

Investing in Potential

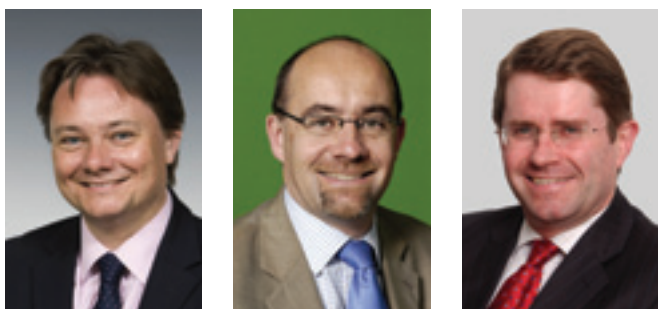


Our Strategy to increase the proportion of 16–24 year olds
in education, employment or training

Investing in Potential

Our Strategy to increase the proportion of 16–24 year olds
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FOREWORD



Raising aspirations and creating the right opportunities for people of all ages to improve their skills and enter sustainable employment are critical if we are to ensure economic recovery and a return to sustainable growth. That is why we have published our National Skills Strategy, *Skills for Growth*, and its partner document, the higher education framework *Higher Ambitions*, setting out how we will ensure that people have more opportunities to gain relevant, quality skills with real market value. It is also why we are publishing our White Paper *Building Britain's Recovery: Achieving Full Employment*, which sets out Government's ambitious plans to raise employment rates above pre-recession levels.

Young people are the future of our country and of our economy. Thanks to record investment in education and training, more young people than ever before are acquiring the skills and qualifications they need for success in life and work.

But the economy is changing, and we now need to go further to support all young people to build their skills to secure greater productivity and economic growth. The global recession has

brought about a new challenge of falling youth employment. We are already taking decisive action to **prevent** young people from dropping out and support them to engage in education and training to in order gain the knowledge, skills and aptitudes they need for the upturn. The reforms set out in our White Paper *Your child, your schools, our future: building a 21st century schools system* will support more young people to build a strong foundation of achievement at age 15. We have also embarked on an ambitious programme of reform of 14-19 learning, including historic legislation to raise the age of compulsory participation in learning to 17 in 2013 and 18 in 2015. By **personalising** provision and support through the September Guarantee, we have ensured that more 16-18 year olds are in learning now than ever before.

But our commitment does not stop at 19. It is essential that young people continue to learn and develop skills and we have set an ambition for three-quarters of people to participate in higher education or complete an advanced Apprenticeship or equivalent technician level course by the age of 30. We have strengthened provision to help young people into work and prevent a generation being lost to unemployment. And we continue to support young people who face particular challenges in their lives to get the personalised service they need to realise their ambitions. This Strategy, alongside the measures announced in *Building Britain's Recovery*, sets out how we are helping

young people now and what more we will do to secure their individual success and their vital contribution to our economy and society.

The success of our Strategy will depend upon **partnership**, not only between DCSF, DWP and BIS, but with every local authority and their Connexions service, every Regional Development Agency and employer in the country. That is why, through Backing Young Britain, we are calling on businesses, charities and public sector organisations to join us in creating opportunities for young people. We are inviting all employers, large and small, from across the country to show their support by joining the growing community who have registered on the Backing Young Britain website and who are getting involved with one of our Seven Asks – your organisation can sign up at www.hmg.gov.uk/backingyoungbritain.

Iain Wright

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for
14–19 Reform and Apprenticeships

Jim Knight

Minister of State for Employment and
Welfare Reform

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Apprenticeships and Consumer Affairs

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

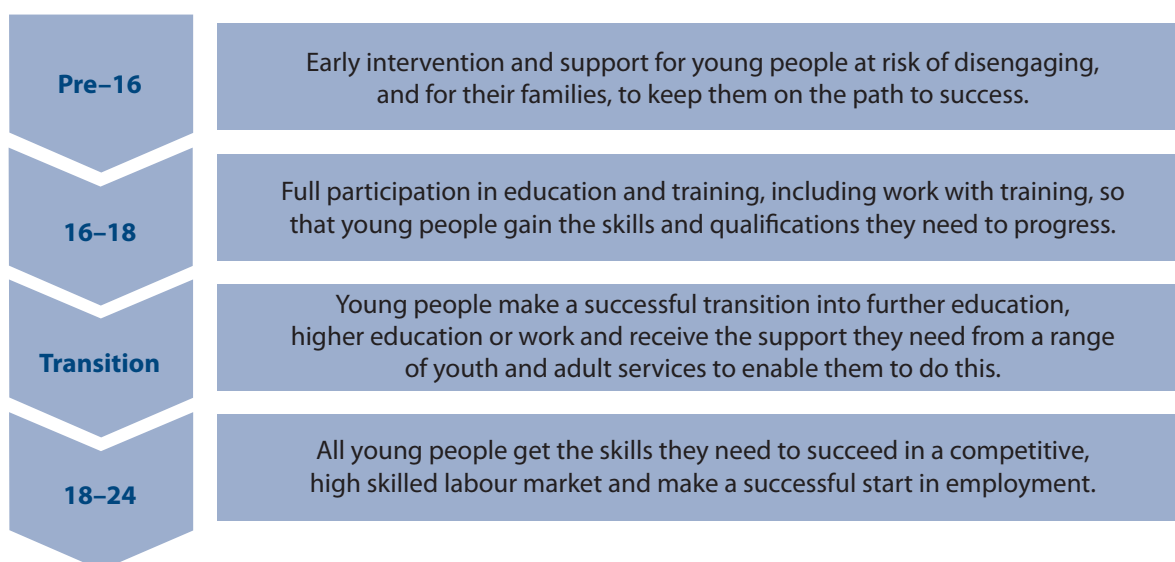
1.1 This Strategy sets out our aim to continue to drive up participation in education and training and maximise employment opportunities for young people aged 16 to 24. We have based the Strategy around our clear ambitions for young people at each stage of their development, which are set out in the diagram below.

1.2 We have set ourselves an ambitious Public Service Agreement target to reduce the proportion of 16–18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) by 2 percentage points by 2010. Local areas are demonstrating equal commitment to this challenge, with the NEET indicator chosen for more Local Area Agreements than any other. Our collective ambition has already secured a momentous shift in outcomes for young people:

- From its introduction in 1998, the New Deal for Young People (NDYP) helped over 750,000

young people aged 18–24 into sustained work and as a result we entered the current recession having virtually eradicated long-term youth claimant unemployment. Now we are building on the success of NDYP with the Flexible New Deal.

- At the end of 2008, our September Guarantee helped to ensure that the proportion of 16–18 year olds participating in learning reached almost 80%, the highest ever rate. The proportion of 16–17 year olds NEET fell for the third consecutive year.
- Increased participation is helping to drive rising attainment, with 76.7% of young people achieving a Level 2 qualification by the age of 19 in 2008, exceeding our PSA target by 3.3 percentage points.
- Provisional data from 2009 show that schools are preparing young people for their future better than ever – 49.7% of pupils achieved



5 or more A*–C GCSEs including English and Maths, 90,000 more than in 1997.

1.3 But the context in which we all work is changing. The global recession has created a real challenge, particularly for young people seeking work and for families who may be experiencing reduced income or worklessness. Young people's early experience in learning helps to set them on the path to success: the employment rate of those with level 2 qualifications is over 50% higher than for those without qualifications. It is vital that young people have a strong focus on developing early a wide range of skills and experience to give them the greatest opportunity to progress as they move through their adult life. That is why the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, the Department for Children, Schools and Families, and the Department for Work and Pensions have come together to respond to these challenges and opportunities and to publish this Strategy to increase participation and maximise employment amongst 16–24 year olds.

1.4 The Government has already taken decisive steps to strengthen existing provision and put in place new support for young people. Although the number of young people who are unemployed has risen since the start of the recession, this support will ensure that long-term youth unemployment remains significantly below the levels seen in previous recessions. We are using this recession as an opportunity to raise young people's skill levels so that we emerge from it with a young, skilful and dynamic workforce for the future. We are:

- Offering every 16 and 17 year old a suitable place in learning through the **September Guarantee**. In 2009, almost 96% of 16 year

olds and almost 90% of 17 year olds said that they wanted to continue learning and received an offer under the Guarantee.

- Introducing an ambitious **14–19 reform** programme to provide all young people with learning opportunities which suit their needs and interests.
- Creating an additional 35,000 **Apprenticeship** places, including 21,000 in the public sector.
- Investing more than £650m in 2009–10 on **financial support** for 16–18 year olds, including Education Maintenance Allowance, Care to Learn and discretionary learner support funds to help young people overcome financial barriers to participation.
- Funding 30,000 more places in **higher education** in 2009/10 than we did in 2007/08. The number of higher education students in England is 339,000 higher than in 1997.
- Providing 18 year old job seekers who have been NEET for six months with **fast track entry to the support available to job seekers at six months** – between April and September 2009, around 16,000 young people benefited from this opportunity.
- Making jobs through **Local Employment Partnerships (LEPs)** available to young people from day one of a claim to Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA).
- Leading the **Backing Young Britain (BYB)** campaign that has already encouraged employers to offer thousands of additional opportunities to young people.

- Requiring every unemployed 18–24 year old to take up a job, work-focused training or a work experience place through the **Young Person's Guarantee**.

1.5 We recognise that we need to go further and that is why we are publishing this Strategy alongside the White Paper *Building Britain's Recovery*, which sets out Government's ambitious plans to raise employment rates above pre-recession levels. We will:

- Invest an extra £202m in post-16 participation in 2010–11, on top of the funding announced in Budget 2009, which means an additional 142,500 learners will have an opportunity to learn as part of the September Guarantee compared to plans at the Comprehensive Spending Review. This will mean that we are investing £8.2 billion in 2010–11 to fund learning for 1.6 million young people and we will increase 16-19 funding by 0.9% in real terms in 2011–12 and 2012–13 to continue our commitment to the September Guarantee. As a result of this additional investment, and by removing the EMA bonus system, an extra 80,000 learners will be able to claim weekly Education Maintenance Allowance payments from 2010–11.
- Build on the success of the September Guarantee to provide an extended **January Guarantee** in 2010 so that every 16–17 year old who is not in education, employment or training will receive an offer of a place with an Entry to Employment provider and Education Maintenance Allowance to go with this.
- Provide **employer subsidies** to support more 16 and 17 year olds to take up an Apprenticeship place.
- Better integrate the services offered by Jobcentre Plus and Connexions for 16 and 17 year olds who are looking for work, including providing 16–17 year olds who are NEET with **access to LEP vacancies**, with training or as an Apprenticeship where possible.
- Continue the **Activity Agreement and Entry to Learning pilots** in 2010–11 to refine our model and create the most effective and efficient support for vulnerable 16–17 year olds who are not in education, employment or training.
- Work with Connexions services and Jobcentre Plus to explore the introduction of **group advice sessions** for 16–17 year olds to give an early introduction to the local labour market and the skills they will need to find sustainable employment.
- Provide young job seekers with access to a dedicated **personal adviser** from day one of their unemployment claim, more time with an adviser throughout their claim, and more opportunities to be fast tracked to the support available from six months.
- **Bring forward the Young Person's Guarantee** so that all 18–24 year olds still unemployed after six months will be guaranteed access to a job, training or work experience. This will be supported by more time with their personal adviser to draw up a personalised back-to-work plan.
- Introduce a **Graduate Guarantee** that all new graduates still unemployed at six months will have access to an internship, training or help to become self employed.
- Make available over 100,000 additional government funded training, internship, work

experience and job opportunities to help deliver the guarantee. This will include a target of 16,000 apprenticeship places through the Future Jobs Fund.

- Introduce a requirement that all young job seekers take up one of the places on offer before they complete ten months on JSA.

1.6 This Strategy sets out how Government, local authorities and other partners can work together effectively to support young people during their crucial formative years. It is aimed at all those who make decisions about services for young people and brings together the key commitments from recent Government publications, including *Skills for Growth: The National Skills Strategy* and the employment White Paper, *Building Britain's Recovery*, which is published alongside this Strategy. Together, these commitments create a coherent and comprehensive range of support for 16–24 year olds to enable them to participate and succeed in education, employment or training.

The education and training policies set out in this Strategy apply in England only. Employment policies generally apply to Great Britain, but may have a training element that varies between England, Scotland and Wales. Further information can be found in Building Britain's Recovery.

Chapter 2

ANALYSIS – PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

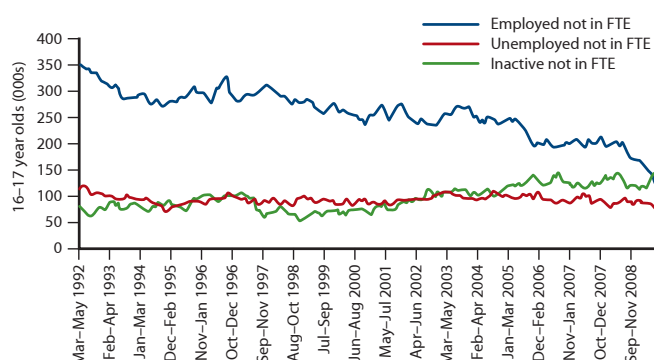
Participation at age 16–24 and the impact of the recession

2.1 The vast majority of young people aged 16–24 are already participating in education, employment or training. 16–17 year olds are most likely to be in education and training, with the proportion of young people in learning at this age reaching the highest ever rate of 88% at the end of 2008. Nearly half of all 18 year olds are in full time education, falling to around 10% by the age of 24¹. The majority of 18–24 year olds are in work, and over the past twenty years employment and ILO unemployment² rates for those not in full time education have generally followed overall labour market trends.

1 The DCSF Statistical First Release: Participation in Education, Training and Employment by 16–18 year olds in England gives the most robust information on participation in education and training up to age 18. For 18–24 year olds equivalent data do not exist so we use the ONS Labour Market Statistics on participation in full time education (FTE) for this group.

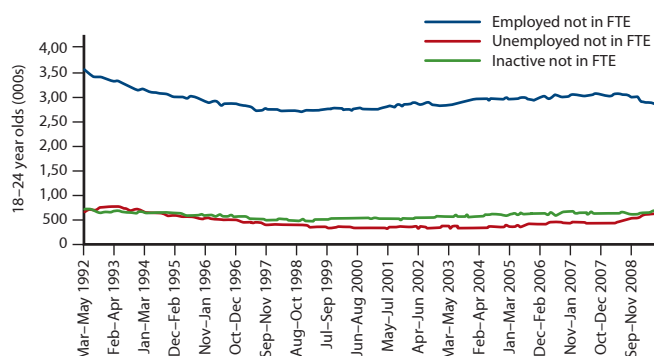
2 The definition of unemployment internationally agreed and recommended by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) is all people aged 16 and over who are without a job, want a job (of one hour per week or more), have actively sought work in the last 4 weeks and are available to start work in the next 2 weeks, or are out of work, have found a job and are waiting to start it in the next 2 weeks.

Figure 1: Labour market status of 16–17 year olds not in full time education (levels, thousands)



Source: ONS Labour Market Statistics (UK), 1992–2009, seasonally adjusted

Figure 2: Labour market status of 18–24 year olds not in full time education (levels, thousands)



Source: ONS Labour Market Statistics (UK), 1992–2009, seasonally adjusted

2.2 The global recession is having a significant impact on young people, but in comparison with previous recessions in the 1980s and 1990s, our key policy interventions have helped to ensure that we entered this downturn in a much stronger position. The New Deal for Young People had virtually eradicated long-term youth claimant unemployment whilst the September

Guarantee had helped to ensure record levels of participation in learning amongst 16–17 year olds. Compared to previous recessions:

- Participation in full time education is significantly higher.
- A greater proportion of ILO unemployed young people are in full time education.
- The proportion of young people not in employment or full time education is lower.
- Total youth claimant unemployment is lower.
- Long-term youth unemployment is much lower on both the ILO and claimant count measure.

2.3 Between the ages of 16 and 24, many young people explore different options, and there is a significant degree of churn within the group who are not in employment, education or training. Research from the Youth Cohort Study and Longitudinal Study of Young People in England shows that in the two years following compulsory education, just over one in six young people had been NEET at some point, but only one in twenty five had been NEET for 12 months or more. Similarly, for 18–24 year olds claiming JSA, we know that over half of new claimants leave within the first three months of their claim, and 75% leave by six months. Of young people aged 18–24 who are ILO unemployed, 80% have been unemployed for less than twelve months. If we are to make a sustainable increase in the proportion of young people who are in education, employment and training, we must take action to both prevent the inflows of young people into this group and to maximise the outflow back into education, employment and training.

Early influences on young people's participation

2.4 Whilst it is at age 16 that young people make formal decisions about post-compulsory participation in learning, the reasons for their engagement or disengagement often emerge long before this point. Analysis has shown that a young person's early attitudes and behaviours are key to explaining some of the differences in participation by age 17³. Those who believe they are of low ability, who have negative attitudes towards education and who engage in risky behaviours, such as frequent drinking of alcohol and anti-social behaviour are at greater risk of becoming NEET. Conversely, prior attainment is the strongest protective factor, with young people who achieve 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*–C earning 9–11% more than those without and being 3% more likely to be employed. Families have a very strong influence on young people's aspirations and choices. Young people whose parents are in 'routine' occupations are more than four times as likely to be NEET than young people whose parents are in the 'higher professional' category⁴, whilst boys are more likely to be NEET than girls. This is a social injustice that we must continue to tackle, working with families and communities to raise aspirations, including through the Communities and Local Government (CLG) Connecting Communities programme. We set out our focus on prevention and early intervention before the age of 16 in the following chapter.

3 DCSF 2009: Drivers and Barriers to Educational Success – Evidence from the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England

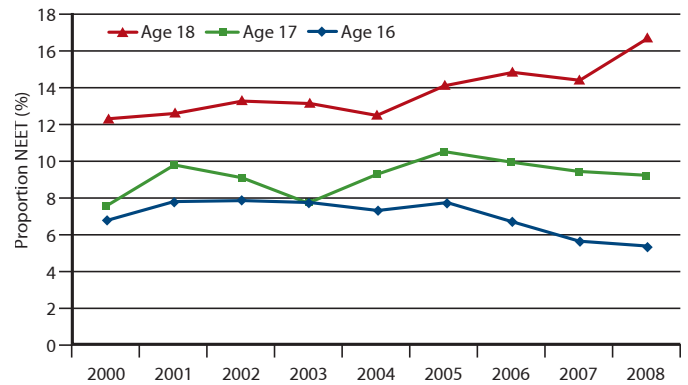
4 DCSF: Youth Cohort Study and Longitudinal Study of Young People in England: The Activities and Experiences of 17 year olds: England 2008

2.5 We also know that not participating at age 16–17 can have a domino effect of negative consequences with young people who were NEET being more likely than their peers to experience negative outcomes by the age of 21, including unemployment, lower income, poor health and depression. By intervening early to support every 16–17 year old to participate in learning, we are not only raising their skills levels, but also reducing the likelihood of poor outcomes later in life.

Young people who are not in education, employment or training

2.6 Over the last decade, the proportion of young people aged 16–18 who are NEET has remained at around 10% (208,000 in 2008), but this obscures quite different recent trends in rates at individual ages. The proportion of 16 and 17 year olds who are NEET has fallen each year since 2005, and at age 16 stands at its lowest level for more than a decade. At age 18, young people are more likely to be in the labour market than at 16–17, so this group have felt the impact of the global recession proportionately more. As a result, the proportion of 18 year olds who are NEET has increased significantly from 14.2% at the end of 2007 to 16.6% at the end of 2008.

Figure 3: Proportion of 16–18 year olds NEET



Source: DCSF SFR: Participation in Education, Training and Employment by 16–18 Year Olds in England

2.7 Since the start of the recession, young people have experienced the greatest fall in employment as they face increasing competition in the labour market from those with greater levels of experience. Although the rise in ILO unemployment has not been as large as for older groups in proportionate terms, it has had a greater absolute effect. We know that long periods of unemployment at this age can be particularly damaging and that is why we have taken decisive action to prevent a generation of talent being lost. Whilst the impact of the recession on 16–17 year olds has been mitigated by the rise in education and training, at age 18–24, the increase in participation has been outweighed by rising ILO unemployment, which has caused an increase in the number of people who are not in education, employment or training.

2.8 The group of young people who are NEET at age 16–18 is not homogenous. Recent research⁵ has identified three main subgroups. Around two-fifths of these young people are generally positive about learning and are very

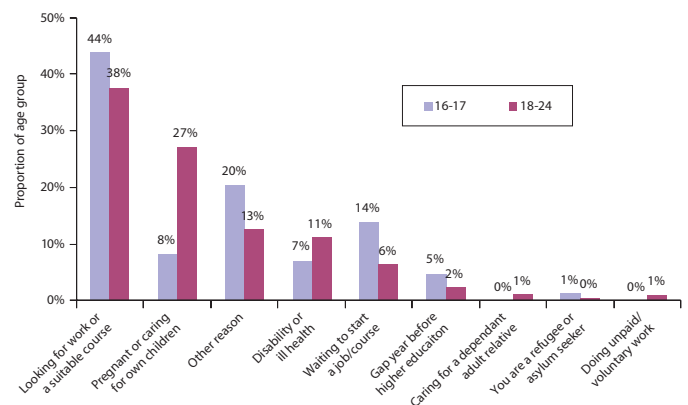
5 DCSF 2009: Increasing participation: understanding young people who do not participate in education or training at 16 or 17

likely to participate in education or training in the short-term. However, another two-fifths face a range of personal and other barriers and are more likely to remain NEET for longer periods. Within this group, we know that 15% of 16–18 year olds who are NEET are teenage mothers and pregnant young women, whilst young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are twice as likely to be NEET than their peers. The remaining fifth of young people who are NEET are undecided – they do not face significant personal barriers to participating in education or training, but need the right provision to encourage them back into learning. This group has been growing as a result of the economic downturn and presents a particular challenge for services in the short term.

2.9 As with the younger age group, there is considerable diversity amongst 18–24 year olds who are not in education, employment or training. The group is made up of those who are ILO unemployed, who are actively seeking and available for work, and economically inactive⁶ young people who are outside the labour market. Over the past decade, the majority of 18–24 year olds who were not in employment or full time education have been economically inactive, whilst less than half are ILO unemployed. Over a quarter of 18–24 year olds are not in work, education or training because they are pregnant or looking after their children, and one in ten because of disability or illness. Within the 18–24 age group, employment rates rise with age, whilst participation, ILO unemployment and inactivity fall with age.

2.10 Within the 18–24 age group, employment rates rise with age, whilst participation, ILO unemployment and inactivity fall with age. The Labour Force Survey now asks young people why they are not in education, employment or training. Fewer than 40% of 18–24 year olds not in education, employment or training are looking for work or a suitable course, over a quarter are pregnant or looking after their children, and one in ten have a disability or illness. The youngest within the group are more likely to be looking for work or a suitable course, whilst the oldest are more likely to be pregnant or caring for their children.

Figure 4: Main reason young people are not in education, employment or training



Source: Labour Force Survey, Quarter 3 2009

⁶ The economically inactive are defined as people who are not in employment or unemployed.

Chapter 3

INTERVENING PRE-16 TO KEEP YOUNG PEOPLE ON THE PATH TO SUCCESS

Our Vision

3.1 Young people at risk of disengaging are identified at the earliest opportunity and given the support they need to remain engaged and continue in post-16 learning.

As we saw in Chapter 2, the factors that affect young people's participation between the ages of 16 and 24 often have their roots much earlier in their life. Young people are strongly influenced by the aspirations and norms of their families, their peers and their communities. If we are to raise participation and reduce the number of young people who are NEET, we must do all we can to reduce the flow into that group by intervening early to engage young people in learning and to assess and address the risk factors that might cause them to disengage.

What Progress Has Already Been Made?

3.2 From their earliest years, we have committed to ensuring that children have the best possible start through the network of over 3,000 Sure Start centres, providing health, education and childcare support to around 2.4 million families. We have also driven up parental engagement in education by improving access to information through Parent Know How and by putting Parent Support Advisers in place in many schools to help parents directly. We are continuing to build on this whole family approach through the Family Intervention Projects, which work with some of the most challenging families to help them to tackle the interlocking issues that they face, including

anti-social behaviour, school absenteeism and underlying inter-generational disadvantage.

3.3 Family learning programmes provide additional support, creating opportunities for parents and carers to learn together with their children right through into their teenage years. These programmes can play an important part in helping parents keep their children engaged and aspiring for the future. They can change attitudes to learning and help people engage more effectively with their wider community and the services that are available to them and are particularly effective in targeting disadvantaged families. We are investing £47m per annum in 2009–10 and 2010–11 in family learning programmes, many of which are targeting areas of high deprivation and reaching families with multiple disadvantages.

3.4 Through the £12m Connecting Communities programme announced by CLG in October 2009, we will reinvigorate and connect with those communities that are feeling particular pressure from the recession and ensure that they and their young people are well placed to share fully in future prosperity. This ambitious programme will work with around 100 areas of the country to deliver practical actions on streets and estates that address local people's concerns, reconnect them with jobs and tackle the real and perceived sense of unfairness experienced by some.

3.5 Securing future participation and success is central to our programme of 14–19 reform. We want every child to succeed, and we will never give up on any child. That is why, in October 2009 we set out in *Quality, Choice and Aspiration* our plans to transform the way Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) is delivered giving children, from an early age, the tools and support they need to raise ambitions and plan for the future. This new approach will bring together young people with those working in business and older peers to provide an understanding of all the different types of jobs they might aspire to and the qualifications they need to fulfil their ambitions.

3.6 More than 50% of young people from all social backgrounds say that they aspire to go to university, a huge change from just a decade ago. The proportion of young people entering higher education from lower socioeconomic groups continues to rise: between 2002/03 and 2007/08 the gap in participation in higher education between higher and lower socioeconomic classes narrowed by 7 percentage points. This has been due, in part, to the success of Aimhigher, which works with around 40% of secondary schools to increase the number of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the qualifications and aspirations necessary to enter higher education, with a particular emphasis on raising aspirations to the most selective universities. This is good news for individuals but also for our economic success and for social mobility.

3.7 As the trend towards knowledge-based services becomes ever more central to the UK's economic prosperity and growth, we expect to see a further rise in the number and variety

of professional roles requiring university level education. Alan Milburn's report *Unleashing Aspiration: The Final Report on Fair Access to the Professions* made a number of powerful recommendations on increasing opportunities for people of all backgrounds to aspire to a job in the professions. It emphasised the need to lift ambition and to stop opportunities being lost through a lack of networks, financial support, advice or the soft skills increasingly necessary to gain access to professional jobs and succeed in the world of work.

3.8 Schools, colleges and learning providers all have a key role in preparing young people for their post-16 choices. We know that prior attainment is a major determinant of what young people choose to go on to do, which is why it is so important that teachers are alert to early signs of under-performance and actively take steps to ensure vulnerable young people catch up – and keep up. The last ten years has seen a very significant rise in school standards overall, but there is still more to be done to ensure that all young people reach their potential. In our White Paper, *Your child, your schools, our future: building a 21st century schools system*, we set out our plans for a truly personalised education system. This includes Pupil and Parent Guarantees which will mean that all children attend a school where they are taught in a way that meets their needs, where their progress is regularly checked and where barriers to learning are spotted early and addressed quickly. To support this we are implementing the Gaining Ground programme to provide extracurricular focused academic activities and increased assessment for learning in secondary schools with above average pupil

attainment at Key Stage 4 but below average pupil progression.

Early Identification – Bournemouth

A risk assessment approach is used from an early age in Bournemouth to identify pupils at risk of becoming NEET. This takes into account issues such as deprivation, special educational needs, predicted grades and intended destinations. Schools and Connexions services share this assessment so that all partners are able to provide these young people with the support they need to remain engaged, leading to better targeting of the limited resources available.

3.9 Through the 14–19 Reform programme, we are also transforming the range of qualifications on offer to create four equal pathways – Apprenticeships, Diplomas, Foundation Learning and General Qualifications – to ensure that every young person has an option to engage and excite them. In doing so, we are building on experience of innovative curriculum routes such as the Key Stage 4 Engagement programme, which will become part of Foundation Learning. In 2006/07, 85% of Key Stage 4 Engagement participants went on to a positive post-16 outcome. Good qualifications at 16 are the strongest possible protection against becoming NEET, and we are helping more young people than ever to achieve them – provisional data from 2009 shows that 49.7% of pupils achieved 5 or more A*–C GCSEs including English and Maths, 90,000 more than in 1997⁷.

⁷ DCSF SFR October 2009: GCSE and Equivalent Results in England 2008/09 (Provisional)

What More Needs to Be Done?

3.10 All services that work with young people up to the age of 16 must be alert to the risks of disengagement and ready to provide additional support to prevent this. Young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those who regularly truant or are excluded, young people in care and those whose performance deteriorates between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 are at particular risk. The best schools and services are already implementing early identification through a risk matrix approach and collaborate with partners to ensure that young people, including those who are in alternative provision, are helped to stay on track and make a successful transition to further learning at age 16.

3.11 Following on from *Quality, Choice and Aspiration*, we will shortly publish our response to the Panel on Fair Access to the Professions. This will set out how we will work with the professions to raise awareness of the increasing opportunities that are on offer, particularly among young people from non-professional backgrounds. Our new measures will be backed by a major cross-Government communications campaign, in partnership with employers, voluntary organisations, universities, professional bodies, schools and colleges. Through this campaign we want to inspire young people to consider different careers and see entry to the professions as an option that can be within their reach.

3.12 The end of compulsory education is a very important time for young people. Although the majority make a successful transition to learning or work, there is a small proportion – often the most vulnerable – who become NEET. Schools, colleges and learning providers, working

together with IAG services through the 14–19 partnership, have an important role to play in identifying those who have not made a firm decision about what to do post-16, or who have not secured a place in learning, or a job, by the time they leave school. Guidance services should be alerted so that more intensive support can be offered to this group during the summer and a suitable post-16 opportunity found through the September Guarantee, which is discussed in the next Chapter. Local authorities should ensure that young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their families receive coherent support from all appropriate agencies to secure a successful transition.

September Guarantee – Barnsley

Barnsley uses the Intended Destinations data collected as part of the September Guarantee to look at the fit between provision and places and to identify young people with low aspirations who need additional support. Making regular use of this data has encouraged all partners to ensure that it is kept updated and ensures a close match between supply and demand, improving value for money. It has also encouraged providers to offer more flexible courses to help young people to engage.

3.13 We are taking steps through the reforms in the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 to deliver improvements for children and young people who are detained in youth custody. This will foster greater alignment of education and training in youth custody with the mainstream learning sector and will help

ensure that young people continue their learning in custody and on release.

3.14 Local areas should ensure that:

- All schools and children’s services are aware of the key risk factors for disengagement – including deprivation, home environment, truancy, poor behaviour, parental non-involvement, learning difficulties and/or disabilities and reduction in performance between KS3 and KS4 – and are using a risk-based approach to target support at those young people who need it most.
- Through high quality IAG, schools provide young people with impartial information on the full range of options available, making use of innovative approaches such as mentoring and Aimhigher to raise young people’s aspirations.
- All preventative services work together through local targeted youth support arrangements to ensure that vulnerable young people receive the help they need to remain engaged in education, employment or training.
- A whole family approach is taken wherever possible, drawing on the experience and resource of the Working Neighbourhoods Fund to raise aspirations and break inter-generational cycles of worklessness and low aspirations across the community.
- High quality and timely Section 139(a) assessments are carried out where appropriate for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to ensure that they receive the correct support and provision.

3.15 At a national level, we will:

- Support schools to prevent young people from becoming NEET by developing a practical toolkit setting out the actions they can take to support successful transition to post-16 participation, including examples of best practice from the many institutions that already do this well. **We will publish this as part of an updated NEET Toolkit in 2010.**
- Continue to develop the post-16 progression measures as a key tool to show schools how their pupils went on to participate and achieve up to the age of 19.
- Roll out nationally this year the Aimhigher Associates programme. Aimhigher Associates are undergraduates who help to raise the aspirations and ambitions of those young people with the potential to succeed in higher education and support them through the applications process. **The scheme will build so that 5,500 Associates are helping 21,000 young people.**
- Launch a communications campaign to raise young people's aspirations and encourage them to consider career options which may be beyond their immediate personal experience. **This campaign will start in January 2010.**

Chapter 4

SUPPORTING 16–18 YEAR OLDS TO PARTICIPATE IN LEARNING

Our Vision

4.1 Every young person aged 16 and 17 is participating in education and training, building the skills and qualifications they will need to succeed in sustainable employment. Through the Education and Skills Act 2008, we have introduced historic legislation to raise the age of compulsory participation to 17 in 2013 and 18 in 2015, and in *Raising the Participation Age: supporting local areas to deliver*, we have set out the key steps towards implementation. As we build towards these key milestones, we want to ensure that as many 16–17 year olds as possible are participating in education and training, attaining qualifications at Level 2 and Level 3 which are a passport to greater success in the labour market. We will achieve this through three key steps:

- **Rigorous tracking** – so that local authorities have comprehensive systems in place to keep track of young people’s participation, and use this data forensically to identify young people who are NEET, plan provision and target intervention.
- **Personalised support** – so that every young person has access to the high quality information, advice and guidance (IAG) they need to choose the right option and the support to progress successfully in that chosen route.

- **Tailored provision** – so that in every area of the country, young people are able to access engaging and flexible learning provision that motivates them and enables them to progress.

These key steps culminate in our **September Guarantee**, which offers every 16 and 17 year old a suitable place to continue their education and training.

What Progress Has Already Been Made?

4.2 As we saw in Chapter 2, we have made significant progress in recent years in increasing the proportion of 16–18 year olds participating in learning, reaching a record high of almost 80% at the end of 2008, setting us on trajectory to raise the participation age. At the end of 2008, the proportion of 16–17 year olds NEET fell for the third consecutive year and at 16 reached the lowest rate for more than a decade.

4.3 Rigorous Tracking – The Client Caseload Information System (CCIS) database maintained by Connexions services is a vital tool to help local authorities identify and support young people who are NEET. The proportion of young people on the database whose activity is not known has fallen from 13.6% in 2003 to 4.6% in 2009. At a local strategic level, we know that the best Children’s Trusts and 14–19 Partnerships analyse this data rigorously, to benchmark their performance against statistical neighbours and to identify the specific characteristics and needs of their individual young people, down to ward and street level. As set out in the 2007 *NEET*

Strategy, we have further strengthened the tracking system by introducing an expectation that learning providers will notify Connexions services as soon as a young person leaves post-16 learning so that they can receive the support they need as early as possible.

4.4 Personalised IAG and Support – In *Quality, Choice and Aspiration*, we set out our expectations of the high quality service required to help all young people plan a smooth transition into education, training and employment and avoid becoming NEET. We know that young people increasingly want to access IAG in different ways and through Connexions Direct, we make advice and information available 365 days a year, including through the website, phone line and adviser web chat. The introduction of the online 14–19 prospectus and Apprenticeship vacancy websites are also helping to ensure that details of all options are easily accessible to young people, their parents and advisers. We are continuing to work with BECTA to explore the potential of technology to support and reengage young people who are not in education, employment or training.

4.5 The Targeted Youth Support reforms are helping to ensure that all vulnerable young people receive early and high quality intervention, using the Common Assessment Framework, and drawing in the expertise of a wider range of services under a Lead Professional. By the end of 2009, virtually all local areas were able to fully deliver targeted youth support practices and early evaluation shows that they have already succeeded in improving the way in which professionals deliver multi-agency support. We are also determined to

prevent financial barriers stopping young people from engaging. That is why we provide means-tested Education Maintenance Allowance of up to £30 per week to more than 500,000 young people, as well as Care to Learn to support teenage parents with the costs of childcare. We also make Hardship Funds available so that schools and colleges can help young people facing financial barriers to participation. Through the Activity Agreement pilots, we are extending support to the most vulnerable young people, setting out in a written agreement the steps that they will take to reengage and the additional support they will receive, together with a clear financial incentive. Third sector organisations have a key role in supporting young people who are NEET to reengage and we have established the Entry to Learning pilot to develop ways to support young people to make a successful transition from third sector provision back into mainstream learning.

4.6 Tailored provision – Through the 14–19 curriculum reforms, we are creating four equal learning routes to ensure that there is provision to suit the needs and aspirations of all young people – Apprenticeships, Diplomas, Foundation Learning and General Qualifications. We know that many 16–17 year olds are focused on employment and we are determined to secure sufficient high quality Apprenticeships to meet their needs. That is why we have put in place the offer of an Apprenticeship place for all suitably qualified young people from 2013 and launched the National Apprenticeships Service (NAS), which will focus on engaging with employers to secure rising numbers of places for young people. In addition, Diplomas are successfully reengaging learners, who report high levels of motivation. By 2011 all 17 Diploma Lines of

Learning will be available, and will build to the Diploma entitlement by 2013.

4.7 Entry to Employment (E2E) has been a key programme for engaging young people who are at risk of not participating. We expanded the programme for 2009/10 and are including a Community Service element within 20,000 places in 2009/10 and, as part of Foundation Learning, in 2010/11 to enable young people to combine their learning with practical experience in their communities. Foundation Learning is building on the E2E model, incorporating all post-16 programmes at Entry Level and Level 1 from September 2010. It helps young people make manageable progression steps, with a flexible curriculum based on vocational/subject learning, personal and social development and the Functional Skills that make young people attractive to employers. This flexibility will allow young people to take different levels of qualifications in different areas of learning or even, for instance, some units at Level 2 as part of a broader Level 1 qualification. For learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities such flexibility can be used to create programmes of learning which enable young people to progress at their own pace, building accredited learning on a pathway to employment.

4.8 The culmination of our approach – bringing together tracking, support and provision – has been the historic introduction of the September Guarantee of a suitable offer of a place in post-16 learning for all young people leaving compulsory education. Through the September Guarantee, local areas survey young people’s intended destinations, using this data to secure a close match between supply and demand in order to support young people to

make a successful transition at 16 and reduce the risk of them dropping out or becoming NEET. As we announced in the 2007 *NEET Strategy*, we successfully extended the Guarantee to all 17 year olds in 2008 to ensure that those who had left learning or were completing one-year courses were given the opportunity to reengage in education and training. In 2009, almost 96% of 16 year olds and almost 90% of 17 year olds received an offer under the Guarantee, helping to support record levels of participation by both age groups and putting us on track to deliver the raising of the participation age to 17 in 2013 and 18 in 2015.

Care to Learn supports teenage parents

Sasha was 17 when she had her little girl. She planned to go to college but thought that would not be possible due to the cost of childcare. Her health visitor gave her a leaflet about Care to Learn and explained how it helped young mums return to education. She is now ready to leave college after studying accounting. She said “Without Care to Learn I would not have qualifications, my daughter would not have met the friends she has, and we can both look forward to a better future”.

Foundation Learning – Portsmouth

A local college and non-profit provider in Portsmouth are working together on a Foundation Learning programme engaging young people who are NEET in vocational learning. One-to-one mentoring, coherent delivery of personal and social development, and a focus on professional areas with good employment prospects are key – as is the incentive of guaranteed places on Level 2 Diploma courses for those with good attendance and behaviour who successfully complete the programme.

What More Needs to Be Done?

4.9 Rigorous Tracking – The clear rules that we have put in place on the currency of records held on CCIS provide a safety net to ensure a minimum level of contact with young people, but wherever possible, we expect local areas to update these records much more frequently through direct contact with young people and exchange of information with learning providers and partners. Although the quality of CCIS information has improved, we know from other statistics collected by local authorities and from surveys, that CCIS records are not complete, particularly at age 18 and for young people from vulnerable groups, where numbers of young people whose activity is not known remain too high. The number of care leavers and young offenders recorded on CCIS is, for example, considerably lower than that shown by other statistics.

4.10 Personalised IAG and Support – The standard of IAG given to young people continues to vary significantly from one area to

another. The best Connexions services intervene as soon as a young person becomes NEET, assessing their needs, and putting in place clear support to help them reengage. This might range, for example, from general support and guidance for those who are clearly focused on their next steps and how to get there, to much more frequent contact with a young person with a history of dropping out or who is undecided about their next steps. It is essential to monitor regularly the progress of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and be able to respond quickly to match provision to individual need. We have issued new guidance on the completion of learning difficulty assessments, which emphasises the need for consistent standards, improved leadership and training. As well as advice and guidance, young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming so require additional support to help them get back on the path to success. By fully embedding the Targeted Youth Support approach, local areas should ensure that the expertise and input of all of the relevant services are brought together to provide the tailored package of support that each young person at risk needs to reengage. Young people living in rural communities may face particular challenges to accessing education and training resulting from longer distances to learning and a less well-developed transport infrastructure. We will continue to support rural areas to deliver the 14–19 Reforms, so that these young people have a genuine choice of learning opportunities.

4.11 Tailored Provision – We expect every local authority to take advantage of the unique opportunity created by the transfer of funding and responsibility for post-16 provision in April 2010. This will help them, working closely with the Young Person’s Learning Agency

(YPLA), to design NEET out of the system. It is important that all authorities, working in their sub-regional groupings, take this opportunity to assess whether the local pattern of provision fully meets the needs of young people and the local labour market and to address any gaps in that provision. By 2010/11, all local areas are expected to deliver some 14–19 Foundation Learning, and all post-16 provision at Entry Level or Level 1 should be delivered through this route. The introduction of Foundation Learning and the transfer will both provide opportunities for local areas to make more flexible provision available to reengage young people who are NEET. Provision with flexible start dates is essential to reducing the time it takes for young people who are NEET to flow back into education and training. For learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities there will be opportunities to follow supported employment programmes providing intensive job coaching leading to employment. These elements can be incorporated into individually tailored programmes

4.12 In 2010, we are building on the success of the September Guarantee by delivering an extended January Guarantee, which will provide every 16 and 17 year old who is NEET with an appropriate offer of training, which in the significant majority of cases will be an Entry to Employment course and, where otherwise eligible, the Education Maintenance Allowance to go with this so that they can reengage rapidly in learning. We have focused the additional provision on Entry to Employment in order to create the flexibility that NEET young people need, and are encouraging providers to deliver Foundation Learning provision and to incorporate different experiences such as the Community Service element to engage young

people. Many Colleges and other providers already offer January start dates for their mainstream courses, and local Connexions services will also support young people to engage in the courses that best meet their needs where there are places available. In total, additional investment from Budget 2009, the Pre-Budget Report and for the January Guarantee, means we will be investing £8.2bn in 2010–11 to secure 1.6 million learning places for young people.

4.13 We know that demand from young people for Apprenticeships is strong. The National Apprenticeship Service will be giving subsidies to employers to take on 16 and 17 year old Apprentices, and we will provide sufficient funding to support 5,000 Apprenticeship employer placements for this group.

4.14 Local authorities will have a legal duty to make provision available to engage every young person aged 16 and 17 in learning as part of the raising of the compulsory participation age to 17 in 2013 and 18 in 2015. In order to prepare for these responsibilities, local areas should ensure that:

- There is a clear focus from all partners on successful delivery of the September Guarantee so that every 16 and 17 year old receives a suitable and timely offer to continue in learning and is supported to take up that offer and progress.
- There are policies in place to continue to reduce the proportion of young people whose activity is not known, particularly at age 18, and for vulnerable groups such as teenage mothers. This will require a sharper focus on young people who move between

local authority boundaries when they leave learning.

- All providers notify Connexions services promptly if a young person leaves learning and this is recorded on CCIS and followed by direct contact with the young person as early as possible. Those who live in another authority area should be brought to the attention of the Connexions service in their home area.
- Data from the CCIS database is analysed forensically and presented regularly to the 14–19 Partnership and Children’s Trust so that local areas understand the young people who are NEET in their area and can plan the right provision for them.
- There are clear strategies in place for all partners to respond to the rising numbers of 16–18 year olds who are NEET but do not have a specific barrier to participation.
- Schools and IAG providers use a variety of means to help young people to understand the full range of choices available post-16, including work based options such as Apprenticeships, and support them to make the right choice for them, making use of labour market intelligence to shape young people’s aspirations.
- The local 14–19 Prospectus contains detailed and accessible information about the full range of learning options available, and plans are in place to deliver a Common Application Process for those opportunities by September 2011.
- Young people nearing the end of their course are helped to prepare and progress successfully on to the next phase of their

learning or work and all efforts are made to prevent them from becoming NEET.

- Provision is sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of all young people, both in terms of start dates that allow young people to reengage at different times of year, flexibility of delivery to support vulnerable young people, and time needed to complete learning.
- Diplomas are offered to learners who would benefit from the combined approach of classroom learning, work experience and practical activity.
- Local authorities and their partners fulfil their existing commitments to provide Apprenticeship opportunities for young people, including leveraging in Apprenticeship placements through their procurement processes.
- The important role and experience of the third sector is recognised and nurtured to ensure that suitable reengagement routes, including opportunities to participate in community service, are available to young people and that these are linked closely to mainstream provision so that young people can progress.

4.15 At a national level, we will:

- Put in place a January Guarantee for 2010 to provide all 16 and 17 year olds who are NEET with an offer of an Entry to Employment place and, where otherwise eligible, the Education Maintenance Allowance to go with this. This will help young people who are NEET to reengage quickly in learning to build the skills they need. **We will support the delivery**

of the January Guarantee with £40m of funding in 2010.

- Continue the Activity Agreement and Entry to Learning pilots in 2010–11 to develop an increasingly effective and efficient model to reengage the most vulnerable young people, working with third sector organisations that are particularly skilled in this area. **We will provide additional funding to continue the Activity Agreement and Entry to Learning pilots until March 2011.**
- Work with Jobcentre Plus and Connexions services, as well as Careers Scotland and Careers Wales, to explore the possibility of providing joint advice sessions for 16–17 year olds who are NEET to give them an introduction to the local labour market, advice on the training that they will need and job search skills.
- Draw on best practice from local areas to develop a data tool that will help Connexions services to ensure that they are getting the most out of the analysis and presentation of CCIS data to different audiences. **We will share this diagnostic tool with Local Authorities in early 2010.**
- Issue statutory guidance for Local Authorities setting a clear framework for planning, managing and reviewing local IAG services to ensure that young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET receive a high level of service to help them to remain engaged. **Following consultation, this will be issued in Spring 2010.**
- Better integrate the services offered by Jobcentre Plus and Connexions for 16 and 17

year olds who are looking for work, including providing young people who are NEET with access to LEP vacancies, with training or as an Apprenticeship where possible.

- **The National Apprenticeship Service will also provide 5,000 subsidies to employers by March 2010**, to support them to take on 16 and 17 year olds as Apprentices. This will help us to build towards providing an offer of an Apprenticeship place for all suitably qualified young people by 2013 through the National Apprenticeship Service, its website and vacancies on-line system. We will also create clearer pathways for progression into Apprenticeships based on Foundation Learning, Young Apprenticeships and specific preparatory training as part of the Apprenticeships route.

Chapter 5

YOUTH AND ADULT SERVICES WORKING TOGETHER TO SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE

Our Vision

5.1 Young people make a successful transition into further and higher education or work and receive the support they need from a range of youth and adult services to enable them to do this. For all young people aged 18–19, and 20–24 year olds with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, Connexions services, adult careers services, health services and Jobcentre Plus need to cooperate fully to support individual young people, offering access to a choice of coherent and complementary advice that helps young people to navigate this period of change.

What Progress Has Already Been Made?

5.2 In Chapter 4, we set out the support available to help 16–18 year olds to participate in learning. The vast majority go on to make a successful transition into further learning and work. Many young people choose to continue in further education to gain the Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications which are a fundamental basis for success in the labour market. By the age of 19, 76.7% had achieved a Level 2 qualification in 2008, exceeding our PSA target by 3.3 percentage points.

5.3 However, whilst most young people have a very clear idea of what they want to do and how to go about achieving this, others continue to explore different ideas and need additional help and support. We are committed to an all-age careers strategy, to ensure that

IAG services for young people and for adults support a smooth transition from one to the other. At ages 18 and 19, young people are able to access the full range of support from local Connexions and targeted youth support services set out in Chapter 4, whilst nextstep support is also available to unemployed 18 and 19 year olds through their Jobcentre Plus or Connexions personal advisers. This means that the young person can approach the service that they feel the most comfortable with, and, through agencies working together, receive the full range of support they need to help them to plan their future career.

5.4 Jobcentre Plus also provides advice and support to young people who are seeking work, helping them to take practical steps towards sustainable employment. In the 2007 *NEET Strategy*, we set out ambitious changes to bring together Connexions and Jobcentre Plus services to offer fast-track entry to intensive support for those who have spent a period NEET. This opened up more personalised help from advisers and access to full time provision through the New Deal options. And since April 2009, we have fast-tracked on a mandatory basis all 18 year old job seekers who have already built up a six month period of being NEET to the provision normally available to job seekers after six months of claiming JSA. By the end of September 2009, around 16,000 18 year olds had benefited from the extra support that is available from the 6 month stage of JSA.

5.5 At a local level, Jobcentre Plus and Connexions services have made huge progress in joining up their services, developing service level agreements, sharing premises and delivering group advice sessions jointly. Through the Integrated Employment and Skills trials, we have been testing the way in which IAG and skills support can fit together with employment advice for young adults and we have set out in *Building Britain's Recovery* our commitment to increasing the personalisation of the service that customers receive. This is particularly important for young people who are NEET as they often have relatively low levels of skills.

5.6 Particularly in this period of economic uncertainty, it is essential that we provide young people with a solid financial basis for participation. That is why we have further developed Education Maintenance Allowance, not only trialling and adopting new criteria for provision which attracts it, but also ensuring that a successful income assessment gives a learner assurance of support for up to 3 years, helping to provide certainty across this crucial period of transition.

5.7 Young people's progress is influenced by a wide range of factors and Government cannot provide all of the support that they need alone. That is why we launched the Backing Young Britain (BYB) campaign to encourage all employers to do their part by offering young people additional opportunities. Across the country, organisations have pledged thousands of additional opportunities for young people across seven key commitments, including providing work experience, internship opportunities, work trials, Apprenticeships and jobs through the Future Jobs Fund or Routes into work. To

date over 330 organisations have endorsed the BYB campaign, and we have had in total 600 expressions of interest in the 7 BYB asks, with some organisations interested in more than one ask. We developed the web-based Graduate Talent Pool earlier this year to encourage more employers to offer internships and since July over 16,000 graduate internships have been pledged by employers through this route and others.

Group sessions – Barking & Dagenham

Barking and Dagenham Connexions Service and Jobcentre Plus are working together to plan joint delivery of group advice sessions for 18 year olds who are NEET. By working together and running the sessions in a community venue, the two organisations can provide young people with the full range of advice about the local labour market and education and training opportunities, ensuring that they receive seamless support in this period of transition.

Backing Young Britain – IBM

IBM employs around 17,500 people nationally and is pledging its support to young people by providing schemes ranging from internships through to e-mentoring programmes. Around 250 young people enter IBM's 12 month internship programme each year and are given the opportunity to work across all areas of the company. Frances Revel, one of this year's interns commented: "This placement has proved invaluable. Being immersed in working culture and the chance to experience such a challenging role has given me a real focus on what I want to achieve in my career."

What More Needs to Be Done?

5.8 From autumn 2010, nextstep and the Careers Advice Service will be merged into the new adult advancement and careers service (aacs). Unemployed 18 and 19 year olds will be able to access a range of services through Connexions or the aacs, which will also be available to all adults aged 19 and over. In addition to the online and telephone service, young people without a level 3 qualification and other priority groups, including offenders and people with disabilities, will be entitled to more in-depth support through aacs, including face to face sessions providing careers and skills advice and ongoing follow up and support. Ten “prototypes” for the aacs are already in place to test innovative approaches to joint working with other services, including local authorities.

5.9 It is essential that Jobcentre Plus, Connexions services and the new aacs develop strong relationships to secure seamless support for young people. We already know that relationships built locally are helping to create positive outcomes for young people, through service level agreements, referral processes, joint delivery of support sessions and case conference approaches. We are building further on this by making Jobcentre Plus a statutory partner in the Children’s Trust in each local area to ensure that their expertise on the labour market helps to inform the direction of children’s services and to further secure joint working.

5.10 Some young people may experience a range of barriers to successful transition that require additional support, such as teenage parenthood or a learning difficulty and/or disability. It is particularly important that through local targeted youth support arrangements,

appropriate professionals in all relevant local services are engaged to help these young people secure a successful transition. When any young person receives support, a successful transition into education, employment or training must be one of its key outcomes, so that they can go on to gain the skills and qualifications they need to succeed. Young people who are leaving care and those leaving the Criminal Justice System often face particularly difficult transitions and local authorities can play a pivotal role in providing the services necessary to support them to participate.

5.11 Local areas should ensure that:

- Organisations in their area are encouraged to sign up to Backing Young Britain to offer opportunities for young people. Local authorities, public sector partners, the third sector and business can all play an important role in increasing the number of jobs, Apprenticeships, internships and work experience opportunities on offer for young people.
- Connexions services provide young people with a clear overview of the support and advice available from themselves, nextstep or the Careers Advice Service (and from autumn 2010, the aacs) and from Jobcentre Plus, to ensure that they can access all the available advice and support.
- Service level agreements are in place to set out clearly the way in which these services will work together for young people. This helps to ensure that cooperation and support continues, even where individual support workers move on from their roles.

- Jobcentre Plus is actively contributing to local Children's Trusts and 14–19 Partnerships as required.
- Young people at risk of offending and young people supervised by the criminal justice system are helped to secure sustainable education, employment or training as part of wider support and resettlement programmes.

5.12 At a national level, we will:

- Build on the success of our fast tracking arrangements to offer this opportunity to more young people so they are able to progress early into the jobs, training opportunities and work experience that will be available to most jobseekers after six months.

We will introduce these changes from January 2010.

- Continue to drive down the proportion of 18–19 year olds whose current activity is not known by Connexions services by legislating to allow Jobcentre Plus to share basic details on 18–19 year old benefit claimants with Connexions. **This legislation was part of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 and we will provide Connexions services with this data through the secure National Client Caseload Information System from early 2010.**
- Strengthen arrangements to ensure that Jobcentre Plus routinely refers 18 year old JSA claimants with low attainment to Connexions or adult career services to ensure that they have the opportunity to build further skills and qualifications in order to secure sustainable

employment. **These arrangements will be strengthened during 2010.**

- Publish annually a leaflet for 16–19 year olds who are NEET setting out the full range of options and opportunities available. **Take Control of Your Future will be available to Connexions services and local partners from late 2009.**
- Introduce greater flexibility for Jobcentre Plus locally so that they are able to tailor their approach to their local customers. As set out in the *Building Britain's Recovery*, we will be piloting a new model of flexibility in a number of Jobcentre Plus districts. **These pilots will begin in April 2010.**
- Update our joint guidance to Connexions, Jobcentre Plus and nextstep/aacs on joint working, setting out at an operational level the steps we expect the organisations to take to join up support for young people. **We will issue this updated guidance in 2010.**

Chapter 6

INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS SUPPORT FOR 18–24 YEAR OLDS

Our Vision

6.1 Between the ages of 18 and 24 all young people will get the skills they will need to succeed in a competitive, high skilled labour market and make a successful start in employment. We do not see education and employment as separate, but rather as an integrated experience that allows young people to achieve their qualifications, gain the practical experience they need for work, and continue to take up opportunities at work to further develop their skills. It is critically important that young people are able to lay down firm foundations for their future careers at this stage in their lives as they are more likely to benefit from increased income and opportunities than at any point later on. Our ambition is that three-quarters of people should participate in higher education or complete an advanced Apprenticeship or equivalent technician level course by the age of 30.

What Progress Has Already Been Made?

6.2 Across the 18 to 24 age range, young people can be at very different points in the development of their careers. Some will already be working and getting the training and development which will enable them to advance; some will still be deciding what they want to do and trying out different options, through courses and taking full or part-time jobs; others will still have things going on in their lives which mean that building a career is not a priority for them at this point. Whatever their position though,

it is important that all young people are able to develop the skills and confidence to enter and succeed in work as it is this which, over time, will help them lead satisfying lives, stay out of poverty and play a full part in society. Those young people who are caring for young children or other family members also need to be thinking about their longer term options. Skills give individuals wider options, helping them to climb higher, earn more and get more out of work. And of course, skills are an important driver of economic growth, raising productivity and improving economic prospects for everybody.

6.3 Since the *Leitch Review of Skills* we have invested substantially in improving skill levels and creating opportunities for all young people. Apprenticeship numbers have soared in recent years; starts increased from 65,000 in 1996/97 to a record 234,000 in 2008/09 and expenditure increased by almost a quarter to over £1 billion in the two years to 2009/10. In *Skills for Growth: The National Skills Strategy* we signalled our commitment to significantly expand higher level Apprenticeships with an additional 35,000 advanced and higher Apprenticeship places for 19–30 year olds to equip the next generation for the higher level jobs of the future. The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act puts our Apprenticeship programme on a statutory footing, enabling us to safeguard the Apprenticeship brand by ensuring Apprenticeships are real jobs. We recognise that some young people may need to

undertake specific training before they are ready for a full Apprenticeship programme, so there are opportunities to do this in further education and with other training providers.

6.4 We are also succeeding in getting more young people into higher education. Student numbers in England have increased by 339,000 since 1997 to 2,000,000 in 2007/08; 43.3% of 18–30 years old went to university for the first time that year. Young people from all backgrounds can access higher education through a variety of routes, including vocational qualifications, Diplomas and Apprenticeships. As we set out in both *Skills for Growth* and the higher education framework, *Higher Ambitions*, we are keen to see more opportunities to progress from such routes, including to the most prestigious courses and institutions. We are developing Diplomas in collaboration with Higher Education Institutions to ensure that Diploma learners are equipped with the skills and knowledge they need for successful higher level study.

6.5 Other young people are benefiting from a skills system which is increasingly focused on delivering relevant, up to date skills and flexible provision. To date, nearly 100,000 19-24 year olds who are in work have achieved a qualification through Train to Gain and many more are still working towards successful completion. The Qualifications and Credit Framework, now being rolled out, contains new vocational qualifications approved by employers to meet industry standards. These are designed to be taken in small units so that young people can build up their credit as they learn and continue to do so if they transfer from full-time education into work or from one job

to another. In *Skills for Growth* we reiterated our commitment to fully fund first full level 2 and level 3 courses for young people, as well as literacy and numeracy courses and, for the unemployed, employability and work-focused training.

Support for young people seeking work

6.6 As we saw in Chapter 2, the majority of 18–24 year olds are employed, and we know that many 18–24 year olds who are not in employment or training say that they want to work. Through Jobcentre Plus, we provide an integrated service that gives young people access to a range of advice and training to support their journey into work.

6.7 Good literacy, language and numeracy skills provide people with the essential platform they need to find, stay and progress in work, increase their earnings and support their families. Employers expect young people to have basic employability skills when they start work and Jobcentre Plus advisers refer those young people who need it onto a literacy, language or numeracy course. Since the launch of Skills for Life in 2001, over 2.8 million people of working age have achieved a literacy, language or numeracy qualification. In March this year we published a refreshed Skills for Life strategy, *Skills for Life: changing lives*. This has a particular focus on employability, ensuring that the courses on offer will help young people find and progress in work.

6.8 We have also, for the first time, published employment strategies focused on an ambitious vision for some of those people who have been most excluded from opportunities to enter and stay in work. In June we published

Valuing Employment Now, the learning disability employment strategy, with the specific objectives of raising the aspirations and the employment rates of people with learning disabilities and their families and carers. We are challenging the notion that people with learning disabilities cannot work and we expect learning providers to raise their, and their learner's expectations that they can and will. We have also just published *Work, Recovery and Inclusion*, the mental health and employment delivery strategy for people with severe mental health conditions. This addresses the wide disparity between the numbers of people who say they would like to work and those who are working. It responds to specific recommendations made in the Perkins Review, *Realising Ambitions: Better employment support for people with a mental health condition*, aimed at getting more people with a mental health condition off out of work benefits and into employment. These are landmarks in setting out how all the services involved in working with these groups of people can work together to achieve better outcomes.

6.9 We also want to encourage young people to develop their entrepreneurial skills and behaviours because the contribution of entrepreneurs and those who undertake enterprising activity is crucial for driving the growth of UK businesses. Our Enterprise Strategy aims to give students an insight into the world of employment and self-employment and to raise aspirations, with a particular emphasis on currently under-represented groups. Enterprise education is designed as a continuous journey of enterprise learning from primary to tertiary levels and encourages students to be creative and innovative, to take risks and to manage them and to do this with determination and drive. We

support the Make Your Mark campaign, run by Enterprise UK, which works with young people to empower them through the promotion of enterprise and entrepreneurship and to change their attitudes, and the attitudes of those who influence them, so that they are more likely to consider running their own business as a viable alternative to more traditional occupational activity. And we facilitate enterprise at higher education level through support of the National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship.

Helping young job seekers during the recession

6.10 We know that young people can find it particularly difficult to find work during a recession, and we have widened our offer to 18–24 year old job seekers to reflect this. Young people who are seeking work have access to all of the new measures introduced to help people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance during the downturn, including:

- An expanded Rapid Response Service for people facing redundancy.
- Group sessions in job search for newly unemployed job seekers.
- Access to Local Employment Partnership vacancies.
- The six month offer: recruitment subsidies, work-focused training, help to become self employed and volunteering places.

6.11 Through Backing Young Britain, we have extended the support specifically targeted on young people seeking work, including:

- **Group sessions for 18 year olds looking for work for the first time** – to give them

an introduction to the local labour market and support with their CV and job search skills.

- **New internships for graduates and non-graduates** – a total of 40,000 opportunities will be available to support both graduates and non-graduates to gain practical work experience, with at least 20,000 places for graduates.
- **A new mentoring network** – to match young people with experienced adults to help find their feet in a tough jobs market. This will be available from early 2010.
- **Additional one-to-one support from an adviser** – from three months of a young person's claim.
- **Access to work trials from the first day of their claim** – for 18–24 year olds from disadvantaged groups.

6.12 On top of this, in the 2009 Budget we announced that we would introduce a major package of options for young people seeking work: The Young Person's Guarantee. All 18 to 24 year olds, before 12 months of a JSA claim, would be guaranteed:

- A job through the **Future Jobs Fund**;
- additional support to help them to compete for existing jobs through programmes called **Routes into Work** (preparing young people for jobs in economic growth sectors such as retail and hospitality) and **Care First Careers** (jobs in the care sector);
- work-focused **training**; or
- a work experience place delivered through a **Community Task Force**.

6.13 The Guarantee will be in place from January 2010, and from April 2010 we will require all young people to take up a place on one of the options: doing nothing will not be an option.

6.14 In addition, on 18 November the Prime Minister announced that we would be guaranteeing all new graduates unable to find work after six months access to an internship, training or help to become self employed. This builds on the work done over recent months by the Office for Graduate Opportunities to maximise the opportunities available for unemployed graduates to boost their knowledge and work based skills. These opportunities include internships, volunteering placements, postgraduate study and training for self employment. We know from the last recession that, whilst the employment rate for young graduates fell, they subsequently recovered their position in the labour market faster than those with lower level qualifications. These measures, taken together, should help graduates prepare for work and reduce their risk of becoming long term unemployed.

What More Needs to Be Done?

6.15 The new provision already introduced to help young job seekers through the recession adds up to a substantial menu of support. But we now want to bring all of the support available to young job seekers together into an offer that is even stronger, and in the *Building Britain's Recovery* White Paper we set out how we will do this.

6.16 We will offer young people more time with a personal adviser throughout their claim, and bring provision forward so that we can offer

a comprehensive range of potential jobs, training and work experience from the six month point of a young person's claim, including provision available through the Young Person's Guarantee.

6.17 We are making this investment because we know that the sooner we offer these sorts of places the sooner young people will benefit from the skills and experience they provide. We know young people need extra support in the current jobs climate. We want them to have this as early as possible in their claim. The longer they are not doing anything, the greater the risk that young people will suffer the long-term damaging effects of unemployment.

6.18 We will:

- Give young people access to a dedicated personal adviser from day one of a young person's unemployment claim, more time with an adviser throughout their claim, and more young people fast tracked to the support available from six months.
- Bring forward the Young Person's Guarantee so that all 18–24 year olds still unemployed after six months will be guaranteed access to a job, training or work experience. This will be supported by more time with their personal adviser to draw up a personalised back-to-work plan which will draw on provision including the Young Person's Guarantee, the six month offer provision open to all job seekers, and internships.
- Provide a Graduate Guarantee that all new graduates still unemployed at six months will have access to an internship, training or help to become self employed.

- Make available over 100,000 government funded additional training, internship, work experience and job opportunities to help deliver the Guarantee. This will include a target of 16,000 apprenticeship places through the Future Jobs Fund.

- Introduce a requirement that all young people take up one of the places on offer before they complete ten months on JSA.

6.19 On reaching six months of unemployment, young people will discuss all the provision on offer with their personal adviser and work with them to draw up a personalised back-to-work plan. Young people will sign up to the package in their plan and will be required to follow it through. Any young person who fails to attend the programme they are referred to will have to take part in the Community Task Force before they reach the end of month ten of their claim to benefit.

6.20 In addition, anyone who is fast tracked, including 18 year olds who have built up a six month period not in education, employment or training, will get immediate access to this offer. More young people will be fast tracked as part of this offer so that those moving in and out of work are not held back from the more substantial support normally available after an unbroken six month claim. Currently we also fast track those with a history of 22 months benefit receipt out of the previous 24. We announced in the White Paper that we will seek to loosen this condition and fast track more job seekers with a recent history of benefit receipt to personalised support as resources allow.

6.21 We will continue to offer all young people aged 18–24 the opportunity to build their skills.

Increasingly, Skills for Life and the work-focused training provided to job-seekers at six months is being delivered within mainstream further education colleges. This will help young people get back into an educational environment and encourage them to continue learning even if they get a job. Colleges often provide specific help to young people who are coming back into learning after some time away, help which can extend beyond education to include financial and pastoral support.

6.22 We will ensure that, through the integration of employment and skills services, all job-seekers have the opportunity to get the literacy and numeracy support they need to help them find and progress in work. In addition, we are supporting providers to offer more embedded Skills for Life provision so that young people and adults can improve their literacy and numeracy as part of a vocational course, and providers are being supported to develop more flexible and responsive provision which is tailored to local employer needs and allows people to learn when and where it suits them. We will also work with the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) to develop the arrangements for commissioning skills training from a wide range of providers, including third sector organisations to ensure that young people who are not in education, employment or training receive the help they need to get them back on the path to success.

6.23 Building on this pre-employment skills training, we will continue to strengthen progression routes into higher level training and professional jobs. We will develop opportunities for advanced level Apprentices to move on into higher education and we have set a requirement that from April 2011 all Apprenticeship

frameworks will show how to progress into higher education, and all level 3 and 4 frameworks will carry UCAS tariff points. We will also establish an Apprenticeships scholarships fund of £1 million so that 1,000 of the best Apprentices receive £1,000 each to incentivise further progress with their learning and skills development, including in higher education. This fund will be set up from autumn 2010. Also, from autumn 2010 we will pilot a Joint Investment Scheme with employers in sectors which are critical to the recovery of the economy and future growth. We are starting with £20m but ultimately anticipating a combined fund of up to £100m which would support 75,000 training places at advanced vocational levels, many of which will go to young people.

6.24 Those people who find themselves at a particular disadvantage in accessing learning and work stand the best chance of success if that is part of a wider package of support. We will continue to implement the commitments made in *Valuing Employment Now*. Actions include recruiting job coaches specifically to support people with learning disabilities, training for all Jobcentre Plus staff and the creation of jobs, work experience and training opportunities. We will expand Project Search, which supports young people aged 16–24 with learning difficulties and/or disabilities currently in FE and special schools into paid jobs through internships, from 2 to 12 sites making sure we learn the important lessons so that we can roll-out good practice. From April 2010 local authorities will be responsible for those learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are subject to a learning difficulty assessment aged 19–25. They have complex needs and provision has to be individually tailored to enable their successful move into

employment. Additional Learning Support funds have been agreed for this group and will be used to ensure successful outcomes.

6.25 We will also start to take the actions set out in *Work, Recovery and Inclusion*. The aacs will provide targeted support for all those with specific challenges but we are considering the need for a small pool of specialist advisers to meet the very particular needs of people with mental health conditions.

6.26 There is a strong link between young people who are not in education, employment and training and offending behaviour. Ministry of Justice data shows that in the four weeks prior to entering prison, 57% of young offenders aged 18–20 and 66% of adult offenders aged 21+ were not participating in any of these. Contact with the criminal justice system can provide the opportunity to reengage young people and we have been implementing a programme of transformation to improve its effectiveness. The focus is on building basic skills where the need is very high, alongside the development of vocational skills and experience needed to secure and stay in work. As a result of this, participation rates are up, achievement is rising and inspection outcomes now equal those of other mainstream sectors. But there is more to do. Our trials of a ‘virtual campus’ in prisons have demonstrated that we can use IT safely and this will benefit the links prisoners can make between what happens inside prison and their continuation in learning and/or work on release. Joint commissioning arrangements can make the most effective use of resources, improving partnership delivery and communication at the local level so that offenders move into mainstream DWP and other

programmes as they reach the end of a custodial sentence.

6.27 As we saw in Chapter 4, third sector providers play a particularly strong role in the delivery of training and support for vulnerable young people and those not in education, employment or training right across the 16–24 age range. Organisations like Rathbone, NACRO, the Foyer Federation and the Prince’s Trust have substantial experience of running E2E and other similar programmes. But smaller, niche third sector organisations are also key to reengaging those furthest from the labour market. Recent research soon to be published by the Learning and Skills Council shows third sector organisations have a strong record in engaging people with lower prior attainment and enabling them to achieve, that compares well with mainstream provision. Learners who were previously disaffected often feel they can succeed in this type of provision as it tends to be very flexible, and offer one-to-one learning with personal help and support. We will build on these successes as we develop the commissioning arrangements for the SFA.

6.28 We want people to be able to be more proactive in finding out how they can improve their skills and what support is available to them. From autumn 2010, everybody aged 19 and over will become entitled to their own personal skills account, further increasing the level of control they can exercise over the direction of their training. Skills accounts will set out what funding they are entitled to, what courses are available to help them achieve their ambitions, and where they can access the best quality provision. They will also set out a record of the qualifications gained and, over time, will allow the individual

to build up a portfolio of their skills and learning. People will be able to access skills accounts directly online themselves, but some, including job seekers and young people aged 19 and over, will also be introduced and helped to use them by advisers. As an additional measure to make sure that people who are in work understand the careers advice that continues to be available to them we will ensure that all customers leaving Jobseeker's Allowance will receive a letter informing them how to access support from the aacs. To target this support at those who are more likely to repeatedly move in and out of work, from April 2011 we will offer a telephone contact with the aacs to everyone who enters work after 6 to 12 months on JSA.

6.29 As set out in *Building Britain's Recovery*, we are increasing our efforts to make sure that those people who are not in full-time education or employment and who are not able to actively seek work, because of caring responsibilities or other barriers, get the support they need to plan their future careers.

Chapter 7

CONCLUSION

7.1 It is essential for the future of individuals, of our economy and of our country that young people are participating in education, employment and training between the ages of 16 and 24. The vast majority are already learning and working between these ages, putting themselves on the path to sustainable employment and success. However, a minority of young people experience difficulties during this period and require additional support to help them to remain engaged.

7.2 We know that the foundations of disengagement are often laid well before the age of 16, through absence from school, falling attainment or low aspirations as a result of worklessness within communities. That is why we have begun our Strategy with **prevention**, working with children and families from an early age to recognise young people at risk of disengagement and intervene early to help them to continue on the path to success. Young people who continue on in learning at age 16–17 are less likely than their peers to be unemployed by the age of 21, so by intervening early, we are also helping to prevent later negative consequences, both for young people and for the economy.

7.3 Young people who are not in education, employment or training or at risk of becoming so are very diverse and must be treated as individuals who require tailored support, advice and provision to engage. That is why we have

put **personalisation** at the heart of our Strategy to engage 16–24 year olds – individual tracking of progress, a tailored offer of learning through the September Guarantee, all-age personalised careers advice and the tailored support offered by the Flexible New Deal.

7.4 None of this can be achieved by one Department or agency alone and **partnership** is key to providing the integrated support that young people need if they are to reengage. Partnership between DWP, BIS and DCSF nationally: partnership between local authorities and all the other organisations involved in supporting this group, including the YPLA, SFA, Jobcentre Plus, learning providers, employers and third sector organisations; and partnership between central and local government so that we can work together to tailor support to individual young people.

7.5 We are building from a strong base and this Strategy has set out significant additional support that will help us to secure further increases in participation over the coming years. Through our successful **September Guarantee**, we will continue to offer a suitable place in learning to all 16 and 17 year olds. We will build on this through the **January Guarantee** that will provide 16–17 year olds who are not in education, employment or training in 2010 with an Entry to Employment place and Education Maintenance Allowance to go with this. We will bring forward the **Young Person's Guarantee**

so that all 18–24 year olds still unemployed after six months will get access to a job, training or work experience, and we will introduce a **Graduate Guarantee** so that all new graduates still unemployed at six months will be able to access an internship, training or help to become self employed.

7.6 Together, these guarantees provide young people with a clear offer of support that will help us to continue to ensure that they emerge from the recession with higher skills levels than ever before, able to take full advantage of the upturn to secure their sustainable employment and success in years to come.



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