

Getting ready for work

The availability and effectiveness of enterprise education and work related learning for pupils in secondary schools. OFSTED November 2016

The scope of the report

Examines how secondary schools are preparing young people for the world of work through an investigation of 40 secondary schools.

Rationale

One of the implications of Britain leaving the European Union is that we will have to harness home-grown talent and to encourage the creativity and innovation of young people.

Definition of Enterprise Education

Teaching pupils the knowledge and skills they will need to be future employees and potential employers. It includes teaching financial and organisational capability whilst also providing opportunities to raise pupils' awareness of problems and solutions in the context of business and enterprise.

Key findings

- The extent to which the school curriculum was used to prepare pupils for the world of work was largely dependent on the will of the school leader. Time, funding and other more pressing priorities left it as a poor relation
- Where enterprise education was a part of the curriculum it was often unclear as to its impact on pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills and was rarely formally assessed or verified
- Local employers stated that a lack of work-related learning was a major barrier to young people gaining employment
- Many schools cited time as a barrier to creating and developing partnerships with local businesses and where there were good links they were dependent on individual contacts or parental involvement
- The report concludes that there is little coherence and a lack of strategy by government, business organisations or individual schools to create a co-ordinated approach to addressing poor provision
- Relationships were often hampered by poor communication between school and business staff and a lack of clarity over what was wanted from the partnership
- Schools are more likely than in recent years to promote apprenticeships but are still concerned as to the quality of this route if it was perceived to limit options for young people in the future

Recommendations

These are broken down into four different stakeholder groups:-

The Department of Education should:

- Revisit Lord Young's report from 2014 and promote the importance of well-planned provision for enterprise education
- Ensure that the availability and value of apprenticeships is communicated well to parents and pupils
- Promote the Careers and Enterprise Company to encourage schools to work together in delivering enterprise education

OFSTED should:

- Ensure that inspection judgements take greater account of the coherence and rigour with which schools prepare pupils for employment and self-employment

Secondary schools should:

- Ensure a coherent programme to develop enterprise education
- Develop stronger links with business by using local networks
- Make the most effective use of the expertise of their specialist teachers in delivering enterprise and work related education and that all teachers involved in delivery have access to appropriate professional development
- Ensure that enterprise and work related programmes have effective mechanisms for monitoring and assessing progress in relation to developing knowledge, understanding and skills

Employers should:

- Support local schools in greater numbers by offering activities such as mock interviews, participation in careers fairs and careers talks
- Provide well-planned and constructive opportunities for pupils to gain work experience and an insight into a range of roles and occupations through work shadowing.