



PRESS NOTICE: 22nd November 2013

CAREERS GUIDANCE for Young People: the chorus of disapproval grows and professional concerns increase about the potential damage to young people's lives as well as to the economy

As the chorus of disapproval of the implementation of the Government's policies for careers guidance for young people grows¹, Careers England today publishes the 24th in its series of Policy Commentaries entitled "**Government Inspiration Vision Statement and Other Recent Developments**".

Alongside the Ofsted Thematic Review and Government Action Plan published in September 2013², the Government also published an *Inspiration Vision Statement*.³ This has clearly been the basis for Ministerial statements in two recent Parliamentary question sessions: in the House of Lords on 23 October 2013; and in the House of Commons on 11 November 2013.

Policy Commentary 24 analyses these various statements. **It demonstrates that the Government, despite its earlier promises to achieve a renaissance of the careers profession, appears now to be writing careers professionals out of the policy script.**

In addition, an analysis of relevant sections in a recent report of the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission⁴ is provided as an annex to the new Policy Commentary. The Commission is

¹ See for example the survey published by the CBI which shows that 93% of Young People Are Not Getting the Careers Information They Need – based upon a survey of 2000 young people, published 21st November 2013. The CBI calls the Survey findings are a '*damning indictment*' of standards in careers guidance.

<http://www.cbi.org.uk/media-centre/press-releases/2013/11/93-of-young-people-are-not-getting-the-careers-information-they-need-cbi-1/>

² See Watts, A.G. (2013). *Ofsted Thematic Review and Government Action Plan*. Careers England Policy Commentary 23.

³ HM Government (2013). *Inspiration Vision Statement*.

⁴ Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission (2013). *State of the Nation 2013: Social Mobility and Child Poverty in Great Britain*.



chaired by Alan Milburn, who in an earlier report⁵ to the Labour Government recommended that Connexions should be broken up, the duty for careers guidance be devolved to schools and the relevant funding be passed to schools.

The first two of these recommendations have subsequently been implemented by the Coalition Government but, crucially, the third has not. The new report from Alan Milburn includes this withering comment that, as a result, ***'the chickens are already coming home to roost'*** (p.195). His Commission accordingly recommends that ***'the UK Government should provide additional resources to schools to provide high quality careers services'*** (p.203).

The emphasis placed by Ministers on aspiration and inspiration (in the *Inspiration Vision Statement*) would be widely welcomed by Careers England members and the wider careers community, as would the notion that employers and people in jobs have important contributions to make in this respect. We would also, however, emphasise that:

- (a) such contributions should be integrated into a coherent and developmental careers programme, including careers education within the curriculum, managed by a careers professional;
- (b) this programme should include face-to-face interviews with careers professionals, who have been trained in career guidance skills, practise under a code of ethics, and have knowledge of the full range of courses and occupations;⁶
- (c) the overall careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) in a school should be quality-assured through a CEIAG quality award which is nationally validated through the Quality in Careers Standard (as recommended by the Education Select Committee, and as already being done by many schools in the country) (see <http://www.careersengland.org.uk/quality.php>).

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⁵ Panel on Fair Access to the Professions (2009). *Unleashing Aspiration: the Final Report of the Panel on Fair Access to the Professions*. London: Panel on Fair Access to the Professions.

⁶ In this respect, it is worth noting the evidence that it is not low aspirations, but misaligned aspirations, that lead young people to become NEET. See Yates, S., Harris, A., Sabates, R. & Staff, J. (2010). Early occupational aspirations and fractured transitions: a study of entry into 'NEET' status in the UK. *Journal of Social Policy*, 40(3): 513-534.



Notes to Editors

(i) Careers England is the national **Trade Association** for organisations involved in the provision of careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) products and services in England for people of all ages. **Our members provide aspects of some, or all, of the four components of CEIAG:**

- a. Careers education (that is “career learning”)
- b. Careers information
- c. Careers advice
- d. Careers guidance

(ii) Careers England is principally, therefore, an **employer body**. Our full members comprise the majority of prime contractors for the **National Careers Service** along with a significant number of sub-contractors and ‘careers providers’ delivering publicly-funded careers guidance services for local authorities (LAs), schools and colleges across England.

(iii) We also provide the project leadership, administration and management for the **Quality in Careers Standard** (the national validation for England’s 13 specialist Quality Awards - for Schools, Colleges & Work-Based Learning Providers - covering all four components of CEIAG).

(iv) Full details of all Careers England’s members, our activities, our publications (including Key Policy Summaries on the Coalition Government’s policies for careers guidance), links to the CEIAG Quality Award providers and the Quality in Careers Standard can be found at www.careersengland.org.uk

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