



## **Youth Wiki national description**

# Youth policies in the United Kingdom (England)

2020

The Youth Wiki is Europe's online encyclopaedia in the area of national youth policies. The platform is a comprehensive database of national structures, policies and actions supporting young people. For the updated version of this national description, please visit <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/youthwiki>



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# United Kingdom (England)

## OVERVIEW

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### Youth Policy in the United Kingdom

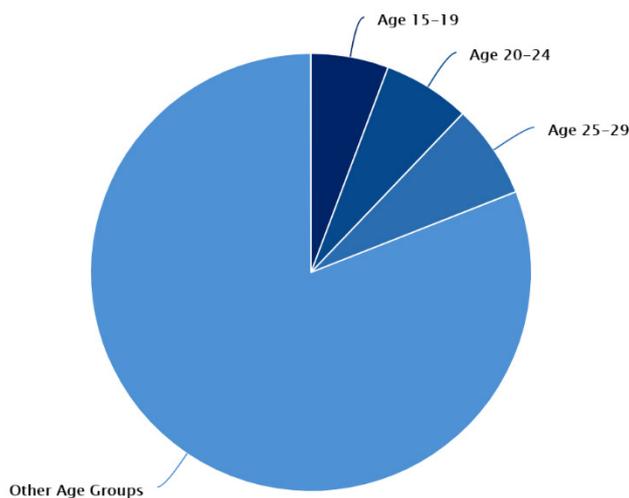
Responsibilities for policies targeting young people sit in different departments across government. For example, policy responsibility for young people's mental health sits in the [Department of Health](#), whereas responsibility for out-of-school opportunities for young people sits in the Office for Civil Society in the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#). These departments' policies address different age ranges, and so there is no single age range for youth policy in England.

The UK left the EU on January 31st at 11pm, beginning the transition period that ended on December 31st 2020. An [update](#) on the website of the Erasmus+ UK National Agency states that:

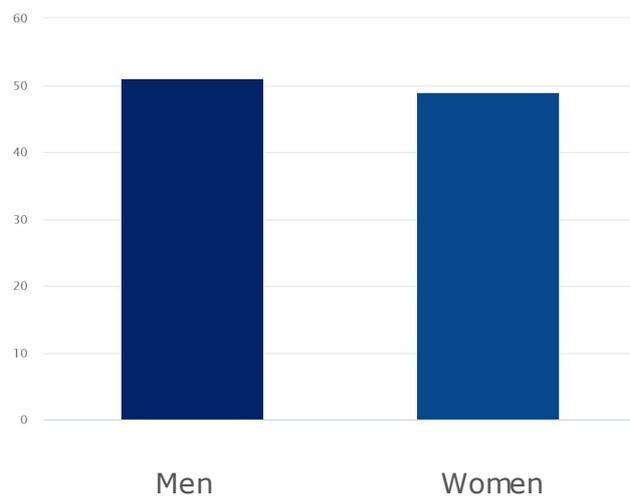
under the Withdrawal Agreement negotiated with the EU, the UK will continue to participate fully in the current (2014-2020) Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps (ESC) programmes. This means that the projects successfully bid for during the current (2014-2020) Erasmus+ and ESC programmes will continue to receive EU funding for the full duration of the project, including those where funding runs beyond 2020 and the end of the transition period. As a result, the UK government guarantee of EU funding will no longer be required and the Erasmus+ and ESC guarantee IT system has been closed.

Additional updates have been published on the [Erasmus+ site](#)

### Ratio of young people in the total population on 1st January



## Ratio of men and women in the youth population



### Statistic references

#### References:

Data are for the United Kingdom as a whole, and might not represent the demographic situation in England.

Ratio (%) of young people in the total population (2017): Eurostat, yth\_demo\_020 [data extracted on 4/09/2018].

Absolute number of young people on 1 January for the age group 15-29 (2017): Eurostat, yth\_demo\_010 [data extracted on 4/09/2018].

Ratio (%) of men and women in the youth population (2017): Eurostat, yth\_demo\_020 [data extracted on 4/09/2018].

Young immigrants from non-EU countries (2016): Eurostat, yth\_demo\_070 [data extracted on 4/09/2018].

# 1. YOUTH POLICY GOVERNANCE

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Responsibility for youth policy is distributed across various government departments, including Education and Health. The Office for Civil Society within the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport does, however, have specific responsibility for supporting youth policy, as well as for the National Citizen Service (see [Youth Volunteering at National Level](#)). As a result, the particular focus of youth policy is on out-of-school activities, including social action and volunteering.

The Government has pursued a policy of decentralisation/localism resulting in increased powers at local level. As a result, decisions about the provision of services and activities for young people are determined at a local, rather than a national, level. This introduces flexibility to make provision according to local need, but also means that no national standard for such services for young people is specified.

## 1.1 Target population of youth policy

### Target population of the national youth policy

Responsibilities for policies targeting young people sit in different departments across Government. For example, policy responsibility for young people's mental health sits in the [Department of Health & Social Care](#), whereas responsibility for out-of-school opportunities for young people sits in the [Office for Civil Society](#) in the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport](#). These departments' policies address different age ranges, and so there is no single age range for youth policy in England.

### Target population of local authority provision

A duty is placed on [local authorities](#) to promote the well-being of young people aged 13-19 by securing access to sufficient educational, recreational leisure-time activities and facilities for them, so far as is reasonably practicable. This age range rises to 24 years for those with learning difficulties. Local authorities are also expected to provide more targeted services for vulnerable young people, including teenage pregnancy advice, youth justice teams, drug and alcohol misuse services and homelessness support.

## 1.2 National youth law

### Existence of a National Youth Law

There is no single national youth law in England. However, there are a number of pieces of legislation which address the needs and rights of young people and regulate how youth issues are addressed. Relevant legislation includes the:

- [Children Act 1989](#)
- [Children Act 2004](#)
- [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [Children and Young Persons Act 2008](#)
- [Children and Families Action 2014](#)
- [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#)

There was no systematic consultation of young people in the drawing up of this legislation. However, young people would be able to contribute to any public consultation which generally precedes a new piece of legislation; see the chapter on '[Participation](#)' for further details.

A Civil Society Youth Steering Group was set up within DCMS as part of the Civil Society Strategy 2018, to oversee the development and implementation of policies affecting young people. The DCMS also set up a national Young Commissioners and Inspectors Group to involve young people directly and meaningfully into the commissioning, monitoring and evaluation of national programmes affecting young people.

## Scope and contents

### Safeguarding and child protection

Much of the relevant legislation relates to safeguarding and child protection. The Children Acts of 1989 and 2004 provide the legislative framework for child protection in England. The [Children Act 1989](#) sets out what [local authorities](#) and the courts should do to protect the welfare of children and places a duty on local authorities to provide services for children in need, their families and others. Based on proposals in the Government Green Paper, [Every Child Matters: Change for Children in Schools](#) (Department for Education and Skills, 2003), the [Children Act 2004](#) created a statutory framework for local cooperation to improve the well-being of children in their local areas and placed a duty on specified agencies with regards to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It also established the post of the [Children's Commissioner](#), the holder of which has a statutory duty to promote and protect the rights of all children in England in accordance with the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#).

The [Children and Young Person Act 2008](#) reformed the care system in England and Wales, implementing the proposals of the Government White Paper [Care Matters: Time for Change](#) (Department for Education and Skills, 2007). The [Children and Families Act 2014](#) introduced a range of reforms to improve services for key groups of vulnerable children, including children in the adoption and care systems; those affected by the decisions of the family courts; and those with [special educational needs and disabilities](#). It gave the Children's Commissioner special responsibility for the rights of children in or leaving care, living away from home or receiving social care. This legislation covers the welfare of young people up to age 18. It may extend to those aged 18, 19 and 20 for those who have been [looked after](#) by a local authority after age 16 or who have a learning disability.

### Duty on local authorities

The [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#) implements the proposals of the 2005 Government Green paper [Youth Matters](#). In particular, it imposed a duty on local authorities (LAs) to promote the well-being of persons aged 13-19 (and of persons aged up to 24 with learning difficulties) by securing access for them to sufficient educational and recreational leisure-time activities and facilities so far as is reasonably practicable. LAs can fulfil this duty by providing activities and facilities, assisting others to do so or making other arrangements to facilitate access which can include the provision of transport, financial assistance or information. LAs must supply young people with up-to-date information regarding the leisure-time activities and facilities that are available locally. They must also ascertain from young people their views of existing provision and the need for additional provision and to take those views into account. For further information, see the section on local government in the article on '[Youth Policy Decision-Making](#)'.

### Revisions/updates

There is no single piece of legislation covering youth policy, it is therefore not possible to describe when, how and why it has been updated. When newer legislation updates or revokes existing legislation, details are provided on the [UK legislation website](#).

## 1.3 National youth strategy

### Existence of a National Youth Strategy

There is currently no overarching national youth strategy.

### Scope and contents

N/A

### Responsible authority for the implementation of the Youth Strategy

N/A

### Revisions/updates

In April 2019 the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport](#) and the [Office for Civil Society](#) announced the development of a new [Youth Charter](#) dedicated to giving young people a strong voice in various matters. The [Youth Charter](#) will facilitate an integrated, youth-centric approach to policy and somewhat centralise youth services. However, this will not be a cross-departmental youth policy strategy.

## 1.4 Youth policy decision-making

### Structure of Decision-making

#### Central government

Youth policy and strategy is a cross-government area led by the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#) (DCMS). More specifically, responsibilities for some elements of youth policy are part of the portfolio of the Under Secretary of State for Sport and Civil Society. DCMS also has responsibility for culture, sport, tourism, leisure, the creative industries and broadcasting. It took over responsibility for youth policy from the [Cabinet Office](#) in 2016. Prior to 2013, youth policy was within the remit of the [Department for Education](#).

DCMS's responsibilities for youth policy mainly relate to out-of-school opportunities for young people. It promotes social action schemes for young people and also has responsibility for the [National Citizen Service](#) (for further information see the section on '[Youth Volunteering at National Level](#)' in the Chapter on '[Voluntary Activities](#)'). Other responsibilities include supporting [local authorities](#) to deliver their statutory duties for youth provision and strategic dialogue with young people.

Other policies relating to young people sit with departments that have responsibility for that policy area as a whole; for example, responsibility for youth employment sits with the [Department for Work and Pensions](#).

#### Local government

Local authorities (LAs) have a statutory duty (under section 507B of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#) – see the article on '[National Youth Law](#)') to secure sufficient services and activities for young people aged 13- 19 (and those with learning difficulties to age 24) and to improve their well-being. They have responsibility for coordinating the overall local offer of all available provision for young people. They do not have to deliver the services themselves, and may commission, support and facilitate organisations from the [voluntary, community and social enterprise \(VCSE\)](#) sector to do this.

It is in-line with central government's localism agenda, whereby more power lies at a local level, that decisions about this statutory duty of an offer for young people are determined at a local, rather than a national, level. No standard of such services for young people is specified.

## Young people's role in decision-making

The current Government is committed to giving young people a voice in formulating youth policy. It is also committed to the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#), and demonstrates this by placing a strong emphasis on consulting young people, involving them in local democratic processes and decision making, and recognising their positive contribution to society.

In August 2018, the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#) (DCMS) published their [Civil Society Strategy](#), which emphasised the value of youth participation in politics and civil society, and the Government's commitment to increasing youth participation. This took the form of a Youth Steering Group, managed by the British Youth Council as part of the [Youth Voice contract](#) that will run until at least March 2020.

The British Youth Council provides a range of other youth participation services as part of this contract with the aim of greater involvement of young people in policy-making decisions. For example, the [Youth Voice Groups](#), which involve young people in decision-making across three areas: advocacy, youth engagement and accessibility. As well as this, the [Young Inspectors programme](#) is designed to ensure young people can influence local services within their local communities.

In July 2020, the UK government [launched Involved.uk](#), a new digital platform (Instagram page) with the aim to engage young people aged 13-25 in government decision-making. Responses to polls will be fed live to public consultations and wider policy-making in government departments.

## Main Themes

### Central government

Youth policies from a range of government departments aim to:

- support parents and families to support their children from birth to and through the teenage years
- ensure that all young people succeed in learning and find a job
- help young people develop their character, a sense of belonging and the behaviours which will help them succeed in learning, work and life
- encourage young people to take care of their physical and mental health
- look out for the most vulnerable young people who may suffer abuse, neglect, exploitation, or homelessness, focusing intensively on those for whom the state acts as a corporate parent
- prevent youth crime and support young people in the criminal justice system.

### Overlaps with European Union policy

In its 2015 submission to the [EU Youth Report](#), the Cabinet Office, which held policy responsibility for young people at the time, identified the five areas where the main themes of the (then) Government [policy](#) overlapped with the EU Youth Strategy:

- education and training
- employment and entrepreneurship
- participation
- voluntary activities
- social inclusion.

### Local government

The main themes underpinning the offer made by [local authorities](#) (LAs) are set out in [Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on Services and Activities to Improve Young](#)

[People's Well-being](#), issued by the Secretary of State for Education in 2012. It lists the youth work and other services that LAs should provide, so far as they are practically able, to improve the well-being of young people. This includes youth work and other activities that:

- connect young people with their communities, enabling them to belong and contribute to society, including through volunteering, and supporting them to have a voice in decisions which affect their lives
- offer young people opportunities in safe environments to take part in a wide range of sports, arts, music and other activities, through which they can develop a strong sense of belonging, socialise safely with their peers, enjoy social mixing, experience spending time with older people, and develop relationships with adults they trust
- support the personal and social development of young people through which they build the capabilities they need for learning, work, and the transition to adulthood – communication, confidence and agency, creativity, managing feelings, planning and problem solving, relationships and leadership, and resilience and determination
- improve young people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being
- help those young people at risk of dropping out of learning or not achieving their full potential to engage and attain in education or training
- raise young people's aspirations, build their resilience, and inform their decisions, thereby reducing teenage pregnancy, risky behaviours such as substance misuse, and involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour.

[The Civil Society Strategy, 2018](#) states that the government will review the guidance, which sets out the statutory duty placed on local authorities to provide appropriate local youth service. The review is expected to provide greater clarity of government's expectations, including the value added by good youth work.

### **Surveys of local provision**

A 2011 House of Commons Education Committee report on [Services for Young People](#) describes the local authority provision as follows:

Provision has typically taken the form of open-access services, including a range of leisure, cultural and sporting activities often based around youth centres. Local authorities also provide targeted services for vulnerable young people, such as teenage pregnancy advice, youth justice teams, drug and alcohol misuse services and homelessness support. Whilst some authorities provide services directly, many are contracted out to voluntary, community or private organisations. These sectors also provide a range of services funded wholly or largely from external sources: both open-access ones, such as the Scouts or faith-based groups, and targeted ones, such as training programmes run by [Fairbridge](#). The breadth of activities and providers meeting the description of 'services for young people' is consequently so broad that it is almost impossible to describe as a single sector.

In 2012, the [National Youth Agency](#), an intermediary charity which is the national body for youth work, published the [results of a commission](#) into what 'sufficient' local provision of services for young people should be. The NYA Commission aimed to gather and scrutinise evidence from across the sector to create a clearer picture of sufficiency. The findings were intended to inform central government and local authority understanding of sufficiency.

In 2013, the Cabinet Office undertook a [survey](#) to develop a broader understanding of how local authorities meet their statutory duty to secure services and activities for young people.

## The National Agency for Youth

There is no government agency in England which meets the definition of a national agency for youth - a government agency established to address youth issues, design and manage youth related programmes and initiatives, supporting both individuals and entities in availing themselves of funding opportunities, as well as producing and disseminating information on youth policies and opportunities.

## Policy monitoring and evaluation

There are no mechanisms specifically for monitoring and evaluating the implementation and effects of youth policies. A range of tools are utilised for general policy monitoring including in-house research capability, commissioned research, surveys, impact assessments, consultations, etc. Some surveys, for example, may be conducted at regular intervals and new policy documents generally include a statement regarding the timing of any evaluation.

Further details of policy making, monitoring and evaluation processes are provided in the article on '[Evidence-based youth policy](#)'.

## 1.5 Cross-sectoral approach with other ministries

### Mechanisms and actors

Youth policy and strategy is a cross-government area led by the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#). However, each individual government department retains responsibility for policies, programmes, actions and funding in their individual areas. For example, responsibility for youth employment sits with the [Department for Work and Pensions](#).

A number of large-scale initiatives have demonstrated a cross-sectoral approach to youth policy. These included the:

- [Youth Contract](#), which was a package of measures designed to address youth unemployment from 2012 to 2016. Responsibility for the measures was shared across three central government departments: the then Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (now the [Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy](#)), the [Department for Education](#) and the [Department for Work and Pensions](#).
- [Youth Engagement Fund](#), which was a cross-government fund launched in 2014 and supported by the [Cabinet Office](#), the [Department for Work and Pensions](#) and the [Ministry of Justice](#). Over three years, it aimed to reduce the number of young people, aged 14-17 years, who become NEET (not in education, employment or training). The funding was provided through social impact bonds, which are a payment by results system: investors fund innovative initiatives and the government only pays if the initiatives achieve the planned outcome.
- The [Youth Investment Fund](#), which is aimed at supporting disadvantaged communities across England, helping young people to get the best start in life and supporting them to fulfil their potential. It is made up of £40 million of government and National Lottery funding from the [Department for Digital Culture, Media and Sport](#) and the [National Lottery Community Fund](#).
- Step Up to Serve's youth social action campaign, [#iwill](#), is being supported by the Government up to 2020. For more information about both of these initiatives, please see the Chapter on '[Voluntary Activities](#)'.

## 1.6 Evidence-based youth policy

### Political Commitment to Evidence-Based Youth Policy

The introduction to the [Magenta Book](#) (HM Treasury, 2011) sets out that the Government is committed to improving central and local government efficiency and effectiveness. It wishes to ensure that public funds are spent on activities that provide the greatest possible economic and social return. This requires that all policy, including youth policy, is based on reliable and robust evidence. High quality evaluation is vital to this.

Evidence-based policy making is embodied in [The Civil Service code](#) (2015) which has a statutory basis in Part 1 of the [Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010](#). All civil servants in the UK Civil Service (serving the UK Government and the Governments of Scotland and Wales) are expected to carry out their role with a commitment to the core values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality. Objectivity is defined as basing advice and decisions on rigorous analysis of the evidence. Civil servants must:

- provide information and advice, including advice to ministers, on the basis of the evidence, and accurately present the options and facts
- take decisions on the merits of the case; take due account of expert and professional advice.

Civil servants must not:

- ignore inconvenient facts or relevant considerations when providing advice or making decisions
- frustrate the implementation of policies once decisions are taken by declining to take, or abstaining from, action which flows from those decisions.

Improving policy making capability is an important strand of the [Civil Service Reform plan](#) (Cabinet Office and Civil Service Reform, 2014). Chapter 2 of the plan puts forward 'open policy making' as the default model to be adopted. Open policy making aims to make better policy by using a collaborative approach and being open to new ideas, new ways of working, new insights, new evidence and experts (see the [GOV Policy Lab blog](#) for further information).

In July 2020, Minister for the Cabinet Office Michael Gove [gave a speech](#) which outlined the direction for civil service reform in coming years. This included diversification of recruitment as well as geographically diversifying and increasing the civil service presence around the UK. He also stated:

"The second Rooseveltian challenge is to change how Government itself works, to reorganise its institutions to become better at reform. The need for reform in so many areas is obvious. And this Government is determined to deliver it in a way that is consistent with our moral values."

This reform will likely affect the approach to youth policy in the UK.

To support the implementation of open policy-making, the Cabinet Office produced a range of resources for policy makers. They include the:

- [Civil service policy profession policy curriculum](#)
- [Open Policy Making Manual](#) (2016).

Public Sector Equality Duty

The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) came into force across Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) on 5 April 2011 under the [Equality Act 2010](#). It means that public bodies have to consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It also requires that public bodies have due regard for the need to:

- eliminate discrimination
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

The [Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2011](#) came into force on 10 September 2011. They require public bodies to publish relevant, proportionate information showing compliance with the Equality Duty, and to set equality objectives.

### **Cooperation between policy-making and research**

HM Treasury's Green and Magenta Books together provide detailed guidelines, for policy makers and analysts, on how policies and projects should be assessed and reviewed. The two sets of guidance are complementary: the [Green Book](#) (2011) emphasises the economic principles that should be applied to both appraisal and evaluation, and the [Magenta Book](#) (2011) provides in-depth guidance on how evaluation should be designed and undertaken. Neither are specific to the development of youth policy.

The [Green Book](#) models the policy making process as a cycle with the following stages (page 3):

- rationale
- objectives
- appraisal
- implementation (monitoring)
- feedback.

### **What Works Networks**

The Government set up a number of [What Works Networks](#) in 2013. The What Works initiative aims to improve the way that government and other organisations create, share and use high quality evidence for decision-making. It supports more effective and efficient services across the public sector at national and local levels. Policy areas covered by the What Works Centres are:

- health and social care
- educational achievement
- crime reduction
- early intervention
- local economic growth
- improved quality of life for older people
- well-being.

For example, in 2015 the Early Intervention Foundation published research on [Social and Emotional Learning](#).

### **Improvements to assessing Impact**

As part of its former responsibility for youth policy, the Cabinet Office worked to support the youth sector to measure and increase the impact of its services for young people. In 2014, it published a guide entitled [Outcomes Frameworks: a guide for providers and commissioners of youth services](#), to help providers and commissioners who are considering how to improve outcomes for young people as a result of their work. The guide aims to:

- simplify the landscape of available outcomes frameworks
- provide information on what a variety of frameworks look like when applied 'on the ground'

- suggest where to go for further information and support
- begin to demonstrate how measuring impact can help those working with young people to learn from and improve the programmes they run.

The Cabinet Office also supported the [Centre for Youth Impact](#). This initiative is a centre for evidence, capacity building and practice development with the aim of increasing the capacity of those providing and commissioning services for young people to generate and use high quality evidence in the design, delivery and evaluation of their services. In [the Civil Society Strategy 2018](#) the government also outlined that it is supporting a £1m evaluation of 90 projects across the UK, engaging young people through the Youth Investment Fund. As a result by the end of 2020 it is expected that there will be a shared impact measurement framework for open access to youth provision that uses data to improve services, measure outcomes and predict impact. This will be supplemented by a solid evidence base of what works in open-access youth services.

The Centre for Analysis of Youth Transitions ([CAYT](#)) began as a research centre, funded by the Department for Education. CAYT produced new research on topics relating to youth transitions and created a repository of 'what works' in terms of policy designed to assist young people in their transition from education to work, as well as reducing engagement. Since April 2015, the repository has been managed by Mentor, as part of the Alcohol and Drug Education and Prevention Information Service ([ADEPIS](#)).

### **National Statistics and available data sources**

A number of youth specific indicators are tracked at national level, providing a general understanding of the youth population in the following specific areas:

- Statistics on the number of [young people not in education, employment or training](#) (NEETs) are compiled by the [Office for National Statistics](#) (ONS) and published quarterly (February, May, August, and November). The figures discussed in the statistical bulletin are obtained from the Labour Force Survey (a survey of households) and are therefore estimates, rather than precise figures.
- As part of its monthly labour market statistical briefing, the ONS provides both [seasonally adjusted](#) and [not seasonally adjusted](#) statistics on the educational and labour market status of young people from 16- 24 years of age are published.
- [Destination data](#) provides clear and comparable information on the success of schools and colleges in helping their young people continue in education, employment and training is published annually by the [Department for Education](#).
- The [characteristics of children in need](#) are collected via the children in need census and published annually by the Department of Education.
- The [Social Mobility Commission](#), an independent statutory body, publishes an annual report setting out its views on the progress made towards improving social mobility in the UK. Its most recent annual report, [State of Nation 2018-2019: Social Mobility in Great Britain](#) was published in April 2019. It also reports on public attitudes to social mobility in Great Britain. You can read the 2019-2020 results [here](#).
- The [Youth Justice Board for England and Wales](#) collects [data](#) on young people in the youth justice system. Annual statistics cover the flow of young people through the youth justice system, while general statistics cover offences resulting in a disposal, court remands, disposals, intensive supervision and surveillance programmes, and custody.

There are also a number of surveys which provide information about the health and well-being of young people. They include:

- The [Health Survey for England](#), undertaken since 1991 and covering children young people aged 2 to 15, measures health and health related behaviours living in private

households in England. It is commissioned by [NHS Digital](#) (formerly the Health and Social Care Information Centre).

- The [National Study of Health and Wellbeing: Children and Young People](#), again commissioned by [NHS Digital](#), aims to find out about the health, development and well-being of children and young people aged between 2 and 19 years of age in England and Scotland.
- [Survey of the Mental Health of Children and Young People in England](#) is the first survey of children and young people to focus on their mental health since 2004. The survey provides data on the prevalence of mental illness among children and young people in England and Scotland and collects robust data on a range of topics relating to the mental health of these groups.
- Note: Data on levels of participation in representative democracy are covered in the article on '[Youth participation in representative democracy](#)' in the chapter on 'Participation'.

### **Participation in youth services**

There is no statistical collection of the levels of participation in youth services. Organisations working in this area accept that there is a gap in the data available due to the changing nature of the way youth services are being delivered. Prior to 2008, the National Youth Agency collected data on the number of young people participating in youth services; however, this ended when its funding was withdrawn.

### **Budgetary Allocations supporting research in the youth field**

No information on budgetary allocations supporting research in the youth field is available.

## **1.7 Funding youth policy**

### **How Youth policy is funded**

Although the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport is responsible for youth policy, it is not a major provider of funding. Individual departments are responsible for funding their policies / programmes.

As discussed in the article on '[Youth Policy Decision-making](#)', local authorities (LAs) have a statutory duty to secure sufficient services and activities for young people aged 13- 19 (and those with learning difficulties to age 24) to improve their well-being. They are free to decide how to discharge this duty.

Local authorities are not provided with specific funding for youth services: They decide how much of the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) (the non-ring fenced funding provided to local authorities from central government, via the [Department for Communities and Local Government](#)) to allocate to them. LAs can also redirect funding from other non-ring fenced areas, such as council tax and other local sources. The amounts LAs redirect varies depending on local circumstances. Previously, LAs received specific funding through the Early Intervention Grant, but in 2013 it was rolled into the RSG.

Against a background of reduced funding nationally, [Delivering Different Young People](#) (2015), a joint initiative between the [Cabinet Office](#), the [Department for Communities and Local Government](#), the [Local Government Association \(LGA\)](#) and the [Society of Local Authority Chief Executives \(SOLACE\)](#) provided a small number of local authorities with funding to rethink how they provide services to young people and support positive outcomes. The funding includes professional support to review the available options and to share experiences with other authorities.

## Social impact bonds

Social impact bonds (SIBs) are a form of social investment which involve private investors providing the capital to address complex social problems. It is a payment by results system: investors fund innovative interventions and the government only pays if these interventions achieve the planned outcomes. SIBs have been used to fund some youth initiatives, for example, the Youth Engagement Fund; see the article entitled '[Cross-sectorial approach with other ministries](#)' for more information about this fund.

## What is funded?

In addition to funding given to local government bodies to provide youth services described in the article on '[Youth Policy Decision-Making](#)', the government also uses grants to fund external organisations and activities that address its policy priorities. These include the following (note that this list does not attempt to be exhaustive):

- Grant funding from the Cabinet Office to the British Youth Council to provide the Youth Voice suite of programmes (see the sub-heading 'Actors' in the article on 'Consultation of Young People').
- Cabinet Office funding for the National Citizen Service (see the article on '[Youth Volunteering at national level](#)').
- Cabinet Office funding for the #iwill, the national campaign to promote youth social action (see the article on '[Youth Volunteering at national level](#)').
- Cabinet Office funding for the Youth Social Action Fund and the Uniformed Youth Social Action fund to get more young people involved in social action (see the article on '[Youth Volunteering at national level](#)').
- Administered by local authorities, central government provides [Youth Opportunity funding](#). Young people may apply to their local authority for funds to use on activities and projects which are of benefit to them. In many LAs, young people themselves are responsible for making decisions about the applications which receive funding.

## Financial accountability

### Local authority accountability

Local Authorities (LAs) are responsible for ensuring that expenditure on youth services is timely and transparent, and that value for money is achieved. They are accountable both for services delivered directly by local government officers and for those services commissioned from external providers.

The [Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government](#), as the provider of the Revenue Support Grant, has detailed processes for dealing with any concerns about the overall financial management of a local authority.

Currently, all local authorities are required to report annually to the [Department for Education](#) (DfE) on expenditure on children's services. This annual return, known as '[Section 251](#)' concentrates on education spending, but also contains a couple questions on youth spending and other associated areas, including substance misuse and teenage pregnancy services. These returns provide transparent data for accountability purposes.

Local authorities (LAs) are accountable to local taxpayers. Democratic accountability helps ensure that they use available resources as effectively and as efficiently as possible. Their performance can be scrutinised by members of the public and by elected councillors. This is made possible by the availability of transparent data, for example the Section 251 returns.

### Accountability systems for charities

Both central government and local authorities (LAs) may contract third parties to provide services for young people. To be a charity, an organisation must satisfy the definition of a charity in the [2011 Charities Act](#). It must be:

- established for a charitable purpose
- subject to the control of the High Court's charity law jurisdiction.

A charity will generally have trustees who are responsible for the organisation's overall management. Trustees are legally responsible for directing the affairs of their charity, ensuring that it is solvent, well run and delivering the charitable outcomes for the benefit of the public for which it was set up. Trustees must ensure that their charity complies with charity law and the requirements of the [Charity Commission](#), as well as other legislation and regulators. They must also ensure the organisation is meeting the requirements, charitable purposes and objects set out in the charity's own governing document.

[The Charity Commission](#) also has a statutory function to identify and investigate abuse and mismanagement in charities. Information about the discharge of these duties is available from the section of the Charity Commission website which sets out [How the Charity Commission ensures charities meet their legal requirements](#) (2013).

The Charity Commission has also published [guidance](#) which sets out how charities may deliver services for local authorities or government departments.

## Use of EU Funds

Details of how the European Social Fund and Youth Employment Initiative will be spent in England are set out in the [European Social Fund Operational Programme 2014-2020](#) (Department for Work and Pensions, 2015). The programme is worth 6.4 million euro (of which 3.5 million comes from the ESF) and will support over 2.3 million people. It addresses the following priorities:

- An inclusive labour market. Almost 60 per cent of the total allocation will be dedicated to helping people into jobs, with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups like the low-skilled, older workers or people from ethnic minorities. Initiatives financed under this programme will also tackle youth unemployment in areas where it is relatively high. It will prepare young people for working life, in particular by reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) or at risk of becoming NEET. Other measures will support efforts to reduce the gender employment gap. It is expected that the programme will help over 217,000 participants into work and get 78,000 young people into work, education or training.
- Skills for Growth. Projects contributing to the development of a skilled and adaptable workforce and to increasing productivity will be supported. These projects will help people address their basic skills needs and develop the intermediate and higher level skills required by employers. As a result, an expected 140,000 participants will improve their basic skills and more than 300,000 participants will gain qualifications at level 2 or above. 12,600 SME and micro businesses will be supported in their business growth.

## 1.8 Cross-border cooperation

### Cooperation with European countries

UK participation in the European Union funded programme [Erasmus+](#), the EU funding programme for education, training, youth and sport 2014-2020, is not covered in this description of youth policy. See the article on ['Cross-border learning mobility'](#) for further information about this.

The UK participates in the EU [Working Party for Youth](#), which sits under the [Education, Youth, Culture and Sport \(EYCS\) Council](#). The Working Party on Youth prepares items for decision by EU ministers for youth at each EYCS Council meeting. There is an EYCS Council meeting during each six-monthly EU presidency.

Via representatives in Brussels, the UK contributes to draft youth conclusions via The Working Party for Youth. These conclusions are then put to the Council for approval.

The Working Group for Youth and the EYCS Council operates under the EU's Open Method of Cooperation (OMC). Under the OMC, EU countries are evaluated by one another against a set of indexes, with the Commission's role being limited to surveillance (i.e. it has no legislative or formal powers of compulsion).

### **International cooperation**

The UK Government, as a signatory of the European Cultural Convention (ETS No. 18), participates in the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ). The CDEJ supervises a programme of activities involving policy makers, youth researchers and youth work practitioners and focuses particularly on the development of youth policies in its member states.

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) may apply to the European Youth Foundation (EYF). The EYF fund was established in 1972 by the Council of Europe to provide financial and educational support for European youth activities.

## **1.9 Current debates and reforms**

Following the general election on December 12th 2019 that resulted in a Johnson-led Conservative majority government, some changes to governance are currently in process. For example, Michael Gove [announced](#) an ambitious plan for structural civil service reforms as discussed in Section 1.6:

“The second Rooseveltian challenge is to change how Government itself works, to reorganise its institutions to become better at reform. The need for reform in so many areas is obvious. And this Government is determined to deliver it in a way that is consistent with our moral values.”

This reform will likely affect the approach to youth policy in the UK.

## **2. VOLUNTARY ACTIVITIES**

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Volunteering is a key focus of youth policy. The remit for volunteering lies with the [Office for Civil Society](#) at the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, which has specific responsibility for supporting youth policy and social action as well as the National Citizen Service (see '[National programme for youth volunteering](#)'). Besides the Government's role in major initiatives, the organisation of voluntary activities is characterised by a large degree of involvement of civil society or third sector, mainly voluntary or charitable, organisations.

In 2017 the Government passed the [National Citizen Service Act](#), which put the National Citizen Service on statutory footing. The [#iwill](#) fund, the national youth social action campaign, targets those from less affluent backgrounds through joint funding from the [Department for Culture, Media and Society \(DCMS\)](#) and the National Lottery Fund. The #iwill Fund supports the aims of the #iwill campaign, which is coordinated by Step Up to Serve, and [aims](#) to make involvement in social action the norm for ten to 20-year-olds across the UK. Since its 2016 launch over 500,000 young people are estimated to have undertaken social action opportunities as a result of the funding.

As a response to the COVID-19 global pandemic, the UK government [pledged £750 million](#) in May 2020 to voluntary and community organisations (as well as social enterprises) to support their services, including youth volunteering organisations. £360 million from individual government departments to charities in England and £310 million for smaller local VCSE's working with vulnerable people in England.

## 2.1 General context

This description concentrates on those opportunities directly funded and promoted by central government. It does not attempt to cover all volunteering opportunities. [Do-it.org](http://Do-it.org), the national volunteering database, provides details of over one million volunteering opportunities.

### Historical developments

Volunteering has a rich history in England, traceable back to medieval times when there was a strong association between religion and ministrations to the poor and sick. In more recent times, and particularly over the last half century or so, successive governments have sought to bring volunteering into the ambit of government policy. The changing relationship between government and volunteering was summarised in an [article](#) published in The Guardian newspaper in June 2015:

In the 1960s volunteering was seen as a way of diverting youthful energy away from Mods-and-Rockers gang feuds. In the 1970s the emphasis was on professionalising volunteer effort as a reliable appendage to social services. The Thatcher administration of the 1980s saw volunteering very much through a lens of individual freedom, and as a practical response to mass unemployment and inner-city unrest, while the mood music of the 1990s under both Tory [Conservative] and Labour regimes was heavy on active citizenship.

### Previous initiatives

Since 2000, successive governments have introduced initiatives to promote and support voluntary activities for young people. The then Labour Government funded the [Millennium Volunteers \(MV\) programme](#). MV was designed to promote sustained volunteering amongst young people aged 16-24, especially amongst those who had no previous experience of volunteering and were at risk of social exclusion. It was based on the following nine key principles:

- sustained personnel commitment
- community benefit
- voluntary participation
- inclusiveness
- ownership by young people
- variety
- partnership
- quality
- recognition.

MV certified participation by awarding a certificate after 100 hours of volunteering and an Award of Excellence and Personal Profile after 200 hours. The programme was based on a consultation paper, Millennium Volunteers: Labour's Proposals for citizen's service written in 1996.

In May 2004, still under a Labour Government, the Russell Commission was established to develop a new national framework for youth action and engagement. The Commission hoped that within five years its framework would deliver the following benefits:

- young people will develop their skills and contribute in an active way to their local communities
- the capacity of communities and of volunteering organisations will be enhanced

- society at large will be more cohesive, and through skills development the UK's competitive advantage will increase.

One of the key recommendations from the Russell Commission was the establishment of a dedicated implementation body which would be youth-led and independent of government. This led to the creation of 'v, the national Young Volunteer Service' (now known as [vInspired](#)). It commissioned, through a series of contracts, the delivery of the framework as recommended by the Russell Commission. Between 2006 and 2011, it operated a grant-funding arm and worked directly with young people. Since 2011 and the end of most of its government funding, vInspired has continued its work with young people, providing them with opportunities to volunteer, but it no longer plays a grant-making role.

The [Youth Community Action Programme](#) 2010 was a government initiative designed to encourage all young people in England aged 14-19 to take part in activities that contribute to their communities as part of their learning and personal development. The aim was that all young people would have the chance to participate in at least 50 hours of community action by the age of 19. v, the National Young Volunteers Service, worked with the then education department (the Department for Children, Schools and Families) to implement the programme. The programme was cancelled by the Coalition Government (2010-15), before its full implementation, in the context of adverse economic conditions.

## Main concepts

There is no single accepted UK definition for volunteering.

The Cabinet Office commissions the [Community Life Survey](#) to look at the latest trends in areas such as volunteering, charitable giving, local action and networks and well-being. The aim of the survey is to provide cost-effective data of value to government, external stakeholders and citizens. It uses the following definitions of volunteering:

- formal volunteering – giving unpaid help through groups, clubs or organisations
- informal volunteering – giving unpaid help as an individual to people who are not relatives.

[Compact Voice](#), an organisation which aims to foster strong, effective, partnerships between public bodies and voluntary organisations, has a number of good practice documents. Document number 31, which covers [volunteering](#), uses the following definition:

an activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or individuals or groups other than [or in addition to] close relatives.

The volunteering pages of the [National Council for Voluntary Organisations \(NCVO\)](#) website defines volunteering as

someone spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone who they're not closely related to. Volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual.

The 2010 Select Committee Report on [Services for Young People](#) describes some of the youth volunteering programmes introduced by successive governments (see the section above on 'historical developments' for details). Most of these programmes are driven by the objective to give young people an opportunity to volunteer in a way which will benefit their community.

The policy of successive governments to encourage social cohesion, and the underlying principles of action by individual citizens in response to community-level needs, have shaped both the National Citizen Service (NCS), the youth volunteering programme, and #iwill, the national campaign for youth social action (see the article on '[Youth Volunteering at National Level](#)' for further details).

It is worth noting that the [National curriculum](#) in schools (which sets out programmes of study for subjects that must be taught to all pupils aged 5 to 16) explicitly supports these policies by specifically mentioning volunteering. One of the aims of the [programme of study for citizenship](#) for 11- to-16-year-olds is to foster student 'interest in, and commitment to, participation in volunteering, as well as other forms of responsible activity, that they will take with them into adulthood'.

## 2.2 Administration and governance of youth volunteering

### Governance

Central government sets the policy direction for youth volunteering activities and may provide funding for relevant programmes to meet its policy objectives, such as the National Citizen Service; #iwill (the national campaign for youth social action); and the national volunteering database, [Do-it.org](#). These programmes are delivered by a wide range of youth and community organisations.

The [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#) is responsible for out-of-school volunteering opportunities for young people, such as social action and the National Citizen Service. Prior to 2016, this responsibility sat with the Cabinet Office. Information about the organisations it works with to deliver these services is provided in 2.4.

### Cross-sectoral cooperation

Many volunteering programmes and activities involve charitable and other organisations working in the Third (voluntary) Sector. The framework for the relationship of these organisations with government is contained in the [Compact](#), the 2010 agreement between government and the voluntary and community sector (often referred to as Civil Society).

The Compact sets out a way of working that aims to ensure that the government works effectively in partnership with the voluntary and community sector to achieve common goals and outcomes for the benefit of communities and citizens in England. All government departments are signed up to the Compact.

## 2.3 National strategy on youth volunteering

### Existence of a National Strategy

There is no national strategy for youth volunteering in England. Responsibility for promoting social action - in support of a more cohesive, more responsible and more engaged society - is part of the portfolio of the Under Secretary of State for Civil Society, a Minister in the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#) (DCMS).

Central government is therefore responsible for and funds a number of programmes which promote and provide opportunities for young people to volunteer. However, these programmes do not represent a national strategy for youth volunteering. They do not meet the EU Youth Wiki's definition of an overreaching public document: an action plan, or a set of official documents, integrating the major directions to be followed in the organisation of and policy making youth volunteering at national level.

Note, that in November 2016, the launch of a new Government youth policy statement was announced, which was later dismissed in favour of a wider [Civil Society Strategy](#) published in August 2018. Moreover, an independent review (see '[Steve Holliday Report](#)') into Full-Time Social Action (16h/week for more than 6 months) of young people has been undertaken. For more information about both of these initiatives, please see the article entitled '[Current debates and reforms](#)'.

## Other official documents containing guidelines on youth volunteering

### Compliance with charity legislation

Most of the organisations providing volunteering opportunities for young people are charities. Charities must comply with duties placed on them by legislation. The key piece of legislation is the [Charities Act 2011](#), which came into effect in 2012. It sets out how all charities in England and Wales are registered and regulated, and replaces most of the [Charities Act 1992](#), [Charities Act 1993](#) and [Charities Act 2006](#). In particular, they must provide value for money and have a charitable purpose which must be for the public benefit. See the section on [financial accountability](#) in the article on funding for further details.

### Safeguarding

The organisations providing opportunities for youth volunteering must include safeguarding and safer recruitment in their governance and operational arrangements. This includes checking the suitability of those working with children and vulnerable adults. The [Disclosure and Barring Service](#) (DBS) helps employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevents unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children, through its criminal record checking and barring functions.

It is the trustees of an organisation who have primary responsibility for safeguarding within their charity. This duty is set out in statutory guidance which was updated in 2018, entitled [Working Together to safeguard children: a guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children](#). The Children England guidance, [Everyone's business: Safeguarding for trustees](#), sets out responsibilities for safeguarding and protecting children and was updated in 2019.

### Health and safety of volunteers

Organisations / employers using volunteers have a duty of care towards them. Assessing and managing risk is a key part of this duty. Particular duties are imposed by the [Health and Safety at Work Act 1974](#). The WCVA provides a [factsheet](#) on keeping volunteers safe.

### Equality legislation

All public bodies are bound by equality legislation which prohibit discrimination on the basis of age, disability; sex; gender reassignment; race; religious belief; political opinion; or sexual orientation.

Volunteers are not specifically mentioned in the [Equality Act 2010](#); however, the Equality and Human Rights Commission published [advice](#) in 2016 on the legal status of volunteers.

### Scope and contents

Not applicable

### Responsible authority

Not applicable

### Revisions/ Updates

Not applicable

## 2.4 Youth volunteering at national level

### National Programme for Youth Volunteering

There are two programmes, the National Citizen Service and the National Campaign for Youth Social Action (the [#iwill campaign](#)), which can be considered to meet the definition

of a national programme for youth volunteering: they are general, national-wide programmes which are organised, monitored and funded by the state.

### **National Citizen Service**

The [National Citizens Service](#) is the national programme for youth volunteering. It is a government-backed initiative that brings together young people aged 15 to 17 from different backgrounds to help them develop greater confidence, self-awareness and responsibility with a view to creating a more cohesive, responsible and engaged society. It is managed by the NCS Trust, a royal charter body, following the passing of the [National Citizen Service Act 2017](#). In addition to establishing a new NCS Trust by royal charter, the Act revises the NCS' governance and management arrangements, making them more robust, and requires the NCT to publish a business plan at the start of each year, in tandem with annual accounts and an annual report. The Act also supports the promotion of the NCS, allowing the Government to send each young person a letter on behalf of the NCS once they turn 16.

The NCS is delivered in 18 regions. A supply chain of over 300 organisations deliver the programme across the country. They are youth and community organisations including charities, college consortia, voluntary, community, social enterprises (VCSE) and private sector partnerships. From 2020 onwards, NCS works with over 150 partner organisations.

NCS takes place over the school holidays in summer, autumn and spring. The shape of the programme changes slightly depending on the time of year. Participants are placed in groups of 12 to 15 young people from different backgrounds. The programme is organised into a number of phases:

- adventure – young people spend a week taking part in outward bound activities
- skills – young people spend a week away from home (summer holidays only) learning to be self-sufficient, develop new skills and learn about the needs of their local community
- social action – the group decides on and implements a social action programme (30 hours of volunteering) which will make a mark on their local community.

Participants pay a maximum of £50 for a place. Bursaries are available for those unable to meet the cost and support is provided for students with additional needs. Further details are available from the [NCS Trust website](#).

According to an evaluation of the NCS from the [National Audit Office \(2017\)](#), in 2016, 93 000 young people participated in the programme, amounting to 12% of those eligible for participation that year. Since 2011, when the NCS was first piloted, 300,000 young people have participated in it.

Until 2017, the Cabinet Office provided funding for the National Citizen Service (NCS). [European Social Funds \(ESF\)](#) were also used to support the NCS, alongside contributions from programme participants, who pay £50 each. After the passing of the [National Citizen Service Act 2017](#), which made the NCS Trust a Royal Charter Body, the Government provides grant-in-aid funding to the NCS within a strengthened system of accountability. The Government will expand NCS to serve 360,000 participants a year in 2020, at an estimated cost of £1.26bn over the course of the Parliament (ending in 2020).

The government [announced in March 2020](#) that the budget (Comprehensive Spending Review) 2020 would be delayed to enable the government to remain focused on responding to COVID-19, therefore there are no further funding figures available at the time of writing. The [NCS Annual Report 2018-19](#) states total funding of £55.4m was received by NCS Trust in the four month period to 31st March 2019 which included £55.2m of grant in aid from DCMS.

The 2016 [Kantar Public value for money analysis](#) of the NCS programme shows that it has consistently demonstrated monetised benefits that were greater than costs.

In October 2019 the NCS rebranded, and expanded its delivery network to include hundreds of partners. The NCS Trust [advised](#) that programme costs are expected to reduce by 30 per cent in real terms by 2024 but has been [criticised by the Local Government Association](#) for receiving a disproportionate amount of government funding while funding for local youth services continues to be cut.

In 2020, the NCS summer programme was adapted to an online programme to align with social distancing rules guidelines due to COVID-19. You can read more about the digital hub, Staying Connected, [here](#).

### **National campaign for youth social action**

[#iwill](#) is the national campaign youth social action. It is supported by HRH The Prince of Wales and aims to make social action part of life for as many 10 to 20-year-olds as possible by 2020. It is coordinated by the charity [Step Up to Serve](#).

Through collaboration and partnership, it is 'spreading the word' about the benefit of youth social action, working to embed it in young people's transition to adulthood and creating fresh opportunities for participation. #iwill asks for pledges of support from education providers, employers and business leaders, the voluntary sector and public bodies in this work. Details of this are set out in its pledge [guidance document](#). One of the [key priorities](#) for the #iwill campaign in 2020 is a youth-led communications campaign outlining achievements since it began in 2013, and to explore youth social action growth post-2020. This priority is in the context of Step Up To Serve, the time-limited charity coordinating the #iwill campaign, closing as planned in December 2020.

The Cabinet Office has commissioned research to track the progress of the #iwill and to provide evidence on the enablers and barriers to taking part in social action. Further details are provided in the section on '[Characteristics of Youth Volunteering](#)'.

Step Up To Serve is funded through a blend of businesses, philanthropists, trusts and foundations and Central Government. Currently, its core funding comes from:

- [The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#)
- [Pears Foundation](#)
- [Garfield Weston](#)
- [The Prince of Wales' Charitable Foundation](#)
- [The Eranda Rothschild Foundation](#)
- [Spirit of 2012](#)
- [Comic Relief](#)
- [Ormiston Trust](#)

The campaign also receives support from 7 Business Pioneers who either contribute financially or in-kind.

### **National Youth Social Action Fund / #iwillFund**

The 2015 [Youth Social Action Fund](#) aimed to encourage youth participation in social action. The funds addressed lower rates of participation in meaningful social action in the East of England and provided extra funding for young people in more deprived or rural areas. The fund responded to some of the issues identified by the Cabinet Office and Step to Serve commissioned [Ipsos Mori Youth Social Action Survey](#) of 2014.

The [#iwillFund](#) was announced in November 2016 and brings together £40m of seed funding from the [Office for Civil Society](#) and [Big Lottery Fund](#) to create an investment pot in support of the #iwill campaign's goals in England. Delivery partners [Comic Relief](#) are providing social action opportunities for young people in disadvantaged areas and from

backgrounds with below-average levels of participation; and [Pears Foundation](#) are funding activities in education, health and social care. [UK Community Foundations](#) distributes grants for local social action opportunities through their network of 43 Community Foundations working in England.

In October 2019, a £5 million investment of Government funding was announced for the #iwill Fund, such as volunteering in their communities by funding groups delivering these programmes. This is part of the Government's £500 million long-term commitment to youth services, the [Youth Investment Fund](#) announced in 2019.

### **Uniformed Youth Social Action fund**

The Uniformed Youth Social Action Fund, launched in 2014 and funded by 10 million in Libor funds (paid by banks following improper actions in the financial markets), aimed to get more young people involved in social action through uniformed groups and to support the Step Up To Serve #iwill campaign. The fund was split into two, although both Funds 1 and 2 had the same aim of encouraging young people in disadvantaged areas or hard to reach communities to get involved in social action by joining a uniformed youth group in the UK.

In 2016, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport commissioned [evaluations](#) of the Uniformed Youth Social Action Funds 1 and 2 by Ipsos Mori. Key findings from these evaluations include that adults benefitting from the social action carried out by uniformed youth groups typically reported that the activities they experienced were very worthwhile (Fund 1); and that the pilots were, on the whole, successful in engaging children and young people who might be considered hardest to reach.

In 2019, the Department for Culture, Media and Society [announced](#) that nine uniformed youth groups organisations are to receive £4.2 million in funding to create more than 6,000 places for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds across England,

### **Youth Investment Fund**

In 2016, the Prime Minister announced £80 million worth of funding for a new [Youth Investment Fund](#), which was open to projects targeting disadvantaged communities. £20 million worth of Government funding was also announced for investment in the #iwill campaign by 2020, alongside an additional £20 million from the Big Lottery Fund. This funding is being used by Step up to Serve for the #iwill Fund, which will support projects which encourage young people to develop a habit of volunteering and community engagement. In October 2019, a £12 million boost to the fund was [announced](#) by the Government to fund youth projects up to 2020/2021.

### **COVID-19 Additional Funding**

The government [pledged £750 million](#) to support Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, including £200 million for the Coronavirus Community Support Fund, along with an additional £150 million from dormant bank and building society accounts. The DCMS funding allocated £360 million from individual government departments to charities in England based on evidence of service need, and £310 million allocated for smaller, local VCSEs working with vulnerable people in England.

## **Funding**

See the individual programmes above for details of how they are funded.

## **Characteristics of youth volunteering**

The Cabinet commissions Ipsos MORI to carry out the annual Youth Social Action survey to measure the proportion of 10-20 year olds taking part in social action across the UK.

Results of the [2018 survey](#) published in March 2019 show a gradual decrease over the timespan of the research in the proportion of young people taking part in social action frequently and a shift in the duration of time spent on social action activities, from longer

acts of social action to shorter ones. Rates of participation in specific types of social action in 2018 are as follows:

- Fundraising / sponsored event - 43 per cent
- Gave time to charity / cause - 26 per cent
- Supported people - 23 per cent
- Tutored, coached, mentored someone – 17 per cent
- Helped improve local areas – 16 per cent
- Campaigned for something - 8 per cent.

Generally, targets for young people or particular groups of young people's participation are not set. Where they are, for the National Citizens Service, they are described within the programme information above.

### **Support to young volunteers**

The government is keen to reduce barriers to participation in the National Citizen Service (NCS) and therefore provides bursaries for those unable to meet the cost. Other than this there are top-level policy support measures for young volunteers.

Young volunteers are not entitled to any special social security provisions. Benefits may still be payable while volunteering, for example where the only form of payment received by the individual is in the form of travel expenses. More detail on volunteers' entitlements is available from the [gov.uk website](http://gov.uk).

### **Quality Assurance (QA)**

There are no regulations on standards of quality in youth volunteering programmes. Quality standards are, however, built into contracts with delivery organisations. In addition, organisations in receipt of government funding are expected to provide value for money. The [National Audit Office](http://National Audit Office) uses three criteria to assess value for money:

- economy: minimising the cost of resources used or required (inputs), that is, spending less
- efficiency: the relationship between the output from goods or services and the resources to produce them, that is, spending well
- effectiveness: the relationship between the intended and actual results of public spending (outcomes), that is, spending wisely.

The National Audit Office ([NAO](http://NAO)), whose legal basis is set down in the [Budget Responsibility and National Audit Act 2011](http://Budget Responsibility and National Audit Act 2011), scrutinises public spending on behalf of Parliament. Independent of government, it audits the accounts of all central government departments and agencies, as well as a wide range of other public bodies. The NAO reports to Parliament on the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which these bodies have used public money. For example, the 2017 NAO [review of the National Citizen Service](http://review of the National Citizen Service) examined how the NCS represents value for money, including examining its performance, aims and targets and management.

The National Citizen Service Trust and other programme providers place a great deal of emphasis on evaluating the impact of the programme. All young people who take part in the NCS programme complete detailed questionnaires before and after the programme. These results are compared to a control group of similar young people, so it can be checked that the programme is making an impact.

Moreover, since 2017, following the passing of the [National Citizen Service Act 2017](http://National Citizen Service Act 2017), the National Citizen Trust has been required to publish a business plan at the start of each year, in tandem with annual accounts and an annual report.

Since 2014 Ipsos MORI has been commissioned by the Cabinet Office and Step Up To Serve to measure the proportion of 10- 20 year olds taking part in social action across the UK. Details of the findings of this review are provided above (see [characteristics of youth volunteering](#)).

## Target groups

Current official policy documents do not specify a target group for youth voluntary activities.

The [National Citizen Service](#) is open to young people 15 to 17 years. It is aimed at young people from all social, cultural and religious backgrounds so that it can create a balanced social mix of young people. Government funding aims to ensure that cost is not a barrier to participation. Young people with additional needs are also supported so that they can participate in the programme.

The [#iwill](#) campaign is aimed at all 10 to 20 year olds whatever their social background.

Central government has also made specific funds available to address young people in deprived communities and hard to reach groups. Under the third round of the [Uniformed Youth Fund](#) in 2018, funding was awarded to:

- Create 5,500 places for young people to join uniformed youth groups such as police cadets, Scouts, Guides and faith-based organisations
- Support expansion and development of new groups.

The Fund will be distributed and managed by [Youth United Foundation](#), a member organisations for uniformed youth groups. The announcement follows the 2018 [Civil Society Strategy](#) where the government promised to work alongside uniformed youth groups to consider how they can expand in disadvantaged areas.

## 2.5 Cross-border mobility programmes

### EU programmes

Young people in the United Kingdom can experience international volunteering through the European Solidarity Corps, which replaced the European Voluntary Service in 2018. It is the main EU programme providing volunteering opportunities for young people. It is an initiative of the European Union which creates opportunities for young people aged 18- 30 to volunteer or work in projects in their own country or abroad that benefit communities and people around Europe. As such, its core aim is to bring together young people to build a more inclusive society, supporting participants are able to join projects run by organisations which have been checked and authorised to run European Solidarity Corps projects. Projects supported by the European Solidarity Corps can last from two to twelve months and will usually be located within the Member States of the European Union.

The European Solidarity Corps brings together two complementary strands: volunteering and occupational activities. The volunteering strand offers young people the opportunity to carry out full-time voluntary service of between two and twelve months in another country. Volunteers will not receive payment for the work they do, but they will receive other support depending on the EU programme funding the placement, generally this is return travel to and from the project, accommodation, meals, medical insurance and a small amount of spending money to cover their day-to-day living expenses. Examples of what participants could be asked to do include:

- Helping rebuild a school or community centre that has been devastated following an earthquake
- Providing support to newly arrived asylumseekers
- Clearing vegetation from forests to help prevent wildfires

- Working with disabled people in a community centre
- Vulnerable people and responding to societal challenges.

The UK's participation in current programmes running until and [beyond](#) 2020 is [not affected](#) by Brexit.

## Other Programmes

Other international volunteering opportunities for young people from the UK are available through the [British Council](#) (the non-departmental public body, which is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities). There are various ways to get involved, including:

- [Active Citizen](#)
- [Teach abroad as an English Language Assistant](#).

[Voluntary Service Overseas \(VSO\)](#) leads the consortium of respected development organisations which delivers the [International Citizen Service \(ICS\)](#). ICS provides opportunities for 18- to 25-year-olds to volunteer on a development project in Africa, Asia or Latin America. ICS has four key focus areas: health; livelihoods; education; and participation. Participants contribute to the costs of their placement by raising a minimum amount of funds. Having completed the overseas placement, volunteers are expected to make an impact in their local community, through an Action at Home project. This is a self-directed project aimed at supporting positive social change, and may involve awareness-raising and campaigning on an issue that has emerged from the overseas placement, or around an issue that is important in the volunteer's home community. It should raise the profile of development activities, inspire others to take positive action and create links between people in the UK and developing countries. It is funded by the [Department for International Development](#).

Other organisations in the UK, for example [Volunteer Action for Peace \(VAP\)](#), facilitate overseas volunteering by young people. Note that the opportunities available through such organisations do not always have a youth focus.

## Legal framework applying to foreign volunteers

Young people coming from other EU/EEA countries to take up a volunteering placement in the UK do not need a visa. All non-EEA/EU volunteers coming must have a visa under [Tier 5, Temporary Worker, Government Authorised Exchange](#) under the UK Visas and Immigration points-based system, before they can take up their placement.

Tier 5 (Temporary Worker) applicants must have a sponsor before they can apply for a visa. The British Council and Ecorys, as organisations providing the Erasmus+ UK National Agency are licensed Category A sponsors. Individual applicants for UK visas must have received their CoS before applying for their Tier 5 visa.

Further information is available from the [UK National Agency website](#).

If volunteers will be working with young people under 18 or with vulnerable adults, they will have to provide references and complete further checks through [Disclosure and Barring Service \(DBS\)](#) to ensure that they are suitable to work with such groups.

## 2.6 Raising awareness about youth volunteering opportunities

### Information providers

All the providers of youth volunteering opportunities use a wide variety of social media platforms to market their programmes. They use the methods which will most appeal to young people.

The National Citizen Service providers present the programme in schools and colleges in order to promote it to young people directly.

### **Key initiatives**

The national volunteering database, [Do-it.org](#), provides details of over one million volunteering opportunities. The Do-it Trust receives funding from the Cabinet Office and also raises funds from other supporters.

[vInspired](#) is a volunteering charity for 14- to 25-year-olds. It can help young people to:

- find volunteering opportunities for causes and charities that interest them
- set up their own voluntary project
- translate their volunteering hours into job skills.

Originally funded by central government, vInspired now raises its own funds.

## **2.7 Skills recognition**

### **Policy Framework**

The policy statements which discuss opportunities for youth volunteering mention the benefits to young people in terms of developing personal skills, while gaining transferable skills and experience which helps them in their further studies or transition to employment. However, the Government does not provide criteria or mechanisms for formal recognition of volunteering.

### **Existing arrangements**

Participation in the [National Citizen Service \(NCS\)](#) results in certification. It is also encouraged by UCAS, the University and College Application Service, and helps young people frame their skills and experiences for interviews and university applications.

Some UK organisations involved in delivering the National Citizen Services have enabled NCS participants to document their learning using the EU's [Europass](#) framework.

All accredited organisations are expected to support individual volunteers to gain accreditation under the EU's [Youthpass](#) framework at the end of their placement.

There do not appear to be any arrangements to use the ECTS and ECVET systems to validate learning during voluntary activities.

## **2.8 Current debates and reforms**

All volunteering organisations in the UK face common challenges of how to engage significantly higher numbers of young people.

The Department for Culture, Media and Society and Step Up To Serve commissioned the National Youth Action Survey in 2017 which runs alongside the #iwill campaign which aims to increase social action participation in youth to 60% by 2020. The [National Youth Action Survey 2017 found](#) 58% of young people participated in social action but only 39% found it to be meaningful social action. There continues to be a significant socioeconomic gap in participation furthermore.

There are many different factors influencing this situation; it is not clear which are dominant. It is generally agreed that equal consideration must be given to improving young people's access to clear and relevant information, on the one hand, and improving the professional capacity of organisations to provide enjoyable, safe and rewarding opportunities on the other.

## Brexit

The UK left the EU on January 31st 2020 at 11pm, beginning the transition period that is set to end on December 31st 2020. An [update](#) on the website of the Erasmus+ UK National Agency states that:

under the Withdrawal Agreement negotiated with the EU, the UK will continue to participate fully in the current (2014-2020) Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps (ESC) programmes. This means that the projects successfully bid for during the current (2014-2020) Erasmus+ and ESC programmes will continue to receive EU funding for the full duration of the project, including those where funding runs beyond 2020 and the end of the transition period. As a result, the UK government guarantee of EU funding will no longer be required and the Erasmus+ and ESC guarantee IT system has been closed.

Additional updates have been published on the [Erasmus+ site](#)

## NHS Cadets

In July 2020, the [NHS Cadets initiative](#) was announced - the £6 million programme funded equally by NHS England and St. John's ambulance will provide 14 to 18-year-olds with first aid training, courses to develop their leadership skills, and volunteering opportunities in the NHS – including vital hands-on work experience in hospitals. The aim is to have 10,000 young people enrolled as volunteers by 2023.

## Health Education England - Volunteer Training, Development and Education

NHS Health Education England has established a national set of [standards](#) for NHS volunteers, regardless of age. Additionally the organisation provides a comprehensive suite of e-learning to support volunteers in health and social care settings through the [Volunteer Education Hub](#). In December of 2020 NHS Health Education England will be piloting a national Volunteering Certificate, aimed specifically at those volunteers who wish to formalise their learning and development, leading to a career within the NHS. Specifically the Certificate will support young people to apply for clinical and medical further education on university courses.

# 3. EMPLOYMENT & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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The UK is a large, open and competitive economy with low levels of regulation in its product and labour markets. There is no specific regulation of the youth labour market, nor any specific arrangements for the governance of youth employment. Specific employment programmes for young people do exist, however, and these are among the topics covered in this chapter.

## 3.1 General context

### Labour market situation in England

The UK is a large, open and competitive economy with low levels of regulation in its product and labour markets. The 2020 European Commission [UK Country Specific Report](#) states that the UK has high employment but low, stagnant productivity. Labour productivity and investment are low and not improving. The UK faces a broad need for more investment in equipment, infrastructure and housing, while also bringing down project costs. There is scope to improve the effectiveness of education and training systems in areas such as basic and technical skills. Tight regulation of the land market can also prevent capital and labour from moving to where it is most needed.

A certain amount of market and economic volatility has occurred following the referendum of 23 June 2016, in which the UK voted to leave the European Union. During the transition period 31 January 2020 to 31 December 2020, trading relations between

the EU and the UK will remain essentially unchanged. Beyond this period, however, they will depend on the outcome of the negotiations on the UK's future relationship with the EU.

COVID-19 has a significant economic impact on the UK. A [report](#) from the Office for National Statistics for the period of September 21st to October 4th 2020 states:

- The arts, entertainment and recreation industry had the lowest percentage of businesses currently trading, at 70%, compared with 86% across all industries.
- Wave 15 (21 September to 4 October 2020), 48% of businesses experienced a decrease in turnover; since Wave 12 (10 to 23 August 2020), the trend has flattened compared with a previously steady decrease.
- In Wave 15 (21 September to 4 October 2020), 9% of the workforce were on partial or full furlough leave, unchanged from Wave 14 (6 to 20 September 2020).
- The accommodation and food service activities industry had the highest percentage of businesses with no cash reserves, at 7%, and had the highest percentage of businesses with a severe risk of insolvency, at 17%.

Gross Value Added (GVA) is a measure of the increase in the value of the economy due to the production of goods and services. [Data](#) from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) shows that in 2017, the UK per head GVA figure was £27,555. Of the four UK countries, only England had a higher GVA per head value than this average at £28,096. Wales had the lowest GVA per head at £19,899. Northern Ireland experienced the highest annual growth in total GVA at 3.6% though GVA per head remains the lowest at £21,172. Scotland's GVA per head was £25,485.

[Data](#) published by the Office for National Statistics in 2020 shows labour productivity increased in 32 out of 44 enterprise regions in the UK between 2010 and 2018; the highest productivity growth was in the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership, with 16% growth over the period. Labour productivity increased in 15 out of 18 city regions between 2010 and 2018; the highest productivity growth occurred in West Midlands City Region, in Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region and in Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region.

The UK recognises that it has a skills shortage in some important industries, acting as an obstacle to people accessing employment. The 2017 [UK Employer Skills Survey](#) (published in 2017 by UKCES) shows an 8% increase in the number of skills-short vacancies since 2015. This increase is similar to the proportional increase in vacancies, meaning the density of skill-shortage vacancies has remained stable at 22% since 2013. There is a lack of expertise in the business services sector, IT, oil and gas, and energy and construction sectors, as evidenced in the chosen specialisms for the new national colleges (see the section on [Skills Development](#)). Results of the 2019 survey are [expected](#) to be published in 2020.

### **Labour market regulation**

The UK has a lightly regulated labour market. In line with the [Equality Act 2010](#), there are protections against discrimination in Great Britain (England, Wales and Scotland) on the grounds of: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. The [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) has published [guidance](#) on this for employers.

Health and safety regulation is well established and comprehensive. Working time is controlled and flexible working promoted.

### **National Minimum Wage**

There is a national minimum wage (NMW) and a national living wage (NLW) in the UK. The minimum national wages for under-25s in 2020 are set out in the table below:

National minimum wage for:

Under 18	18-20	21-24	Apprentices
£4.55	£6.45	£8.20	£4.15

Source: [National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage rates](#), 2020, GOV.UK.

The National Living Wage, which stipulates a higher wage for older workers, was introduced in April 2016.

The [Low Pay Commission Report Spring 2016](#) outlines the reason for these two wages: the age structure seeks to help manage employment risks, given that younger workers have lower pay on average than older workers and face tougher labour market conditions. This means that if employers were to maintain a generally higher level of wages for all ages, there might be fewer opportunities for younger workers.

### Pensions

All employees over 22 years of age are auto-enrolled into a [designated pension scheme](#).

### Youth and the labour market

There is no specific regulation of the youth labour market.

The UKCES report on young people, entitled [Catch 16-24](#) and published in 2015, states that persistently high youth unemployment is a long term, structural element of the UK economy.

Persistently high youth unemployment is a long term, structural element of the UK economy. This has been significantly impacted by COVID-19. A youth unemployment [report](#) published by the House of Commons library in October 2020 states that in June - August 2020:

- 581,000 young people aged 16-24 were unemployed, an increase of 35,000 from the previous quarter.
- 3.54 million young people were employed, down 220,000 from the previous quarter
- 2.74 million young people were economically inactive, an increase of 168,000 from the previous quarter.

In September 2020, 529,400 people aged 18-24 claimed unemployment related benefits. This was an increase of 294,400 claimants from March 2020, when the UK lockdown began. This represents an increase of 125% between March and September 2020. Some of this increase will be due to employed people who have become eligible for Universal Credit as part of the government response.

As noted by the Office for National Statistics, the employment rate is the proportion of people aged between 16 and 64 years who are in employment. Estimates for [June to August 2020](#) show 32.59 million people aged 16 years and over in employment, 102,000 fewer than a year earlier and 153,000 fewer than the previous quarter. For June to August 2020, the estimated employment rate for all people was 75.6%; this is 0.3 percentage points down on the year and 0.3 percentage points down on the quarter. It's important to note these figures are for the whole population and not young people specifically.

[Catch 16-22](#) also outlines the key issues for young people in accessing work:

- they find it difficult to get work without experience and difficult to obtain experience without work

- access to opportunities for work placements and related activities is limited by geographical location (the so-called 'postcode lottery') - these are more readily available in areas with higher economic performance
- young people are most likely to be recruited into low wage, low skilled jobs where the pathways for promotion, and for further learning and development, are unclear.

### Main concepts

The [Office for National Statistics](#) has developed a framework for labour market statistics which describes the major concepts (earnings, employment, hours of work, labour disputes, economic inactivity, redundancies, claimant counts, unemployment, job and vacancies) that exist within the UK labour market and their relationship to each other. Details are available in the [Guide to Labour Market Statistics](#).

## 3.2 Administration and governance

### Governance

Governance of youth employment

There are no specific arrangements for the governance of youth employment. Conditions are set by general employment legislation and the health of the labour market. However, specific employment programmes for young people do exist.

Youth policy is one of the responsibilities of the Minister for Civil Society. Previously, this Minister was part of the [Cabinet Office](#), but the position moved to the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#) (DCMS) following machinery of government changes announced in summer 2016.

The [Department for Work and Pensions](#) (DWP) is responsible for welfare, pensions and child maintenance policy. It administers the state pension and a range of working age, disability and ill health benefits, including those for young people.

DWP supports all those who are out-of-work, including young people, through the employment and social security network, Jobcentre Plus and through the online job search tool, "[Find A Job](#)" which replaced Universal Jobmatch in 2018. Jobcentre Plus helps the unemployed of all ages prepare for, find and stay in work by providing:

- training, guidance and work placement programmes
- work experience, volunteering and job trialling schemes
- help with starting a business (see the article on '[Start-up funding for entrepreneurs](#)').

See the article on '[Integration of Young People in the Labour Market](#)' for further information.

The [Department for Education](#) (DfE) is responsible for education, children's services, higher and further education policy, apprenticeships and wider skills, and equalities. The portfolio for the Minister of State for Apprenticeship and Skills includes careers education and guidance in schools, as well as apprenticeships.

[HM Treasury](#) is the government's economic and finance ministry. Since its objectives include increasing employment and productivity, and ensuring strong growth and competitiveness across all regions of the UK by means of structural reforms, the Treasury makes a significant contribution to policies covered by this chapter.

### Local skills provision

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) are non-statutory partnerships between the public sector (local authorities) and the private sector (businesses). The 39 LEPs work with the further and higher education sector to agree local skills priorities and how they can best be delivered.

## Cross-sectorial cooperation

There is no specific mechanism for cooperation on matters of youth employment and entrepreneurship policy. General mechanisms which may be used include Cabinet committees and sub-committees, task forces and inquiries.

## 3.3 Skills forecasting

### Forecasting system(s)

The UKCES [Working Futures](#) report series, published in 2016 before UKCES closed in 2017 (see below), presents official labour market projections for the UK from 2014 to 2024. The series projects the future size and shape of the labour market by considering employment prospects by industry, occupation, qualification level, gender and employment status. The Working Futures model focuses on sectoral and occupational employment structures, qualifications, and general workforce trends (including replacement demand). The approach exploited existing official data, including the [Labour Force Survey](#) (LFS). The full methodology used is set out in the 2016 [Technical Report](#).

A suite of data workbooks complement the Working Futures reports. Each workbook contains analysis of projected employment and replacement demand by occupation and qualification level. [Workbooks](#) are available at varying levels of sectoral detail for the UK.

The [Employer Skills Survey](#) (ESS) and [Employer Perspective Survey](#) (EPS) also contribute to the UK's labour marketing forecasting. Both are biennial surveys, carried out in alternate years. The ESS provides insight into the skills issues employers face and the action they are taking to address them. The EPS provides data on the views and actions of 18,000 employers across the UK as they make decisions about how to engage with training providers, schools, colleges and individuals in the wider skills system, to get the skills they need.

Working Futures, the Employer Skills Survey and Employer Perspectives were produced by the [UK Commission for Employment and Skills](#) (UKCES). Management of the Employer Skills Survey and the Employer Perspectives Survey moved to the UK Government's [Department for Education](#) when UKCES closed in early 2017.

There is some debate on whether this forecasting system is effective. According to a [report](#) from the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), skills forecasting in England relies on market signals to generate a supply of young skilled workers. The report suggests that this system is vulnerable to the possibility of inaccurate market information and labour market mismatch, especially in niche and emerging sectors.

### Skills development

Skills policy is the responsibility of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) since 2016. The [BEIS Single Departmental Plan 2019](#) is the key policy document, replacing the BIS single developmental plan: 2015 to 2020. There have been some developments in skills policy post-Brexit vote in 2016. [An apprenticeship levy](#) was introduced in April 2017 to fund the doubling in investment by the government in apprenticeships by 2020. A [Register for Apprenticeship Training Providers](#) was set up in May 2017.

A network of [National Colleges](#), providing high level technical skills, was established. They ensure the UK has skilled people in industries crucial to economic growth – high speed rail, nuclear, onshore oil and gas, digital skills and the creative industries. The first Colleges opened in October 2016, with the network fully operational by September 2017. A [research report](#) evaluating the initial phase of the National College programme delivery was published in February 2020. The process evaluation explored various facets of the National Colleges' establishment and delivery, including the commissioning processing for the National Colleges, the Colleges' funding arrangements in relation to their operational

costs, and the funding awarded for their capital build projects and progress against these initial plans.

### **Post-16 Skills Plan**

The July 2016 [Post-16 Skills Plan](#), published by the then Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (now Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) and the Department for Education based on the recommendations of the [Sainsbury Review](#), sets a framework to support young people and adults, enabling them to access sustained, skilled employment and meeting the needs of the UK's growing and rapidly changing economy.

The plan establishes a common framework of 15 routes across all technical education, which will group occupations together to reflect where there are shared training requirements. The proposed routes are:

- agriculture, environmental and animal care
- business and administration
- catering and hospitality
- childcare and education
- construction
- creative and design
- digital
- engineering and manufacturing
- hair and beauty
- health and science
- legal, finance and accounting
- protective services
- sales, marketing and procurement
- social care
- transport and logistics.

Only high-quality technical qualifications which match employer-set standards will be approved. The new, employer-led Institute for Apprenticeships, opened in 2017 (see the article on '[Traineeships and Apprenticeships](#)') regulates quality across apprenticeships, with its remit eventually expanding to cover all technical education. All 15 routes will begin with high-quality, two-year, college-based programmes, aligned to apprenticeships.

## **3.4 Career guidance and counselling**

### **Career guidance and counselling services**

#### **National Careers Service**

The [National Careers Service](#) provides free information, advice and guidance to help people make decisions about learning, training and work opportunities, including apprenticeships. It offers confidential and impartial advice, supported by qualified careers advisors. Whilst young people aged 13 to 18 have access to the National Contact Centre or the NCS website, individuals who are 19 years and over can access the service via all of its delivery channels. Local branches of the NCS work with employers, schools, colleges, charities and social enterprises to raise the aspirations of young people and provide them with the knowledge and awareness they need in order to pursue new

opportunities and succeed in their chosen careers. Each branch does this by bridging the gap between the worlds of education and work, and encourages young people to develop a more positive outlook, alongside the motivation and resilience to succeed.

A [letter to post-16 education providers](#) explaining the funding for academic year 2019 to 2020 from the Education and Skills Funding Agency indicates some priorities for skills funding:

We are also continuing to invest in the institutions of the sector to ensure more high-end technical skills training delivery and overall stability. These investments include funding of £170 million to support new Institutes of Technology from academic year 2019 to 2020 to deliver higher-level technical skills, and the Strategic College Improvement Fund of £15 million until 2020 to help weaker colleges improve.

The [Education and Skills Funding Agency](#) is responsible for the commissioning, contracting and performance of the National Careers Service. In addition to the telephone channel, face-to-face advice is delivered through eleven prime contractors in 12 geographical areas.

### **Careers guidance and counselling in schools and colleges**

In line with the [Education Act 2011](#), all schools and colleges have a duty to provide pupils in Years 8- 13 (ages 12- 18) with access to independent careers advice. Although it is up to individual schools and colleges to decide how careers guidance should be delivered, it must:

- be impartial and independent
- provide students with information on all post-16 education and training options, including apprenticeships
- provide each student with guidance which is in his/her best interest.

In addition, in Year 8 (ages 12/13), careers guidance should include information about the options available at age 14 such as [university technical colleges](#), [further education colleges](#), [sixth-form colleges](#) and [studio schools](#). For those over full-time compulsory school age, information should include higher education and employment options post-18, including apprenticeships. These options are described in full in the chapter on [secondary education](#) in the Eurydice Network's descriptions of [national education systems](#).

Provision can include web-based and telephone services and/or face-to-face guidance from a specialist provider.

To support schools, the Department for Education (DfE) has issued statutory guidance [Careers Guidance and Inspiration in Schools](#) (2017).

The [Careers & Enterprise Company](#) is an employer-led organisation which supports careers education in schools and colleges and helps young people prepare for the world of work and. It has three main areas of work:

- discovering what help is needed and where
- offering information about the world of work to schools – increasing employer engagement with young people, enabling them to meet, speak to and understand employers of all sizes
- investing in locations that need support – filling gaps in the provision of careers and enterprise activities across the country.

### **Higher education**

While higher education institutions (HEIs) are under no statutory obligation to provide careers information and advice, it is recognised as an important aspect of their overall provision for students. Indeed, the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#) sets an

expectation, as outlined in Indicator 6 of [Chapter 4B: Enabling student development and achievement](#), that higher education providers must:

have in place, monitor and evaluate arrangements and resources which enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential.

All HEI's have their own careers service staffed by professionals who are trained in this area. The [Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services](#) (AGCAS) is the professional association for HE careers practitioners.

In many cases, students can still access their university careers service for several years after graduation. Some universities allow lifelong access.

## Funding

Funding for the National Careers Service is provided by the [Education and Skills Funding Agency](#) on behalf of the Department for Education. The document '[National Careers Service Area-based contracts funding rules](#)' set out the funding rules for area based contracts and form part of the terms and conditions between the Skills Funding Agency (the predecessor to the Education and Skills Funding Agency) and providers.

Schools, colleges and universities are individually responsible for funding the services they offer.

## Quality assurance

### Schools and colleges

Careers education and guidance provided by schools and colleges is examined as part of the school inspection process, carried out by [Ofsted](#). Details are set out in Ofsted's Education [inspection framework](#) document and the [Further education and skills inspection handbook](#).

The emphasis placed on careers guidance in the school inspection process has increased since September 2013. Since then, judgments on leadership and management have taken into account how well schools deliver careers advice and guidance to all pupils.

Data is collected on the education or employment destinations of students aged 14- to 16 and 16- to 18 years. It provides clear and comparable information on the success of schools and colleges in helping all of their students undertake qualifications that offer them the best opportunity to continue in education or training. [Performance measures](#) are increasingly being seen as a key tool in assessing how well schools and colleges prepare their pupils to make a successful transition into the next stage of education, training, or employment.

Destination data of students in Key Stage 4 (14 to 16 years) and Key Stage 5 (16 to 18 years) is regularly published in a [statistical release](#) from the Department for Education. These are also included in headline figures of school performance measures.

### Higher education

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) carries out reviews to check whether higher education providers are meeting the expectations set out in [Chapter 4B: Enabling student development and achievement](#) of the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#). As noted above, the indicator most relevant to career guidance and counselling services is Indicator 6:

Higher education providers ensure all students have opportunities to develop skills that enable their academic, personal and professional progression.

This indicator is supported by examples of how it may be interpreted in practice, grouped under the following headings:

- developing academic skills
- developing employability skills

- facilitating career management.

Since the autumn of 2012, universities have had to supply information on the destinations and salaries of their recent graduates as part of the [Unistats data set](#) collection. This information allows prospective students to compare institutions by employability rates of graduates. Data on the employment of graduates is also included in the annual survey of [Destination of Leavers from Higher Education](#) (HESA, 2017).

### 3.5 Traineeships and apprenticeships

Whilst apprenticeships combine practical on-the-job training with study, traineeships combine work experience with work preparation training and English and mathematics provision for people who need more support before progressing into an apprenticeship or other employment.

#### Official guidelines on traineeships and apprenticeships

##### Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are paid jobs which incorporate substantial and sustained on- and off-the-job training. The term 'apprenticeship' has been legally protected by law since 2016, and in England, its definition is framed by four core principles:

- it is a job, in a skilled occupation
- it requires substantial and sustained training, lasting a minimum of 12 months and including off-the-job training
- it leads to full competency in an occupation, demonstrated by the achievement of an apprenticeship standard, which is defined by employers
- it develops transferable skills, including English and maths.

Three levels of apprenticeship are available:

1. Intermediate Level Apprenticeships (equivalent to five GCSE passes at A\*-C (or 9-4), and European Qualifications Framework (EQF) Level 3)
2. Advanced Level Apprenticeships (Level 3) (equivalent to two A-level passes and EQF Level 4).
3. Higher Apprenticeships (Levels 4 to 7) (EQF Levels 5 to 7)

Note: both general and vocational qualifications are grouped into levels within the [Regulated Qualifications Framework \(RQF\)](#), from entry level to level 8. The levels are mapped to the [European Qualifications Framework](#).

There is no upper age limit for undertaking an apprenticeship.

Previously, each apprenticeship had a framework which:

- covered all the statutory requirements for an apprenticeship programme
- was used by colleges, employers and training providers to make sure that all apprenticeship programmes are delivered consistently and therefore to national standards
- included the names of all qualifications and what each qualification is worth (its 'credit value')
- gave guidance on how to get onto an apprenticeship programme, the time it will take and career paths available after an apprenticeship.

As part of a series of reforms to apprenticeships, these frameworks are being replaced by apprenticeship standards. The frameworks are being designed by groups of employers for occupations in their respective sectors, describing the skills and knowledge that an apprentice needs to be fully competent in by the end of their apprenticeship. The

[Apprenticeship trailblazer quality statement](#) (2017, Institute for Apprenticeships) provides information on the marks of quality applied to the apprenticeship standards.

As new standards are developed and approved, they are [published](#) by the [Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education](#). The existing apprenticeship frameworks began to be withdrawn in March 2016, as the new standards have been developed and have become widely used. In 2018, the government [confirmed](#) that all frameworks will be withdrawn from 2020-2021 and replaced with employer-designed standards.

A department for Education [funding document](#) for apprenticeships released in July 2020 states:

We are committed to driving up the quality of apprenticeships and so from 1 August 2020, all new apprenticeship starts must be on standards. Apprenticeship frameworks will no longer be available to new starts, but learners will still be able to complete their framework, providing they started it on or before 31st July 2020. It is our intention that all apprentices who started an apprenticeship framework 6 before 1 August 2020 complete their apprenticeship framework by 31 July 2025 (accounting for any breaks in learning).

Ofsted, the education inspectorate, and Ofqual, the qualifications regulator, will continue to play a central role in monitoring the quality of apprenticeships: Ofsted through its inspection and reporting responsibilities and Ofqual through its role in ensuring that standards are maintained in the award of qualifications. Alternative assessment oversight arrangements may also be used in cases where employer groups have chosen not to use qualifications regulated by Ofqual. As the number of degree apprenticeships has increased, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) has taken on an apprenticeship quality monitoring role. In September 2020 Gavin Williamson, the education secretary, [announced](#) Ofsted will take over the inspection of degree apprenticeships (Level 6 and 7) from April 2021. This will make Ofsted the single body for the inspection of apprenticeship training at all levels.

The following quality requirements apply to reformed apprenticeships:

- Real employment – an apprentice must be employed in a job which has a real purpose. They will have a range of experience and additional enhancement opportunities that can help their future progression.
- Minimum hours of employment – this should be at least 30 hours per week. By exception, where the individual's circumstances or the particular nature of employment in a particular sector make this impossible, then an absolute minimum of 16 must be met. In such cases, the duration of the apprenticeship should be extended.
- The duration of the apprenticeship – this will be determined by the employer groups drafting the standards, but must be at least 12 months.
- Apprenticeship Agreement – a contract of service between the apprentice and the employer which confirms that the apprentice is undertaking an apprenticeship and which standard they will be following.
- English and Maths – where they don't have it already, all Level 2 apprentices must achieve Level 1 English and maths and take the test for Level 2, and all Level 3 apprentices must achieve Level 2.

A progress report on the [Apprenticeships Reform programme](#) in 2020 states the government has reached 69.6% of its target of 3 million new apprenticeships between 2015 and 2020. In the reporting period of 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2019 there was a total of 393,400 apprenticeship starts. This is an increase of 4.7% compared with 375,800 starts in the 2017/18 reporting period. There were 198,600 apprenticeship starts reported for the first two quarters of the 2019/20 academic year, compared with 214,200 reported at this time in 2018/19, a decrease of 7.3%.

In aiming to widen participation of people from Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups, the reforms have resulted in minor change: in 2018/19, 12.5% of starts were from people of BAME backgrounds, meaning that 48,400 BAME individuals entered the apprenticeship workforce.<sup>16</sup> This is an increase on the 11.4% of starts that were made by BAME individuals in 2017/18, and means that we have achieved our BAME representation target before 2020. In the first two quarters of 2019/20 reported so far, 23,900 or 12.3%, of starts reported were made by people from BAME backgrounds.

A [release of summary statistics](#) on key apprenticeship learning data in England for the 2019/20 academic year showed the proportion of starts according to age:

- 16-18: 23.7 per cent (75,500)
- 19-24: 29.5 per cent (94,200)
- 25 and over: 46.8 per cent (149,300)

This release also gives an indication of the impact of COVID-19 on apprenticeships in 2020:

There have been 58,160 apprenticeship starts reported to date between 23 March and 31 July 2020, fewer than the 107,750 reported for this period at this point last year, a decrease of 46.0 per cent.

### **Wages for apprentices**

Apprentices aged 16-18 are entitled to the apprentice minimum wage of £4.15 an hour. Apprentices are paid for both their normal working hours and the time they spend training as part of their apprenticeship. Apprentices aged 19 and over are also entitled to the £4.15 apprentice minimum wage in the first 12 months of their apprenticeship. After the first 12 months of their apprenticeship, people aged 19 and over are entitled to the age appropriate National Minimum Wage. See the article on '[Labour market situation in England](#)' for details of the National Minimum Wage.

As employees, apprentices are entitled to the same employment rights as other employees, including holiday entitlement and maternity leave.

### **Traineeships**

Traineeships are education and training programmes with work experience which help young people become work ready. They are designed to help young people who do not yet have the appropriate skills or experience enter into an apprenticeship or employment. They are open to those aged 16 to 24 who are qualified below Level 3 (EQF Level 4), although they are not designed for the most disengaged young people who require specific and intensive support.

Traineeships last for a minimum of six weeks and can last up to a maximum of six months. Content is tailored to the individual's needs and includes:

- A work experience placement of 100 hours minimum (for benefit claimants, a maximum of 240 hours; this can be extended if a need is identified) which ensures young people can develop the skills, knowledge, confidence, attitudes and behaviours they need to succeed in employment.
- Work preparation training (for example writing CVs, interview preparation, job searching and interpersonal and communication skills) focusing on activities to help the learner progress to an apprenticeship or other employment.
- Maths and English support, if needed, to help them get the skills they need to boost their career prospects.

Learning providers and employers are able to add flexible additional elements to the content of their traineeships to meet both the needs of the labour market and the young person in question.

Traineeships are delivered as a partnership between employers and education and training providers. Training providers must have a contract with the [Education and Skills Funding Agency](#). Traineeships are not jobs and are therefore exempt from the National Minimum Wage. Employers are not required to pay young people for any work experience placement they undertake as part of their traineeship. However, since trainees are undertaking education and training, they could qualify for existing programmes of financial support, including the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund, Free Meals, and Learning and Learner Support arrangements for 19 to 24 year olds.

Following the publication of the government's Plan for Jobs which included a £111 million investment to triple the number of traineeships available, the government is [planning a procurement opportunity](#) so providers can access funding to deliver 19 to 24 adult education budget (AEB) funded traineeships. A government announcement states:

As well as an investment of £111m for 2020 to 2021, there are new flexibilities and opportunities which will strengthen traineeships and widen access to them for young people:

- young people qualified up to Level 3 (rather than Level 2 previously) are now eligible for a traineeship
- there is a more flexible work experience offer of minimum 70 hours, with multiple employers if needed
- we want to see flexible content and qualifications that prepares trainees for progression to apprenticeships and jobs through a direct line of sight to the occupational standards
- an increased AEB traineeship learning aim cost of £1500.
- employers who offer new traineeship work placements will receive £1,000 per learner (up to ten learners) to support engagement and assist with costs such as the purchase of additional PPE for trainees
- traineeships can now last up to 12 months, allowing twice as much time on a programme for those young people with particular needs who need it. We still expect traineeships to support young people into work as quickly as possible.

[Figures](#) for the first two quarters of the 2019/20 academic year show that traineeship starts have decreased to 8,400 from 8,800 starts reported at the equivalent point in 2018/19, a fall of 3.8 per cent. Under 19s account for over four-fifths of traineeship starts (80.5 per cent – 6,800 starts).

In 2019, a [report](#) estimating the impact of traineeships from those beginning in the academic year 2013/14 found that 12 months after starting their traineeship, 29% began an apprenticeship and 57% starting further learning. For 19-23 year olds, the analysis indicated a positive impact of being employed 12 months after the traineeship.

## Youth Guarantee

The Youth Guarantee is a European Union approach to tackling youth unemployment which ensures that all young people under the age of 25 – whether registered with employment services or not – get a good-quality, concrete offer within 4 months of them leaving formal education or becoming unemployed. The UK supports the aims of the Youth Guarantee, but for subsidiarity and national specificity reasons prefers to continue with its existing approaches; see the article on '[Integration of Young People in the Labour Market](#)' for further details.

## Promoting traineeships and apprenticeships

Traineeships and apprenticeships are promoted to young people through all the usual channels, including social media, television and print adverts.

The Government provides the '[Find an Apprenticeship](#)' service to help young people find and apply for apprenticeships. There are also a number of national events which promote and celebrate apprenticeships:

- The [National Apprenticeship Awards](#) recognise excellence in businesses that grow their own talent through apprenticeships and the apprentices who have made a significant contribution to their workplaces.
- The annual [Apprenticeship Week](#) celebrates and promotes the impact of apprenticeships. National Apprenticeship Week [2021](#) will take place from 8 to 14 February 2021.

In addition to young people proactively searching for opportunities themselves, organisations which work with young people may refer them to traineeship programmes and apprenticeships. Such organisations include local authority services for young people, schools, colleges, Jobcentre Plus Work Coaches, National Careers Service advisers and National Citizen Service providers.

### **Making traineeships and apprenticeships attractive to employers**

Special measures are available to promote traineeships and apprenticeships, making them more attractive to employers.

In September 2020 it was [announced](#) as part of the Government's Plan for Jobs response to COVID-19, employers are being offered £2,000 for each new apprentice they hire aged under 25, and £1,500 for each newly recruited apprentice aged 25 and over. This includes taking on an apprentice who has been made redundant. The cash boost is designed to support employers to cover the cost of recruiting an apprentice such as providing facilities, uniforms, helping with travel costs or to help pay their salary. This new cash incentive for employers is on top of the existing £1,000 payment for new 16-18 year-old apprentices, and those aged under 25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Incentives for employers to take on 16-18 year olds for quality apprenticeships [come in the form of](#) a £1,000 payment, paid to employers in instalments at 3 months and 12 months. Employers who benefit from the small employer co-investment waiver will also receive these payments. Additionally, employers who train an apprentice aged 19-24 and has previously been in care or who has a Local Authority Education, Health and Care plan, will receive £1,000 to help with these additional costs in the same way as the payment for 16-18 year olds. Employers with less than 50 employees are not required to co-invest 5% in their apprentice's training - the government will pay 100% of the training cost.

In addition, many of the Government City Deals (agreements between cities and the government, which give the former additional powers to support economic growth) encourage employers to hire apprentices through schemes such as devolved employer grants.

Further information is available in a [House of Commons Research Briefing](#) (House of Commons Library, 2016).

Note that the [Enterprise Act 2016](#) introduced apprenticeship employment targets for public sector bodies in England to meet.

### **Recognition of learning outcomes**

The minimum standards for apprenticeships and traineeships are covered in the sub-section covering official guidelines on traineeships and apprenticeships.

### **Funding**

#### **Apprenticeships**

The government covers a proportion of the cost of training apprentices. Following changes to the funding system at the end of 2016, the amount it contributes depends on

whether or not the apprentice employer pays the apprenticeship levy (see below). Employers choose the training they would like their apprentice to receive throughout their apprenticeship. The apprenticeship funding system includes 30 funding bands, with the upper limit of those bands ranging from £1,500 to £27,000.

[From January 2020](#) employers who do not pay the apprenticeship levy have been able to create accounts on the apprenticeship service and reserve funding to cover the costs of apprenticeship training and assessment. For the remainder of the 2020-21, the number of 'active' or 'used' reservations available to non-levy paying employers at any given time will increase from 3 to 10. This enables non-levy paying employers to recruit more apprentices for their businesses through the apprenticeship service. This policy came into effect on 15 July 2020 and will continue to be kept under review.

Following the passing of the [Finance Act 2016](#), an Apprenticeship Levy was introduced in 2017 for large employers (including public bodies) who have an annual pay bill of more than £3 million. The levy is set at a rate of 0.5 per cent of an employer's gross wage bill. Each employer will receive a £15,000 allowance, meaning that only those whose total wage bills are more than £3 million pay the levy. Employers only pay the portion of the wage bill that is above the £3 million threshold.

Guidance related to how hiring an apprentice and apprenticeship funding for employers is available from the government [website](#).

A House of Commons [briefing paper](#) on Apprenticeship funding was published in October 2016.

## Traineeships

Traineeships for 16- to 18-year-olds are funded by the [Education and Skills Funding Agency](#), an executive agency sponsored by the Department for Education (DfE) using a funding per student methodology. For 19- to 24-year-olds, they are funded from the [Adult Education Budget](#). The funding available for 19- to 24-year-olds combines work experience and work preparation into a single funding rate. The primary measure of success is securing a positive outcome for participants in the form of an apprenticeship, sustainable employment or further learning (a condition of 20 percent of the funding a provider receives).

Training providers receive a 20 per cent achievement payment if the learner progresses to one of a number of successful outcomes beyond solely achieving a qualification.

As part of the Plan for Jobs response to the economic implications of COVID-19, the government will provide an [additional £111 million](#) this year for traineeships in England, to fund high quality work placements and training for 16-24 year olds. This funding is enough to triple participation in traineeships. The government will fund employers who provide trainees with work experience, at a rate of £1,000 per trainee. The government will improve provision and expand eligibility for traineeships to those with Level 3 qualifications and below, to ensure that more young people have access to high quality training.

Information on traineeship funding for 16- 19 year olds in 2020- 21 can be found [here](#).

## Quality assurance

Arrangements for quality assurance look at both the quality of training and financial management and performance of providers.

## Quality of training

[Ofsted](#), the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills, is the non-ministerial government department responsible for the inspection and regulation of day care and children's social care, and the inspection of children's services (including services for vulnerable children), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, youth work, work-based learning and adult education. The overall purpose of Ofsted inspections is to

evaluate how efficiently and effectively education and training provision meets learners' needs. Providers are notified of any areas where they need to improve and offered support to do so. Where provision is deemed inadequate, this triggers a process of intervention.

All inspection reports are published in order to inform decision-making by prospective learners who may be considering several different institutions. The inspection process also aims to promote improvement for all providers by setting expectations, increasing the accuracy of the provider's self-assessment, and identifying best practice.

Ofsted inspects training providers under the [Common Inspection Framework](#) and the [Further Education and Skills Inspection Handbook](#).

When carrying out a full inspection, inspectors make graded judgements about the following areas, which enable them to make an overall judgement about the effectiveness of the setting:

- effectiveness of leadership and management
- quality of teaching, learning and assessment
- personal development, behaviour and welfare
- outcomes for children and learners.

Each of the four areas above and the overall effectiveness of the school are judged using criteria relating to the following grading scale:

- grade 1: outstanding
- grade 2: good
- grade 3: requires improvement
- grade 4: inadequate.

Inspectors also consider a provider's approach to safeguarding and how well staff promote learner welfare and keep them safe, as outlined in the Ofsted guidance document, [Inspecting Safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings from September 2019](#).

All inspection reports are made publicly available and are published on the [Ofsted website](#).

### **Financial health of providers**

Another important element of quality assurance is the monitoring of the financial health, financial management and performance of providers, undertaken by the [Education and Skills Funding Agency](#). The SFA is also responsible for some direct intervention when it has concerns about financial health or control.

## **3.6 Integration of young people in the labour market**

### **Youth employment measures**

The [Department for Work and Pensions](#) (DWP) is responsible for welfare, pensions and child maintenance policy. DWP supports all those who are out-of-work, including young people, through the employment and social security network, Jobcentre Plus and through the online job search tool, "[Find a Job](#)". DWP also administers the Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). Various forms of assistance are available to unemployed benefit claimants who may improve their chances of employment through training; some of these are aimed at young people. They are described below.

The [Work and Health Programme](#) is the UK Government's welfare-to-work scheme since 2017, offering support to the long-term unemployed and some disabled benefit

claimants. The Work and Health Programme is designed to allow service providers (who run the programme) the freedom to introduce and implement their own ideas and schemes to help unemployed participants find work. Providers may decide to place people in work-related activities, such as work experience placements. The programme provides support to help people find and keep a job. It is available on a voluntary basis, to those with health conditions or disabilities, and to various groups of vulnerable people. It also provides support to those who have been unemployed for over two years, and it will be compulsory for this group.

Young people aged 18- to 24-years are referred to the programme when they have been claiming Jobseeker's Allowance for nine months (those aged 25 and over are placed on the programme after 12 months).

As a response to the economic implications of COVID-19, the government announced a Plan for Jobs in July 2020, which includes a [Kickstart Scheme](#) specifically targeted at getting young people into employment. The Kickstart Scheme provides funding to employers to create job placements for 16 to 24 year olds on Universal Credit who are at risk of long term unemployment. Employers of all sizes can apply for funding which covers: 100% of the National Minimum Wage (or the National Living Wage depending on the age of the participant) for 25 hours per week for a total of 6 month associated employer National Insurance contribution employer minimum automatic enrolment contributions. Employers can spread the start date of the job placements up until the end of December 2021. A Kickstart Scheme application must be for a minimum of 30 job placements. If a single employer cannot provide this many job placements, they can find a Kickstart gateway, such as a local authority, charity or trade body for help applying.

New [funding](#) for the National Careers Service was also made available as part of the Plan for Jobs – The government will provide an additional £32 million funding over the next 2 years for the National Careers Service so that 269,000 more people in England can receive personalised advice on training and work.

The following sub-sections describe welfare and employment initiatives designed to support and assist young people.

### **Work experience scheme**

The [Work Experience scheme](#), as described in a 2015 House of Commons [research briefing](#), is targeted at 18-24 year olds who have little or no experience of work. Young people can participate in the scheme after they have been claiming [Universal Credit](#) for three months but before they join the Government's main welfare-to-work scheme, the Work Programme (typically after claiming for nine months). Entry into the scheme is voluntary and individuals can choose to leave the placement before it is complete.

Under the scheme, individuals are matched with suitable work experience placements. These last between two and eight weeks, for between 25 and 30 hours a week. Some participants may have their placement extended by up to four weeks if an employer offers to hire them as an apprentice. Participants on the scheme do not receive a wage but continue to receive benefits and must continue to look for permanent work. Travel and childcare costs are also payable, if required.

### **Sector-based work academies**

Sector-based work academies are aimed at claimants (of all ages) who are considered relatively well prepared for employment, with no basic skills needs. Claimants are offered sector-specific training and work experience placements for a period of up to six weeks, followed by a job interview with an employer. Whilst attending a sector-based work academy, people will continue to claim benefits. Any travel and childcare costs associated with taking up a place in an academy will be covered.

The training element of the academy is fully funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. The job interview may also lead to apprenticeship places, and the training element of the academy may be used as the foundation of apprenticeship training.

## Youth obligation

Since April 2017, '[Youth Obligation](#)' (YO) has been the main welfare programme for young people. It supports 18- to-21-year-olds to take part in work-based learning in order to develop the motivation, skills and experience they need to move into employment. Receiving [Universal Credit](#) depends on the young person taking part in a work placement or preparing to begin an apprenticeship or traineeship after six months.

## Youth Guarantee

The Youth Guarantee is a European Union approach to tackling youth unemployment which ensures that all young people under 25 – whether registered with employment services or not – get a good-quality, concrete offer within 4 months of them leaving formal education or becoming unemployed. A quality offer is defined as a job, apprenticeship, traineeship, or continued education and can be adapted to each individual need and situation.

The [2018 Youth Guarantee Country Report for the UK](#) contains the following statement about the UK position in relation to it:

“The UK has not established a Youth Guarantee scheme. Whilst the government supports the approach set out in the Council Recommendation, it believes that the existing provision in the UK – in particular the Youth Contract and additional support for 16- 17-year-old NEETs - fulfils the basic requirements.”

In April 2019, a [Youth Charter](#) was announced - a collaborative initiative between youth charities and the Department for Culture, Media, and Society to coordinate government youth policy.

## Flexicurity measures focusing on young people

The European Commission defines flexicurity as an integrated strategy for simultaneously enhancing flexibility and security in the labour market. It attempts to reconcile employers' need for a flexible workforce with workers' need for security. It is a key element of European Union [Employment Guidelines](#) and the [European Employment Strategy](#).

There is no formal implementation of flexicurity measures for young people in England or, indeed, in the UK.

An assessment of how far the UK's flexible and lightly regulated labour market amounts to a form of flexicurity is given in the UK country description in the [European Observatory on Working Life](#).

## Reconciliation of private and working life for young people

There are no youth-specific policy measures / initiatives to reconcile the private and working lives of young people. As noted in the introduction to this chapter, UK workplaces are increasingly flexible with a growth in self-employment, part-time working, zero-hours contracts and increasing female participation.

All public bodies and employers in Great Britain (England, Wales and Scotland) are bound by the [Equality Act 2010](#). The Act, which harmonises and extends previous equality legislation, seeks to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all. Under the Act, the following are 'protected characteristics', or the categories to which the law applies: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

## Funding of existing schemes/initiatives

Funding for schemes described above are generally provided by the [Department for Work and Pensions](#) (DWP).

The Work Programme, described above under '[Youth employment measures](#)', makes use of co-funding under the EU's European Social Fund. The Work Programme functions on a payment-by-results basis: providers of work placements and other services therefore receive a job outcome payment after a participant has spent a minimum length of time in employment. Further information is available from the Department for Work and Pensions [website](#).

A 2016 DWP [impact assessment of sector-based work academies](#) shows their funding comes from a number of sources:

- pre-employment training (PET) is covered by the Adult Skills Budget, administered by the Department for Education since summer 2016
- the Flexible Support Fund (FSF) enables the DWP's Jobcentre Plus network to procure and fund the PET through local providers
- employers cover the costs of the work experience placement and guaranteed job interview.

### Quality assurance

The aim of the Work and Health Programme is to support participants into employment that lasts; the payment by results model is intended to reflect this aim. Work programme providers are responsible for ensuring that participants receive full information about the services available to them. Full details are available in the Department for Work and Pensions Work and Health Programme provider [guidance](#).

## 3.7 Cross-border mobility in employment, entrepreneurship and vocational opportunities

### Programmes and schemes for cross-border mobility

The British Council's [Study and work abroad](#) portal brings together information on opportunities for UK students, recent graduates, and young professionals to study, volunteer, work or develop their creativity through international experience. Opportunities include:

- The European Solidarity Corps (which replaced the European Voluntary Corps in 2018). It is the main EU programme providing volunteering opportunities for young people. It is an initiative of the European Union which creates opportunities for young people aged 18-30 to volunteer or work in projects in their own country or abroad that benefit communities and people around Europe. The UK's participation in current programmes running until and [beyond 2020](#) is not affected by Brexit.
- the [Generation UK – China](#) Summer Language and Internship Programme, which helps students from the UK boost their employability and develop a global mindset through study and work experience opportunities in China
- International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience ([IASTE](#)) work placements, which give young people over the age of 19 who are enrolled in a science, engineering, technology or applied arts course at a UK university the opportunity to take part in a paid industry traineeship in one of 80 countries.

Young Britons, generally aged 18-30, may be eligible to apply for working holiday visas in a number of countries.

### Legal framework

There is no specific legal framework for the cross-border mobility of young workers, trainees / apprentices and young professional / entrepreneurs.

## 3.8 Development of entrepreneurship competence

### Policy Framework

There is no formal strategy for entrepreneurship education in England, although a policy paper covering [business enterprise](#) was published under the Coalition Government (2010-2015), in which the Government recognised the need to engage with young people as part of the wider goal of 'encouraging people and giving them the skills to set up their own business'. The paper stated the need to give young people hands-on business experiences to make them view starting their own business a viable career option in later life. More recently, various moves have been made towards creating enabling environments for entrepreneurs.

The 2017 [Building our Industrial Strategy](#) highlighted the government's aim to support the next generation of entrepreneurs and improve support for scale-ups. Responses to the preceding Green Paper supported the importance of Enterprise and Entrepreneurship to the successful delivery of the industrial strategy. In 2019 a new [review](#) was established with the aim of investigating obstacles and proposing solutions to support enterprising young people from all backgrounds, as part of the 2017 government's [Industrial Strategy](#). It also aims to increase diversity in the business community through targeted support to entrepreneurs from disadvantaged and lower income backgrounds.

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education published a [guidance](#) for UK higher education providers in 2018 that provides context and direction for the state of entrepreneurship education in the UK.

Some resources for entrepreneurs are provided by the government. The [Business Support Helpline](#) provides free advice to start-ups. Designed for business support and guidance, [38 Growth Hubs](#) are located in England. The [Office for the Small Business Commissioner](#) was also set up to help resolve payment disputes with larger businesses. Awards such as the [Enterprising Britain Awards](#) aim to raise the profile of entrepreneurship across the UK.

CIPD, the main UK organisation for Human Resources professionals, gives a useful overview of UK approaches to giving young people hands-on business experience, with reference to wider, European-level policy frameworks, in its 2015 briefing paper entitled [Encouraging enterprise in education](#).

### Formal learning

#### Entrepreneurship education in compulsory education

Young Enterprise, the UK's leading enterprise education charity, defines entrepreneurship education (or enterprise education, as it is more commonly known in England) as:

the application of creative ideas to practical situations. It aims to raise awareness of the mind-set and skills required to respond to opportunities, needs and challenges such as problem solving, teamwork, communication, creativity and resilience. It can be applied across the curriculum, extending beyond business to a wide range of practical and social skills' ([Outcomes map: Enterprise education and employability](#), page 3, Young Enterprise, 2015).

Enterprise education is not part of the National Curriculum, although schools may choose to include elements of it in their school curriculum. At ISCED 3 (GCSE and A level – descriptions of these qualifications is available in the Eurydice network's description of [national education systems](#)), schools may offer pupils the opportunity to follow a qualification in business studies.

Schools may also include entrepreneurship in their non-statutory Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE) classes. The [PSHE Association](#), which was set up in 2006 with government funding to help raise the quality of PSHE teaching, has produced a revised programme of study for PSHE for pupils in key stages 1 to 4 (ages 5- 16). Its

[programme of study](#) suggests that in primary education (age 5-11), children should be taught about money and given a basic understanding of enterprise. In secondary school, (age 11-16), pupils should be taught: how to make informed choices and be enterprising and ambitious; about the economic and business environment; how personal finances choices can affect themselves and others; about the rights and responsibilities of consumers. The programme of study for PSHE was updated in January 2020 according to [guidance](#) from the Department for Education. From September 2020 this new curriculum is compulsory.

Although there is no formal strategy for entrepreneurship education, elements of business enterprise policy filter into schools. Pupils are given the opportunity to participate in hands-on business experiences. They include, amongst others:

- [Tycoons in schools](#), a national enterprise challenge in schools. The competition allows students to start and run a business whilst at school or college, thereby allowing them to gain valuable hands-on experience of what is involved with running a business.
- The [National Enterprise Challenge](#), which gives schools the opportunity to set up and manage a business.
- The [Tenner Challenge](#), which is aimed at young people aged 11-19 who want to get a taste of what it's like to be an entrepreneur. It gives them a chance to think of a new business idea and make it happen, using real money to take calculated risks in the business field, make a profit – and make a difference.
- [MyBnk](#), which is an award-winning UK charity that teaches young people how to manage their money and set up their own enterprise.
- The [Fiver Challenge](#), which is aimed at five to 11- year-olds across the UK, giving participants £5 to set up mini businesses to create products or services they can then sell/deliver at a profit and engage with their local community.

In addition, [Young Enterprise](#) is a business and enterprise charity which helps young people learn about business and the world of work through a range of programmes.

### **Entrepreneurship education in higher education**

The driver for enterprise education within higher education is set out in the 2011 Government White Paper for Higher Education, [Students at the Heart of the System](#). The Government wanted universities to look at how they could work with businesses to promote better teaching, employer sponsorship, and innovation, following its policy statement on business enterprise (see above). Universities' commitment to student entrepreneurship was praised in a [2011 report](#) by the Higher Education Funding Council for England. The need for enterprise education and entrepreneurship opportunities for students in higher education - including postgraduate research students - was highlighted in the 2012 [Wilson Review of Business-University Collaboration](#) commissioned as part of the 2011 White Paper.

[QAA's guidance](#) on entrepreneurship education shows that there is no single model that describes the delivery of enterprise and entrepreneurship across higher education providers in the UK. Delivery models include enterprise and entrepreneurship being:

- managed by a central unit
- embedded in the curriculum by subject specialist educators
- embedded in the curriculum under another name such as 'professional studies' or 'personal marketing skills'
- delivered through a careers service
- led or supported through facilities such as incubators, boot camps and extra-curricular clubs and societies.

In 2018, QAA published a comprehensive [guide](#) for higher education providers on enterprise and entrepreneurship education intended to promote, enhance and inform on the area. The Teaching Excellent Framework (TEF) provides the opportunity for higher education institutions to recognise the value of high quality Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Education and highlight the career benefits for students.

In the context of extra-curricular activities, some institutions offer summer schools or events which are led by staff or students. Many actively support start-up activities and deliver mentoring support beyond graduation. Students can also gain practical experience through external bodies such as [Enactus](#), an international not-for-profit organisation that works with leaders in business and education to develop socially responsible entrepreneurs. [Shell Livewire](#), an online community that offers networking, advice and a chance to win monthly and annual 'grand ideas' awards, is another example of extra-curricular engagement in higher education.

Participation in extracurricular activities may in some cases be formally recognised and recorded, for example through reference to the personal development process (in which learners identify key areas of learning and development activity that will enable them to either acquire new or develop existing skills and attributes) and use of transcripts, as well as the [Higher Education Achievement Record](#) (HEAR).

There are also stand-alone degree programmes (including master's degree programmes) in some institutions which may involve actual business start-up as an integral requirement.

The [National Centre for Entrepreneurship in Education](#) supports entrepreneurship both in higher education and in its graduates.

### **HE entrepreneurship networks**

The [National Association of Colleges and University Entrepreneurs](#) (NACUE) is a membership organisation for engaging students in enterprise, set up by students for students. It gives college and university students the opportunity to boost their skills, confidence and aspirations through supporting student-led enterprise societies, running inspiring events and advocating practical learning. The 2012 [Wilson Review of Business-University Collaboration](#) recommended that the NACUE should be supported by sponsors, universities and government in promoting entrepreneurship.

NACUE, the Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship, and Enterprise Educators UK have formed the Enterprise Alliance to ensure collaboration and reduced duplication in their activities at national and local level.

The role of business mentors is growing across the enterprise and entrepreneurial agenda of universities. Mentors are drawn from both alumni networks and the business community, normally without remuneration or position.

### **Non-formal and informal learning**

Non-formal and informal education in support of young people's wider learning and development lie at the heart of youth work. Youth work organisations, including local authorities, the third sector and uniformed organisations (for instance, the Scouts or Girlguides) often carry out activities which lead to the development of entrepreneurship competence.

### **Educators support in entrepreneurship education**

Enterprise education is not mentioned in the [Teachers' Standards](#) which underpin initial teacher training.

Responsibility for continuing professional development (CPD) is shared across a range of organisations, including: the Department for Education (DfE); the National College for Teaching and Leadership; the Teaching and Learning Academy; school governing bodies; and the individual teachers concerned.

Teachers have a professional duty to participate in CPD arrangements and schools themselves decide how much time to allocate to CPD based on their specific areas for development as set out in their school development plan (SDP). Each individual teacher's development is planned for in the context of the SDP and monitored by the performance management system. Schools may choose to cover enterprise education as part of their CPD arrangements.

[EBEA](#) is a professional subject association for those interested in the teaching and study of economics, business and enterprise.

There are also a number of National Occupational Standards (NOS) which cover [entrepreneurship and enterprise](#). NOS, which set out the standards of performance expected when carrying out functions in the workplace and specifications of the underpinning knowledge and understanding. Since 2015, these are no longer actively maintained, but remain publicly available.

## 3.9 Start-up funding for young entrepreneurs

### Access to information

Government and charities who provide funding opportunities for young entrepreneurs promote them through all the normal channels, especially on social media.

### Access to capital

A number of schemes make capital available to young (and older) entrepreneurs. These are described below.

#### The Prince's Trust

The [Prince's Trust](#) was founded by HRH The Prince of Wales in 1976 to help 13- to 30-year-olds who are unemployed or struggling at school to transform their lives. One of the longest-running strands of the charity's work is the [Enterprise programme](#) which provides 18- to 30-year-olds with the support they need to start a business. The programme has four stages:

- meeting the team – what the programme is and how it can help
- exploring – learning about personal finance, legal structures, marketing, finance, and business plans
- building support – flexible one-to-one support to get started with market research, writing a business plan and considering finance; small grants are available to test the viability of a business
- launch – presentation of business plan to the Business Launch Group who decide if an idea is viable and sustainable; approved businesses receive two years' mentoring and access to start-up finance if needed:
  - low interest start-up loans of up to £7,500 (just under €9000) offered through the Start Up Loans Company
  - small start-up business grants in special circumstances.

Note: [Start Up Loans](#) are available from the Start Up Loans Company, which offers government-backed personal loans for business purposes. The loans are available to businesses which have yet to launch or those that have already started trading. The partners support loan applicants in all regions and industries throughout the UK. Within certain conditions, they are open to anyone aged-18 and over but are not specifically aimed at young people.

## Shell LiveWIRE

The [Shell LiveWIRE Smarter Future Programme](#) is a social investment programme which provides support for young, innovative entrepreneurs.

The award is open to any entrepreneur aged 16- 30 years who:

- has been trading for less than a year, or is looking to start trading in the next 6 months; and
- has an idea that addresses the UK's future transport, energy, or natural resource challenges, or makes urban environments cleaner and more sustainable places to work and live in.

Pre-start businesses are encouraged to apply, as are university spin-outs, product and urban designers, and other relevant design and engineering graduates with innovative business ideas.

## New Enterprise Allowance

The [New Enterprise Allowance](#) is a government scheme designed to help unemployed individuals who have a business idea and want to start their own business. It is available to individuals aged 18 and over in Great Britain who are claiming Universal Credit, Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or lone parents claiming Income Support.

Interested and eligible individuals are referred by the DWP's Jobcentre Plus network to a mentoring organisation, which matches them with a volunteer business mentor. The mentor assists the individual in drawing up a business plan, which is then assessed by the mentoring organisation. If the plan is approved, the individual can access financial support once they stop claiming benefit.

## #IdeasMeanBusiness

The Prince's Trust has partnered with Innovate UK, the UK's innovation agency, to launch the [#IdeasMeanBusiness](#) campaign. The initiative will provide the next generation of UK innovators with much needed support, advice and funding to help them turn their ideas into reality.

The #IdeasMeanBusiness pop-up coffee shop in London will give young people the chance to speak with Innovate UK business mentors and experts from The Prince's Trust. Innovate UK and The Prince's Trust will also be taking the pop-up coffee shop to different regional locations by the end of the year, to continue inspiring the next generation of innovators that #IdeasMeanBusiness.

## 3.10 Promotion of entrepreneurship culture

### Special events and activities

Each of the national initiatives and programmes referred to under '[Development of Entrepreneurship Competence](#)' and '[Start-up Funding for Young Entrepreneurs](#)' organises special events and activities to promote learning in entrepreneurship, and to celebrate young people's achievements in this area.

### Networks and partnerships

There is no formal strategy for entrepreneurship education in England, although a policy paper covering [business enterprise](#) was published under the Coalition Government (2010-2015), in which the Government recognised the need to engage with young people as part of the wider goal of 'encouraging people and giving them the skills to set up their own business'. As part of this, a number of initiatives (which can be seen as events, activities, networks and partnerships) received Government support. They include:

- [Inspiring the Future](#), which recruits young entrepreneurs to volunteer to go into schools to talk about running their own businesses and how they got there
- supporting the development of [Tenner](#), which gives schoolchildren £10 to fund a business idea and earn money.

### 3.11 Current debates and reforms

#### Traineeships

Following the publication of the government's Plan for Jobs which included a £111 million investment to triple the number of traineeships available, a procurement opportunity is planned so providers can access funding to deliver 19 to 24 adult education budget (AEB) funded traineeships.

They will be looking for providers with the capacity to start providing high-quality traineeships quickly through a ring-fenced contract for service. Opportunities to bid for additional 19 to 24 AEB traineeship funding will be handled through the Department for Education's e-sourcing portal.

The Plan for Jobs included a commitment to provide thousands of new traineeships to get young people aged 16 to 24 (up to 25 for those with an Education, Health and Care Plan) in England into work. As well as an investment of £111m for 2020 to 2021, there are various other policy developments aimed to strengthen traineeships and widen access to them for young people in 2020 and beyond. You can read more about them [here](#).

#### T Levels

[T Levels](#) were introduced in England in September 2020. These are 2 year courses following GCSE's that will be equivalent to 3 A Levels. T Levels have been developed with employers and businesses to meet the needs of industry and prepare young people for work. They will offer classroom learning as well as a 3 month industry placement. The government published [funding guidance](#) for T Levels in September 2020. This includes how T Levels are funded regarding the size of the technical qualifications for the second wave of T Levels being delivered from 2021 to 2022.

#### COVID-19

The impact of COVID-19 on young people's employment and education prospects has been a focus of public debate. In September 2020 the Office for National Statistics [found](#) the UK unemployment rate had risen to its highest level for two years.

According to the [Office for National Statistics](#), there were an estimated 765,000 young people (aged 16 to 24 years) in the UK who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) in April to June 2020; this was a decrease of 28,000 compared with April to June 2019 and was down by 6,000 compared with January to March 2020.

The percentage of all young people in the UK who were NEET in April to June 2020 was estimated at 11.1%; the proportion was down by 0.3 percentage points compared with April to June 2019 and down by 0.1 percentage points compared with January to March 2020.

Of all young people in the UK who were NEET in April to June 2020, an estimated 39.0% were looking for, and available for, work and therefore classified as unemployed; the remainder were either not looking for work and/or not available for work and were classified as economically inactive.

#### Kickstart Scheme

The [Kickstart Scheme](#) provides funding to create new job placements for 16 to 24 year olds on Universal Credit who are at risk of long term unemployment as a response to the economic impacts of COVID-19. Employers of all sizes can apply for funding which covers:

- 100% of the National Minimum Wage (or the National Living Wage depending on the age of the participant) for 25 hours per week for a total of 6 months
- associated employer National Insurance contributions
- employer minimum automatic enrolment contributions

Employers can spread the start date of the job placements up until the end of December 2021.

## 4. SOCIAL INCLUSION

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The primary objective of the UK Government regarding social inclusion has been to remove barriers, so that everyone, whatever their background, has equal opportunities to progress. This focus on social mobility is assisted by the Social Mobility Commission (SMC), an independent statutory body which monitors progress towards improving social mobility throughout the UK, and promotes social mobility in England.

In December 2017, the Department for Education, under Justine Greening, published the national plan, [Unlocking Talent, Fulfilling Potential](#). It plans to deal with social mobility through education – by removing barriers, preventing young people from achieving their potential in four key life phases - early years, school, post-16 education and careers, with the belief that equality of opportunity begins at education. It allocated £800 million of resources to provide solutions to the key challenges in each key life phase identified. The plan requires various agents and sectors in society, including educators, universities, government, businesses and civil society, to help transform the social mobility in the UK and become a fairer society. L

Under the Opportunity Areas programme, the Government has identified twelve areas in England characterised by low social mobility to receive support, and in 2017, committed an additional £72 million. The aim of each opportunity area is to build young people's knowledge and skills and to provide the best advice and opportunities for their development from the early years until entering work, to create long-term change. In January 2018, the Department for Education [announced an additional six opportunity areas](#), awarding more than £22 million to help improve schools to tackle underperformance in accordance with [Unlocking Talent, Fulfilling Potential](#). In addition, the Government is supporting the Children's Social Care Innovation Programme to improve the lives of the most vulnerable children and young people, and those receiving help from the social care system.

Furthermore, in August 2018, the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#), under the Office for Civil Society published the [Civil Society Strategy: building a future that works for everyone](#). It outlines how the government will help create a fair and improved country that best works for everyone; it encompasses how all of civil society, together with the Government, can achieve this. The Strategy contains five chapters, focusing on an important foundation of civil society, people, places, the social sector, the private sector and the public sector, and addresses why the government will continue supporting this sector, and what the government will do to further build upon it in the form of investment, policies or initiatives.

### 4.1 General context

#### Main challenges to social inclusion

The [Monitoring social mobility 2013 to 2020 report](#), published by the Social Mobility Commission examines government action on the Commission's key social mobility recommendations from 2013 to 2020.

It covers several policy areas including:

- early years
- education
- employment
- housing
- health
- transport

It highlights areas of concern and sets out an action plan for the government to achieve greater social mobility in the UK. The report recommends a dedicated unit to coordinate action and ensure recommendations are delivered.

## Main concepts

In this chapter, the term 'social inclusion' refers to the process which ensures that people who are at risk of poverty and social exclusion gain the opportunities and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life, and to enjoy a standard of living and well-being that is considered normal in the society in which they live. It also ensures they enjoy a greater level of participation in the decision making which affects their lives and better access to their fundamental rights. In this context, social inclusion can be considered as a multi-dimensional concept, which combines various factors, including: income and living standards; the need for educational and decent work opportunities; effective social protection systems; housing; access to good-quality health and other services; and active citizenship.

In recent years, the stated aims of the UK Government regarding social inclusion have been to remove barriers, so that everyone whatever their background has equal opportunity to progress.

## Child poverty

A key element of promoting social inclusion is a reduction in levels of child poverty. A target to reduce levels of child poverty was first introduced by the Labour Government in office from 1997 to 2010. The [Child Poverty Act 2010](#) fulfilled a commitment to enshrine the child poverty target in legislation. Its provisions include:

- setting 4 child poverty targets to be met by 2020/21
- requirements for the UK Government to publish a regular UK child poverty strategy
- requirements for the Scottish and Northern Irish Ministers to publish child poverty strategies
- creation of the Child Poverty Commission to provide advice
- requirements for the UK Government to publish annual progress reports
- new duties on [local authorities](#) and other 'delivery partners' in England to work together to tackle child poverty.

The House of Commons Library published a [short guide](#) to the Act in 2014.

The role and remit of the Child Poverty Commission has been amended twice since its creation. The [2012 Welfare Reform Act](#) expanded its remit to monitoring and providing advice on improving social mobility. Further changes were made by the [Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016](#), transforming it into the [Social Mobility Commission](#), an advisory non-departmental public body.

In its most recent [Monitoring social mobility report](#), the Social Mobility Commission identifies areas of major concern:

- An increasing number of children growing up in relative poverty

- A crisis in the early years' workforce
- A greater chance of disadvantaged young people getting stuck in low paid jobs

The Commission also found that, at present, there is no meaningful coordination between departments on the social mobility agenda, and no single force championing social mobility across government.

To start to address this issue, the Commission has established a programme of support and advice to help employers recruit a more diverse workforce. It has also prepared a range of reports to be published over the next year, which will include new recommendations where it believes the government or others need to take further action.

## 4.2 Administration and governance

### Governance

It is an ambition of the UK Government to create a society in which opportunities are shared equally and are not dependent on family background, geographical location or the school an individual has attended. The approach to social inclusion is general: improving opportunities for all. An element of this ambition therefore involves targeting the opportunities available to young people.

The ambitions set out in policies relating to social inclusion apply to all of the United Kingdom. However, many policy levers are in the hands of the devolved administrations, which are responsible for their own devolved policies and are not bound by the policies of the Westminster government. Nevertheless, the UK Government works closely with the devolved administrations to promote these principles and encourage their implementation across all parts of the United Kingdom.

Additionally, there is recognition, across Government departments and devolved assemblies of the UK, that serious efforts to promote social inclusion need a joined-up approach to governance, policy making and implementation; they cannot be developed or delivered in 'silos'.

### Main actors

- The [Department for Work and Pensions](#) (DWP)
- The [Department for Education](#) (DfE)
- The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Civil Society at the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#) (DCMS)
- The [Home Office](#)
- The [Department of Health and Social Care](#)
- The Ministry of [Housing, Communities and Local Government](#)
- [Local authorities](#) (LAs)
- The [Social Mobility Commission](#) (SMC)
- The [British Youth Council](#)
- Youth Elected Bodies

### General distribution of responsibilities

The [Department for Work and Pensions](#) (DWP) is responsible for welfare, pensions and child maintenance policy. It administers the state pension and a range of working age, disability and ill health benefits, including those for young people. DWP has a team which is responsible for poverty and social justice. Its priorities include creating a fair and affordable welfare system in which improves the life changes of children.

The [Department for Education](#) (DfE) is responsible for education, children's services, higher and further education policy, apprenticeships and wider skills, and equalities. Its aim is to 'achieve a highly educated society in which opportunity is equal for all, no matter what their background or family circumstances'.

The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Civil Society at the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#) (DCMS) has, amongst other areas, responsibility for social and community action. See the article '[Main Concepts](#)' in the 'Voluntary Activities' chapter. Additionally, DCMS announced in their [Civil Society Strategy](#) their plans of creating a youth structure in their department to ensure young people contribute to upcoming policy changes. See article on '[Current Updates and Reforms](#)' for more information.

The [Home Office](#) is responsible for the safety and security of the country. Their policies fields span across a range of matters, like crime prevention and knife, gun, and gang crime; which also encompasses the safety of children and young persons.

There are also elements of policy at the [Department of Health and Social Care](#) which address the wellbeing and social inclusion agenda.

The [Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government](#) is responsible for creating places to live and work for its citizens, and enable locals to get involved in their communities. Its policies include initiatives to encourage community integration and provisions for housing which affect the livelihood of young people.

[Local authorities](#) (LAs) have a statutory duty (under section 507B of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)) to secure sufficient services and activities for young people aged 13-19 (and those with learning difficulties to age 24) and to improve their well-being. The 2012 Government publication, [Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on Services and Activities to Improve Young People's Well-being](#) lists the youth work and other services that LAs should provide (so far as they are practically able) to improve the well-being of young people. Previously, there were duties on local authorities to put in place local cooperation arrangements and prepare and publish child poverty needs assessments and related strategies to reduce and mitigate the effects of child poverty. These duties were removed by the 2016 [Welfare Reform and Work Act](#).

The [Social Mobility Commission](#) (SMC) is an advisory, independent, non-departmental public body, sponsored by the [Cabinet Office](#), the [Department for Education](#) and the [Department for Work and Pensions](#). It monitors the UK's progress towards improving social mobility, and promotes social mobility in England. It is responsible for:

- publishing an annual report setting out its views on the progress made towards improving social mobility in the United Kingdom
- promoting social mobility in England by (for example) challenging employers, the professions, universities and schools to play their part in promoting social mobility
- carrying out and publishing research in relation to social mobility
- providing advice to ministers (at their request) on how to improve social mobility in England, which must then be published.

Its most recent annual report, [State of the Nation 2018-2019: Social Mobility in Great Britain](#), was published in April 2019. Additionally, it has published a number of pieces of separate research, surveys and analyses, focusing on issues such as public attitudes, skills gaps and the impact of extracurricular activities.

The [British Youth Council](#) (BYC) is an umbrella organisation, consisting of a variety of national and local youth organisations. Its mission is to empower young people to become involved in politics and contribute to the decision-making process regarding youth-related policies. BYC provide opportunities for young people (25 and under) to inform and influence policies that affect them locally, nationally and internationally. BYC manage and provide opportunities to volunteer, campaign and participate in

programmes, like [Youth Voice](#), [Youth Select Committee](#) and the [UK Youth Parliament](#) (UKYP). Additionally, they coordinate the [Local Youth Council Network](#), which consists of over 620 youth councils. Their responsibilities include, but not limited to, representing young people's views to decision makers, campaigning, sitting on local scrutiny panels, and running the [Youth Opportunity Fund](#).

Youth elected bodies include Young Mayors and the [UK Youth Parliament](#) (UKYP). Young Mayors are elected by the young people in their constituency to represent them on a local and national scale, to influence and discuss with local, regional and national decision-makers about issues affecting young people, and to promote social cohesion locally and nationally. Together, they form the [Young Mayors Network, which](#) enables young mayors to work collaboratively together, act as a lobby group when necessary, share ideas. Similarly, the UKYP empower 11 to 18 year olds to have a voice. There are over 300 elected members. They represent the young people in their area to local, regional and national government, providers of services for young people, and other agencies involved in the views and needs of young people.

For more information see the article on '[Youth representation bodies](#)' in Chapter 5.

### Reporting requirements

The [Child Poverty Act 2010](#) placed a duty on the Secretary of State to meet four UK-wide income targets by the end of the 2020 financial year and to publish a child poverty strategy evaluating progress towards the four targets and setting out future action.

Subsequent legislation has amended these requirements. In addition to creating a new duty for the Government to publish data on children in low income houses, the [Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016](#) removed the income related targets. They were replaced with measures to improve the life chances of children. The Act also placed a duty on the Secretary of State to present an annual report containing data on children living in workless households and on the educational attainment of pupils at the end of key stage 4 (age 16).

The Social Mobility Commission has a central role in this reporting. Its remit includes responsibility for monitoring progress towards improving social mobility in the UK and promoting social mobility in England.

### Cross-sectoral cooperation

The current UK Government, (in office since July 2016) established a Cabinet Committee for Social Reform. It will oversee and agree social policy reforms and lead initiatives to increase social mobility, deliver social justice and make Britain a country that works for everyone. The Committee brings together the Secretaries of State from nine government departments. Members are the:

- Prime Minister
- Chancellor of the Exchequer
- Home Secretary
- Lord Chancellor, Secretary of State for Justice
- Secretary of State for Education
- Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
- Secretary of State for Health
- Secretary of State for Work and Pensions
- Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
- Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
- Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

## 4.3 Strategy for the social inclusion of young people

### Existence of a National Strategy on social inclusion

There is no single strategy to promote the social inclusion of young people; however this does not mean that it is not considered important.

The key strategies which promote the social inclusion of young people are:

- Social Mobility Strategy - [Opening doors, breaking barriers: a strategy for social mobility](#) (April 2011)
- Participation Strategy – [Building Engagement, Building Futures](#) (December 2011)
- Social Justice Strategy – [Social Justice: transforming lives](#) (2012)
- Child Poverty Strategy – [Child Poverty Strategy 2014 to 2017](#) (2014).
- [Unlocking Talent, Fulfilling Potential](#) (2017)
- [Civil Society Strategy](#) (2018)
- [Social Mobility Commission Strategy 2019](#)

The following section concentrates on the actions in these strategies which apply to young people – it does not attempt to cover the entire strategies in a comprehensive manner.

### Scope and contents

#### Social Mobility Strategy

[Unlocking Talent, Fulfilling Potential](#) (Department of Education, 2017), published under May's Conservative, sets out the government's overarching ambition of leaving no community behind, as it was highlighted in the [2017 State of the Nation](#) that there is a widening geographical division in the UK (see the section on '[Main challenges to social inclusion](#)' in the article on 'General Context'). Hence, the paper emphasises on the importance of raising standards, and putting social mobility at the heart of their education policy in order to achieve such ambition.

Similar to the previous strategy, the plan identifies four key lifestage ambitions to help contribute towards their overarching ambition to ensure no one is prevented from achieving their potential:

- firstly, to close the 'word gap' in the early years;
- secondly, to close the attainment gap in school while continuing to raise standards for all;
- thirdly, to have high quality post-16 education choices for all young people;
- and for everyone to achieve their full potential in rewarding careers.

The plan emphasises on how a good standard of education is imperative to improving social mobility and inclusion, but it also extends beyond education, and stresses that in order for their framework/plan to be successful, it is also necessary for everyone in wider society to collectively work towards achieving equality of opportunity. These actors include educators, businesses, and civil society.

#### Participation Strategy

In 2013, the Department for Education published statutory guidance for [local authorities](#) entitled [Participation of young people: education, employment and training](#). The guidance outlined the responsibilities of local authorities with respect to securing sufficient and suitable education provision for young people in their respective areas; raising the participation age; and promoting the participation of vulnerable young people not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Note: in 2013 and 2015, the participation age was raised to 17 and 18 respectively. Young people are now expected to participate in: full-time education or training; or part-time education or training, alongside volunteering.

Following the [English Apprenticeships 2020 vision document](#), published in December 2016, which stated the government's plan to increase the quality and quantity of apprenticeships by 2020, the government has:

- Announced a [£10 million boost to degree apprenticeship](#) opportunities to increase the number of degree apprenticeships available to young people, in order to provide more opportunities for young people to actualise their potential, and gain workplace skills and qualifications together.
- Worked in partnership with employers, universities and colleges to [offer over five thousand new opportunities](#) and career fields for apprentices.
- Launched the ['GetInGoFar' campaign](#) in May 2016, which demonstrates to young people how with an apprenticeship they can 'go far', in some cases up to degree level. Ultimately, inspiring young people to consider apprenticeships post-16 education.

### Social Justice Strategy

In March 2012, the Government published [Social Justice: Transforming Lives](#), which outlined a new approach to tackling poverty. It set out the view that the problem is not solely caused by income poverty alone, and that the focus on income over the last few decades has ignored the root causes of poverty, allowing social problems to deepen and become entrenched. The strategy set out the following principles which informed its approach:

- a focus on prevention and early intervention
- interventions which focus on recovery and independence, not maintenance
- promotion of work, for those who are able to work, as the most sustainable route out of poverty, while offering unconditional support for those who are severely disabled and cannot work
- designing and delivering solutions at the local level
- interventions which provide a fair deal to the taxpayer.

Chapter Two of the strategy focuses on young people. It outlines what is being done to support young people from the most disadvantaged backgrounds. This includes helping schools support their poorest pupils via the pupil premium (see the information about the pupil premium in the article on ['Support Measures for Learners in Early Childhood and School Education'](#) in the Eurydice [description of the education system in England](#)) and keeping children engaged in mainstream education through measures to tackle bad behaviour, absenteeism and the causes and impacts of exclusion. It also discusses measures to help those at greatest risk, including young offenders and those involved in gangs and children experiencing poor mental health.

Furthermore, the [Race Disparity Audit](#), published in October 2017, identified minority groups at risk of social exclusion. Thereafter, the government launched the ['Ethnicity Facts and Figures' website](#) which provides analysis of the audit's findings and data. The aim of the audit was to not only gain clarification of how ethnicity affects people's life chances and how they are treated across areas such as education, employment, health, crime, and benefits, but also, to provide transparency and awareness of race inequality in the UK. The data has provided sufficient data to assess the differences between ethnic groups, understand what areas have large disparity gaps, and to inform the development of the government's future strategies and policies.

As a result, the government has already [launched a series of programmes](#) to address the disparities reported in the audit.

- The Department of Work and Pensions are targeting 16 to 24 year ethnic minorities in twenty hotspots from becoming NEET, by providing mentoring schemes, traineeships, vocational training and workplaces.
- The Ministry of Justice will be implementing recommendations made by the [Lammy Review](#) (an independent review of the criminal justice system treatment and outcomes of ethnic minorities).
- The Department of Education will conduct an external review of practice in exclusions, focusing on groups disproportionately likely to be excluded.

### Child Poverty Strategy

The [Child Poverty Strategy](#) was published in 2014 and builds upon the [2011 Strategy](#). The strategy stated the government's commitment to eradicate child poverty by 2020. It sets out the actions to be taken between 2014 and 2017 to tackle child poverty through:

- supporting families into work and increasing their earnings
- improving living standards
- preventing poor children becoming poor adults through raising their educational attainment.

The strategy meets the duties set out in Section 2 of the [Child Poverty Act 2010](#) (see the section on '[Main concepts](#)' in the General Context article).

### Responsible authority

See the article on '[Administration and Governance](#)'.

### Revisions/Updates

#### Child Poverty Strategy

The government has decided not to publish a Child Poverty Strategy for 2018 to 2021. In September 2017, the Department for Work and Pensions stated the government [repealed their requirement under the Child Poverty Act 2010 to publish a child poverty strategy. The government believes to tackle the root causes of poverty and disadvantage and promote social mobility, a new approach is required, which 'goes beyond the safety net of the welfare state'](#). Hence the new approach consists of measures to aid in parental worklessness and promote children's educational attainment, as these areas will in turn 'make a big difference to disadvantaged children'.

As a result, the government has proceeded with the [Troubled Families Programme](#), (see the section on '[Programmes for vulnerable young people](#)' in the article on 'Inclusive programmes for vulnerable people' for more information), and in 2020, it was announced that the Programme will be receiving [£165m in funding](#) to ensure it continues for another year.

Additionally, the Government has published '[Improving Lives: Helping Workless Families](#).' It provides a framework on how the government will improve children's outcomes, targeting specifically, children who face multiple disadvantages. It identified indicators and measures to track progress on areas like parental conflict, debt and homelessness which affect children and families' outcomes. For more information, see section '[Programmes for vulnerable young people](#)' in the article on 'Inclusive programmes for young people'.

## 4.4 Inclusive programmes for young people

### Programmes for vulnerable young people

The Troubled Families programme, Life Chances Fund and Children's Social Care Innovation Programme all specifically target vulnerable young people.

In addition, all the strategies aimed at reducing social inequality (described in the article on '[Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Young People](#)') prioritise support for vulnerable young people.

The systems for providing formal and non-formal education, and youth justice, all have a central role to play in fostering social inclusion.

### **Troubled Families**

The [Troubled Families Programme](#) is a programme of targeted intervention for families with multiple problems, including crime, anti-social behaviour, truancy, unemployment, mental health problems and domestic abuse. One aim of the programme is to tackle issues before they require costlier interventions. Staff funded by the programme identify 'troubled families' in their area and usually assign a key worker to each family, acting as a single point of contact. The Government uses a 'payment-by-results' model to incentivise positive outcomes. This involves both an upfront attachment fee to local authorities and a reward payment for each family that shows sustained improvement across set criteria or moves into continuous employment.

£448 million was allocated to the first phase of the programme which ran from 2012 to 2015. The second phase of the Programme was launched in 2015, with £920 million allocated to help an additional 400,000 families. In 2020, the programme received £165 million in funding to ensure it continues running for another year, until March 2021.

Evaluation has indicated that the programme has reduced the number of Looked After Children, as well as the number of custodial sentences and convictions. The 2019 cost-benefit analysis suggested that the programme had resulted in economic and fiscal benefits to the taxpayer and wider society. These benefits had mainly been realised through reductions in the number of Children in Care and youth offending.

### **Improving Lives: Helping Workless Families**

The Government published '[Improving Lives: Helping Workless Families in April 2017](#)'. It identifies that children from workless families are often faced with other multiple, complex problems, like parental conflict, poor parental mental health, and parent alcohol and drug dependency, as they tend to overlap with parental worklessness. These issues in turn, affect children's and families outcomes and prevents them from fulfilling their full potential. The policy paper provides a framework on how the government will improve disadvantaged children's and families' outcomes, this includes:

- Setting the next phase of the Troubled Families Programme,
- Reduce parental conflict through a new programme delivered locally by specialised organisations
- Improve the Jobcentre Plus' services by providing more personalised services for Jobseekers and to efficiently address their needs, strengthen partnerships with local authorities, wider public service and the public sector, and circulate information more effectively
- Implementing a trial of the Individual and Placement Support approach which tackles alcohol and drug dependency, by providing them support to go back into employment, building a network to help them, and treatment.

In 2019, the Department for Work and Pensions published '[Improving Lives: Helping Workless Families Indicators 2019](#)', which was used to track progress in tackling disadvantages affecting families' and children's outcomes.

### **Life Chances Fund**

The [Life Chances Fund \(LCF\)](#) is an £80m fund provided by central government to help people in society who face the most significant barriers to leading happy and productive lives. It provides top up contributions to outcomes-based contracts involving social

investment, referred to as [Social Impact Bonds](#) (SIBs). These contracts must be locally commissioned and designed to tackle complex social problems over six themes:

- drug and alcohol dependency,
- children's services,
- young people,
- early years,
- older people's services,
- and healthy lives.

Targeted policy callouts will invite applications to the themes across three staggered intervals. The fund launched in July 2016 and will run for nine years through to March 2025. The Life Chances Fund has [awarded over £760,000](#) to local commissioners and service providers to develop the Social Impact Bonds that tackle social issues, like drug and alcohol dependency amongst disadvantaged young people and help support children's services.

The use of SIBs should make it easier for voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations (VCSEs) to access the investment they need to increase the size of their project. An example of SIB funding is the [2016 Youth Engagement Fund](#) of £16 million. The ultimate aim of the fund is to improve employment prospects of disadvantaged, vulnerable, young people by paying for positive education and employment outcomes. This will improve their employability and in turn, reduce long-term benefits dependency and likelihood of offending, as there is a strong link between poor educational achievement and chances of offending. A list of the projects supported by the third and final round of funding was [announced](#) in September 2018.

An [evaluation report](#) of the Youth Engagement Fund was published in May 2020, and found that overall the interventions delivered appear to have been implemented successfully. The services provided were found to be effective in engaging young people, in particular the quality of the coaching/mentoring. However, there were also limitations to the support, as the providers did not necessarily support the most disadvantaged young people in the area, and focused primarily on supporting young people rather than also addressing the wider factors that affect whether young people become NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training).

### **Children's Social Care Innovation Programme**

In 2013, the Department for Education launched the [Children's Social Care Innovation Programme](#), aimed at developing, testing and sharing effective ways of supporting children who need help from social care services to ultimately help improve social care for the future. The programme was extended in 2016 with £200 million of government funding committed over four years. More information about the programme, and its main delivery partner, the Spring Consortium, can be found on the Innovation Unit [website](#).

### **Youth justice system**

The [Youth Justice Board](#) oversees the youth justice system in England and Wales; its principal aim is to prevent offending. It is a non-departmental public body which was created by the [Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#).

The youth justice system in England and Wales is made up of a network of organisations that work together to administer justice and support children and young people. This network consists of:

- [youth offending teams](#) (YOTs) (multi-disciplinary teams which work young people that get in trouble with the law)
- local partnerships made up of partners from the police, probation services, local authority children's services and health services

- the police and the Crown Prosecution Service
- the courts and the judiciary
- secure accommodation providers.

There are various prevention programmes that work to keep young people, especially those who are vulnerable, away from crime. They are run within local communities, and can involve parents and families.

Participation is voluntary, and does not begin before the young person themselves and their parents confirm and agree to what will be expected of them. This is set out in an Intervention Plan. Many programmes are run by the relevant local authority's youth offending team or by other local organisations, such as youth charities.

From 2018 to 2021, priorities include:

- national standards for youth justice
- improving local practice
- resettlement and transitions between services
- safety and education in custody
- Secure Schools
- the disproportionate representation of children from some black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds in the youth justice system
- serious youth violence reduction

Furthermore, the Home Office released the [Serious Violence Strategy](#) in April 2018. It addressed how the Government will be responding to the increase in serious violence - knife crime, gun crime and homicide. It sets out a programme that focuses on young people and early intervention to 'catch young people before they go down the wrong path.' See section 'Serious Violence Strategy' in the article on '[Current Debates and Reforms](#)' for more information.

## Education

For programmes within the education system aimed at vulnerable young people, see the section '[Educational support](#)' in the article 'Social inclusion through education and training' for further information.

Local authority programmes for vulnerable young people

[Local authorities](#) have a youth support team (or similarly named group) responsible for supporting young people most at risk of not making a successful transition into adulthood. They are generally multi-disciplinary teams consisting of youth workers and family support, health and careers specialists, social workers, police and probation officers. They may offer advice, support and guidance in the following areas:

- health
- housing
- sex and relationships
- youth justice (see above).

Under statutory duties, local authorities have to provide services and activities that improve the well-being of young people, and those with learning difficulties to age 24.

## Other programme providers

A number of charities provide services which target vulnerable young people to aid their social inclusion, including (but not limited to):

- [Action for Children](#), which provides practical and emotional support for young people to help them build the skills they need to successfully transition to adulthood.
- [Transitions UK](#), which supports disadvantaged young people aged 14 to 25 years to help them become healthy, happy and fulfilled adults.
- The [Explore programme](#) (part of The Prince's Trust) which supports disadvantaged young people aged 16-25, by encouraging them to develop the motivation, self-confidence and skills they need to change their lives.

For further information, please visit each charity's website. The following section focuses on government programmes.

## Funding

Funding mechanisms are described where the programme / intervention is mentioned above.

## Quality assurance

Programmes focusing on young people's social inclusion tend to have built in evaluation and quality assurance procedures. For example:

- A comprehensive, independent audit of the first phase of the Troubled Families Programme was undertaken; the [final report](#) was published in 2016 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- A [second evaluation of the Troubled Families Programme 2015 to 2020](#) was published in 2019.
- An evaluation was undertaken of the [Children's Social Care Innovation Programme](#) prior to the commitment of second phase funding.
- The [Youth Justice Board](#)'s remit includes quality assurance. It has published [National Standards for Youth Justice services](#) and reports to the Department for Justice on compliance with these standards.
- Schools must account for how they spend their [Pupil Premium](#).

## 4.5 Initiatives promoting social inclusion and raising awareness

### Intercultural awareness

The stated aims of the [National Citizen Service](#) (NCS) (see the chapter on '[Voluntary Activities](#)') are very much about supporting young people's development of intercultural awareness, understanding and acceptance of other cultures. This is summarised in the [National Citizen Service Act, 2017](#) which places a duty on the NCS:

enabling participants from different backgrounds to work together in local communities to participate in projects to benefit society.

Additionally, the [British Council](#) facilitates intercultural awareness for young people in education, the arts, and society. As an international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities, they work with more than 100 other countries. They enable people in the UK and other countries to share knowledge, create and develop connections and build links and trust between one another, by providing English language materials, exchange programs to work or study abroad, and research.

Intercultural awareness is also an integral part of the [school curriculum](#). All schools must provide a curriculum which is balanced, broadly-based and promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society.

## Integrated Communities Strategy

[The Integrated Communities Strategy](#), published in March 2018, sets out a plan to 'tackle the root causes of poor integration' in order to create a more integrated and united Britain. [The Integrated Communities Strategy green paper](#) announced £50 million will be utilised to:

- support the new Cohesion and Integration Network,
- support new migrants and resident communities to integrate into the community,
- ensure all children and young people are prepared for life in modern Britain,
- increase opportunities for all young people, whatever their background,
- support teachers to promote British values and integration
- mitigate residential segregation,
- increase economic opportunities, in particular, for ethnic minorities and women,
- increase the number of apprenticeships,
- and challenge practices that hinder integration and equal rights.

In July 2018, the new Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government [announced](#) a new £7 million '[Integrated Communities Innovation Fund](#)', to contribute towards the Integrated Communities Strategy and address the causes of poor integration and support projects that will encourage integration. An additional £3 million [was subsequently announced](#) in May 2019 to support additional projects.

The [Integrated Communities Action Plan](#), published in February 2019, builds upon the Integrated Communities Strategy green paper and sets out the government's next steps for building strong integrated communities.

## Young people's rights

### Human rights

Relevant legislation setting out rights which cover both young people and adults includes:

The [Human Rights Act 1998](#) gives a clear legal statement of citizens' basic rights and fundamental freedoms.

The [Equality Act 2010](#) extends previous equality legislation in order to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all. Under the Act, the following are 'protected characteristics' (the categories to which the law applies): age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. Protection from discrimination is valid in schools, colleges, work places, clubs, youth service, hospitals, and council services.

The [Data Protection Act 2018](#) controls how an individual's personal information is used by organisations, businesses or the government. It updates the UK's previous data protection laws to be more appropriate for the UK's digital economy and society, hence it repeals the [Data Protection Act 1998](#). It applies the [EU's General Data Protection Regulation](#) (GDPR) into UK legislation in preparation for when the UK leaves the European Union. The Act broadens the scope of individual's data and information it protects to all general data, law enforcement data, and national security data, in order to protect the privacy and rights of individuals. Individuals are given more power and control of their data: to know what data is held about them, how it is being used, and when it should be deleted. The Act provides further protection to children's data; the [Information Commissioner's Office](#) provides a [summary](#):

- to process children's data online, children, aged 13 and over, can provide consent without parental consent (unless it is for a preventative or counselling service);

- when processing data of children under the age of 13, reasonable efforts must be made to verify the person providing parental consent holds parental responsibility for the child;
- privacy notices and processes must be designed to allow children to easily understand and access, to exercise their data protection rights, and erase their personal data;
- if the original processing was based on consent when the individual was a child, erasure of that data when requested must be complied; and
- children’s personal data for marketing purposes, user profiles or creating personality, have specific protection..

The [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#) gives individuals the right to access recorded information held by public sector organisations. The [Information Commissioner's Office](#) provides advice for education providers on how to comply with the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts.

## **Key initiatives to safeguard democracy and prevent radicalisation leading to violent extremism**

### **Prevent duty**

The Prevent Duty is the duty placed on specified authorities (including [local authorities](#), early years providers, schools and higher and further education establishments) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. It has three specific strategic objectives:

- responding to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat posed by those who promote it
- preventing people from being drawn into terrorism and ensuring they are given appropriate advice and support
- working with sectors and institutions where there is a risk of radicalisation.

Specific guidance for [early years providers and schools](#) and [further](#) and [higher](#) education institutions is available. Prevent is one of four strands of [CONTEST](#) (the UK Government’s 2011 counterterrorism strategy). It was made a statutory duty by the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#).

To assist implementation of the duty in Section 26 of the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#), the Home Office has produced a [Prevent e-learning training package](#). It contains introductory training and is aimed at the education sector. Models for other sectors are under development. It provides a foundation from which to develop further knowledge around the risks of radicalisation and the roles involved in supporting those at risk.

In addition, the Home Office maintains a catalogue of [PREVENT training courses](#).

### **Counter-Extremism Strategy**

The [Counter-Extremism Strategy](#), published by the Home Office in October 2015, sets out the government’s strategies to counter all forms of extremism. The Strategy covers how the government will work across departments and ministries, individuals and groups across Britain to defeat extremism. The Strategy acknowledges to achieve this, it involves preventing radicalisation of young people, they plan to do this by:

- Providing young vulnerable people opportunities and experiences to feel social inclusion and a sense of belonging;
- Addressing the lack of ‘belonging’ and integration felt particularly by young people and women by creating more cohesive communities;
- Running a national programme which provides information and support for young people about the risks of online radicalisation,

- Ensuring schools promote British values and safeguard pupils from extremism and radicalisation;
- Broadening the work of the National Citizen Service (See section on '[Intercultural awareness](#)' above).

### **Building a Stronger Britain Together Programme**

To deliver the goals set out in the [Counter-Extremism Strategy](#), the Home Office launched the [Building a Stronger Britain Together \(BSBT\) programme in September 2016](#). BSBT is a partnership between the government and civil society and community organisations that help counter extremism and radicalisation. Organisations bid for in-kind support and grant funding for programmes they provide that align and contribute to the Counter-Extremism Strategy goals. [An additional £770,000 of funding was awarded](#) to groups in 2019, with a cumulative spend of £9 million awarded to groups since the programme's inception.

A [Progress Report](#) was published in October 2019, outlining what BSBT has delivered to date as well as presenting interim findings from an independent evaluation of its effectiveness. The report shows that evidence to date provides indicators of the positive impact of BSBT across each target outcome. A full assessment of the four years years of delivery of the BSBT programme is due to follow this report in 2020.

### **Channel – a multi-agency approach to preventing radicalisation**

[Channel](#) is a police-led multi-agency approach, within the PREVENT strategy, to protect people at risk of radicalisation. Channel uses existing collaboration between local authorities and statutory partners, as reflected on the Safeguarding Board: schools; health, police, youth offending services, youth services, children's social care and education. All partners are required to:

- identify individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism
- assess the nature and extent of that risk
- develop the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned.

The aim of Channel is to safeguard children, young people and adults, and to prevent them from being drawn into committing terrorist related activity. It aims to ensure that vulnerable children, young people and adults of any faith, ethnicity and background receive support before their vulnerabilities are exploited by those who want them to embrace terrorism and before they become involved in criminal terrorist activity.

The Channel guidance makes it clear that there is no single way of identifying who may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Contributory factors can include: peer pressure (including online influence), bullying, crime against them or their involvement in crime, anti-social behaviour, family tensions, race/hate crime, lack of self-esteem or identity and personal or political grievances.

### **School resources**

The Government believes that an education that promotes fundamental British values will give young people the ability to challenge and resist the influence of extremist views. In November 2014, it published guidance on promoting British values for [local authority maintained schools](#) and [independent schools \(including academies and free schools\)](#).

From September 2015, [Ofsted](#), the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills, the body responsible for school inspection in England, has had to assess the arrangements schools have in place to promote pupils' welfare and prevent radicalisation and extremism. In July 2015, the Department for Education (DfE) published [a guide to help schools understand the techniques terrorist groups use on social media](#).

## Higher education resources

The Office for Students (OfS) provides [information for higher education institutions](#) as they comply with their Prevent duties. This includes links to resources and support material and details of how OfS monitors [compliance](#).

## 4.6 Access to quality services

### Housing

[Local authority](#) social service departments are responsible for supporting young people with housing needs. They support those under 16 years of age who are in conflict with their parents and feel forced to leave home and have a duty to provide accommodation for a young person who is homeless. The [Children Act 1989](#) considers a young person to be homeless if:

- no-one has parental responsibility for them
- they are lost or abandoned
- the person who has been caring for them is unable to continue to provide suitable care and accommodation
- they are at risk if the local authority does not provide accommodation for them (applies to 16 and 17 year olds).

Almost all 16 or 17 year olds who have nowhere to live will be classed as 'in need' and receive support from the local authority social services department. Social services carry out a needs assessment to decide on the type of help the young person is entitled to.

While this decision is being made, social services must provide accommodation if the young person in question has nowhere else to stay. The type of provision made available depends on personal situation, what is available in the area and how much it costs. The accommodation offered could include a room in a hostel, foyer, Nightstop scheme or self-contained accommodation; details of each of these are provided below.

### Hostels

Emergency hostels for single homeless people provide purpose-built accommodation where they can stay for a short time. Some emergency hostels only provide accommodation for women, young people or those who have been sleeping on the streets for a long time.

### Foyers

[Foyers](#) offer affordable accommodation for young people, usually between the ages of 16 to 25, who are homeless or in housing need, and want to develop skills and prepare for living independently. Foyers vary in size and the amount of support they offer. Some are converted houses which can house up to 20 people. Others are in larger purpose-built hostels that can house up to 100 people.

Young people living in a foyer must sign up to an education and training programme based on the skills they already have and the type of work they are interested in doing. Foyers usually work closely with careers services and training agencies. Some foyers also have job clubs for non-residents. Many have arrangements with local employers who may be able to provide work experience, apprenticeships and eventually permanent jobs.

### Nightstop schemes for young people

[Nightstop](#) schemes provide free temporary accommodation for people aged between 16 and 25 in the homes of volunteer families usually for one night at a time. Homeless young people are provided with a private bedroom in a family home, an evening meal and breakfast. The young person can use all the facilities, including a washing machine, but will be asked to leave after breakfast.

Volunteers are checked and trained by [DePaul UK](#), a charity that works with young homeless people.

### Self-contained accommodation

In rare cases, homeless young people may be offered self-contained accommodation. If this happens, social services should also provide support to help with managing a tenancy, advice on budgeting, paying bills, claiming benefits and being a good tenant and neighbour.

### Housing benefit and Universal Credit

[Universal Credit](#) is a welfare benefit which began a phased introduction across the United Kingdom in 2013. It replaced six means-tested benefits and tax credits: income based Jobseeker's Allowance, Housing Benefit, Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, income based Employment and Support Allowance and Income Support. It is only available to those over 18 (and under [state pension age](#)) who are not in full time education or training.

Young people making a new claim for Universal Credit receive a programme of intensive support. The '[Youth Obligation Support Programme](#)' (YOSP) supports 18-to-21 year-olds to gain the motivation, skills and experience to move into work. Young people on the YOSP are supported by the DWP's Jobcentre Plus network into sector based work academy places, traineeships and helped to apply for apprenticeships (see the article on '[Integration of Young People in the Labour Market](#)' for full details). Payment of welfare benefits is dependent on the young person taking part in a work placement or preparing to begin an apprenticeship or traineeship after six months. [Published statistics](#) indicate that there were 63,000 participants on YOSP between Oct 2018 and April 2019 with almost 2 in 3 participants who complete the programme finding work.

Linked to this, since April 2017, the housing element of Universal Credit (or Housing Benefit if the claimant has not moved on to Universal Credit) is no longer being paid to young people aged 18- 21. The stated rationale is to ensure 'young people in the benefits system face the same choices as young people who work and who may not be able to afford to leave home'. The [Universal Credit \(Housing Costs Element for claimants aged 18 to 21\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2017](#) specify the categories of young people who will be exempt from the removal of the housing costs element of Universal Credit. These exemptions include: those who may not be able to return home to live with their parents; certain claimants who have been in work for 6 months prior to making a claim; and young people who are parents. The House of Commons Library has published a [briefing](#) on the withdrawal of the entitlement from 18- to 21-year-olds.

### Social services

[Local authorities](#) are responsible for delivering social services for young people. In most authorities, they are provided under the following headings:

- children and young people
- health, well-being and adult social care.

The relevant strategies and initiatives are described throughout this chapter.

### Health care

Young people aged under 16 (or aged 16, 17 and 18 and in full-time education) are entitled to free prescriptions, dental treatment (including check-ups), eye tests and vouchers for glasses and free wigs and fabric supports (e.g. surgical brassiere). 16 and 17-year-olds who are not in full time education, but are on a low income, are entitled to free dental treatment and may qualify for support with other National Health Service treatments.

The Government commissions research into the health and well-being of 14- year-olds living in England which allows for comparisons over time. Results from the [Longitudinal](#)

[Study of Young People Cohort 2: Health and Wellbeing at Wave 2](#) were published in July 2016. Two fundamental themes emerged from the study:

- Year 10 (age 14) students in 2014 were markedly more 'work focused' than their counterparts in 2005
- there were signs that the mental wellbeing of year 10 students – particularly that of girls – had worsened and that young people felt less control over their own destinies.

### **Mental health**

[CYPMHS](#) (children and young people's mental health services) are the NHS services that work with children and young people who experience difficulties in their emotional or behavioural wellbeing. They are multidisciplinary teams, often consisting of:

- psychiatrists
- psychologists
- social workers
- nurses
- support workers
- occupational therapists
- psychological therapists (this may include child psychotherapists, family psychotherapists, play therapists and creative art therapists)
- primary mental health link workers
- specialist substance misuse workers.

Young people might be referred to CYPMHS to help them deal with disorders or issues, such as anxiety; autism; behavioural problems; bullying; depression; eating disorders; obsessive compulsive disorder; psychotic disorders, including schizophrenia; and alcohol and substance abuse.

CYPMHS are locally organised. The current commissioning arrangements for them are complex. They are commonly described as inpatient, community and universal services, although in some places an older 'four tier' model is still used. The tier model defined the system in terms of the services that provide the care. In practice, this has sometimes led to a focus on service boundaries meaning that children and young people have to fit the services, rather than the services fitting the changing needs of the child or young person.

The [Social Justice Strategy](#) (Department for Work and Pensions, 2012) includes poor mental health as a cause of some of the behaviours displayed by some children who experience disadvantage. It outlines clear links between poor mental health and poor school attendance, and shows that effective treatment for mental health problems can lead to improved behaviour and attainment at school.

Such findings have led to a new plan for improving young people's mental health. Indeed, following a Ministerial Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce, [Future in Mind](#) was published in March 2015 by the [Department of Health and Social Care](#). The report makes a number of proposals that the government wishes to see by 2020. These include:

- tackling stigma and improving attitudes to mental illness
- introducing more access and waiting time standards for services
- establishing 'one stop shop' support services in the community
- improving access for children and young people who are particularly vulnerable.

In line with these proposals, NHS England is developing a major service transformation programme over the five years to 2020 to significantly re-shape the way mental health

services for children and young people are commissioned and delivered across all agencies. Further information is available from the mental health pages for children and young people pages of the [NHS England website](#).

Furthermore, in January 2018, the then Prime Minister, [promised](#) to tackle loneliness in the UK. It is recognised that loneliness affects all groups of people, and the [Office for National Statistics](#) also [highlighted](#) that certain groups were more likely to feel lonely than others, this includes younger people. As a result, May formed a Cross Government Ministerial Group on Loneliness, which comprises of representatives from Government departments. Tracey Crouch, the Minister of Sport and Civil Society, and a team within the [Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#) are supporting the delivery of the government's strategy and plans. The Ministerial Group's responsibility is to strategise and research an appropriate approach to inform the government's future policy to reduce loneliness, and create and manage a dedicated loneliness grant fund to help. In June 2020, a [Tackling loneliness](#) briefing report was published, explaining the strategy and steps taken so far by the Government. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on loneliness is also considered, alongside the measures introduced by the Government in response. More information can be found in the section on 'Loneliness Strategy', in the article on [Current Updates and Reforms](#)'.

## Financial services

There is no legal age limit for opening a bank account, but a bank manager can decide whether to allow a child or young person to open an account. It is a criminal offence to send people under 18 years of age material inviting them to borrow money or obtain goods or services on credit or hire purchase. However, those between 14 and 18 years can enter into a credit or hire purchase agreement, if an adult acts as their guarantor.

It is possible to borrow money at any age, but access to loans may be limited because a lender will not usually be able to take a young person to court if they break the terms of a loan. This is because a contract entered into when one of the parties is aged under 18 is not considered legally binding. Under-18s can be added to an adult's credit card as an authorised user or may apply for prepaid cards, but they will not be given their own card.

## Money and Pensions Service

The [Money and Pensions Service](#) came into existence in early 2019, as a new money guidance body, merging the functions of the Money Advice Service (MAS) with the Pensions Advisory services and Pension Wise.

MAS previously brought together a large number of stakeholders to draw up a strategy to improve financial capability across the UK. The [strategy](#), launched in October 2015, aims to improve people's ability to:

- manage money well, both day to day and through significant life events
- handle periods of financial difficulty.

It has a focus on developing people's financial skills and knowledge, and their attitudes and motivation. This, combined with an inclusive financial system, can help people improve their financial well being. The strategy sets a number of priorities to better support young people:

- Improve understanding of the different capabilities or barriers faced by post-school young adults in managing money and making key financial decisions
- Identify effective approaches to supporting young adults affected by welfare reform
- Identify effective approaches to support young adults impacted by changes to student finance both during their studies and after they graduate
- Trial financial capability interventions with leading employers of young adults.

The strategy discusses children in care, young care leavers, young careers, and young adults as vulnerable and in need of extra support to acquire financial capability. It also

discusses the challenges faced by young adults as they transition towards independent living (between 16 to 18 and continuing to their mid-20s). Two of the key themes of the strategy relate to [children and young people](#) and [young adults](#).

In January 2020, The Money and Pensions launched a new UK-wide [Strategy for Financial Wellbeing](#), the ten-year framework which will help achieve the vision of everyone making the most of their money and pensions. One of the big themes of the strategy is for 2m more children and young people getting a meaningful financial education.

### Financial Conduct Authority

The Financial Conduct Authority ([FCA](#)) is the independent financial regulatory body in the United Kingdom which is financed by charging fees to members of the financial services industry. It publishes a series of occasional discussion papers on specific issues relevant to the FCA's work. Two of these papers, although not focused on young people, are of interest here:

- [Access to Financial Services in the UK](#), which discusses barriers people face in accessing financial services.
- [Consumer Vulnerability](#), which aims to broaden understanding and stimulate interest and debate around vulnerability.

### Quality assurance

The services, described above, are monitored and evaluated to ensure they are of high quality and provide best value.

### Health and Social Care Services

The [Care Quality Commission \(CQC\)](#) is the independent regulator of health and social care in England and is responsible for inspecting all registered health services provided to children. For Healthcare Organisations, organisations are inspected against a basket of measures which give ratings for Safety, Effective, Caring, Responsive and Well-led. For Children's Services there are specific initiatives which include:

The Child safeguarding and looked after children inspection programme

- Evaluating the quality and impact of local health arrangements for safeguarding children.
- Improving healthcare for children who are looked after.

[Joint Targeted Area Inspection Programme \(JTAI\)](#) (in partnership with Ofsted, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, HM Inspectorate of Probation and, where relevant, HM Inspectorate of Prisons):

- Evaluate the effectiveness of front-line safeguarding
- Assess how well the different agencies work together.

[Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) inspections](#) (jointly between CQC and Ofsted) evaluate implementation of the reforms introduced by the Children and Families Act 2014. They assess how well education, social care and health services work together in partnership to identify those children and young people (aged 0 – 25) who have SEND and/or a disability. Also how well they assess their needs and meet their needs.

The multi-agency approach is further reinforced in [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#), A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (July 2018).

### Housing

Services are quality assured through requirements for local authorities to:

- Take account of the impact of health and safety hazards in housing on vulnerable occupants, including children, when deciding on the action to be taken by landlords to improve conditions.
- Safeguarding vulnerable young people, including young people who are pregnant, leaving care or a secure establishment.

### Financial Services

The Money and Pensions Service (an arms-length government body sponsored by the Department of Work and Pensions) commissions a [Financial Education Quality Mark](#), delivered through Young Enterprise. This signals quality-assured financial education resources that:

- Have been developed in consultation with a teacher of educationalist and tested with young people
- Have dedicated theory of change and evaluation plan
- Have principal focus on financial education
- Include opportunities for structured learning
- Are engaging and relevant for young people
- Are clearly written and easy to use
- Contain accurate, up to date information and be free of branding.

The Money and Pensions Service has plans to work to promote and expand use of the Quality Mark for resources in all UK nations and for vulnerable children and young people beyond purely school settings.

## 4.7 Youth work to foster social inclusion

### Main inclusive Youth-Work programmes and target groups

A duty (under section 507B of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)) is placed on local authorities to promote the well-being of persons aged 13- 19 by securing access for them to sufficient educational and recreational leisure-time activities and facilities so far as is reasonably practicable. This age range rises to 24 years for those with learning difficulties. Local authorities are also expected to provide more targeted services for vulnerable young people. This includes teenage pregnancy advice, youth justice teams, drug and alcohol misuse services and homelessness support.

Details of other target groups and programmes are provided in the article on '[Inclusive Programmes for Young People](#)'.

## 4.8 Current debates and reforms

### New Youth Charter

In April 2019, the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#) announced the development of a [New Youth Charter](#) to set the vision for young people over the next generation and beyond. It aims to give young people a voice in decision making, and reaffirm the Government's commitment to youth policy.

This charter focuses on issues relevant to social inclusion such as 'combating serious violence and knife crime and addressing mental and physical health challenges'.

### Loneliness Strategy

Based on information provided by the [Office of National Statistics](#), the strategy on loneliness will target all groups experiencing loneliness, but the strategy will also

specifically target groups that were highlighted in the analysis, which includes young people. The ONS [found](#) younger people (16 to 24 year olds) were significantly more likely to report feeling lonely. The Strategy's aim is to 'reduce the risk, prevent loneliness or intervene early, before loneliness becomes entrenched'.

Currently, DCMS and the Office for Civil Society are in the consultation process, requesting specialist organisations in tackling loneliness to provide their opinions and expertise knowledge to help shape and develop the strategy framework and develop indicators of loneliness.

Additionally, DCMS [announced](#) new funding of £20 million available to charities, organisations and community groups, it consists of:

- An £11 million 'Building Connections Fund', available for those who can help bring communities together, and local businesses and services that contribute to tackling isolation;
- A £5 million fund by the Big Lottery Fund and the government, and £1 million by the Co-op Foundation, available specifically those who tackle loneliness among young people;
- A £5 million fund by the People's Postcode Lottery, which will be used to further contribute towards existing grants given to charities that address loneliness;
- And the Health Lottery contribution of £4 million, for charities that work to improve social links in disadvantaged areas across England.

Future updates on their strategy development and announcements can be found on [their GOV.UK page](#).

### **Serious Violence Strategy**

In April 2018, the Home Office announced the government's plans to address the recent increases in serious violence: knife crime, gun crime and homicide, in the [Serious Violence Strategy](#). To tackle the root causes of serious violence, the Strategy emphasises law enforcement is not sufficient, but a cross-departmental approach (which includes education, social services, and health for example), is required.

The Strategy is structured on four key themes:

- tackling county lines and misuse of drugs;
- early intervention and prevention;
- supporting communities and partnerships;
- and an effective law enforcement and criminal justice system.

The Strategy identifies risk factors for serious violence: the individual, family, school, community and peer group. Hence, the Strategy emphasises on early intervention and prevention for young people to tackle the root causes of serious violence. The Strategy describes the government next actions and commitments:

- The Home Office will provide £11 million through the [Early Intervention Youth Fund](#). This fund will be used to support young people by providing them with skills and tools to have the opportunity to live violent-free lives. This funding will be used for 2018 to 2019 and 2019 to 2020. In July 2018, the Home Office revised this fund, and have decided to [double it to £22 million](#).
- Provide more funding for young people's advocates, who work with gang-affect young women and girls.
- Build partnerships between schools and the Police.
- A collaborative effort between the Department of Education, Home Office and Ofsted to explore what can be done to support schools with potential crime risks.

- Provide £13 million over the next four years (pending the next Spending Review) through the Trusted Relationships Fund, to trial approaches that support at risk children and young people. It will provide them with the opportunity to develop trusted relationships with adults that support them. Some of the funding has been allocated to projects and have been to be [successful](#).
- Continuation of the Troubled Families Programme till 2020. (More information can be found in section '[Programmes for vulnerable young people](#)' in the article 'Inclusive programmes for young people'.)
- The launch of a media campaign, [#knifefree](#), to raise awareness about the risks of carrying knives to young people.

## 5. PARTICIPATION

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In December 2017, the Government launched a five-year, [Democratic Engagement Plan](#), which is an overarching strategy to increase democratic engagement across all groups. The Plan does make specific provisions to increase youth participation and civic engagement.

In the 2018 [Civil Society Strategy](#) the government further outlined plans to engage meaningfully with young people when creating policy or designing programmes which affect them.

Additionally, since 2018 the Government has promoted [National Democracy Week](#), to celebrate democracy and raise awareness about the UK's democratic process and institutions to excluded groups, those who face barriers to participation and those less likely to be registered. Gov.uk also provides [resources](#) for young people on democratic engagement and voter registration.

There are many other opportunities for participation, including the UK Youth Parliament, Youth Steering Group, National Young Inspectors Programme and local authority youth voice structures, youth panels and engaging in mock trials. These and other initiatives are described in this chapter.

### 5.1 General context

#### Main concepts

There is no official definition of youth participation. This article adopts a broad definition of participation:

- It can be referred to the political participation of young people, where as active citizens, take part in, express views on, and have decision-making power about issues that affect them. This typically takes place in formal structures and institutions of representative democracy.
- It can also be used to refer to young people's civic engagement and participation in society in general, or their communities; this includes, volunteering, national service and political activism.

In line with this definition, the UK Government's ambition is to ensure that all young people have the tools and opportunities they need to fulfil their potential, regardless of their background or life circumstances.

The [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#) (DCMS) is the government department responsible for youth policy. The [Office for Civil Society](#), which is located within DCMS, holds policy responsibility for youth services - charities, social enterprises and voluntary organisations and, with specific relevance to youth, aims to ensure that:

- high quality opportunities are provided for young people to build their skills and networks outside of school,
- young people's voices are heard, and
- the value of youth services is advocated and, by supporting the youth sector to adapt and transition to a tighter financial landscape, the sector will be able to continue to deliver high quality services for young people.

However, there is overlap between government departments, and cross-departmental effort is required in developing, implementing and delivering youth related policies and initiatives successfully. For more information, visit '[Administration and governance](#)' in Chapter 4.

## **Institutions of representative democracy**

England is a constituent part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The United Kingdom is a Parliamentary democracy which has a constitutional sovereign as Head of State.

Unlike the devolved administrations, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, which were granted devolved powers in 1998, England has no separate government of its own. Legislation for England is passed by the United Kingdom Parliament in Westminster, London.

Parliament is the legislature and the supreme legal authority in the UK which can create or end any law. Parliament consists of:

- the Sovereign (currently the Queen) in Parliament,
- the appointed or hereditary House of Lords, and
- the publicly elected House of Commons.

The [House of Commons](#) is the lower house, where most of the work of Parliament is conducted. It is composed of 650 elected members, known as Members of Parliament (MPs), 533 of which represent English constituencies. Note, however, that a review of parliamentary constituencies is currently underway; proposals include reducing the number of elected members in the House of Commons to 600, with England being allocated 501 seats out of these. The Boundary Commission [report](#) was published in September 2018, and more information can be found on the Boundary Commission for England 2018 [website](#).

The Prime Minister selects a Cabinet of Ministers, and these, together with the civil servants working in government departments, form the executive.

The structure of local government varies across England:

- In some areas, there are two tiers which have distinct functions, but overlap in some matters. These are known as county councils and district, borough or city councils.
- In other areas, unitary authorities carry out all local government functions. There are three main types: unitary authorities in areas outside the main conurbations; London boroughs; and metropolitan boroughs.

Information on the structure and functions of local government in England is provided by the 2018 House of Commons Library Briefing Paper [Local Government in England: Structures](#).

The first-past-the-post system, a simple plurality system in which each constituency across the UK returns one MP, is used to elect MPs to the House of Commons and for local elections. The Closed Party List system is used to elect Members of the European Parliament. Details of these different voting systems can be found on the [UK Parliament website](#).

Voting is not compulsory in the UK, although the issue has been discussed in the context of falling rates of turnout, as highlighted in a 2015 [House of Commons Library Briefing Paper](#).

Voting can take place in person, by ballot; by post; or, in certain circumstances, by proxy. Further details on ways of voting are on the [GOV.UK](#) website.

## 5.2 Youth participation in representative democracy

### Young people as voters

A person must be 18 or over to vote in all types of elections in England. This also applies to referendums. A person must register in order to be able to vote and is then placed on the electoral register (also known as the electoral roll). Registration to vote takes place from the age of 16. This may be done [online](#).

There are no special provisions in the electoral rules for young people or specific groups of young people, although students who are at a university or college in a different area (called a constituency) to their home address can register in both constituencies. They may only vote in one of these constituencies at a general election, but if the home and university addresses are in two different [local authority](#) areas, they may vote in local elections in both.

### European Parliament election

[UK turnout](#) in the 2019 European Parliament election was 36.9%. This was higher than the 35.4% recorded in 2014, but lower than the 38.2% recorded in 2004. No age breakdown is available.

### Local elections

Local elections are held at different times for different local council areas. The most recent local elections were held in June 2019. For more information and data, a briefing paper of the [Local Elections 2019](#) was published, by the House of Commons Library. There are no age banding statistics available.

### Referendum on membership of the European Union

According to the Electoral Commission's [data](#), overall turnout in the referendum held on 23 June 2016 on the UK's membership of the European Union was 72.2 per cent. Based on post-election sampling it has been [reported](#) that the turnout for 18-24-year-olds was 64 per cent.

### UK General Election

[Research](#) published by the British Election Study Team in 2018 found that turnout by age in the 2015 and 2017 elections ranged from between 40% and 50% among the youngest voters to over 80% among the oldest. Polling [research from Ipsos MORI](#) suggests that turnout in 2019 ranged from 47% among 18 to 24-year-olds up to 74% among over-65s. This is a [wider gap](#) than in 2017, when the same pollsters measured turnout at 54% and 71% respectively in these age groups. However, Ipsos MORI caution that it uses pre-election survey data to derive these turnout estimates, which for several reasons it describes as one of the "hardest challenges" of analysing such data.

[Data](#) published by [YouGov](#), which based their findings on a survey of over 40,000 adults, found that as in the 2017 election, age continued to be the biggest dividing line in the 2019 election. The data indicates that little has changed on this front over the past two years, with Labour still winning a majority of younger voters and the Conservatives remaining more popular among older Britons.

A [study](#) by the Electoral Commission found that one of the main drivers of lower levels of completeness of the electoral registers in 2015 remained age:

Age	Completeness
65+	96 per cent
55-64	93 per cent
45-54	90 per cent
35-44	82 per cent
25-43	70 per cent
20-24	67 per cent
18-19	65 per cent
16-17	45 per cent

Young people, who are more likely to move frequently from one address to another, are less likely to be registered.

The lowest rate of registration is in the category known as 'attainers' (16-to 17-year-olds who will reach the voting age within the twelve-month period starting on 1 December after they make their application to register). For the 18-19 year olds, there was also a statistically significant drop of nine percentage points since the previous year. This is associated with the transition, in June 2014, to a system of individual electoral registration (IER), replacing the previous 'head of household' registration system.

The Commons Library Briefing Paper on [political disengagement, published in September 2018](#), reported:

- young people reported lower levels of knowledge about politics than other age groups;
- young people were less likely than other ages to participate in political activities, to be on the electoral register; and
- to vote in elections.

## Young people as political representatives

There is no legislation governing young people as members of political parties. The age at which they can join, other eligibility criteria and the benefits of membership are matters for the parties' own rules.

In the 2019 briefing paper [Membership of UK Political Parties](#), the data stated that 18-24 year olds make up between 4 to 6 per cent of the membership of the main political parties.

Young people as candidates

Candidates for European and UK Parliamentary elections and for local elections must be 18 years old or over. There are no quotas for young people.

Of the Members elected to Parliament in [2019](#), 49% of MPs elected were aged over 50. Members aged 18-29 and those over 70 each represented 3% of the total.

There are no functions reserved for young people.

## 5.3 Youth representation bodies

### Youth parliament

[British Youth Council](#) (BYC) is an umbrella organisation, consisting of a variety of national and local youth organisations. Its mission is to empower young people to become involved in politics and contribute to decision-making regarding youth-related policies. BYC provide opportunities for young people (25 and under) to inform and influence policies that affect them locally, nationally and internationally.

[The UK Youth Parliament](#) (UKYP) was launched at the House of Commons in July 1999. It is a UK-wide initiative run by the [BYC](#). Any young person aged 11 to 18 can stand for election. Each local authority (LA) across England represents a UKYP constituency. Each constituency has a minimum of one Member of the Youth Parliament (MYP) elected as a representative to UKYP. The numbers of MYPs in each constituency depend upon the numbers of young people in that area, e.g. Warwickshire has four MYPs, whilst Southampton has only one. There are over 364 elected MYPs. An MYP must stand down on his/her 19th birthday. The term of office is one year. All MYPs meet once a year at the UK Youth Parliament Annual Sitting.

UKYP aims to give young people a voice, which will be heard and listened to by local, regional and national government, providers of services for young people and other agencies who have an interest in the views and needs of young people. As well as the Annual Sitting, there is a Sitting in the House of Commons, regional meetings, dialogue with Ministers and Opposition spokespeople and inputs to policy and programme development. There is a rolling programme of activities, events, campaigns and projects across the year.

The annual debate in the House of Commons chamber is chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. MYPs debate five issues chosen by a '[Make Your Mark](#)' ballot of young people from across the UK, and then vote to decide which two issues should become their priority campaigns for the year ahead (one UK-wide and the other a priority campaign for England). The [last session of the Youth Parliament](#), on the 8th November 2019.

Climate change was declared the top concern with over 800,000 people voting for this issue via the Make Your Mark ballot. You can read about the other issues covered and watch the sessions [here](#). The next session will be held in November 2020.

As Members of the Youth Parliament are elected from [local authority](#) areas, they also receive support and funding from local authorities' budgets.

### Youth councils and/or youth advisory boards

There are a variety of structures representing young people at a local level. Local authorities are encouraged to operate youth voice vehicles, which allow young people to have their say on issues. Many local authorities do have such bodies, and these can include shadow youth councils, young mayors, young inspectors and young citizens panels. It is up to the local authority to decide what structures to put in place.

These bodies can be run on either a contracted out basis or by local authorities themselves.

Around the beginning of each year, many local authority youth voice vehicles run local elections, in which young people are voted into positions as representatives of the youth population in that area.

Additionally, BYC coordinates the [Local Youth Council Network](#), which consists of over 620 youth councils. Their responsibilities include, but are not limited to, representing young people's views to decision makers, campaigning, sitting on local scrutiny panels, and running the [Youth Opportunity Fund](#).

## Higher education student union(s)

The National Union of Students ([NUS](#)) is a voluntary membership organisation. It is a confederation of around 600 students' unions, amounting to more than 95 per cent of all higher and further education unions in the UK. Through the member students' unions, which are constituted under the [Education Act 1994](#), it represents the interests of more than seven million students.

NUS UK is governed by a combination of National Conference, the National Executive Council and the NUS UK Board with a leadership network made up of elected representatives, appointed trustees and permanent staff.

[National Conference](#) is the head policy making body of NUS UK. Delegates are elected from each local students' union that is an affiliated member of NUS to represent students' views on a National level.

The [National Executive Council](#) is the interim policy making body between meetings of the National Conference for issues which need addressing. It is also the main scrutiny and accountability body for NUS officers and work carried out under the policy zones (see below).

The [NUS UK Board](#) is responsible for the management and administration of NUS UK. It provides direction for the long term plans of the organisation.

The [National President](#) is the national voice of students and is the chair of the three bodies above.

The activities of the NUS cover five policy zones:

- further education
- higher education
- society and citizenship
- union development
- welfare.

The role of each zone is to lead a portfolio of work, enable in-depth and wide ranging research and discussion on issues important to students, and deliver campaigns and work programmes relevant to that area. Each zone is led by a vice president elected at the NUS National Conference and a committee elected at the Zone Conference held in late October.

In addition to policy zones there are four liberation campaigns that exist autonomously within NUS:

- Black Students
- Disabled Students
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans students (LGBT+)
- Women

These liberation campaigns host their own annual conference and determine their own policy.

Students' unions are usually [funded](#) in one, or a combination, of the following ways:

- per capita union fees – an amount paid per student, which may come from the college or university
- block grant - a lump sum, usually paid in termly instalments, generally paid by the college or university itself.

The NUS itself is funded through the fees paid by the member students' unions to affiliate themselves.

## School student union(s)

There is no top-level body representing secondary school students. Whilst the Government has powers to prescribe regulations for school councils, it has so far preferred encouragement to prescription and it is up to individual schools to decide how to involve students in the life of the school. School Councils, representative groups of students who have been proposed and elected by their peers to represent their views and raise issues with the leadership and governors of the school are common, but not formally organised into networks.

See '[Non-formal and informal learning](#)' for further information.

## Other bodies

The [British Youth Council](#) works to empower young people and promote their interests at a local, national, European and international level; and to promote the increased participation of young people in society and public life (see '[Actors](#)' in the article 'Young People's Participation in Policy-Making' and above). In 2016, the UK Government confirmed continued funding until 2020 in support of BYC's '[Youth Voice](#)' programme, which includes the UK Youth Parliament (see '[Youth parliament](#)'). For more information, visit the Youth Voice [webpage](#).

The [Youth Voice Leadership Development Programme](#), a BYC flagship event, brings youth representatives from across the UK together for training courses to help develop their leadership skills, that will support them become successful representatives for their peers and community.

The [Youth Select Committee](#) (YSC) is a British Youth Council initiative, supported by the House of Commons. There are eleven committee members, aged 15-18, and include Members of the UK Youth Parliament, Youth Councillors and representatives from each of the devolved nations. The YSC receives induction training and mentoring from parliamentary Clerks and British Youth Council staff.

## 5.4 Young people's participation in policy-making

### Formal Mechanisms of Consultation

The United Kingdom is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child ([UNCRC](#)). Article 12 of the UNCRC affirms that:

'States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.'

In practice, this involves an emphasis on consulting young people and encouraging their involvement in local democratic processes and decision making.

Specific reference to Article 12 of the UNCRC is made in 2012 [statutory guidance](#) issued by the Secretary of State for Education under [Section 507B](#) of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#). This relates to local authorities' duty to secure services and activities for young people aged 13 to 19, and those with learning difficulties to age 24, to improve their well-being.

The guidance states that local authorities:

'...must take steps to ascertain the views of young people and to take them into account in making decisions about services and activities for them, in line with Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). They should establish and maintain structured arrangements for doing so. To inform continuous improvement, these arrangements should enable young people to inspect and report at least annually on the quality and accessibility of provision. As appropriate they should also be involved actively in service design, delivery and governance. Young people should receive the

support they need to participate, ensuring representation of the full diversity of local young people, and those who may not otherwise have a voice.'

Consultations may take place through the representative bodies dealt with in '[Youth representation bodies](#)', but other methods are also used, including online consultations, focus groups, street interviews and surveys. The use of social media has become increasingly common in consultations, as this is regarded as a particularly suitable means of engaging young people's interest.

Revised general [consultation principles](#) issued by the [Cabinet Office](#) in January 2016 for use by government departments, advised them to:

Consider whether informal iterative consultation is appropriate, using new digital tools and open, collaborative approaches. Consultation is not just about formal documents and responses. It is an on-going process.

The Cabinet Office stated its own intention to 'use more digital methods to consult with a wider group of people at an earlier stage in the policy-forming process'.

The Department for Education issued [statutory guidance](#) on listening to and involving children and young people in 2014.

Consultations are ad hoc, rather than following a fixed schedule.

## Actors

[Youth representation bodies](#), youth organisations, young advisors/experts and individual young people, may all be involved in consultations.

The main public authorities involved are government departments, government agencies and local authorities. Also playing a role are:

### Children's Commissioner for England

The post of [Children's Commissioner](#) was established under the [Children Act 2004](#) which gave the Commissioner responsibility for promoting awareness of the views and interests of children. The [Children and Families Act 2014](#) strengthens the remit, powers and independence of the Commissioner and also strengthens the Commissioner's responsibilities towards children in care and other vulnerable groups.

The Commissioner is responsible for the rights of all children and young people until they are 18 years old, or 25 years old, if they have been in care, are care leavers or have a disability.

Some of the ways the Commissioner involves children and young people in its work are:

- Research: This is based on what children and young people say. The Commissioner and staff consult children and young people who have experience or knowledge of particular issues, both individually and in groups. Their views inform the Commissioner's decision-making and recommendations.
- Young people advisory groups: among the groups is Amplify, an advisory group of 30 young people aged from 11 to 18 years. Amplify has three whole group meetings a year and smaller groups meet to advise the Commissioner or to work on specific issues.
- Young expert groups: there are two young expert groups - one for children with care experience and one for the Commissioner's communications work.
- Participation Network: this is made up of organisations, services and groups that directly work with children and young people and promote Article 12 of the UNCRC. It includes schools, colleges, youth groups, children in care councils and voluntary and community organisations. The Commissioner ensures that groups that support disabled children and young people, those seeking asylum or who have been in trouble with the law, are included.

- The Children’s Commissioner organises an annual ‘[Takeover Challenge](#)’ in conjunction with children’s newspaper, [First News](#), which organisations across England open their doors to children and young people to take over adult roles. Takeover puts children and young people in decision-making positions and encourages organisations and businesses to hear their views.

### **The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Youth Affairs**

The [All Party Parliamentary Group \(APPG\) on Youth Affairs](#) is one of a number of informal groups of Members of both Houses of Parliament with a common interest in particular issues. The APPG on Youth Affairs is coordinated by the [British Youth Council](#) and exists to: raise the profile of issues which affect and concern young people; encourage dialogue between parliamentarians, young people and youth services; and encourage a coordinated and coherent approach to policy making on youth affairs.

The group has around 70 members and meets several times throughout the year, often inviting a Minister to join it.

### **British Youth Council**

The British Youth Council ([BYC](#)) is an independent UK charity run for and by young people which works to empower young people and promote their interests at a local, national, European and international level; and to promote the increased participation of young people in society and public life. BYC has secured government funding until 2020 to support its ‘[Youth Voice](#)’ initiative, which includes the Youth Parliament (see ‘[Youth parliament](#)’). BYC is a membership organisation, bringing together approximately 230 separate organisations that work with young people locally, nationally and internationally. BYC provides a range of youth participation services to young people in England so they can influence public decision making at a local and national level. As well as the Youth parliament, these activities include:

- [Youth Select Committee](#) – annual inquiries (mirroring the organisation of House of Commons Select Committees) into issues that young people care about to influence policies.
- [Young Mayor Network](#) - a body that gives directly-elected young mayors the chance to support each other and come together.
- [Local Youth Council Network](#) - local youth councils are forums that represent the views of young people at a local level.

The [Youth Select Committee](#), is a BYC initiative, supported by the House of Commons. There are eleven committee members, aged 15 to 18, and include Members of the UK Youth Parliament, Youth Councillors, a Young Mayor, and reserved seats and representatives from each devolved nation. It forms part of the Youth Voice programme run by the BYC. It enables young people to participate on a national level – hold inquiries into issues that they care about to influence policies.

From 2019 BYC also leads in the implementation of [three commitments arising from the Civil Society Strategy](#) to encourage young people to participate in making national policy, including a Youth Steering Group, a Young Inspectors Group and Digital Youth engagement research.

### **Information on the extent of youth participation**

There is no central source of data or statistics on the level of young people’s participation in policy consultations.

Good practice in involving hard-to-reach groups includes making consultation documents available in different language versions or in children and young people’s versions. An example of this is a young people’s [call for evidence](#) from a consultation run in February and March 2016 on peer support and emotional well-being. Suggestions for good practice

at local level are included in the Local Government Association [guide to engagement](#). They also published [A Councillor's Workbook on Engaging with Young People](#).

In January 2016, the Cabinet Office issued updated general [consultation principles](#) for use by other government departments and stated:

'We will use more digital methods to consult with a wider group of people at an earlier stage in the policy-forming process. We will make it easier for the public to contribute their views, and we will try harder to use clear language and plain English in consultation documents.'

## Outcomes

In 2019, a total of [838,288 young people voted on UK topics and 840,322 young people voted on devolved topics](#) in the annual 'Make Your Mark' ballot. The ballot decides what Members of the UK Youth Parliament should debate and vote on to be their campaign for the coming year. See '[Youth parliament](#)' for further information.

The national campaigns chosen through the ballot produce national outcomes as well as local outcomes. For instance, the [Youth Select Committee](#) produces a report on the national campaign topic, which then receives a formal Government response. Protecting the environment was the number one issue voted for, with 399,652 votes.

Consultation feedback is usually in the form of a published government response to the consultation or a commissioned analysis. Feedback on how responses will contribute to policy-making may also be provided through relevant organisations involved in the consultation. In some cases, a specific version of the response is issued for children and young people, which focuses on their participation.

## Large-scale initiatives for dialogue or debate between public institutions and young people

The Children's Commissioner organises an annual '[Takeover Challenge](#)' in which organisations across England open their doors to children and young people to take over adult roles. Takeover puts children and young people in decision-making positions and encourages organisations and businesses to hear their views. The latest [#TakeoverChallenge Day](#) takes place on 29 November 2019. An estimated 100,000 children and young people across England took over in 1000 organisations, as part of Takeover Challenge in 2017 and 2018.

A component of the Takeover Challenge is the '[Whitehall Takeover](#)', in which children in the care of local authorities and care leavers were handed the reins. Twenty-two Secretaries of State and Ministers in departments ranging from the Ministry of Justice and the Home Office to the Foreign Office, as well as hundreds of MPs, 14 Permanent Secretaries and the highest ranking senior servants, all took a back and put children in charge. Children and young people represented Ministers at top meetings, worked with civil servants on new policies, asked the questions that mattered to them and spoke at high profile events.

NHS (National Health Service) England has a [Youth Forum](#) which aims to provide a voice for young people. It is made up of up to 25 Young People recruited from all over the country and linked into a Facebook network of hundreds more young people. The young people work in partnership with NHS England, Public Health England and the Department of Health to improve health services for young people. The NHS Youth Forum Impact Report 2013-2017 is available [here](#). At the time of writing (September 2020), this is the most recent report available.

In 2020, the NHS Youth Forum worked on several COVID-19 responses, including [updating PHE guidance](#) on shielding to make it relevant and accessible for young people and led social media campaigns such as [#mycovid19pledge](#).

## 5.5 National strategy to increase youth participation

### Existence of a national strategy to increase young people's political and civil society participation

In December 2017, the Government launched a five-year [democratic engagement plan](#), to increase democratic engagement across all groups. The Plan does make specific provisions to increase youth participation and civic engagement.

Additionally, the Government [launched](#) National Democracy Week, which takes place annually. [National Democracy Week](#), is to celebrate democracy and raise awareness about the UK's democratic process and institutions to excluded groups, those who face barriers to participation and less likely to be registered. Democracy Week is seen as a focal point for action for young people and as part of 2019's Democracy Week a toolkit has been developed. [The toolkit](#) contains high quality, easy to use activities that have been co-developed with young people and Parliamentarians from different parties, and is non partisan. In 2019, a [youth engagement toolkit](#) for elected and non-elected officials was also published, aimed at engaging 13 to 16 year olds in democratic activities. [Rock Enroll!](#) is another initiative, in the form of an interactive resource pack, designed to encourage young people to register to vote.

The Government's programmes and initiatives are designed to create a social action journey for young people. The elements of this, include the #iwill social action campaign and the National Citizen Service, both of which aim to provide young people with skills for citizenship and community engagement, and which could be considered as a facilitator of political and civil society participation. These, and other initiatives, are dealt with in '[National Programme for Youth Volunteering](#)'.

### Scope and contents

#### Democratic Engagement Plan

The Government's Democratic Engagement Plan, [Every Voice Matters: Building A Democracy That Works For Everyone](#), was published in 2017. It sets out the government's five year plan, of how it plans to build a democracy that works for everyone. The Plan outlines how the government will tackle democratic exclusion and increase participation among under-registered groups. The plan will be implemented from 2017 to 2022.

It's strategy includes:

- building on records of voter registration and identifying what more there is to do,
- encouraging participation to make British democracy more inclusive,
- launching National Democracy Week (see below for more information), and
- identifying barriers that specific underrepresented, and under-registered groups face.

Under-registered groups include:

- overseas voters,
- black and minority ethnics,
- frequent movers and renters,
- young people, and
- those with mental health conditions or disabilities.

#### National Democracy Week

The Government [launched](#) National Democracy Week, which will take place annually. Its inaugural week took place in July 2018. The aim of [National Democracy Week](#), is to celebrate democracy and raise awareness about the UK's democratic process and

institutions, specifically engaging, under-registered groups, excluded groups, and those who face barriers to participation.

The delivery and organisation of the week is a collaborative effort between the National Democracy Week Council Members, the Cabinet Office, and other networks and organisations. A list of the groups can be found on the [GOV.UK site](#).

It sits alongside the Democratic Engagement Plan. See above for more information.

### **Responsible authority for the implementation of the strategy**

The responsible authority for implementation is described where the programme / strategy is mentioned above, if applicable.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

The responsible authority for monitoring and evaluation is described where the programme / strategy is mentioned above, if and where applicable.

### **Revisions/Updates**

#### **Civil Society Strategy: Building a Future that Works for Everyone**

In August 2018, the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#) (DCMS) published their [Civil Society Strategy](#), which emphasised the value of youth participation in politics and civil society, and the Government's commitment to increasing youth participation.

The Strategy sets out plans to strengthen the foundations of social value and other long-term ambitions and plans. It emphasises the five foundations of society: people, places, social sector, private sector and public sector.

The Strategy acknowledges the importance and value of youth participation in politics and civil society, and outlines the Government's plans to increase youth participation. Upon the advice of DCMS, the government's future plans involves systematically changing specific stage in the policy cycle, particularly, policy design and implementation, to include young people. This will ensure young people's voices are communicated and heard across sectors and government departments and structures regarding issues affecting them. There has been no announcement or establishment of a timeframe to implement this.

DCMS also has plans to set up a series of initiatives to facilitate in youth participation and democracy, in their department, this includes:

- a Civil Society Youth Steering Group; whose responsibility will be to oversee policies affect young people; and
- a National Young Commissioners and Inspectors Group; whose responsibilities will include commissioning, monitoring and evaluating programmes and policies that affect young people.
- With respect to future policy, the government will build systems to ensure that young people both have their views heard and are able to play a role in delivery. As a first step, new digital solutions will be explored to enable large numbers of young people to play a role in consultations and programme design across the government.

As part of the commitments to the Civil Society Strategy, in February 2019 [DCMS launched new youth voice projects](#). The projects meet three commitments from the Civil Society Strategy to encourage young people to participate in making national policy and will include a Youth Steering Group; A Young Inspectors Group; and Digital Youth engagement research. The projects will be delivered by a consortium of youth organisations led by the British Youth Council and will run as pilots until March 2020.

30 young people from across England will be recruited for the Youth Groups to be involved in policy development and the monitoring and evaluation of national programmes. Regional partners will be targeting those with little or no youth voice

experience and from seldom heard groups such as young carers and children in care to take part. The Digital Youth engagement research project will explore how digital methods can be used to engage young people in policy making. The project will be led by The Mix, a charity which offers support to young people under 25, providing support and helping the young people design a digital tool that could be used in future to engage more young people in how policy is made.

## 5.6 Supporting youth organisations

### Legal/policy framework for the functioning and development of youth organisations

There is no government-level policy framework specifically for youth organisations.

The framework for the operation of youth organisations and their relationship with government is governed by the overall framework of the [Compact](#), the 2010 agreement between government and the [voluntary and community sector](#) (often referred to as Civil Society). It sets out a way of working that aims to ensure that the government works effectively in partnership with the voluntary and community sector to achieve common goals and outcomes for the benefit of communities and citizens in England. All government departments are signed up to the Compact.

In 2013, Compact Voice, which represents the voluntary sector on the Compact, and the Office for Civil Society, [announced](#) a joint action plan which set out clear activities to strengthen the use of the Compact across government departments. Its implementation across government is overseen by the Office for Civil Society, which supports the Minister for Civil Society who holds policy responsibility for developing a stronger civil society. They, in turn, are part of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport ([DCMS](#)). Prior to July 2016, the Office for Civil Society was part of the [Cabinet Office](#).

There is a great variety of youth organisations of different sizes and governance arrangements, although many operate as charities, under the [Charities Act 2011](#) (see '[Financial Accountability](#)').

### Public financial support

In addition to the Revenue Support Grant given by the Government to [local authorities](#) from which they fund their youth activities (see '[How youth policy is funded](#)'), the Government also provides grant funding to external organisations and activities that address its policy priorities. In a climate of control of public spending, there has been a reduction in such government grant funding and recipients of grants are expected to show that they have alternative financing arrangements in place and that they are sustainable in the longer term.

The government policy defines social action as 'people coming together to help improve their lives and solve the problems that are important in their communities' extends to involving young people in social action. A government [policy paper](#), issued in July 2016, sets out the main means through which the Cabinet Office (responsibility has since transferred to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport) supports organisations to involve young people in social action:

- the [National Citizen Service](#) (see '[Youth volunteering at national level](#)') which presents youth organisations with a wide range of opportunities and benefits;
- the Youth Social Action Fund (see '[Initiatives to increase the diversity of participants](#)'), as part of the [#iwill](#) campaign; and
- funding provided to the [British Youth Council](#) (see '[Actors](#)' in the article 'Young People's Participation in Policy-making').

## Initiatives to increase the diversity of participants

In July 2015, the Minister for Civil Society [announced](#) a new round of funding for organisations working with young people through the Youth Social Action Fund, (now the [#iwill campaign](#)), part of which would be aimed at redressing the lower participation rate of young people from lower socio-economic groups in social action. There is a focus on deprived and rural areas of the country. Furthermore, in DCMS' [Civil Society Strategy](#), it states that the government, and the Big Lottery Fund have provided £80 million to the Youth Investment Fund and the #iwill Fund, which supports voluntary, community based organisations that encourage young people to participate in social action. A breakdown of the funding has not yet been published.

In September 2018, DCMS [announced](#) the government's investment of £5 million to the Uniformed Youth Social Action Fund, to increase places (5,500) for disadvantaged, vulnerable children in uniformed youth organisations. It helps youth organisations launch new groups in deprived areas, enabling children to participate in social action activities, like volunteering. This fund contributes to the goals and promises made in the Civil Society Strategy.

Additionally, the [25 Year Environment Plan](#) by the [Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs](#) (DEFRA), makes specific provisions to help children and young people from all backgrounds 'to engage with nature and improve the environment.'

On 14 December 2016, the Minister for Civil Society [announced](#) the launch of an independent review of full-time social action. Its aim was to understand how to increase young people's participation in full-time social action; by examining at the challenges and benefits of young people committing to full-time social action (defined as more than 16 hours a week for six months or more), and the barriers and opportunities, supporting young people face. A consultation was [launched](#) in September 2017 calling for evidence relating to the benefits and barriers of full-time social action for young people, which closed in mid-October 2017. The Chair of the Full-Time Social Action review, Steve Holliday, published the evidence gathered and made recommendations to the Minister for Sport and Civil Society in a [report](#). The Government [response](#) to the review was published in July 2018.

## 5.7 "Learning to participate" through formal, non-formal and informal learning

### Policy Framework

All maintained schools must meet the requirements set out in section 78 of the [Education Act 2002](#) and promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of their pupils. Academies are subject to the same requirements under [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2010](#).

Through ensuring pupils' SMSC development, schools can also demonstrate they are actively promoting fundamental British values. These, as set out in the Government's 2011 '[Prevent](#)' strategy are:

- democracy
- the rule of law
- individual liberty
- mutual respect
- tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

From 1 July 2015, a wide range of public-facing bodies, including all schools, colleges and universities, became subject to the 'Prevent' duty became law. This is a duty to have due regard to preventing people being drawn into terrorism. Specific guidance (England and

Wales) for [early years providers and schools](#) and [further education institutions](#) and [higher education institutions](#) is available.

Under the [Teachers' Standards 2011](#), teachers must demonstrate that they are not undermining fundamental British values.

- The Department for Education issued [guidance](#) in 2014 on promoting British values in schools as part of their pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.

## Formal learning

Citizenship is a compulsory subject only at key stages 3 (age 11-14, ISCED 2) and 4 (age 14-16, ISCED 3). Although set out as a separate subject in the National Curriculum, citizenship can be taught through other subjects, in particular Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education, which is a curricular requirement. There is no requirement for citizenship to be taught post-16.

The [aspects](#) of citizenship which should be taught to pupils include:

- the roles played by public institutions and voluntary groups in society, and the ways in which citizens work together to improve their communities
- human rights and international law
- diverse national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and understanding
- the different ways in which a citizen can contribute to the improvement of his or her community.

Education for 16 to 19 year olds is qualification-led rather than curriculum-led and the [National Curriculum](#) does not apply to post-compulsory education. In post-compulsory full-time secondary education, aspects of citizenship education may be embedded in the general objectives and values of the education system (see '[Policy Framework](#)'), but there are no requirements for subject-based citizenship teaching.

The qualification most commonly taken by 16 to 19 year olds is the General Certificate of Education Advanced Level ([A Level](#)).

Currently, one exam board, AQA, offers an A Level in [Citizenship Studies](#). The government has a document that outlines the subject criteria for citizenship studies for GCSE and A Level. You can read this [here](#).

The GCSE course in Citizenship Studies builds on the programmes of study in general lower secondary and primary education. AQA describes the [subject](#) as the following:

Citizenship Studies specifications allow students to apply their learning to real-life scenarios on both a local and global scale. Citizenship Studies provides the opportunity for students to work individually to develop their own knowledge and also encourages students to work with others and take part in group activities to bring about a change. From GCSE to A-level our Citizenship Studies specifications offer a clear route of progression, building on the relationship between the individual, the law and the state, and the nature of identities.

Exam boards, [AQA](#) and [Edexcel](#), offer an A Level in Government and Politics. According to both specifications, students will develop skills for citizenship and encourages participation:

### [AQA specification](#):

- At AS Level, students will develop a broad understanding of the UK's political system, with specific focus on People, Politics and Participation, and Governing Modern Britain.
- At A2, there is a broad choice of options for teachers to select, this includes, US Politics and Political Issues: Ideologies in Action.

The [Edexcel specification](#) offers a similar course:

- At AS Level, students will gain an understanding of the existing arrangements and structures that facilitate British representative democracy and participation; and government processes and institutions within the UK.
- At A2 Level, there is a broad choice of options for teachers to select. This includes, UK Political Issues, Political Ideologies, and Global Political Issues.

There are also vocational qualifications available which cover aspects of citizenship, for example the [Certificate in Public Services](#) which includes a unit in citizenship and diversity and the [Certificate of Personal Effectiveness](#) which offers a module in citizenship and community.

Note: Full-time education is compulsory for all young people up to the age of 16. Young people must then opt to do one of the following until the age 18:

- stay in full-time education, for example at a college
- start an [apprenticeship](#) or [traineeship](#)
- spend 20 hours or more a week working or volunteering, while in part-time education or training.

### **Non-formal and informal learning**

The [Education Act 2002](#) gave the Government powers to prescribe regulations for school councils by order but it has so far preferred encouragement to prescription. Encouraging the involvement of students is underpinned by the general principles of the [United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#), and Article 12 in particular, which the Government has regard to (see '[Formal Mechanisms of Consultation](#)').

In statutory [guidance](#) issued in 2014, the Department for Education identified one of the benefits of involving children and young people in decisions that affected them as being that:

It encourages pupils to become active participants in a democratic society - by holding youth parliaments and school councils which develop skills such as co-operation and communication and encourage them to take responsibility.

[Research](#) published in 2007 and carried out for the then Department for Children, Schools and Families, found that nearly all (up to 95 per cent) of schools in England and Wales had a school council. It is up to individual schools to decide whether or not to set up a school council, what form it should take and what powers it should have.

School councils are only one of the possible means of involving students. Schools use surveys and questionnaires on particular issues, or regular general consultation across the school, as well as formal meetings between pupils and staff, pupils and the head and pupils and governors.

The [Association for Citizenship Teaching](#), the professional subject association for citizenship, offers a continuous professional development (CPD) [module](#) in 'Student Voice and Citizenship'. It also provides [resources](#) for teachers to use in their lessons.

Other initiatives/programmes for developing young people's' social and civic competences include:

- the National Citizen Service
- the Duke of Edinburgh's Award
- #iwill
- the Discovering Democracy Award
- Mock trials.

The National Citizen Service ([NCS](#)) is a government-backed initiative that brings together young people aged 15 to 17 from different backgrounds to help them develop greater confidence, self-awareness and responsibility with a view to creating a more cohesive, responsible and engaged society (see '[National Programme for Youth Volunteering](#)' for details of the scheme). Schools and colleges are encouraged to promote NCS to their students as schools and colleges can work with NCS providers to help students develop the skills that will support their economic and social participation. Government backing means that involvement in NCS brings no extra costs to schools or colleges. Each participant pays a contribution of up to £50 and bursaries are available on a case by case basis. Support is provided for young people with additional needs.

Until 2017, the Cabinet Office provided funding for the National Citizen Service (NCS). [European Social Funds \(ESF\)](#) were also used to support the NCS, alongside contributions from programme participants, who pay £50 each. After the passing of the [National Citizen Service Act 2017](#), which made the NCS Trust a Royal Charter Body, the Government provides grant-in-aid funding to the NCS within a strengthened system of accountability. The Government will expand NCS to serve 360,000 participants a year in 2020, at an estimated cost of £1.26bn over the course of the Parliament (ending in 2020). The government [announced in March 2020](#) that the budget (Comprehensive Spending Review) 2020 would be delayed to enable the government to remain focused on responding to COVID-19, therefore there are no further funding figures available at the time of writing (September 2020). The [NCS Annual Report 2018-19](#) states total funding of £55.4m was received by NCS Trust in the four month period to 31st March 2019 which included £55.2m of grant in aid from DCMS.

In October 2019 the NCS rebranded, and expanded its delivery network to include hundreds of partners. The NCS Trust [advised](#) that programme costs are expected to reduce by 30 per cent in real terms by 2024 but has been [criticised by the Local Government Association](#) for receiving a disproportionate amount of government funding while funding for local youth services continues to be cut.

In 2020, the NCS summer programme was adapted to an online programme to align with social distancing rules guidelines due to COVID-19. You can read more about the digital hub, Staying Connected, [here](#).

The Duke of Edinburgh's ([DofE](#)) Award programme is a youth achievement award for 14 to 24 year olds, aimed at fostering social and employability skills. Schools, colleges, universities, youth centres, youth organisations and businesses may become involved in running the programme. Participants are aged 14 to 24 and complete a programme of activities in four or five sections that involve, among other things, helping the community or the environment.

[#iwill](#) is the national campaign youth social action. It is supported by HRH The Prince of Wales and run by the Step Up to Serve charity. Through collaboration and partnership, it promotes the benefits of youth social action, with the aim of involving as many 10 to 20 year olds as possible by the year 2020. #iwill asks for pledges of support from education providers, employers and business leaders, the voluntary sector and public bodies in this work. Details of this are set out in its [pledge](#) guidance document. (See '[National Programme for Youth Volunteering](#)') for further details.

Through collaboration and partnership, the #iwill campaign is 'spreading the word' about the benefit of youth social action, working to embed it in young people's transition to adulthood and creating fresh opportunities for participation. #iwill asks for pledges of support from education providers, employers and business leaders, the voluntary sector and public bodies in this work. Details of this are set out in its pledge [guidance document](#). One of the [key priorities](#) for the #iwill campaign in 2020 is a youth-led communications campaign outlining achievements since it began in 2013, and to explore youth social action growth post-2020. This priority is in the context of Step Up To Serve, the time-limited charity coordinating the #iwill campaign, closing as planned in December 2020.

The government-funded [Discovering Democracy Award](#), run by the British Youth Council, was launched in September 2015. It is an award to recognise exemplar secondary schools which prepare their students to be full and active participants in democratic life from a young age.

The [Bar Mock Trial Competition](#) offers students in years 10 to 13 (ages 14-17) the opportunity to take part in criminal mock trials in real courts. Students take on the roles of barristers and witnesses and present their case against teams from other schools. Their performances are judged by Circuit Judges, Recorders and senior barristers or advocates who volunteer their time. The competition is run by the [Citizenship Foundation](#) and sponsored by the General Council of the Bar of England and Wales, the four Inns of Court and the local Bar Circuits. It has been running since 1991. In that time, more than 53,000 young people have participated in the competition. Further information on the [competition](#) is available from the Citizenship Foundation.

Furthermore, in the [Democratic Engagement Plan](#), it states the government plan to explore further initiatives and programmes to provide extra-curricular education and resources on democratic engagement, through the Suffrage Centenary Fund. (See '[Scope and contents](#)', in the article on 'National strategy to increase youth participation').

### Partnerships

Local authorities (LAs) have a statutory duty (see the article on '[National Youth Law](#)') to secure sufficient services and activities for young people aged 13 to 19 (and those with learning difficulties to age 24) and to improve their well-being. They may provide in-house services, partner with other organisations or commission services. While partnerships are encouraged it is a matter for individual LAs as to what partnerships they engage in.

Funding of any partnerships is through the general budgets of schools and local authorities and not through specific funds.

### Youth work and education

At school level, a National Youth Agency [Commission](#) into the role of youth work in formal education found that forward thinking schools and academies value their role as a hub for the whole community. However, this still represents the minority of schools and there is much scope for greater collaboration between both [education and youth] sectors. In keeping with the Government's localism agenda, there is no uniform, national picture of engagement between them across the country. Increasing numbers of academies means also that autonomy at school level is increased.

The Commission also found that while youth workers were engaging with formal education in a variety of ways, there was a move towards increasingly targeted provision for the most vulnerable young people and away from 'open access' provision.

Typical areas of youth work activity in schools include:

- drop-in programmes
- participation work
- one-to-one support
- advice and guidance
- delivery of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Sex and Relationship Education (SRE).
- See Chapter 10 [Youth Work](#) for more information.

### Quality assurance/quality guidelines for non-formal learning

Participation in schemes such as the Duke Of Edinburgh's award (see Non-formal and informal learning above) can provide [evidence](#) of how these competences are being developed.

## Educators' support

The [Five Nations Network](#) supports sharing of practice in education for citizenship and values in England, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The network is managed by the [Association for Citizenship Teaching](#) and offers workshops, conferences and funding for small research projects.

The Association for Citizenship Teaching ([ACT](#)) is the subject association for citizenship. It is a membership organisation for teachers and others involved in citizenship education. It is the main provider of professional development and networking opportunities, including professional development days, training, an annual conference and tailored programmes of school-based CPD.

An extensive range of citizenship [CPD modules](#) is freely available on ACT's website, as well as teaching [resources](#).

ACT also awards a quality standard for citizenship education and a quality mark for citizenship teaching resources.

The [Citizenship Subject Expert Group](#) comprises teachers from primary and secondary schools, the Association for Citizenship Teaching (ACT), the [Citizenship Foundation](#), the Parliamentary Education Service, [Young Money](#) (formerly known as Personal Finance Education Group), higher education and Initial Teacher Education. Ofsted are also represented at meetings. The Expert Group has compiled a list of [resources](#) for teachers, including resources for post-16.

[Young Citizens](#) developed a collection of [teaching resources](#) for different stages of education, including the 16 to 19 year old category.

The UK Parliament's [Education Service](#) provides free [training and support](#) for trainee teachers and teachers of political literacy-related subjects. Training may be offered via webinars or in schools. Seminars and other CPD events are also held at Westminster as well as courses for trainee teachers and placements. Teaching [resources](#) and lesson plans are also available on the website. The '[Parliament Explained](#)' podcast, produced by the UK Parliament, is a series of six episodes explaining what Parliament is, how it scrutinises the work of the government and how people can get involved with its work. Note, however, that the podcast is not specifically aimed at young people.

The Government has developed an '[Educate Against Hate](#)' website with advice and resources to protect children against extremism and radicalisation.

## 5.8 Raising political awareness among young people

### Information providers / counselling structures

The Office for Civil Society at the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport ([DCMS](#)) has general responsibility for raising political awareness and encouraging political participation. As its remit also includes youth policy, there has been a focus on the engagement of young people.

The [Education Outreach Team](#) of the Education Service of the UK Parliament runs interactive workshops, covering themes ranging from debating to voting and elections, for students aged 7 to 18, in schools around the UK.

The [Electoral Commission](#) is the official regulator of elections. Some of its campaigns, such as promoting eligibility to register to vote, are aimed mainly at young people.

## Youth-targeted information campaigns about democratic rights and democratic values

### Democratic engagement programmes and resources

The Office for Civil Society runs a [democratic engagement programme](#), under which funding was provided in 2014 for the charity [UK Youth](#) to develop an online 'Democracy Challenge' tool, designed by young people.

Together with its young steering group, [UK Youth Voice](#), and in partnership with the Cabinet Office, UK Youth developed a 15-hour group learning [programme](#) for youth workers and others to run with young people aged 16 and over. It is aimed at developing young people's understanding of democracy and voting, and increasing their interest through creative, imaginative and meaningful activities. The programme is considered likely to be most effective when used with young people whose engagement with politics and the democratic process is relatively low, but who have some interest in social and community issues and who care about making a positive change in their communities and beyond.

The Cabinet Office (which was responsible for youth policy before the transfer of responsibility to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport in July 2016) has a range of other democratic engagement resources for young people, developed in collaboration with a number of national organisations. This includes [Rock Enroll](#), a resource pack containing four 45-minute interactive lessons explaining why young people should register to vote, and with an easy-to-read guide to voting and registering to vote.

[UK Parliament Week](#) has been developed by the Houses of Parliament as part of its Outreach and Engagement Service. It is a programme of events and activities and an online conversation to connect people with the UK Parliament. Although the programme is not specifically targeted at young people, there is a [section](#) on the website where one can sign up to receive a kit with ideas for schools and youth organisations to get involved in running or attending events.

In the run up to the UK General Election in May 2017, young voters aged between 18 to 24 were able to book a free place on tours of the Houses of Parliament in Westminster. The move aimed to engage young voters with the democratic process and encourage them to register and vote.

In December 2017, the Government launched a five-year, [Democratic Engagement Plan](#). The Plan does make specific provisions to provide youth-targeted information campaigns on democracy. It states the government plan to explore further initiatives and programmes to provide extra-curricular education and resources on democratic engagement, through the Suffrage Centenary Fund. (See '[Scope and contents](#)', in the article on 'National strategy to increase youth participation').

On 29 June 2017, a House of Lords Select [Committee on Citizenship and Civic Engagement](#) was appointed. Its remit is wider than young people, but on 11 October 2017, it held an evidence session on the civic engagement of young people.

Witnesses were questioned on:

- the current state of civic engagement amongst young people in the UK
- the demographics of the groups that the organisations reach
- the main barriers the organisations called to give evidence face
- how volunteering and social action fits in with democratic engagement and political participation
- how the work of the organisations fits in with the broader citizenship landscape
- the relationship between integration and civic engagement
- examples of best practice in promoting civic engagement amongst young people.

Points raised in the [Select Committee's](#) written evidence included:

- young people should be encouraged to volunteer and provisions should be implemented to facilitate this;
- citizenship study is not embedded throughout education (primary school to university), it is especially important for the young generation to be educated about participation and politics, in the social media and digital age;
- consider electronic voting to encourage more young people to be politically involved and participate; and
- the term 'Fundamental British Values' being counterintuitive, and instead, 'Shared Values of British Citizenship' will be more inclusive to those who are from other countries but are British.

The full Select Committee [report](#) can be found on UK Parliament. The [Government's response](#) to the report was published in June 2018. The Select Committee report helped inform the Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper and the Civil Society Strategy.

### **Voter registration**

In the lead up to the general election in December 2019, [1.5 million young people](#) registered to vote in the UK from October 22nd to November 19th 2019. According to [GOV.uk](#); 1,429,967 of those who registered are under 25, whilst 1,191,756 are 25-34 year olds, bringing the total number of registered 18-34 years olds to 2,621,723.

Additionally, the [National Union of Students](#) (NUS) ran a voter registration campaign which saw elected officers visiting college and university campuses across the country encouraging all students to register to vote before the 26 November deadline.

Ahead of the referendum on membership of the EU, nearly 3 million applications (2,920,092) to register to vote were made between 6 May 2016 (the day after the May elections) and 9 June (the extended deadline for registering to vote in the EU Referendum). A quarter of these were received from young people aged under 25. More than half of the total applications were from people aged under 35.

The Electoral Commission used mobile advertising for the first time in 2015 to directly encourage students to register to vote online. Tens of thousands of students with mobile phones on specific networks received SMS/MMS messages with a link to the website they could register to vote on. In addition, the Electoral Commission re-launched a YouTube advert aimed at encouraging young people to vote.

Online registration, introduced in 2014, has made registration easier, simpler and faster and is more in tune with the digital methods many use to interact with services, particularly young people. Since June 2014, more than 5.6 million applications to register to vote were made by people aged 16-24, 4.3 million of these were made online.

### **Promoting the intercultural dialogue among young people**

Primary responsibility for promoting integration and cultural understanding lies with the [Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government](#) (formerly known as the Department for Communities and Local Government).

Projects funded by the department which focus on young people include:

- [Anne Frank Trust UK](#): an organisation which challenges all forms of prejudice and discrimination among 20,000 young people, and inspires them to become active and responsible members of their community
- [Show Racism the Red Card](#): a project to run workshops for 9400 11-to-18-year-olds in schools across England, to deliver a programme of work designed to combat the influence of the far right on young peoples' attitudes and behaviours.

[The Integrated Communities Strategy](#), published in March 2018, by the Secretary of Education, Hinds, and then, Secretary of Housing, Communities and Local Government,

Javid, replaces the former integration policy. It attempts to devise a plan to 'tackle the root causes of poor integration' in order to create a more integrated and united Britain. [The Integrated Communities Strategy green paper](#) announced £50 million will be utilised to:

- support the new Cohesion and Integration Network,
- support new migrants and resident communities to integrate into the community,
- ensure all children and young people are prepared for life in modern Britain,
- increase opportunities for all young people, whatever their background,
- support teachers to promote British values and integration
- mitigate residential segregation,
- increase economic opportunities, in particular, for ethnic minorities and women,
- increase the number of apprenticeships,
- and challenge practices that hinder integration and equal rights.

In July 2018, the new Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government [announced](#) a new £7 million '[Integrated Communities Innovation Fund](#)', to contribute towards the Integrated Communities Strategy and address the causes of poor integration and support projects that will encourage integration.

Allocation of the funding is yet to be announced.

### **Promoting transparent and youth-tailored public communication**

The UK Government operates within a general system of open government, based on the principle that 'governments and institutions work better for citizens when they are transparent, engaging and accountable.'

Details are in the third [UK Open Government National Action Plan](#), covering the period 2019 to 2021.

In a 2015 report by the [House of Commons Commission on Digital Democracy](#), the [key targets and recommendations](#) outlined included: by 2020, the House of Commons should ensure that everyone can understand what it does by using plain English language and the use of more infographics and visual datas; Parliament should be fully interactive and digital; and by 2016, all published information and broadcast footage should be available online freely for the public. The targets and recommendations contribute toward creating a more open and transparent government (note, however, that the action plan is not specific to young people).

The Commission, which is particularly interested in the role of young people in the UK democracy, [reported](#) in January 2015. Its recommendations included that the House of Commons should take further steps to improve active involvement by young people, which might include:

- encouraging young people to participate in the e-petitions system
- youth issue-focused debates which involve young people and MPs.

It also recommended that the House of Commons, as part of its professional communications strategy should pilot and test new online activities, working with national and local partners, to target and engage specific groups who are not currently engaged in the democratic process. One of the potential target groups identified was 18- to 25-year-olds not at university.

At the time of writing (September 2020) there has been no review of developments from this report.

The [Children's Commissioner](#) for England aims to communicate appropriately:

We always make sure our communication with children and young people is relevant and appropriate. We use methods of communication which children can understand including producing versions of our reports specifically for children and young people.

The Children's Commissioner also has a young expert group to advise on its communications work.

See '[Young People's Participation in Policy-Making](#)' for transparency in decision-making.

## 5.9 E-participation

Online voter registration was introduced in June 2014. This was intended to make the process of registration quicker and easier and to increase registration by under-represented groups, including young people. The system is compatible with all platforms, including smartphones and tablets. In August 2015, [data](#) on the operation of the new individual electoral registration system, which allowed individuals to register online, issued by the Cabinet Office for the UK as a whole, showed that the age group making most use of the service was 25 to 34. In the June 2017 UK General Election, the Electoral Commission [reported](#) that more than 96% of applications to register were made using the online service, and 69 per cent of online applications received between 18 April to 22 May 2017, were from people under 34 years old.

At the time of writing (September 2020) there is no provision for online voting in elections and referendums in the UK. [#Ask the Speaker](#), launched in 2016, gives schools across the UK the opportunity to take part in a live Question and Answer session with the Speaker of the UK Parliament's House of Commons, live from their classrooms. Priority is given to schools in Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland; and in England, specifically, the North East, North West, South West and Yorkshire, and the Humber.

Responses to consultations can commonly be made online (see '[Formal Mechanisms of Consultation](#)').

There is an [online facility](#) for all British citizens and UK residents to create or sign a petition, supported by five other people. Petitions gaining 10,000 signatures get a response from the Government, while those gaining 100,000 signatures will be considered for a debate in Parliament. Petitions can be shared through social media or email.

The Speaker of the House of Commons' Commission on Digital Democracy encourages participation through various social media platforms. There are also online forums, such as the national online forum held with [student representatives](#) from eight Universities in 2014 to discuss the challenges of digital democracy.

The Commission on Digital Democracy, which is particularly interested in the role of young people in the UK democracy, [reported](#) in January 2015. Its recommendations included that the House of Commons should take further steps to improve active involvement by young people, which might include:

- encouraging young people to participate in the e-petitions system
- youth issue-focused debates which involve young people and MPs.

It also recommended that the House of Commons, as part of its professional communications strategy should pilot and test new online activities, working with national and local partners, to target and engage specific groups who are not currently engaged in the democratic process. One of the potential target groups identified was 18 to 25 year olds not attending university.

Furthermore, in a speech, made by the Leader of the Commons, titled, [Strengthening Our Parliamentary Democracy](#), she outlined that e-democracy could be a means to encourage young people to be engaged and participate in politics because of the digital

age we live in: over half of 12 to 15 year olds interested in the news, receive their updates from social media, compared with only 17% who read a newspaper.

## 5.10 Current debates and reforms

### Lowering the voting age

Periodically, the subject of lowering the voting age has been discussed. [Votes at 16](#) is an organisation that campaigns for the lowering of the voting age. The [British Youth Council](#) also campaigns for the voting age to be changed to 16.

In June 2020, the House of Commons released a research briefing that gives details of the calls to change the law. You can read the report [here](#).

### Civic Engagement and Social Action Survey

The results of the Civic Engagement and Social Action Community Life Survey 2019/20 were [published](#) in July 2020. The survey looks at civic participation, activism and consultation, as well as asking questions about how participants feel about levels of involvement in local decisions. The survey found the age groups 16-24 and 25-34 were less likely (15% and 17%) to have engaged in civic consultation than the age groups between 35 and 74 years old (23-25%).

This survey is conducted as part of the Civil Society Strategy to research the ambitions of government to create opportunities for people to change their own lives and the world around them. This could be involving citizens in local decision-making using participatory democracy, or in the design of public service delivery. Responses as a result to the survey have not yet been released.

## 6. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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There is a significant drive to correct the longstanding imbalance between general (academic) education and vocational or technical education and to improve and increase the take-up of apprenticeships. Recent plans and reforms to the 16-19 technical education and skills system within the wider context of the [Government's Industrial Strategy](#) and [Post-16 Skills Plan](#), are among the topics dealt with in this chapter.

### 6.1 General context

#### Main trends in young people's participation in education and training

There is an upward trend in the participation of young people aged 16-18 in education and training.

[Raising the Participation Age \(RPA\)](#). Full-time education is compulsory to age 16. From age 16 until their 18th birthday, young people must participate in full- or part-time education or training. The requirement to participate post-16 was introduced by the [Education and Skills Act 2008](#) in two phases:

- Since 2013, all young people are required to participate in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17.
- Since 2015, this rose to their 18th birthday.

The requirement to participate, according to the [statutory guidance](#) issued to [local authorities](#), does not mean that young people necessarily have to stay on in school. Young people have a choice as to how they participate which can be through:

- full-time study in a school, college or with a training provider
- full-time work or volunteering (20 hours or more) combined with part-time education or training leading to relevant regulated qualifications
- an apprenticeship, traineeship or supported internship (p.16).

The Department for Education (DfE) publishes an annual [statistical first release](#) (SFR) which contains provisional estimates of participation in education, training and employment for the end of the year. These are DfE's definitive measures of participation for 16- to 18-year-olds, and are used to monitor progress against DfE's objectives of raising participation and reducing the number of young people NEET (not in education, employment or training).

Provisional statistics relating to the end of 2019 show that:

- Between 2018 and 2019 the proportion of 16- to 18-year-olds in education and apprenticeships increased by 0.9 percentage points to 81.6 per cent.
- At age 16 the participation rate was 94 per cent and at age 17 it was 87.6 per cent, the highest level since consistent records began.
- Between 2018 and 2019 the proportion of 18-year-olds in education or apprenticeships went up by 1.0 percentage points to 63.4 per cent.
- At end 2019 the provisional estimate of the 16-18 NEET (not in education, employment or training) rate remained stable and is still one of the lowest on record at 6.6% (record low was 6.3% at end 2016).

The Office for National Statistics releases quarterly statistics that include information on young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). The May 2020 statistics [state](#):

The percentage of all young people in the UK who were NEET in January to March 2020 was estimated at 11.2%; the proportion was up by 0.2 percentage points compared with January to March 2019 and up by 0.1 percentage points compared with October to December 2019.

### **Mobility**

Increasing numbers of UK students are gaining international experience during their higher education.

Around half of the outward mobilities which take place in the UK do so within the Erasmus+ programme. [Figures](#) from the Publications Office of the European Union state that 16,868 UK students participated in the Erasmus+ programme in 2018 (report published January 2020)

In [2017/18](#), 17,048 higher education students participated in the Erasmus+ programme in the UK. This is an increase from 14,803 in 2014/15, reflecting a steady upward trend consistently since 2010. Additionally, in 2018 51,427 participants in 741 UK projects benefited from mobility in higher education, vocational education and training, school education, adult learning and youth for a total grant amount of €121.03 million.

Under the Withdrawal Agreement negotiated with the EU, the UK [will continue](#) to participate fully in the current (2014-2020) Erasmus+ as part of the Brexit transition period. According to the European Commission [website](#), the possible participation of the UK in future programmes after 2020 will depend on the outcome of the overall negotiations on the future relationship between the two parties.

### **Inclusion**

The Social Mobility Commission, an advisory non-departmental public body, publishes an annual State of the Nation report. Key points from the [2018-19 report](#) include:

- Social mobility in Great Britain depends greatly on where you live.

- Children from working class backgrounds still suffer significant disadvantage compared to their peers from higher-income backgrounds, starting from birth and through every stage of life.
- Twice the number of disadvantaged 16 to 18-year-olds are in further education than in school sixth forms, meaning further education institutions are a key tool for improving social mobility.
- Apprenticeships could be a powerful vehicle for social mobility, however the reality is not as clear cut. Those from lower socio-economic backgrounds are clustered in lower returning and lower level apprenticeships.
- Once at university, disadvantaged students are much more likely to drop out, due to the costs of studying and cultural barriers.

## Organisation of the education and training system

Reforms since 2010 are changing school governance. The Government is encouraging greater collaboration between schools to raise standards through new structures such as [multi-academy trusts](#) (MATs) and [teaching school](#) alliances. These provide a middle tier of management formerly provided by local authorities. There has been a fundamental shift in the landscape, with [academies](#) (including [free schools](#)) now forming a substantial minority of primary schools and a majority of secondary schools. [Regional schools commissioners](#), appointed by Government, provide additional oversight. Local authorities retain their duty to ensure a sufficient supply of school places, support school improvement and support vulnerable children and young people.

Full-time education is compulsory to age 16. From age 16 to 18, young people must be in full- or part-time education or training. See 'raising the participation age' (RPA) in '[Main concepts](#)'.

The [National Curriculum](#) applies throughout compulsory full-time education but not to education or training from ages 16-19.

The (International Standard Classification of Education) ISCED is divided into stages 0-8:

- ISCED 0 is aged 0-5
- ISCED 1 is aged 5-11 and encompasses Key Stage 1 and 2, the two key stages of primary education. Primary schools are either maintained schools or academies. Most are mixed-sex.
- ISCED 2 is equivalent to Key Stage 3 for 11-14 year olds in secondary education. Secondary schools are either maintained schools or academies and can be either mixed or same-sex.
- ISCED 3 features Key Stage 4 for 14-16 year olds. This stage is attained through GCSE examinations. Following these exams, young people continue to either sixth form college, a further education college or an apprenticeship/traineeship. This stage is attained through A Level exams or Applied General Qualifications in a vocational area.
- ISCED 5-8 refer to higher level education from foundation degrees all the way to doctoral studies.

Outside of higher education, there is a large and diverse range of vocational programmes designed to prepare people for careers and jobs, provide specific skills and ongoing development for people in work, and support career progression. A large proportion of government-supported vocational learning is within apprenticeship frameworks. Workplace training is also funded by employers, through in-company training and learning from independent providers.

Adults who wish to improve their basic skills can take single subject qualifications at different levels. They may also take the Access to Higher Education Diploma, a qualification which prepares people without traditional qualifications for study at

university. Adult community learning extends beyond the youth age group, but also includes it. It provides both non-formal learning and formal learning.

An overview of the education system is provided by the Eurydice national description for England in the article '[Organisation of the Education System and of its Structure](#)'.

Another useful source is [UK Refernet](#) - the UK portal for the ReferNet network which offers comparable information on Vocational Education and Training (VET) across Europe.

## Main concepts

The term early leaving from education or training (ELET) is not commonly used. Instead, the term 'not in education, employment or training' (NEET) is used. The definitions underlying the term used by the Office for National Statistics ([ONS](#)), and reflecting those recommended by the International Labour Office (ILO) are:

Young people - those aged 16 to 24

Education and training – people are considered to be in education or training if any of the following apply:

- they are enrolled on an education course and are still attending or waiting for term to (re)start
- they are doing an apprenticeship
- they are on a government supported employment or training programme
- they are working or studying towards a qualification
- they have had job-related training or education in the last four weeks.

## Employment

'In employment' includes all people in some form of paid work, including those working part-time. People not in employment are classed as either unemployed or economically inactive. Unemployed people are those who have been looking for work in the past four weeks and who are available to start work within the next two weeks. Economically inactive people are those who have not been looking for work and/or who are not available to start work. Examples of economically inactive people include those not looking for work because they are students and those who are looking after dependants at home. Anybody who is not in any of the forms of education or training listed above and who is not in employment is considered to be NEET. Consequently, a person identified as NEET will always be either unemployed or economically inactive.

## Social inclusion

The focus of the current Conservative government, in office since May 2015, is on social mobility. In a [speech](#) on 30 March 2017, the Secretary of State for Education said:

By social mobility I mean stripping away the barriers that anyone faces, so that everybody all over the country, and of many backgrounds, can go as far as their talents mean they're able to, that they get the best and most stretching education or training, and make the transition into and upwards through a great career.

In 2017, a [national plan](#) for improving social mobility through education was published, focusing on closing the attainment gap and the introduction of 'Opportunity Areas'. The 2018-19 [paper on the broader context of social mobility](#) in Britain has a major focus on the education system also. It recognises social mobility has stagnated across the UK in the past four years and outlines the major inequalities that exist across regions.

## 6.2 Administration and governance

### Governance

Overall responsibility for the education service in England lies with the UK Government. Although education is considered a devolved matter, England does not have its own devolved government - unlike Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The UK Government's [Department for Education](#) (DfE) is responsible for all phases of education in England. It has policy-making responsibility for children's services and education, including higher and further education policy, apprenticeships and wider skills.

DfE is supported by 17 agencies and public bodies. These include:

- [Ofqual](#) – the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation, is the independent regulator of qualifications, examinations and assessments.
- [Ofsted](#) – the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills, is responsible for the inspection and regulation of day care and children's social care, and the inspection of children's services, schools, colleges, initial teacher training, youth work, work-based learning and adult education.

While [local authorities](#), schools and other education providers must operate within an overall policy framework set by DfE, the education and training system is characterised by a high level of institutional autonomy.

[Higher education institutions](#) are private bodies that, subject to their degree-awarding powers, are free to design their programmes and awards and to determine the conditions on which they are awarded. They are also responsible for their own staffing, admissions and research.

The [UK Council for Internet Safety \(UKCIS\)](#) is a collaborative forum through which the government, the tech community and the third sector work together to create a safe online environment for all, including young people. It is part of the Department for Culture, Media and Society (DCMS), the Department for Education (DfE) and the Home Office. It expands the scope of the previous [UK Council for Child Safety](#). One of its priority areas is online harms experienced by children and young people including cyber bullying and sexual exploitation.

Further information is available in the articles '[Administration and Governance at Central and/or Regional Level](#)' and '[Administration and Governance at Local and/or Institutional Level](#)' in the Eurydice national description for England.

### Cross-sectoral cooperation

There is a formal structure to facilitate cross-governmental cooperation on ending long-term youth unemployment: the Earn or Learn Cabinet Committee. Its terms of reference are:

To drive progress to abolish long-term youth unemployment by: creating 3 million new apprenticeships; supporting young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET); and ensuring that all young people are either earning or learning.

The Committee is a group of ministers that can take collective decisions that are binding across government. Its [membership](#) includes:

- the Secretary of State for Education
- the Lord Chancellor/Secretary of State for Justice
- the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
- the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions
- the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

It also includes relevant Ministers, such as the Minister for Digital and Culture.

Erasmus+ is the European Union programme for education, training, youth and sport. It focuses on the mobilities of young people in higher education. The [Erasmus+ UK National Agency](#) is a partnership between the [British Council](#) and [Ecorys UK](#) and is a main feature of governance and cross-sectoral cooperation of organisations in the English higher education system.

## 6.3 Preventing early leaving from education and training (ELET)

### National strategy

There is no stand alone strategy for preventing early leaving of education and training in England. More so, numerous policies and strategies exist to engage young people in education, training or the labour market. Many of these are discussed in detail in the section '[Employment and Entrepreneurship](#)'.

The term early leaving from education or training (ELET) is not commonly used in the UK context. Instead, the term 'not in education, employment or training' (NEET) is used. Local authorities have a duty to identify young people not participating so that they can get the support they need. In the [Participation Statutory Guidance](#) it states

Local authorities are expected to act on any information they receive about a young person who has dropped out; contacting them at the earliest opportunity and supporting them to find an alternative place in education, training or employment with training that leads to relevant regulated qualifications.

The vision for technical education, published as the [Post-16 Skills Plan](#) in July 2016, is based on the report of an [independent panel](#) on technical education. The skills plan contains the following commitment regarding those not in education, employment or training (NEET – see '[Main Concepts](#)'):

We will continue to provide support to those young people still not in education, employment or training, including prioritising free or subsidised training for 19–24 year-olds with low-level skills through our adult funding arrangements (p. 31).

For further information on the Post-16 Skills Plan, see [3.3 'Skills Forecasting'](#)

The Department for Education's strategy for 2015 to 2020, published in March 2016, [World-class Education and Care](#) includes as a priority to 'transform the 16-19 skills system so young people can access high-quality technical and professional education, leading to continued education, training, or skilled employment at 19.'

In September 2019, [an open consultation](#) aimed at anyone with an interest in technical education and training for young people and adults in England took place for 12 weeks, as well as 6 consultation events led by DfE. These consultations built on the DfE's commitments in the Post-16 Skills Plan which responded to the recommendations in the Sainsbury Report. Analysis of the consultation responses informed policy development by DfE [outlined](#) in 2020:

- improve the quality of higher technical education on offer
- encourage more people to take higher technical education courses and get high-skilled work
- introduce a national approval scheme, to show which higher technical qualifications meet employers' skills needs

To support reforms to technical education, the government [announced](#) £1.5 billion to upgrade the existing further education (FE) estate in England as announced in the 2020 budget; up to £290m for Institutes of Technology; £2.5 billion for a national skills fund to help adults and employers access training as announced in the 2020 budget.

The Government's 2015 [English Apprenticeships: Our 2020 Vision](#) strategy sets out plans for raising the quality of apprenticeships and achieving three million apprenticeship starts by 2020. A progress report on the [Apprenticeships Reform programme](#) in April 2019 states the government has reached 57% of its target of 3 million new apprenticeships between 2015 and 2020. New employer-led apprenticeship standards have replaced the existing frameworks. Reformed apprenticeships provide substantive training in a professional or technical route, whilst also offering transferable skills and competency in English and maths for all ages.

As a response to COVID-19, the government announced a series of cash incentives for any firm that hires a new apprentice in the [Summer Statement 2020](#). For six months from [August 2020](#), the Government will pay bonuses to companies for hiring new apprentices at a rate of £2,000 for an apprentice under 25, and £1,500 for an apprentice over 25. Apprentices between 16-18 years old already benefit from a £1,000 bonus, so the total available support for these apprentices will be £3,000. Firms will also pay no employers' National Insurance contributions on apprentices under the age of 25.

## **Formal education: main policy measures on ELET**

### **Financial support mechanisms**

The UK Government targets financial support at certain disadvantaged groups to make it easier for them to remain in education.

Since 2017, all working parents of three- and four-year-olds are provided with 30 free hours of childcare per week. This is an early intervention measure that recognises that low attainment is associated with early school leaving and that low attainment can begin early in a child's education.

The [16 to 19 Bursary Fund](#) is funding which the Government provides to local authorities, schools, colleges and other education and training providers for students who need financial help to stay in education. To qualify, students must:

- be at least 16 and under 19 on 31 August of the relevant year
- study at a publicly funded school or college (not a university), or be on a training course, including unpaid work experience.
- meet residency requirements.

There are two types of bursary: the vulnerable student bursary and the discretionary bursary. Students who may qualify for the vulnerable student bursary include students who are:

- in care
- care leavers
- in receipt of Income Support, or Universal Credit in place of Income Support, in their own right
- in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit and Disability Living or Personal Independence Payments in their own right.

The discretionary bursary is for disadvantaged students who do not meet the vulnerable student bursary criteria, but who need help to stay on in education or training. Support may be provided, for example, towards the cost of transport, meals, books and equipment. Schools and colleges set their own criteria for the discretionary bursary. They look at individual circumstances, which will generally include family income.

- Other support schemes include: Care to Learn ([C2L](#)). C2L helps young parents under the age of 20 to continue in, and return to education after the birth of a child. It does this by providing funding for childcare whilst the young parent is studying. The young parent's study programme must have some public funding and the childcare must be registered provision.

- Free school meals. Children whose parents, carers or guardians receive certain state benefits are entitled to free school meals during compulsory schooling and post-16 education in schools and since September 2014 in further education institutions. Further [information](#) on free school meals is available from the government information website, GOV.UK. See also the Department for Education's [advice](#) to further education institutions on the requirement to provide disadvantaged students aged 16 to 18 with free meals. In [July 2020](#), the government extended the free school meals initiative for the summer holidays as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, called the COVID Summer Food Fund.
- Learners aged 19 and over who are on a further education course and facing financial hardship, may be eligible for Discretionary Learner Support ([DLS](#)). The money can help pay for things like accommodation and travel, course materials and equipment or childcare. The amounts provided and means of payment depend on the scheme the learning provider has in place.

### Careers education, information, advice and guidance

The Government-supported [Careers & Enterprise Company](#) was set up in 2015 to improve careers education and advice for young people and inspire them about the opportunities offered by the world of work in an effort to engage young people and prevent early school-leavers. The company coordinates an [Enterprise Adviser Network](#) of business volunteers. Each volunteer supports a local school or college to develop an employer engagement plan that gives young people opportunities to meet and be advised by employers.

The Careers & Enterprise Company also coordinates a national mentoring campaign, announced by the Government in 2016, among schools and colleges, employers, mentoring organisations and young people. A [mentoring fund](#) was launched in June 2016, through which the company aims to provide mentor support to almost 20,000 students across the country. The Mentoring Fund and Mentoring Extension Fund support Year 8-10 students at risk of disengaging from education by scaling up proven mentoring organisations. Funding delivery is confirmed until August 2020.

The company also manages the [Careers & Enterprise Fund](#) which is in place to increase the number of encounters that young people, aged 11-18, have with employers while in education through careers and enterprise activities. The fund is made up of £4 million of Government-backed investment, with the addition of more than £1 million from other sources. Part of the funding is targeted to geographic 'Opportunity Areas' identified by the Government using the [Social Mobility Index](#). These areas are disadvantaged by barriers that make it harder for young people to realise their employment potential. Funding delivery is confirmed until August 2020.

This policy was informed by [research](#) showing that increasing the number of encounters that young people have with employers while in education can reduce their chances of becoming NEET.

Jobcentre Plus is a government-funded employment agency and social security office. As part of the [Jobcentre Plus Support for Schools](#) initiative, [Jobcentre Plus](#) staff help those students at risk of becoming NEET (not in employment, education or training) or otherwise disadvantaged in the labour market.

### Transition to the labour market

The '[Youth Obligation](#)', means that young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) will participate in an intensive regime of support from the first day of their [Universal Credit](#) benefit claim, and after six months they will be expected to apply for an apprenticeship or traineeship, gain work-based skills, or go on a mandatory work placement to give them the skills they need to move into sustainable employment.

See the article on '[Integration of Young People in the Labour Market](#)' for details of the Youth Obligation and implementation of the Youth Guarantee.

## Vocational education and training

The Government's overhaul of technical education is set out in its [Post-16 Skills Plan](#). This entails the replacement of the thousands of courses which currently exist with 15 routes into skilled employment. Each route, such as health and science, construction, social care, or engineering and manufacturing, is delivered either through a two-year, college-based programme including a work placement, or through an apprenticeship. The programmes are suitable for 16–18 year-olds, but also accessible by adults (students aged 19 and over). Each programme is closely aligned to the apprenticeships at the start of each route and it will be possible to move from one to the other.

See '[3.3 Skills Forecasting](#)' for more information.

See the article 'Official guidelines on traineeships and apprenticeships' in the '[Employment and Entrepreneurship](#)' chapter.

## Incentives for providers

The apprenticeship levy came into effect in 2017. The policy aims to provide more support for younger apprentices and disadvantaged people and greater flexibility for employers. As part of the government's Plan For Jobs COVID-19 response, an incentive payment will be made to employers who hire an apprentice between 1 August 2020 and 31 January 2021. This was announced along with other changes to the apprenticeship levy in July 2020, and came into effect from 1 August 2020. Other changes include the number of 'active' or 'used' reservations available to non-levy paying employers at any given time increasing from 3 to 10. This enables non-levy paying employers to recruit more apprentices for their businesses through the apprenticeship service.

You can read more about these changes to apprenticeship funding in England [here](#).

The funding formula used by the [Education and Skills Funding Agency](#) for 16-19 year-olds was also updated in August 2020. You can read more about this [here](#).

## Addressing ELET through non-formal and informal learning and quality youth work

Statutory [guidance](#) issued to [local authorities](#) to improve the well-being of young people, include youth work and activities that 'help those young people at risk of dropping out of learning or not achieving their full potential to engage and attain in education or training'. The extent to which this is done and the way in which it is done are down to local priorities and decision making.

Further information: [Tackling Early Leaving from Education and Training in Europe: Strategies, Policies and Measures](#)

## Cross-sector coordination and monitoring of ELET interventions

Statutory [guidance](#) for local authorities makes several references to partnership working/cross sector coordination. [For example](#), local authorities can seek to work with institutions in their area to coordinate and implement the [16 to 19 Bursary Fund](#).

The guidance advises that local authorities should provide strategic leadership in their areas to support participation in education, training and employment - working with and influencing partners by:

- ensuring a focus on participation is embedded and communicated throughout the authority's services for children and young people
- ensuring the services for young people in the local area come together to meet the needs of young people – including funding for education and training places and re-engagement provision
- agreeing ways of working with other partners such as [Local Enterprise Partnerships](#) (LEPs), Jobcentre Plus, employers, voluntary and community sector organisations,

health services (including mental health services), youth offending teams, the police, and probation services; and

- working with neighbouring authorities, especially where young people routinely travel out of the area to access education and training, for work or other services (pp 7-8).

The Department for Education monitors the performance of local authorities in delivering their duties, and specifically in their tracking and supporting of 16- and 17-year-olds, using data collected by local authorities and submitted to the National Client Caseload Information System (NCCIS). NCCIS includes data showing the numbers of young people participating in education or training, those who are not participating, those who are NEET or those whose current activity is not known.

See the article on '[Integration of Young People in the Labour Market](#)' for the UK's position on the Youth Guarantee.

## 6.4 Validation of non-formal and informal learning

### Arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning

The general purpose of processes for validating non-formal and informal learning is to widen participation in formal, further and higher education amongst those who lack the relevant formal qualifications, for whatever reason. The recognition arrangements are aimed at ensuring that there are no arbitrary and unnecessary barriers to admission or progression that might disadvantage particular groups, rather than targeting particular groups themselves.

#### Within regulated (general and vocational) qualifications

There is no national prescribed position on, or approach to, recognising non formal and informal learning in England. However, the qualifications regulator, [Ofqual](#) (the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation), allows for the recognition of prior learning (RPL) for [awarding organisations](#) and associated regulatory criteria underpinning the Regulated Qualifications Framework.

While the actual offer of RPL depends on the providers themselves, Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition state that where an awarding organisation has in place a policy for the recognition of prior learning it must:

- ensure that the policy which it has in place enables the awarding organisation to award qualifications in accordance with its Conditions of Recognition
- publish that policy
- comply with that policy.

The procedures and tools to be used to assess prior learning are left to the discretion of the awarding organisations, but e-portfolios are a common method used.

National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) are a means of validating workplace learning. They are aimed mainly at people in work or may be taken as part of an apprenticeship. They provide evidence of professional competence against a nationally recognised occupational standard.

To evaluate prior learning, students may be required to undertake the same assessments as those followed in the formal course of learning, although they do not have to attend taught sessions.

The second option is to submit a portfolio of evidence based on previous learning, skills and/or competence, which must be cross-referenced to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of the relevant unit(s).

There are no specific qualifications required for staff involved in validation.

### **Within higher education**

Although not required by law to do so, all [Higher Education Institutions](#) (HEIs) design their qualifications in accordance with The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of Degree-Awarding Bodies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland ([FHEQ](#)). The framework forms part of the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#), the definitive reference point used to assure the quality and standards of UK higher education providers. The FHEQ is based on the premise that qualifications should be awarded for the achievement of outcomes and attainment, rather than years of study.

As autonomous institutions, HEIs have discretion as to whether or not they recognise prior learning for entry to a learning programme. The selection processes and procedures employed by HEIs addressed in [Chapter B2](#): Recruitment, selection and admission to higher education of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, include the recognition of prior learning for the purposes of meeting entry requirements for a programme. The Quality Code does not, however, specify the criteria to be used for selection, but encourages each institution to ensure that its own policies and procedures are transparent, explicit and communicated effectively.

Many Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) give credit for prior study and informal learning acquired through work or other experiences for advanced standing within a learning programme. They must then align their procedures for RPL to [Chapter B6](#): Assessment of students and the recognition of prior learning of the Quality Code.

Credit may also be used to help students transfer to another programme either within the same institution or at a different institution. As each HEI's programmes are different, the requirements for credit vary between institutions. HEIs may use the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System ([ECTS](#)), but most use national credit systems which articulate with it.

[Chapter B6 on assessment](#) of students and the recognition of prior learning in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education says that consideration should be given to the appropriateness of assessment tools for the nature of the prior learning to be assessed. Examples of tools that might be used include:

- a portfolio of evidence
- a structured interview
- completion of a piece of work accompanied by a reflective account of the learning achieved
- artefacts
- a performance-based assessment
- completion of the assessment used to demonstrate learning in the module/programme for which comparability is being claimed.

Other common tools include observation at the workplace, questionnaires and viva voces.

There are no specific qualifications required for staff involved in validation, although The UK Quality Code for Higher Education - [Chapter B2](#): Recruitment, selection and admission to higher education states:

Higher education providers are vigilant to ensure that all those authorised to make decisions on behalf of the provider about whether or not a place should be offered to a prospective student are fully briefed, and competent to do so.

### **Further information**

For arrangements to recognise the learning outcomes of volunteering, see the article '[Skills recognition](#)' in the 'Voluntary Activities' chapter.

See the subheading '[Official guidelines on traineeships and apprenticeships](#)' in the article on '[Traineeships and Apprenticeships](#)' for learning outcomes in these areas.

Another good source of information on non-formal and informal learning is the Cedefop publication, [Country report UK, England and Northern Ireland: 2016 update to the European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning](#).

See also section 4.3.2. Recognition of non-formal and informal learning in [The European Higher Education Area in 2015: Bologna Process Implementation Report](#)

## Information and guidance

The provision of information, advice and guidance in relation to the various methods of validation in place is delivered by the individual learning providers and awarding organisations which offer validation opportunities.

Learning providers and awarding organisations which recognise prior learning have their own policies in place and this includes for the type of information and guidance they offer.

[Chapter B2](#): Recruitment, selection and admission to higher education of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education says:

Providers decide what information they will make available and how it can be communicated most effectively to the diverse range of prospective students and their advisers. Such information may include: details of the recognition of prior learning for the purposes of meeting entry requirements...

The chapter on [assessment of students and the recognition of prior learning](#) in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education gives, as an indicator of sound practice, that:

Those who might be eligible for the recognition of prior learning are made aware of the opportunities available, and are supported throughout the process of application and assessment for recognition.

Applicants benefit from being engaged in discussion and negotiation about the form(s) of assessment to be used in their case, and from having a shared understanding of the learning that would need to be evidenced as well as the nature of the evidence to be provided.

## Quality assurance

Awarding organisations and [higher education institutions](#) (HEIs) determine their own quality assurance arrangements for the validation of non-formal learning. For example at the [London School of Economics](#), the internal academic board reviews the quality assurance processes. The Quality Assurance Handbook provides guidance on what School-level and departmental-level responsibilities look like under the new devolved framework, and set out further information about the operating environment i.e. national and School level Quality Assurance arrangements. The Quality Assurance Agency's [Quality Code for Higher Education](#) is the definitive reference point for HEIs.

## 6.5 Cross-border learning mobility

### Policy framework

The [UK Strategy for Outward Mobility 2017-2020](#) aims to increase the proportion of UK-domiciled students accessing international experiences as part of their degrees from 6.6% in 2014 to 13.2% in 2020. The policy focus is on outward mobility to produce UK graduates that are capable of working in a multinational and multicultural environment, and improve their employability.

The Strategy has six objectives. The ones relevant for cross-border learning mobility are:

1. promote the benefits of study and work abroad

2. monitor trends in student mobility
3. build capacity in UK higher education to facilitate outward mobility
4. share best practice in UK higher education

1) This includes promoting existing outward mobility initiatives, including higher education institutions' own campaigns, Erasmus+, and the British Council's Study, Work, create website.

2) This includes analysing data from the 4 UK nations to track mobility trends and work with HEI's to maximise the outward mobility data that is used for statistical purposes.

3) This includes securing investment for outward mobility, and working with relevant stakeholders to widen participation in the UK sector to international opportunities.

4) This includes providing a comprehensive online information hub for all relevant outward mobility resources.

The Strategy is being [implemented](#) by Universities UK International ([UUKi](#)), the international arm of Universities UK. It established the [Go International](#) programme to work with [higher education institutions](#), government and sector organisations to help increase the proportion of UK domiciled students with some international experience. To boost outward student mobility, Go International creates an annual report of mobility data and trends, collaborating with other sector agencies to deliver a programme of research, assist higher education staff in promoting and delivering outward mobility programmes and using its mobility network to share knowledge and good practice.

The policy focus is on outward mobility as the UK is already a popular destination for students coming from outside the UK. The British Council's [Study UK](#) website provides information for foreign students, as well as parents, teachers and employers, when considering international destinations for education and training.

## **Main cross-border mobility programmes for students in formal education**

### **Schools' programmes**

At secondary level, individual schools may organise visits abroad for pupils in support of their language or other subject learning. Participation in these is voluntary. These are typically funded directly by the participants' families. Schools generally operate a 'hardship policy' to make participation feasible for all students, whereby those in receipt of free school meals, or otherwise experiencing economic difficulties, do not have to pay.

Occasionally, visits may include exchanges with other schools. External funding from charitable foundations may be available to undertake trips of this nature. For example, the [Lefèvre Trust](#) has funding for pupils seeking to develop their French skills and also for those studying for [GCSEs](#) or [A Levels](#), while the [Charles de Gaulle Trust](#) has funding for academic and vocational students aged between 17 and 19.

### **Erasmus+**

Erasmus+ provides students in higher education with the opportunity to study abroad in Europe for 3 to 12 months (per university cycle) as part of their degree. Students can take part in study mobility at any time during their degree, except for during the first year.

To be eligible students must:

- be registered at a university or college that holds an [Erasmus Charter for Higher Education](#)
- be undertaking higher education studies leading to a recognised degree (or other recognised tertiary level qualification) up to and including the level of doctorate

- be enrolled in a short-term higher vocational education course, which includes foundation degree courses, or be a part-time student (providing study during the period abroad is full-time).

The [Erasmus+ report 2018](#), released in January 2020, outlines the increasing trend of students participating in Erasmus+:

There is a strong trend with students increasingly opting to do Erasmus+ traineeships abroad, showing the great interest among young people to get practical experiences abroad to improve their career prospects. In 2017/2018, 95,800 students as well as recent graduates undertook training abroad compared to 76,000 participants in 2014,

Eligible students receive an Erasmus+ grant provided by the European Commission, paid through their institution, to contribute towards the extra costs that may be encountered from studying abroad. The Erasmus+ UK National Agency sets the Erasmus+ study abroad grant rate for students each year, taking account of the level of demand from institutions (mainly universities). Students with a severe disability or exceptional special needs may be entitled to extra funding to cover associated costs while abroad. UK students going abroad for the whole academic year may also qualify for a large contribution made towards their UK tuition fees for the year they are away.

The [Erasmus+ report 2018](#), released in January 2020, outlines the increased uptake in Vocational Education and Training (VET) learners. The number of received applications in VET for learners and staff mobility increased by over 750, to reach 7,854 in 2018. There are also learner mobility opportunities in VET, through a VET traineeship in a programme country abroad, lasting up to 12 months. Alternatively, learners can gain experience in a workplace or at a VET school where they will also spend time in industry or with another relevant organisation or enterprise. Each project can last either one or two years. Recent VET graduates from a college, company or other training provider, such as former apprentices, can also take part in mobility opportunities. This is on condition that the Erasmus+ training placement takes place within one year of graduation.

### **Bilateral programmes**

There are also bilateral programmes which support student mobility in specific areas, including:

- [UKIERI](#) UK-India Education and Research Initiative. The programme focuses on bilateral and mutually beneficial relationships of leaders of HEI's but also learners, focusing on research and innovation, and education and training. The [UK/India International Mobility Programme](#) was proposed in 2019. This programme aims to increase the levels of outward student mobility from the UK, in line with the UK's national strategy on outward student mobility and UUKI's national campaign. The grant-funded mobility placements are due to take place between June 2020 and January 2021.
- [Generation UK](#) - study in China. The programme consists of a full academic scholarship to study in mainland China from one semester up to a whole year. There are no Mandarin language requirements. The aims are to improve career prospects, experience a new culture and gain new skills. The programme is not running in the 2019/20 academic year but will be in the 2020/21 year.

These and other programmes are described on [Study and work abroad](#), the British Council's online resource for UK students, recent graduates, and young professionals seeking international opportunities to study, work, volunteer, research or develop their creativity.

### **Further information**

For further information on mobility and other aspects of internationalisation in formal education, see the chapter '[Mobility and Internationalisation](#)' in the Eurydice national description for England.

See also the European Commission's [Mobility Scoreboard](#) and the [background report](#) for higher education and the Mobility Scoreboard [database](#) for initial vocational education and training.

## Promoting mobility in the context of non-formal learning, and of youth work

[Erasmus+](#), the European Union's programme for education, training, youth and sport, [funds](#) different types of mobility for young people and those who work with them. Youth exchanges allow groups of young people (aged 13 to 30) from countries participating in Erasmus+ to meet and live together for between 5 and 21 days. Participants jointly carry out a work programme designed and prepared by them before the exchange. The programme could be a mix of workshops, exercises, debates, role-plays, simulations and outdoor activities. Exchanges allow young people to develop competences; discover new cultures, habits and lifestyles through peer-learning; and strengthen values like solidarity, democracy and friendship. Exchanges may be organised through youth organisations or by informal groups of young people.

Erasmus+ also funds [European Solidarity Corps](#), which replaced the European Voluntary Service in 2018. It is an initiative of the European Union which creates opportunities for young people aged 18- 30 to volunteer or work in projects in their own country or abroad that benefit communities and people around Europe.

The UK's participation in current programmes running until and [beyond](#) 2020 is [not affected](#) by Brexit.

## Quality assurance

### Erasmus Charter for Higher Education

The Erasmus Charter for Higher Education ([ECHE](#)) provides the quality framework for Erasmus+ funded activities carried out by [higher education institutions](#) (HEIs). The aims of Erasmus+ support the quality of student and staff mobility.

In order to participate in Erasmus+ projects, HEIs such as universities and other organisations whose core work is in the field of higher education must hold the ECHE. By signing the ECHE, an HEI confirms that its participation in Erasmus+ is part of its own strategy for modernisation and internationalisation. A Call for Proposals for the award of the ECHE is held annually and is awarded to HEIs for the full remaining duration of the Erasmus+ programme (i.e. until the end of 2020). This means that HEIs awarded with an ECHE in previous Call years (since 2013) do not need to apply again. The UK National Agency is [mandated](#) to ensure that UK HEIs which have received the ECHE abide by what they have promised. Compliance of the HEI with the ECHE principles is monitored by the UK National Agency through a [variety of measures](#) including monitoring visits, interim reports, systems' checks and opn-the-spot checks.

For higher education institutions located in [Partner countries](#), the ECHE is not required, and the quality framework is established through inter-institutional agreements between higher education institutions.

For organisations providing vocational education and training, a Call for Proposals for the award of the [VET Mobility Charter](#) is held annually. The Charter aims to reward and promote organisations, through streamlined procedures, as well as continuing to develop quality in mobility.

The Charter is not a compulsory requirement for participation, but its use is encouraged.

### Erasmus+ National Agency

The Erasmus+ [UK National Agency](#) monitors and reviews activities performed as part of its work plan and reports to the UK Government, as well as the European Commission.

Programme beneficiaries monitor and evaluate the impact the mobility experience has had on the participants and report the benefits to the Erasmus+ National Agency, which in turn will analyse the impact within a national context.

### Quality Code for Higher Education

Higher education institutions adhere to the Quality Assurance Agency's Quality Code for higher education. [Chapter B10](#): Managing Higher Education Provision with Others includes indicators of sound practice in quality assurance.

## 6.6 Social inclusion through education and training

### Educational support

#### Special educational needs and disabilities

The [Children and Families Act 2014](#) sets out the support which [local authorities](#) are required to provide to children and young people with [special educational needs or disabilities](#) (SEND). Under the Act, a child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child of compulsory school age (5 to 16) or a young person aged 16 to 25 has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age or
- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

The Act secures the general presumption in law of mainstream education in relation to decisions about where children and young people with SEN should be educated, although separate provision in special schools may be made in particular cases for those with complex needs.

The [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years](#) outlines 'four broad areas of need' which should be planned for. These are:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- sensory and/or physical needs.

There are two broad categories of support:

- Special educational needs support / SEN support is the support given to a child or young person in their pre-school, school or further education institution from within the school or college's overall budget, up to a nationally prescribed (financial) threshold per student per year
- Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans are for children and young people aged up to 25 with more complex needs, who need more support than is available through SEN support. They aim to provide a unified approach, including a young person's education, health care and social care needs. Young people and parents of children who have EHC plans have the right to request a Personal Budget to use in support of their needs.

Schools must appoint a member of staff as a special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). The SENCO is a member of staff who has responsibility for coordinating special educational needs provision.

Specific support that children or young people may be provided with includes: working in small groups; extra help from classroom/teaching assistants; encouragement; practical assistance with mobility etc. While different teaching approaches may be used, the general requirement is that all pupils with SEN will be enabled to access the full curriculum. Disabled pupils may need access to specialist equipment. In some cases, external specialist support may be used.

For young people (aged 16+) in [further education colleges](#), the SEND Code of Practice suggests ) that the type of support which might be given could include: assistive technology; personal care (or access to it); specialist tuition; note takers; interpreters; one-to-one and small group learning support; independent living training; accessible information such as symbol-based materials; access to therapies such as speech and language therapy.

Under the [Equality Act 2010](#), schools, colleges and universities need to have in place access arrangements so that students with SEN are able to participate fully in internal school tests, mock examinations and external examinations, without, however, changing the demands of these assessments. Examples of the type of reasonable adjustments and access arrangements which might be made include readers, scribes and Braille question papers.

For higher education students who have extra expenses as a direct result of a disability, support is provided through Disabled Students' Allowances ([DSA](#)). Allowances may cover:

- non-medical help for students requiring non-medical personal assistance e.g. readers for blind students or sign-language interpreters for deaf students
- specialist equipment
- general expenses arising from attendance at the course
- extra travel costs arising from the disability.

### **Looked after children**

Under the [Children Act 1989](#), local authorities have a duty to promote the educational achievement of [looked after children](#).

Looked after children are given priority in school admissions, must be enrolled only in good or outstanding schools and have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) as part of their overall care plan.

Local authorities' responsibilities extend to looked after 16- to 17-year-olds. Statutory [guidance](#) sets out local authorities' duties in supporting transitions from care. Local authorities should ensure that:

- links are made with further education (FE) colleges and higher education (HE) institutions and that care leavers are supported to find establishments that understand and work to meet the needs of [looked after children](#) and care leavers;
- each eligible care leaver knows about the 16-19 Bursary Fund; and
- each eligible care leaver receives a bursary of £2,000 when going on to study a recognised HE course and that arrangements for the payment of the bursary are agreed by the young person as part of the overall package of support that a local authority provides to its care leavers.

### **Pupils/students whose first language is not English**

The Government's [framework document](#) for the National Curriculum, in the section on 'Responding to pupils' needs and overcoming potential barriers for individuals and groups of pupils', states teachers must also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Monitoring of progress should take account of the pupil's age, length of time in this country, previous educational experience and ability in other languages.

Teachers should plan teaching opportunities to help pupils develop their English and should aim to provide the support pupils need to take part in all subjects. It is normal practice for those pupils whose first language is not English to be integrated into mainstream education, with additional language support if needed. Funding regulations state that local school funding formulae may take into account certain 'allowable factors' which include English as an additional language. There is [currently no financial support](#) provided to schools by central government specifically to support pupils with English as an additional language (EAL). However, local authorities in England can opt to include EAL in their local formulae for allocating their dedicated schools grant (DSG) schools block funding for 2018-19 to schools in their area, as part of the National Funding Formula (NFF). A report on this states:

The distribution of the EAL rates for both primary and secondary pupils shows a significant movement towards the NFF values of £515 and £1,385. For the primary 14 indicator 69% of local authorities are allocating between £500 and £750 per pupil. For the secondary indicator 59% are allocating between £1,250 and £1,500 per pupil.

You can read more [here](#).

In assessments and tests relating to National Curriculum English, learners' answers are required in English. Some access arrangements can be made in other subjects, such as mathematics.

### **Alternative provision**

Alternative provision settings provide education for children who can't go to a mainstream school because of exclusion, illness or other reasons and who would not otherwise receive suitable education. Schools may also arrange such off-site education for pupils when their behaviour has been poor.

The Government's March 2016 White Paper, [Educational Excellence Everywhere](#), set out its intention to reform the current alternative provision system, which makes it difficult for those leaving alternative provision to find suitable post-16 provision. Schools, rather than [local authorities](#) will become responsible for commissioning such provision. Local authorities will retain a role in ensuring sufficiency of alternative provision in their area. Based on the White Paper, The Government launched the [Alternative Provision Innovation Fund](#) in March 2018. It seeks to fund and develop projects that help improve outcomes for children in alternative provision settings. An example is [Cognus'](#) programme in Sutton, helping young people achieve good academic progress in alternative provision, as well as successful transitioning from alternative provision to further education, employment and training.

For more information on alternative provision, see the article '[Inclusive Programmes for Young People](#)' in the 'Social Inclusion' chapter and DfE [guidance](#) for local authorities.

### **Widening participation in higher education**

Widening participation in higher education is regarded as a vehicle for increasing social mobility. In 2014, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills published a [National strategy for access and student success](#), developed by the Higher Education Funding Council for England ([HEFCE](#)) and the Office for Fair Access ([OFFA](#)).

The strategy aims to:

- make significant and sustained improvements in the participation rates for the most disadvantaged groups and in the diversity of the student population
- narrow the gap in the participation rates in and across higher education between advantaged and disadvantaged groups.

These underrepresented and disadvantaged groups may include, but are not limited to:

- people from lower socio-economic groups or from neighbourhoods where higher education participation is low

- people from low income backgrounds
- some ethnic groups or sub-groups, including White males from economically disadvantaged backgrounds
- disabled people
- mature and part-time learners
- care leavers
- carers
- people estranged from their families
- people from gypsy and Traveller communities
- refugees
- students with mental health problems, Specific Learning Difficulties and/or who are on the autism spectrum.

The 2020 statistics for widening participation in higher education offer some insight into the current landscape in England. For example, the gap in progression rates by age 19 between Free School Meal and non-Free School Meal pupils has increased to 18.8 percentage points - up 0.2 percentage points since last year and the highest gap since 2006/07. Additionally, the progression rates for pupils with Special Education Needs lag well behind those for other pupils. 8.9% of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or Statement of SEN progressed to HE by age 19 by 2018/19 compared to 20.6% of pupils on SEN Support and 47.3% for pupils with no SEN.

You can read more [here](#).

[Advance HE](#) (formerly the Equality Challenge Unit) works to remove barriers to further education. It provides a central resource of advice and guidance for the sector. Advance HE is a registered charity whose charitable objective is to support strategic change and continuous improvement through the development of individuals and organisations of higher education.

The Government's May 2016 White Paper [Success as a Knowledge Economy: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice](#), refers to two goals set by the then Prime Minister on widening participation:

- doubling the proportion of people from disadvantaged backgrounds entering university in 2020 compared to 2009
- increasing the number of black and minority ethnic (BME) students going to university by 20% by 2020.

For further information on special educational needs see the articles in the Eurydice national description for England:

[Introduction](#) to the Educational Support and Guidance chapter

[Special Education Needs Provision within Mainstream Education](#)

[Separate Special Education Needs Provision in Early Childhood and School Education](#)

[Support Measures for Learners in Early Childhood and School Education](#)

[Support Measures for Learners in Higher Education](#)

[Support Measures for Learners in Adult Education and Training](#)

See also '[Youth work to foster social inclusion](#)' in the Social Inclusion' chapter .

## Funding

The Pupil Premium, mentioned above in relation to looked after children, also covers deprived pupils (those eligible for free school meals). There is also a 'service premium'

for children and young people with parents in the armed forces. See subheading '[Pupil Premium for Disadvantaged Pupils](#)' in the article '[Support Measures for Learners in Early Childhood and School Education](#)' in the Eurydice national description for England. Further information is also available on the Department for Education's [website](#).

## Social cohesion and equal opportunities

### Equality legislation

The [Equality Act 2010](#) created the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#), which places public bodies, including schools, [further education colleges](#) and [higher education institutions](#), under a general duty to carry out their functions with due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- foster good relations across all characteristics between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The [Department for Education's advice for schools](#) regarding the Equality Act include outlining ways in which the curriculum could be taught in a discriminatory way and highlighting ways to prevent this e.g The girls' cricket team are not allowed equal access to the cricket nets, or the boys' hockey team is given far better resources than the girls' team.

The protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

The Act applies to all schools, both publicly funded and independent fee-paying schools, higher education authorities and further education colleges.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has provided [guidance](#) on the provisions of the Act as regards further and higher education institutions.

### 'Prevent' Duty

From 1 July 2015, a wide range of public-facing bodies, including all schools, colleges and universities, became subject to the 'Prevent' duty. This is a duty to have due regard to preventing people being drawn into terrorism. Specific guidance for [early years providers and schools](#) and [further education institutions](#) and [higher education institutions](#) is available. Broadly speaking, these guidelines discuss the importance of safeguard training for teachers, as well as training in identifying children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and risk assessment.

### School curriculum

All [maintained schools](#) must meet the requirements set out in section 78 of the [Education Act 2002](#) and promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of their pupils. [Academies](#) are subject to the same requirements under the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2010](#).

Through ensuring pupils' SMSC development, schools can also demonstrate they are actively promoting fundamental British values. These, as set out in the Government's 2011 '[Prevent](#)' strategy are:

- democracy
- the rule of law
- individual liberty
- mutual respect
- tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

Opportunities for developing social cohesion and an understanding of equality may be provided through personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), which all schools should make provision for, or in any other subjects or topics which schools may choose to introduce. The PSHE Association has developed a [programme of study](#) for PSHE, endorsed by the Government and to be taught at key stages 1-5. It is based around three areas - health and wellbeing, relationships, and living in the wider world. For these three areas at Key Stage 5, (the relevant key stage for this discussion as it's for 16 year olds onwards) learning opportunities include: establishing positive mental health practices, respecting and understanding different cultural beliefs and views, recognising and managing bullying or harassment in the workplace, and celebrating cultural diversity to name a few. More information can be found [here](#).

An [updated curriculum](#) of PSHE is mandatory in schools from September 2020.

### Teachers' standards

The minimum [standards](#) which the Government sets for teachers to meet include that they must establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect and set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions.

Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others and not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

### Programmes for youth organisations and schools

The Diana Award's peer-to-peer [Anti-Bullying Ambassadors](#) programme offers resources and training to schools and youth organisations across the UK. Following training, young people become Anti-Bullying Ambassadors in their schools and youth organisations. In their role they help educate their peers on bullying, lead on anti-bullying campaigns, promote a culture which celebrates and tolerates difference and help keep their peers safe both online and offline.

[Internet Matters](#), a Department for Education funded tool, works to support reporting of cyber-bullying to schools.

## 6.7 Skills for innovation

### Innovation in formal education

Skills which support innovation are not explicitly part of the National Curriculum,.

The only direct reference to innovation in the National Curriculum is within the subject 'design and technology'. One of the purposes of studying this subject, as described in the [National Curriculum](#), is that 'Pupils learn how to take risks, becoming resourceful, innovative, enterprising and capable citizens'. The subject is not compulsory at Key Stage

4 (age 14-16) but schools must provide it as an option (known as an entitlement subject).

Opportunities for innovative skills development may be provided through personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), which all schools should make provision for, or in any other subjects or topics which schools may choose to introduce. The PSHE Association has developed a [programme of study](#) for PSHE. For Key Stage 5 (the final two years of upper secondary education, students aged 16-18/19), the programme includes as suggested learning opportunities for 'Core Theme 3: Living in the wider world', reinforcing or extending pupil's ability to:

- be enterprising in life and work
- demonstrate creativity and problem solving
- respond to change
- respect diversity
- show initiative

The Government provides [Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund](#) to enhance teachers' skills, confidence and knowledge as the government's initiative to support and increase great teaching and leadership in schools. Pedagogical tools are not provided to the teachers however.

### **Further information**

There are overlaps in the types of skills supporting innovation and those supporting entrepreneurship and creativity. See the article on '[Development of Entrepreneurship Competence](#)' and its subheading '[Acquiring cultural and creative competences through education and training](#)' for information on these.

[Teaching and Learning in General Lower Secondary Education](#)

[Teaching and Learning in General Upper Secondary Education](#)

[Teaching and Learning in Vocational Upper Secondary Education](#)

## **Fostering innovation through non-formal and informal learning and youth work**

The National STEM Learning Network is a joint initiative by the Department for Education, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and The [Wellcome Trust](#). The initiative, which is UK-wide, was set up in direct response to concerns about the engagement of young people in science. Among the programmes and projects run by the network, is the [STEM Ambassadors](#) programme. STEM Ambassadors are volunteers from a wide range of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) related jobs and disciplines. As well as working with schools and colleges across the UK, the network works with youth and community groups and others to ensure they have access to STEM Ambassadors to engage young people with STEM subjects outside the classroom. With the support of Government funding, this programme is offered free of charge to education providers and youth and community organisations.

[British Science Week](#) is an annual programme of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths events and activities across the UK for people of all ages. It is run by the British Science Association ([BSA](#)). British Science Week supports any type of organiser, including youth and community groups and will help organisers to plan events by providing a range of free activity and support resources. BSA also began running a new extra-curricular initiative in 2018 for young people aged 11-to-19 to come up with innovative solutions that have the potential to change the world in global health and development issues.

The initiative, [Youth Grand Challenges](#), links with BSA's [CREST Awards](#) programme which is the only nationally recognised accreditation scheme for young people's project work in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects. The awards are offered at six levels and are for 5- to 19-year-olds. CREST gives young people the chance to participate in hands-on science through investigations and enquiry-based learning. The programme can be run in schools, clubs, youth groups, other organisations or at home.

## 6.8 Media literacy and safe use of new media

### National strategy

There is no standalone strategy addressing media literacy. In October 2017, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) introduced the [Internet Safety Strategy green paper](#), which came out as the result of the consultation with a wide range of stakeholders with a focus on online safety. It covered a range of topics such as stressing a commitment to develop children and young people's digital literacy. The strategy also commits the Government to continuing to collaborate with industry, working with voluntary sector organisations such as the [Internet Watch Foundation](#), to eradicate online child sexual exploitation. In its [response to the green paper](#), the government recognises the importance of working closely with the private sector, as it believes that companies need to take a more proactive approach in dealing with harmful content.

The [UK Council for Internet Safety \(UKCIS\)](#) is a collaborative forum through which the government, the tech community and the third sector work together to create a safe online environment for all, including young people. It is part of the Department for Culture, Media and Society (DCMS), the Department for Education (DfE) and the Home Office. It expands the scope of the previous [UK Council for Child Safety](#). One of its priority areas is online harms experienced by children and young people including cyber bullying and sexual exploitation.

Measures in the [Digital Economy Act](#) 2017, introduced age checks for pornographic websites so under-18s cannot view harmful content – with powers to block sites which refuse to comply.

The Government has issued [statutory guidance](#) to schools and colleges on their duty to keep pupils and students safe:

As schools and colleges increasingly work online, it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. As such, governing bodies and proprietors should ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place (p.22).

See also [Annex C on 'Online Safety' p.96..](#)

- [Ofsted](#), the inspectorate, [requires](#) its inspectors to consider evidence in its inspections of schools and colleges that:
- action is taken to ensure that children are taught about safeguarding risks, including online risks
- staff, leaders and managers oversee the safe use of electronic and social media by staff and learners and take action immediately if they are concerned about bullying or risky behaviours
- appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect learners from potentially harmful online material.

Inspectors should:

include online safety in their discussions with children and learners (covering topics such as online bullying and safe use of the internet and social media). Inspectors should

investigate what the school or further education and skills provider does to educate pupils in online safety and how the provider or school deals with issues when they arise.

Responsibility for media literacy, digital competences and safe use of new media involves several government departments and agencies.

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport ([DCMS](#)) is responsible for media and for young people; the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Minister for Sport, Tourism and Heritage is the minister responsible for domestic online safety issues.

The [Home Office](#) has responsibility for cyber security and counter-terrorism.

The [Department for Education](#) has responsibilities for the school curriculum, education programmes and safeguarding and Ofsted for inspecting the arrangements for these at school and college level.

Under the [Communications Act 2003](#), [Ofcom](#) (the Office of Communications), the independent regulator and competition authority for the UK communications industries, has a responsibility to promote, and to carry out research in, media literacy.

### **Media literacy and online safety through formal education**

Digital competencies are developed through the subject 'computing' in the [National Curriculum](#), introduced in 2014, and replacing the subject Information and Communication Technology. Computing is a compulsory subject throughout compulsory education, from age 5 to 16 in [maintained schools](#). [Academies](#) are not obliged to follow the National Curriculum, but use it as a benchmark.

One of the purposes of the study of computing is to ensure that:

pupils become digitally literate – able to use, and express themselves and develop their ideas through, information and communication technology – at a level suitable for the future workplace and as active participants in a digital world.

One of the aims is to ensure that pupils 'are responsible, competent, confident and creative users of information and communication technology'.

From the first year of primary education (age 5 to 6), pupils are introduced to the safe use of technology and to how to protect their privacy and identity online. At Key Stage 3 (ages 11-14), students should be taught to understand a range of ways to use technology safely, respectfully, responsibly and securely, including protecting their online identity and privacy; recognise inappropriate content, contact and conduct and know how to report concerns.

At Key Stage 4 (ages 14- 16) students should be taught to: understand how changes in technology affect safety, including new ways to protect their online privacy and identity, and how to identify and report a range of concerns.

The most common qualifications taken by students at the end of Key Stage 4, [GCSEs](#), align, for each subject, with their related programme of study. While the computing programme of study is compulsory at Key Stage 4, it is entirely a matter of student choice and course availability as to whether or not a qualification in GCSE computing is taken.

### **Pedagogical tools**

Resources for teachers are available from several organisations. The UK Safer Internet Centre is a partnership of three organisations: [SWGfL](#) (South West Grid for Learning), [Childnet International](#) and the [Internet Watch Foundation](#). It provides a collection of its own [resources for teachers](#) and resources from other relevant organisations.

SwGfL, one of the partner organisations in the UK Safer Internet Centre, also makes a large collection of [resources](#) freely available. It has developed a self-review online tool, [360 Degree Safe](#), for schools to review their online safety provision and to develop an action plan to bring about improvements.

The Government provides grant funding to the [Network of Teaching Excellence in Computer Science](#) to help teachers and school leaders build their knowledge and understanding of technology.

### **Promoting media literacy and online safety through non-formal and informal learning**

The Government's [digital strategy](#), published in March 2017, mentions some innovative initiatives outside the formal curriculum which provide young people with opportunities to develop their digital skills. For example, the [Raspberry Pi Foundation](#) is providing low-cost, high performance computers to learners alongside outreach and education to make more young people access computing and digital making.

The BBC [Make it Digital](#) programme partnered with over 25 organisations to provide the micro:bit (a pocket sized codeable computer) to every child in year 7 (aged 11) to inspire them to develop their interest and digital creativity. The micro:bit helps children to start learning basic coding and programming. The [Make it Digital Traineeship](#) is a nine week traineeship for young unemployed people to help them boost their digital skills and access the job market.

The Government is supporting the National Citizen Service (NCS see '[National programme for youth volunteering](#)' in the article on 'youth volunteering at national level') and the Raspberry Pi Foundation to take forward a pilot that will test new ways to include digital skills and careers in NCS programmes. This could include hands-on coding experience, digital making, digital entrepreneurship and contact with creative technology-focused businesses to inspire participants to consider a career in the sector.

[CEOP](#) is the child protection command of the [National Crime Agency](#). The CEOP Command's [Thinkuknow](#) programme provides resources, training and support for professionals who work directly with children and young people, including those in youth work and non-formal settings. [Training](#) provided by CEOP includes 'Keeping Children Safe Online', an introductory e-learning course for professionals. Those who complete the course and who register for access to CEOP's Thinkuknow educational resources are awarded Thinkuknow Trainer status, with access to its full range of resources for delivery to young people and parents/carers.

### **Raising awareness about the risks posed by new media**

The UK Council for Child Internet Safety ([UKCCIS](#)) was a group of more than 200 organisations drawn from across government, industry, law, academia and charity sectors that worked in partnership to help keep children safe online. It has since been taken over by the [UK Council for Internet Safety \(UKCIS\)](#) which expands the scope of the previous [UK Council for Child Safety](#). In 2016, UKCCIS it published [Sexting in schools and colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people](#).

The [Anti-Bullying Alliance](#) provides information resources to young people on various aspects of bullying, including cyberbullying such as advice on how to make complaints, as well as advice for young people, schools and teachers

In 2016, [Childnet International](#) issued cyberbullying [guidance](#) funded by the UK [Government Equalities Office](#) and the European Union, which showed schools how to embed cyberbullying in their anti-bullying work.

The [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) exists to promote the safe and responsible use of technology for young people. It is a partnership of three leading organisations: the South West Grid for Learning ([SWGfL](#)), [Childnet International](#) and the Internet Watch Foundation ([IWF](#)). The centre has three main functions:

- Awareness Centre: to provide advice and support to children and young people, parents and carers, schools and the children's workforce and to coordinate Safer Internet Day (see below) across the UK

- Helpline: to provide support to professionals working with children and young people with online safety issues
- Hotline: an anonymous and safe place to report and remove child sexual abuse imagery and videos, wherever they are found in the world.

[Safer Internet Day](#) is celebrated globally in February each year to promote the safe and positive use of digital technology for children and young people and inspire a national conversation. Coordinated in the UK by the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#), the celebration sees hundreds of organisations get involved to help promote the safe, responsible and positive use of digital technology for children and young people. The day offers the opportunity to highlight positive uses of technology and to explore the role played by young people, parents, carers, teachers, social workers, law enforcement, companies, policymakers and others in helping to create a better and safer online community. Events and activities are run across the UK.

A concern about the risks posed by social media is that of radicalisation. Building young people's resilience and the promotion of fundamental British values includes ensuring they are protected from the threat of extremist and ideological views and materials online. In 2015, the Government issued new advice to all schools and childcare providers to coincide with the new prevent duty introduced as part of the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#), which legally requires a range of organisations including schools, colleges, universities, local and other public bodies to take steps to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism).

At the same time, it issued a guidance document, [How Social Media is Used to Encourage Travel to Syria and Iraq: Briefing Note for Schools](#).

## 6.9 Awareness-raising about non-formal and informal learning and quality youth work

### Information providers / counselling structures

These information and counselling services may be provided by [local authorities](#) (LAs), whether directly or indirectly. They have responsibility for coordinating the overall local offer of all available provision for young people. They do not have to deliver the services themselves but may commission, support and facilitate actors from the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE) to do this. As the main providers or commissioners of youth services, individual local authorities are also the main providers of information on the learning opportunities included within their local offers. Statutory [guidance](#) says that local authorities should take the strategic lead and 'publicise effectively to young people and their families the overall local offer of all services and activities available for young people locally'.

There is no central source of information and guidance on non-formal, informal and youth work learning opportunities; rather each local authority provides the information on its website, typically on a section such as integrated youth support services, youth support services, community, community learning and/or adult learning. Local authorities commonly also provide directories of youth organisations. As well as local authority websites, local authority run libraries are sources of information on learning programmes and youth organisations. However, Eurodesk, a European network of European and national information centers for young people, offers centralised youth information and international learning opportunities and is an organisation supported by the Erasmus+ programme.

[Generation Change](#) is a UK charity partnership and sector-based network of youth social action organisations. Together with [Step Up To Serve](#) it coordinates 'Horizon', an online mapping tool which shows youth social action programmes across the UK, developed with the support of British Gas. They have now [mapped](#) more than 1.2 million social action opportunities for 11- to 25-year-olds.

## Awareness raising initiatives

The National Youth Agency ([NYA](#)) describes itself as the national body for youth work. Although it no longer receives government funding, and operates as a charity, it is recognised as a leading source of information and expertise in England on youth policy and youth work. NYA runs an annual [Youth Work Week](#), which provides an opportunity for youth organisations, youth workers and young people to celebrate their achievements and the impact of their work. The next Youth Work Week will be held in November 2020.

See also the article '[Raising awareness about youth volunteering opportunities](#)'.

## 6.10 Current debates and reforms

### Forthcoming policy developments

#### Reform of technical education

The Government announced its intention to implement an overhaul of technical education as set out in its [Post-16 Skills Plan](#). These reforms have had a renewed focus in the context of COVID-19. In 2020, the government announced [further funding](#) for these reforms:

To support reforms to technical education, the government announced:

- £1.5 billion to upgrade the existing further education (FE) estate in England as announced in the 2020 budget
- up to £290m for Institutes of Technology
- £2.5 billion for a national skills fund to help adults and employers access training as announced in the 2020 budget

Among these reforms are plans to introduce newly-approved digital qualifications in 2022, potentially leading to jobs like network engineer or software developer. Approved qualifications in health and sciences and construction will follow in 2023.

#### Internet safety strategy

In 2017, the [Internet Safety Strategy Green Paper](#) was released, which set out proposals to tackle unacceptable behaviour and content online. Since then, the Government's period of consultation and [response](#) to the Green Paper, as well as the [2018 Digital Charter](#) set out to create a more regulated and safer online experience in the UK for all. The Charter states an investment of an additional £7 billion in research and development by 2021/22, delivering major upgrades to the digital infrastructure, and states the government will introduce a new statutory duty of care enforced by an independent regulator to tackle harmful online content. A National Data Strategy is also expected to be established.

#### Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE)

The Government [has committed](#) to making a new curriculum of PSHE mandatory from September 2020, though schools are encouraged to adopt it from September 2019. The PSHE Association has developed a [programme of study](#) for PSHE, endorsed by the Government and to be taught at key stages 1-5. It is based around three areas - health and wellbeing, relationships, and living in the wider world.

#### T Levels

The introduction of [T Levels](#) will take place in September 2020. T Levels will follow GCSE's and be equivalent to three A Levels. They will consist of both classroom learning and "on-the-job" experience, to cater to meet the needs of the industry. In anticipation of T Levels, the nationwide [NexT Level campaign](#) was launched in October 2019, as well as the [T Level Action Plan](#). This plan confirms the details of the remaining 15 T Levels –

to be introduced from 2022 and 2023 – as well as the selection criteria for providers wishing to deliver T Levels in 2022.

## Ongoing debates

### Brexit

The UK left the EU on January 31st 2020 at 11pm, beginning the transition period that is set to end on December 31st 2020. An [update](#) on the website of the Erasmus+ UK National Agency states that:

under the Withdrawal Agreement negotiated with the EU, the UK will continue to participate fully in the current (2014-2020) Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps (ESC) programmes. This means that the projects successfully bid for during the current (2014-2020) Erasmus+ and ESC programmes will continue to receive EU funding for the full duration of the project, including those where funding runs beyond 2020 and the end of the transition period. As a result, the UK government guarantee of EU funding will no longer be required and the Erasmus+ and ESC guarantee IT system has been closed.

Additional updates have been published on the [Erasmus+ site](#)

### COVID-19

In June 2020, the government announced a [billion pound Covid catch up plan](#) to tackle the impact of lost teaching time due to COVID-19. £650 million will be shared across state primary and secondary schools over the 2020/21 academic year and headteachers will decide how the money is spent.

Separately to this, the National Tutoring Programme worth £350 million forms part of the package, and is aimed at increasing access to high-quality tuition for the most disadvantaged young people over the 2020/21 academic year and provide a sustained solution to closing the attainment gap. The National Tutoring Programme has been designed and developed by a collaboration of five charities – the Education Endowment Foundation, Sutton Trust, Impetus, Nesta and Teach First – working in partnership with the Department for Education. You can visit the official website [here](#).

In August 2020, the government [announced](#) a £9 million funding package, as part of the National Tutoring Programme, to target reception-age children and boost their early language skills.

The government released [statutory guidance](#) for schools in August 2020 during the coronavirus outbreak including guidance on special educational needs and disability, safe working and online learning. [Statutory guidance](#) on keeping children safe in education was also released in September 2020 as children start back to school in the UK.

## 7. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

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The National Health Service (NHS) covers people of all ages. As part of the NHS, there are dedicated services for children and young people, such as CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health services) and the school nursing service.

The mental health of children and young people has emerged as a key issue of concern and it is one of the Children's Commissioner's priority issues.

Note: The Office of the Children's Commissioner exists to promote and protect the rights and interests of children and young people (see '[Actors](#)' in the Participation chapter).

## 7.1 General context

### Main trends in the health conditions of young people

Smoking, drinking and drug use amongst young people are key public health concerns. NHS Digital, an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department of Health, conducts surveys which provide information used by central and local government to better understand these behaviours and to develop policies, plan services and new initiatives, and to monitor and evaluate their impact.

Results from the 2018 [survey](#) Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use among Young People in England, covering secondary school pupils aged 11 to 15. It covers a range of topics including prevalence, habits, attitudes, and for the first time in 2018, wellbeing. It shows the current prevalence of smoking, drinking and drug use:

- 16 per cent of 11-15 year old pupils had ever smoked, which is down from 19 per cent in 2016.
- 10 per cent of pupils said they had drunk alcohol in the last week. This varied from 2% of 11 year olds and 3% of 12 year olds, to 23% of 15 year olds.
- 22% of 15 year olds reported having been drunk in the last four weeks
- 24 per cent of pupils reported they had ever taken drugs which remains consistent with the 2016 data.
- 40% of recent smokers reported low life satisfaction nowadays. This compares to 18% for all pupils.

This report, published in 2019, is the latest report released at the time of writing (August 2020). The Smoking Drinking and Drug Use Survey 2020 fieldwork will not go ahead in the autumn 2020 term (academic year 2020/21) due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Read more [here](#).

In 2018, the conception rate for women under 18 years decreased for the 11th year in a row, the longest continued decrease since records began.

- In 2018, conception rates for under 18-year-olds in England and Wales declined by 6.1% to 16.8 conceptions per 1,000 women aged 15 to 17 years. Compared to 2016 where the rates were 18.9 conceptions per 1000 women aged 15-17 years.
- Conception rates declined from 2.7 conceptions per 1,000 women aged under 16 years in 2017 to 2.5 in 2018, a 7.4% decrease.
- The conception rate for women under 16 years has fallen every year since 2007, and has decreased by 69.9% since 1999.

Source: [Conceptions in England and Wales: 2018](#). [released 4 March 2020]

Public Health England also provide data covering key health trends, including:

- The [most recent survey](#) of the mental health of children and young people in England found that 12.5% of 5 to 19 year olds had at least one mental disorder when assessed (2017), and 5% met the criteria for 2 or more mental disorders. There also appears to be a slight increase over time in the prevalence of mental disorder in 5 to 15 year olds, rising from 9.7% (1999) to 10.1% (2004) to 11.2% (2017)
- Rates for hospital admissions for self-harm for 10-24 year olds have risen from 405 in 2016/17 to [421 in 2017/18](#).
- [In 2018](#), 24% of pupils reported they had ever taken drugs. This is the same to 2016.
- Referrals to specialist child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) increased by 64 per cent between 2012 and 2015.

## Main concepts

No particular concepts have been identified.

## 7.2 Administration and governance

### Governance

#### Main governmental and public actors involved in policy-making

The Department of Health and Social Care ([DHSC](#)), a ministerial department leads, shapes and funds health and care. Children's health is one of its [policy](#) areas.

The remit of Public Health England ([PHE](#)), an executive agency, sponsored by the Department of Health and Social Care, is to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities.

[NHS England](#), an executive non-departmental public body, leads the National Health Service (NHS). It sets the priorities and direction of the NHS and encourages and informs the national debate to improve health and care.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence ([NICE](#)) is a non-departmental public body providing national guidance and advice to improve health and social care. One of its 'population groups' is [children and young people](#).

The Care Quality Commission ([CQC](#)) is the independent regulator of health and social care.

At local level, local authorities have, since 1 April 2013, been responsible for improving the health of their local population and for public health services. Also, Health and Wellbeing Boards, established under the [Health and Social Care Act 2012](#), plan how to meet the needs of the local population through commissioning and integrating all health services and how to tackle local inequalities in health. The boards are established by local authorities and bring together the NHS, public health, adult social care and children's services, including elected representatives and [Local Healthwatch](#) organisations (which champion the interests of service users).

[Clinical Commissioning Groups](#) (CCGs), also established under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 are clinically-led statutory NHS bodies responsible for the planning and commissioning of clinical health care services for their local area and must be represented on Health and Wellbeing Boards.

In developing health and wellbeing strategies for their local areas, Health and Wellbeing Boards must have regard to the Government's annual [mandate to NHS England](#), which sets out the Government's priorities and the budget for the NHS. Objectives in the 2019/20 mandate were different to other years due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Matt Hancock [states](#):

Given the exceptional circumstances, I am setting NHS England and NHS Improvement a very brief mandate for 2020-21 to provide important clarity for the system about the headline objectives that we need NHS support to achieve at this difficult time. My intention is to replace this with a further mandate that takes account of the NHS's capacity to achieve our wider goals in light of developments with Covid-19, once the virus has been effectively managed.

The five objectives included in the 2020 mandate are not specifically related to children and young people, but outline aims to delay and mitigate spread of COVID-19, ensure progress towards the effective implementation of the NHS Long Term Plan and to help ensure delivery of its wider priorities including planning for life outside of the EU once the transition period ends.

Further information on Health and Wellbeing Boards is available in this House of Commons Library [briefing](#).

Local authorities have a wider duty to promote healthy lifestyles in their areas and are providers and commissioners of community sport and leisure facilities.

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport ([DCMS](#)) is responsible for a wide cross-section of policy which affects young people, including arts and culture, tourism and heritage, media and digital, civil society and social action, and sport.

[Sport England](#) is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. Sport England's strategic aims are to get more people from every background regularly and meaningfully engaging in sport and physical activity, and to work towards a more productive, sustainable and responsible sport sector. Its remit covers adults and children from the age of 5 (apart from school sport, which is delivered through the [Department for Education](#)). Sport England is also a statutory consultee on planning applications that affect playing fields in England.

At a local level, Sport England is supported by [County Sports Partnerships](#), networks of local agencies committed to working together to increase the number of people taking part in sport and physical activity. Sport England is also responsible for measuring both the levels of activity of children and young people and the correlation between children and young people's attitudes and physical activity through the [Active Lives](#) (Children and Young People) survey, which was launched in September 2017 and should reach over 100,000 children each year.

The [House of Commons Health Committee](#) is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the policy, administration and expenditure of the Department of Health and its associated bodies.

The responsibilities of the Minister of State for School Standards and Minister for Equalities within the Department for Education ([DfE](#)) include children and young people's mental health in schools.

The [Children's Commissioner](#) for England is an independent statutory office, which aims to promote and protect the interests of children and young people across a range of areas, including physical and mental health. The Commissioner speaks up for children and young people so that policymakers and the people who have an impact on their lives take their views and interests into account when making decisions about them.

### **Main non-public actors involved in policy-making**

There is a wide range of non-government organisations which seek to influence policy making in young people's health and wellbeing. These include:

The [Kings Fund](#) is an independent charity working to improve health and care in England by undertaking research and analysis, developing individuals, teams and organisations, building capability to improve care, promoting understanding of the health and social care system and bringing people together – through events and networks.

The [Nuffield Trust](#) is an independent health think tank providing evidence-based research and policy analysis and informing and generating debate, to learn, share knowledge and debate.

The [Association for Young People's Health](#) (AYPH) is a charity working in the area of young people's health. Its work includes:

- involving young people and making sure their views are heard
- working with healthcare providers to improve services for young people
- improving access to information, resources and innovation
- promoting evidence-based practice and highlighting important data

- increasing communication between practitioners from different sectors.

The [Youth Sport Trust](#) is a charity which promotes awareness of how physical education and school sport can deliver whole school positive outcomes to improve attainment, physical and mental wellbeing and inclusion.

The [Association for Physical Education](#) (afPE) is the membership subject association for physical education. Its main purpose is to promote and maintain high standards and safe practice in all aspects and at all levels of physical education, school sport and physical activity influencing developments at national and local levels that will impact on pupils' physical health and emotional well-being.

The [Royal Society for Public Health](#) (RSPH) is an independent, multidisciplinary charity dedicated to the improvement of the public's health and wellbeing. Its object is to inform policy and practice, and educate and support communities and individuals to live healthily.

The [Young Health Movement](#) (YHM) is a peer driven approach to raising public health awareness among young people, run by RSPH. YHM works with a wide variety of young people's services, including local authorities, schools and colleges, youth centres and organisations, charities and community groups. It has developed a national network of young people's health and wellbeing services, resources and points of information.

### Cross-sectoral cooperation

Cross-sectoral cooperation is embedded in the approach to policy making. For example, Public Health England has produced a framework for national and local action to address the specific public health needs of young people and ensure their future health, [Improving Young People's Health and Wellbeing](#). This framework was developed with support from the charity Association of Young People's Health and with input from across health, education, youth services and local and national government.

The statutory Health and Wellbeing Boards, established under the [Health and Social Care Act 2012](#), act as forums in which leaders from the local health and care system can work together to improve the health and wellbeing of their local populations. They bring together clinical, political, professional and community leaders to address local health challenges.

## 7.3 Sport, youth fitness and physical activity

### National strategy(ies)

A cross-government strategy, [Sporting Future](#), was published in 2015 and set out a new government vision for success in sport. The strategy focuses on five key outcomes: physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, individual development, social and community development, and economic development. Its main aim is to encourage people to be more active, a key part of which is to end the distinction between traditional 'sport' and broader physical activities, such as walking, dance and fitness classes.

There is a strong emphasis on attracting under-represented groups such as women, disabled people, those in lower socio-economic groups and older people into sport and physical activity. Progress on the strategy is reported through an [annual report to Parliament](#).

The strategy covers all ages, but there is a section on children and young people. Actions that concerned children and young people include:

- extending the age range for which [Sport England](#) is responsible downward from 14 to 5 in order to have a greater impact across the whole of a person's sporting life and across the transitions and disruptions that young people face

- extending the Active Lives survey to measure children’s engagement in sport and physical activity
- seeking to better understand the barriers and issues around the drop-off in engagement from primary to secondary as well as identify good practice, particularly for those groups who are most affected, such as girls
- continuing to support the School Games, a national programme which offers opportunities for all children to engage in competitive sports
- establishing a [working group to advise](#) on how to ensure no child leaves school unable to meet a minimum standard of capability and confidence in swimming
- provision by the [Department for Transport](#) to support [Bikeability](#) training for school children. The government has said that expected spend between 2016 and 2021 on active travel has doubled to £2.4 billion. The government [announced in February 2020](#) that it will significantly expand the Bikeability programme and invest £22 million in a range of national schemes over the next year:
- £20 million will go to extend the Access Fund which helps local authorities support more people to cycle and walk
- £1 million will go towards the Big Bike Revival – a grass roots project encouraging more than 40,000 people to take up cycling who wouldn’t normally consider it
- £1 million will be invested in the Walk to School outreach programmes offered by the government’s partners Cycling UK and Living Streets

Sport England has developed its [delivery strategy](#) (Towards an Active Nation) to support Sporting Future.

[Please note that sport in the UK is a devolved matter. The grassroots/participation aspects of the sport strategy apply to England and are delivered by Sport England on behalf of DCMS. Participation in sport in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland is the responsibility of those administrations].

## Promoting and supporting sport and physical activity among young people

School Sports and Activity Action Plan

The School Sports and Activity Action Plan (SSAAP) was [announced in October 2018](#), by the Secretary of State for Education and [published in July 2019](#).

This action plan is a statement of intent, setting out a joint commitment from DfE, DCMS and DHSC, to ongoing collaboration at national level to ensure that sport and physical activity are an integral part of both the school day and after-school activities, so that all children have the opportunity to take part in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day.

It sets out how schools, parents, sporting organisations and communities can work together to ensure that young people have access to the sporting opportunities that are right for them, inside and outside the school gates.

The Actions committed to in the plan include:

- Empowering young people to ensure pupils have the opportunity to be active throughout the school day, in a way that engages and interests them.
- Raising awareness of the importance of physical activity for children and young people.
- Immediate action to support sport in schools, through improving the coordination of PE training for teachers, reviewing current training and providing schools with a toolkit to support effective use of a PE and Sports Premium.

- To work towards ensuring all children leave primary school with swimming and water safety skills.
- A scheme to help schools rate their health and wellbeing provision.
- To increase the provision of after-school sport opportunities.
- Set up a clear pathway of competition and strengthen the School Games - a national programme which offers opportunities for children to take part in competitive sport at all levels; within their own school or local area as well as county and regional events.

Further details on these commitments will be published in an update to this action plan.

In 2011, the Chief Medical Officers (CMOs) of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland issued [guidelines](#) for recommended levels of physical activity for different age groups. These guidelines [were last updated in](#) September 2019 to better reflect the increased compelling evidence base for the positive correlations between regular physical activity and young people. For children and young people aged 5 to 18 years these are as follows:

1. Children and young people should engage in moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity for an average of at least 60 minutes per day across the week. This can include all forms of activity such as physical education, active travel, after-school activities, play and sports.
2. Children and young people should engage in a variety of types and intensities of physical activity across the week to develop movement skills, muscular fitness, and bone strength.
3. Children and young people should aim to minimise the amount of time spent being sedentary, and when physically possible should break up long periods of not moving with at least light physical activity.

### **Sport England investment**

Sport England funds a range of programmes to promote sport and physical activity amongst children and young people.

Current investment priorities include:

- Offer specialist training to at least two teachers in every secondary school in England by 2020. The aim of this will be to better meet the needs of all children, irrespective of their level of sporting ability, and to involve them in shaping the sporting opportunities that are provided.
- Improve the experience that children get in school through the recently doubled Primary PE and Sport Premium funding and investment into the [School Games](#) - a national programme which offers opportunities for children to take part in competitive sport at all levels; within their own school or local area as well as county and regional events. Over 21,000 schools compete in levels 1-3 and over 1m children have participated..
- Help to ensure there is a good sports and activity offer before and after the school day through supporting satellite clubs - outposts of local sport or physical activity clubs based around the needs of young people - and exploring the new Government investment into extending the school day and breakfast clubs.
- Recognise the importance of transitions between both primary and secondary and then to further and higher education, with an increased focus on [supporting inactive children and students](#) to take up sport and exercise

Sport England have committed to a [£210 million package of funding](#), a combination of National Lottery and government funding, to respond to the COVID-19 crisis in 2020. This includes a £35m Community Emergency Fund and £55m Sector Stimulation which

includes £20m Tackling Inequalities Fund designed to minimise the impact of COVID-19 on people from underrepresented groups.

## Physical education in schools

Under the reformed National Curriculum, which local authority [maintained schools](#) have been required to teach since September 2014, physical education (PE) remains a compulsory subject until the end of compulsory full-time education at age 16. National Curriculum [programmes of study](#) outline what should be taught at each key stage.

[Academies](#) and [free schools](#) do not have to follow the National Curriculum but are required to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes, among other things, the physical development of pupils.

Schools decide how much time to spend teaching physical education (PE), taking into account the needs and circumstances of their pupils.

As part of the autonomy of schools, they or individual teachers are free to select the pedagogical tools which they use. The Association for Physical Education ([afPE](#)), the UK PE subject association, provides some free resources and tools on its website.

Individual [Awarding Organisations](#) may offer teaching resources to schools entering students for their examinations in PE qualifications, e.g. AQA's [resources](#) for its Physical Education GCSE.

Since October 2012, new regulations (the [School Premises \(England\) Regulations 2012](#)) have applied to the provision of outdoor space by schools. These require that suitable outdoor space must be provided to enable 'pupils to play outside' and 'physical education to be provided to pupils in accordance with the school curriculum'.

Local authorities and schools must seek the consent of the Secretary of State when seeking to dispose of publicly funded school land, including playing fields. [Advice](#) from the Department for Education, refers (p.6) to the 'very strong policy presumption against the disposal of school playing field land'.

The Department for Education established a [Healthy Pupils Capital Programme](#) (HPCF) in 2018/19, funded through the [Soft Drinks Industry Levy](#). £100m of revenue generated from the Soft Drinks Industry Levy was provided in 2018-19 for the HPCF. This fund is intended to improve children's and young people's physical and mental health by improving and increasing availability to facilities for physical activity, healthy eating, mental health and wellbeing and medical conditions. Funding will be available to primary and secondary schools and sixth-form colleges.

## Collaboration and partnerships

County Sports Partnerships (CSPs) are [networks](#) of local agencies committed to working together to increase the number of people taking part in sport and physical activity. CSPs cover all age groups, but do specific work with schools and the further/higher education sectors, including coordinating Sport England programmes at a local level.

## 7.4 Healthy lifestyles and healthy nutrition

### National strategy(ies)

In 2017, the Department of Health published its tobacco control plan, [Towards a Smokefree Generation: a Tobacco Control Plan for England](#). This is an all-age strategy, but discouraging young people from smoking is one of its priorities.

The main targets of the overall strategy are to be achieved by 2022, but there is also a commitment to continue with efforts to reduce smoking prevalence beyond then. The vision of the strategy is to create a smokefree generation, which will be regarded as achieved once smoking prevalence is at 5 per cent or below, across all age groups.

The aims of the strategy include:

- reducing the prevalence of 15-year-olds who regularly smoke to 3 per cent or less by the end of 2022
- reviewing the data on 16- and 17-year-olds to help in understanding the trends in smoking amongst young people
- reducing the prevalence of smoking among adults, from 15.5 per cent to 12 per cent or less as a way of reducing the number of young people who smoke through being influenced by adults' behaviour
- reviewing the type and level of sanctions for tobacco retailers who repeatedly break laws designed to protect young people.

At national level, implementation of the strategy is mainly the responsibility of the Department of Health, NHS England and Public Health England. Implementation at local level is the responsibility of local councils and Clinical Commissioning Groups.

In 2017, the Government published a new [drug strategy](#), setting out its approach to curbing the demand for and supply of drugs. It is an all-age strategy, but it includes the objective (p.2) of 'preventing people – particularly young people – from becoming drug users in the first place'. Young people not in education, employment or training, and looked after children (those in the care of a public authority) are identified as particularly at risk. Actions relating to young people, include:

- investing in a range of evidence-based programmes, which have a positive impact on young people and adults, giving them confidence, resilience and risk management skills to resist risky behaviours and recover from set-backs
- providing support to school nurses, teachers and wider community services, including youth workers, to work together to promote health and wellbeing
- providing information and intelligence to improve decision-making, enabling high quality and cost effective services.

Specific services which the Government will support under the strategy include developing its '[Talk to FRANK](#)' service, continuing to develop and promote the '[Rise Above](#)' digital hub and expanding the Alcohol and Drugs Education and Prevention Information Service ([ADEPIS](#)) to reach wider prevention partners, such as youth offending teams.

The strategy also emphasises the importance of good quality Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education (see '[Health education and healthy lifestyles education in schools](#)').

Responsibility for implementation is cross-governmental, driven by a Drug Strategy Board, chaired by the Home Secretary and including representation from key government departments and wider partners, e.g. Public Health England and the National Policing Lead on Drugs.

In 2017, the Government published an [evaluation](#) of its previous (2010) drug strategy. Findings include the importance of early intervention (especially pre-school and family-based programmes, as well as school-based Personal, Social and Health Education) in reducing risk factors associated with drug use and in turn drug use itself.

Public Health England's strategic action plan for 2016-2019, [Health Promotion for Sexual and Reproductive Health and HIV](#) is all-age, but young people are identified as one of the groups at risk. The plan is set in the strategic context of the Department of Health's 2013 [A Framework for Sexual Health Improvement in England](#).

To reduce the rate of under 18 and under 16 conceptions as well as narrow the variation in rates across the country, the action plan commits Public Health England to:

- provide improved data to local authorities

- promote evidence and effective practice to reduce teenage pregnancy and improve the public health outcomes for the school age population
- ensure that young people have access to accurate information on sexual and reproductive health
- promote training and capacity building for the wider school workforce to increase and improve delivery of Sex and Relationships Education and Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education (see ['Health education and healthy lifestyles education in schools'](#)).

Implementation is mainly the responsibility of Public Health England, with the NHS and local authorities.

There is also a 2016 cross-Government action plan, [Childhood Obesity: a Plan for Action](#), which is targeted across a broad population, but with specific initiatives for children and young people. Key relevant strategic objectives include:

- Introducing a soft drinks industry levy across the UK, designed to encourage producers to reduce the amount of sugar in their products and to move consumers towards healthier alternatives. Revenue from the levy to be invested in programmes to reduce obesity and encourage physical activity and balanced diets for school age children.
- Taking out 20% of sugar in products. A broad, structured sugar reduction programme to remove sugar from the products children and young people eat most.
- Supporting innovation to help businesses to make their products healthier
- Developing a new framework by updating the nutrient profile model to help families to recognise healthier choices.

Note that, at local level, Health and Wellbeing Boards and local councils have their own health and wellbeing strategies, both general and targeted, e.g. teenage pregnancy strategies, to reflect the needs and characteristics of their particular populations.

## **Encouraging healthy lifestyles and healthy nutrition for young people**

The national Healthy Child Programme 0-19, includes the [Healthy Child Programme: From 5-19 Years Old](#). The programme sets out the recommended framework of universal and progressive services for children and young people to promote optimal health and wellbeing.

The 5-19 element is led by school nursing services (see section '[Stakeholders](#)' in the article 'Mechanisms of early detection and signposting of young people facing health risks').

One of the six themes covered by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's [Life Chances Fund](#), launched in July 2016, is young people. The young people theme focuses on reducing the risk of negative, social, economic and health outcomes amongst disadvantaged young people aged 11-24. The programme operates through [Social Impact Bonds](#) and £48m was made available in 2018 to fund 22 new projects.

The [Healthy Universities Network](#) supports whole university approaches to health and wellbeing. This extends to staff and the wider community, as well to students.

The Department for Education has introduced a [Healthy Pupils Capital Programme](#) in 2018. Funding is available to primary and secondary schools and sixth-form colleges for improving access to facilities for physical activity, healthy eating, mental health and wellbeing and medical conditions (such as kitchens, dining facilities, changing rooms, playgrounds and sports facilities). £100m of revenue generated from the Soft Drinks Industry Levy will be provided in 2018/19 for this programme.

Public Health England published Government's [recommendations](#) for energy and nutrients in 2016. The [Eatwell Guide](#) is a policy tool used to define government recommendations on eating healthily and achieving a balanced diet. For schools, the Department for Education developed a [School Food Plan](#) in 2013. Updated [regulations](#) on school food were issued in 2014 and new [School Food Standards](#) became mandatory in January 2015.

## Health education and healthy lifestyles education in schools

Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education is currently a non-statutory subject; Government [guidance](#) states that it is 'an important and necessary part of all pupils' education. Currently, under the [Education Act 2002](#), maintained secondary schools must teach sex education but this does not extend to schools which have academy status. It is usually taught as sex and relationship education (SRE), within the curriculum for Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education. There is no statutory programme of study but schools must have regard to [statutory guidance](#).

However, from 2020, under [new proposals](#), all pupils will study compulsory health education as well as new reformed relationships education in primary school and relationships and sex education in secondary school.

The [PSHE Association](#) has developed a (non-statutory) [programme of study](#) to support schools. Within the programme of study (p.5), one of the overarching concepts developed through PSHE is 'A healthy (including physically, emotionally and socially), balanced lifestyle (including within relationships, work-life, exercise and rest, spending and saving and lifestyle choices).'

At Key Stages 3 and 4 (pupils aged 11-16) the core theme of 'health and wellbeing' includes a focus on:

- how to make informed choices about health and wellbeing matters including drugs, alcohol and tobacco; maintaining a balanced diet; physical activity; mental and emotional health and wellbeing; and sexual health
- parenthood and the consequences of teenage pregnancy
- how to assess and manage risks to health; and to keep themselves and others safe.

The Government has provided grant funding to the PSHE Association, a charity, and the national membership organisation for Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education, to enable it to help schools in their PSHE provision through advice and [teaching resources](#).

Within the programme of study, for Key Stages 3 and 4 (ages 11-16), the core theme of 'relationships' includes a focus on:

- how to develop and maintain a variety of healthy relationships within a range of social/cultural contexts and how to develop parenting skills
- how to recognise and manage emotions within a range of relationships
- how to deal with risky or negative relationships including all forms of bullying (including the distinct challenges posed by online bullying) and abuse, sexual and other violence and online encounters
- the concept of consent in a variety of contexts (including in sexual relationships)
- managing loss including bereavement, separation and divorce.

Making informed choices about sexual health and learning about parenthood and the consequences of teenage pregnancy fall under the 'health and wellbeing' core theme.

## Peer-to-peer education approaches

There is a wide range of peer-based approaches operated by charities operating in the youth sector. Examples of these include:

[Straight Talking Peer Education](#), funded through the Big Lottery, employs teenage mothers and young fathers to run courses in secondary schools about the realities of early parenthood, healthy relationships, child sexual exploitation and sexting.

This [work](#) aims to:

- reduce teenage parenthood and sexual exploitation by allowing young people the opportunity to make better-informed life choices
- reduce barriers to employment for teenage parents, supporting the development of skills and providing pathways towards economic independence.

[Girlguiding Peer Educators](#). Peer Educators are 14- to 25-year-olds who help young people in the Girlguiding movement to explore important topics including mental wellbeing; body confidence and self-esteem; healthy relationships and making own decisions about alcohol, smoking, sex and drugs.

[Sexpression:UK](#) is a student-led independent charity that empowers young people to make informed decisions about sex and relationships by running sex education workshops in schools and community settings.

### **Collaboration and partnerships**

Under s.10 of the [Children Act 2004](#) (as amended by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009), local authorities have a duty to:

make arrangements to promote cooperation between the local authority and named local partners with a view to improving the wellbeing of children in the authority's area....

This includes cooperation on matters relating to 'physical and mental health and emotional well-being'.

Under the legislation, local authorities were required to establish Children's Trust Boards to facilitate a multi-agency approach to children and young people's wellbeing.

Section 194 of the [Health and Social Care Act 2012](#) provided for the establishment of Health and Wellbeing Boards and GP-led Clinical Commissioning Groups. It made them and local authorities jointly responsible for the [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#) process and required them to develop a Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS) to oversee and inform commissioning decisions.

There is no longer a statutory duty for local authorities to establish Children's Trust Boards, but many of the Children's Trusts/Children's Partnership Boards' structures remain and cooperate with Health and Wellbeing Boards through their governance arrangements.

### **Raising awareness on healthy lifestyles and on factors affecting the health and well-being of young people**

The NHS Choices website has an all-age [Livewell](#) hub, covering a range of health topics, some of which such as [Eat Well](#) are teen-specific.

Public Health England runs several [all age campaigns](#) and also hosts the [Rise Above](#) health and wellbeing website for young people.

The [Time to Change](#) campaign to end the stigma attached to mental illness is led by the mental health charity [Mind](#) and [Rethink Mental Illness](#). The campaign is all-age, but there is a children and young people's [programme](#) within it. It is funded by the Department of Health, [Children in Need](#) and the [Big Lottery Fund](#).

The [MindEd](#) website, funded by the Department for Health and the Department for Education provides educational e-learning resources applicable across health, social care, education, criminal justice and community settings.

[Get Set](#) is the British Olympic Association and British Paralympic Association's youth engagement programme. It provides resources to encourage young people to develop a

core set of sporting values, enabling them to make the right decisions on and off the field of play. The programme aims to:

- Inspire young people to fulfil their potential and maintain healthy, active lifestyles
- Give all young people the chance to learn about and live the Olympic Values of friendship, excellence and respect and the Paralympic Values of inspiration, determination, courage and equality
- Build excitement about Team GB and ParalympicsGB, using the Olympic and Paralympic Games as a hook for learning and participation.

Local authorities offer services and information in their own areas. There is also much provision through charities and other third sector organisations.

## 7.5 Mental health

### National strategy(ies)

In 2019, the [NHS Long Term Plan](#) made a commitment to at least 345,000 more children and young people under 25 will have access to support through either NHS-funded mental health services or school/college mental health support teams by 2023 to 2024. It is part of a drive to offer a comprehensive model of care that covers children, young people and adults. It comes with the commitment to invest in new mental health support teams across 20% to 25% of schools and colleges nationwide and to ensure that crisis care is universally available 24/7 by 2023 to 2024. The [NHS Mental Health Implementation Plan 2019 to 2020 to 2023 to 2024](#) relates to the long term plan, and provides details of a new framework to help achieve the mental health specific commitments.

[Public Health England's 2020-2025 strategy](#) lays out aims to contribute towards the Government's aim in the [Cross-Government Suicide Prevention Workplan](#) to reduce suicides by 10% by 2021/22 and maintain a downward trend beyond 2022. They state "we will work towards ensuring mental health has parity with physical health, modelling the role that organisations can play as employers and embedding good mental health across PHE's work."

In January 2017, the Government responded to and accepted all recommendations set out in [The Five Year Forward View for Mental Health](#) an all-age strategy up to 2020/21. In its response, the Government committed itself to securing improvements in access to the high quality mental health care for children and young people previously set out in the 2015 report [Future in Mind](#):

- Local Transformation Plans were developed in 2015/16, setting out how local agencies will work together to improve children and young people's mental health. These will be refreshed and integrated within new Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs).
- Schools, colleges and local NHS services will be supported to work more closely together to provide dedicated children and young people's mental health services, by evaluating emerging models and approaches, to explore the impact closer working can have.
- Promising preventative programmes for use in schools will be evaluated.
- A pilot programme of peer support in education and community settings and online will be launched.
- All local areas will be expected to work with the existing Children and Young People's Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (CYP IAPT) programme to deliver post-graduate training in specific therapies. This will lead to at least 3400 existing children and young people's mental health service staff being trained by 2020/21.

- the Care Quality Commission will be encouraged to undertake in depth review of children and young people's mental health services in 2017/18.
- New access and waiting times standards for children and young people with an eating disorder will be introduced. From April 2017, the target is that children and young people referred routinely to services should be seen within four weeks, and those referred for urgent help should be seen within one week. Treatment in accordance with the standards should be received by 95 per cent of those in need by 2020/21.

An Inter-Ministerial Group for Mental Health, chaired by the Secretary of State for Health, is being established to oversee implementation of the report's recommendations and ensure policy alignment across government.

A cross-Government programme board has been established, chaired by the Department of health, and attended by senior representatives from all Government departments that are responding to this strategy.

NHS England has also published its [implementation plan](#) and established a programme board to oversee progress.

The cross-government all-age [suicide strategy](#) was issued in 2012 and was last updated in January 2017. The strategy identifies young men as a high-risk group. It also advises a tailored approach to reducing the suicide risk among and children and young people, including those who are vulnerable such as looked after children, care leavers and children and young people in the youth justice system.

Children and young people have an important place in this strategy. Schools, social care and the youth justice system, as well as charities highlighting problems such as bullying, low body image and lack of self-esteem, all have an important contribution to make to suicide prevention among children and young people. Measures to help parents keep their children safe online are included in area for action 5. The call for research to support the strategy includes a focus on children and young people and self-harm (p. 6).

The Government will continue to work with the internet industry through the UK Council for Child Internet Safety to create a safer online environment for children and young people. Recognising concern about misuse of the internet to promote suicide and suicide methods, we will be pressing to ensure that parents have the tools to ensure that their children are not accessing harmful suicide-related content online (p. 8).

The 2017 progress report stated the overall aim of reducing the national suicide rate by 10 percent by 2020/21. In terms of relevance to youth, it highlighted Government proposals and actions in this area, including:

- Providing mental health first aid training in schools
- Expanding pilots to establish single points of contact for mental health to more schools
- Funding the PSHE Association to produce guidance on teaching about mental health problems
- Providing funding to tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in schools.

Local authorities have had primary responsibility for coordinating and implementing work on suicide prevention since April 2013.

Public Health England issued [guidance](#) in 2016 to assist local authority public health teams to work with clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), health and wellbeing boards, the voluntary sector and wider networks of partners to develop or update local suicide prevention plans.

Link to further [information](#) and annual suicide strategy implementation reports (latest [January 2017](#)).

The House of Commons Health Committee held an [inquiry](#) on suicide prevention which ended with the publication of its [final report](#) in March 2017.

This said (p.16):

We recognise the importance of promoting emotional wellbeing in order to tackle mental health problems in young people. We also note the importance of taking the opportunity to provide support for young people in distress, and at times of particular vulnerability, including in further and higher education settings. We are looking in further detail at children and young people's mental health and education in our current joint inquiry with the Education Committee.

[A guidance](#) for parents and carers in supporting young people's mental health and wellbeing during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic was published in June 2020. As part of the UK government's COVID-19 [response](#), £5 million was allocated in funding to community mental health projects in May 2020. This funding is delivered by mental health charity Mind in an effort to help existing services respond to the mental health and wellbeing challenges of the pandemic.

### **Improving the mental health of young people**

School-based counselling is one-to-one support, provided in school, by a trained professional counsellor to children and young people who are experiencing problems, and who are usually referred for counselling by their pastoral care teachers. Non-statutory government [guidance](#) aims to help primary and secondary schools to set up or improve existing school-based counselling services so that they achieve the best outcomes for children and young people. This also sets out the expectation that, over time, all schools should provide access to counselling services.

Colleges and universities offer confidential advice and support through their students union and from a range of student services and other agencies.

See also:

[Guidance and Counselling in Early Childhood and School Education](#) (Eurydice national description)

[Guidance and Counselling in Higher Education](#) (Eurydice national description)

The Mental Health First Aid programme was announced by the Government in June 2017. Over a two-year period all secondary schools in England will receive practical advice on how to deal with issues such as depression and anxiety, suicide and psychosis, self-harm, and eating disorders. The programme will be backed in the first year by £200,000 in [government funding](#), and delivered by the social enterprise [Mental Health First Aid](#). Since 2019, this is currently provided by the [Anna Freud Centre](#). The training will take place across England in over 100 locations between 1st September 2019 - 31st March 2020. The training will be available for up to two members of staff from over 1900 eligible schools and colleges. This one-day training will be freely available to those schools who: have not yet received Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Training in 2017 – 2018 and are a mainstream secondary school, sixth form college, Pupil Referral Unit or a Free School.

CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) is used as a term for the NHS services that assesses and treat young people with emotional, behavioural or mental health difficulties. There are local NHS CAMHS services around the UK, with teams made up of nurses, therapists, psychologists, support workers and social workers, as well as other professionals.

Local areas have a number of different support services available. These might be from the statutory, voluntary or school-based sectors, such as an NHS trust, local authority, school or charitable organisation. These work together, through referrals to offer a range of provision.

For further information see the Young Minds [guide](#) to CAMHS and the section '[Health care](#)' in the article 'Access to Quality Services'.

The Children and Young People's Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme ([CYP IAPT](#)) delivered by NHS England aims to improve existing Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) working in the community.

The [Eating disorders programme](#) is being delivered within the CYP IAPT programme framework.

Fulfilling Lives: HeadStart is a Big Lottery funded [project](#) which aims to give young people support and the skills to cope with adversity and do well at school and in life.

Focusing on providing a supportive environment around young people, a range of approaches are offered in schools and communities, including peer mentoring, mental health 'first aid' training, staying safe online, tackling social media bullying and special resilience lessons.

HeadStart also provides targeted support to pupils showing risk factors, such as repeated absences and disruptive behaviour and also to particularly vulnerable groups, including young people in care.

### **[Further information](#)**

In 2016, the Government worked with [Young Minds](#) in partnership with the Royal College of Psychiatrists and the [Charlie Waller Memorial Trust](#) (a charity which focuses on the mental health and wellbeing of young people) to launch '[No harm done](#)', a series of films and toolkits that set out practical steps for young people, parents and health professionals to identify, understand and address self-harm.

Public Health England has published toolkits on preventing suicide among [lesbian, gay, bisexual](#) and [transgender](#) young people, a collaboration with the [Royal College of Nursing](#) to support and develop the role of nurses in the prevention of suicides in the LGBT community.

In March 2017, the Department for Education published an [analysis](#) of the results of a call for evidence which it had issued on peer support and children's and young people's mental health.

A lot of the services in this area are provided through charities, e.g. the [Samaritans](#) and the [Matthew Elvidge Trust](#).

[PAPYRUS](#) is the national charity for the prevention of suicide. It receives Big Lottery funding to:

- provide confidential help and advice to young people and anyone worried about a young person
- help others to prevent young suicide by working with and training professionals
- campaign and influence national policy

[Young Minds](#) also receives Big Lottery Fund funding. The programmes it runs include:

- [No Harm Done](#) (self-harming)
- [Building Pupil Resilience in Schools](#)
- [Amplified](#) (young people and their families having a voice on mental health issues).

[The Mental Health Foundation](#) works with young people directly and through schools to provide prevention-focused peer support and education. It hosts and campaigns with the [Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition](#).

The Department for Education introduced a [Healthy Pupils Capital Programme](#) in 2019. Funding will be available to primary and secondary schools and sixth-form colleges to improve facilities, including those that support young people struggling with mental health issues.

The programme is funded through the [Soft Drinks Industry Levy](#).

## 7.6 Mechanisms of early detection and signposting of young people facing health risks

### Policy framework

There is no overall policy framework for mechanisms of early detection and signposting of young people facing health risks. Early detection mechanisms are applied locally through such services and organisations as: the school nurse service, CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services), local authority youth services and local Health and Wellbeing Boards. Young people are signposted to a wide range of projects and programmes operated at local level which are often operated by third-sector organisations or charities with government funding.

For example, the [Street Talk](#) programme, was delivered by [Addaction](#) and [Mentor UK](#), with funding from the [Home Office](#)). It trained and supported staff at 20 grassroots groups to:

- identify appropriate settings in which to conduct outreach work with young people
- use the [CRAFTT](#) screening tool to identify young people vulnerable to substance misuse
- deliver low intensity substance misuse interventions based around motivational interviewing (Project CHAT)
- offer young people advice and information on drugs and alcohol
- promote engagement with drug and alcohol services

The groups had contact with more than 2,000 young people and delivered 800 interventions.

The [independent evaluation](#) of Street Talk found that of those young people who received the Project CHAT intervention, more than two thirds indicated that their knowledge and confidence to make informed decisions about safer levels and methods of alcohol and drug use had increased.

### Stakeholders

#### Targeted Youth Services

Local authorities' targeted youth services work with young people who require additional support to enable them to make informed choices and maintain positive pathways. The teams include various combinations of professionals such as substance misuse workers, youth counsellors and targeted youth support workers.

#### School nursing teams

As highlighted in [Maximising the School Nursing Team Contribution to the Public Health of School-Aged Children](#), the school nursing team can be well-placed to notice early indications of problems, and to ensure that:

children, young people and their families health needs are assessed and supported, and where additional health needs are identified, they receive an early response, including appropriate referral to specialist services and signposting to other agencies as per the relevant pathway (p.7).

### Guidance to stakeholders

There is no overarching policy on early detection and signposting of young people, however guidance to stakeholders working with young people in varying contexts highlights the importance of this. For example:

- Department for Education [guidance](#) for teachers (2016) on behaviour and mental health notes that teachers are often in a position to notice signs of problems, through

their knowledge of their pupils. The guidance includes information on mental health difficulties and identification tools.

- NICE (the [National Institute for Health and Care Excellence](#)) produces guidance which includes detection, risk profiling and referrals, e.g. on identification and management of [depression in children](#).
- Public Health England issues [guidance](#) on risk/vulnerability factors, e.g. on substance abuse.

## Target groups

Target groups vary according to the intervention area.

[Targeted Youth Support](#) services are aimed at helping vulnerable young people early, so that their difficulties can be addressed as soon as possible, and to prevent their problems escalating. They are typically targeted at young people who without help are at future risk of further problems such as substance misuse, youth offending, teenage pregnancy and homelessness.

In particular (p.4), this is likely to include young people whose situation includes one or more of these factors:

- persistent absence or exclusion from school
- behavioural problems
- poor emotional, social or coping skills
- poor mental health
- learning difficulties and disabilities
- low self-belief
- poor aspirations
- attitudes which condone risky behaviours
- poor family support, family conflict or problems such as parental substance misuse
- poor support networks
- family or friends, or involvement in gangs, who condone high risk activities
- living in a deprived neighbourhood
- poverty.

The [guidance](#) by the Department of Health and Public Health England on school nursing teams states (p. 15):

Particular attention should be paid to the vulnerable children who experience the worst health outcomes, such as Children in Care, NEET, young offenders, children with disabilities and young carers.

## Funding

Early detection and signposting is an integral part of services for young people and not separately funded.

## 7.7 Making health facilities more youth friendly

The Department of Health issued [Quality Criteria for Young People Friendly Health Services](#) in 2011, along with a [self-review tool](#). Recommendations included that:

- Where there is a choice about service location, the service is accessible to young people by public transport.

- Young people can use the service at times convenient to them where possible.
- When making appointments and attending consultations, young people may express a preference about:
  - where they are seen
  - who they are seen by
  - attending with the support of a friend or partner
  - who and how many people are present during discussion, examination and treatment
  - the gender of the member of staff they are seen by.

Target groups identified include:

- unaccompanied asylum seekers who are aged under 18
- looked-after children and care leavers
- teenagers living in neighbourhoods where there are high levels of teenage pregnancy and evidence of health inequalities
- young people from black and minority ethnic communities
- young people with any form of disability and/or sensory impairment
- lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans-gendered young people
- teenage parents
- young people with long-term health needs.

In 2017, the Department of Health issued a [Building Note](#) with some design considerations for facilities for CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)

The GP Champions project was a partnership between the [Association for Young People's Health](#) (AYPH), the Royal College of General Practitioners' (RCGP) [Adolescent Health Group](#) and [Youth Access](#) to improve provision for young people. It was funded by the Department of Health and [Paul Hamlyn Foundation](#) and ran from 2012-2015.

NHS England has a [Youth Forum](#), made up of 25 young people from all over the country, who have a passion for improving health services for young people. The Youth Forum gives a voice to young people to express their thoughts on the health issues that matter most to them. It works directly with NHS England, Public Health England and the Department of Health enabling the Forum to have a real impact on the health services that young people use. The current issues the Youth Forum is working to tackle include:

- Making sure young people understand their healthcare rights.
- #yourhealthinyourhands – working to give young people control to prevent illness and stay well.
- Improving opportunities for young people to get involved in primary care, for example in their GP or dental practice.
- Developing 'golden rules' for good care, highlighting what young people need from their care pathway.

The NHS Youth Forum Impact Report 2013-2017 is available [here](#). At the time of writing (July 2020), this is the most recent report available.

In 2020, the NHS Youth Forum worked on several COVID-19 responses, including [updating PHE guidance](#) on shielding to make it relevant and accessible for young people and led social media campaigns such as [#mycovid19pledge](#).

Further information:

GP Champions project: [What every GP practice can do to improve young people's health](#)

GP Champions for Youth Health Project: [Toolkit for General Practice](#) (Association for Young People's Health/Youth Access/Royal College of General Physicians, 2015)

## 7.8 Current debates and reforms

### Mental Health

The first Mental Health Support Teams were launched in 25 trailblazer areas announced in December 2018. These include 12 areas that are also testing a four-week waiting time. These trailblazer MHSTs are building up their capacity and capability during 2019. [A further 57 sites were confirmed in July 2019](#), and these will start developing 123 Mental Health Support Teams during 2020.

### Health/Sex and Relationships education

Under the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#), all primary schools are required, since September 2019, to provide Relationships Education (retaining their current choice to also provide age-appropriate Sex Education), while all secondary schools (including academies) will be required to provide Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). RSE and health education is [statutory](#) from September 2020.

## 8. CREATIVITY AND CULTURE

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There are a number of initiatives which focus on improving young people's access to, and participation in, creativity and culture. Targets relating to disadvantaged young people have been set within the national all-age culture strategy. There is no separate national strategy focusing on young people.

Arts Council England and the Department for Education fund a network of [Bridge Organisations](#), which connect the education and cultural sectors to enhance the access that young people have to arts and cultural opportunities in areas where it is most needed. Bridge Organisations form [Cultural Education Partnerships](#) with a range of local partners including (but not limited to) local authorities, schools, libraries, museums, art organisations, music education hubs and further and higher education institutions to develop networks of cultural provision in their areas.

### 8.1 General context

#### Main trends in young people's creativity and cultural participation

The [Taking Part survey](#) provides data on cultural and sporting engagement, collecting information on participation in the arts, museums and galleries, archives, libraries, heritage and sport for children aged five to 15 years of age and individuals over 16. It has been running since 2005 and is commissioned by the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#). DCMS conducted a [consultation](#) on question changes in the Taking Part Survey (TPS) 2020/21. The public consultation ran from November to December 2019 and, in addition, DCMS sought responses from stakeholders directly. DCMS solicited feedback on plans to stop using the TPS to collect data on volunteering and charitable giving; child participation in sport. Following the feedback, DCMS will be removing the questions on volunteering and charitable giving as well as child sport participation. The Community Life Survey and Sport England's Active Lives Survey will be used for this information.

The survey Headline findings from the [Taking Part Survey: England Child Report, 2019/20](#) (covering young people aged between five and 15 years) shows the following trends:

- In 2019/20, almost all children aged 5- 15 (96%) had engaged with the arts in the last 12 months, similar to 2018/19.
- In 2019/20, 96% of children aged 5- 10 had engaged with the arts outside of school in the last 12 months. This was the same as in 2018/19 (96%), and there was no statistically significant difference in engagement between boys and girls in this age group, with engagement rates of 95% and 97% respectively.
- In 2019/20, 96% of 11- 15 year olds had engaged with the arts in the 12 months prior to interview, either inside or outside of school. This is a similar proportion to 2018/19 (97%). There was a significant difference in engagement between boys and girls, with engagement rates of 93% and 98% respectively, a difference not observed in 2018/19.

### Barriers to accessing cultural experiences

The barriers to young people's participation in cultural experiences have been identified in a number of reports and reviews. They are summarised below:

- social, geographical, economic and psychological barriers are all cited in a 2015 [study](#) undertaken with children and young people
- the level of accessibility of cultural performances for individuals with disabilities remains an issue, as highlighted in a 2015 [data report](#) from the Arts Council (note that this report does not specifically address young people).
- Another [2015 report](#) investigated the barriers to the arts specifically for disabled and marginalised artists and writers in England. (note that this report does not specifically address young people) The main barriers to arts participation reported by disabled and/or marginalised survey respondents were noted to be financial, physical and social issues: » 29.25% respondents reported 'admission costs' and 24.79% noted 'travel costs' always to be an issue in preventing arts participation.
- The Royal Shakespeare Company for Arts Council England conducted research into 50 Ofsted 'Outstanding' schools to explore why and how they integrate arts and cultural education as part of a rigorous academic curriculum. The [results](#) were released in March 2020. This report highlights transport and location as a clear barrier to arts and cultural education:

Case study visits gave clear evidence that location plays an important part in the schools' access to high quality arts and cultural education. London schools clearly benefit not only from the wealth of cultural provision offered by a capital city, but also from TfL's free transport scheme for school groups. A non-supportive culture was also referenced as a barrier, and the arts not being treated with equal importance to other school subjects.

### Main concepts

The [Culture White Paper](#), published by the then Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2016, frames the value of culture in three key ways:

- intrinsic value: culture is enriching in and of itself, contributing to individuals' personal well being.
- social value: culture improves educational attainment and helps individuals to be healthier, fostering community cohesion and strengthening social relationships.
- economic value: culture contributes to economic growth through skills acquisition and job creation.

It covers the changing nature of culture:

culture no longer simply means being familiar with a select list of works of art and architecture, but the accumulated influence of creativity, the arts, museums, galleries, libraries, archives and heritage upon all our lives.

The paper highlights the importance of visiting, attending and participating in culture and cultural activities. It affirms the value of taking part in cultural activities either as an artist/creator or as an audience member/consumer.

## 8.2 Administration and governance

### Governance

The main government department with responsibility for creativity and culture for young people in England is the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#) (DCMS). Its remit is all-age although it has some policies which focus on young people. The department's main policy areas include:

- arts and culture
- broadcasting
- the creative industries
- cultural property, heritage and the historic environment
- libraries
- museums and galleries.

DCMS works with a number of non-departmental public bodies including:

- [Arts Council England](#), which champions, invests in and develops artistic and cultural experiences for individuals of all ages. Its responsibilities include covers music, dance, theatre, literature, visual arts, contemporary craft, combined arts, galleries, circus, carnival arts, museums, and libraries
- the [Heritage Lottery Fund](#), which protects heritage sites across the UK
- the [British Film Institute](#), which preserves and gives individuals access to England's film heritage, supports the future success of British film and expands education and learning through film
- [Historic England](#), which works to preserve England's historic environment
- the [British Council](#), which is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities.

Other main actors include the [Department for Education](#) and [local authorities](#).

Non-public bodies

The main non-public actors (many of whom receive some public funding) include:

- [Artsworld](#), which aims to place the arts at the heart of work with, for and by children and young people, and champions high quality work by artists and art and cultural organisations.
- [Creative and Cultural Skills](#), which gives young people opportunities to learn and work in the creative industries, helps the creative industries to grow economically and ensures that employers benefit from a skilled generation of talent.
- the [Cultural Learning Alliance](#), which aims to unite the education, youth and cultural sectors and develop a coherent national strategy for cultural learning.
- the [National Association of Youth Theatres](#), which works to develop and empower young people through participation in youth theatre.
- the [National Literacy Trust](#), which works to raise literacy levels in the UK.

## Cross-sectoral cooperation

For details of cross-sectoral cooperation in relation to services for young people, see the article on '[Cross sectoral approach with other ministries](#)' in the Chapter on Youth Policy Governance.

## 8.3 National strategy on creativity and culture for young people

### Existence of a national strategy

There is no separate national strategy directly addressing young people's access to and participation in creativity and culture.

However, the [Culture White Paper](#), published by the then [Department for Culture, Media and Sport](#) in 2016, outlines the Government's future policy commitments for public support to the arts and culture. Alongside addressing the importance of culture in place-making, building stronger communities and boosting economic growth, the policy includes commitments related to children and young people.

As well as this, significant moves are being made towards aligning culture policy with the 2017 [Digital Strategy](#) and [Industrial Strategy](#). In 2019, the DCMS released the policy paper [Culture is Digital](#), recognising the significant role of creativity, and outlining how culture and creative industries will be an important part of the broader long-term industry aims. The paper outlines three broad areas of policy commitments - using digital technology to engage audiences, skills and the digital capability of organisations, and unleashing the creative potential of technology. It's important to note this policy paper covers the whole of the UK although cultural policy is devolved to Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

### Scope and contents

The Culture White Paper outlines four key pledges with respect to arts and culture, each of which includes a number of associated actions and partnerships, planned by the Government in order to sustain and strengthen the arts, thereby generating economic and social benefits. These four main pledges are:

- everyone should enjoy the opportunities culture offers, no matter where they start in life.
- the riches of our culture should benefit communities across the country.
- the power of culture can increase our international standing.
- cultural investment, resilience and reform.

The first of these pledges is most relevant to children and young people. It includes the need to focus on:

- ensuring that culture is an essential part of every child's education, both inside and outside of school
- improving access to skills development and career pathways into employment in the cultural sectors.
- ensuring that publicly-funded arts and culture reflect the diversity of the country.

Each action has an emphasis on improving access and participation by young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

### Responsible authority for the implementation of the strategy

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport is responsible for the implementation of the strategy.

A number of delivery partners are explicitly mentioned in the strategy, including the following:

- the [Department for Education](#), which is responsible for children's services and education
- [local authorities](#) (LAs), which are responsible for the delivery of educational and recreational activities for children and young people in their respective areas
- [Arts Council England](#), which supports activities across the arts, using public money from Government and funding from the National Lottery. It provides funding for music and cultural education programmes including the National Youth Dance Company.
- [Historic England](#), which protects England's historic environment.
- the [Heritage Lottery Fund](#), which funds projects and partners working to transform and protect places, buildings and collections of importance to England's heritage.
- [Public Health England](#), which works to reduce health inequalities by protecting and improving health and wellbeing.

## Revisions/updates

The [Culture White Paper](#) is the Government's first white paper in this area in more than fifty years and is the second culture white paper ever published. The first national strategy, [A Policy for the Arts](#), was published in 1965 by the then Department for Education and Science.

In February 2018, a [review](#) of how the arts, libraries and museums sector has progressed was commissioned by the Arts Council. This report is not specifically about young people but is an important publication for assessing the broader sectoral issues and external issues that continue to face the sector - and included in this is barriers and enablers to participation for young people. Some of the questions that guide this evidence review are: "to what extent do children and young people in England currently engage in arts and culture? What factors influence children and young people who do not engage in arts and culture to do so?". In assessing the expected changes and emerging factors that might influence children and young people's engagement in arts and culture in the next 10 years, the report finds:

If the correlation between socio-economic group and participation in culture is maintained, it is possible to predict that lower social mobility will result in less of what is traditionally defined as cultural participation while greater social mobility over the next 10 years could result in greater participation in culture.

It is predicted that unless there is an increase in BAME young people participating in arts and culture, engagement will continue to decline as populations grow more ethnically diverse. The report also fully acknowledges the impact Brexit and austerity measures have had, and will continue to have, on the arts and culture sector in England.

The [Arts Council England Strategy for 2020-2030](#) "Let's Create" outlines a vision for the country in which everyone has access to cultural experiences. The strategy is built around three outcomes - creative people, cultural communities and a creative and cultural country. It has four investment principles - inclusivity and relevance, ambition and quality, dynamism, and environmentalism. The strategy also outlines the role of the Arts Council for the next 10 years including building capacity at the local level and providing platforms for public debate and maintaining strong partnerships.

In March 2020, the Local Government Association published "[Cultural Strategy in a Box](#)", a guide giving key lessons and guidance in writing a cultural strategy that can be tailored to suit the needs of the local authority and its place. It draws on good practice examples from across England.

## 8.4 Promoting culture and cultural participation

### Reducing obstacles to young people's access to culture

A number of publicly funded programmes and projects, outlined below, aim to counter obstacles in young people's access to culture. The focus of these programmes is largely on improving access to culture for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and in areas where provision is variable. Countering financial and geographical constraints is therefore a common theme.

- [Bookstart](#), which receives funding from the UK Government via Arts Council England, gifts free packs of books to children up to the age of 4, to inspire children with a love of reading from an early age.
- the [National Saturday Clubs](#), which is partly funded by the Department for Education and provides young people with the opportunity to study art and design every Saturday morning for free in a local college or university.
- [Music For Youth](#), which offers young people free performance and audience opportunities through its annual season of concerts and festivals.
- the [Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries Scheme](#), which was established in 2010, with initial funding from the then Department for Culture, Media and Sport, creates new, paid, entry-level roles in the arts for recent arts graduates from low income backgrounds who were in receipt of a full maintenance grant throughout university. Over 2020- 2022, the Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries programme will support 50 salaried jobs in arts and cultural organisations across the UK, for individuals from low socio-economic backgrounds.

### Disseminating information on cultural opportunities

Initiatives aimed at informing young people of opportunities to access cultural environments include:

- the [Family Arts Festival](#), which has been running since 2013, develops the range of arts event and activities on offer to families; the festival receives public funding through Arts Council England and its website publicises high quality arts activities across England, both whilst the festival is being held and throughout the rest of the year.
- the [Spark Festival](#), which presents theatre, dance, music, digital media and visual arts events for young people aged 0- 13 years.

### Knowledge of cultural heritage amongst young people

Programmes and initiatives aimed at supporting young people's discovery and appreciation of the cultural and artistic heritage of England include the following:

- the [Heritage Schools Programme](#), run by Historic England and funded by the Department for Education, involves heritage education managers working with up to 14 schools each to offer curriculum support, coordinate training and facilitate partnerships with local heritage providers; each of the schools involved has a lead teacher who is trained to embed local heritage in their school's curriculum.
- the [Young Roots programme](#), which uses lottery funding to provide grants for helping young people aged 11 to 25 explore their heritage by planning and delivering their own projects.
- although not specific to young people, the BFI National Archive holds a large collection of British films and television programmes which have been preserved and restored; many British film and television clips can be viewed [online](#).

## 8.5 Developing cultural and creative competences

### Acquiring cultural and creative competences through education and training

#### Primary and secondary education

According to the 2013 policy paper, [Cultural Education](#), published jointly by the then Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Department for Education:

Schools have an essential role to play in introducing cultural experiences to their students as part of a broad and rich curriculum.

Furthermore, a principal aim of the [national curriculum](#) in England is to

introduce pupils to the best that has been thought and said, and [help] engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.

Art and Design, Design and Technology, Computing and Music are all compulsory subjects for pupils in Key Stages 1 (ages 5-7), 2 (ages 7-11), and 3 (ages 11-14):

- the [programme of study for Art and Design](#) aims to ensure that pupils produce creative work; develop proficiency in art, craft and design techniques; analyse and evaluate creative works using appropriate language; and know about great artists and designers and understand the historical and cultural development of their work.
- the programme of study for [Design and Technology](#) aims to ensure that pupils develop creative, technical and practical expertise to participate in an increasingly technological world; build and apply skills to design products for a wide range of users; evaluate, critique and test their ideas; and understand the principles of nutrition and how to cook.
- the [programme of study for Computing](#) aims to ensure that pupils understand and apply the fundamental principles of computer science; can analyse problems in computational terms and have practical experience of writing computer programmes; can evaluate and apply information technology to solve problems; and are confident, responsible, creative and competent users of communication and information technology.
- the [programme of study for Music](#) aims to ensure that pupils perform, listen to, review and evaluate music across a range of genres, styles and traditions; learn to sing, to create and compare their own music, have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument and use technology appropriately; and understand how music is created, produced and communicated.

At Key Stage 4 (ages 14-16), pupils have a statutory entitlement to be able to study a subject in each of four 'entitlement areas':

- arts (art and design, music, dance, drama and media arts)
- design and technology
- the humanities (geography and history)
- modern foreign languages.

For further information about the school curriculum see the articles on teaching and learning in [lower](#) and [upper](#) secondary education in Eurydice's national education system descriptions.

Additionally, some schools use [the pupil premium](#) to promote pupils' cultural education. The pupil premium is funding allocated to [maintained schools](#) via their [local authority](#), aimed at raising the educational attainment of pupils who are disadvantaged and with fewer opportunities.

## Further education and training

There are [numerous apprenticeships](#) in the creative and design sector. Some of these include:

- digital media
- graphic design
- animation
- product design
- photography
- fashion

Creative and Cultural Skills offers [guidance](#) for organisations wishing to hire an apprentice. Further information about apprenticeships is available in the article entitled 'Traineeships and apprenticeships' in the chapter on Employment and Entrepreneurship.

Moreover, the [National College for Creative and Cultural Industries](#), which was established in 2016, offers courses in a range of technical support roles in theatre, concert touring, broadcast, themed attractions, education, and trade and corporate events. It aims to provide the creative industries with diverse and highly skilled professionals. Note that although the College offers courses for young people aged 16 years and above, it also welcomes adults.

## Non-formal learning and youth work

Young people's natural desire to develop their creativity and self-expression remains an important area of focus for youth work and non-formal learning (the learning that takes place outside the formal setting of school, college or work-place). However, following the budget reductions of recent years, many youth organisations no longer offer support for artistic and cultural activities as part of their general provision. Other organisations, which have developed specialist experience (in relation to performing arts or sports, for example) may continue to offer targeted provision, on behalf of a local authority, area health authority or other commissioning body. This will usually involve close collaboration with cultural and educational institutions at the local level.

The [Arts Award programme](#) supports young people up to the age of 25 to develop their creative and leadership skills through the achievement of a national qualification which is comprised of five levels. Young people participating in the programme experience arts events, participate in arts activities, take on arts-related challenges and share their skills with other young people, recording their achievements and progress. They are supported by an adviser who acts as their mentor and assessor. There are no entry requirements or time limits for completing the award and anyone working with young people can deliver it, from teachers and museum staff to arts practitioners and youth workers across the UK.

## Specialised training for professionals in the education, culture and youth fields

Current provision of publicly-funded specialised training courses for professionals in the education, culture and youth fields includes:

- courses on offer from the [National Society for Education in Art and Design](#).
- events, training and work-based learning opportunities provided by [Artswork](#), which receives funding from the Arts Council England; Artswork also hosts the [English National Youth Arts Network](#), which is aimed at individuals using arts in their work with children and young people.
- presentations, conferences and networking on offer through [Arts Development UK](#), a professional association comprised of members working in the creative industries.

- the [Teacher Development Fund](#), a pilot scheme launched by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation aimed at helping primary school teachers to deliver effective learning in and through the arts.
- the Specialist Leaders in Education ([SLiCE](#)) fellowship network, which supports leaders in Teaching School Alliances to increase access to and raise the standard of cultural education.
- the [Artsmark](#) scheme, which is funded by Arts Council England and was developed by the then Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the Department for Education and OFSTED, accredits quality arts education in England.

## Providing quality access to creative environments

Notable programmes and projects aimed at widening the access of young people to creative environments include the following:

- the [Music and Dance Scheme](#), through which Government funding is made available for young musicians and dancers to receive specialist training.
- the [Dance and Drama Awards](#), through which Government funding is available for young people who show talent and are likely to succeed in their industry.
- [Music For Youth](#), which offers young people free performance and audience opportunities through its annual season of concerts and festivals.

Further programmes aimed at widening the access of young people to creative environments also include the following programmes, which are supported by Arts Council England:

- [Creative Writing in Schools](#), which develops and implements high-quality creative writing in schools.
- the [National Youth Dance Company](#), which is co-funded by the Department for Education and provides talented young performers with intensive training and performance opportunities taught by world-leading choreographers.
- the [National Saturday Club](#), which is partly funded by the Department for Education and provides young people with the opportunity to study art and design every Saturday morning for free in a local college of university.
- [Summer Arts Colleges](#), which are designed to engage youth offenders in education, training and employment through art experiences.
- [National Youth Music Organisations](#), which provide progression routes for talented young musicians to develop their skills.

Note also that Arts Council England funds a network of [Bridge Organisations](#) alongside the Department for Education. These connect the education and cultural sectors and enhance young people's access to arts and cultural opportunities in areas where it is most needed. See the article '[Synergies and Partnerships](#)' for more information.

A comprehensive list of organisations and programmes currently funded by Arts Council England (known as 'National Portfolio Organisations') can be found [here](#). A significant number of them target young people specifically.

## 8.6 Developing entrepreneurial skills through culture

### Developing entrepreneurial skills through cultural activities

A number of programmes exist to support the development of entrepreneurial skills in young people through engagement in cultural activities:

- [Takeover Day England](#) involves children and young people being given meaningful roles in museums, historic sites and heritage sites across the country, working alongside paid staff and volunteers to learn new skills.
- The [Young Roots programme](#) provides grants for helping young people aged 11 to 25 explore their heritage by planning and delivering their own projects.
- [Apps for Good](#), which offers free creative learning programmes for schoolchildren across the UK, teaching them to use new technologies to design and make products which will help them make a difference to their world.

### **Support young entrepreneurs in the cultural and creative sectors**

Young entrepreneurs in the cultural and creative sectors may benefit from the following programmes and initiatives:

- the [British Council](#) offers young people opportunities to make new connections with creative partners worldwide, through a range of programmes advertised on their [website](#), each focussing on a different country/region and art-form.
- the [Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries Scheme](#), which was established in 2010 with initial funding from the then Department for Culture, Media and Sport, creates new, paid, entry-level roles in the arts for recent arts graduates from low income backgrounds who were in receipt of a full maintenance grant throughout university.
- the [Creative Entrepreneurs website](#), which was established with Arts Council funding, offers resources to start and grow a creative business, including writing a business plan, raising money, accessing advice and mentoring, and case studies of leading experts in the field (note that this resource is not specifically aimed at young people).

## **8.7 Fostering the creative use of new technologies**

### **New technologies in support of creativity and innovation**

A number of publicly funded programmes foster access to and use of new technologies, including the [National College for Creative and Cultural Industries](#), which was established in 2016, offers courses in a range of technical support roles in theatre, concert touring, broadcast, themed attractions, education and trade and corporate events; it aims to provide the creative industries with diverse and highly skilled professionals (although the College offers courses for young people aged 16 years and above, it also welcomes adults).

### **Facilitating access to culture through new technologies**

As highlighted in the [Culture White Paper](#) (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2016):

Technology is expanding the ways in which we make and experience culture; the digital dimension is becoming a 'place' in itself.

Many local and national organisations are increasingly screening content online and digitising their public collections, giving individuals who cannot physically visit performances or collections the chance to experience them. Although these initiatives are not specifically or solely aimed at attracting young people's interest in culture, they help to counter the economic and geographical barriers to participation in the arts and culture mentioned under the subheading 'Main trends in young people's creativity and cultural participation' in 'General Context'.

Leading examples of digitisation and the innovative use of technology by public organisations include the following:

- [Art UK](#), which receives funding from Arts Council England and Scottish Government, allows members of the public to view art from every public collection in the UK online.

- the [National Theatre Live](#), which is part funded by Arts Council England, broadcasts theatre productions live both from the National Theatre and other theatres across the UK and has a successful Schools programme.
- the [Royal Shakespeare Company](#) which broadcasts performances live to schools across the country.
- [Operation War Diary](#), a project run by the National Archives (a non-ministerial government department, overseen by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport), uses crowdsourcing to engage people with its First World War collections, allowing 'citizen historians' to tag data contained within the project; this follows the [World through a lens](#) initiative, which involved digitising a little seen collection of photographs and making them available through the social media platform Flickr.
- the [Royal Opera House](#), which receives funding from Arts Council England, organises both live and pre-recorded screenings of their productions to cinemas across the globe.
- a partnership between the [British Museum](#) and the Google Cultural Institute offers online users the chance to view over 4,500 museum objects remotely; the British Museum is sponsored by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.
- Many museums are offering online virtual tours due to COVID-19. The [British Museum](#) offers virtual tours and online galleries. The [Natural History Museum](#) offers a guided interactive tour narrated by Sir David Attenborough. Others include the London Transport Museum, [The National Gallery](#) and Buckingham Palace State Room [tours](#).

Born out of the Culture White Paper, the Digital Culture Project and #CultureIsDigital online consultation was [launched](#) in 2017. Their aim has been organised into three policy commitments 1) to explore how culture and technology can work together to drive audience engagement, 2) boost the capability of cultural organisations and 3) unleash the creative potential of technology. The Digital Culture Project highlighted three policy priorities for future strategy - digital infrastructure for culture, innovation and creative risk-taking, and collaboration and partnerships between the UK's cultural organisations. With regards to facilitating access to culture through new technologies, the first policy commitment of driving audience engagement outlines some key actions to achieve this:

In order to further broaden cultural engagement and empower communities to share their voices, views and creative content digitally, Arts Council England will ensure that its Creative People and Places programme makes use of digital communications and platforms and that the analysis and learning from the projects are widely shared.

## 8.8 Synergies and partnerships

### Synergies between public policies and programmes

Arts Council England and the Department for Education fund a network of [Bridge Organisations](#), which connect the education and cultural sectors to enhance the access that young people have to arts and cultural opportunities in areas where it is most needed. Bridge Organisations form [Cultural Education Partnerships](#) with a range of local partners including (but not limited to) [local authorities](#), schools, libraries, museums, art organisations, music education hubs and further and higher education institutions to develop networks of cultural provision in their areas.

For further examples, please see the subheading '[Cross-sectoral cooperation](#)' in 'Administration and Governance'.

## Partnerships between the culture and creative sectors, youth organisations and youth workers

[Music Education Hubs](#) involve local authorities, schools, arts organisations and third sector organisations working together to create joined-up music education provision in areas of greatest need. They are funded by the Department for Education.

Moreover, [Music Mark](#) is a membership organisation representing music services and lead organisations in Music Education Hubs, enabling its members to deliver high-quality musical and social outcomes for children and young people.

## 8.9 Enhancing social inclusion through culture

### Fostering equality and young people involvement through cultural activities

Please see the subheading '[Reducing obstacles to young people's access to culture](#)' in 'Promoting culture and cultural participation' for information on projects and initiatives funded by public authorities aimed at promoting social integration amongst young people.

Additional schemes of note include [Summer Arts Colleges](#), which are designed to engage youth offenders in education, training and employment through art experiences.

Moreover, a list of organisations and programmes currently funded by Arts Council England (known as 'National Portfolio Organisations') can be found [here](#). A significant number of them target young people specifically, working to build their self-confidence and promote social integration amongst young people.

### Combating discrimination and poverty through cultural activities

Other cultural programmes and projects aimed at combating discrimination and mitigating the effects of poverty include:

- [Music For Youth](#), which offers young people free performance and audience opportunities through its annual season of concerts and festivals.
- the [Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries Scheme](#), which was established in 2010, with original funding from the then Department for Culture, Media and Sport, creates new, paid, entry-level roles in the arts for recent arts graduates from low income backgrounds who were in receipt of a full maintenance grant throughout university. Over 2020-2022, the Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries programme will support 50 salaried jobs in arts and cultural organisations across the UK, for individuals from low socio-economic backgrounds.

A list of organisations and programmes currently funded by Arts Council England (known as 'National Portfolio Organisations') can be found [here](#). A significant number of them target young people specifically, working to reduce discrimination and to mitigate the effects of poverty.

## 8.10 Current debates and reforms

The [Arts Council England Strategy for 2020-2030](#) "Let's Create" outlines a vision for the country in which everyone has access to cultural experiences. The strategy is built around three outcomes - creative people, cultural communities and a creative and cultural country. It has four investment principles - inclusivity and relevance, ambition and quality, dynamism, and environmentalism. The strategy also outlines the role of the Arts Council for the next 10 years including building capacity at the local level and providing platforms for public debate and maintaining strong partnerships.

## COVID-19

A series of funding streams were announced for the culture and arts sector in England in response to the global pandemic. In July 2020 an emergency financial package for the arts and culture of [£1.57 billion was announced](#) by the Treasury, the Culture Recovery Fund. The government announced that this was the single largest, one-off investment that has ever been made into culture in the UK. This package includes:

- £1.15 billion support pot for cultural organisations in England delivered through a mix of grants and loans. This will be made up of £270 million of repayable finance and £880 million grants.
- £100 million of targeted support for the national cultural institutions in England and the English Heritage Trust.
- £120 million capital investment to restart construction on cultural infrastructure and for heritage construction projects in England which was paused due to the coronavirus pandemic.
- The new funding will also mean an extra £188 million for the devolved administrations in Northern Ireland (£33 million), Scotland (£97 million) and Wales (£59 million).

In November 2020, DCMS announced £14 million "[lifeline grants](#)" for England's heritage sites from the Culture Recovery Fund.

## 9. YOUTH AND THE WORLD

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Youth policies for England do not specifically mention global issues such as climate change, green production and consumption, human rights, international development and the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals, nor does the Government currently monitor young people's awareness of, and interest in, global issues.

However, global and environmental education is supported by a range of resources and programmes. For example, participation in schemes such as Eco-schools is high.

### 9.1 General context

#### Main concepts

Youth policies for England do not specifically mention global issues such as climate change, green production and consumption, human rights, international development and the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals.

#### Youth interest in global issues

The Government does not currently monitor young people's awareness of, and interest in, global issues. Where monitoring activities have collected data which includes information about youth interest in global issues, these may not be specific to young people or to England.

Examples included below cover sustainable development and green patterns of consumption and production. No sources for interest in human rights or UN Sustainable Development Goals are available.

#### Sustainable development

Sustainability and Environmental Education (SEED), an English charity, published a [report](#) in 2019 as a result of a Youth Listening Project researching young people's attitudes to sustainability. The project consisted of focus groups with 60 young people across the UK to design the survey, and 1700 survey responses, the majority of which were UK-based. With over 60% of young people having a reasonable level of

understanding of the concept, 25% thought they already lived in a sustainable society compared to only 4% of an adult group. 68.39% of young people reported global warming as the main issues that would affect their lives in the future.

Data from [Visions for Change](#) (UNEP, 2011), a report based on the results of the Global Survey on Sustainable Lifestyles, presents information on young people's attitudes to and understanding of sustainable development issues. 8,000 young people aged between 18 and 29 were interviewed from 20 different countries, including the United Kingdom (UK). Main findings for the UK include:

- 52.7 per cent of young people over one quarter ranked environmental degradation among their top three concerns.
- 28.8 per cent of young people placed the issue of poverty as number one priority.
- 17.8 per cent of young people considered the issue of environmental degradation as number one priority.
- Young people from the UK were found to have higher levels of awareness and interest in sustainability and environmental concerns than those from developing countries; for example, organic, seasonal and local and fair trade products were recognised by them as emerging norms.

### **Green patterns of consumption and production**

In 2018, the National Centre for Social Research conducted [research](#) on British social attitudes to climate change. It found younger people were overall more worried about climate change and its consequences than older people. 31% of 18-34 year olds are "very" or "extremely" worried about climate change compared with just 19% of over-65s. 35% of graduates are "very" or "extremely" worried about climate change compared with 20% among those without any educational qualifications above GCSE level.

In [Climate Change: Children's Challenge](#) (UNICEF UK, 2013), UNICEF UK/Ipsos MORI polling in 2013 notes the following about children and young people in the UK, aged 11-16:

- 89 per cent were aware of climate change.
- 74 per cent were worried about how climate change will affect the future of the planet, believing that the world will have changed due to climate change by the time they are adults.
- 73 per cent wanted the Government to do more about climate change.
- 64 per cent were worried about how climate change will affect children and families in developing countries.

Currently, the UK is experiencing growing debate and concern surrounding its climate policies, stemming significantly from the youth climate movement and [school strikes for climate](#). A [survey](#) in 2019 by ComRes found that young people in the UK aged 18-34 were significantly more likely (60%) to say they care more about climate change than Brexit, compared to over-55s (43%). Another survey by YouGov and ClientEarth in 2018 found young people aged 18-24 are more likely than older cohorts to believe that the majority of the effects of climate change in the world are happening now or will happen in the future.

In June 2019, the UK government [announced](#) their commitment to a target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

## 9.2 Administration and governance

### Governance

Young people's contribution to global policy making is, where it exists, shaped by general youth policy governance arrangements. These are described in the article on ['Youth Policy Decision-making'](#) in the Chapter on 'Youth Policy Governance'.

One aim of the [Youth Voice](#) contract, which is managed by the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#) and is delivered by the [British Youth Council](#), is to facilitate young people's participation in international decision-making, including in Europe, at the UN, through the Commonwealth and forums like the G20.

For more information about the British Youth Council and its activities, see the article entitled ['Young People's Participation in Policy Making'](#) in the Chapter on 'Participation'.

### Cross-sectoral cooperation

There is currently no cross-sectoral cooperation at government level which fosters young people's involvement in global policy-making. See the article entitled ['Cross-sectoral approach with other ministries'](#) in the Chapter on 'Youth Policy Governance' for information about the cross-sectoral cooperation which occurs more broadly.

Please also see the article entitled ['Cross-border cooperation in the youth field'](#) in the Chapter on 'Youth Policy Governance' for information on the Department for International Development and Civil Society Organisations (DFID CSO) Youth Working Group, which supports youth involvement in international development.

## 9.3 Exchanges between young people and policy-makers on global issues

### Global issues exchanges with policy-makers at the domestic level

Young people can use national forums (including the [UK Youth Parliament](#), the [Youth Select Committee](#), the [Young Mayors Network](#), the [Local Youth Councils](#), and the [Children's Commissioner for England](#)) to raise their concerns about global issues with national policy-makers. Note that these forums do not specifically focus on young people's concerns at a global level.

Further information about these forums is provided in the article on ['Youth representation bodies'](#) in the Chapter on 'Participation'.

### Global issues exchanges with policy-makers at the international level

Young people from the UK are able to exchange their views on global issues with international policy-makers through the following forums:

- The [UK Young Ambassadors](#) project gives young people from across the UK a voice at an international level about the issues and decisions which affect them; 12 individuals aged 18-25 are elected to represent the views of young people from their respective areas across the UK at international meetings and forums around the world, including climate change and G20 summits.
- The [European Youth Forum](#) is a democratic and youth led platform, which represents national youth councils from across Europe, working to empower young people by representing and advocating their interests and needs; the [British Youth Council](#) is a member of the European Youth Forum on behalf of the whole of the UK.
- The [Commonwealth Youth Forum](#) provides young Commonwealth citizens with the opportunity to discuss issues, share their experiences, identify best practice and build consensus on issues that matter most to them.

The first UN Youth Climate Summit was held in September 2019, with a UK delegation present. As well as this, the [UN Youth Summit](#) is held biannually across the globe in which young people from across the UK participate. In 2019 the focus for the summit will be on Sustainable Development Goal 4 - quality education.

## 9.4 Raising awareness about global issues

### Formal, non-formal and informal learning

#### Formal learning

There is no national curriculum for students in upper-secondary education (ages 16-19): this phase of education is characterised by choice and subject specialisation, with students free to take any combination of subjects offered by the school or college they attend. Examination specifications may cover global issues; for example, climate change and green issues may be included in science subjects.

#### Non-formal learning

The following organisations offer non-formal learning opportunities and resources for young people:

- [Young Citizens](#), inspire young people to take an active part in society. Young Citizens runs a number of [programmes](#) such as [the Democracy Ambassadors Programme](#), which trains 1,000 Democracy Ambassadors aged 13-16 to promote youth participation in democratic processes. The foundation also provides [teaching materials](#) relating to citizenship education, including Migration and Brexit. It receives funding from a number of organisations, including public funding from the UK Government via the [Cabinet Office](#), and works across the whole of the UK.
- Oxfam GB offers initiatives including [Schools for Future Youth](#). This project receives funding from the EU and provides a number of resources related to global citizenship education and opportunities for young Oxfam ambassadors to communicate with their peers across Europe.
- The [International Citizen Service](#) supports young people aged 18-25 to gain skills and experience by undertaking a voluntary placement in another country. The organisation fosters an awareness of international or global affairs and issues in young people.

#### Informal learning

For examples of informal learning available in the areas of green production and consumption and climate change, see the subheading '[Green volunteering](#)' in the article on 'Green volunteering, production and consumption'.

The [UK Youth Climate Coalition](#) (UKYCC) is a voluntary group of 18-29 year olds that offers informal learning opportunities through campaigning to challenge the roots of social and climate injustice. The UKYCC organises campaigns and has attended UN Climate negotiations. During the general election in 2019, the UKYCC campaigned for a climate nature debate as part of the political parties' campaigns.

Organisations such as [#iwill](#) and [V\\_inspired](#) may also include informal learning opportunities related to global issues. Moreover, programmes run by [ICS Youth Volunteering](#) support young people to undertake volunteering projects abroad. For more information about this organisation, please see the article entitled '[Cross-border mobility programmes](#)' in the Chapter on 'Voluntary Activities'.

#### Educators' support

There are many resources on offer to teachers and youth workers for continuous learning and development related to the promotion of global issues among young people. Notable examples are the resources and training programmes for schools and youth workers from [Think Global](#). This organisation, which manages programmes on behalf of the

[Department for International Development](#) and the EU, also provides access to the [Global Learning Programme](#), which aims to equip young people to make a positive contribution to a globalised world.

Additionally, the [International School Award](#) from the [British Council](#) formally recognises international work undertaken by schools. The award is made up of three levels which begin with the introduction of international activities to the school curriculum and supports schools to establish links with schools in other countries. This encourages schools to enrich their curriculum, improve their teaching, gain recognition for their international work, and become part of a global network of educators.

Many UK youth workers, and others with responsibility for young people's non-formal learning, gain valuable professional development through involvement in collaborative projects with European and international partners, supported under [Erasmus+](#). The organisation offers UK participants opportunities to take part in a youth exchange programme, a volunteering scheme or a teaching abroad project.

A range of public and private organisations also provide resources for teachers and youth workers in the UK, which include the following examples: [teaching resources](#) from Amnesty International; [climate change activities](#) from the Science Museum; an [online teaching resource](#) promoting global issues from the [United Nations Association UK](#); materials relating to sustainable development from the [World Wildlife Fund](#) and [Oxfam](#); [world heritage materials](#) for young people from UNESCO; resources related to the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) from Oxfam; and [resources](#) related to global issues from [Y Care International](#).

The Youth Climate Summit 2020 is coordinated by the charity Global Action Plan and delivered through the collaboration of a large group of individuals and organisations on 9-13 November 2020. It is supported by the #iwill campaign, the National Lottery and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. TransformOur World, a resource hub for teachers, provides timetables of events for primary and secondary schools and resources for teachers [here](#).

## Youth-targeted information campaigns on global issues

Major information campaigns initiated by the central government and public agencies aimed at promoting knowledge of global issues among young people include:

- The 2019 Year of Green Action, as part of DEFRA's [25 Year Environment Plan](#), saw the assignment of 50 young people as [environment ambassadors](#) as part of the #iwill4nature initiative. It aimed to embed youth social action in young people's lives and encourage them to get involved in green projects in their school.
- The 2015 [Youth Summit](#), hosted by the Department for International Development (DFID), brought together young people from the UK and their peers from other countries to discuss global issues of shared concern. It was the second Youth summit organised by DFID and it was supported by a large-scale advocacy and information campaign involving young people.
- [Eco-Schools](#), an award programme aimed at raising awareness of environmental issues among school children, is managed in England by [Keep Britain Tidy](#). Schools enrolled on the programme follow seven steps, ensuring that the initiative is pupil-led and involves hands-on, real-life world learning. Schools cover a number of topics which are linked to the curriculum, making changes to areas such as their waste collection, energy and water usage, and then monitor and assess their actions, earning awards as they complete each stage. Registration is free for schools, after which they receive regular newsletters and bulletins on regional and national information, funding and competitions.
- Further campaigns aimed at young people have also been launched by charitable organisations in England, including [People and planet](#), which is a network of student campaigns working to defend human rights, protect the environment and alleviate

world poverty, offers training, outreach and resources to groups and campaigns based at schools, colleges and universities across the UK.

### Information providers

Please see information above.

### Key initiatives

Please see information above.

## 9.5 Green volunteering, production and consumption

### Green volunteering

A number of top-level programmes and projects foster young people's participation in environmentally friendly or nature friendly initiatives. These are overseen by non-ministerial departments and agencies and other public bodies, as follows:

- The [#iwill4nature campaign](#) launched in 2019 as part of the UK's Year of Green Action. It is an initiative to bring young people (10-20 year olds) into the heart of environmental action through environmental volunteering such as litter-picking, maintaining green spaces or campaigning for the zero-plastic agenda.
- The [Forestry Commission England](#) runs a [Community Youth Programme](#) for those aged 14- 18, which allows participants to shape future activities for young people and learn new skills related to practical conservation. Another programme called Can You Cut it?, aimed at 13-26 year-olds, gets young people to be actively involved in managing woodland, teaching them conservation and creative arts skills.
- The [Broads Authority](#) manages the national Broads park and has an [education strategy](#) which outlines two programmes aimed at children and young people: a formal programme for school-aged children and wider activities aimed at children and young people and the wider community. Engagement projects, an awards programme for schools and work experience placements for 15- 18 year olds are all available as part of this strategy.
- The [Horniman Museum and Gardens](#) launched the [Horniman Youth Panel](#) in 2010, which offers young people aged 14- 19 the chance to organise events and be involved in shaping what happens at the museum and its gardens.
- The [Lake District National Park Young Rangers](#) programme is aimed at 14- to 19-year-olds who wish to learn practical conservation skills and understand what work as a Lake District Ranger entails.
- [Northumberland National Park](#) has a number of [youth volunteering](#) opportunities for individuals aged 16-25 including working with the Ranger Team and observing and tracking wildlife, through to working towards a nationally recognised award in conservation and the environment.
- The [Yorkshire Dales National Park](#) runs a [Young Rangers](#) programme aimed at 11- to 16-year-olds who meet once a month to take part in practical work projects, such as building dry-stone walls and path building.
- The [Canal and River Trust](#) provides a number of [youth engagement projects](#), such as encouraging university students (aged 18+) to complete research projects on sustainability of all kinds and offering courses for young people (aged 16-18) from disadvantaged backgrounds on the built environment.

### Green production and consumption

[Bikeability](#) is a cycle training programme funded by the [Department for Transport](#) which encourages individuals to get some exercise and reduce the reliance on less sustainable

forms of transport. It is primarily aimed at school children in years 5-7 (ages 9 to 12) and provides individuals with training, divided into three levels of difficulty, about the benefits of cycling and how to ride in different traffic situations. Most training delivered to school children is free, or provided at a minimal cost; training delivered outside of school is charged for.

## 9.6 Intercontinental youth work and development cooperation

### Intercontinental youth work cooperation

See the article entitled '[Cross-border cooperation in the youth field](#)' in the Chapter on 'Youth Policy Governance' for information on international youth work cooperation, including the Department for International Development and Civil Society Organisations (DFID CSO) Youth Working Group.

### Development cooperation activities

See informal learning opportunities mentioned in the article on '[Raising awareness about global issues](#)' in this Chapter.

## 9.7 Current debates and reforms

COVID-19

In September 2020, the UK government's Environment Agency published a [State of the Environment report](#), steered by the commitment of the 25 Year Environment Plan. It states:

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has exposed and amplified green inequality in society. Too many towns and cities in England, especially those with a strong industrial heritage, have too little green space, too few trees, culverted rivers, poor air quality and are at risk of flooding. This holds back economic growth and the building of new homes.

The report states there is substantial and growing evidence for the physical and mental health benefits of spending time in the natural environment, but children are engaging less with nature. The report provides direction to future policy-making in terms of young people and the environment - outlining air pollution as one of the main priorities. However this report does not discuss any youth participation or contribution in UK or global environmental issues for the future.

## 10. YOUTH WORK

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Youth Work in England is viewed as transformational, harnessing skills of young people not fulfilled by formal education.

The [National Youth Agency](#) defines Youth Work as focusing on personal and social development – the skills and attributes of young people – rather than to “fix a problem”. It is an educational process that engages with young people in a curriculum that deepens a young person's understanding of themselves, their community and the world in which they live and supports them to proactively bring about positive changes.

## 10.1 General context

### Historical developments

The historical background of youth work in England is described in the [National Youth Agency's Guide to Youth work in England](#).

'Youth work has its origins in the clubs and projects set up by voluntary organisations – often with a religious intent - in the 19th century. Many of these, such as the Boys' Brigade and the Young Women's Christian Association, still exist today as national voluntary youth organisations. State recognition for youth work dates from the outbreak of war in 1939.'

Today, youth services and youth work have developed into a complex network of providers including community groups, voluntary organisations, and local authorities.

There is no current specific youth work charter or strategy for England. However, there are several documents regarding youth work in England:

- [Section 507B of the Education Act 1996 \(as amended\)](#) which places a duty on local authorities, 'so far as is reasonably practicable,' to secure access to youth services, including youth work activities.
- The 2002 government publication, [Transforming Youth Work: Resourcing Excellent Youth Services](#) which outlines the obligations of local youth services, performance measurement criteria, and resources available to youth services.
- The Secretary for Education and Skills' 2005 document entitled [Youth Matters](#) that outlines a number of key proposals and opportunities for young people.
- The 2006 document [Youth Matters: Next Steps](#) which builds upon the work of the previous document.
- The 2007 government publication, [Aiming High for Young People: A Ten Year Strategy for Positive Activities](#) that outlines the government's strategy to 'transform leisure-time opportunities, activities and support services for young people in England.'
- The 2012 [Youth Work National Occupational Standards](#) (NOS) which defines the competencies required to carry out the functions carried out by the youth work workforce.
- The 2012 government publication, [Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on Services and Activities to Improve Young People's Well-being](#) issued by the Secretary of State for Education which lists the obligations of Local Authorities (LAs) to provide youth services, including youth work.
- The [National Youth Agency's](#) 2020 [Vision for Youth Work in England 2020-2030](#), which sets out their vision for youth work. The National Youth Agency is the leading national charity for youth work in England.
- The [Local Government Association's](#) 2017 publication [Bright Futures: Our Vision for Youth Services](#) which sets out their long term goals for youth services, including youth work.

In April 2019, the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#) announced the development of a new [Youth Charter](#) to set the vision for young people over the next generation and beyond. This included £500m of funding, allocated through the Youth Investment Fund, for youth work services. However, as of [December 2020](#) this funding has not been delivered. For more information please see the article 'Current debates and reforms'.

### National definition or understanding of Youth Work

The [National Occupational Standards for Youth Work](#) puts forth the following understanding of the aims and essence of youth work.

- 'The aim of youth work is to offer young people both planned and spontaneous programmes of personal and social education. There is a wide range of practice to meet the needs of young people, including youth clubs, uniformed (e.g. scouting and guiding) and non-uniformed organisations, faith groups, specialised centres for art or sport, counselling, information and guidance, voluntary service, detached, outreach in schools and colleges.
- The essence of youth work is to enable the transition from childhood to independent adult life. In other words youth work helps young people learn about themselves, others and society, through informal educational activities which combine enjoyment, challenge and learning.'

Furthermore, the [National Youth Agency](#), the leading national charity for youth work in England, sets out the following definition:

'Youth work focuses on personal and social development – the skills and attributes of young people – rather than to "fix a problem". It is an educational process that engages with young people in a curriculum that deepens a young person's understanding of themselves, their community and the world in which they live and supports them to proactively bring about positive changes.

Therefore youth work needs to be (and be seen to be) transformational, harnessing skills of young people not fulfilled by formal education.'

Both definitions emphasise the influential power of youth work in informing young people how to be their best selves and the best citizens within their community. Youth work is seen as not only a learning opportunity, but a system of support on which young people can rely regarding a variety of social and personal factors.

## 10.2 Administration and governance of youth work

### Governance

#### Main actors

There is no single minister or governmental department that is responsible for youth work policy. However, responsibility for general youth policy is distributed across various government departments, including those of [Education](#) and [Health and Social Care](#). The [Office for Civil Society](#) within the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#) does, however, have specific responsibility for supporting youth policy. For more information, please see the chapter on [Youth Policy Governance](#).

Local authorities, of which there are 150 in England, have a statutory duty to secure sufficient services and activities for young people aged 13- 19 (and those with learning difficulties to age 24) and to improve their well-being.

The [National Youth Agency](#) (NYA) describes itself as the national body for youth work. Although it no longer receives government funding, and operates as a charity, it is recognised as a leading source of information and expertise in England on youth policy and youth work. It trains youth workers, sets occupational standards, conducts important research on youth work, and works with policy makers, educators, and employers to champion and celebrate youth work.

#### General distribution of responsibilities

Local authorities are responsible for securing youth work in their areas. This duty is placed on local authorities under the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#) which seeks to promote the well-being of persons aged 13- 19 (or up to 24 years for those with learning difficulties) by securing access for them to sufficient educational and recreational leisure-time activities and facilities so far as is reasonably practicable. Each local authority is required to develop a plan which covers all provision for children and young people and shows how it meets government priorities.

Local authorities also have a duty to:

- Secure access to sufficient youth work activities;
- Ascertain young people's views on positive activities;
- Publicise positive activities.

### **Cross-sectoral cooperation**

There are no established frameworks for ensuring cross-sectoral cooperation in England.

## **10.3 Support to youth work**

### **Policy/legal framework**

As described in the article 'General distribution of responsibilities', local authorities are responsible for securing youth work in their areas. This duty is placed on local authorities under the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#).

[Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on Services and Activities to Improve Young People's Well-being](#) (Department for Education, 2012) lists the youth work and other services that local authorities should provide (so far as they are practically able) to improve the well-being of young people. This includes youth work and other activities that:

- Connect young people with their communities, enabling them to belong and contribute to society, including through volunteering, and supporting them to have a voice in decisions which affect their lives;
- Offer young people opportunities in safe environments to take part in a wide range of sports, arts, music and other activities, through which they can develop a strong sense of belonging, socialise safely with their peers, enjoy social mixing, experience spending time with older people, and develop relationships with adults they trust;
- Support the personal and social development of young people through which they build the capabilities they need for learning, work, and the transition to adulthood – communication, confidence and agency, creativity, managing feelings, planning and problem solving, relationships and leadership, and resilience and determination;
- Improve young people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being
- Help those young people at risk of dropping out of learning or not achieving their full potential to engage and attain in education or training;
- Raise young people's aspirations, build their resilience, and inform their decisions – and thereby reducing teenage pregnancy, risky behaviours such as substance misuse, and involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour.
- However, it makes it clear that the Government does not prescribe exactly which services and activities for young people LA should provide. It also does not define a standard of service for young people.

### **Funding**

Although [local authorities](#) have a duty to secure sufficient services for young people aged 13-19 to improve their well-being, they are not provided with specific funding for youth work. They decide how much of the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) - the non-ring fenced funding provided to local authorities from central government, via the [Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government](#) - to allocate to them. Local authorities can also redirect funding from other non-ring-fenced areas, an example being council tax and other local sources. The amounts local authorities redirect will vary depending on local circumstances.

The [National Lottery Community Fund](#) makes grants available to youth work projects under its 'Empowering young people' programme. To be eligible, projects must be aimed at achieving at least one of the following outcomes:

- more young people are ready for education, work and training;
- young people have better relationships with their support networks and communities;
- young people have improved health and well being.

The [Youth Investment Fund](#) (YIF) was launched in 2016 and supports voluntary, community and social enterprise youth organisations to deliver, expand and create high quality local youth provision in targeted communities across England. Successful applicants will be funded up until 2020 or 2021, which allows them to invest and plan for the future. YIF had a total of £40 million and each organisation received funds between £100,000 to £750,000.

Additionally, although the [Prince's Trust](#) does not provide funding for community projects, they have published a [list](#) of various grants and trusts to which community led youth work projects can apply for additional support.

For information about the general funding of youth policy, including youth work, please see the articles '[Funding youth policy](#)' and '[Supporting youth organisations](#)'.

## Cooperation

The [Children Act](#) (2004) states that in order to improve the well-being of children, 'Each local authority in England must make arrangements to promote cooperation between:

- the authority;
- each of the authority's relevant partners; and
- such other persons or bodies as the authority consider appropriate, being persons or bodies of any nature who exercise functions or are engaged in activities in relation to children in the authority's area.'

Cooperation arrangements are to be made in the authority's area relating to education, training, and recreation, as well as the contribution made by them to society, thereby encompassing youth work.

Furthermore, in 2011, the Government published [Positive for Youth](#), a cross-departmental strategy document for young people aged 13-19 that discusses cross-sectoral cooperation. It is not prescriptive in its cooperative framework, and more so emphasises that 'central and local government can work more effectively with communities, voluntary and community sector providers, and business to help all young people succeed.'

## 10.4 Quality and innovation in youth work

### Quality assurance

The [National Youth Agency](#) (NYA) ensures the quality and development of professional youth work training in England. It does this through validating and monitoring professional qualifications at universities and higher education institutions.

As part of its role in monitoring qualifications, the NYA produces annual reports on validated training programmes for youth workers. As well as ensuring students receive a good standard of learning, the reports create a picture of the developing workforce and highlight changes and new developments. With the help of the [All-Party Parliamentary Group for Youth Affairs](#), the NYA published their most recent [Inquiry Into Youth Work](#) in 2019. This document establishes a broad overview of the role and sufficiency of youth work in England and posits several recommendations for its improvement.

## Research and evidence supporting Youth Work

The 2019 [Youth Work Inquiry Final Report](#) by the [National Youth Agency](#) and the [All-Party Parliamentary Group for Youth Affairs](#) investigates the state of youth work in England. This research was conducted through an open call for evidence in which relevant parties answered the following questions:

- What is the role of youth work in addressing the needs and opportunities of young people?
- Are the key issues and challenges faced by young people being addressed by current youth service provision?
- Are there sufficient youth workers to support youth services and other delivery models for good-quality youth work?
- What are the training and workforce development needs to secure and sustain youth work?

111 written responses were received, which were analysed to provide a foundation for questions explored at oral hearings and to shape the focus of the desk research.

The NYA also hosts several [commissions](#) responsible for conducting research on youth work in England. These commissions include such as the Commission into Young People and Enterprise, the Commission on Youth Work in Education, and the Commission into Sufficiency.

Furthermore, in July 2019, the Government announced that it had launched a review of the guidance for local authorities which sets out how they should secure activities and services for young people. As part of the review process, a public call for evidence was open from October to December 2019. The analysis of this open consultation is still taking place at the time of writing (December 2020).

## Participative youth work

Local authorities have a statutory obligation to include the voices of young people and foster their participation in youth work policy development and initiatives.

[Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on Services and Activities to Improve Young People's Well-being](#) states:

'Local authorities must take steps to ascertain the views of young people and to take them into account in making decisions about services and activities for them, in line with Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). They should establish and maintain structured arrangements for doing so. To inform continuous improvement, these arrangements should enable young people to inspect and report at least annually on the quality and accessibility of provision. As appropriate they should also be involved actively in service design, delivery and governance. Young people should receive the support they need to participate, ensuring representation of the full diversity of local young people, and those who may not otherwise have a voice.'

Beginning in 2011, the [Department for Culture, Media and Sport](#) has contracted the [British Youth Council](#) to create the [Youth Voice programme](#), which provides youth services and enables young people to express their views in national and local decision making, including decisions on youth work. This contract is expected to continue until at least March 2020.

The Office for Civil Society in DCMS published the Civil Society Strategy in August 2018, which included proposals for three new youth voice projects. The following projects were launched in February 2019:

- A Civil Society Youth Steering Group, which is set up within DCMS to oversee the development and implementation of policies affecting young people. This group has [contributed](#) to DEFRA policy-making surrounding climate change and

on [issues](#) including youth violence, volunteering, youth services and the coronavirus outbreak in 2020.

- A national Young Commissioners and Inspectors Group, to involve young people directly and meaningfully in the commissioning, monitoring and evaluation of national programmes affecting young people.
- A new digital solution to enable large numbers of young people play a role in consultations and programme design across the government.

The three new projects are being delivered by a consortium of youth organisations led by the British Youth Council and will run as pilots until March 2020. The other organisations in the consortium are The Mix, Youth Focus North West, Youth Focus: North East and Youth Work Unit.

### **'Smart' youth work: youth work in the digital world**

There are no top level initiatives to promote digital youth work in England.

However, [UK Youth](#) offers a programme entitled [Generation Code](#) which seeks to address 'the lack of computer science skills in young people, empowering them to become digital creators in an ever-changing global society.' Run in partnership with Microsoft, this programme targets 11- 19 year olds to 'explore the digital world'.

It trains young people ages 16-25 with no coding experience to become 'code champions' and deliver coding activities to the younger participants. In doing so, it teaches them valuable coding skills, fosters their leadership capabilities, and creates a multi-tiered network of learning.

An Instagram page, "[Involved](#)" was set up in July 2020 as a platform for young people to share their views and engage young people aged 13-25 around decisions made at the heart of government, by asking questions through the app's polling and stories functions.

## **10.5 Youth workers**

### **Status in national legislation**

According to the [National Youth Agency](#), most people enter youth work as either a volunteer or paid worker/apprentice and are typically called youth support workers. However, to become a professional youth worker, an individual must have an educational youth work qualification such as a bachelor's degree, post-graduate diploma, master's degree, or a graduate diploma.

Those seeking employment around children must undergo a background check from the [Disclosure and Barring Service](#) and register with [Ofsted](#), the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills, to ensure that children are safe in their care.

Furthermore, the [National Occupational Standards for Youth Work](#) provide a framework for what youth workers need to do and to know in order to carry out their role in a consistent and competent way. This document lists 60 standards and explains the performance criteria as well as knowledge and understandings that underpin the successful achievement of that standard.

### **Education, training and skills recognition**

Youth support workers undertake training at level 2 or level 3 resulting in a certificate or diploma in youth work practice. This is a qualification for people who work with young people using principles and practices of youth work and non-formal learning. The level 2 is for the 16+ age group and the level 3 for the 18+ age group. The qualifications are provided by a range of awarding organisations. A [list](#) of the organisations offering qualifications at this level are available from the National Youth Agency. Youth work apprenticeships are also available.

When a youth support worker has a level 3 certificate in youth work practice, they may progress to a professional level youth work qualification:

- Graduate Diploma: two years full time (level 6). For example, a Graduate Diploma in Youth and Community Work;
- BA (Hons): three years full time and part time equivalent (level 6). For example, a BA (Hons) in Youth and Community Work or a BA (Hons) Working with Young People and Communities (Youth Work);
- Postgraduate Diploma: one year full time and part time equivalent – (level 7). For example, a PG Dip in Youth Work;
- MA: one year and part time equivalent – (level 7). For example, an MA in Applied Anthropology and Community and Youth Work.

Note: The level is given in brackets indicates the position of the qualification on the [Regulated Qualifications Framework](#) (RQF). The levels can be mapped to the [European Qualifications Framework](#).

These courses are offered by universities or colleges of higher education. A training course will lead to qualified youth work status if it is recognised by the JNC and validated by the National Youth Agency (NYA). The NYA ensures the quality and further development of professional youth work training in England. It does this through validating and monitoring professional qualifications at universities and higher education institutions.

The NYA has published a [list of JNC recognised and NYA validated academic courses](#) and programmes in England that upon completion provide the status of professional youth worker.

For more information, please see the NYA's article on [validation](#).

## Mobility of youth workers

[Erasmus+](#) provides organisations engaged in youth work with opportunities to travel abroad to attend seminars, training courses, networking events, study visits, and job shadowing/observation periods. Youth work organisations can apply to either send youth workers abroad, or receive organisations and be responsible for hosting a group and developing a programme of activities for participants.

Any organisation or group established in a [Programme Country](#) can be an applicant, and must apply on behalf of all participating organisations involved in a project.

Opportunities for youth workers can include up to 50 people and can last anywhere between two days and two months. Projects must take place in the country of a participating organisation.

Under the Withdrawal Agreement negotiated with the EU, the UK [will continue](#) to participate fully in the current (2014-2020) Erasmus+ as part of the Brexit transition period. According to the European Commission [website](#), the possible participation of the UK in future programmes after 2020 will depend on the outcome of the overall negotiations on the future relationship between the two parties.

## 10.6 Recognition and validation of skills acquired through youth work

### Existing arrangements

[UK Youth](#) offers the [Youth Achievement Awards](#). These awards are designed to formally recognise young people's participation. Through them, young people can gain a nationally recognised, accredited award for involvement in youth work activities and volunteering.

These awards are accredited by [ASDAN](#), which is an education charity and awarding organisation whose curriculum programmes and qualifications help young people develop knowledge and skills for learning, work and life.

Progress is measured through four different levels of achievement, all based upon the amount of responsibility undertaken by the young person.

For more general information about the recognition of skills for young people, please see the article '[Validation of non-formal and informal learning](#)'.

## Skills

Each level of the award connects to a different point on the UK Youth Social Development Journey and represents different levels of participation and skillset. Through their progression through youth work, young people will gain vital life skills and become motivated, self-aware, receptive, resilient, responsible, confident and good communicators.

The Youth Achievement Awards celebrate the cultivation of the following skills competences in young people through youth work:

- Challenge – entry level introduction to youth work;
- Bronze – taking part and getting involved;
- Silver – helping to organise;
- Gold – planning and leading;
- Platinum – taking a full leadership role, with an element of training.

## 10.7 Raising awareness about youth work

### Information providers

As the main providers or commissioners of youth services, individual local authorities are the main providers of information on the learning opportunities included within their local offers. Statutory [guidance](#) says that local authorities should take the strategic lead and 'publicise effectively to young people and their families the overall local offer of all services and activities available for young people locally'.

There is no central source of information and guidance on non-formal, informal and youth work learning opportunities; rather each local authority provides the information on its website, typically on a section such as integrated youth support services, youth support services, community, community learning and/or adult learning. Local authorities commonly also provide directories of youth organisations. As well as local authority websites, local authority run libraries are sources of information on learning programmes and youth organisations.

[Generation Change](#) is a UK charity partnership and sector-based network of youth social action organisations. Together with [Step Up To Serve](#) it coordinates 'Horizon', an online mapping tool which shows youth social action programmes across the UK, developed with the support of British Gas.

They have now [mapped](#) more than 1.2 million social action opportunities for 11- to 25-year-olds.

### Key initiatives

NYA runs an annual [Youth Work Week](#), which provides an opportunity for youth organisations, youth workers and young people to celebrate their achievements and the impact of their work. The theme of the [2019](#) youth work week, was 'Youth Work in Action'. The theme for the 2020 Youth Work Week which took place from 2nd-5th November 2020, was "Ambitious for Youth Work".

For more information on awareness initiatives, please see the article '[Raising awareness about youth volunteering opportunities](#)'.

## 10.8 Current debates and reforms

### Forthcoming policy developments

In April 2019, the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#) announced the development of a [new Youth Charter](#) to set the vision for young people over the next generation and beyond. It aims to give young people a voice in decision making, and reaffirm the Government's commitment to youth policy.

In April 2019, the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#) announced the development of a new [Youth Charter](#) to set the vision for young people over the next generation and beyond. This included £500m of funding, allocated through the Youth Investment Fund, for youth work services. However, as of [December 2020](#) this funding has not been delivered. The funding was due to be released to services in April, however, this was pushed back due to the coronavirus pandemic, by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. [Speaking](#) on the first day of the CYP Now's Youth Work in the 2020s conference in November 2020, Leigh Middleton, NYA chief executive, said: "Young people need that funding now".

### Ongoing debates

#### COVID-19

The global pandemic has had a significant impact on youth work and youth work services in England. The National Youth Agency (NYA) as the Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body for youth work in England has, in consultation with Public Health England and the Health and Safety Executive, developed [youth sector specific advice and guidance](#). The guidance will support local providers, leaders, volunteers and young people to remain safe when engaging in youth sector activities. It is intended to guide the youth sector in opening up services for young people at the right pace and time.

In November 2020, UK Youth announced a £2million [COVID relief fund](#) of grants of up to £50,000 to be awarded to small youth organisations based in England which have been hardest hit by the impact of Covid as part of the government's £750 million package of support for charities.

Also in November 2020, the government announced an emergency funding package to protect the immediate future of grassroots and national youth organisations across the country. The [Youth Covid-19 Support Fund](#), which will be open to grassroots youth clubs, uniformed youth groups, and national youth and umbrella organisations, will help to mitigate the impact of lost income during the winter period due to the coronavirus pandemic, and ensure services providing vital support can remain open. The funding will be allocated from the Government's £750 million package of support. More than £60 million of this package has already been provided to organisations working with vulnerable children and young people.

## GLOSSARY

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### A Level

A General Certificate of Education (GCE) A Level is a single subject [Level 3](#) qualification, generally taken at age 18 after two years of post-16 study. Students typically take A Levels in 3+ subjects. These qualifications are provided by external awarding organisations working within a common regulatory framework.

### Academy

An academy is a publicly funded independent school. Academies have individual funding agreements directly with the Secretary of State and enjoy certain freedoms relating to organisation and the curriculum.

### Awarding organisation

An awarding organisation is a body recognised by the qualifications regulator (Ofqual) for the purpose of developing and awarding qualifications recognising learner achievements. Awarding organisations providing general (academic, rather than vocational) qualifications are often known as exam boards.

### Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan

An Education, Health and Care plan is a legal document issued by the local authority that specifies the education, health and social care support that is to be provided to a child or young person who has [special educational needs](#) (SEN) or a disability.

### Free school

A free school is an [academy](#) established as new provision i.e. not established by the conversion of an existing maintained school.

### Further education (FE) college

A further education (FE) college is an institution legally constituted as a further education corporation, established or designated under the [Further and Higher Education Act 1992](#). As well as offering technical and vocational courses for school-leavers and adults, they are also major providers of many types of learning, including full-time general education programmes for 16- to 19-year-olds and some higher education programmes.

### GCSE

A General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) is a single subject qualification typically taken at age 16 after two years of study. Students typically take GCSEs in 8+ subjects. Higher grade GCSEs are Level 2 qualifications on the [Regulated Qualifications Framework](#) (RQF) and lower grades are Level 1. GCSEs are provided by external [awarding organisations](#).

### Governing body

A governing body is a corporate body set up by law to govern a maintained school. It is made up of parent and staff governors, local authority governors and, according to the legal category of school, foundation/trust governors or partnership governors.

### Higher education institution (HEI)

Higher education institution (HEI) is a term from the [Further and Higher Education Act 1992](#). Under the Act, it means any provider which is one or more of the following: a UK university; a higher education corporation; an institution designated as eligible to receive support from funds administered by the [Higher Education Funding Council for England](#) (HEFCE), aside from further education colleges.

**Local authority**

A local authority is an administrative unit of local government. The areas in which it has responsibilities include education, public health, recreation and leisure, children's services, youth services and housing.

**Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)**

A Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is a voluntary partnership between a [local authority](#) and businesses, established to determine local economic priorities and lead economic growth in its area. There are 39 LEPs in England.

**Looked after child (LAC)**

A looked after child (LAC) is a child who is in the care of the [local authority](#). Looked after children include children who are accommodated by the local authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents; children who are the subject of a care order; and children who are the subject of an emergency order for their protection.

**Maintained school**

A maintained school is a school funded via the [local authority](#) using grants from central government

**Multi-academy trust (MAT)**

A multi-academy trust (MAT) is an academy trust in which the board of trustees is accountable for a number of [academies](#).

**Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC)**

A Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) works with school leaders to take action in underperforming schools.

**Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF)**

The Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) describes all regulated qualifications in England, grouping them according to their level of difficulty (running from Entry Level to Level 8).

**Sixth form**

Sixth form is a term that may be used to describe full-time education for young people aged 16 to 18/19 when provided in a school or a sixth-form college. The two years of study are also referred to as Year 12 and Year 13.

**Sixth-form college**

A sixth-form college is a type of further education college that offers only full-time education for 16- to 18/19-year-olds.

**Social impact bonds**

Social impact bonds channel investment into interventions which tackle social issues. Investors are then repaid on the basis of specified social outcomes being achieved.

**Special educational needs and disability (SEND)**

Special educational needs and disability (SEND) is a term that brings together terms used for children and young people aged 0- 25 reflecting that, under the [Children and Families Act 2014](#), the assessment and provision of education, health and care services for children and young people were brought together into a single framework.

**Studio school**

A studio school is an [academy](#) for 14- to 18/19-year-olds of all abilities, which offers an academic and vocational curriculum and qualifications taught in a practical and project-based way through enterprise projects and real work

## University Technical College (UTC)

A University Technical College (UTC) is an academy which is sponsored by a local university and employers and caters for 14 -to 18/19-year-olds. UTCs specialise in one or two technical curriculum areas (e.g. engineering, science) and teach core GCSEs alongside technical qualifications.

## Voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector

The voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector includes small local community and voluntary groups, registered charities, both large and small, foundations, trusts and a growing number of social enterprises and cooperatives. These are often also referred to as Third Sector organisations or civil society organisations.

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