

Houghton Connexions / Coalfields NEET
(Not in Employment, Education or Training) Panel Meeting.

Being out of education, employment or training (NEET) between the ages of 16 and 19 is an enormous waste of young people's potential and their contribution to society.

Tackling NEET is about:

Prevention - stopping young people becoming NEET: motivating and engaging them while they are still in school and offering attractive and relevant provision post-16.

Intervention - knowing what young people are doing, having the resource to contact or be contacted by them, challenging their expectations and being able to offer opportunities and support when and where they need them, ensuring successful transition.

Sustainability - helping young people, especially those with a history of 'dropping out', to tackle any obstacles to their engagement so they can remain engaged.

The strategy for reducing NEET is based on embedding through the system:

Careful tracking - to identify early those young people who are NEET, or at risk of becoming NEET, so that the right interventions can be planned.

Personalised support and guidance - effective early intervention to re-engage young people, to ensure they have the life skills and knowledge to access education, training or employment and can make informed choices; and to enable them to overcome barriers to participation (including using financial incentives to encourage young people to engage in learning).

Flexible learning opportunities to meet demand - to engage young people through sufficient provision at every level, in every area and in every style of learning.

Rights and responsibilities - to promote young people's rights to access the services they need together with clear incentives in place for all young people to re-engage quickly should they become NEET.

NEET Panel Meeting:

The first Coalfields NEET panel meeting took place in early 2016. The NEET panel meeting was aimed at inviting those agencies and partners who had a role in reducing the proportion of young people not in employment, education or training - NEET.

Bringing key agencies and partners either based within or who have an impact on the Coalfields young people, in-order to introduce / share good practice with one another.

The first meeting set the scene informing partners of the NEET figures - i.e. available young people, and how we could all work better together to support the NEET agenda. First meeting surrounded:

- Establishing a Coalfields strategy for reducing NEET and sustaining young people in Education, Employment or Training (EET);
- Setting out the contribution that each partner can make to reducing the proportion of young people who are NEET;
- To introduce and/or share good practice tips on how this might be achieved;
- Provide examples of case studies;
- Establish / review data sharing arrangements;
- Give links to EET provision.

As the NEET Panels progressed - future meetings involved looking at clients on an individual case by case basis, i.e. which partner or combination of partners could best suit to meet their individual needs etc.

Actions were agreed on these cases and reviewed at the next meeting noting what work had been undertaken with the client in trying to move them into a positive EET provision.

Agencies and Partners involved included:

- Local Authority - Connexions Sunderland;
- Local Authority - Youth Service;
- Voluntary Sector - Youth Support Services;
- Local Secondary Schools;
- Post-16 Learning Providers (Schools with 6th Forms, Sixth Form Colleges, FE Colleges and Work Based Learning Providers);
- Jobcentre Plus / Strengthening Families Key Worker.

There are examples showing positive work undertaken with a number of young people resulting in these young people moving into EET provision.

What was also noted by partners was the often highly intensive work that took place in trying to engage with young people who for whatever reason often chose not to engage with partners. These young people were continued to be contacted on a regular and timely basis to review whether they would want to consider re-engaging in learning.

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