

Enterprise and Learning Committee

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Joint Evidence of the Association of School and College Leaders Cymru and the National Association of Headteachers to the Enterprise and Learning Committee on Young people not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

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Introduction.

1. The membership of ASCL Cymru and NAHT Cymru comprises most of Wales' school leaders. We are submitting this evidence jointly.
2. We welcome the opportunity to submit evidence to the Enterprise and Learning Committee Inquiry on Young people not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)
3. Given that most of the policy initiatives are outside of school, we are not able to provide evidence directly related to the terms of reference of the inquiry but do submit our members' observations on the issue of NEETS:
4. The causes of young people not attending education or training or employment is a complex matter with a diversity of individual reasons; thus seeking to tackle the issue is equally complex with the need for a wide range of approaches to suit the needs of each individual.

Strategies for the identification of young people at risk of falling into the NEET category

1. Schools have a range of strategies which they employ to identify those in danger of NEET.
2. These include 'at risk' registers that are maintained by pastoral and learning coach staff. Based on relevant personal data such as attendance and the completion of coursework requirements, school records are used sensitively and confidentially by personal tutors to monitor 'at risk' learners and to liaise with the relevant external agencies.
3. Regular individual tutorials are held and additionally, when required, in order to allow tutors to support learners in danger of leaving a programme before its completion.

Services and programmes to support those most at risk of becoming NEET and to reduce the numbers and address the needs of those who have become persistently NEET

1. In curriculum terms, secondary schools and colleges have developed programmes that are designed to encourage young people to achieve, ensuring that their offer includes opportunities at all levels. This is a key area within the evolving 14-19 curriculum in response to the Learning Skills Measure.
2. Potential barriers to the longer term success of the policy initiatives include:
3. sustainable funding for what are often the more expensive courses and to maintain and enhance the learning coach support interventions that can have significant impact for an individual. The level of personal support required has budgetary implications but, if the government is to take its responsibility to improve the NEET situation seriously, these cannot be avoided. Indeed, an investment at this stage will contribute significantly to improving the country's future overall economic situation.
4. the development of a range of level one qualifications which can be pursued and accredited on a unitised basis, so as to cater for students who 'drop out' for a period of time.

An example of the complication that can arise with regard to qualifications is the current proposal for England and Wales to introduce a new qualification in Child Care Learning and Development. The new CCLD would replace all existing child care courses and it has recently been proposed that the course will only be available as a Modern Apprenticeship or for post 18 students in the form of a full time Diploma course. This would mean that no school could offer the CCDL - one less vocational choice for school pupils, and a problem for schools who have included the CCLD child care course in their prospectus for 2010-2011.

1. all colleges having flexible starting dates throughout the year as a means of encouraging prospective NEETs to commence education or training, fitting in with the other aspects of the young person's life.