Trades NVQ course. Unfortunately, despite some initial interest by girl students, that opportunity was not taken up – possibly as the result of peer group pressures. In Coventry, however, there were girls in all but one of the school project groups for GCSE Design and Technology and, at one school, girls took up one third of the available places.
- 219 There was a further – fundamental – factor which influenced the nature of student participation in the DPs. This was whether the opportunities being offered were perceived as steps towards constructing a *universal* entitlement for work-related learning, or whether the perception was that the opportunities being created were particularly suited to students who, for various reasons, had not succeeded so far with an 'academic' curriculum. In our view, this is a false dichotomy: it is perfectly possible to argue that work-related learning not only adds relevance and intellectual stimulation for all school students across a surprisingly wide range of traditional school subjects, *but also* provides additional motivation and fresh, relevant encouragement to those variously thought of as disaffected or failing to achieve.
- 220 However, the main point we would draw out here is that this philosophy of entitlement (or otherwise) needs to be thought through, agreed and made clear to all concerned at project and school level before the project begins. Otherwise, the process of student selection cannot be logically, consistently and fairly undertaken.
- 221 A similar point can be made about the need to adopt a school and project view of the wider curriculum and transition framework before undertaking an initiative of this kind. It is interesting that many projects, including Leicester, Trafford, Southwark and Rotherham insisted on setting the DP in the context of an overall 14-19 approach. We return to some of these matters in Chapter VII under the heading of *management issues at school level*.

## ACTIVITIES/CONTENT

- 222 Mention has already been made of the types of input which feature prominently across projects (eg. paragraph 107). One way of summarising the position is through setting out which three of the national objectives each DP chose to focus on. This does not provide a comprehensive picture of what was delivered, of course, but it does give a flavour of the types of coverage. This is presented in Table 2.2.

**Table 2.2: Priority national objectives identified by each project**

| Project            | Priority National Objectives |   |   |   |   |   |
|--------------------|------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
|                    | A                            | B | C | D | E | F |
| Aztec              |                              | ✓ |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |
| Barking & Dagenham | ✓                            | ✓ | ✓ |   |   |   |
| Barnsley           | ✓                            |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |
| Camden             | ✓                            |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |   |
| Cheshire           |                              | ✓ | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |
| Coventry           | ✓                            |   |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |
| Countec            | ✓                            |   | ✓ |   |   | ✓ |
| Croydon            | ✓                            | ✓ | ✓ |   | ✓ | ✓ |
| Devon & Cornwall   |                              |   | ✓ |   | ✓ | ✓ |
| Gloucestershire    | ✓                            |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |   |

|                                 |           |           |           |           |           |           |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Gt. Nottingham                  |           |           |           | ✓         | ✓         | ✓         |
| Greenwich                       | ✓         |           | ✓         |           |           | ✓         |
| Hereford & Worcester            |           |           | ✓         | ✓         | ✓         |           |
| Humberside                      | ✓         |           |           | ✓         | ✓         |           |
| Kirklees                        |           | ✓         | ✓         |           | ✓         |           |
| Leicester                       |           | ✓         | ✓         |           | ✓         | ✓         |
| Lewisham                        | ✓         |           | ✓         |           | ✓         |           |
| Merseyside                      |           | ✓         | ✓         |           | ✓         |           |
| Merton                          | ✓         |           | ✓         |           |           | ✓         |
| Newham                          |           | ✓         | ✓         |           | ✓         |           |
| Norfolk                         |           |           |           | ✓         | ✓         | ✓         |
| Oldham                          |           | ✓         |           | ✓         | ✓         |           |
| Rotherham                       | ✓         |           |           | ✓         |           | ✓         |
| Sandwell                        |           | ✓         |           |           | ✓         | ✓         |
| Sheffield                       | ✓         |           | ✓         |           |           |           |
| Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin |           | ✓         |           |           | ✓         | ✓         |
| Southwark                       | ✓         | ✓         |           |           | ✓         |           |
| St Helens                       | ✓         | ✓         | ✓         |           |           |           |
| Stockport & High Peak           |           |           | ✓         |           | ✓         | ✓         |
| Stoke-on-Trent                  | ✓         | ✓         | ✓         |           |           |           |
| Sunderland                      | ✓         | ✓         |           | ✓         |           |           |
| Tameside                        |           | ✓         | ✓         |           | ✓         |           |
| Trafford                        | ✓         |           | ✓         |           |           | ✓         |
| Tyneside                        |           | ✓         |           |           | ✓         |           |
| Wigan                           |           | ✓         | ✓         |           | ✓         |           |
| <b>Totals</b>                   | <b>18</b> | <b>18</b> | <b>21</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>24</b> | <b>15</b> |

Note: The lettering used for the national objectives is identical to that used in paragraph 106, where they are stated in full. The following is an abbreviated version to help interpretation of this table:-

A = motivation and attainment  
C = work-related learning  
E = Key Skills

B = skills and attitudes for work  
D = effective transitions post-16  
F = links with opportunity providers

223 In terms of specific local objectives, some projects decided, from the outset, to concentrate their approach around specific targets and a tight implementation programme. Thus Humberside, for example, set out to achieve Key Skill awards for 160 students and assessor accreditation for 24 teachers, spread equally across all eight of its schools, through a timetabled and phased action plan stretching from bid stage to evaluation.

224 Other projects were designed to incorporate:-

- variety – often attempting a wide range of different objectives within individual schools as well as whole projects; and/or
- experimentation – allowing and even encouraging change all the way through the project on the basis of what seemed to be working and what did not.

225 These factors resulted in some schools becoming involved, simultaneously, with a variety of components such as taster courses, Key Skills events, mentoring, and new kinds of work experience. This was potentially a dynamic and (positively) challenging experience. The scope to try new approaches in the context of a demonstration project was certainly a major benefit.

226 However, it also carried dangers of over-stretching and/or not giving sufficient attention to each strand of the multifaceted project. Another consequence was that coherent evaluation at project level was rendered complex, since precise attribution of outcome to input strand was virtually impossible.

227 It was noticeable that, across the projects, similar kinds of student activity were used to pursue quite different outcomes. Thus, for example, approaches to enhanced work experience were designed:-

- to use specific tasks or log books or diaries to record evidence that could contribute towards the assessment of the generic Key Skills (as in Devon & Cornwall, Southwark, Barnsley, Kirklees and Wigan);
- to reinforce elements of vocational GCSEs (as in Barking & Dagenham);
- to reinforce elements of GCSE core subjects from the National Curriculum (as in Countec).

228 The same is true of link courses with FE colleges which were used, variously, to deliver:-

- elements or units of NVQ or GNVQ courses (as in Rotherham, Sheffield, St Helens and Gloucestershire);
- taster courses (as in Leicester, Croydon and Stockport & High Peak);
- specifically designed programmes that could lead to acquisition and assessment of Key Skills (Rotherham).

229 Many projects found it useful to hold one, two or three day off-timetable events of various kinds, usually linked to evidence collection for later accreditation in Key Skills. Examples include:-

- 'opportunity conferences' held in several Leicester schools. These were one day, off-timetable but in-school events, usually for the whole Year 10 cohort, which were steered and staffed by volunteers from local businesses working with school staff;
- the 'Peaks Challenge' in Devon & Cornwall. This included participation from employers, banks, the TEC and other partners; it focused on relevant Key Skills within the workplace at several levels;
- the 'Skill Builder' simulation events in Aztec designed around 'virtual' projects set in specific local business and employment contexts;
- the two-day mini project held at Peugeot, for the Coventry project, which was a competitive team exercise to 'design and model a town for the 21<sup>st</sup> century'.

## Co-ORDINATION

230 Nearly all of the projects required co-ordination by a project manager, on behalf of the lead body/steering committee, across a number of participating schools and several other establishments and agencies. The nature of that co-ordination depended on whether the project was, in effect:-

- a single initiative being tried on several school sites (eg. the Barking & Dagenham project on vocational GCSEs); or
- a loose grouping of individual school projects designed around those schools' particular needs, under some kind of common theme, eg. Croydon.

231 Further examples of the latter included:-

- the Lewisham project, which sought to raise levels of achievement through a variety of approaches to work-related learning;
- the Trafford project, which tested innovative means of delivering vocational provision in ways best suited to the particular needs of local schools;
- the Gloucestershire project, which developed a range of innovative practice in vocational courses and Key Skills, designed to meet the previous experience and particular needs of a group of different schools.

232 The project manager/co-ordinator was invariably part-time and seconded from his or her other duties – as were any assistants to the project manager/co-ordinator.

233 Beyond that, there was a very wide variety of steering committees, co-ordinating groups, activity forums of different kinds, and consultation arrangements.

234 The style of project direction also varied widely. Some projects were highly task orientated and 'driven from the top' – often by one individual. Some were more concerned with exploring, learning and

adjusting as they developed – and could be highly collegial in nature. Others seemed to struggle to adopt any kind of distinct leadership approach.

235 At this stage of the report, we simply record these differences of directing/management style. Further comment is offered on some of the issues involved and lessons learned in Chapter VII under the heading of *management issues at project level*.

### III: IMPACT ON STUDENT ATTAINMENT

#### KEY POINTS

- **Students in the project group generally attained GCSE results at around the same level as the average year cohorts for their schools. Since disaffection was a criterion in selection for several project groups, this represents a considerable achievement. Many students successfully completed units (and/or full awards) in Key Skills, NVQs and GNVQs.**
- **There are some dramatic examples of progress from KS3 to KS4 in some schools, but overall the extent of distance travelled by project students is not dissimilar to that of the full year cohorts. This, too, represents considerable progress (see previous point).**
- **Among project group students, there were slightly lower percentages (-2%) for progression into full-time education post-16, and slightly higher percentages (+4%) for entry into the work-based route, compared with the averages for the full year cohorts.**

#### INTRODUCTION

301 In this chapter we discuss outcomes in terms of student *attainment* of various kinds. The first three sections present, and comment on, the data on GCSEs, NVQs/GNVQs and Key Skills. The fourth section considers the *distance travelled* by individual students or project groups; understandably, but also disappointingly, the material here is somewhat tentative. The final section reports on student destinations post-16.

302 Comments on other types of impact, such as attendance and behaviour, are provided in Chapter IV.

#### GCSEs

303 In reviewing performance with GCSEs, we distinguish between:-

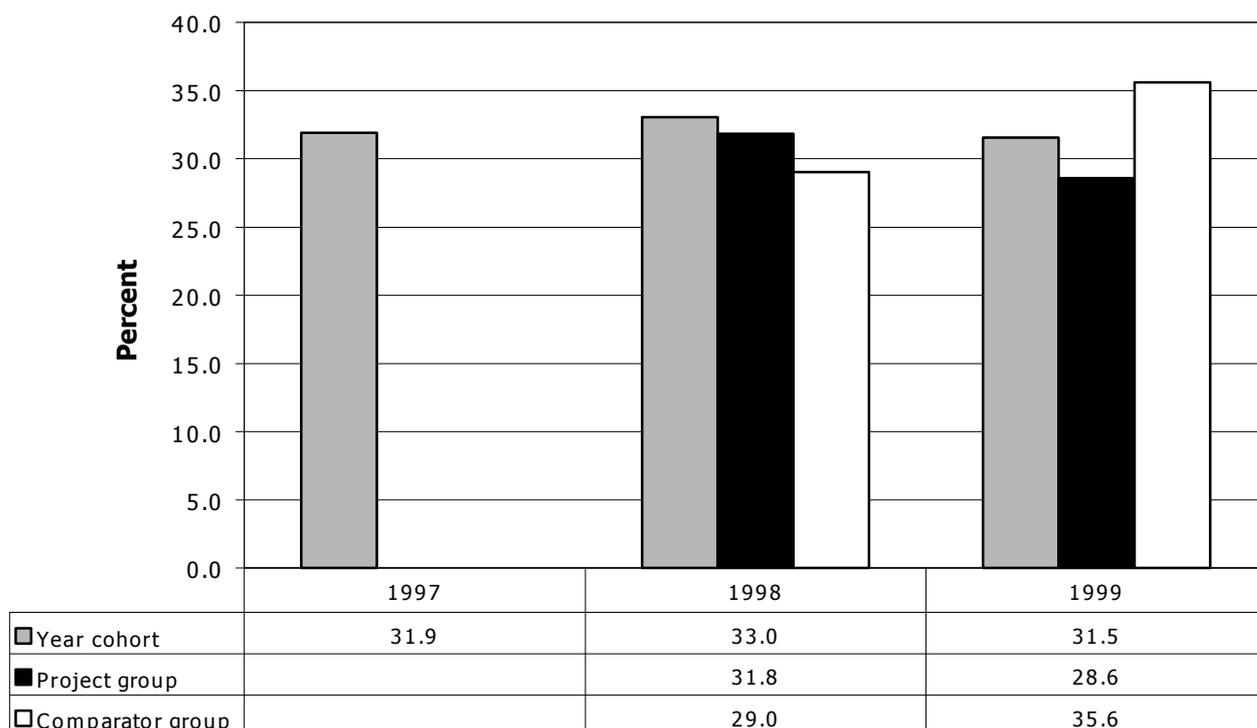
- overall attainment by project (and comparator) students in mainstream National Curriculum subjects;
- outcomes from specific vocational GCSE opportunities, promoted by particular projects.

#### ***Attainment in National Curriculum GCSEs***

304 One of the fundamental questions to be addressed by this study was whether participation in work-related learning had any impact on students' general performance at KS4. By 'general performance' we refer to attainment of mainstream GCSEs as opposed to certified outcomes in specific vocational areas. We therefore asked all projects to supply data at the level of project groups, comparator groups and whole year cohorts, on attainments at GCSE.

305 The data that projects were asked to supply was the percentage of students – whether project group, comparator group or year cohort – that achieved 5 or more grades A\*-C at GCSE. Figure 3.1 below summarises the data we have received for each of these three groups. We did not seek to collect any other data on GCSE attainments – such as percentage achieving 1 or more grade G – although, with the benefit of hindsight, this would have been helpful, given the characteristics of many project groups.

**Figure 3.1: Summary of GCSE attainments in summer 1997, 1998 and 1999 (percentage of students in each category attaining 5+ GCSEs at grades A\* to C)**



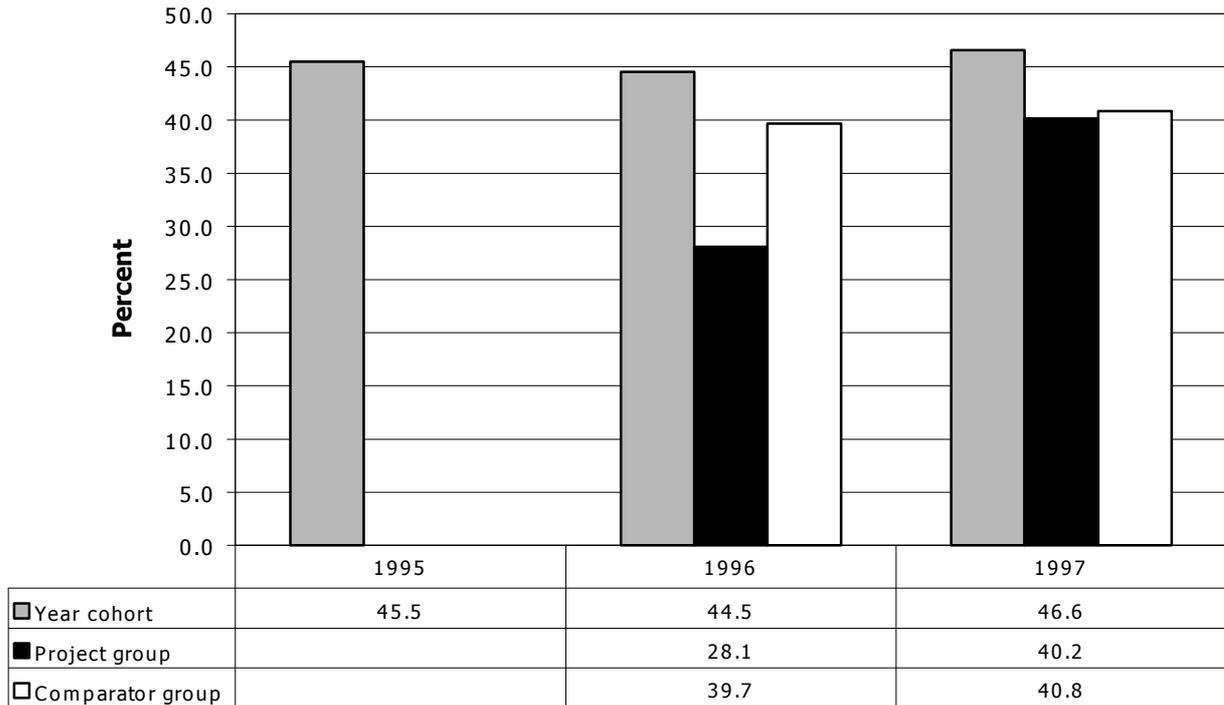
| Number of cases included above |     |     |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| Year cohorts                   | 193 | 163 | 117 |
| Project groups                 | -   | 14  | 88  |
| Comparator groups              | -   | 17  | 45  |

- Notes:
1. The project and comparator groups in most projects were entered for GCSEs in 1999. This explains the larger number of data items for that year.
  2. Summer 1997 was the year before the DP projects started. Only year cohort data is available for that year, therefore, and is included to provide a baseline figure.

306 Given the central importance of this issue, it is particularly disappointing that the data is patchy. Projects seem to have found it very difficult to persuade schools that supplying management information of this type is a valuable exercise. The approach we have taken, here as elsewhere, was to review all the data we had which was relevant to the specific search and produce averages across all usable entries. In practice, this means that the numbers of schools or project/comparator groups reflected in each table differ.

307 To aid comparison, Figure 3.2 below sets out the KS3 results of the same student groups – project, comparator or year cohort – taken two years earlier. This data summarises the percentage of students in each group achieving an average KS3 score of 5 or more. Further comparison of the KS3 and KS4 results are presented later in this chapter.

**Figure 3.2: Summary of KS3 results in summer 1995, 1996 and 1997 (percentage of students achieving an average score of 5 or more)**



| Number of cases included above |     |     |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| Year cohorts                   | 112 | 184 | 188 |
| Project groups                 | -   | 18  | 141 |
| Comparator groups              | -   | 18  | 64  |

Notes: 1. See note 1 under Figure 3.1. Most project groups consisted of pupils that started KS4 in 1997/98, hence the large number of KS3 cases for 1997.

308 Headline conclusions from Figure 3.1 are these:-

- the performance of the three groups are relatively similar. The biggest gap is only about 7% between any two composite averages;
- the project groups performed better than the comparator groups in 1998;
- (by contrast) the project groups performed less well than the comparator groups and year cohorts in 1999.

309 If the comparator groups were put to one side, the data would be very impressive. It is known that in the majority (but not all) of the projects, students were selected on the basis of under-aspiring or under-achieving. Therefore, a scenario in which the achievement of this group is, on average, close to that of the relevant year cohort in the participating schools would suggest that the project was having the impact of bringing the lower aspirers and achievers at least up to the level of the average.

310 The findings for comparator groups are more surprising. Other things being equal, we would have expected this group to have performed at or below the level of both the year cohorts and project groups. This is on the grounds that:-

- they should have been selected on criteria which were broadly similar to those used in selecting project group (eg. including under-achievement); but
- they would not have experienced the enhancements from the project.

311 Our surmise is that the significance of the comparator group is modest at best. This is because:-

- in some projects, comparator groups did not match project groups very closely. Indeed, they were simply the full year cohort in some instances;
- in other projects, the comparator group was selected from a different school to those from which the project group(s) was selected;
- in some projects, the boundaries around what was delivered exclusively to the project group, but not to the comparator group or full year cohort, were far from clearly drawn. In short, the learning experience of the project students in some areas might not have been very different from those of their peers.

312 Despite these reservations, we have concluded it is essential to retain and report on the comparator data. To exclude it completely would run the risk of being accused of ignoring results that may not be as expected. Furthermore, schools and projects that have supplied data for their comparator groups in good faith – and at some inconvenience to themselves – would feel understandably aggrieved at any such exclusion.

313 We would stress that no comparisons between project and comparator data should be made without bearing in mind the caveats set out in paragraph 311 above. Nevertheless, we do believe that the comparator groups can be used as a benchmark in the same way as the year cohort data – as long as firm conclusions are not drawn on the basis of what must be accepted as data of a less than robust quality.

314 Further light may can be shed by exploring specific school – or individual project – data, although such findings cannot be presented as widely applicable, of course. Unfortunately, only a small number of projects provided end of project data in sufficient detail to analyse GCSE results in any depth.

315 Devon & Cornwall was a notable exception. In the five schools which participated (a two year programme focusing on Key Skills and mentoring for students across the whole year cohort), average percentage achievement rose from 39.7% of the year cohort gaining 5+ A\* to C GCSE grades in 1996/97 to 45.5% in 1998/99.

316 Coventry was another exception. Attainment was higher among project groups in two of the four schools, the same in the third, and lower in the fourth, than the comparator groups. At two of the schools, the project group averages were also higher than the year cohort averages.

### **Vocational GCSEs**

317 Coventry was also one of the three projects – the others were Norfolk and Barking & Dagenham – where the overall purpose was to secure improved opportunities for their students through the vocational (sometimes called pre-vocational ) GCSE route, linked to the local employment context. Thus:-

- in Coventry, enhanced course materials/modules were developed and introduced in GCSE Design and Technology: Resistant Materials, and in GCSE Design and Technology: Electronics Products;
- in Barking & Dagenham, the focus was on extending the use of Engineering GCSE;
- in Norfolk, students studying GCSE Food Technology were given an enhanced programme, involving off-site placements with training providers and employers.

318 All three were enthusiastic advocates of this approach. In each case, while very little information was provided on individual student achievement, the overall thrust of the project (as reflected in the final project reports) was on the build-up of course availability and relevant support from local employers. The output evidence related to this objective is impressive (see the section in Chapter VI on *local embedding*).

### **NVQs AND GNVQs**

319 Several projects included NVQs and GNVQs in their curriculum offer. Typically, the objective was to attain discrete units, rather than full awards. Reasons for the latter included the following:-

- the DPs specifically excluded bids from schools or projects which were participating in the Part One GNVQ pilots;
- full NVQ and GNVQ courses can be very demanding in terms of student time, teaching resource and lead planning requirements;

- nearly all projects sought to give students some kind of variety of new learning experiences and deliberately chose to avoid too narrow a focus. There was a concern that some specific courses within the NVQ learning pathway were too constrained and that a mix of units from different NVQ courses would be more appropriate for students at KS4.
- 320 Many projects, however, designed local programmes which matched the material and teaching resource available for NVQ and GNVQ courses (especially from local FE colleges), to the perceived needs of groups of individual KS4 students. Rotherham provides such an example. One college (two others worked in a similar way) linked with a total of 114 students, from 5 secondary schools, to provide a range of particular opportunities (typically 2 hours a week for a term or half a term).
- 321 These programmes included:-
- GNVQ Manufacturing Foundation Level – Unit 7. This used the theme of 'seating within the school grounds' to give the students first hand experience of using the college facilities for manufacturing in the machine shop;
  - GNVQ Health and Social Care Foundation Level – Unit 4. This used the production of a magazine to encourage 'contributing to team activity';
  - NVQ Maintain Safe and Secure Working Environment – Level 1. This programme was designed round the design and creation of dishes for a theme evening in the college Training Restaurant. Here, and in the other examples, there were links to, and a mapping against, requirements of the students' GCSE courses in Design and Technology.
- 322 Stockport & High Peak provides a similar example. Ten schools sent a total of 270 students to a variety of selected courses, chosen from a mixture of NVQ, GNVQ, and NPRA units at local FE colleges. These were typically for half a day a week for between 1 and 5 terms.
- 323 There was encouraging evidence of packages of courses being chosen with considerable care and imagination. For example, in St Helens, the local FE college created a programme which comprised:-
- Media (exploring media audiences, investigating printing and publishing, production of a magazine, visits to industry and Key Skills);
  - IT (creation of 3D images and modelling, interactive games production and Key Skills); and
  - Process Engineering (workshop skills, work with professional engineers and Key Skills).
- 324 Student responses were extremely positive – with a good deal of additional work being done outside of college time. There were also some highly creditable results, with some students gaining full GNVQ awards and others gaining NVQ level 2 in IT.
- 325 Elsewhere, several projects developed approaches that secured achievements and credits in local schemes, often at Entry level. Thus, in Sheffield, students were successful in a total of 214 units, ranging from 'Independent Travel', through 'Costs and Preparation for a Baby', to 'Introduction to Logos'.
- 326 While no project or school was permitted simply to apply the available resource to fund GNVQ Part 1 courses, some projects used the DP to prepare the ground for these courses. Thus, in Lewisham, three schools used one year (only) of the two year DP funding for staff training, before withdrawing from the project, having made successful applications to run full GNVQ courses the following year.
- 327 One exception to the general observation that full vocational qualifications were relatively rare was at one of the Gloucestershire project's 11-16 schools. This school was able to demonstrate that it is possible to fit a full intermediate GNVQ course into KS4, alongside the full National Curriculum, on the basis of a particularly close working relationship with an adjoining tertiary college. All 17 students on the two-year course gained the full intermediate GNVQ award.
- 328 Another exception was at Aztec, where the project was focused on one school and one NVQ programme, namely NVQ Construction (Trowel Trades). The two-year course was based on the school site, and organised through Rathbone CI, with the encouragement and assistance of the CITB. The 22 students (the number dropped to 15 by the end) accumulated between them a total of 56 NVQ units over the two-year period, with several students gaining as many as 6 units each .

## KEY SKILLS

- 329 At the interim stage of this project, there were some concerns that projects and schools were struggling to make headway with the national objective of 'promoting and testing the certification of the Key Skills Working with Others and Improving Own Learning and Performance'. While some problems persisted in year two (and are discussed further in Chapter V), it is encouraging to report that a significant number of projects were able, in the end, not only to develop and establish their teaching and assessment arrangements, but also to secure an impressive volume of student accreditation.
- 330 It is not possible to provide a composite summary of Key Skill qualifications achieved across all projects because:-
- not all schools provided this information to project managers/evaluators;
  - not all projects brought this information together in their final reports or data submissions;
  - (even where they did so) it was not always clear at what level the qualifications had been achieved.
- 331 A notable exception was Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin which provided a breakdown of Key Skill units achieved by school, Key Skill and unit. This is reproduced as Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1: Key Skill units achieved in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin schools**

| School       | Number of pupils in project group | Key Skill Units achieved in |            |              |              |             |             |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|
|              |                                   | IT Level 1                  | IT Level 2 | IOLP Level 1 | IOLP Level 2 | WVO Level 1 | WVO Level 1 |
| 'A'          | 18                                | -                           | 6          | 1            | 14           | 2           | 14          |
| 'B'          | 18                                | 1                           | 17         | 3            | 15           | 4           | 14          |
| 'C'          | 26                                | 14                          | 3          | -            | -            | -           | -           |
| 'D'          | 19                                | -                           | -          | -            | -            | -           | -           |
| 'E'          | 13                                | -                           | 2          | -            | -            | -           | -           |
| 'F'          | 13                                | -                           | -          | -            | -            | -           | 13          |
| 'G'          | 28                                | -                           | -          | -            | -            | -           | -           |
| 'H'          | 23                                | 5                           | 18         | -            | -            | -           | -           |
| 'I'          | 24                                | 9                           | 5          | -            | -            | -           | -           |
| 'J'          | 22                                | -                           | -          | -            | -            | 22          | -           |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>204</b>                        | <b>29</b>                   | <b>51</b>  | <b>4</b>     | <b>29</b>    | <b>28</b>   | <b>41</b>   |

- 332 Other examples of individual projects where hard data was collected and presented in a clear and precise manner include the following:-
- in Southwark, 239 students successfully gained certificates for Working with Others at levels 1 and 2, while 30 gained certificates for Improving Own Learning and Performance at levels 1 and 2. This was a snapshot 3 months after the end of the project: some more qualifications were in the pipeline;
  - in Coventry, 78 students attended a two-day mini-project at the Peugeot Conference centre, of which 6 subsequently gained a level 1 qualification in Working with Others, while 54 achieved a level 2 qualification;
  - in Devon & Cornwall, 30 students from one school achieved both generic Key Skill units at levels 1 or 2;
  - in Kirklees, 97 students from a total of 9 schools attained at least one Key Skill unit and 83 achieved both certificates;
  - in Croydon, 135 students across 7 schools each gained both Key Skill units.
- 333 Reviewing the material on Key Skill accreditation, the overall impression is that:-
- some projects found it necessary (through pressures of time and evidence collecting) to reduce their target to accrediting just one unit;
  - Working with Others was significantly more taught and accredited than Improving Own Learning and Performance.

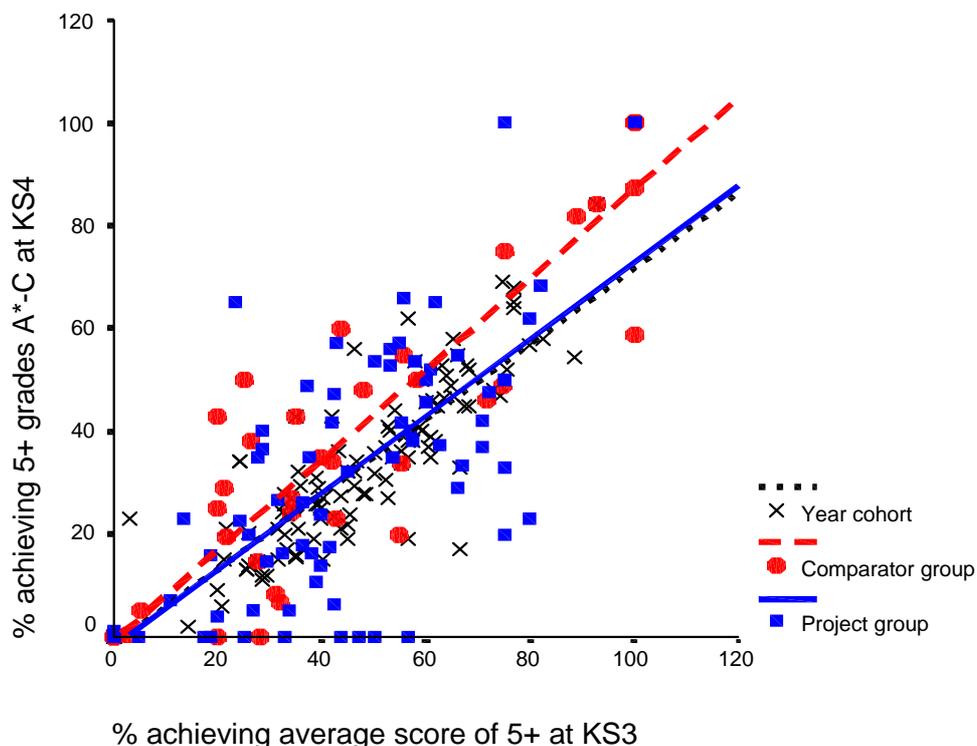
For further discussion of related issues see the section in Chapter V under the heading of *accreditation and certification of Key Skills*.

## DISTANCE TRAVELLED/VALUE ADDED

### General findings

- 334 The analysis of GCSEs was concerned with outcomes at KS4, rather than distance travelled or value added from KS3. Assessing this additionality is notoriously difficult and the subject of current research and consultation within the education community. This project can only make a minor contribution to this exercise.
- 335 Figure 3.3 summarises the available data at school level. The chart compares the percentage of students within each group achieving an average score of 5+ at KS3, with the percentage of students within each group achieving 5+ GCSEs grades A\*-C, in both cases at school level. Each scatter point represents the data from one school. The graph includes the 'lines of best fit' for each series of data.
- 336 The data used for comparing KS3 and KS4 achievements has been "paired" at school level: only schools where the relevant KS3 and KS4 data – for **either** the project group **or** the comparator group **or** the year cohort – is included. In addition, because the volume of available data for one-year projects is very limited, we have only used data from two-year projects. Thus, 'relevant data' relates to KS3 achievements in summer 1997 and KS4 achievements in summer 1999.
- 337 It would have been theoretically possible to have 'paired' the data even further, by including only relevant data for schools where such information was available for the project group **and** the comparator group **and** the year cohort. However, this would have reduced the usable data to, in our view, too small a sample – a maximum of 40 (the number of comparator groups included in Figure 3.3), and probably even less. Accordingly, whilst we acknowledge that the approach adopted does not directly match, for example, project groups and comparator groups, it does benefit from maximising the amount of data used from what is an already reduced sample.
- 338 Table 3.2 overleaf provides some underlying statistical data on the cases in the figure, including the correlation coefficient between the KS3 and KS4 achievements for each of the groups.

**Figure 3.3: Comparison of distance travelled between KS3 (summer 1997) and KS4 (summer 1999)**



Note: The number of cases (schools) included in this figure is 75 project groups, 40 comparator groups and 117 whole year cohorts

339 Headline conclusions from Figure 3.3 and Table 3.2 are these:-

- KS3 data and KS4 data is highly correlated;
- the regression lines for the project groups and year cohorts are virtually identical. Given the point made earlier (see paragraph 309) about the selection of project group pupils, this implies that the projects are making a difference to the actual KS4 achievements of the project pupils, compared to what might otherwise have been expected;
- the regression lines for project groups and comparator groups are on a diverging trend throughout the range of KS3 achievements, and thus the project groups never catch up with the comparator groups;
- the correlation coefficient (and R squared) between KS3 and KS4 is higher for the comparator groups and year cohorts than the project groups, and are at a very high absolute level. This indicates that the KS4 achievements of these groups could be predicted with a high degree of accuracy by reference to knowledge about their KS3 achievements. This is still possible with the project group, but with less accuracy.

**Table 3.2: Statistical data for the cases in Figure 3.3**

|  | Project groups |          | Comparator groups |          | Year cohorts |          |
|--|----------------|----------|-------------------|----------|--------------|----------|
|  | KS3 data       | KS4 data | KS3 data          | KS4 data | KS3 data     | KS4 data |
| Minimum value                                    | 0              | 0        | 0                 | 0        | 0            | 0        |
| Maximum value                                    | 100            | 100      | 100               | 100      | 92.8         | 84.4     |
| Mean value                                       | 44.1           | 31.1     | 45.7              | 39.4     | 45.1         | 31.6     |
| Standard deviation                               | 24.1           | 25.4     | 32.8              | 32.1     | 20.8         | 17.4     |
| Median value                                     | 40.0           | 23.7     | 37.3              | 29.0     | 47.4         | 31.0     |
| Correlation coefficient between KS3 and KS4 data | 0.710          |          | 0.899             |          | 0.876        |          |
| R squared for regression lines                   | 0.497          |          | 0.804             |          | 0.765        |          |

340 There may, however, be an additional explanation of the last bullet in paragraph 339. Examination of the data in Table 3.2 suggests that there may well be a wide distribution of data amongst the project groups. Accordingly, it appears that some project groups have achieved excellent results at KS4. If so, it may be that some projects have delivered an improvement in KS4 achievement above that which would have been predictable. In other words, some projects have proved more effective than others, leading to the wide range of results across the schools.

341 It will be noted that there are a number of 'outliner' points on Figure 3.3, in particular points along the KS3 axis where groups have a "zero" achievement at KS4. It must be remembered that this means that none of the students in the relevant group achieved 5 or more grades A\*-C at GCSE. It is, of course, theoretically possible that all members of a group achieved 4 such grades, but nevertheless would still be recorded as zero achievement at KS4 using the "5+ A\*-C" measure.

342 The project group data is interesting. It appears to show that work-related learning can help students to maintain interest in and commitment to the mainstream curriculum. It also supports the thesis that higher achieving students can benefit just as much as those with lower KS3 scores. The data that is hard to explain is that for comparator groups, although the discussion in paragraphs 310 to 313 above may provide a partial explanation.

343 In order to test the last bullet point in paragraph 339 above, we have considered the various groups as members of one data set, with the type of group – project, comparator or year cohort – as an additional variable. The use of regression analysis on this data – using KS4 as the target variable and KS3 and group type as the independent variables – resulted in a model in which only the KS3 achievements were significant; in other words, the group type did not alter the results of the model. The correlation coefficient for this "total" group was 0.571, again reflecting a reasonable degree of power in predicting KS4 achievements from KS3 scores.

**Comments at project level**

344 Given the relative lack of analysis of KS4 data, it is not surprising that there was little tracking through by projects of individuals or project/comparator groups from KS3 to KS4. This notion of 'distance travelled' was discussed with projects at the September 1997 DfEE workshop. However, it was not generally taken up by project managers.

345 One exception was Aztec, where an analysis was undertaken of the results of the project group that took the NVQ Construction course, compared to a similar sized comparator group. Both groups had similar KS3 starting points (average level across the core subjects of 4.4 for the project group and 4.5

for the comparator group). However, at KS4, the average number of GCSEs grades A\* to G were later recorded as 3.2 for the project group and 7.3 for the comparator group.

346 While this is initially disappointing, it needs to be remembered that:-

- students had a restricted GCSE curriculum because of their NVQ course;
- students achieved some creditable NVQ outcomes (see the section above), which did not count towards the school's or individual's overall points score;
- the project was run during a period of extreme turbulence for the students and staff at the school (see Chapter VII on *management issues at project level*).

347 Another important consideration is what subsequently happened to these Aztec students. On a measure of transition to relevant post-16 training, the project group were clearly motivated to build on what they had achieved, in relation to their NVQ attainment at KS4 (see next section).

348 Another project which applied the distance travelled approach was Gloucestershire. Here, the aim at one school was to see if there was any evidence that the achievement/motivation of students taking a mixed GCSE and GNVQ programme was different from those following a straight GCSE package. Pairs of students with similar Verbal Reasoning Quotient (VRQ) scores were chosen at the beginning of the course and their progress was then monitored over the two-year course.

349 The stated results of this admittedly very small sample included:-

- 'in four out of the six pairs, the pupils who followed a mixture of GCSE and GNVQ gained a higher points score';
- 'pupils who followed the GNVQ course appeared to be better at personal organisation and motivation. Two of these pupils returned to school during the summer holidays to complete units for verification at the start of September'.

350 At one of the Trafford schools we analysed, on a student-by-student and subject-by-subject basis, the differences between teachers' estimated grades and the grades subsequently achieved. This gap could be considered as one measure of the value added by the project.

351 The analysis showed that:-

- the actual grades achieved were two grades above the estimated grades in 14% of cases;
- the actuals were one grade higher in 41% of cases;
- the actual grades were identical to estimated grades in 27% of cases;
- the actuals were one grade lower in 18% of cases.

352 This is tentative evidence of the project having a positive impact on attainment. It should further be noted that increasing student motivation was a major focus of the project in this school.

353 In Stoke-on-Trent we analysed the KS3 and KS4 scores from five of the participating schools for which near complete data was available. Table 3.3 below summarises the results.

**Table 3.3: KS3 and KS4 scores from five Stoke-on-Trent schools**

| Schools          | KS3 scores in 1996/97 |                | KS4 scores in 1998/99 |                |
|------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                  | Project Group         | School Average | Project Group         | School Average |
| School 'A'       | 54.2                  | 52.1           | 23.5                  | 30.6           |
| 'B'              | 42.9                  | 50.2           | 57.1                  | 35.7           |
| 'C'              | 42.5                  | 42.5           | 6.3                   | 25.5           |
| 'D'              | 40.0                  | 88.6           | 35.9                  | 54.5           |
| 'E'              | 23.5                  | 38.8           | 65.0                  | 31.0           |
| Weighted average | 40.7                  | 53.3           | 38.8                  | 34.8           |

Notes: 1. KS3 scores are expressed as the percentage of students achieving an average level of 5 and above at KS3. The average figure is calculated as the sum of the six KS3 test and teacher assessment results for English, Maths and Science

2. KS4 results are expressed as the percentage of students achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C

- 354 This data exemplifies the complex pictures which emerge from more detailed analysis. However, the positive finding is that, whilst on average a **lower proportion** of the project groups achieved an average KS3 score of 5 than the year cohorts, a **higher proportion** achieved 5+ grades A\*-C at KS4 than the year cohorts. Of course, there are differences between each of the schools (eg. see the results for schools C and E). Attributing different lengths of distance travelled to nuances within the project would be difficult to justify without a much more detailed analysis (which would also need to take into account school variables and other contextual factors). Nevertheless, the table illustrates both the approach and the fascinating questions that such data inevitably prompt.
- 355 Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin provided a similar data set to that reported above for Stoke-on-Trent. Table 3.4 summarises the position in the former project.

**Table 3.4: KS3 and KS4 scores from 10 Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin schools**

| Schools                 | KS3 scores in 1996/97 |                | KS4 scores in 1998/99 |                |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                         | Project Group         | School Average | Project Group         | School Average |
| School 'A'              | 68.3                  | 74.2           | 68                    | 70             |
| 'B'                     | 83.2                  | 66.2           | 68                    | 58             |
| 'C'                     | 33.2                  | 31.2           | 15                    | 14             |
| 'D'                     | 66.0                  | 75.1           | 55                    | 57             |
| 'E'                     | 27.1                  | 38.1           | 21                    | 28             |
| 'F'                     | 71.7                  | 71.3           | 26                    | 51             |
| 'G'                     | 66.0                  | 63.2           | 67                    | 46             |
| 'H'                     | 70.9                  | 77.4           | 35                    | 67             |
| 'I'                     | 72.9                  | 57.9           | 58                    | 42             |
| 'J'                     | 91.3                  | 67.0           | 48                    | 40             |
| <b>Weighted average</b> | <b>65.5</b>           | <b>63.7</b>    | <b>47.2</b>           | <b>48.6</b>    |

See notes 1 and 2 under Table 3.3

- 356 This table replicates the complex picture reported above for Stoke-on-Trent, although the linkages between KS3 and KS4 scores are more apparent (other than in school 'F'). Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin's final report itself cautions against reading too much into the data summaries alone. Nevertheless, the project does provide a more detailed breakdown of performance in the GCSE subject(s) which provided the focus for project activities in participating schools. Table 3.5 reports on this further analysis.

**Table 3.5: Breakdown of GCSE performance in relevant GCSE subjects across 10 participating schools in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin**

| School | Focus subject | Number of pupils | % attaining GCSE A* to C in 1999 |                |
|--------|---------------|------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
|        |               |                  | Project Group                    | School Average |
| 'A'    | Art           | 18               | 50                               | 43             |
| 'B'    | Art           | 18               | 89                               | 76             |
| 'C'    | Art           | 26               | 50                               | 48             |
| 'D'    | Technology    | 19               | 42                               | 43             |
| 'E'    | Technology    | 13               | 31                               | 42             |
| 'F'    | Technology    | 13               | 61                               | 54             |
| 'G'    | Geography     | 28               | 61                               | 56             |
| 'H'    | Geography     | 23               | 52                               | 79             |
| 'I'    | Geography     | 24               | 54                               | 52             |
| 'J'    | Science       | 22               | 50                               | 45             |

- 357 This table shows that performance in the relevant GCSE subject among project group students was similar to, or better than, the respective school averages in all but two instances (ie. schools 'E' and 'H'). This is tentative evidence of the project having a positive impact on attainment in the most closely linked curriculum areas, even though the general effect on GCSE results across the board is more difficult to demonstrate.
- 358 We note in passing that the use of 'distance travelled' as an important measure of impact has subsequently featured more prominently in the advice from DfEE and SWA to Action Research Projects (1998-2000).

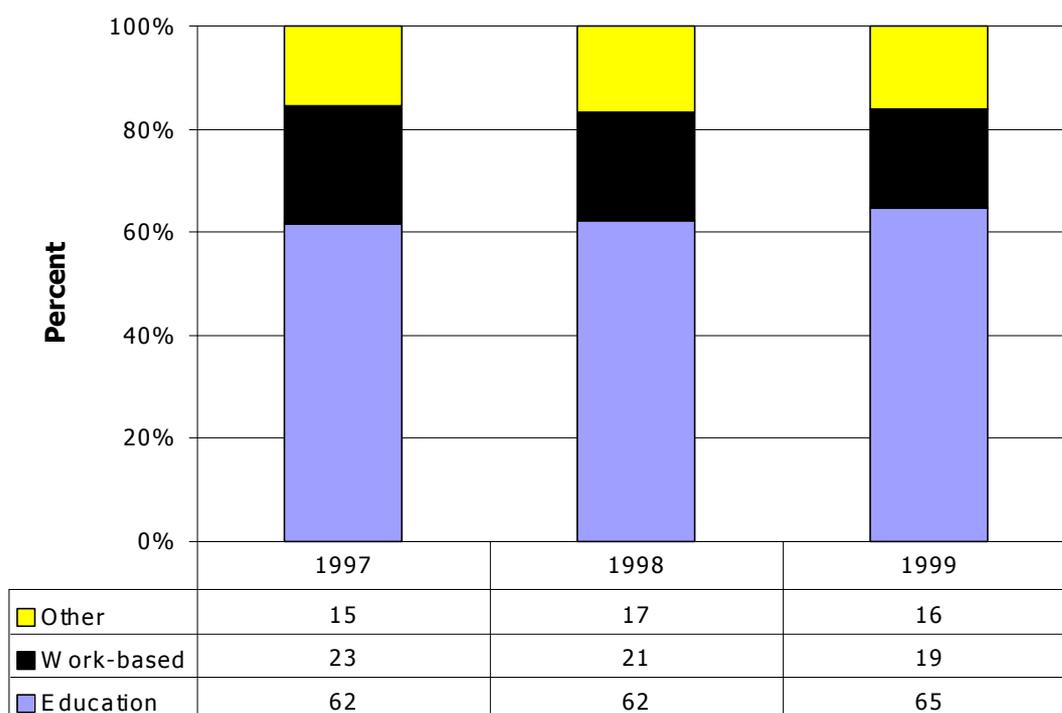
## DESTINATIONS

### General findings

359 Student destinations post-16 provide another important indicator of the impact of the DPs.

360 Figure 3.4 below summarises the data at school level across all the project areas; this relates to the percentage of leavers following each route.

**Figure 3.4: Destinations of Year 11 leavers from participating schools (full-year cohorts) over the 3 years from 1996/97 to 1998/99**



| Number of cases included above |     |     |    |
|--------------------------------|-----|-----|----|
| Year cohorts                   | 169 | 157 | 97 |

- Notes:
1. The categories adopted are based on those used in the annual survey of student destinations. 'Work-based' includes employment and Government-supported training (eg. National Traineeships). 'Other' includes unemployment, not known and other.
  2. The number of cases (schools) is based on those supplying usable data.

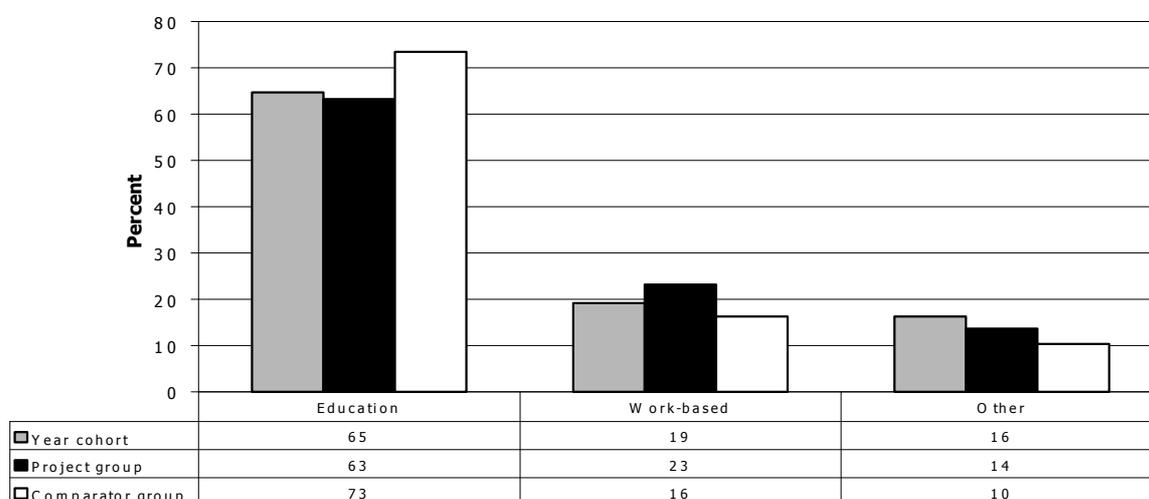
361 For 1999 only, we have also presented the data for the three groups (ie. year cohort, project group and comparator group). This is set out in Figure 3.5. The trend data (Figure 3.4) is important in providing a context within which to interpret the 1999 data (Figure 3.5) It is clear, for example, that the percentage staying on in full-time education has been rising in participating schools, albeit modestly, and that there has been a decrease in those following the work-based route. The 'other' category has remained relatively constant over the three years (with only minor fluctuations).

362 This data is consistent with the earlier findings in the sense that the relationship between the project groups and year cohorts is more explicable than the relationship with the comparator groups. Headline conclusions are that:-

- project group students are less likely than the year cohorts on average to remain in full-time education, but not by much. Comparator group students have the highest staying-on rate;
- project group students are more likely to follow a work-based route than the year cohorts or comparator group students on average;

- project group students were less likely than year cohorts to be categorised as either not in education or the work-based route (ie. less likely to be categorised as 'other').

**Figure 3.5: Destinations of Year 11 leavers in summer 1999, split by year cohort, project group and comparator group**



| Number of cases included above |    |
|--------------------------------|----|
| Year cohorts                   | 97 |
| Project groups                 | 65 |
| Comparator groups              | 33 |

- Notes:
1. The categories adopted are based on those used in the annual survey of student destinations. 'Work-based' includes employment and Government-supported training (eg. National Traineeships); 'other' includes unemployment, not known and other.
  2. The number of cases (schools) is based on those supplying usable data.

### Findings at project level

- 363 Local data on student destinations at the end of KS4 was patchy. The timing of the final report meant that several areas had not yet received the relevant data from their local Careers Service. One exception was Aztec where 15 of the original 22 students on the NVQ Trowel Trades course were continuing with Rathbone CI on related construction trade training after they left school.
- 364 In Coventry, the Careers Service made a significant contribution to the local partnership activity by conducting student interviews and questionnaires during May 1998 (year 1) and March 1999 (year 2). This was augmented by discussions with students by the project manager in May 1999 with a focus on intended career destinations. The results were analysed, by school, across headings which included specific vocational A levels, jobs in engineering or manufacturing, and apprenticeships. One general finding was that a higher proportion of project group students in all four schools intended to follow career paths in engineering or manufacturing, compared with the control groups in the same schools.
- 365 In St Helens, the project manager was able to show evidence of project participants tending to opt for post-16 vocational courses in subjects directly related to their pre-16 vocational programme. There was a particularly high rate of progression from the computer animation course into a range of IT courses post-16. Another interesting feature was that four students from one school began their post-16 careers on A-level courses, only to leave within two months to take up alternative vocational courses which were directly related to their pre-16 vocational programme.
- 366 A point to bear in mind when planning evaluations of future initiatives of this kind is that projects which were only one year in duration, and focused on a Year 10 project group, generally found it difficult to track through what happened to those students at the end of Year 11. This was the case with both career destinations and KS4 results. It is, in any case, more difficult to attribute outcomes at the end of KS4 to Year 10 inputs with any confidence, since other factors will undoubtedly have an effect in the interviewing period.
- 367 Comments on how projects tackled the associated national objective of helping young people make an effective transition from school to post-16 options are provided in Chapter IV under the heading *transition from school to post-16 options*.

## IV: IMPACT ON STUDENT MOTIVATION

### KEY POINTS

- **Evidence from the national data suggests that unauthorised absence rates for project groups improve (ie. reduce) over the life of a project, such that the rates in Year 11 are better than those for both comparator groups and year cohorts. At project level, there is evidence of students' attendance and behaviour improving, following participation in the project.**
- **The overwhelming feedback from teachers was that practical, work-based and work-related learning secures improvement in student behaviour. Work-related learning can enhance *mainstream National Curriculum subjects* as well as forming the basis of a *specific learning programme*.**
- **For many students, the biggest boost to self-esteem and confidence was being selected for what was seen to be a high status initiative. Events such as residential, conferences, workshops or visits were generally well-received; they typically involved journeys off-site and involvement with adults other than teachers.**

### INTRODUCTION

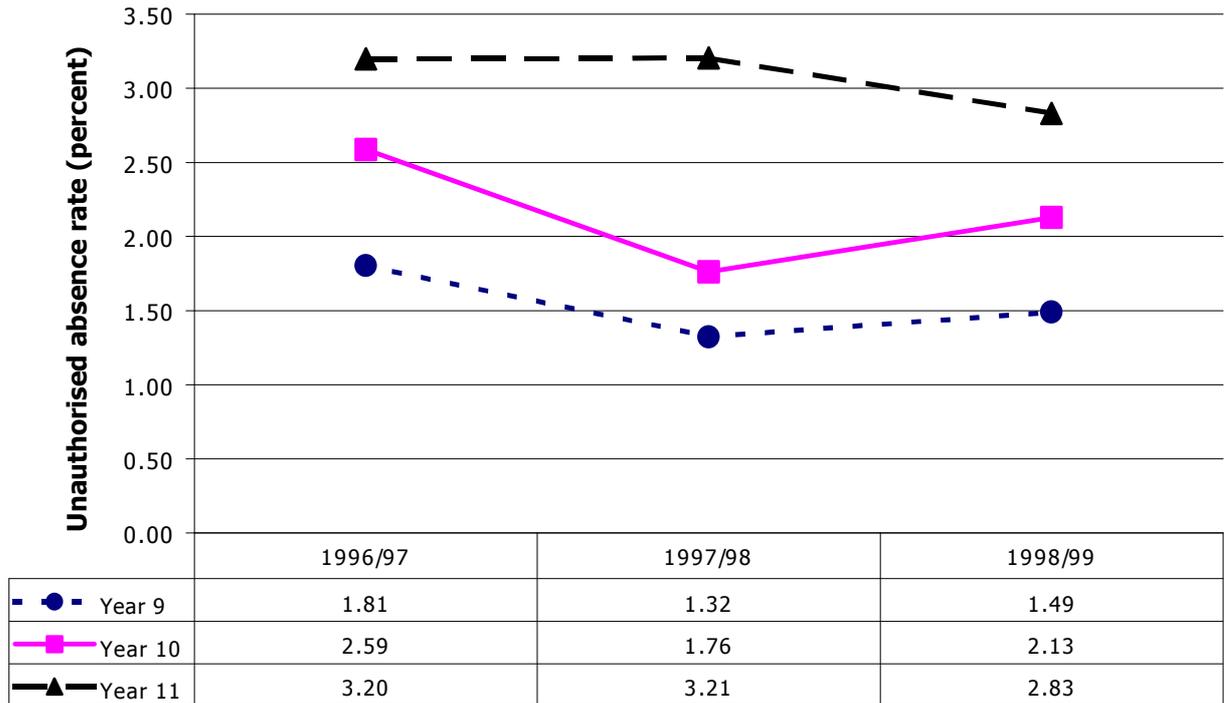
- 401 This initiative was, of course, aimed at much more than improving performance in gaining formal qualifications – crucial though that is. It was also about improving motivation, and creating a positive attitude towards future learning, employment and the world of work. This chapter discusses progress with these latter objectives.
- 402 The first section on attendance is relatively self-contained. However, the following sections (on *behaviour, awareness of the significance of National Curriculum subjects and school generally and of the skills and attitudes required by employers*), inevitably overlap to some extent, especially as it is important to try to summarise the evidence from the particular work-related contexts of individual projects.
- 403 The fifth section provides some direct *feedback from students* which reflects on their particular experiences and, therefore, again stretches across several dimensions of the project outcomes. The final section (*transition from school to post-16 options*) gathers general evidence on the impact on students in relation to their knowledge about, and attitude towards, the choices and opportunities available to them at the end of KS4.

### ATTENDANCE

#### General findings

- 404 A major indicator of motivation is attendance. Projects were asked to supply attendance data for project groups, comparator groups and year cohorts in order to build up a national picture of trends and the impact of the DPs. We asked projects to supply data split between *authorised* absences (ie. that sanctioned by the school) and *unauthorised* absences (which is not sanctioned by schools). In practice, we have used the data for unauthorised absences as the more accurate indicator of motivation (authorised absence rates are more likely to be an indicator of health or parental support).
- 405 Projects were asked to supply this data in terms of the average level of absence (for each of the relevant groups – project groups, comparator groups and year cohorts) expressed as a percentage of the total available sessions in the school year. In the case of project groups, the percentages supplied did not differentiate between absence from school-based sessions or out-of-school sessions (eg. at a placement provider).
- 406 The first data used in this section is summarised in Figure 4.1 below. It shows the composite average unauthorised absence rates for the Year 9, 10 and 11 cohorts over three years. This figure represents the rate of unauthorised absence for the three different year cohorts during each of the three academic years. This figure therefore shows the trends in unauthorised absence for these year groups during, and immediately before, the projects.

**Figure 4.1: Trends in unauthorised absences of Year 9, 10 and 11 cohorts over three academic years**

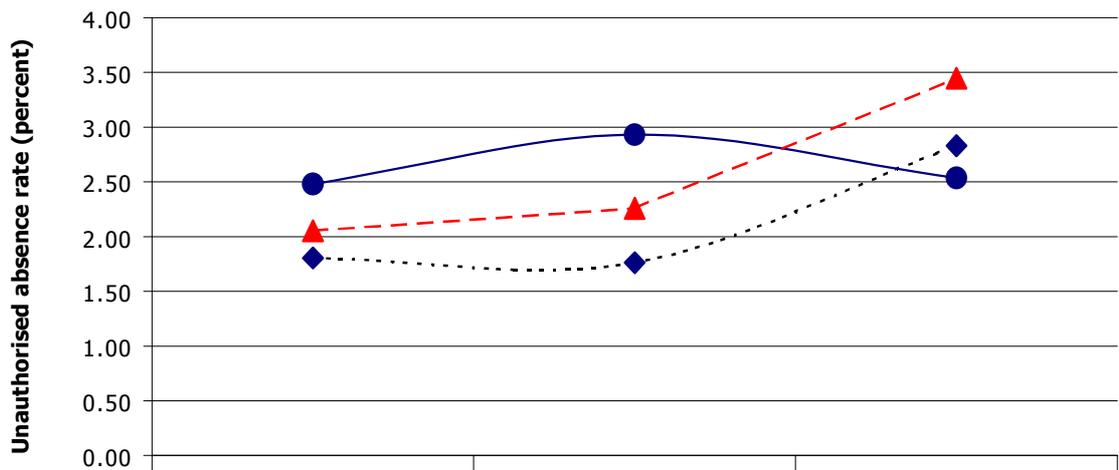


|         | Number of cases included above |     |    |
|---------|--------------------------------|-----|----|
| Year 9  | 132                            | 87  | 53 |
| Year 10 | 123                            | 86  | 60 |
| Year 11 | 120                            | 101 | 65 |

Note: cases relate to valid information from schools.

- 407 The point to note from Figure 4.1 is that unauthorised absences in Year 11 are always higher than in Year 10; and similarly, absences in Year 10 are higher than in Year 9. This is an important contextual point: in short, some increase in unauthorised absences might be expected over the life of the project.
- 408 The next data, summarised in Figure 4.2 below, shows composite averages of unauthorised absence rates for the three groups for the academic years 1996/97, 1997/98 and 1998/99. Whilst the projects were not active in 1996/97, it was possible to calculate retrospective averages for the relevant students in the preceding year (their Year 9). This data therefore “tracks” the same group of students – for the project groups, comparator groups and year cohorts – through three academic years at school, plotting their unauthorised absence rates as they progress from Year 9, into Year 10 and into Year 11.

**Figure 4.2: Trends in unauthorised absences of project groups, comparator groups and year cohorts over three academic years**



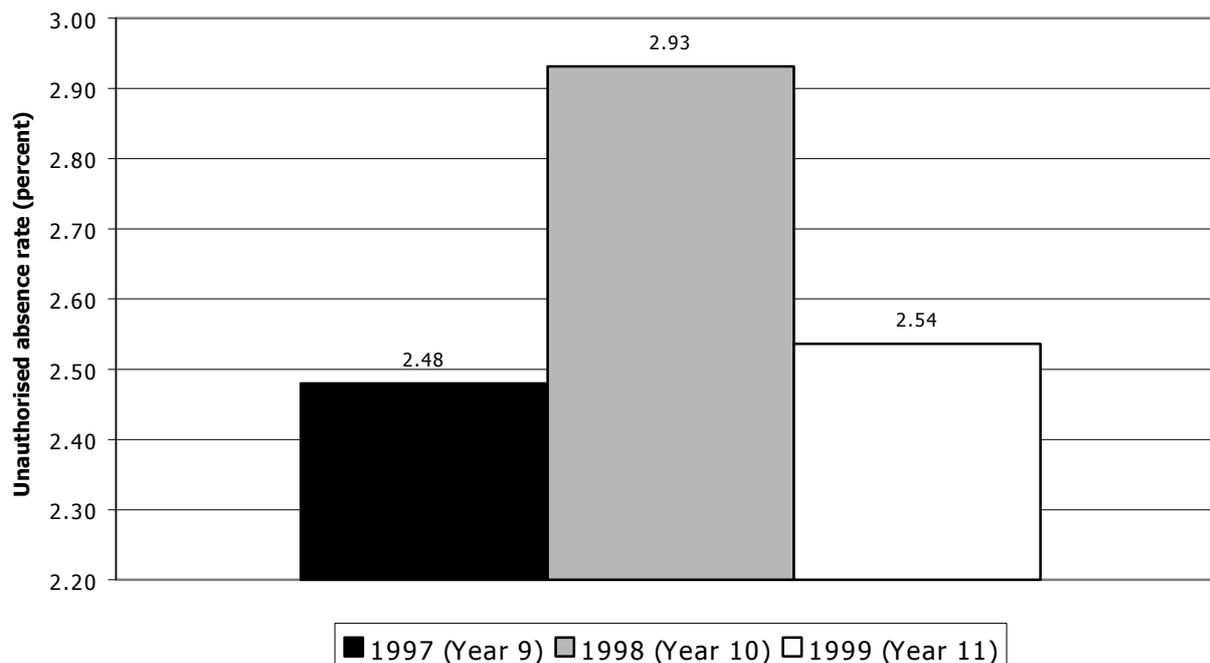
|                  | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 |
|------------------|------|------|------|
| Year cohort      | 1.81 | 1.76 | 2.83 |
| Project group    | 2.48 | 2.93 | 2.54 |
| Comparator group | 2.05 | 2.26 | 3.45 |

|                   | Number of cases included above |     |    |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|-----|----|
| Year cohorts      | 133                            | 112 | 75 |
| Project groups    | 100                            | 89  | 61 |
| Comparator groups | 46                             | 49  | 35 |

Note: cases relate to valid information from schools.

409 Figure 4.3 overleaf lifts out the data for the project groups only from the above and shows the trend for this group over the same three year period in a more "immediate" format.

**Figure 4.3: Trends in unauthorised absences of project group over three academic years**



410 The headline conclusions from these two figures are these:-

- the starting point for the three groups (1997) is as might be expected. The unauthorised absence rate for the project groups is above that of the comparator groups, which in turn is above that of the year cohort. Superficially, this indicates that project groups included students with worse attendance records than either the comparator group students or year cohorts;
- the trend over the three years of the comparator groups follows closely that of the year groups, with the comparator groups always remaining at a rate above that of the year cohorts;
- the absence rate for the project groups follows this trend into Year 10, but then shows a significant and substantial improvement in Year 11 – such that the resulting rate is **below that of the comparator group and the year cohort.**

411 Prima facie, this data therefore suggests that the DPs are having an impact on the motivation of project students, as measured by their unauthorised absence rates over the three-year period. In particular, their rate of unauthorised absence is moving contrary to the trend for both the comparator groups and year cohorts.

### **Findings at project level**

412 Although most projects eventually produced attendance data for relevant year cohorts and project groups, very few included any commentary or interpretation of this data in their final reports. Several referred in various places to teachers' perceptions of 'improved attendance' by students but this was hardly ever backed up with 'before' and 'after' data, based on a precise and appropriate measure.

413 However, the Leicester case study provides some interesting evidence from two schools of the impact on attendance of the project work. At the first school, the lead teacher tracked attendance by each student at his or her placement on an individual basis, and compared the results with the individual's overall pattern of attendance for the term in question. The result was that, of the 42 students in the group, 29 (nearly 70%) had an improved attendance pattern while on the placement – and 8 of those students improved their attendance by more than 20%.

414 At the second school (where the project focused on disaffected students and where the students were taken off normal timetable for a considerable proportion of the school day), the lead teacher kept careful records of individual attendance patterns during the project (Year 10). He also compared that data with the attendance records of those students in Year 9 (plus Year 8 in some cases), and followed some of them through into Year 11.

415 A selection of his comments are set out below:-

- 'since joining the project, student A's attendance increased from 54% in Year 9 to 69% in Year 10';
- 'student B had a bad history of attendance – 49% in Year 8. In Year 10, it went down to 34% but through the vocational project he is now (in Year 11) on an off-site placement, with an attendance level of 97%';
- 'student C has a fairly steady attendance record over Years 9, 10 and 11 (around 90%) but his friend D, who is not on the project, is down to 65% in Year 11';
- 'student E was expected to give up on school work at the end of Year 9 but his attendance actually went up from 61% in Year 9 to 64% in Year 10';
- 'student F's attendance in Year 9 was 33%. In Year 10 it was still poor at 49%, but she did attend most of the vocational project lessons'.

## BEHAVIOUR

416 The overwhelming feedback from teachers was that practical, work-based and work-related learning secures improvement in student behaviour. As with attendance (see above), there was very little 'before' and 'after' measurement (eg. of school sanctions used) to back up this perception. However, the strength of this view - and the conviction of the teachers involved (ie. that vocational opportunities do make a real difference to students' behaviour) - was unmistakable.

417 Thus, for example, teachers in Sheffield said:-

- 'participation in the vocational programme had helped pupils become more mature and independent';
- 'pupils felt that they were trusted by school staff to be responsible and reliable – so improving relationships';
- 'behaviour, particularly of less motivated pupils, tended to improve while participating in practical, work-related subjects.....Pupils enjoyed involvement in practical, work-related subjects and benefited from the experience'.

418 In Barking & Dagenham, this view was even more strongly expressed:-

'Teachers have remarked on the excellent behaviour of pupils who cause difficulties elsewhere in the school. Heads of Year are beginning to use pupils' positive response in engineering lessons as a lever to improve their behaviour across the school more widely. Two pupils, for example, had produced a set of taps and dies of outstanding quality whilst on their work placements. These were displayed at a conference attended by a Minister of State. They were able to explain, with pride, the engineering processes they had adopted, to a number of dignitaries. This celebration of their expertise and success was a new experience for these pupils and led to a dramatic change in attitude to their work'.

419 It is, of course, difficult to tease out the effect that teacher enthusiasm might make in situations of this sort. Teaching and learning are inextricably mixed. In a sense, it must both be expected and pleasing that the way a teacher approaches a new opportunity for learning for his or her students makes a positive difference to the attitude and behaviour of those students.

420 The reference in the Barking & Dagenham example above to the significance of public recognition of student achievement comes through from several other projects. The following comments about the significance to students of the final event are from the external evaluator of the Merseyside project:-

'The choice of Liverpool Football Club at Anfield fitted a number of criteria which in the pupils' minds established *the importance of the presentation*. These were that:-

- it was out of school;
- it was a prestigious place to them and other people;
- other people were envious that they had been there;
- someone had thought that their work on *Motivated by Choice* warranted a venue like Anfield;

- they used the main entrance, were welcomed by the club staff and treated well by everyone at the club.

Some of the formal sessions were quite long for the groups of pupils who were just part of the audience. Shorter formal addresses and greater variety in presentation may have helped here. However, given the criteria for the selection of pupils into *Motivated by Choice*, a measure of success may be the way they sustained their impeccable behaviour throughout the day.

There were outstanding examples of pupils having the confidence, ability and self-esteem to articulate details of what they had achieved, what they had done during the year and how it had enabled them to change their attitudes, abilities and skills.

The resources devoted to presenting this event for the pupils was money well spent.'

421 Not every project of this kind will have a venue like Anfield to hand, but the significance of genuine local acclaim in a context which is meaningful and generous is clearly something which many other projects also came to recognise. Barnsley, Devon & Cornwall, and Coventry were among those which described similarly successful and significant events.

422 It is also, clearly, not just a matter of arranging a one-off presentation but of making sure that the whole programme is valued by the 'outside world'. For students who may not have succeeded to date in school, a fresh chance for a different kind of recognition in a context where they have further opportunities ahead can clearly be highly significant. This, no doubt, was part of the thinking behind the decision in Coventry for *senior* representatives of the Institute of Motor Industries and the Technology Training Confederation to visit the schools and students in that project; and why a similarly senior representative from Peugeot presented the certificates at their presentation evening attended by 140 people.

423 The Stoke-on-Trent project was of particular significance in terms of confidence building in its strategy to aim for increased motivation and higher self-esteem in a group of 160 students (deliberately chosen against the criterion of 'under-aspiration'). The programme involved an interesting mix of mentor support, training and confidence building in IT, and residential experiences (including team orienteering and night 'maps and compass' exercises). The evaluation suggests that the residential had the biggest 'one off' impact, but that mentoring provided the on-going mix of *challenge* and *support* needed to sustain change.

424 Mentoring (or 'business coaching') was widely acclaimed as a powerful method of securing increased student motivation by all the projects which adopted this approach for some or all of their schools. These included Hereford & Worcester, Leicester, Camden and Devon & Cornwall, in addition to Stoke-on-Trent.

425 In Devon & Cornwall two schools and the project were able, between them, to engage the help of 42 local businesses. Mentors were identified who met regularly with students, often on their (business) premises, to discuss progress and achievement. The description from one of the larger firms involved about the ways in which their young employees benefited from their experience as mentors is noteworthy:-

'They have gained 'immense satisfaction' when students' school work has improved as a result of better understanding of its relevance to the working environment'.

It should also be noted that this was a project (see above) where GCSE results were not only tracked through but showed an impressive improvement.

426 In Hereford & Worcester – where 8 schools arranged for mentoring, using a mixture of teachers, classroom assistants, other school staff and employers – the evaluation report commented :-

'In all schools, the provision of mentoring has been defined as the most crucial element of the programme. The training provided ensured a client-centred approach which has enabled mentors to support their mentees throughout the project..... [Whatever the arrangements from school to school]... the principal outcome has been the raising of individual self-esteem and self-confidence – and the achievement of this has been widespread'.

## **AWARENESS OF SIGNIFICANCE OF NC SUBJECTS AND GENERAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS SCHOOL**

427 Whilst not one of the core national objectives, several projects commented on progress with students' awareness of the importance of the curriculum and school generally. Our comments are structured around the important distinction set out in Chapter II about how students were selected for these projects.

428 For those students for whom work-related learning was seen as a universal entitlement (which included many who were strongly motivated and were already achieving well), the additional inputs from the

DPs seem to have provided yet further encouragement and stimulation. Several projects commented on how well some of the very brightest students contributed to, and how much they got out of, the two or three day Key Skill events which were often arranged for all students.

- 429 More generally, the extra interest, relevance and excitement of components such as enhanced work experience, employer-mentors, and visits to 'state of the art' design and manufacturing enterprises seem to have offered benefits and opportunities which were taken full advantage of by the most able and most confident students. Their positive attitudes to school and their understanding of elements of their GCSE core subjects may have been reinforced by the experiences they enjoyed. In the same situations, however, the effect on at least some of the least able, least confident and most disaffected students seems to have been counter-productive. That was certainly the impression gained by our direct observation of some Key Skill events organised for whole year cohorts.
- 430 This kind of analysis may have contributed to what appears to have been an implicit – but powerful – premise of those projects which focused on the disaffected and the, so far, unsuccessful students. These projects seemed, with some justification, to have come to the conclusion that, at Year 10, the only realistic way to secure improved confidence, motivation and long-term achievement for many of these students is to give them a fresh start, in a fresh context, with strong connections to work and lifelong learning. They had also come to believe that success should be secured and celebrated in *different* ways, which may have little connection with the school environment (a reception at the opportunity provider, for example, rather than an item at a traditional school speech day).
- 431 In this scenario, it is important for schools to co-operate with other partners to create learning and employment pathways during KS4 which are regarded as of genuinely equal value as success at GCSE, but which have an 'out of school' context. Any hope or intention of returning such students, after a temporary immersion in work-related learning, to a more traditional, GCSE-oriented curriculum appears unrealistic, in so far as it is insensitive to the circumstances and attitudes of the young people concerned.

#### **AWARENESS OF SKILLS AND ATTITUDES REQUIRED BY EMPLOYERS**

- 432 Nearly all the projects which had committed themselves to this particular objective – National Objective (b) – reported positively on how students, in various ways, had been made more aware of what skills and attitudes their future employers would be looking for.
- 433 Barnsley was typical of many in concluding 'pupils felt they now understood more about job requirements'. In Southwark, the external evaluator found 'that the majority of pupils feel that they know and are able to describe employers' requirements of them as future employees'.
- 434 In Wigan, where the project explored Key Skill accreditation through enhanced work experience, a video has been produced which will be used across the LEA with parents, students, teaching staff and other key partners, to reinforce the requirements of employers. In the video, employers explain why they feel Key Skills are important and why involvement in joint initiatives, such as the DP, is of value.
- 435 In Merseyside, students themselves were given the responsibility of researching the skills and attitudes required by future employers/training providers and explaining the results to others within their peer group. Fifteen employers co-operated by providing for over 30 visits from student 'Choice Clubs'. Preparatory briefings for employers were arranged and were 'seen as important in providing an overall understanding of the whole project (not just the bits they were involved in) – this seemed to be appreciated by the employers and engendered a greater degree of interest and commitment'.
- 436 The two projects connected with motor manufacturing both produced strong evidence of success in providing students with an up-to-date understanding of employers' requirements – and in fairly specific ways. Thus, Barking & Dagenham reported that 'significant progress has been made in ensuring that pupils are aware of, understand the need for and, where possible, work to, industrial standards. Pupils take pride in the fact that they are able to work to the close tolerances required by industry'.
- 437 In a similar vein, Coventry reported that 'the visits to design and manufacturing companies allowed for opportunities for a greater understanding and appreciation of the work and specific roles of designers and manufacturers'. This conclusion was backed up by evidence from analysis of the baseline and follow-up questionnaires to the effect that the project groups were more aware than the control groups of skills and attitudes required by employers.
- 438 A teacher in one of Leicester's project schools provided some vivid examples of students learning about what employers are looking for with a series of short case studies. The following is an excerpt from one of them:-

'Joe (not his real name) joined the course as a student who was rather immature with a poor attendance record. He lacked motivation but had a good sense of humour and, when encouraged, he produced some reasonable work. All students were encouraged to take part in a Mini Enterprise during Year 11 and Joe, along with two other students, visited Leicester's

Fruit and Vegetables Wholesalers to purchase fruit and vegetables in bulk. They then, very successfully, bagged these up and sold them to members of staff. Joe is now employed working on a fruit and vegetable stall on Leicester market.'

## FEEDBACK BY STUDENTS ON IMPACT OF SPECIFIC PROJECT COMPONENTS

- 439 We turn now to views expressed by students themselves. Perhaps the most useful data – in evaluation terms – was through before and after questionnaires or interviews with project and comparator groups. This was only done in a thorough manner by a small number of projects, other than the case studies.
- 440 In Barnsley, the evidence from the questionnaires was supplemented by the external evaluator with focus group meetings with students and with interviews with teachers before, during and after the project end. Some of the findings in relation to students' views were:-
- students were better able to list and describe Key Skills when questioned during the post work experience focus group sessions;
  - students' perceptions of where they acquire Key Skills had changed after portfolio building and work experience. Initially 28% felt that they would acquire Key Skills through work experience, but post work experience, this figure had risen to 59%;
  - after the final questionnaire, more students felt that 'carrying on learning' was 'very important';
  - students felt that portfolio building and work experience had influenced them in their career aspirations and post-16 education choices.
- 441 Other projects reported findings from individual student interviews. In Southwark, for example, the evaluator reported that, among other things:-
- students valued working with others as a means of saving time, sharing and taking responsibility, sharing understanding, learning to listen to each other and to compromise;
  - students recognised the value of action planning and prioritising, identifying deadlines, organising their time and setting targets;
  - despite the difficulty of the concept Improving Own Learning and Performance, students were able to explain the use of colour coding to identify activities they still had to complete.
- 442 Among the most common of student comments in unstructured or open-ended discussions at the conclusion of projects were those relating to particular events – field trips, visits, presentation evenings and so on. This was certainly the case for those young people from Merseyside who took part in *Motivated by Choice*. Perhaps the strongest student reaction to that project was the feeling of having been selected for the project:-
- 'Overwhelmingly, pupils spoke of being privileged to have been selected for *Motivated by Choice*, to have felt successful and very adult in taking part in it and that it had been a 'special' experience, of which they felt very proud. It has not been possible to completely separate, in the evaluation, how much of the motivation and raising of confidence and self-esteem is derived from being part of a select group, doing something special, and how much is intrinsically provided by the activities in the programme. However, in the special school and in the PRU where whole cohorts were involved, the motivation and feeling of being special were equally identified by pupils.'
- 443 The importance students place on the feeling of gaining confidence and being valued comes through strongly in the way Rotherham summarised the views of their project students:-
- 'The adult environment encouraged pupils to mix with college students and behave more responsibly. The individual attention proved valuable in contributing to the development of confidence and self-awareness. The positive individual experiences led to pupils feeling:-
- more grown up;
  - more in control;
  - interested in what they were doing.'
- 444 Some of the most powerful messages can best be conveyed by direct quotes from the students involved. The following examples come from an evaluation exercise immediately after an Aztec event

aimed at promoting Working With Others, through a community based simulation exercise about planning a leisure centre:-

- 'I enjoyed phoning people from leisure centres';
- 'I did not enjoy tallying, filling in activity sheets or the log books';
- 'I liked working in a big group and being the boss';
- 'I had to finish the work because if something wasn't done it would put back the others';
- 'I didn't enjoy the presentation because it went wrong and we weren't organised enough';
- 'I enjoyed working to see if a leisure centre is a good idea. I learnt how to listen to people's views';
- 'I most enjoyed asking people in the interviews and trying to be professional about it all'.

445 A similar set of verbatim comments from students in Stoke-on-Trent were recorded, following the weekend residentials at an Outdoor Centre:-

- 'It helped me to make new friends and learn how to communicate with other people';
- 'It helped bring team skills to us';
- 'It gave me confidence about going out into the world and socialising';
- 'I learnt how to build a raft, sail a canoe, climb rocks and swing from trees, and also work in a group';
- 'I learned a lot about working with others. None of the activities would have been possible without other members of the team'.

#### **TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO POST -16 OPTIONS**

446 This section provides selected comments from those projects where transition – National Objective (c) – was a key consideration.

447 In Merseyside, where small groups of students investigated a particular occupation or training and then reported back to the whole cohort, the final report noted:-

'Based on the principle that we truly learn something by having to teach others and that we take ownership through the opportunity to self-manage, the overall aim was to encourage the youngsters to take responsibility for their own futures post-16'.

448 Rotherham tackled this objective in a different way, by developing a careers programme alongside the extensive series of taster courses for students at the local colleges of FE:-

'The KS4 vocational programmes gave the young people involved a chance to sample their career choice, helping them to make more informed decisions, thereby lessening the likelihood of wasted training provision, support and time.....The incorporation of careers information within the curriculum enabled pupils to identify relevant occupational areas. It enabled them to familiarise themselves with vocational programmes on offer at FE colleges in subject areas that would meet their career needs. Through the dual marketing of provision to parents as well as pupils, it raised awareness and involved parents in the vocational push'.

449 In Barking & Dagenham, the final report noted that vocational guidance in some schools had initially been a weakness but went on to say that, after some fundamental review work (alongside the project's focus on the development of vocational GCSEs), a number of positive actions were taken. This included an exercise in three schools that resulted in:-

- the construction of a detailed scheme of [careers] work;
- the appointment of new careers co-ordinators in two of the schools;
- much closer links with the Careers Service;
- discretely timetabled CEG [careers education and guidance] sessions;

- an enhanced library.

## V: OTHER IMPACTS

### KEY POINTS

- **Several schoolteachers received training for D32/D33/D34 qualifications through the projects. Staff development, and raising awareness of the work-related curriculum generally, were regular features and well received. There would be merit in capitalising on lessons learned by teachers to date by means of an ongoing INSET strategy.**
- **Timetabling changes required a long lead-time, and sometimes also a campaign of 'winning the hearts and minds' of senior managers and teachers not directly involved with the project. It was not realistic to expect students who lack motivation in the first place to put in the additional time required to catch up with course work, out of taught periods.**
- **Feedback on piloting Key Skills (whether or not the programmes were accredited formally) was positive, although cost was a major constraint to accreditation. Support from awarding bodies for schools piloting new courses and assessment techniques was patchy. Often local post-16 providers were a source of more ready advice. In some areas, support from employers for Key Skills was outstanding.**
- **Employers were often willing to make important contributions but they did not always appreciate the 'big picture'. The most productive contacts tended to be with local employers where there was a link between the curriculum content and the nature of the employers' business. A major source of frustration over student placements at local opportunity providers was insufficient detail paid to practical arrangements (eg. concerning travel or passing on information about student absences).**

### INTRODUCTION

- 501 This chapter discusses other outcomes achieved by the projects in terms of process points such as partnership working and staff development. Some of the issues covered here are similar to those discussed in Chapter VII. The distinction is that Chapters V (and VI) record evidence as presented by the projects, whereas Chapter VII identifies a number of more general issues which arise from the analysis as a whole.
- 502 The sections in this chapter are headed:-
- timetabling;
  - accreditation and certification of Key Skills;
  - teacher development;
  - links with opportunity providers;
  - value for money.

### TIMETABLING

- 503 As in some earlier sections, we suggest that it is helpful to summarise the available evidence – in this case about how projects dealt with curriculum adjustments and associated timetable problems – according to whether the interventions were designed:-
- (a) for all students; or
  - (b) for those who were disaffected in some way.
- 504 For projects which focused on (a), an appropriate way of thinking about and dealing with the 'extra' opportunities provided was to regard them as a way of 'vocationally enhancing' the normal learning arrangement. The enhancement could be to do with content (learning about new and different things) or process (learning about standard content but in a more stimulating and relevant context) – or both.

505 Leicester is a good example of a partnership which is firmly committed to the notion of what they call an 'entitlement' to vocational learning for all students. If that principle is in place, the timetabling problems diminish – because if something is an entitlement for all, then it has to be built into the normal timetable and/or dealt with as an off-timetable event of some kind *for everyone*.

506 For projects which focused on (b), a crucial decision was which aspects of the curriculum the selected group of students were going to miss, so that they could engage with the project programme, while the rest of the year cohort carried on with the 'normal' timetable. Several projects learned some important lessons about how to deal with the associated problems during the course of the project.

507 Thus, for example, the external evaluator to the Merseyside project concluded in his final report:-

'It is not realistic to sustain the Motivated by Choice programme outside the normal timetabled curriculum. The load is too heavy on staff who have full teaching commitments and conflicts can occur where pupils are withdrawn from their normal teaching lessons to engage in Motivated by Choice activities on more than a limited number of occasions'.

The final project report acknowledges this comment and goes on, positively, to suggest that any mainstream school wishing to run Motivated by Choice in the future should use mainstream curriculum time and take advantage of the opportunities for greater flexibility presented by the new provisions for disapplication (Section 363).

508 A similar conclusion was drawn in Hereford & Worcester. In that project, the final report commented: 'where a timetabled slot has not been available in three schools, co-ordination has proved problematic'. However, the report then went on to say: 'It must not be assumed ...that all respondents feel that a dedicated curriculum slot is the only solution. For some it is seen as undesirable to create what might be perceived as a vocational 'sink group', despite the hugely increased ease of management gained'. Interestingly, other projects took a diametrically different view, believing that a timetabled slot conveys important value and status for the students involved.

509 Overall, this does not seem to have been an issue that was always thought through as carefully as it might have been. In our view, to design a programme which takes disaffected students from different groups from different lessons, and then expects them, individually, to 'catch up' (as happened in some projects – not those quoted above) is somewhat unrealistic.

510 There were other problems, too, which might have been foreseen, especially in relation to communication between schools and college/work placements. For example, difficulties were experienced in aspects such as:-

- passing information between schools and colleges about student absence;
- procedures for staff absence (in schools and colleges);
- what to do when school and college terms do not match;
- travel arrangements between sites.

511 It was not always clear from the final reports which, if any, students had been formally disapplied from aspects of the National Curriculum in the second year of the project (the regulations under Section 363 of the Education Act 1996 only came into effect in September 1998). There were, however, several positive references to the extra flexibility which these regulations would provide in the future – see, for example, paragraph 507 above. However at least one project reported a view that saw disapplication as a 'negative gesture which can undermine or disrupt the entitlement of all students to an academic KS4 curriculum'. We judge this to be a minority view.

## **ACCREDITATION AND CERTIFICATION OF KEY SKILLS**

512 This section addresses National Objective (e); a summary of what is known about actual student achievement of Key Skills has already been provided in Chapter III). However, behind those (largely successful) figures, lies a very wide variation in how well projects were able to tackle the processes such as:-

- preparing staff for teaching these units;
- preparing students to achieve them;
- collecting the student evidence;
- arranging the local assessments;

- liaising with the Examination Bodies.

513 The latter, in particular, seemed – for some – to be especially problematic. Thus, for example, in Merseyside:-

'All the schools in the project except one experienced significant difficulty in accrediting the students because the Examination Bodies were very slow to respond and seemed unable to give appropriate guidance, advice and support. Only Asdan responded positively.'

514 Barnsley and Kirklees were two more projects which commented favourably on Asdan materials and the quality of the advice they received. Kirklees also involved another Examination Board (not viewed so favourably as Asdan). Both Boards were invited to comment afterwards on lessons learned and how the process might be improved in their particular situation; and both did so. In their final report, Kirklees made the interesting comment that 'the demands for sufficiency of evidence appear to differ between accrediting bodies. Schools need to talk with external evaluators and regional representatives at the inception of Key Skills work to establish clearly the demands of the awarding body.'

515 Aztec found difficulty in establishing a productive relationship with their Examination Body (which was reported as being unaware of the DP). An external verifier eventually did make contact but proved unhelpful. The school concerned then switched to another Board but again experienced what they saw as unreasonable bureaucracy and considerable difficulty.

516 At the other extreme, and in relation to another Board, Southwark reported positively that 'we are working closely with Edexcel on the certification of students' work. They have been supporting our project since last September and have been an invaluable source of support.' Wigan, Croydon and Trafford also reported favourably on support from Edexcel.

517 Southwark made a number of other reflective comments which capture well some general lessons learned in other projects:-

- 'The biggest problem that faces our teachers is getting the students to log their work against the QCA criteria as well as the GCSE requirements. This is a paper problem rather than a teaching one and we are trying to devise strategies to cut down the paper work.'
- 'It seems that students in the top sets and those in special schools warmed to the [Key Skills] project rather than those in the middle to less able groups in mainstream schools.'
- 'We have learned that on the first year of the project it is not a good idea to try and write assignments or work experience portfolios to try and cover both of the Key Skills – you need experience of assessing before this is attempted.'
- 'Teachers suggest that it is important to reduce the amount of written instruction, repetition and jargon, which cloud the way forward and can be demotivating. Jargon should be replaced with examples of work done, as guidance for implementation.'
- 'Teachers need [more] thorough guidance about the level at which items of students' work should be accredited.'
- 'It would be useful to investigate further the scope for collaboration over the accreditation of Key Skills, especially Working With Others through Youth Service links.'

518 Croydon was another project which identified opportunities where the generic Key Skills could be developed and evidence collected which would contribute towards assessment. The final report commented:-

'Everyone has developed creative approaches to gathering evidence with the student portfolios, sometimes gathering videos and tape recordings of the students, annotated photographs, any existing action plans and self-assessments, student/tutorial reviews, NRA and Progress File work, witness statements from work experience supervisors, and examples of GCSE course work at various stages of drafting or reworking'.

The problems came with understanding the specifications and, most of all, in getting the students to collect and organise their evidence against the specifications.

519 Some projects concluded that the actual experience of learning key skills (non-accredited), followed by some non-paper based form of praise and recognition, was more valuable than formal accreditation. Thus Merseyside commented:-

'Accreditation proved to be both a distraction and largely undesirable to the young people and the teachers involved. In continuing with the work this year (not as a DP), we have collectively decided not to pursue formal accreditation'.

- 520 Others found it helpful to use other kinds of accreditation as an alternative to or, more often, as a supplement to, the NCVQ Key Skill units. Humberside, for example, recorded at the end of its first year:-
- ‘Schools report that it is important to use, as a vehicle for Key Skill accreditation, awards which are seen to be useful by young people for when they start work. Examples of such awards are the St. John Ambulance First Aid Awards, CIHE Basic Health and Safety Certificate, and Careers Library Users’ Award’.
- 521 Humberside went on to note that:-
- ‘Other school activities which have proved to be fertile ground for Key Skill assessment are ones in which young people are given the responsibility for arranging, from start to finish, important school events. Two of our schools have run extremely well organised discos in this way. Focusing upon Key Skill accreditation as an activity in its own right is seen as being less important to young people’.
- 522 Oldham’s approach to the promotion and certification of NCVQ Key Skills units focused on developing a package of teaching materials for the development of what they called ‘reviewing skills’ at age 14 ie. the skills ‘collaboratively to take stock of a situation, identify what needs to be done, set realistic long and short term targets and regularly monitor progress to achieve the required end results’.
- 523 Several projects, including Greater Nottingham, Cheshire, Croydon and Stockport & High Peak expressed concerns over what they saw as the high costs of accreditation. Some felt that this could be an inhibiting factor in relation to the continuing assessment of Key Skills. Another issue of immediate concern to some projects (eg. Wigan and Kirklees) was that schools would no longer be allowed to submit students’ work for the two free-standing generic Key Skills, once the DP was concluded.
- 524 We have mentioned earlier (Chapter III) the fact that Key Skill qualifications do not count towards the ‘league table’. This was perceived as a significant constraint by several projects. Croydon, for example, made the point that ‘these two Key Skills underpin all our work with young people ..... it is vital that they are recognised and developed alongside GCSE and part one GNVQ’.
- 525 It is encouraging to record that nearly all projects involved with Key Skills were able to report appropriate training and accreditation for assessment of teaching staff in schools. Kirklees is a typical example in this respect; from a start point of one teacher with D32/D33 and another with D32/D33/D34 qualifications, the project concluded with at least 8 staff with D32/D33 and 3 with D32/D33/D34.
- 526 Other projects – quite sensibly – decided to use existing local skills and knowledge for this purpose:-
- in Trafford, two FE colleges provided awareness raising sessions, training and consultancy for the consortium, of which the colleges were themselves core members;
  - Wigan reported that ‘strong relationships have been developed with the local college which has provided a team of assessors and verifiers, working in collaboration with schools and the project’s management team, to put in place assessment systems and procedures and to develop support materials.’
- 527 Wigan had the accreditation and certification of Key Skills as the primary focus for the project. Their reflections, summarised in their ‘Summary of Main Findings and Key Issues’ paper, contain many positive points. These include the following:-
- “The response of pupils has been excellent. Their motivation has increased, particularly in relation to the formal accreditation of Key Skills.”
  - “The knowledge and understanding of both teachers and pupils has been broadened in relation to competence based assessment and verification procedures.”
  - “Schools feel that there have been clear, accredited outcomes resulting from their investment of time and in development.”
- 528 Although the overall picture is somewhat patchy, it needs to be stressed that in many areas (for example, Leicester, Devon & Cornwall, Merseyside and Coventry), the support from employers for Key Skills work has been outstanding. For additional comments see also the section below on *links with opportunity providers*.

## TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

- 529 As mentioned above, several projects were instrumental in individual teachers gaining Key Skill assessment qualifications. Sometimes the numbers involved were quite substantial – Lewisham, for

example, lists 20 teachers who were accredited as assessors or verifiers or both. This was the most common specific outcome in relation to staff development/training but clearly this was supported by a much wider programme of information sharing and skill acquisition.

530 Barnsley was typical of many other projects in including a specific target for staff development as one of its local objectives. This was achieved in a number of ways, including taking full advantage of a range of formal and informal networking meetings that were arranged during the period of the projects. The Barnsley team also invited DfEE officials with a remit for Key Skills to visit staff and students; they were pleased at the opportunity to show what was being achieved, as well as to share views about future developments.

531 The Trafford project placed considerable emphasis on staff development and general awareness raising. One school surveyed all teachers at the beginning and end of the project to explore whether they felt they were contributing to the development of students' Key Skills. The following progress was noted. The numbers in brackets are the equivalent figures for the first year:-

- Communication – 22 (2);
- Application of Number – 12 (4);
- Information Technology – 10 (6);
- Problem Solving – 21 (2);
- Working with Others – 25 (2);
- Improving our Learning and Performance – 20 (4).

532 It is clear, from the case studies and narrative accounts of progress in project reports, that a substantial number of teachers gained a great deal from the various regional and national meetings on Key Skills organised or promoted by the DfEE, QCA and some of the national awarding bodies. This was not a formal part of the DP initiative and specific records (eg. numbers of teachers attending) were not always kept. However, in our view, this programme of 'light touch' support at national level was a significant factor in the success of this particular component of the DPs. We draw on that experience in suggesting the need for an on-going strategy for teacher INSET to build generally on what has been learned from these projects (see Chapter VII).

533 Feedback from teachers was well captured in Stockport & High Peak. Questionnaire returns from staff were summarised as follows:-

'All respondents thought that the courses had added to their professional development in the assessment/teaching of NVQ and GNVQ courses. Most commented on the usefulness of visiting other establishments, the involvement in the presentation of new ideas and the development of relationships with the college tutors'.

534 The networking point was endorsed by Croydon: 'The establishment of a local network – teachers from the participating schools together with Edexcel, college and Prospects Careers Service colleagues – which met regularly, was very productive'. In the Leicester project, networking of this kind was enabled and encouraged through a local standing arrangement for modestly funded and synchronised release time for LVF (Leicestershire Vocational Framework) school co-ordinators. That infrastructure continues as a permanent feature of the Leicester City Cluster's support service provision. The Cluster is a local arrangement for continuing staff and curriculum development in relation to vocational learning for all 14-19 students in the City and nearby parts of the County.

535 Most projects found it useful to adopt a staff development programme which was both varied and capable of being adapted to meet emerging needs. Trafford's approach was typical of many and was based on an outline structure of regular half-termly meetings attended by all the schools involved and the project's key partners. Their sessions included:-

- a Key Skills awareness event;
- an update on the Progress File;
- a meeting about verifying Key Skills;
- a joint planning/development session with employers;
- a workshop on developing Key Skill materials;

- a session devoted to evaluation of the programme.

536 Some staff development programmes developed in unexpected – but welcome – ways. Thus, at one school in Devon & Cornwall, every member of staff undertook a one-day placement with local employers. In addition to the individual benefits gained and the valuable employer contacts made, the process led to the establishment of a permanent internal Education Business Partnership group.

537 A powerful testimony to the impact of a DP's influence on pedagogy was contained in the final report from the Southwark project:-

'It appears that the project has not only improved some young peoples' motivation but has also had an effect on the way that the teachers viewed the learning processes and the way they planned and prepared their lessons. At our last INSET, the teachers said that the project allowed them to review their teaching and focus on planning for the future and that it allowed the students to feel in control of their own learning'.

### **LINKS WITH OPPORTUNITY PROVIDERS**

538 Links with opportunity providers was the focus for National Objective (f). With very few exceptions, projects report very positively on the willingness of FE colleges, training providers and employers to respond to local requests for additional help. This was most frequently with student placements; but other contributions include mentoring (see Chapter IV), visits, and in-school support/encouragement.

539 That is not to say that such arrangements were easy to set up. For example, in Wigan, although the project was successful in attracting more than 300 employers to make some contribution to students' development during the life of the project (eg. by providing work placements and evidence of their achievements in this context), this was the result of considerable and consistent efforts on the part of school and project staff. The most difficult challenge was engaging employers in an understanding of the bigger picture. One positive outcome from this experience was the production of a video to raise awareness of employers (and others) of the importance of Key Skills (see paragraph 434).

540 Several projects reported that local conferences and briefings could be helpful. For example:-

- Trafford organised a briefing for employers on Key Skills and the work-related curriculum generally. Whilst it was a success, it tended to be existing contacts who supported the event, rather than the new employers with whom they were hoping to build new links;
- in Merseyside, 'the briefings for employers were important in providing an overall understanding of the whole project and its underlying rationale (not just the bit they were involved in). This seemed to be appreciated by the employers and engendered a greater degree of interest and commitment'.

541 The need for local persistence came through strongly in Leicester. The case study reports that:-

'The Cluster was quickly able to find local partner FE colleges willing to host (and, in some cases, help fund) suitable placements. However, it was not at all easy to find such placements with training providers. There were problems with both the cost and with 'fitting them in' to the training providers' existing programmes. However, persistence by the Cluster staff eventually succeeded in identifying a total of nine such providers willing to co-operate. The Cluster has subsequently created a 'Training Providers Development Group' to help sustain and promote this aspect of the project.'

542 It is also important to record that some of the engagement of employers was secured without their fully understanding the particular significance of the local initiative being developed. For example, the Countec/Trident Trust case study reports (from a detailed analysis of the employer questionnaires) that there was only a very limited awareness that the project was about a particular enhancement of work experience, targeted at improving connections with selected elements of the National Curriculum core subjects. Many local employers thought of it simply in terms of 'traditional' work experience, focused at introducing the 'world of work' to young people. However, as the case study comments, it may have been unrealistic to have expected too much change in understanding and perception from just one year's pilot activity. From a practical perspective, the positive news was that 100% of the employers who were engaged with the project undertook to continue with it in the next year.

543 The Kirklees project reported along not dissimilar lines:-

'Employers were briefed by a variety of methods – visits by school staff, telephone calls, letters carried by pupils, and at placement interviews. In the example of the special school involved within the project, it is part of all placements that the pupil will be interviewed at the employer premises accompanied by a member of staff ..... A few employers were confused initially, having received two sets of information about the placement – one relating to the general

nature of the placement and the other relating to the Key Skills project, while in one organisation only one supervisor was aware of Key Skills and how to collect evidence. However, employers were very positive, allowing the digital cameras to be used on their premises and many schools received a higher return of pupil report forms than on previous occasions.'

544 Humberside made the point that their urban schools found it easier to forge links with colleges, employers and training providers than their rural schools; the latter, therefore, had to focus on more established activities such as work experience and Young Enterprise. On the other hand, some of the London-based projects, for example Aztec and Lewisham, did not find it as easy to secure the engagement of employers as they had hoped.

545 Several projects paid tribute to the support offered by National Training Organisations (eg.the CITB). In Greater Nottingham, for example:-

'The partnership between the three schools has been strengthened further by a joint agreement made with the Construction Industry Training Board to continue with construction related vocational courses next year...'

546 Another example was in Aztec where the CITB representative on the steering committee offered 'input to the students' careers programmes in Year 11 with information about local employment and training opportunities in the construction industry'. He made it clear that 'the CITB will be looking for ways to extend this opportunity to other schools in the area in continuing co-operation with Rathbone CI and MEBP'. There were similar positive references to the CITB in Barking & Dagenham and in Rotherham.

547 Both the projects with strong links to the motor vehicle industry (Coventry and Barking & Dagenham) were able to secure substantial support from their local major manufacturers for the vocational GCSE courses which formed the major elements of their DPs. In Coventry, visits were arranged to, among others, Agco Ltd., Peugeot Cars (a Peugeot representative was also on the steering committee), Jaguar Cars, Nastech Europe, Ove Arup, Marconi Communications, the Coventry University School of Engineering, and the International Manufacturing Centre at Warwick University.

548 In Barking & Dagenham, there was an equally impressive list of project supporters, including the Ford Motor Company, Unilab, Norman Taps and Dies, and Black and Decker; the latter also made available their original design drawings and development materials for their 'Workbench'. As the final report for this project notes, 'it was possible, therefore, to demonstrate the industrial approach to design and make, rather than the school-based approach which the students had hitherto encountered'.

549 The contributions of FE colleges, too, were effective in several areas. In Gloucestershire, for example, where 'Further Education colleges are eager to help 11-16 schools develop their vocational programmes' :-

'Colleges are conscious of the need to prepare students adequately for further education and, in a competitive market place, to capture some of their potential clients by developing systems for greater continuity of education. There is a problem in the funding of joint programmes, but there are many ways of taking the relationships forward, most notably in colleges providing help and training for staff in schools as they embark on vocational programmes'.

550 Sometimes external support came from some slightly unexpected sources. For example, in Merseyside, the whole student programme began with Away Day Skills Workshops, led by the RAF. The workshops were 'based on the concept of TLC (Teamwork, Leadership and Communication) and were largely interactive and challenging – this was highly valued by all the participants'.

551 One final example in this section of what was clearly a generally positive picture of enhanced and productive links with opportunity providers comes from the Leicester experience where, during the course of the project, the first local industry-resourced unit was produced and offered for piloting. This was 'Technology into the Millennium', a nine week unit designed by the Leicestershire Engineering Training Group and staff from project centres, located partly in school and partly on training group premises.

## **VALUE FOR MONEY**

552 Value for money was not an explicit aspect for review by DPs or the national study. Nevertheless, the following general comments are added:-

- investment in staff training and development was worthwhile and will provide a good investment for the future;
- so, too, will local development work on materials for teaching, learning and assessment;

- 'celebration' events for students are significant and both deserve - and repay - appropriate resourcing;
- DPs attracted substantial additional but uncosted resources in terms of time and commitment from many individuals and local partners;
- some employers were extremely generous;
- the costs of formal Key Skill accreditation are high and, potentially, prohibitive;
- there was a remarkable difference in the size of project groups ranging from 12 to 1540, yet each project attracted approximately the same amount of DfEE funding. The difference in spend per project group pupil was, therefore, considerable;
- while it was obviously legitimate for some projects to focus more than others on capacity building rather than direct spending on students, there were still some very wide differences in spending on, for example, capital equipment, supply costs and evaluation.

## VI: SUSTAINABILITY AND REPLICABILITY

### KEY POINTS

- **There was generally a commitment to local embedding and dissemination. Whilst some enhancements do not require major new funding (eg. updating curriculum materials), others carry a unit cost which cannot be significantly reduced (eg. residential events).**
- **Many models could be replicated fairly easily, but would still need customising to different situations. Training for teachers would also be required in the new areas.**

### INTRODUCTION

- 601 This chapter discusses how projects went about (and are still going about) *disseminating* their findings at various levels and about what plans they have for sustaining and developing what has been learned within their own partnerships and immediate localities.
- 602 The final section (*replication*), is more reflective and assesses the prospects for transfer of what has been learned to other parts of the country, as perceived both by the partnerships themselves and by SWA.

### DISSEMINATION

- 603 Nearly all projects were able to point to some kind of dissemination to other local schools outside the project. Many were able to go beyond that and structured their approach at several levels. Leicester, for example:-
- organised various local workshops for Leicester and Leicestershire schools (some for heads, some for deputies, some for teachers with responsibility for staff/curriculum development);
  - made presentations at regional level for the East Midlands 14-19 curriculum conference;
  - provided inputs at national conferences organised by the LEA Curriculum Advisers Network, and by Edexcel, on work-related developments at KS4.
- 604 Coventry arranged a series of conferences, workshops and visits at LEA and regional level. They were all designed to inform and interest headteachers, college principals and teachers about the opportunities they have shown can be made available in vocational GCSE and A level courses, supported by major local companies.
- 605 Gloucestershire organised a major dissemination conference with national speakers to share the outcomes of its DP and Standards Funds project with all county secondary schools, FE colleges and other local partners. The projects have also been heavily featured in the LEA's in-house magazine "Learning Matters".

### LOCAL EMBEDDING

- 606 It is, of course, too early to be able to analyse with any certainty how firmly, and with what degree of permanence, the approaches developed through the DPs have been embedded into local school curricula and teaching methods. However, it does appear from our visits and final reports that virtually all projects have made pedagogic, staff development and other kinds of gains which will certainly be used and built on in the years immediately following this initiative. Precisely what and how this will happen depends a good deal on the nature of the activity involved.
- 607 We set out below several examples of what is a very promising overall picture:-
- in Leicester, eight schools (including all six schools in the DP) offered their 'modular option' arrangement in the year after the Project finished, while 10 schools (including all four in the second element of their DP) integrated recording of the two new Key Skills into their core programme;

- in Barking & Dagenham, vocational GCSEs are now built into the KS4 option schemes in all eight secondary schools, compared to just four at the beginning of the project;
  - in Aztec, after an additional local programme of teacher training, four new schools are planning to use the Skillbuilder project with over 300 students in the summer term 2000;
  - in Wigan, the project began with small groups in just three schools, but moved in phase two to larger groups in five schools. During 1999/2000 there is a network of twelve schools (supported by extension funding) with whole year cohorts - and there are plans to involve even more schools in the future;
  - in Coventry, two of the project schools have moved on (September 1999) to pilot new, linked, A level courses, with one school offering A level Design and the other A level Graphics.
- 608 Many projects reported positively that what had been learned about the application of Key Skills, mentoring and taster courses would be developed and sustained within the curriculum and organisational arrangements of each school involved. In Stoke-on-Trent, this was translated into specific actions in the LEA's Education Development Plan; this followed a 'no holes barred' discussion with Heads from the participating schools to determine which components of the DP model (if any), should be recommended for inclusion. Residential and mentoring were both supported as part of a strategy to combat under-aspiration, reflecting the Heads' professional judgement that these two components had had a positive impact on project group students' attitudes and motivation.
- 609 A similar link has been established in Shropshire between the lessons learned in their DP and the LEA's EDP. The particular theses highlighted were cross-curricular approaches to the world of work and the development of independent student learning.
- 610 Many of the opportunities developed through these projects will, of course, be dependent on finding significant continuing funding. Placements at training providers and FE colleges will always carry a cost. So, too, will residential courses and many other out-of-school activities related to involvement in work-based learning. As has been seen from earlier chapters, many of these types of experience proved to be successful in terms of student motivation and achievement – and in some cases exceptionally so. Local projects and schools will undoubtedly try to find ways and means of sustaining such initiatives but how far they will be able to do so remains to be seen.

## REPLICABILITY ELSEWHERE

- 611 Putting the issue of cost on one side for the moment, there are several examples of achievements in these DPs which have strong prospects for replication in other schools. There are, however, two important general qualifications to this.
- 612 One comes from the standard literature on spreading good practice from local action research. This is that teachers seldom simply pick and use successfully what other teachers have done unless they, too, employ an action research approach and amend/develop/apply the approach being suggested in their own circumstances.
- 613 The second is that many of the developments from the DPs are genuinely local and relate to specific local business and employment contexts. Thus, the vocational GCSE developments at Coventry and in Barking & Dagenham relate to their own local industrial situations; a similar point applies to the simulation exercises developed for Aztec schools in south London. All of these developments are, quite rightly, responsive to local circumstances.
- 614 These two qualifications are closely related and both lead to the conclusion that, given the right approach ie. teachers learning from each other on the basis of applying fresh ideas to their own situation (not just picking something off the shelf), then replication beyond the DPs is not only desirable but achievable. It is, however, important to remember that this is unlikely just 'to happen' without an overall national/regional strategy. This would include arrangements for the necessary teacher networking/workshops to take place. Such a strategy could well embrace other related national initiatives (see the section on *national management issues* in Chapter VII).
- 615 Among the approaches that clearly lend themselves to the prospect of *low-cost* replication, subject to the strategy described above, are:-
- 'enhanced' work placements which are either connected to the development and accreditation of Key Skills (as demonstrated by projects such as Devon & Cornwall, Southwark, Barnsley, Wigan and Kirklees) and/or related to elements of National Curriculum core subjects (eg. Countec);
  - vocational GCSEs relevant to the local employment context (as championed by Barking & Dagenham and by Coventry).

- 616 A good example of where 'replicability' is already up and running comes from Merseyside where the one year DP on 'Motivated by Choice' was run again in the year after the project with four new schools. This was funded by the North Liverpool Partnership, in collaboration with the local TEC; similar projects have also been started in St Helens and the Wirral. A video and accompanying handbook and leaflet were produced to promote the project elsewhere.

## VII: MANAGEMENT ISSUES

### KEY POINTS

#### School level

- **Whole school planning was a determinant of effective implementation. This involved a coherently argued and explicitly stated curriculum philosophy, support from senior managers and the whole-hearted support of a critical mass of teachers.**
- **The role of lead teacher was crucial. Key qualities included enthusiasm, commitment and the ability to communicate well.**

#### Project level

- **Successful projects were clear from the outset as to what precisely they wanted to achieve. It was essential to be clear as to which features were mandatory (eg. the year groups to be involved or the training to be supplied to lead teachers) and which were negotiable (eg. timetabling arrangements in participating schools). Building on other local initiatives was often helpful, although it could constrain creativity and make evaluation more complex.**
- **The professional leadership of the project manager/co-ordinator was crucial. Support structures were also important: no individual has the full range of skills, knowledge and experience required. Using local steering groups effectively required both prior planning and imagination. It was vital to consult with, and secure the ownership of, practitioners.**
- **Several special schools and pupil referral units participated in local projects and made important contributions. Indeed, the greater flexibility applied to curriculum planning and management at such institutions made some enhancements easier to incorporate than in mainstream schools.**

#### National level

- **For the future, DfEE should specify evaluation requirements in greater detail and include them in the contractual arrangements. There would be merit in DfEE and Ofsted reviewing carefully the arguments for including schools experiencing difficulties (eg. as evidenced by Special Measures) in initiatives of this type.**
- **If Key Skills had been retained pre-16, it would have been essential that accredited outcomes had been taken into account in the calculation of school performance at KS4; and that Examination Boards had reviewed the scope and style of support provided to schools for pre-16 Key Skills work. However, schools were disappointed by subsequent announcements that approval to continue offering generic Key Skills pre-16 would only be forthcoming during the life of pilot projects. This appeared to place in question the rationale for embarking on some of the pilots.**

### INTRODUCTION

- 701 This final chapter identifies and exemplifies some of the main lessons to be learned from the DPs. It includes a description of 'success factors' at several levels, namely:-
- school;
  - project;
  - national.
- 702 This chapter is written with an eye to the future in the sense that we are trying to bring out issues to be addressed as and when there are further national and local developments designed to follow on in some way from the DPs. Nevertheless, there are some issues in the final section which would appear to merit some immediate consideration and action.

## SCHOOL LEVEL

### Whole school planning

- 703 The necessity of 'whole school planning' was consistently seen to be a pre-condition of success in the projects. This phrase can mean many things but, in the current context, it is possible to identify a number of features that appear to be of special relevance:-
- a curriculum philosophy which has sorted out whether work-related learning is an *entitlement for all* students or something which is of *particular relevance to certain students only* (most frequently those who are disaffected, poor attenders or simply those who are not achieving as well as they might). It should be expected that this philosophy – whatever it is for any particular school – should come through clearly in that school's development plan and associated documents;
  - a *long lead time*. Many school timetables are constructed, at least in terms of major principles, up to a year in advance and, even where that is not the case, some of the changes that might be required (eg. blocked options or keeping certain teaching sessions free of all core subjects) are so logistically difficult to achieve that extra time is needed for the case to be made, colleagues to be convinced, and the actual timetabling problems to be resolved;
  - the full understanding and *commitment of senior managers* in the school. This is needed not just to push through solutions to organisational/timetabling problems, but also to sustain the project as and when unexpected problems occur during the course of the year. These could be:-
    - either within the school, eg. students going on visits/placements and having to miss 'normal' lessons, against the wishes of some subject teachers
    - or externally, eg. when the local employer/FE college finds that the students' ability or behaviour are not quite what had been assumed by that outside organisation;
  - perhaps most important of all, the requirement to gain the whole-hearted *support of at least a critical mass of teacher colleagues* who will need to contribute in some way. This includes subject teachers, year heads and class tutors.
- 704 There is substantial evidence, from our fieldwork and project reports, to support each of these points, but especially the last one about securing the understanding and commitment of teacher colleagues. A positive example – from a school in the Aztec project – described the lead teacher as 'giving unstintingly of her time and effort to ensure that the exercise itself ran smoothly and that its significance was properly understood by pupils and teacher colleagues'.
- 705 An effective structural way of securing whole school support was evident in the Coventry project, which introduced into the management arrangements a steering group comprising each of the curriculum deputy heads from the schools involved.

### Role of lead teacher

- 706 It is probably inevitable that one teacher should take the main lead in any one school and there are examples throughout the projects of where this has happened. In general, the qualities that make an effective lead teacher appear to include enthusiasm, commitment and the ability to communicate well; the post-holder does not necessarily need to be in a senior role, provided there is support available from senior management when it is needed (see above).
- 707 Sometimes, however, illustrations of inappropriate lead roles have been evident. In one school, what was essentially a curriculum development project was assigned to the teacher who co-ordinated work experience, on the grounds that 'the project involved liaison with employers'. While this was true in a superficial sense, the project quickly became unstuck because what was really needed was good communication about the *curriculum content* of the initiative between subject teachers and the employers.
- 708 The Senior Adviser from one participating LEA commented on the crucial relationship between the lead teacher and other teachers in the same school with a supporting contribution to make.

"In project schools, the lead teacher for the focus subject had a nominated team of IT and personal Key Skills teachers to help, and these were the teachers trained to assess Key Skills. Whereas team work was very successful in some schools, it depended on the willingness of teachers to collaborate (not all subject teachers liked having others around) and it also depended on support from senior managers in allowing time for people to work together."

- 709 There is certainly a danger that too much can be asked of the lead teacher. One project pointed out that outcomes were expected to vary across the various participating schools because 'given the strands of the project, identifying one teacher with experience and enthusiasm for work experience, careers, IT, and Key Skills has been difficult'. The answer is surely to identify other relevant teachers prepared and able to help.

## **PROJECT LEVEL**

### ***Building onto other local initiatives***

- 710 One important general management issue for planners of future projects of this kind is about the relative advantages or disadvantages of building their projects onto some kind of relevant existing infrastructure. By 'relevant existing infrastructure' we mean, at its simplest, an existing partnership interested in joint ways of creating more opportunities for improving student performance – for example, a local 14-19 co-ordinating group or an EBP. On the other hand, it could extend to an arrangement, as in Leicester, with full-time staff and a physical base which is experienced in developing and implementing projects of this kind.
- 711 The arguments in favour of making use of such an infrastructure are self-evident and include efficiency, expertise, ease of communication and so on. Possible arguments against are the difficulty of establishing a distinct identity for the new project, too many prior assumptions, and the complexity of isolating outcomes which could accurately be assigned to any individual project. On balance, our conclusion is that existing infrastructures, although not essential, were a great asset to DPs – not least in terms of cost efficiency and sustaining/embedding what was learned into future activity.

### ***Coherence with flexibility***

- 712 Whether the infrastructure is new or old, getting the leadership 'pitch' just right in terms of encouraging alternative approaches and allowing/disallowing exceptions is clearly a demanding challenge. Not all the case studies achieved an effective balance, here. In one, the project management was shared between the LEA and the TEC – an arrangement which gave rise to some confusion among participating schools.

### ***Consultation***

- 713 It was evident that there was a large variation in the degree and extent of consultation with school and other partners before the original proposal bid was sent to the DfEE. However, even those where prior consultation had been substantial found it necessary to re-consult and re-negotiate with schools when the proposal was approved. Perhaps not surprisingly, schools are reluctant to commit time and other resources to project planning unless and until they know 'it is for real'.

### ***Unforeseen developments***

- 714 Even where early and thorough overall planning did take place, implementation was often seriously affected by unexpected events at school and project level. It was the norm rather than the exception for some crucial change (eg. through illness, promotion, or restructuring) in management arrangements to take place at project level during the course of the DPs. This was mirrored by similar changes at school level, and exacerbated yet further by external factors, such as Ofsted inspections, local school closure/re-organisation proposals, and the parallel development of related initiatives.
- 715 In Leicester, nearly all of the participating secondary schools found themselves the subject of a City wide re-organisation proposal during the course of the project. In Aztec, the school hosting the main NVQ element of the project was put into special measures, became subject to a closure proposal, was reprieved and then given a 'Fresh Start'; these changes also involved a total of three successive headteachers in the space of a year.

### ***Project groups***

- 716 The significance of the local steering committee, drawn from the various local partners, required as part of the DfEE's bid specification, varied considerably across the projects. At one extreme, the role and impact were perfunctory. This did not necessarily diminish the immediate operational efficiency of the project: indeed some implied that, in practice, a steering committee wasn't needed as such as long as the project manager could ask for help/guidance from relevant committee members on a bilateral basis as and when it was required. At the other extreme, there were examples where the steering committee added significant value to the direction of the project.
- 717 There were some projects, however, where no matter how hard the project manager tried to raise interest and commitment from the original proposal partners, busy diaries seemed to get in the way of their attending steering committee meetings or making strategic or operational contributions during the life of the project.

- 718 Some participants pointed out that, in the long term, the most important contribution of a steering committee is to create and foster working relationships between different institutions and agencies that can help to embed and sustain the project (or developments from it) after the pump priming stage is over.
- 719 Several projects found it helpful, whether or not they had an active steering committee, to create a practitioners group of some kind – usually the lead teachers from each school in the project. Again there is evidence to show that this was helpful at several levels, including:-
- the smooth running of the project;
  - staff training and development;
  - exchanging ideas and good practice;
  - building up connections and ideas for future collaborative work.
- 720 Stoke-on-Trent had three parallel, active groups. One was the Management Group, involving Headteachers, LEA officers, the TEC, EBP, Careers Service and evaluators; the others brought together school co-ordinators, and (separately) IT co-ordinators. Each group had a distinctive role and contribution.
- 721 It is interesting that at least one project (Aztec) decided, from the beginning, to manage the contributions it expected from every partner, including schools, by formal contracts. In the event, for reasons that would have been impossible to predict at the beginning, that decision proved to be a wise one.

### ***Professional leadership***

- 722 Looking across all the DPs, perhaps one of the most important success factors was the quality of professional leadership provided by the project manager/co-ordinator. Some projects were fortunate enough to have available to them, either in one person, or more often shared between several individuals:-
- well developed project management skills;
  - curriculum expertise across the whole field of work-related learning and assessment (including Key Skills);
  - a good working knowledge of related topics, such as careers guidance, local progression opportunities and related national initiatives such as the Progress File.
- 723 That was asking rather a lot! There is some evidence that some of the smaller projects and/or those which did not network sufficiently, failed to draw upon sufficient expertise of the right kind at the right time.
- 724 This area of teaching and learning is changing very fast and keeping up with the existing body of knowledge and prospective developments is no easy undertaking. Nevertheless this wide breadth of professional leadership is undoubtedly required at local project level in order to maximise the benefit gained by students and staff. In our judgement, such leadership was evident in several, but far from all, of the projects.

### ***Clarity of purpose***

- 725 A connected, and similarly important, success factor was clarity of purpose, set alongside equal clarity about targets, timetables and allocated responsibilities. In a sense, this is a general point about project management skills. However, joint activities to pursue important (but somewhat nebulous) aspirations such as 'improving awareness of skills and attitudes required by employers' can be particularly complex to turn into specific programmes with measurable outcomes.
- 726 In general – but there are exceptions – our conclusion is that those projects which focused down early on some precise targets gained considerably in terms of good use of resources and the motivation of students/staff/employers/other agencies. One example was Coventry where the purpose was 'to explore ways in which modules of work endorsed by the Institute of Motor Industries could be integrated into the programmes of study for National Curriculum Design and Technology at KS4 and, in particular, into GCSE courses for Design and Technology that focus on resistant materials and electronic products'. Whilst the wording might use technical language, the focus was clear.

## Quality

- 727 A powerful point made by several participants is the importance of insisting on high quality in relation both to documentation for students and their working environment. For students who might, so far, not have been successful in school, it is crucial to demonstrate that they have not been relegated, in terms of how they are viewed and what kind of investment might be justified to help secure improved opportunities for them at the end of their school careers. Thus, for example, properly designed and printed tasks, folders and other stationery, as well as new (not second hand or passed on) furniture and computing equipment need to be seen as a proper and justifiable investment – not a 'waste of money'.
- 728 The conclusion from the Camden project, for example, was that 'high profile links and a well equipped base [IT] room have been key in the improvement in student self-esteem, motivation and achievement.' This message can be as much for teachers in the project schools as for outside observers. At the same time, it was pointed out that much is gained if the project students themselves are involved in the specification, acquisition and subsequent care of the equipment and materials concerned.

## Evaluation

- 729 The issue of evaluation was treated very differently from one project to another. In some, only limited evaluation activity was reported. In others, it was a central feature of the whole project, absorbing planned and not insignificant resources. A number of projects, including Stoke-on-Trent, Barnsley, Sheffield, Southwark, St Helens and Devon & Cornwall engaged external evaluators; these were chosen variously from the private sector, TECs and Universities.
- 730 Leicester's evaluation strategy also included peer group moderation (visits and written reports from colleagues in other schools) and case studies (each school writing a short evaluative commentary on a particular aspect of the project). In Devon & Cornwall the external evaluator was commissioned to provide several major reviews including an assessment of employer attitudes towards the local PEAKS (Performance, Enhancement and Accreditation of Key Skills) project. SWA conducted similar exercises in case study areas (eg. a review of the Countec engagement with employers to support their project on enhanced work experience).
- 731 The role of the external evaluator, where appointed, varied widely. Some projects gave their evaluator a relatively narrow brief (eg. administering and analysing questionnaires to students, staff or employers). In these cases, the added value in using an external evaluator appeared to be the dispassionate, objective approach which they could bring from being a certain distance away. Others looked for a commentary and wider contribution across the whole of the project activity. At least one of the evaluation reports in this category (Merseyside) provided valuable recommendations for future development on a range of different issues, including some relating to curriculum and management.
- 732 Several projects administered the student questionnaire, provided by SWA, after the initial national workshop. However, few did so at both the beginning and end of the project, thereby being equipped to compare the baseline and final positions. Many project co-ordinators were not able to persuade all schools to take part. Some gave the impression that they were simply doing this because it was 'part of the national requirements' and clearly did not perceive it as a useful means for the project itself to gain important evaluative feedback.
- 733 Three of the exceptions to this general finding were the Gloucestershire, Coventry and Stoke-on-Trent projects. In Gloucestershire, the external evaluator organised specifically designed questionnaires for small samples of project group students at each school (customised to their specific programmes), analysed the results and summarised the conclusions in a clear, useful and attractive format. In Coventry, the local Careers Service undertook some independent research on a sample of the project group (using both questionnaires and group discussions) in both May 1998 and March 1999 – and again presented the conclusions in a very helpful and professional format. In Stoke-on Trent, the local evaluator (Keele University) designed a customised questionnaire which built on and enhanced the SWA draft; this was administered twice and gave valuable insights into student perceptions. The gender splits were particularly interesting.
- 734 The response from projects to the requirement for information from comparator groups (or at least comparative information that would help to establish some kind of counterfactual position) was, in general, disappointing. While some projects conscientiously provided the required data, few saw it as a meaningful or helpful contribution to any local evaluative process. This resulted in some projects 'going through the motions', rather than adopting a rigorous selection process for the comparator group which would have established a base similarity with the project group (eg. about KS3 results, attendance or behaviour). The effects of this can be perceived in the data summaries in Chapters III and IV.
- 735 Gloucestershire was an exception here, as well. The project took trouble, albeit on a small scale, to compare the performance of students on a mixed GNVQ/GCSE programme, with those in a comparator group, who had similar VRQ scores, but were on a traditional GCSE courses (already summarised in Chapter III).

736 Very few projects appeared to make reference to any established body of research findings. Barnsley was a commendable exception.

### **Participation by students with special needs and from PRUs**

737 One of the most encouraging features of the whole initiative was the inclusive way in which so many projects were able to include students from special schools within virtually all their planned activities. Several illustrations of this have already been mentioned in earlier chapters.

738 Other examples are as follows:-

- in Devon & Cornwall, resources were developed focussing on Working with Others and Improving Own Learning and Performance which 'enabled SLD students to take more ownership of their work eg. tracking log books and Writing with Symbols software';
- in Lewisham, training from OCR enabled staff to introduce a new accredited pre-vocational access course focused on number, communication, IT and work skills;
- in Leicester, the school co-ordinator designed Entry Level criteria for the two new generic Key Skills, as adapted by the local Partnership (to be made available to students in all schools). This was in addition to arranging 15 team building events suitable for small groups of SEN students with severe learning difficulties and a two-day mini-enterprise project involving the whole Year 12 group in the design, production and sale of school T-shirts;
- in Oldham, the Young Enterprise achievement diary, which was developed by that project to have a special focus on Key Skills, was modified again to meet the requirements of students with special needs;
- in Wigan, special schools contributed fully and equally alongside mainstream schools in the project from the beginning. A significant outcome was that 'special school students achieved so much through being formally accredited for their achievement in Key Skills development';
- in Croydon, one school for pupils with Moderate Learning Difficulties worked very effectively with a range of partners including an FE college, the Careers Service and the Education Business Partnership Work Experience team. Eighteen pupils from this school achieved both Key Skills units;
- in Trafford, one of the major elements of the project was first to review and then develop a significant expansion of vocational provision for students from a special school. This included Youth Challenge (a joint programme with the Youth Service to build confidence and independence) and Team Enterprise, in which students run businesses with help from local companies;
- in Gloucestershire, the project demonstrated that it was possible successfully to include students with learning difficulties from a special school within the FE college link course focused on units of NVQ level 1 in Hospitality and Catering.

739 Several of the projects were also able to bring Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) into the project – with no apparent organisational or other difficulties. Indeed, some participants remarked on the fact that special schools and PRUs were more able in some ways than mainstream schools to take advantage of the opportunities on offer. This was because of their greater flexibility over timetabling and their greater emphasis on individual student programmes of work.

### **Links with other initiatives**

740 Inevitably – and perfectly properly – many projects and project schools were also engaged with, and/or bidding for future funding from, other local and national initiatives at the same time as taking part in the DPs. Sometimes links with other initiatives were somewhat low key. Elsewhere, they were exploited positively and often made a useful contribution to the DP; this was especially true of the NRA (Progress File) projects.

741 Southwark, for example, noted:-

'We believe that the Progress File will be a good teaching and recording tool. The aim is to encourage the schools to see all the work-related initiatives as having one common thread, with the Progress File central to this progress'.

742 Oldham was another project which carefully explained its many connections to, for example, Outward Bound, Young Enterprise, Compact, Careers Service inputs and bids being made for SRB and Progress File DP funding. What is difficult in this situation, in evaluation terms, is trying to disentangle the

particular impact of the KS4 DP (or any other project) from everything else that is going on. In general – to risk a sweeping conclusion – projects and schools seemed better at seeing, and making use of, connections between different projects and opportunities than in evaluating the outcomes of individual initiatives.

## **NATIONAL LEVEL**

### **Lead time**

- 743 Nearly all the projects pointed out – or complained that – they had very little time between notification that their bid had been successful and their start date for the student programme. They emphasised points such as:-
- timetables are fixed months in advance;
  - it is difficult to get teachers together at the end of term;
  - school holidays intervene.
- 744 While it would be fair to suggest that contingency plans should have been prepared, secondary schools are large and complex organisations which cannot (or cannot be persuaded to) put organisational arrangements on hold for what, at school level, may be a relatively minor initiative, in volume terms. In many schools, the DP had slipped down the priority list by the time the confirmation was received. Government Ministers and DfEE officials do, of course, have their own pressures and parameters to work within. Nevertheless, this issue is one which DfEE and project managers may wish to bear in mind when preparing for other initiatives of this kind.

### **Management information**

- 745 As has been pointed out several times, the provision of management information on students from the project and comparator groups, as well as whole year cohorts (where these were not the project groups), was patchy, to put it diplomatically. Our judgement is that the fault was not, in the main, with project managers and co-ordinators, most of whom tried very hard to gather this information from schools.
- 746 It was, however, both surprising and disappointing that many schools did not seem able to track through standard data on basic individual student performance information such as attendance, internal sanctions, KS3 and KS4 results and actual (or likely) post-16 destinations, with any degree of ease or certainty. Nor could they always produce reliable whole cohort information for previous years. Much of this data, should, of course, have been produced for other purposes.
- 747 One explanation appears to be that this kind of data is often held by different people in different parts of the school for different purposes and that other teachers (in this case the lead teachers for the DP) do not have straightforward access to this data or its interpretation. Whatever the explanation, there can really be little excuse for non-compliance with reasonable requirements for information of this kind. We are aware that DfEE has already tightened its approach on this issue for subsequent initiatives, through insistence on detailed evaluation strategies and precise specifications within the contract documentation of data requirements.

### **Qualitative reports**

- 748 There was a better response rate for the narrative/subjective information contained in the termly and final project reports from project managers. However, even these varied greatly in terms of the range of matters covered and the overall quality of the information supplied. In the final reports, for example, it was noticeable that some projects simply selected information from the earlier termly reports or just put together minutes of meetings or reports gathered from participating schools. However, others attempted to give more of an overview with strong sections on evaluation, dissemination and plans for future developments.
- 749 Whilst it is impossible to impose absolute standards on the quality of report writing, DfEE may want to consider, for the future, moving towards yet greater specifications from the outset about what qualitative information is required and by what precise dates, with these specifications becoming part of the contract conditions (ie. as in paragraph 747 above, referring to quantitative data).

### **Participation by schools experiencing other difficulties**

- 750 A more difficult issue is what attitude to take to the participation in projects of this kind by schools which:-

- are known to have serious weaknesses or be in Special Measures after Ofsted inspections; or
- who enter these categories in the course of the project.

- 751 There were several instances where schools were not able to participate as planned in the DP, either because the school management failed to deliver, or because it was decided, in the light of the difficulties faced by the school, that 'everything, including the work-related curriculum, that was not directly concerned with raising GCSE performance at KS4 had to be dropped'. There are, of course, arguments for specifically including schools with these kind of difficulties in projects of this type, especially if they can be shown to offer significant ways to improve student and staff performance in schools where there is an urgent need for rapid improvement.
- 752 Much probably depends on individual circumstances. This is a matter which would merit consideration by DfEE and Ofsted officials.

### ***Support from Examination Boards for Key Skills***

- 753 Another subject for possible discussion between DfEE and, this time, QCA and, possibly, the main Examination Boards, is how to get better information though to school level about assessment and accreditation of Key Skills. As is pointed out in Chapter V, some projects and schools struggled to find their way through what they found to be a complex, and sometimes impenetrable, bureaucratic maze. In too many cases, the impression was that for certain staff in the main Examination Boards, standalone Key Skill accreditation for Working with Others and Improving own Learning and Performance at KS4 was a marginal activity, with relatively few people able to offer authoritative guidance. Some projects found their way through this difficulty by means of particular contacts and helpful individuals; but others got nowhere, with the result that some student work that might have qualified for accreditation simply did not do so.

### ***Approval to continue offering generic Key Skills pre-16***

- 754 There was an immediate additional question to be resolved at national level. This was whether – and how – agreement could be obtained for DP schools which were keen to secure continuing accreditation for the generic Key Skill qualifications on a standalone basis. Several of the projects were deeply concerned over information they had received from the Examination Boards that they could not continue with such accreditation beyond the expiry of their projects.
- 755 [The position now is that the "generic" Key Skills, which DPs had dispensation to use and test out, have been dropped for pre-16 use, although projects can continue to offer them until July 2001. However, from September 2000, schools can accredit Communication, Application of Number and Information Technology, either as separate units or for the full Key Skills qualifications.]

### ***Integrating Key Skills with calculation of school performance at KS4***

- 756 Not far behind, in terms of urgency, is the crucial need, as perceived by many projects and schools, 'to make Key Skills count' in school league tables. The difficulties associated with making this change are, of course, complex and go well beyond the remit of this initiative and this evaluation report. We simply record the strong view from many projects that the lack of progress on this matter constitutes a significant constraint to the widespread take-up of this opportunity in schools.

### ***Teacher development strategy***

- 757 It is pointed out, in Chapter VI, that much good practice developed by DPs is well suited, given the right conditions, to replication in other schools elsewhere in the country. However, this will not 'just happen'. In our view, it will need a strategy and INSET programme, probably involving at least the DfEE (taking the initial lead), plus other national agencies and local authorities.
- 758 There would be obvious sense in developing such a strategy in the light not just of the DPs and this evaluation, but also in relation to the outcomes and evaluations of related national initiatives. These include the Action Research Projects, the Education Action Zones with a work-related element, and relevant Standards Fund projects.

**'PEN PORTRAITS' OF ALL 35 KS4 DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS**

# AZTEC

## SKILL BUILDER

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Aztec  |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 007  |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | Sept 97 – Aug 99                                     |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | NVQ element – 1<br>Key Skills element – 2            |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | NVQ element – 22<br>Key Skills element – approx. 200 |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | None   |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | B      E      F                                      |

### Stated local objectives:

1. To enable young people to develop the Key Skills necessary for the world of work
2. To test approaches to the accreditation of Key Skills units including Working with Others and Improving own Learning and Performance
3. To enable employers to benefit from enhanced and extended links with schools and young people through making a contribution to the curriculum

### Main features of the project:

1. NVQ Construction (Trowel Trades) offered to 22 pupils as a two year course, on-site, run by Rathbone CI and supported by CITB
2. Locally designed simulation exercises, based around construction themes, offered to local high schools for development and accreditation of generic Key Skills

### Main outcomes of the project:

Well written simulation exercises have been developed as planned but, for a variety of reasons beyond control of the project manager, have not yet been tested and used to the extent originally intended (there are some encouraging signs that there will be some additional take up in 1999/2000).

## **BARKING and DAGENHAM**

**Project sponsor:** L.B Barking and Dagenham

**DfEE number:** 052

**Duration:** Sept 97 – Aug 98

**Number of project schools:** 3

**Number of project students:** 118

**Number of comparator students:** 36

**Key national objectives:** A B C

### **Stated local objectives:**

1. To provide pupils with opportunities to extend and gain recognition for practical skills and competencies
2. To introduce industrial standards and practices to school-based vocational courses
3. To provide pupils with well-informed and accurately targeted vocational guidance and support

### **Main features of the project:**

The development of vocational opportunities through selected GCSE courses, drawing on:-

- continental teaching practice/materials, and
- help provided by local employers

### **Main outcomes of the project:**

Improved motivation and attainment by the students, who gained in self confidence and skill levels by working "to industrial standards" in the work place.

# BARNSLEY

## WORK EXPERIENCE COUNTS

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Barnsley LEA  |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 024   |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | One year with 2 groups (one year after the other)<br>(+ one special school for 2 years) |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 4 in Year 1; 2 in Year 2; 1 for 2 years   |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | 482: 184 in Year 1; and 298 in Year 2   |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | None  |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | A      B      C   |

### Stated local objectives:

1. Establish a practical framework for the accreditation of Key Skills through work experience
2. Develop a programme of staff development for teachers who are involved in the planning and assessment of Key Skills, using work experience
3. Establish a Quality Assurance process for the assessment of Key Skills, as an integral part of the world of work module within the locally accredited Careers Education and Guidance quality awards

### Main features of the project:

Overall aim: To establish a framework for the accreditation of Key Skills through work experience

Features: Programme of staff development for teachers; training for enough teachers to assess Key Skills across the Borough; integration with CEF

### Main outcomes of the project:

1. Increased pupil motivation and self-confidence
2. Pupils planning for entry to post-16 education and training
3. Production of high quality materials
4. Production of information for employers
5. Increased pupil awareness of Key Skills
6. Increased pupil understanding of post-16 requirements (job and other)
7. Increased achievement with portfolios and work experience placements
8. Increased quality of pupil performance on work experience

# CAMDEN

|                                       |                                   |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Camden LEA                        |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 064                               |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | Sept 97 – July 99                 |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 1 (with plans for 3 subsequently) |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | 12                                |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | 16                                |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | A      D      E                   |

**Stated local objectives:**

1. By Summer 1998, to disseminate successful elements to the whole Year 10 cohort at Acland Burghley school and to two additional schools in the borough and, by Summer 1999, to disseminate outcomes to all other schools in the TEC area
2. To build upon existing links with Marks & Spencer and other organisations, particularly the use of exercises developing employability skills, which have been used with key groups of "at risk" students at Key Stage 4

**Main features of the project:**

1. The project was planned to provide a multi-faceted programme of work-related learning (including Key Skills, taster courses, workplace units and tutorial support) at one school in year one, "rolling out" to two further schools in year two – concentrating particularly on "able but disaffected" students
2. During the course of year one, the focus was on the use of IT and the creation of an IT base at the original school
3. A further feature is the use of business 'coaches' or mentors following students through Years 10, 11 and into Year 12 for those who stay on in the sixth form

**Main outcomes of the project:**

1. A group of students who have had significantly better examination results, attendance and progression to post-16 options, compared with the control group and, in terms of progression, with the whole year group
2. The production of a handbook containing information on good practice, coaching, schemes of work on IT, Key Skills, and staff training for PHSE programmes
3. The diversification of the Key Stage 4 curriculum by the introduction of two new GNVQ Part One courses in IT and Leisure and Tourism, and the certification of IT for all Key Stage 4 students
4. The development of a work-related learning faculty at Key Stage 4
5. The development of extended work placements to motivate and develop students' personal skills and motivation
6. Good classroom practice on teaching skills – praised by Ofsted in September 1999
7. The development of positive links with businesses and providers in the local community
8. The development of a progression programme for "at risk" students
9. The widening of the business coaching scheme at Key Stage 4 and post-16
10. Borough-wide dissemination of good practice

# CHESHIRE

## ADVANTAGE

|                                       |                                      |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Cheshire Work Related Strategy Group |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 004                                  |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | 2 years                              |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 9                                    |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | Approx. 1540                         |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | No data provided                     |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | B      C      E                      |

### Stated local objectives:

1. To include the use of the NPRA unit scheme as a means of curriculum planning and accreditation, linked to evidence of achievement
2. To identify the Key Skill links to the components of the Pathways Framework
3. To ensure the use of the re-launched NRA as a means of managing individual learning effectively to share information with others and aid future personal development

### Main features of the project:

1. Exploring how an existing framework "Pathways Towards Adult Life" could be used more effectively to plan activities and evaluate their impact on the curriculum
2. Developing links between the framework and the Key Skills, particularly WWO and IOLP
3. The formal accreditation of Key Skills
4. Specific inputs for pupils included:-
  - work experience
  - developing student planners to help the recognition of Key Skills achievements
  - development of an Internet site aimed at enhancing careers education and guidance
  - collaborative events with local businesses
  - training for young enterprise students at a local Higher Education institution
  - use of local business advisers at weekly meetings with Young Enterprise group
  - involvement of Rotary Club in supporting Key Skill recognition

### **Main outcomes of the project:**

1. Overall impact of project has been considerable and extensive in most schools eg. Key Skills/awareness of employers' requirements/improved performance. In one school, impact was with special needs students. In another school, benefits included personal development for pupils and the ability to become independent learners
2. Staff training - D34 award in one school
3. Heightened staff and pupil awareness to Key Skills – in one school induction of awareness of Key Skills into earlier years' PSE sessions
4. Recognition of need to use expertise of other education establishments. Has highlighted that a greater coherence across the various initiatives is possible and, if achieved, can lead to a greater overall impact
5. Increased student responsibility and change in attitudes to teaching styles
6. Development of work experience diaries
7. One school found an increase in part-time jobs
8. Mock interviews with Rotary Club
9. In one school a Careers website was developed – facilitated by 2 lower sixth students

# COUNTEC

## PROBLEM SOLVING PARTNERSHIPS

|                                       |                             |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Countec and Project Trident |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 067                         |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | Sept 97 – Dec 98            |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 3 full + 2 partial          |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | Approx. 200                 |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | None                        |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | A      C      F             |

### Stated local objectives:

1. To demonstrate that work-related activity can contribute directly to the subject needs, motivation, attainment and maturity of young people
2. To demonstrate that the work-based activities offered by an employer as part of work experience can be arranged so as to set a "problem" or "challenge" to a student
3. To demonstrate that small and medium-sized companies can contribute to, and take advantage of, the work-related activities developed in support of the objectives listed here

### Main features of the project:

1. The development of curriculum-related tasks for students to complete during their enhanced work experience placements which directly assist their understanding of elements of core curriculum subjects and thereby contribute towards improving GCSE performance
2. 'Multiplier' strategies to help secure local sustainability and growth of this approach to work experience
3. Involvement of employers – especially small and medium sized companies

### Main outcomes of the project:

1. The creation of a bank of curriculum-related tasks which can continue to be used in Milton Keynes and elsewhere
2. Valuable lessons learned about the most efficient way of managing such enhanced work placements
3. Some evidence of gains for some students in terms of motivation and achievement of tasks

# COVENTRY

## EQUIPPING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR WORKING LIFE: VOCATIONAL AND WORK RELATED OPTIONS AT KEY STAGE 4

|                                       |                 |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Coventry LEA    |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 29              |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | 2 years         |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 4               |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | 78              |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | 79              |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | A      D      F |

### Stated local objectives:

1. Work in partnership with 4 schools to identify modules of work that will enhance the provision for vocational study within current GCSE Design & Technology courses and thus raise the standards of attainment and improve GCSE grades
2. Provide resources and training that will extend the opportunities for work in school
3. Plan additional opportunities through Partnership Centres and local businesses for pupils to experience the application of technology in the work place

### Main features of the project:

1. Project aimed to enhance the design and technology GCSE curriculum through the provision of work-related curriculum materials, resources, training and visits to local businesses, University departments and Education Business Partnership Centres
2. Pupils were given experience of designing and manufacturing techniques in industry, the role of IT and the importance of teamwork
3. Visits to local businesses (designing and manufacturing) included Agco, Peugeot, Jaguar, Nastech, Ove Arup, The Clothing Centre, Marconi, Coventry University School of Engineering, and Manufacturing Centre at Warwick University
4. A two-day design and make mini-project provided opportunities for accreditation in Key Skill units

### Main outcomes of the project:

1. Overall attainment was higher from the project groups than the control groups in two schools, the same in one school and lower in the fourth school
2. NVQ Key Skill unit 'Working with Others' – 69.2% gained level 2 and 7.6% level 1
3. A higher percentage of pupils are following career paths in engineering or manufacturing in all four schools compared with the control groups in the same schools
4. Two of the project schools have started new A level design courses from September 1999 with 15 students enrolled in each school
5. Increased motivation of pupils and the gaining of the NVQ accreditation and opportunities to work in teams
6. A presentation evening for NVQ awards was held

# CROYDON

## THE KEY FOUNDATIONS PROGRAMME ONLINE FOR WORK

|                                       |                                |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Croydon LEA                    |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 057                            |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | Sept 97 – July 99              |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 8 (6x11-16, 1x11-18 and 1xMLD) |
| <b>Additional comparator schools:</b> | All schools in LEA             |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | Approx. 240                    |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | Entire LEA year group          |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | All                            |

### Stated local objectives:

1. Establish for Key Stage 4 pupils, within local post-16 provision, a range of structured and planned GNVQ taster opportunities across the vocational areas – activities to be developed by Key Stage 4 and post-16 staff working together to produce assignments focused on elements within GNVQ Units
2. Identify opportunities for the acquisition of Key Skills within these programmes and the broader work experience programmes managed by Trident/CEBP
3. Develop and provide guidance for employers hosting work experience placements which identifies and describes the Key Skills and shows how opportunities for their acquisition might be created
4. Develop and provide guidance for those teachers accompanying pupils on GNVQ programmes or visiting pupils on work experience placements which identifies Key Skills and shows how they might be recorded in a pupils' NRA
5. Using NCVQ guidance, with specific reference to Working With Others and Improving Own Learning and Performance, record Key Skills within pupils' NRAs
6. Identify, within the Key Stage 4 National Curriculum and within the broader curriculum, opportunities for pupils to acquire and record Key Skills
7. Develop, in partnership with Prospects Careers Services' World of Work Centre, pupils' support materials which identify employment trends, skills needs and learning opportunities for each vocational area

### Main features of the project:

1. Taster programme (2 or 3 days) in different vocational areas for a total 240 students – each group of students accompanied by a KS4 teacher
2. Enhanced careers guidance
3. 200 students had opportunity for KS accreditation through enhanced work experience
4. All students have a summative KS statement within their NRA

**Main outcomes of the project:**

1. Clear and explicit links established between schools and colleges for GNVQ tasters
2. All schools now Approved Centres for GNVQ through links with Edexcel
3. Collaboration with Croydon Work Experience resulted in structured witness testimony statements, mapped against the Key Skills specifications
4. Students' portfolios contained assessable evidence across the curriculum, eg. GCSE coursework accompanied by planning documents, improvements and modifications; examples of collaborative work, eg. group presentations; action plans and self review outcomes
5. Local Labour Market Information packs produced for each GNVQ vocational areas; also log books, assessment pro formas and tracking documentation developed
6. Establishment of a local network – teachers from participating schools and colleges meeting regularly

# DEVON and CORNWALL

## PEAKS

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Devon and Cornwall TEC hold contract (consortium of schools) |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 078  |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | 2 years  |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 6  |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | 974  |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | 55   |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | C      E      F  |

### Stated local objectives:

1. Develop a variety of cross curricular activities which:-
  - enhance Key Skill learning opportunities for pupils, improving their personal performance
  - lead to recognised accreditation of Key Skill units
2. Extend partnerships between school and the world of work so as to:-
  - raise awareness and expectation of all partners of the relevance of Key Skill training
  - recognise labour market requirements and emerging skill shortages
  - both determine and recognise labour market requirements and emerging skill shortages
  - enhance teaching and learning styles across the curriculum
  - further promote teaching strategies incorporated in the delivery of NVQ, GNVQ and RSA National Skills Profile courses
3. Devise an efficient monitoring, recording and evaluation framework according to identified needs and to develop and produce a Consortium Log Book as an acceptable recording method to accredit Key Skills units

### Main features of the project:

1. Enhancement of school culture and curriculum through business mentoring, preparing Key Skills portfolios within a PSE framework and development of cross curricular Key Skills
2. Enhanced work experience
3. Staff development
4. Peaks Challenge event, an inter-school competition featuring a business project (but with a Key Skills dimension)
5. Preparation of a new quality standards framework, leading to the Investors in Education Business Partnership Award

**Main outcomes of the project:**

1. Average percentage achievement across 5 schools at KS4 risen from 39.74% in 1996/97 to 45.48% in 1998/99
2. 30 students from Redruth School achieved both Key Skill units and 12 students from Falmouth School achieved one unit each
3. 120 employers/training providers actively involved with schools over two years (excluding work experience only)
4. Penryn College received an award for work with employers from Institute of Careers Guidance in 1999
5. Peak Folders designed and in use – ie. locally designed portfolios for Key Skills evidence
6. Increase in demand for teacher placements

# GLOUCESTERSHIRE

|                                       |                                      |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Gloucestershire LEA                  |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 044                                  |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | Sept 97 – July 99                    |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 5                                    |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | Approx 200 – in different activities |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | None                                 |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | A      D      E                      |

## **Stated local objectives:**

1. To increase the number of pre-16 students having access to quality vocational provision
2. To improve the systematic development and recording of Key Skills
3. To improve links between pre-16 and post-16 providers

## **Main features of the project:**

Four different projects in a total of 5 different (mostly 11-16) schools to develop a range of innovative practice in vocational courses and Key Skills:-

- NVQ units in Catering
- enhancement of Compact and KS accreditation
- full GNVQ at KS4 in Health and Social Care
- enhanced delivery of GNVQ units

## **Main outcomes of the project:**

1. Dissemination conference held; also the publication of the LEA's in-house *Learning Matters* magazine, devoted primarily to KS4 work-related projects
2. Work-related learning at KS4 developed successfully within NVQ and GNVQ frameworks
2. Development of close relationships between 11-16 schools and Further Education colleges with vocational programmes
4. Pupils responded well to practical tasks with clear short-term goals
5. Timetables adjusted to allow extended practical work and activities off-site

# GREATER NOTTINGHAM

## VOCATIONAL PATHWAYS

|                                       |                        |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Greater Nottingham TEC |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 084                    |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | 1 year                 |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 3                      |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | 98                     |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | 113                    |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | D      E      F        |

### Stated local objectives:

1. To enhance the vocational experience with both off-site and on-site activities in partnership with local colleges, industry, training agencies and wider community
2. To develop action planning, target setting and reviewing as an integral part of vocational educational, to enhance NRA and careers guidance
3. Promote joint school/college co-operation by sharing learning and teaching styles and curriculum organisation, building on existing good practice

### Main features of the project:

1. Partnership working between 3 schools and local post-16 providers
2. Development of vocational options within KS4 curriculum including Key Skills, NVQ units, vocational GCSEs and GNVQ units
3. Introduction of Progress File
4. Staff development for school staff

### Main outcomes of the project:

1. Pupils felt mentoring was important
2. Broad spectrum of vocational qualifications achieved eg. NVQ Units in Sport and Leisure, Hairdressing and Wood Occupations, GCSE Textiles, Key Skills (WWO, IOLP), and GNVQ Units (Foundation Level Business)
3. Glaisdale School approved as centre by Edexcel
4. 7 staff from Ellis Guildford school completed GPA Business and 3 completed D34
5. Ten pupils from Bigwood School obtained units from City and Guilds in Desk Top Publishing

# GREENWICH

## GREENWICH VOCATIONAL EDUCATION NETWORK (GVEN)

|                                       |                 |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Greenwich EBP   |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 102             |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | 2 years         |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 4               |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | 524             |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | 445             |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | A      C      F |
| <b>Stated local objectives:</b>       |                 |

### *Aims*

1. To promote an increased vocational education offer pre-16
2. To support the development and enhancement of Key Skills accreditation 14-16
3. To enhance collaboration and links between schools, further education and employers
4. To raise staff awareness and ability to deliver vocational education programmes pre-16
5. To raise awareness of, and promote parity of esteem for, vocational educational programmes 14-16 among local students, parents and employers
6. To develop a vocational education curriculum strategy 14 – 19 which promotes retention, achievement and progression
7. To support equality of opportunity at all stages and in particular at the point of enrolment/ course selection

Continued

### *Objectives*

1. To establish local vocational networks representing schools, further education, employers and trainees
2. To produce an evaluation report highlighting aspects of good practice and recommendation for vocational education provision
3. To establish routes through which young people can develop and accredit Key Skills
4. To develop a range of marketing strategies promoting vocational education amongst key stakeholders
5. To increase the number of young people 14–16 undertaking a vocational education programme
6. To promote partnership and enhance links – especially with training providers

### **Main features of the project:**

1. 3 schools and a PRU are to pilot new courses – RSA, Youth awards, GNVQ foundation, NVQ1
2. Other features include:-
  - teacher development
  - enhancing school / college links
  - enhanced work experience to lead to NVQ 1 unit completion
  - enhanced CEG with input from Careers Service
  - the production of teaching materials

**Main outcomes of the project:**

No general report received - outcomes from PRU included the following

1. Students gave positive responses about course – improving attendance and commitment
2. Improved knowledge of Key Skills
3. Recognition of 2 participants in 'Do the Right Thing' awards programme

# HEREFORD AND WORCESTER

## KEY SKILLS IN THE WORK- RELATED CURRICULUM

**Project sponsor:** Hereford & Worcester LEA

**DfEE number:** 079

**Duration:** 2 years

**Number of project schools:** 9

**Number of project students:** 87

**Number of comparator students:** 88

**Key national objectives:** C D E

### **Stated local objectives:**

1. Opportunity to acquire Key Skills and gain accreditation
2. Key Skills obtained through the work place
3. Extended work experience

### **Main features of the project:**

1. To build on an existing four-year programme of work-related activities, but to offer opportunities to a wider range of pupils. Key themes include the accreditation of Key Skills and G /NVQ units
2. The delivery of the programme is based on a partnership between schools, colleges, employers and training suppliers. The Careers Service is also involved
3. Work experience and the curriculum will be used in the accreditation process. Mentoring is also a component

### **Main outcomes of the project:**

1. Development of placement opportunities, supported by new log book focusing on informal gathering of evidence for Key Skill accreditation
2. Endorsement of mentoring having impact on achievement levels of students
3. Development of Key Skills in both KS4 and post-16 curricula, including staff training; has had an impact on whole school
4. Perceived improvement in attendance, attitudes towards school and work, and ability to complete homework and coursework, due to improved motivation

# HUMBERSIDE

## DEVELOPING AND ACCREDITING KEY SKILLS ACHIEVEMENT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE HUMBER REGION

**Project sponsor:** The Humberside Partnership

**DfEE number:** 069

**Duration:** Sept 97- July 99

**Number of project schools:** 8

**Number of project students:** 160

**Number of comparator students:** 160

**Key national objectives:** A D E

### Stated local objectives:

1. To offer Key Skill assessment and recognition to 160 young people in 'Working with Others' and 'Improving own Learning and Performance'
2. To develop collaborative working between the four new unitary authorities in the Humber region
3. To develop links between schools and employers, providing opportunities for work experience placements and the development of Key Skills within them

### Main features of the project:

1. Eight schools in four LEAs, each exploring Key Skill assessment opportunities in the core curriculum and in work experience
2. Joint training/support for three teachers in each school – all to be trained and accredited against appropriate assessor awards
3. New networks and links – including collaboration working between the four new unitary LEAs in the Humber region

### Main outcomes of the project:

1. Staff development, with D32/33 award
2. Series of briefing and networking meetings for staff to develop understanding of project and processes, and to share good practice
3. Development of cross-curricular teams at some schools
4. No discernible improvement in measurable performance indicators, ie. attendance and KS4 results, but favourable comments by pupils. Measurable differences between target and control groups not able to be validated as, in most cases, control groups not directly comparable in ability

# KIRKLEES

## 'ENHANCING THE WORK RELATED CURRICULUM'

|                                       |                               |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Kirklees Metropolitan Council |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 025                           |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | Sept 97- July 99              |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 10 (1 withdrew)               |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | approx. 140                   |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | approx. 140                   |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | B      C      E               |

### **Stated local objectives:**

1. To develop an enhanced work experience model
2. To develop a quality framework
3. To explore accreditation of their experiences

### **Main features of the project:**

1. A work experience project enhanced by pupil investigations of themes such as "a day in the life of" people at work, which were explored for accreditation through a range of different mechanisms and awarding bodies
2. Strong emphasis on use of IT and multi-media presentations

### **Main outcomes of the project:**

1. Significant increase of awareness of Key Skills for students and teachers involved
2. Similar development of IT experience for both (but too demanding for some pupils)
3. Most students gained level 1 Key Skills certificate or more
4. Helpful meetings with accrediting bodies – but their demands for "sufficiency of evidence" appeared to vary

# LEICESTER

## "IN CREDIT"

|                                       |                            |             |   |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|---|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Leicester / Leicestershire |             |   |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 008                        |             |   |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | Sept 97- Aug 98            |             |   |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 9                          |             |   |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | Project 1:                 | approx. 275 |   |
|                                       | Project 2:                 | approx. 500 |   |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | None                       |             |   |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | Project 1:                 | C           | F |
|                                       | Project 2:                 | B           | E |
| <b>Stated local objectives:</b>       |                            |             |   |

### Project 1: *Developing a Modular Option*

1. Students provided with a broad menu of vocational units from a variety of contexts
2. Facilitate workshops for staff, training providers, lecturers and employers to design vocational units and plan their delivery
2. Identify off-site placements within FE and industry for the delivery of vocational units
4. Provide moderation training for lecturers, training providers and employers involved with the scheme

### Project 2: *Integrating two Key Skill units within the Leicestershire Vocational Framework*

1. Establish a joint Task Group of teachers, employers and training providers to design and resource Key Skills assignments and agree students documentation
2. Revise student end of unit evaluation form to include any Key Skill criteria and adapt student Key Skills record to include new Key Skill units

### **Main features of the project:**

#### Project 1:

- Extra opportunities beyond local vocational curriculum entitlement for a number of modular options, based on elements of NVQ/ GNVQ approaches at off-site FE/ training provider locations

#### Project 2:

- Development of Key Skills opportunity (WWO and IOLP) within an existing local framework – with particular emphasis on opportunities, conferences, action planning and mentoring

### **Main outcomes of the project:**

1. Much strengthened – and embedded – programme of modular option opportunities for all participating schools, with availability extended to *all* Leicester/shire secondary schools
2. The two generics Key Skills integrated into the core Leicestershire Vocational Framework – alongside further developments of local accreditation arrangements
3. Substantial staff development and strengthening of local partnerships between schools and local employers / FE colleges / training providers

# LEWISHAM

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Lewisham LEA                                  |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 91  |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | 2 years (NB most schools commenced in 1998/9) |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 9   |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | 119   |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | 84  |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | A      C      E                               |

## **Stated local objectives:**

1. Pupil achievement; attendance/punctuality; completion of portfolio work; KS4 assessments
2. Staff development to support the delivery of work-related units, both as part of GCSE courses, and also GNVQ units for Key Skills
3. Create and strengthen links with external agencies and employers

## **Main features of the project:**

1. The delivery of vocational and work-related units informed by GNVQ requirements, work-related extensions to NC course units, and GNVQ core skills work
2. Schools have each adopted an approach tailored to their needs, but broadly within the boundaries outlined above
3. Other features include staff development and enhancing links within local opportunity providers, including training suppliers and employers

## **Main outcomes of the project:**

1. 3 schools were given GNVQ pilot status and therefore became only loosely linked to project
2. Lewisham EBP representative had high profile, leading to strengthened links to schools and linking the project with other initiatives
3. Creation of school links with Craft Skills Workshop and Lewisham College; also strengthening of working relationship with Educational Business Partnership
4. At least one school showed positive impact on levels of achievement, measured by KS4 results
5. Staff reported pupils gaining in self confidence and social skills, as well as improved motivation
6. One school had disappointing target group attendance data, with levels below control group; other schools showed improved attendance especially in programme sessions
7. Staff development has resulted in various training sessions and accreditations

# MERSEYSIDE

## MOTIVATED BY CHOICE

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Merseyside TEC  |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 22  |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | 1 year  |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 8 (5x LEA sec schools, 1x GM, 2 PRUs)                       |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | 140 Year10 (20 each from sec schools)<br>(10 each from PRU) |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | 20  |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | B C E   |

### Stated local objectives:

1. To increase young people's knowledge and understanding of post-16 options
2. To motivate young people and, as a result, reduce potential disaffection

### Main features of the project:

1. Industry Visits
2. Away Day Skills Workshop
3. Choice Club Projects
4. Celebration Event

### Main outcomes of the project:

1. All participating pupils attended at least two Industry visits
2. Skills workshops hosted by 4 different companies with inputs on teamwork, leadership and communication by RAF; all pupils attended one full day event
3. Choice Club projects led by pupils themselves working in small teams, researching career opportunities, culminating in presentation to their peers
4. 220 attended Celebration event held at Liverpool Football Club

# MERTON

## DEVELOPING NEW HORIZONS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

|                                       |                                |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | LB Merton                      |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 058                            |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | Sept 97- July 99               |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | Available to all local schools |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | Not stated                     |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | None                           |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | A      C      F                |

### Stated local objectives:

1. To continue to develop inclusive provision for disaffected pupils
2. To establish extended work-based experience and accreditation integral to the KS4 curriculum

### Main features of the project:

1. Extension of existing non-unit approach for seriously disaffected Y11 students to Y10 students *at risk of* disaffection
2. Programme focus is on part-time, work-based experience – plus some curriculum development work with local schools
3. Individual referrals of students from all local schools

### Main outcomes of the project:

1. Wide range of activities undertaken with students, schools and employers
2. Enabled the pupils to make a successful transition to employment more readily; high levels of progression into employment from the project
3. One school reported increase in rate of attendance and punctuality, and a reduction in anti-social behaviour
4. Exclusions continued, but were significantly reduced in Year 11
5. The students felt 'informed', were confident about work and benefited from a 'key working' approach

# NEWHAM

## SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FOR EMPLOYABILITY

|                                       |                  |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Newham LEA       |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 104              |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | Sept 97- July 99 |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 4                |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | Approx. 200      |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | None             |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | B      C      E  |

### Stated local objectives:

1. Negotiating a range of appropriate work-based tasks which can form part of the evidence for assessment of the two Key Skills
2. Identifying with schools ways in which evidence generated can be supplemented in order to meet the full Key Skill specifications
3. Ensuring the acquisition of these Key Skills is given recognition in the progression process and promoting these as evidence of achievement for those students performing under GCSE and G/NVQ Foundation levels

### Main features of the project:

1. The development of a range of work- based tasks which students can use to generate evidence for the achievement of the two Key Skills WWO and IOLP
2. To develop also the involvement and acceptance of these tasks by local employers, training providers and post-16 centres as an enhancement of the student's qualifications

### Main outcomes of the project:

1. Benefits felt across Year 10 in final year of project, due to related changes made to recording of Key Skills developments (an outcome of pilot work)
2. Training sessions by NEBP and Edexcel for school co-ordinators – leading to development of assignments across range of curriculum areas
3. Development of work experience diary into a Student/Employer handbook focusing entirely on recording of Key Skills development
4. A number of business-led seminars used to promote key employability skills
5. DfEE-supported event for local employers and training providers
6. Dissemination to all schools in the Borough
7. Schools reported involvement in the project had led to increased motivation, confidence and aspirations

# NORFOLK

## FOOD TECHNOLOGY

**Project sponsor:** Norfolk and Waveney TEC

**DfEE number:** 013

**Duration:** Sept 97- July 99

**Number of project schools:** 4

**Number of project students:** 218

**Number of comparator students:** Prior year groups

**Key national objectives:** D E F

### **Stated local objectives:**

1. To trial a GNVQ manufacturing unit embedded in the project programme
2. To train school staff to an appropriate level in Computer Integrated Manufacturing Systems and to train school staff to an appropriate level in microbiological methods
3. To provide all appropriate school staff with the experience, support and guidance of an industrial mentor

### **Main features of the project:**

Enhanced provision to support local students taking GCSE Food Technology through a joint school /college /local industry programme to include off-site placements.

### **Main outcomes of the project:**

No summative final report received

# OLDHAM

## RAISING ACHIEVEMENT IN WORK RELATED LEARNING THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF REVIEWING SKILLS

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Oldham Chamber of Commerce, Training and Enterprise |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 110   |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | 2 years   |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 3 nominated pilot schools (but more taking part)    |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | 60  |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | 29  |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | B      D      E                                     |

### Stated local objectives:

1. To develop a package of teaching materials which focus on the development of reviewing skills at age 14
2. To develop a framework for the improvement of these skills amongst young people through current KS4 Work Related Learning Projects
3. To promote Key Skills and to test the certification of the NCVQ Key Skills Units in WWO and IOLP
4. To involve schools, colleges, training providers, businesses, Oldham Compact/EBP, Oldham Careers Service Partnership and Oldham Schools Development in the delivery of the package and framework
5. To prepare young people for working life by giving them an awareness of the Key Skills and reviewing skills required by employers
6. To enable young people to make use of these skills in making effective transition from school to post-16 options
7. To link the above to a more coherent approach to recording achievement and action planning

### Main features of the project:

Producing literature to promote 'reviewing skills' within a Key Skills framework. This literature was then used as part of other WRL activities to provide a focus.

### Main outcomes of the project:

1. Pupil motivation and team working skills appear to have improved
2. Involved pupils appear to have an enhanced interest in entering training or education      post-16

# ROTHERHAM

## EQUIPPING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR WORKING LIFE

**Project sponsor:** Rotherham CCTE

**DfEE number:** 074

**Duration:** 1 year

**Number of project schools:** 6

**Number of project students:** 152

**Number of comparator students:** Nil

**Key national objectives:** A      D      F

**Stated local objectives:**

1. To work in collaboration with the Construction Curriculum Centre at RCAT to develop a curriculum model that is transferable and can be repeated in other vocational areas, which provides for accreditation for Key Skills, GNVQ/NVQ, as well as meeting the National Curriculum requirements
2. To introduce the curriculum model in manufacturing, electronics and engineering
3. To introduce a vocational taster course at Swinton Comprehensive in partnership with Dearne Valley College, in order to develop an integrated learning programme which optimises individual skill development and develop pupils' understanding of the relationship between the learning which takes place in school and college
4. To continue to develop the links between Wickersley Comprehensive and Rother Valley College through GCSE Motor Vehicle Technology and RSA Word Processing, with an emphasis on enhancing the experience of KS4 pupils
5. To encourage and support the mobility of participants between schools, colleges and industry
6. To disseminate project report to all secondary schools in Rotherham
7. To disseminate research report on convergence between G/NVQ in specific vocational areas and KS4

### **Main features of the project:**

The delivery to school pupils of vocational provision at three FE colleges, in order to develop and enhance current links between local colleges and schools, in terms of the vocational courses available to young people at KS4. The vocational courses covered included:

- GNVQ Manufacturing Foundation Level, unit 7;
- GNVQ Health and Social Care Foundation, unit 4;
- NVQ1 Maintain Safe and Secure Working Environment;
- GNVQ Foundation, mandatory unit 2 – Understanding Personal Development and Relationships;
- GNVQ Construction of the Built Environment Level 1 unit 5;
- GNVQ IT, Engineering Foundation Level unit 7;
- GNVQ IT, Engineering Intermediate Level unit 8;
- NVQ unit – Improving own Learning and Performance;
- Word Processing (leading towards RSA);
- Motor Vehicle Mechanics (leading towards C+G).

### **Main outcomes of the project:**

1. Improved pupil enthusiasm and motivation
2. Pupils feeling – more grown up
  - more in control
  - interested in what they were doing
3. " The project was successful and has met all of its original objectives"

# SANDWELL

## SKILLS FOR EMPLOYMENT

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Sandwell Strategic Forum for Education Training |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 033 (West Midlands)                             |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | 1 Year x 2<br>(Year 10 pupils in both years)    |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 3 in first year; (same) 3 in second year        |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | 54 in first year; not known in second year      |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | None  |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | B      E      F                                 |

### Stated local objectives:

1. Involve employers in the development and accreditation of Key Skills
2. Enhance teachers awareness of:
  - Key Skills accreditation
  - career opportunities
  - local education and training
  - post-16 qualifications routes
  - industry's need for Key Skills
3. Explore with external awarding bodies the accreditation of young peoples' skills for inclusion in the NRA. These will include the Key Skills, Working with Others and Improving own Learning and Performance

### Main features of the project:

1. Development and enhancement of an existing "product" – the Sandwell Skills Passport – which aims to provide accreditation of some Key Skills
2. An increase in the number of Key Skills accredited, and increase in volume of activity
3. Main elements:-
  - Work-Out Week-ends (residential)
  - use of the Skills Passport, linked to Progress File
  - teacher placements
  - occupational tasters (in Year 11) for pupils, linked to FE colleges, experience of the workplace, and sampling occupational areas

**Main outcomes of the project:**

1. Residential Work-Out Week-ends facilitated by the Industrial Society, teachers and employers a great success, valued by pupils and teachers
2. Greater emphasis being given to Key Skills development and integration across the curriculum
3. Possibility of Sandwell Skills Passport being kitemarked by Edexcel (main constraint being sustaining costs)
4. Training delivered to training suppliers, schools and Library Service; also awareness raising with young people, teachers, trainers and employers
5. Evaluation, re-structuring and improvement of the Occupational Tasters Programme ensuring incorporation of Key Skills
6. One school reports project cohort absence levels have decreased and KS4 levels have increased; in all schools evidence of enhanced student motivation
8. Skills Passport logbooks and guidance materials produced
9. Annual presentation and celebration event held

# SHEFFIELD

|                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Sheffield TEC ( contract holder) |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 1                                |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | 1 Year                           |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 6                                |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | 454                              |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | n/a                              |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | A      C      (Note: 2 only)     |

## **Stated local objectives:**

1. Increased levels of attainment for 14-19 year olds
2. Increased participation rates in education and training and reduced numbers of young people who adopt an inappropriate route
3. Increased numbers accessing the range of routes and qualification post-16

## **Main features of the project:**

Extension of range of curriculum opportunities for 14-16 year olds (particularly the disaffected) via:-

- school/college links
- provision of taster courses
- accreditation of Key Skills

## **Main outcomes of the project:**

1. Enhanced school / college links
2. The accreditation of Key Skills units for pupils not achieving any GCSEs at A\*-C
3. Staff development in the accreditation of Key Skills
4. Vocational tasters helping students to make appropriate work experience choices

# SHROPSHIRE AND TELFORD & WREKIN

## CAREERLINK

|                                       |                                      |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin LEAs |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 30                                   |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | 2 years                              |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 10                                   |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | 226                                  |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | No control identified                |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | B      E      F                      |

### Stated local objectives:

Each of the three national objectives chosen has been augmented with a local objective; the letters in brackets demonstrate which of the national objectives the local objective is designed to support

1. (E) To plan coursework assignments within the GCSE syllabuses which develop and offer opportunities for assessment and certification of the NVQ units in Information Technology, Working with Others, and Improving Own learning and Performance
2. (F) To arrange visits to workplaces by teachers who will develop appropriate learning materials, and by pupils who will observe the application in the workplace of subject and Key Skills
3. (B) Pupils will investigate workplace organisation, expectations and attitudes. They will reflect in tutorial and careers education classes on their work-related learning and record their outcomes and achievements in their Record of Achievement

### Main features of the project:

1. Staff development to include:-
  - workplace visits and placements with employers
  - training in the TDLB assessor award for certain subject teachers
  - close liaison between subject teachers at participating schools to share experiences
2. Staff activities designed to assist teachers in developing tasks and assignments, which extend and provide assessment opportunities for the three Key Skills as well as subject (GCSE) courses
3. Extension of employer links in a way that enhances the GCSE curriculum and the development of Key Skills
4. Employers encouraged to contribute to subject lessons

### Main outcomes of the project:

1. Enriched experience of young people's learning of GCSE subjects and in most cases appears to have enhanced their subject learning and performance
2. Gave students direct experience of workplaces and helped them to develop key skills, even though it did not always achieve certification in Key Skills
3. Gave several teachers improved knowledge and experience of workplaces and ensured that many were aware of, and able to develop, pupils' competence in the three Key Skills
4. Some teachers achieved assessor qualifications
5. Case study and curriculum materials in each subject area have been prepared for publication and will be disseminated to all schools for use with future cohorts
6. Raised the profile of the world of work as a topic for study, with many teachers recognising the value of the visits for subject purposes as well as for greater understanding of the world of work



# **SOUTHWARK**

## **KEYS TO EMPLOYABILITY**

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Southwark LEA  |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 060  |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | Sept 97- July 98<br>( continuing as a standards Fund project in 1998/99) |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 6  |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | approx. 620  |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | 120  |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | A      B      E  |

### **Stated local objectives:**

None

### **Main features of the project:**

1. Key Skills development for all project students through enhanced careers education, guidance and work experience
2. Adaptation of teaching approaches within selected NC core subjects in individual schools to help develop, assess and measure the key skills WWO and IOLP
3. Development of additional Key Skills provision for lower and higher attainers

### **Main outcomes of the project:**

1. Approx. 300 students gained Key Skills certification (level 1 or level 2) - mostly WWO
2. Gained practical experience about planning for work experience, portfolios and using these portfolios for Key Skills assessments at school level
3. Developed approaches which will help link this work to use Progress Files and vice versa

# ST. HELENS

## EQUIPPING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR WORKING LIFE

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | St. Helens Metropolitan Borough Council |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 55                                      |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | 1 year                                  |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 7                                       |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | 30                                      |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | 27                                      |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | A      B      C                         |

### Stated local objectives:

1. To provide vocational courses at NVQ/GNVQ Intermediate level to complement others on offer and the suite of courses available at Foundation level for 14 - 16 students
2. To introduce exciting, stimulating and motivating courses which meet the needs identified in the Merseyside Labour Market Assessment
3. To give young people the Key Skills, interpersonal and team working skills demanded by employers

### Main features of the project:

Three vocational programmes at NVQ/GNVQ intermediate level, provided at St. Helens College:-

- NVQ Units in Engineering Process
- GNVQ Units in Media
- GNVQ Units in Computer Animation

### Main outcomes of the project:

1. Motivation and concentration levels high, as shown by willingness of pupils to put in long afternoons at college and additional out of college work to build up portfolios
2. Individual satisfaction with course high – it broadens curriculum in ways which would be very difficult without college assistance, and often directly relevant to their future career plans
3. Positive reaction to project has engendered discussions between schools and colleges on closer co-operation for the provision of the curriculum at KS4

# STOCKPORT AND HIGH PEAK

|                                       |                                       |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Stockport and High Peak TEC           |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 37                                    |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | 1 year, extended to 2 year            |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 12, including one Pupil Referral Unit |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | 205                                   |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | no data                               |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | C      E      F                       |

## **Stated local objectives:**

1. To deliver a whole cohort model of vocational education, with a variety of models of delivery, schools involved and ability range covered
2. To offer constructive teacher support and staff development

## **Main features of the project:**

Stockport Partners for Education planned to design and embed in the curriculum a coherent framework of work-related and vocational options at Key Stage 4. Models included:-

- delivery within schools by school and/or college staff alongside with, or integrated within, GCSE courses
- students spending half/full day per week at a local college for periods between one to six terms
- combination of students attending college half day per week over one term and follow up lessons each week in school

## **Main outcomes of the project:**

1. Provided students with opportunity to undertake work-related learning through involvement with local colleges – with widening scope of activities on Key Skills
2. Professional development through certification for staff
3. Majority of students rate courses highly and seem satisfied
4. Evidence from one school that students have enrolled for FE due to experiences on project
5. Presentation event for students to receive certificates

# STOKE-ON-TRENT

## BRIDGING THE GAP THROUGH THE WORLD OF WORK

|                                       |                 |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 029 B           |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | 2 years         |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 8               |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | 121             |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | 127             |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | A      B      C |

### **Stated local objectives:**

1. To raise pupil achievement and aspirations
2. To use the work-related curriculum to support and enrich curriculum delivery
3. To widen the current work experience programmes

### **Main features of the project:**

1. Residential week-end at outdoor centre, mixing pupils from different schools
2. Mentoring of project pupils with mentors trained by EBP
3. Provision of IT equipment with training for staff, design of project school web sites and encouragement for pupils to communicate between schools using e-mail

### **Main outcomes of the project:**

1. Increased confidence and social skills among participating students, arising in particular from residential experiences
2. Expanded network of trained mentors
3. Commitment from LEA and headteachers to include work related components in Education Development Plan
4. Evidence from at least two schools of increased attainment at KS4 by project groups, compared with year groups as a whole

# SUNDERLAND

|                                       |                 |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Sunderland LEA  |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 009             |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | 2 years         |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 7               |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | 251             |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | none            |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | A      B      D |

## **Stated local objectives:**

1. Additional evidence for NRA/PF
2. Promote Key Skills among employers
3. Raise basic skills

## **Main features of the project:**

1. This is primarily a work experience project, with accreditation of Key Skills via ASDAN. However, schools have been allowed to follow different options – including initial stages of NVQ activity
2. The start of the project was effectively delayed for 12 months

## **Main outcomes of the project:**

1. Initial evidence of usefulness of the project to a special school
2. Limited evidence of greater sense of whole-school planning at one or two schools
3. Recognition of need for better planning and co-ordination across a range of related initiatives, in order to reduce confusion/overload at school level

# TAMESIDE

## LEARNING TO WORK

**Project sponsor:** Manchester Education Training Partnership

**DfEE number:** 006

**Duration:** 2 years

**Number of project schools:** 11

**Number of project students:** 1,201

**Number of comparator students:** no data

**Key national objectives:** B C E

### Stated local objectives:

1. To increase the provision of work-related learning within both GCSE courses that all students follow in KS4, and through vocational courses that are available as KS4 options
2. To provide opportunities for students to gain accreditation in the NCVQ Key Skills in Working with Others and Improving Own Learning, through work experience, careers education and other learning activities developed through the curriculum
3. To integrate the learning from work experience into the careers education and guidance that young people receive and to use outcomes from work experience to inform individual careers action planning

### Main features of the project:

1. Developing work experience in the curriculum, including design and production of work experience handbook
2. Work experience and careers education and guidance, including job studies carried out by pupils and development of teaching materials based on local labour market information
3. Developing Key Skills accreditation through work-related learning, including piloting in four schools

### Main outcomes of the project:

No final report received

# TRAFFORD

## EQUIPPING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR WORKING LIFE

|                                       |                 |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Trafford MBC    |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 50              |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | 2 years         |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | 4               |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | 38              |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | 24              |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | A      C      F |

### Stated local objectives:

1. To enable pupils at Key Stage 4 to gain accreditation in an increased range of NVQ programmes approved under section 5 of the Education Reform Act 1988
2. To support the "Learning to Compete" initiative in its aim of increasing the post-16 progression of pupils by establishing a seamless 14-19 programme designed and delivered in partnership by pre- and post-16 providers of education and training
3. To increase pupil motivation and achievement levels by employing Progress Files to track their achievements whilst they are progressing along their learning pathways [This was subsequently revised to include a reference to Key Skills and give Progress File a lower priority]

### Main features of the project:

Each of four schools with slightly different approaches:-

- two (one mixed and one all girls) enhancing curriculum for selected pupils on a customised NVQ programme ("MPower")
- one (recently merged special school) undertaking complete review of vocational options on full school year basis
- one providing IT programme, originally on twilight basis but now integrated into main curriculum

### Main outcomes of the project:

1. Teacher awareness. Briefings were held on vocational programmes both for project and other staff
2. Curriculum materials, including for Key Skills programmes
3. A revised curriculum plan for work-related learning at the participating special school

# TYNESIDE

## DEVELOPING KEY SKILLS THROUGH MENTORED WORK-BASED EXPERIENCE

|                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Tyneside TEC                     |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 55B                              |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | I year (97/98)                   |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | " At least 4"                    |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | 200 – half Year 10, half Year 11 |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | No data                          |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | B      E                         |

### Stated local objectives:

#### Aims - *for young people:*

1. To raise awareness about Key Skills and employability by making their links to the workplace explicit
2. To promote their understanding of the demands of the workplace
3. To provide the opportunity to gain recognition of Key Skill achievement, particularly in the area of Working with Others and Improving Own Learning and Performance
4. To relate the demands of the workplace to the career choice process

#### Aims - *for Education Institutions:*

5. To help raise achievement and support the attainment of the National Targets for Education and Training
6. To provide a framework in which GNVQ Part One students in future years of full implementation will be able to draw maximum benefit from work experience or training placements
7. To develop a greater understanding of how Key Skills and employability skills can be developed in young people

#### Aims - *for Employers and Training Providers:*

8. To offer a clear mechanism through which their support for raising levels of achievement in Key Skills can be expressed
9. To provide supporting materials which are discrete to particular employment sectors

### Main features of the project:

The provision of mentoring support to young people across a range of work-based experiences

### Main outcomes of the project:

No reports or data received

# WIGAN

## LEARNING AT WORK – WORKING TO LEARN

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Project sponsor:</b>               | Wigan LEA   |
| <b>DfEE number:</b>                   | 036   |
| <b>Duration:</b>                      | Phase 1 – Autumn/Spring terms 1997/98<br>Phase 2 – Summer term 1997 to Spring term 1999<br>Phase 3 – Summer term 1999 |
| <b>Number of project schools:</b>     | Phase 1 – 3<br>Phase 2 – 5<br>Phase 3 – 2   |
| <b>Number of project students:</b>    | Phase 1 – 70<br>Phase 2 – 185<br>Phase 3 – 483  |
| <b>Number of comparator students:</b> | 155 (year 1 ; 146 (year 2)  |
| <b>Key national objectives:</b>       | B      C      E   |

### Stated local objectives:

1. To trial the package in a consortium of schools, including one special school, and to develop/refine the scheme in the light of evaluation
2. To help schools develop a more relevant Key Stage 4 curriculum by forging and utilising improved links with employers, training providers, FE colleges and the Careers Service
3. To provide pupils with an enhanced programme of action planning, supporting the work-related curriculum and in particular the development of Key Skills

### Main features of the project:

1. Enhancement of work experience by exploring the accreditation of Key Skills. In first two phases of project, selected pupils worked towards two Key Skills but in the final phase a whole year group of Year 10 pupils focused on just one, namely Working With Others
2. Major efforts also to work with employers (eg. information packs and participative events)

### Main outcomes of the project:

1. The motivation and success of pupils, particularly in relation to accreditation through NCVQ Key Skills units
2. An enhanced work experience programme focusing on improved planning and preparation, with more structured involvement of employers
3. The knowledge and understanding of both teaching staff and pupils related to competence based assessment and verification procedures eg. the gathering and referencing of relevant evidence, constructing portfolios, and new forms of accreditation
4. Better understanding of the implications for schools, in particular related to strategic planning and curriculum development, monitoring and assessment
5. The training and skills required by staff in schools moving into unfamiliar ways of working with both pupils and employers
6. To some extent, raising awareness and opening up the debate about Key Skills with employers