

Learner Views on Current and Future Learning Provision in the Humber Sub Region: North Lincolnshire area report.

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Content

Executive Summary	4
Section 1 Introduction	6
1.1 Reasons for the research	6
Section 2 Methodology	7
2.1 Overall Approach	7
2.2 Surveys	7
2.3 Consultations	8
Section 3 Presentation of Data	9
3.1 Background data.....	10
What were young people currently doing?.....	10
What were parent/ carer respondents child(ren) currently doing?.....	11
3.2 Current provision	11
Parents and carers views on current provision	11
Parents and carers knowledge of current provision.....	12
Young people’s knowledge of current provision	13
Barriers to Learning	13
Suggestions for change – Parents and carers	14
Suggestions for change – Young people	14
3.3 Future Learning Needs.....	15
Hopes for the future.....	15
Young people’s views on what they need to learn in the next two years...	17
What young people think employers are looking for.....	18
What motivates young people to learn?	19
Where young people would prefer to learn	20
3.4 How do young people make decisions about their future?	21
What parents and carers think influences their child(ren)’s decisions about	
their future?	22
What influences the decisions young people make?.....	23
Where do young people get advice and guidance?.....	24
Parents’ perception of the quality of the Advice and Guidance their children	
receive	25
Young People’s perception of the quality of Advice and Guidance.....	25
3.5 Support needed to enable access and success.....	26
3.6 Views on Minimum Standards of Learning Provision.....	28
Section 4 Relationship of research findings to strategic objectives	29
Section 5 Learning Providers’ Views – Some Context	37
Knowledge of the current range of provision	37
Views on the current range of choice available to learners	37
Perceptions of future learning needs.....	38
Learning Providers’ perceptions of young people’s understanding of the	
options available to them.....	39
Where Learning Providers think young people get advice and guidance	39
How prepared are young people to make decisions about their future	
learning options?	40
What support would most help learners?	40
The minimum standard of provision.....	40
Views on Learner Entitlement.....	40
Section 6 Conclusions	42
Funding.....	42

Advice and Guidance	43
Provision	43
Future Learning Needs.....	44
Transport.....	45
Work Based Learning/ Vocational Learning	45
Learner Entitlement	45
Support needed to ensure access and success	46
Engagement and Personalisation	46
References.....	48
Appendix I:- Sample Graffiti Wall, Learner Entitlement	49

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Executive Summary

The research, commissioned and funded by the Learning and Skills Council, was based on the premise that organisational change should be implemented through partnership between all service users and deliverers.

The aim of the project was to enable young people, aged 14 to 19, and parents/carers to share their views on current learning provision and what they would like to see from future provision in the sub region, thereby giving them a voice in strategic level policy and planning for 14- 19 learning services across the sub region.

The report focuses on young people and parents/carers views on current provision, future learning needs, decision-making, support and access and minimum standards of learning provision.

The aims of this research report are to:

- ⇒ Present the issues and insights gathered through surveys and consultations with young people and parents/carers
- ⇒ Place the issues and insights in the context of recent research and learning providers views, where appropriate
- ⇒ Provide stakeholders with the opportunity to comment on the research findings.

The key findings of the research suggest:

- ⇒ Parents/carers, young people and learning providers all identified a lack of meaningful work experience and poor availability of work placements as a barrier to young people achieving their goals and a weakness of current provision.
- ⇒ Parents/ carers considered the changes most likely to have a high impact on young people's learning to be curriculum flexibility and more practical or active learning activities.
- ⇒ Young people would like to see changes to current provision to make it more 'personalised'.
- ⇒ Young people often mentioned the importance of enjoying what they are doing in order to learn.
- ⇒ The majority of young people and parents/carers do not feel informed of the full range of provision. Few feel well informed about school based sixth forms, E2E or Apprenticeships.
- ⇒ More young people express a desire to remain in education or training than actual post 16 participation rates suggest.
- ⇒ Over one quarter of young people said they would prefer to learn in college rather than in school and a significant number of 14–16 year olds said they would prefer to learn in the workplace.
- ⇒ As many young people believe they will need to gain vocational qualifications in the near future as those who believe they will need academic qualifications.
- ⇒ The majority of young people thought that employers were mainly interested in personal skills such as social and communication skills,

- punctuality and reliability, honesty, commitment, confidence and willingness to learn new skills.
- ⇒ Parents/carers do not see themselves as influencing the career and key learning decisions made by their child(ren), however, young people and learning providers consider parents and carers to be a major influence on young people's choices.
 - ⇒ North Lincolnshire is the only area of the sub region where professional advice and guidance from Connexions Personal Advisers is more of an influence than the advice of friends and peers.
 - ⇒ For parents/carers the availability of transport was a significant influence on the advice they gave.
 - ⇒ The local availability of appropriate courses influenced the advice given by parents/carers.
 - ⇒ Practical work and flexible study hours were considered important by young people in North Lincolnshire but not by parents or learning providers.
 - ⇒ Very few young people or parents/carers thought that additional support in IT, reading and writing, behaviour management or counselling would help with their learning. More or improved work experience and work-based learning and support in Maths were the areas they both considered to be important.
 - ⇒ All of the areas of support identified as least important by parents and carers were rated as most important by learning providers.
 - ⇒ When asked: "What do you expect a college, school or training provider to offer you?" young people often stated "support" and "understanding. Young people accept that they also have responsibilities as well as rights. These responsibilities are respect, good behaviour, hard work and honesty.
 - ⇒ Young people expressed concern about how they would be made aware of their learning entitlements and how these entitlements would be monitored.

Section 1 Introduction

1.1 Reasons for the research

This research into the views of young people and parents and carers in the Humber sub region was commissioned and funded by the Learning and Skills Council in May 2004. The managing agent was Connexions Humber and the research was conducted by TAC.

The aim of the study is to inform strategic level policy and planning for 14- 19 learning services across the sub region. This has been done through analysing the perceptions of young people and their parents, in the context of learning providers' views, on current learning provision in the sub region and by identifying perceived future needs for 14-19 provision. The findings of this research have been cross-referenced with findings from the BMG Householder Survey as well as OFSTED reports and other recent research such as the General Teaching Council's Teacher Survey and have been used to evaluate the suitability of the objectives, priorities and planned actions to improve learning provision set out in area strategy documents.

This project will help the LSC and partners ensure that their 14-19 Learning Strategy is learner focussed. It has enabled young people, aged 14 to 19, and parents and carers to:

1. Share their views of what they would like to see from provision in the sub region
2. Contribute to a critical evaluation of current learning provision
3. Contribute to a critical evaluation of the suitability of the objectives, priorities and planned actions to improve learning provision set out in area strategy documents.

The research has endeavoured to explore the relationships and inter-relationships between young people's views, parents' views and learning providers' views on the sub regional learning system.

This is the North Lincolnshire Area Report. There are a number of companion documents available for download from the Connexions Humber website, the Local LSC website and the CfBT website. The companion documents are:-

- ⇒ Sub Regional Full Report
- ⇒ Sub Regional Summary
- ⇒ East Riding Area Report
- ⇒ Hull Area Report
- ⇒ North East Lincolnshire Area Report
- ⇒ Young Persons Summary

Section 2 Methodology

2.1 Overall Approach

The overall approach to the research draws on systems thinking and participatory research, both of which are based on collaborative approaches to identifying solutions to perceived problems. These approaches are well suited to developing new forms and standards of delivery based on user need and are based in the belief that organisational change should be implemented through partnership between all service users and deliverers.

The rationale for taking this approach was to enable service users to:

- Share their views on current learning provision
- Outline what they perceive their current and future needs to be
- Make proposals contributing to the development of the strategy

The focus of this research was the views of young people and parents and carers however service providers' views were also collected via a mixed method approach in order to place the research in context.

The research engaged with a sample of:

- Young people,
- Parents
- Schools
- Statutory & Voluntary Sector Youth Service
- Specialist provision (e.g. S.E.N)
- FE colleges
- Sixth form colleges
- Work Based Learning providers (including E2E and Apprenticeships).

The data collection process was designed and conducted within a participatory framework, thereby enabling participants to shape the research process through identifying key issues, prioritising those issues and proposing potential solutions.

2.2 Surveys

Surveys were sent to a sample of learning providers in North Lincolnshire. They were asked to distribute 10 copies of the young people survey and the parent/carer survey to a representative sample of their learners.

In North Lincolnshire we have had surveys completed and returned by: -

- 21 Young People
- 9 Parents/ Carers
- 5 Learning Providers

2.3 Consultations

Consultations took place in a variety of venues in North Lincolnshire including:-

- Shopping Centres
- Youth Projects
- Connexions Centres

We have consulted 220 Young People and 90 Parents/Carers across the sub region including the North Lincolnshire area.

Where it has fitted with the aims of their projects the Creative Connexions Team has also recorded the views of young people on their learning experiences.

Parents were invited to comment on current learning provision in their area and suggest improvements. They were also asked about barriers to their child(ren) achieving their goals. We then talked to participants about ways to overcome these barriers, namely how they would change or improve current provision to better meet the needs of young people. In the process of identifying a problem and suggesting a change participants contributed to a critical evaluation of current provision.

The TAC consultant and the young people who took part in the consultation events negotiated the actual activities used. The consultations predominantly utilised informal interviews and/or participatory appraisal tools or group activities to record young people's views on:-

- The availability, quality and standard of current learning provision in the sub region
- Their future learning needs and learning support in the sub region
- Their motivations for pursuing their chosen learning pathways
- Their aspirations for their future and the link to their chosen learning pathway.
- The level of control they had in choosing their learning pathway.
- The Learner Entitlement, Student Guarantee & Provider Guarantee charter

Not all of the above topics were covered in all consultations.

Sample questions that were explored with young people are listed below:-

- What do you think/ did you think of school/ college/ the training course?
- Did it suit/ How could it have been made to suit your interests and plans for the future?
- What would you like to be doing in one year's time and in 3 years time? Why?
- How will you get to that point?
- What courses, training or learning do you think will be necessary to achieve your goals?
- If you have to do some course/ learning where would you prefer to do it? (prompts – school, college, whilst working, through voluntary work, at a community/ youth group)
- Do you think you will need support/ help to do this? What support/help?

In addition the draft Learner Entitlement for the appropriate Local Authority Area was used as the focus of discussion with some young people. They were asked:-

- What were their views on the suggested draft?
- Was it clear and easy to understand?
- What was the level of service that learning providers should guarantee to provide?
- What they would agree to commit to in return?

Section 3 Presentation of Data

The main body of the report focuses on the data from Young People and parents and carers. As previously stated the analysis of data from Learning Providers gives valuable context to the data provided by Young People and parents and carers but was not the main focus of the research. Accordingly this is presented as a separate section following the main data.

All reasonable efforts were made to ensure the views of a representative sample of young people and parents from each area of the sub region were included in the research. Almost inevitably as self-reporting questionnaires were used for part of the data collection some groups are not fully represented in some areas. Where this was the case the research team attempted to engage the under-represented groups through consultation sessions.

The sub regional sample (total of 510 responses) can be considered as both adequate and appropriate for the total relevant population. Analysis of the surveys returned suggests that the results can be considered as broadly representative of young people currently in a range of provision, and of parents and carers of children across the full age range of 14-19 and of the views of different areas of the sub region.

The survey returns and the consultation sessions were generally concerned with people's perceptions of existing provision and as such notions of statistical internal validity are not wholly appropriate, however, the external validity of the research was tested through cross referencing to other recent research and through comparison of survey data with consultation data.

The reliability of the data collection tools, namely that they would give the same answers over time, across similar groups and irrespective of who administered it, was ensured through steering group involvement in the design of the data collection tools.

In addition it should be noted that the research adopted a triangulation strategy in its qualitative design, involving the use of multiple sources to enhance the rigour of the research, in order to help counter any bias or misinterpretation of results. The data triangulation included the use of more than one method of data collection in the form of documents, self-reporting questionnaires and face-to-

face consultations/interviews that included video-taping. In addition to this, more than one researcher took part in the data collection and analysis to guard against researcher bias.

3.1 Background data

19% of young people who responded to the sub regional survey were from North Lincolnshire.¹

48% of young people from North Lincolnshire who responded to the survey were male and 52% female. 81% were between 14 and 16 years of age, 14% were 17 to 19. None of the respondents had a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

The children of 56% of the parents and carers who responded were between the ages of 14 and 16 and 44% had children between the ages of 17 and 19.

What were young people currently doing?

Currently 76% of young people from North Lincolnshire who responded to the survey were still at school, 5% were at college, 14% were on an apprenticeship, 5% were on an Entry to Employment programme. None of the respondents from North Lincolnshire were unemployed or were in some other form of education or training or in employment.

The following table shows this data in comparison to the sub regional totals.

Currently at ...	Subregion (%)	N Lincs (%)	East Riding (%)	Hull (%)	NE Lincs (%)
School	67	76	55	60	86
College	11	5	15	15	10
School Sixth Form	3	nil	9	nil	nil
Other Provision	6	nil	6	9	4
Unemployed	4	nil	6	7	nil
Apprenticeship	7	14	6	9	nil
E2E	2	5	3	nil	nil
Total	100	100	100	100	100

¹ Returns from the other areas of the sub region were: 31% from the East Riding, 20% from North East Lincolnshire and 30% from Hull.

What were parent/ carer respondents child(ren) currently doing?

55% of parent/carers respondents' children were still at school, 33% were at college and 12% were on an apprenticeship.

The following table shows this data in comparison to the sub regional totals.

Currently at ...	Subregion (%)	N Lincs (%)	East Riding (%)	Hull (%)	NE Lincs (%)
School	64	55	72	62	50
College	20	33	20	19	10
School Sixth Form	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil
Other Provision	3	nil	nil	nil	20
Unemployed	7	nil	4	19	nil
Apprenticeship	3	12	4	nil	nil
E2E	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil
Missing data	3	nil	nil	nil	20
Total	100	100	100	100	100

3.2 Current provision

Parents and carers views on current provision

Parents and carers views on current provision were collected via consultation events. They were asked to talk about positive and negative aspects of education and training in their area, to talk about barriers to their children achieving their goals and to suggest changes to current provision that would have a positive impact on young people's learning.

Parents and carers in North Lincolnshire were more satisfied with the quality of teaching than in other areas of the sub region. They cited poor pupil behaviour as a negative aspect of current school provision. They also criticised current provision for lack of work placements and vocational opportunities.

Importantly many young people during the consultation events said that more or better work experience would be a change in provision that would have a significant positive impact on their learning (see page 22).

This is similar to views expressed by John Dunford, the General Secretary of the Secondary Heads Association, reported in the Times Education Supplement (*Is it tea-making of work experience?* September 3rd 2004, p3) that "teenagers will be left to run errands and count the stock", and that, "frankly they might as well be at school".

The opinion is also important in relation to the fact that work related learning is, now compulsory for all 14-16 year olds. Consultation with parents from rural areas highlighted the difficulties of finding work placements for their children on college courses. This raises questions of the viability of finding meaningful work experience placements for all secondary school pupils if parts of the sub region are experiencing difficulties in placing older students.

It is interesting to note that gaps in vocational provision were also noted by a number of learning provider respondents, specifically gaps in apprenticeships, gaps in specific vocational areas and gaps in opportunities for young people of lower ability. It is also useful to note here that a national survey of teachers published in 2004² found that the development of 'vocational education and employability skills' were rated by just over one third of respondents as being 'not applicable' to their school and that among those who indicated that 'vocational education and employability skills' are applicable, just under one third say that it needs more emphasis.

Parents and carers knowledge of current provision

If, as suggested by the data from young people, parents and carers are a source of information for young people when choosing their learning paths it is important to understand what their knowledge base is.

Parents know most about...

	Sub region ³	N Lincs	East Riding	Hull ⁴	NE Lincs
Sixth Form College	24%	44%	14%	13%	0%
FE College	32%	22%	14%	19%	50%
Apprenticeship	13%	22%	3%	13%	0%
School Sixth Form (same school)	39%	11%	45%	6%	20%
Work	24%	11%	14%	19%	20%
E2E	6%	11%	3%	0%	0%
School Sixth Form (different school)	6%	0%	7%	6%	0%

The data in this section is based on responses from all but one of the parents and carers in North Lincolnshire who responded to the question concerning the learning options open to their child(ren). This response rate was considerably higher than the sub regional response rate for this question. They were asked to tick the option they knew most about and put a cross next to the option they

² NFER, 2004, General Teaching Council Survey of Teachers 2004, GTC page 22

³ Total % does not equal 100 as respondents were able to tick more than 1 option

⁴ Total % does not equal 100 as not all respondents answered this question.

knew least about. Some respondents chose to tick all that they knew about, or to put crosses next to all the options they felt they did not know enough about.

Of those that responded to this question parents in North Lincolnshire appear to know least about school based sixth forms, Entry to Employment (E2E) and work and know most about the Sixth Form college or FE Colleges

Young people’s knowledge of current provision

66% of young people from North Lincolnshire responded to this question and some chose to tick all the options that they knew about, or to put crosses next to all the options they felt they did not know enough about.

Young people say that they know least about E2E, Apprenticeships and school based sixth form provision. Over half of young people in North Lincolnshire say that the option they know most about is to go to a sixth form college or FE college.

When compared to the knowledge base of their parents and carers and to comments made by learning providers this is perhaps unsurprising. Parents and carers also knew least about E2E and school based sixth form provision, and as 24% of young people in North Lincolnshire say that parents and carers influence the decision they make this is clearly going to result in an information gap. This is also reinforced by comments made by some learning providers suggesting that training providers do not have good access to pupils in schools and that teachers and Connexions Personal Advisers are not fully informed of training options.

Barriers to Learning

The responses of Parents/carers in North Lincolnshire to *What are the three main barriers to your child achieving what they want?* are set out below

Barrier to achievement – North Lincolnshire	Sub regional rank
1. Lack of parental support/control	1 st
2. Negative influence from friends	2 nd
3. Lack of work placements/work experience	7 th
4. Poor behaviour of others	3 rd
5. Poor advice and information/lack of awareness of sources of advice and information	5 th
6. Lack of transport	6 th
7. Lack of choice of training provider	11 th
8. Lack of support from teachers	4 th
9. Lack of childcare provision	17 th
10. = Parents being too pushy	13 th
= Having to work as well as study	14 th
= Being a young/teenage parent	22 nd

The lack of meaningful work experience and the poor availability of work placements was identified,

- ⇒ By parents and carers as a barrier to achieving goals
- ⇒ By young people as an aspect of education that if changed would have a major impact on their education
- ⇒ By learning providers as a criticism of the current range of provision available to young people.

Suggestions for change – Parents and carers

Parents and carers were asked to suggest ways of overcoming the barriers faced by their children and to place them in a matrix according to how easy they thought their suggested solution would be to implement and how big an impact on learning the change would have.

The main suggestions⁵ for a high impact, focussed on:-

- 1) **Curriculum flexibility and appropriateness to young persons needs**
Work placements for their qualifications instead of academic qualifications – ie as an option to GCSE/A levels or college, from age 14 (*N Lincs*)
Make college more interesting and suitable for young people (*N Lincs*)
- 2) **Increased or more accessible provision**
Suitable and sufficient provision for disabled and autistic in college and with work providers (*N Lincs*)
Provision in outlying villages, not just big areas (*N Lincs*)
More transport and free for young people (*N Lincs*)
- 3) **Implementing support for young people on managing their behaviour**
Support for young people on managing their behaviour (*N Lincs*)
Practitioners based in school who are link workers between young people and teachers (*N Lincs*)
- 4) **Support for parents and carers.**
Parental support to develop parenting skills and managing young people's behaviour (*N Lincs*)

The solutions or changes to current provision that parents/carers think would aid young people in overcoming perceived barriers to success are all concerned with the breadth, scope and appropriateness of current provision. By stating a need for change in these areas parents and carers are implying that current provision is not flexible enough, does not meet young people's needs, is not accessible and that there is not enough support to address behaviour or for parents and carers to support their child(ren).

Suggestions for change – Young people

During the consultation events, young people were asked about the changes to learning provision that they thought would have the biggest positive impact on their learning.

⁵ A table of all the suggestions made and where they were placed in the matrix can be found in Appendix III.

As with parents and carers suggestions for change, the suggestions made by young people focused on curriculum flexibility and relevance to their needs. Some of the suggested changes in North Lincolnshire relate to the creation of a comfortable and respectful learning environment and some relate to restructuring of provision.

The suggested changes in rank order are:-

Suggested Change	Sub regional rank
1 st More 1 to 1 support	8 th
2 nd Flexible study hours	6 th
3 rd = Better Behaviour	5 th
More work experience	4 th
5 th = More understanding of you as a person	1 st
More interesting/relevant subjects	7 th
More information and advice	10 th
Help with Maths, English or ICT	13 th

The suggestion of more or better work experience as a curriculum change that would have a significant impact reflects the survey findings and is also reflected in the central government drive to support work related learning and positive work experience as an entitlement.

A greater proportion of young people in North Lincolnshire than other areas of the sub region, suggested that more flexible learning hours, different or more relevant subjects and more one to one support would have an impact on their future learning. Flexible learning hours, different or more relevant subjects and more one to one support are factors that could be considered as ingredients of ‘personalised learning’ and are clearly seen by young people in North Lincolnshire as desirable. This is slightly at odds with the findings of the national survey of teachers that found only 58% of teachers thought it desirable for learners to “expect learning to fit them rather than for them to fit the learning provided”⁶.

3.3 Future Learning Needs

Hopes for the future

Young people were asked how long they would like to remain in some form of education or training. In North Lincolnshire 5% of young people said they wanted to leave education or training at the age of 16. A national survey of young people’s attitudes conducted by the National Centre for Social Research on behalf of the DfES⁷ found that 1 in 10 young people thought they would leave full time education at the age of 16. 33% of young people in North

⁶ NFER, 2004, General Teaching Council Survey of Teachers 2004, GTC page 52

⁷ National Centre for Social Research, 2004, Young People in Britain: The Attitudes and Experiences of 12 to 19 Year Olds , DfES page 76

Lincolnshire expected to remain in education or training for one or two years beyond compulsory education compared to a national figure of 24%. These figures suggest that young people in North Lincolnshire have relatively high aspirations and motivation to remain in education beyond compulsory schooling. However, only 43% of young people in North Lincolnshire wanted to remain in some form of education or training until they were between 20 and 30 years of age. In total 52% of young people in North Lincolnshire wanted to remain in education until or beyond the age of 19, this compares to a national figure of 61%⁸.

Young People want to stay in education until...

Area	16 (%)	17 (%)	18 (%)	19 (%)	20-30 (%)	30+ (%)	Don't know (%)	No response (%)
Sub region	6	4	30	12	42	1	2	3
N Lincs	5	5	28	9	43	0	5	5

NE Lincs	4.5	0	45	14	32	0	0	4.5
East Riding	9	3	23	6	50	0	3	6
Hull	6	6	27	18	39	3	0	0

Young people in North Lincolnshire were more likely to want to remain in some form of education or training until they are between the ages of 20 and 30 than young people in Hull or North Lincolnshire.

When compared to actual participation rates for the Yorkshire and Humber region for 16 year olds (77%) and 17 year olds⁹ (66%) (2001 data) there is obviously a gap between young people's aspirations and reality. What is not completely clear from this research is what prevents those young people who wish to stay in education until they are 18 from doing so. However, young people did suggest that more or better work experience and work related learning would have a significant impact on their learning and significant numbers of young people, suggested that more flexible learning hours, different or more relevant subjects and more one to one support would have an impact on their future learning.

It is also worth noting that 28% of young people in North Lincolnshire said that they would like at least some of their learning to take place in the workplace. Whilst these were identified by young people as changes that would improve learning whether all, or any of these are also perceived as a barrier to continued participation is not clear.

Similarly parents and carers have identified a number of barriers to learning, however, whether any or all of these are also barriers to participation is not clear.

⁸ National Centre for Social Research, 2004, Young People in Britain: The Attitudes and Experiences of 12 to 19 Year Olds , DfES page 77

⁹ DfES, Nov 2004, Participation in Education and Training by 16 and 17 Year Olds in Each Local Area in England: 2001, available online at www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SBU/b000450/index.shtml

A typical consultation response from many young people was that they *'want a good education so I can get a good job'*. Financial support is not a key factor in terms of accessing education but money (long term) is a motivating factor in terms of decision making about courses or jobs. Typically young people and their parents *'want a good job with lots of money'*.

Young people's views on what they need to learn in the next two years

Young people were also asked what they thought they would need to learn in the next two years. Their responses were coded into nine categories for analysis. The categories were as follows:

- ⇒ No response
- ⇒ Obtaining academic qualifications
- ⇒ Further knowledge in the core curriculum subjects
- ⇒ Obtaining vocational qualifications/learning a trade
- ⇒ Life skills and independency
- ⇒ Financial skills and money management
- ⇒ Available career opportunities
- ⇒ Support and encouragement from others
- ⇒ Don't know

Nearly 42% per cent of young people from North Lincolnshire who returned the survey did not give a response to this question, with a further 5% stating that they did not know what they needed to learn over the next two years¹⁰.

Young people's views on what they need to learn over the next 2 years

	Sub region	N Lincs	East Riding	NE Lincs	Hull
Vocational qualifications	24%	24%	6%	40%	35%
Academic qualifications	21%	24%	23%	32%	9%
Life skills and independency	13%	5%	15%	14%	16%
Core curriculum subjects	11%	0	15%	0	22%
Financial skills	5%	0	12%	0	6%
Career opportunities	5%	0	3%	9%	6%
Support and encouragement	1%	0	3%	0	0
Don't know	3%	5%	3%	0	3%
No response	17%	42%	20%	5%	3%

24% of young people in North Lincolnshire felt that they needed to learn a vocational qualification over the coming two years¹¹. This is the same as the sub regional average but considerably less than the percentage of young people in both North East Lincolnshire (40%) and Hull (35%) who thought a vocational qualification was what they would need to study in the next two years.

¹⁰ 3% of young people in Hull did not respond to this question compared with 20% of young people from the East Riding and 5% from North East Lincolnshire.

¹¹ This fits with learning providers views that one of the most important future learning need for the sub region is likely to be vocational provision.

24% of young people in North Lincolnshire said they needed to ‘learn’ traditional academic qualifications such as GCSEs, A Levels and degrees. This is slightly higher than the sub regional average (21%) and higher than any other area of the sub region except North East Lincolnshire.

5% of young people in North Lincolnshire felt that they needed to learn social and communication skills or life skills, including how to be more independent by learning to drive. This is lower than other areas of the sub region.

What young people think employers are looking for

"Reliable, honest people with a good standard of education" (YP80, N Lincs)

All young people were asked what they think employers are looking for. All responses were coded into eight categories as follows:

- ⇒ No response
- ⇒ Relevant skills, qualifications and experience
- ⇒ Hard honest worker, committed to the job with a sense of responsibility
- ⇒ Punctual, good at timekeeping with reliable attendance
- ⇒ Willing to learn new skills
- ⇒ Polite, friendly and approachable with good social & communication skills
- ⇒ Confidence
- ⇒ Don't know

A number of young people gave more than one response to this question and this is reflected in the results.

Young people's views on what employers are looking for

	Sub Region	N Lincs	East Riding	NE Lincs	Hull
Relevant skills, qualifications & experience (a good education)	40%	25%	32%	59%	45%
Polite, friendly and approachable with good social/communication skills	13%	19%	11%	3%	18%
No response	11%	19%	11%	10%	3%
Confidence	5%	15%	2%	0	5%
Punctual, good at timekeeping with reliable attendance	17%	11%	16%	21%	18%
Hard honest worker, committed to job with a sense of responsibility	12%	7%	23%	7%	8%
Willing to learn new skills	2%	4%	5%	0	0

Young people in North Lincolnshire were considerably less likely than the sub regional average to think that employers look for relevant skills, qualifications and experience. Only 7% of young people in North Lincolnshire felt being hardworking and trustworthy was a main attribute looked for by employers.

This is similar to other areas of the sub region with the exception of the East Riding where it was considered important by considerably more young people.

The proportion of young people that viewed punctuality, reliability and good timekeeping as important was lowest in North Lincolnshire (11%). However, being polite and friendly with good social and communication skills was thought of as important by 19% of young people in North Lincolnshire. This is similar to most of the areas; Hull 18%, and East Riding 11% with the exception of North East Lincolnshire where only 3% of young people expressed the same view.

What motivates young people to learn?

Young people were asked an open question as to what things get them to work hard and do their best. The responses were then coded. Fifteen different motivating factors were named by young people in North Lincolnshire (compared to twenty-seven different types of response sub regionally). Enjoyment or personal satisfaction was the most frequently mentioned motivating factor, followed by compulsion or need and self set targets and goals..

In some respects this is similar to findings from the General Teaching Council’s Survey which suggest that individual education plans are one of the strategies likely to foster motivation.

“The most widely-used strategies to foster motivation in pupils at risk of disengagement are individual education plans; home-school dialogue; a reward system; and contributions from support staff.” (GTC, 2004, p30)

Young people in North Lincolnshire are predominantly motivated by interesting or stimulating learning opportunities, a ‘need’ or reason to learn and by aiming for self set targets or goals. The responses given by young people in North Lincolnshire suggest that they are not as interested in rewards as young people in other areas of the sub region.

Motivating factor	
1 st	Enjoyment/ personal satisfaction
2 nd	Need/ compulsion/ reason to do it
3 rd	Self set targets/ goals/ doing well
4 th =	Interest in subject
4 th =	Future success/ long term aims
4 th =	Reward (non-specified)
7 th =	Encouragement/ being ‘pushed’/ interest from staff
7 th =	Pleasing others/ praise (parents, teachers)

Sub Regional Rank
1st
Not in top ten
Not in top ten
3rd
2nd
5th
4th
8th

Where young people would prefer to learn

The question “*Where would you prefer to learn?*” was only directed to young people. They were asked to tick one of a range of options (listed below) and explain the reason for their choice:

- In school
- In college
- In a workplace
- At a training centre
- Doesn't matter
- Elsewhere

24% of the young people surveyed in North Lincolnshire would prefer part of their learning to take place in a school environment. Typically those young people who expressed a reason for this suggested that it was because school was a ‘safe’ or friendly environment or because they liked the discipline and structure of this type of learning. All of those who said they would prefer to learn in school were currently in school and between the ages of 14-16.

29% of young people in North Lincolnshire said they would like some or all of their learning to take place in college. Of these almost all were currently learning in a school environment. Typically young people said they would prefer to learn in college because they would be treated more like an adult, it was perceived to be more like ‘real life’ or they said they preferred that type of environment.

24% of the young people surveyed in North Lincolnshire said it did not matter where they learnt as they would try their best wherever.

29% of young people in North Lincolnshire said they would prefer at least some of their learning to be in the workplace. One third of the young people in North Lincolnshire who said they would prefer at least some of their learning to be in the workplace were currently at school.

Interestingly 68% of teachers who responded to a national survey said that they thought it was desirable for young people to “spend more time learning outside the formal school or college environment”¹². This is echoed by one 14 year old female respondent who said that they would prefer to learn in school, in college and in the workplace...

One young person from North Lincolnshire, under the age of 16, expressed the benefits of learning in different environments by stating that college was most suitable for getting the qualifications they needed but that learning in the workplace helped you...

“...to learn how to cope in a working environment.” (YP90, N Lincs)

¹² NFER, 2004, General Teaching Council Survey of Teachers 2004, GTC page 52

Case Study

Stephen is 18 and lives in North Lincolnshire. He has just completed a two-year catering course but wants to add computing to his skills. He found college better than school because it is more 'laidback' and both the teachers and young people are more respectful because they have 'free choice to learn'. He thinks schools should give more support to people who want to learn and that others shouldn't be able to stop them from learning. In a year's time he would like to be working full-time, possibly in customer service and in three year's time would like to have been promoted. He thinks he will get there by completing a computing course, he wants to stay in college to be fully focussed on a full time course. He thinks his tutors and his parents will give him all the support he needs. He doesn't think young people are encouraged to express their opinions about their learning. He thinks that young people should respect others views and that teachers will listen to those who want to learn. Young people should make an effort to learn.

3.4 How do young people make decisions about their future?

The survey of parents and carers and of young people as well as the consultation events with young people collected data concerning the advice and guidance young people get when making decisions about their future.

77% of parents and carers in North Lincolnshire said that their child(ren)'s future plans influenced the advice they gave to their child(ren). 77% felt that it was important for their child(ren) to keep their options open. The local availability of appropriate courses influenced the advice given by two thirds of parents and carers in North Lincolnshire. Exam expectations or actual results gained were seen as an influencing factor by 55% of parents and carers.

Transport, was seen as an influence by one third of parents/carers in North Lincolnshire. Money was also an influencing factor for one third of parents and carers in North Lincolnshire.

Advice from teachers was seen as an influence by 44% of parents and carers in North Lincolnshire. As in all area sof the sub region advice from this source was seen as a greater influence by parents and carers than advice from Connexions Personal Advisers (22%), Youth Workers (11%), friends (22%), other parents and carers and family (22%).

11% of parents and carers in North Lincolnshire noted that caring responsibilities influenced their child(ren)s decision making.

What parents and carers think influences their child(ren)'s decisions about their future?

	Sub region	N Lincs	East Riding	NE Lincs	Hull
Future Plans	73%	77%	93%	70%	44%
Keeping their options open	58%	77%	66%	50%	50%
Courses available locally	46%	66%	52%	40%	25%
Exam Expectations/ Actual Results	42%	55%	41%	30%	44%
Advice from teacher	40%	44%	38%	50%	31%
Money	37%	33%	41%	40%	31%
Transport	36%	33%	55%	10%	19%
Friends	16%	22%	14%	0%	25%
Parents/ carers	13%	22%	7%	20%	19%
Advice from Connexions Personal Adviser	13%	22%	14%	10%	6%
Caring Responsibilities	10%	11%	14%	0%	13%
Advice from Youth worker	7%	11%	3%	10%	13%
Flexible Study	4.5%	0%	0%	10%	13%

Parents/carers were also asked to say which they felt was the most important factor. The factors which parents and carers in North Lincolnshire considered **most important** are shown in rank order in the table below.

Most Important Influence – North Lincolnshire	Sub regional rank
1. Keeping their options open	2nd
2. Future Plans	1st
3. Exam expectations/ Actual results	4th

Whilst a third of all parents and carers thought that transport was an influence on the decisions their children make none thought it the most important factor. Similarly whilst two thirds of parents/carers in North Lincolnshire thought the courses available locally influence the decisions their children make none thought it to be the most important factor.

What influences the decisions young people make?

Money is the main influencing factor for young people in North Lincolnshire. This is the only area in the sub region where this is so.

'Future Plans', often articulated, as 'a career', and exam expectations/actual results are the second most commonly cited influencing factors on choices made by young people in North Lincolnshire in relation to learning.

What influences young people's decisions?

	Sub region	N Lincs
Money	36%	43%
Future plans	55%	38%
Exam expectations/ Actual results	32%	38%
Advice from Connexions Personal Advisers	20%	29%
Parents/ carers	41%	24%
Advice from teacher	18%	19%
Friends	24%	14%
Courses available locally	16%	14%
Flexible study	12%	14%
Caring responsibilities	12%	10%
Transport	20%	9%
Advice from Youth worker	2%	0

East Riding	NE Lincs	Hull
41%	27%	21%
65%	55%	39%
35%	18%	24%
18%	23%	9%
53%	36%	30%
26%	9%	9%
24%	27%	21%
9%	9%	24%
9%	18%	6%
3%	27%	9%
41%	5%	9%
0	5%	3%

Transport was not considered to be as important by young people in North Lincolnshire as it was by their parents - it influenced the decisions made by only 9% of young people responding to the survey whereas 33% of parents thought transport was an influencing factor.

For 10% of young people, caring responsibilities influenced the decisions they made concerning their learning. Flexible study hours were more of an influence on young people in North Lincolnshire than the sub regional average.

Fewer young people in North Lincolnshire said they were influenced by their parents/carers than other areas of the sub region. Advice from Connexions Personal Advisers was a considerably stronger influence in North Lincolnshire than other areas of the sub region, with 29% of young people in North Lincolnshire saying that they had influenced their decision making.

It is worth noting that North Lincolnshire is the only area of the sub region where the percentage for professional advice and guidance from Connexions Personal Advisers is higher than the influence of friends and peers, cited by 14% of young people as influencing the decisions they make. The customer satisfaction survey, conducted by BRMB on behalf of the DfES in 2003, found that 25% of respondents said that Connexions had definitely influenced the decisions they made.

It is also interesting to note the difference between young people's perceptions and parent/ carer perceptions. Advice from teachers was seen as an influence by 44% of parents and carers in North Lincolnshire whereas only 9% of young people cited teachers as an influence. This disparity is replicated across all areas of the sub region.

Case Study

John is 17 and lives in North Lincolnshire. He has just finished school. He wants a training course to become an electrical installer. He wants to undertake an apprenticeship and is unsure of his options. He has epilepsy and this can affect his learning. He enjoyed school but when his friends decided to move school, he followed them. He didn't feel he received very good careers advice at school and didn't get his first choice of options because they were full. He took ICT and business courses although he didn't really want to do them. In a year's time he would like to be on an apprenticeship and by three years time he would like to be a qualified electrician.

To achieve these goals he needs to control his epilepsy, to gain a place on an apprenticeship despite his poor results and possibly to improve his grades by taking evening courses. He would prefer any further training to be on the job and will need tutor support to motivate him and give him 'someone to talk to'. He thinks the Local Authority should run more open days for colleges and provide more courses for the options young people are interested in.

Where do young people get advice and guidance?

22% of parents and carers who responded to the survey in North Lincolnshire said that their child(ren) had not received any information, advice or guidance on their learning options.

Parent/carer perceptions of whether their child(ren) had received Information, Advice and Guidance

Area	Yes (%)	No (%)	Missing Data (%)
Sub region	69	27	4
N Lincs	78	22	0

NE Lincs	70	30	0
East Riding	83	17	0
Hull	44	37	19

When asked where their child(ren) get information, advice and guidance on their learning options it is noticeable that parents named a variety of sources including Schools, Connexions, Careers Teachers and Colleges.

Parents and carers were also asked how good they felt the advice and guidance, from whatever source, had been. The response rate to this question was low, however, that is not surprising given that 22% of parents and carers in North Lincolnshire did not think their child had received advice and guidance. All parents and carers in North Lincolnshire felt advice and guidance had been excellent, good or OK.

Parents' perception of the quality of the Advice and Guidance their children receive

Area	Excellent (%)	Good (%)	OK (%)	Poor (%)	Very Poor (%)	Missing Data (%)
Sub region	14	26	24	7.5	1.5	27
N Lincs	11	33	33	0	0	22

NE Lincs	20	20	30	0	0	30
East Riding	14	38	24	7	3	14
Hull	6	6	19	19	0	50

Young People's perception of the quality of Advice and Guidance

Young people were asked if they had received advice and guidance on the learning options open to them, where they got this advice and guidance from and how good they thought it was. 90 % of young people who responded to the survey in North Lincolnshire said they had received advice and guidance. This is higher than the proportion of parents who thought their child(ren) had received any information advice and guidance.

Young people in North Lincolnshire say they receive advice and guidance from Schools, Connexions Personal Advisers, Magazines, Careers Fairs, Colleges and Parents. This would appear to be positive in that young people are not reliant on a single source of, potentially biased, information.

77% of young people in North Lincolnshire thought the advice and guidance they had received was excellent, good or OK, this is slightly higher than the sub regional average of 70%. Whilst this appears to compare unfavourably with the findings of the 2003 customer satisfaction survey for Connexions Humber where 90% of respondents were 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied with the service received it should be noted that in this project 'advice and guidance' covers multiple sources not solely Connexions. However, 14% of young people in North Lincolnshire felt that the advice and guidance they had received was very poor

or poor. These young people said the advice and guidance they had received was school based or from careers fairs. The remainder said they had not received any advice or guidance.

Area	Excellent (%)	Good (%)	OK (%)	Poor (%)	Very Poor (%)	Missing Data (%)
Sub region	19	35	16	4	2	24
N Lincs	10	43	24	10	4	10

NE Lincs	27	55	14	0	0	4
East Riding	21	47	12	3	0	18
Hull	18	6	18	3	3	52

If the rating of 'OK' is understood as meaning that the advice and guidance was adequate but that there was room for improvement, or that there are some good points and some bad points, then this data could be taken to suggest that around one in three young people are not fully satisfied with the help they are receiving.

The LSC Humberside Survey 2003 interviewed 2500 representative respondents across the region and found that most were aware of colleges/universities and/or jobcentres providing advice about training or learning activities (79%). Only 29% mentioned the Humberside Partnership. However it must be noted that only 14% of respondents were aged under 24 years and 47% were aged over 45 years and as such may not be so aware of services currently available to young people. The Connexions Humber Ofsted Report 2003 found limited knowledge of Connexions among parents, pupils, students and trainees. Young people, who are not part of Connexions targeted groups, are much less knowledgeable about what services are available.

3.5 Support needed to enable access and success

This section considers data gathered from surveys and the consultation events on areas of support that parents and carers and young people in North Lincolnshire believe would enable greater equality of access and opportunity to succeed for young people across the sub region.

Work experience was seen to be important by young people and parents but not learning providers in North Lincolnshire. Practical work and flexible study hours were considered important by young people in North Lincolnshire but not by parents or learning providers.

Only two of the top five areas of support that young people believe would help them access the learning to which they are entitled are ranked in the top five by learning providers based in North Lincolnshire, namely financial support and support in Maths. Financial support and support in Maths were important to both young people and parents/ carers in North Lincolnshire.

Areas of support that need further development to help young people access the learning experience to which they are entitled – rank order (sub regional rank in brackets)

Young People	
1 st	Work Experience (1 st =)
2 nd	Practical Work (1 st =)
3 rd	Flexible Study Hours (4 th)
4 th	Financial Support (5 th =)
5 th	Maths (3 rd)
6 th =	1 to 1 support (7 th =)
6 th =	Own Target Setting (5 th =)
8 th =	IT (7 th =)
8 th =	Reading (9 th)

Parents/ Carers	
1 st =	Work Experience (2 nd)
1 st =	Career Planning (1 st)
1 st =	Own Target Setting (3 rd)
4 th	Financial support (4 th)
5 th =	Maths (5 th =)
5 th =	1 to 1 support (5 th =)
5 th =	Independent Living Skills (8 th)
8 th	Reading (9 th)

Career planning and learner involvement in setting targets are seen to be very important areas of support in need of development by parents/carers and learning providers in North Lincolnshire.

During consultation events caring responsibilities, or family issues, were mentioned by a couple of young people as reasons for not doing well at school (it has also been mentioned by Connexions Personal Advisers as a big issue for the sub region). A recent survey by The Princess Royal Trust for Carers found that more than a million children in Britain are looking after someone with an illness, disability or health problem – reported in TES September 3rd, p4. Greater awareness and understanding of the associated needs of such learners (eg flexibility or 1 to 1 support) may be necessary.

Case Study

Jack is 16 and has just left school in North Lincolnshire. He is keen to join the army. He enjoyed school but he felt strongly that his schoolteachers were lax with discipline and deadlines. Most of the other kids were unruly and disruptive and stopped the rest of the class who wanted to learn from doing so. Jack would like to see the disruptive kids separated from the ones who wanted to learn. He had enjoyed school trips and family outings to the local army base. He'd like to be in the army in a year and to be an officer within 3 years. He will get there by working hard, by being a team leader and motivating his team by being positive and respectful. He would like to take further training in electronics, communications and logistics and would prefer to learn hands on. He would like to see the Local Authority provide more information for young people about their options and to provide more trips to workplaces to see what different jobs are really like. He thinks schools should have higher expectations of young people.

3.6 Views on Minimum Standards of Learning Provision

The views of parents and carers and young people on minimum standards of provision and statements of learning entitlement were collected through consultation events.

Support and understanding were common responses to the question "What do you expect a college, school or training provider to offer you?" Young people recognise that they then have a responsibility to offer respect and good behaviour as well as hard work and honesty.

One of the key themes when talking to contributors as they completed the flipcharts was that learning should be fun. Young people often mentioned the importance of enjoying what they are doing in order to learn, or that if what they do is boring they do not learn, and often pointed out that there is no reason why school or learning cannot be fun.

Consultation responses on the notion of Learner Entitlements resulted in young people suggesting that learning providers should offer:-

1. Courses that motivate and inspire you
2. Good, detailed information about career and learning choices
3. Clear guidance on where the things you are studying now might lead (eg other courses, types of jobs etc
4. A place to learn that is supportive for all learners and gives me the same chance to succeed as anyone else
5. A place to learn that encourages you to go on to further learning or employment
6. A place to learn that has high standards and high expectations
7. Recognition for your successes that are not 'academic'
8. The opportunity to learn at a pace that suits you

- 9. The chance to be in control of your own learning
- 10. The availability of a wide range of qualifications and courses

Young people recognise they have a responsibility to:-

- Be good
- Do the work
- Be determined to do the best you can
- Give hard work and effort
- Get work completed
- 'Get your head on'
- Give 100% to education and get more in return
- Demonstrate a willingness to find out stuff for yourself – be motivated enough to do something about it yourself rather than letting others do it for you.

Section 4 Relationship of research findings to strategic objectives

Each area of the sub region has strategic documents relating to 14-19 learning and statements of learner entitlement, reflecting the specific needs of those areas. In order to evaluate their appropriateness this section draws together the objectives of the 14-19 Strategy for Learning for North Lincolnshire, and considers them in the light of the views of young people and parents/carers gathered during this research.

For ease of comparison across the four area reports and the sub regional report the same headings have been used. Thus the wording of the principles may not be as they appear in the original document.

The table on the following pages shows strategic objectives, priorities and actions, and whether young people and parents and carers think they are important. This analysis is based on survey returns and consultation responses. In general there is overall support from young people and parents/carers for the objectives and for many of the priorities as they have a close fit with their needs. There may, however, be a need for modification to some priorities and additional actions to address specific issues raised by young people.

Strategic Objectives, Priorities and Actions	What young people and parents/carers say
Objective	
<p>Increase participation from the age of 16 onwards by developing a broad 14-19 curriculum that is centred on the needs of the individual learner</p>	<p>Strong support from young people and parents/carers for the overall objective to increase participation in education and training.</p> <p>Whilst the proposed actions to increase learner motivation and hence increase post 16 participation through making learning more appropriate to young people's needs are apt, it may be sensible to also consider actions that deal with other ways of increasing learner motivation. This could include greater awareness of learning styles and active learning, implementing a programme to ensure all young people have an Individual Education Plan, CPD for teaching staff and greater collaborative activity between young people and staff. The research suggests that an additional action focussing on revising/simplifying the system of funding provision may be necessary to make a broad curriculum accessible to all.</p>
Actions	
<p>Map and review provision, fill gaps and remove duplicate or failing programmes</p>	<p>The research suggests that there are a number of gaps especially in vocational provision and for those less able. There is also a need to increase the number of places available in some types of provision.</p>
<p>Develop collaborative provision to increase flexibility and choice</p>	<p>The research suggests that there is a need to increase flexibility in order to improve access to a full range of provision.</p>
Priority	
<p>Positively market this provision to increase the desire to learn post 16</p>	<p>This is important but the research evidence suggests that there already exists a strong desire to remain in education or training post 16.</p> <p>It is important that any marketing of provision includes marketing to parents/carers as they are a strong influence on the decisions made by young people.</p>
Priority	
<p>Increase progression to HE, including vocational routes</p>	<p>There is strong evidence that young people and parents and carers want more and better vocational provision.</p>

Action	
Develop learning pathways which combine vocational and non-vocational learning, promoting work experience and apprenticeships	<p>Work experience is highly important to young people and parents and carers – they believe it would help their learning. There is a need to promote apprenticeships and E2E as legitimate learning pathways as these are the routes that young people and parents/ carers know least about.</p> <p>A programme to ensure teachers in schools are also aware of the benefits of vocational learning may be necessary.</p>
Improve links to local HE provision and create more vocational pathways.	<p>Improved links, if they lead to clearer progression routes in areas of interest to learners is a positive action. This may help to address the disparity between young people’s desire to stay in education and actual participation rates. The creation of more vocational pathways is especially of importance to learners in the Hull area.</p>
Priority	
Improve aspirations and motivation and match employer need	<p>Again, whilst this is important, the research evidence suggests that amongst the majority of young people there already exists a high level of aspiration and motivation to be involved in learning. The belief that the learning being undertaken will lead to employment is important to many young people and parents/ carers. It is therefore important to consider employer need, however, this should not be at the expense of learner need.</p>
Action	
Fast Track opportunities for learners not yet ready for Level2/3 qualifications	<p>There is support for alternative accreditation routes via community and or informal learning for all young people not only those who are not yet ready for Level2/3 qualifications.</p>
Allow learners to take qualifications when it suits their needs/ ability and implement methods to accredit prior learning	<p>This is a positive action in that it recognises individual learner needs. The research suggests that accreditation of prior learning should include informal as well as formal learning.</p>

Objective	
Enhance quality and standards of delivery in all learning provision, building on the best work done in schools, colleges and training providers both locally and nationally, so that all young people receive the best possible learning experience	There is definite support for this objective. The quality of teaching and lack of support from teachers were both cited as barriers to learning by parents. Young people wanted greater understanding from teachers. They would also like teachers to be more open, sociable, outgoing, more responsive and supportive.
Priority	
Implement a rigorous and consistent self monitoring and evaluation process	The quality of teaching was cited as a barrier to learning by parents therefore rigorous evaluation of standards would be welcomed. Self-evaluation and monitoring would need to be transparent and independently monitored to satisfy young people.
Priority	
The achievement of high standards of teaching and learning is placed at the heart of all learning provision	The quality of teaching was cited as a barrier to learning by parents. The quality of teaching was also a commonly cited negative aspect of young people's learning experience.
Action	
Develop a set of agreed standards	Not addressed in the research but young people and parents/carers should be included in the process of agreeing the standards to ensure that the standards cover elements of provision that are important to them.
Priority	
Build on shared best practice	Not specifically addressed in the research
Action	
Ensure teachers and trainers are appropriately qualified and have the skills necessary to deliver teaching and training of the highest quality	CPD for teachers should include skills identified in the research by young people such as behaviour management, pastoral practice, anti bullying and engagement. Learning providers identify a need for help and advice about behaviour management, PSPs etc and more pastoral support in schools
Action	
Implement CPD programmes for staff to share and learn best practice taking place across all sectors.	Though not addressed specifically in the research there is a clear need to ensure that standards and practice are consistent across all sectors if flexible learning programmes are to be successful.

Priority	
Create learning environments of the highest standard which are appropriate and stimulating	The 'atmosphere' or ethos of a learning environment contributes considerably to its success. The building of good teacher-pupil relationships is identified as not only beneficial to the attitudes and motivation of young people but also to the development of more enjoyable learning experiences.
Action	
Improve learning environments to demonstrate the value that is placed on learning, to allow a variety of teaching, training and learning styles and to ensure up to date vocational skills can be acquired.	Young people suggested changes to provision that would have an impact on their learning. Many relate to the creation of a comfortable and respectful learning environment. The facilities in some college provision and some work-based training were criticised by young people. Lack of facilities, poor facilities, and low numbers of places on FE courses were also mentioned as negative aspects of current post-16 provision by parents/carers.
Objective	
Improve achievements by setting targets that provide a clear focus for providers and learners and by developing effective retention strategies, learner support programmes and by encouraging local action.	The role of targets in improving performance was not specifically addressed by the research, however some young people did recognise targets as a factor that motivates them to do their best.
Priority	
Increase retention by ensuring that the learner is on the right programme and is supported in a culture of high expectations	Research suggests that more support is needed to help young people change programmes. Some young people felt that having to make choices that could affect the rest of their lives in Year 9 was too early and hence mechanisms to support changes of programme would be welcomed. More places and timetabling flexibility were found to be problematic for some young people, especially when combining vocational and non-vocational learning. Young people say they should be entitled to "A place to learn that has high standards and high expectations."
Actions	
Improve retention through attendance monitoring and	Not specifically addressed in the research. Attendance monitoring is clearly important in

targets to improve attendance.	alerting providers to possible issues and the possible support needs of learners especially those who have caring responsibilities.
Intensify learner support well before the transition stage of 16	There is clear backing from young people and parents/carers for more learner support programmes. Some young people felt that having to make choices that could affect the rest of their lives as early as Year 9 was too early, however, it could be suggested that if understanding of the options available began earlier then by Year 9 young people would be better prepared to make decisions.
Celebrate excellence in education and training, eg CoVEs, Specialist Schools etc and share good practice Celebrate excellence of learners	Rewards, praise and recognition are motivating factors for young people. Celebrations of excellence focussing on young people's achievement would be positive. The sharing of good practice was not addressed in the research.
Make better use of initial assessments to ensure learners are on appropriate programmes and can be supported appropriately	This is important as the research shows the third highest motivating factor to be interest in the subject. There is a clear desire for support through career planning, this may form a part of initial assessments.
Priority	
Build on improvements in attainment arising from the Literacy and Numeracy strategies and ensure the value of learning is communicated and that initiatives to encourage parents/carers to support their children are established.	Learning appears to be highly valued by most parents/carers and young people and many want to stay on beyond the age of 16.
Actions	
Implement initiatives to establish partnerships between providers and parents to support the learner	Parents and carers identified the need for help to better enable them to support their child(ren) as an important change they would like to see.
Priority	
Use Performance Indicators that are common across providers and pathways which include value added and distance travelled information	Not addressed in the research though such indicators may be useful in helping young people make choices about where they want to learn.

Actions	
Establish common data collection methods	Not addressed in the research.
Priority	
Implement targets to increase participation, retention, achievement, progress and quality.	Not addressed in the research.
Actions	
Establish targets to ensure aspirations of learners and providers are high	Parents/carers felt that involving young people in target setting was important.
Actions	
Raising aspirations of learners and their parents by building on experience and good practice.	The research suggests that most young people and their parents have high aspirations in relation to getting a good job or gaining qualifications.
Objective	
Ensure that young people are given high quality information, guidance and the individual support needed to take advantage of the right learning opportunity.	Learning providers suggested an area for development was independent careers advice with more input from Connexions Personal Advisers. It should be remembered that the research found that young people received information and advice from multiple sources so actions to improve the quality of information, advice and guidance must encompass all professionals and organisations that work with young people, parents/carers and young people themselves. Poor advice and information was seen as the fifth biggest barrier to young people achieving their potential. Young people will need additional guidance to choose vocational pathways and linked college courses at 14.
Priority	
Well co-ordinated and clearly packaged provision which allows the learner to consider with guidance the breadth of pathways available.	Young people recognise the need for consistent information, advice and guidance. Many young people receive advice from multiple sources and can be confused by conflicting advice.
Actions	
Collaboration between providers and Connexions to improve the guidance and information given to learners.	Whilst this is important, it should be recognised that few young people considered Connexions Personal Advisers to be the main source of their guidance and information.

Actions	
Building on established links with HE institutions to raise aspirations and establish clear progression routes.	Many young people want to stay in education or training until they are between the ages of 20 and 30.
Priority	
Ongoing support for young people during their learning.	Young people and parents/carers consider support to be important. Ongoing support tailored to individual needs could be considered as an element of personalised learning.
Actions	
Encourage providers to promote progression routes.	There is a need to promote vocational options.
Actions	
Building on the Connexions Personal Adviser Service to support learning and offer guidance in progression routes.	Whilst this is important it should be remembered that young people receive advice and guidance from multiple sources.
Priority	
Inclusive provision working towards the removal of barriers to participation.	Parents and carers see the main barriers to learning as lack of parental support or control, negative influences from friends, the poor behaviour of others, lack of support from teachers, poor advice and information, lack of transport, lack of work placements or work experience, over emphasis on exams and qualifications, the quality of teaching and lack of stability in schools. Specific actions addressing these barriers should be implemented.
Actions	
Develop programmes that bring into learning those who are disaffected, providing opportunities for progression, removing any identified barriers to learning.	It is "vitaly important" to retain non-accredited courses as it is these courses and programmes that allow 'second chances' and first level engagement.

Section 5 Learning Providers' Views – Some Context

Data from learning providers is presented in this section to provide some context to the views of young people and parents/carers. It should be noted that the sample is small as learning providers were not the main target of the project, however, learning providers views on what young people and parents and carers know about existing provision and advice and guidance is extremely pertinent.

In total five responses were received from learning providers in North Lincolnshire. The table below shows a breakdown by type of survey respondent.

Respondent Type	Sub region (%)	N Lincs (%)
Training Providers	26	20
Schools	25	40
FE	18	40
Youth Service	13	nil
Alternative Provision	9	nil
Connexions	9	nil

Knowledge of the current range of provision

Learning providers were asked how they would rate their own knowledge of the full range of learning provision for young people in their area. All felt that their own knowledge was either very good, good or adequate. No providers felt that their own knowledge was poor.

Views on the current range of choice available to learners

Limited availability of post-16 and especially post-18 Apprenticeship/ NVQ training (School, N Lincs)
Vocational opportunities for rural schools 14-16 is an issue (School, N Lincs)
Availability of places on current e2e provision is inadequate (Training provider, N Lincs)
North Lincs only has 4 providers with a narrow range of provision. Supply doesn't meet demand (FE college, N Lincs)

Learning providers were asked how would they rate the current range of choice for learning provision for young people in their area. All but one rated it as excellent or good with one respondent, an FE provider, rating it as poor. However, the qualitative statements above point to gaps in provision, specifically gaps in apprenticeships and gaps in vocational provision.

The lack of a range of provision is also supported by findings published in the LSC Humberside Household Survey 2003, which found that traditional types of

learning, delivered through traditional routes, dominate provision. Less formal, community-based and e-learning is negligible.

When asked what could be done to improve provision one provider suggested:-

Strategic planning to ensure sufficiency of supply and development of breadth across providers - targeting specific areas to be developed (FE college - North Lincs)

Other comments included:-

Provision has improved and links are developing. However drive of league tables encourages/forces education to concentrate on exam success at the expense of work related skill development. (School)
WBL input should be standardised across all schools.
Variable standards across provision making it difficult to support learners who transfer (FE college)

Perceptions of future learning needs

Learning Providers felt that two learning needs were paramount:

- ⇒ More vocational training
- ⇒ Personalised learning routes

Representatives of the Voluntary and Community sector, noted in a consultation session that learning has to have “value for the individual” and that it is important to identify what it is the young person values. Importantly it was noted that accreditation does not always equal value for young person and that it is “vitaly important” to retain non-accredited courses. It was noted that it is these courses and programmes that allow ‘Second chances’ and first level engagement. It also enables “learning for the sake of learning”.

The following needs were seen to be particularly important:

Future learning need	N Lincs
Further CEG support	✓✓
Underdeveloped NVQ2 provision	✓
More vocational training	✓
Personalised learning routes	✓
More ICT	✓
Greater links between learning and the workplace	✓
Involvement / support of employers	✓
Financial support	✓

When asked if young people’s future learning needs were currently being met, over half of learning providers in North Lincolnshire said no.

Learning Providers' perceptions of young people's understanding of the options available to them

There was a mixed response from learning providers in North Lincolnshire as to whether young people understand the options that are available to them at the end of year 11.

Additional information provided by learning providers suggests that there is a range of information and support available to prepare young people.

Most of them do. We have an excellent Careers Advisor and good links with Connexions (School- North Lincs)

To combat any lack of understanding learning providers felt that more information is required. They firmly pointed to more and improved careers education and guidance, along with further Connexions input into schools to improve young people's and their parents/carers understanding.

One provider suggested an innovative approach to help young people understand the options available:-

A one year funded 'sabbatical' for all 16 year olds to work for at least 3 months for 3 companies/organisation from three different employment sectors (Training provider - N Lincs)

Where Learning Providers think young people get advice and guidance

All learning providers thought that young people get advice and guidance from multiple sources. In North Lincolnshire all learning providers thought that young people received advice and guidance from parents and carers or other family members and from school.

As well as receiving advice and guidance from Connexions Personal Advisers or from college or training staff learning providers named other important sources of advice and guidance. These included:-

- ⇒ Youth workers
- ⇒ Work based learning providers
- ⇒ Internet
- ⇒ Guidance companies
- ⇒ Employers

Representatives of the Voluntary and Community sector thought the VCS is under represented in careers lessons and careers fairs despite the fact that the sector is the third largest employer in the country and that many of the skills needed in the sector are similar to those needed by service industries and can be gained through volunteering work.

How prepared are young people to make decisions about their future learning options?

Learning providers were also asked how well prepared they thought young people were to make decisions about their future at the end of year 11. None of the respondents from North Lincolnshire thought young people were not prepared compared to a sub regional average of 33%.

Learning Providers' Perceptions of how well prepared young people are to make decisions at the end of year 11?

Area	Well Prepared	Adequately Prepared	Not Prepared	Missing data
Sub region	21%	38%	33%	8%
N Lincs	40%	60%	0	nil

Hull	29%	14%	43%	14%
NE Lincs	25%	50%	0	25%
East Riding	0	43%	57%	nil

What support would most help learners?

The most important support areas were perceived by learning providers in North Lincolnshire to be; behaviour management support, counselling support and help with independent living. This differs from the areas of support considered to be most important by both parents and carers and young people.

The minimum standard of provision

The majority of learning providers felt that the minimum standard for all provision should be vocational or academic programmes, tailored to individual needs and 'only the best will do'.

Pupils should be given the opportunity to be the best that they can be by either following a broad and balanced curriculum or a vocational course (School- N Lincs)

Views on Learner Entitlement

Respondents had mixed views about the idea of a statement of learning entitlement. Some thought that a learner entitlement would help engagement, encourage and support learners whilst others questioned what it would achieve. This is not dissimilar to the views of young people, where they questioned the enforceability of a statement of learner entitlement.

Learning providers were asked to make suggestions as to what should be included in a statement of learner entitlement. These are shown in the table below:

Minimum entitlement	Quote:
Inspection concerns	There is too much poor provision that remains unchallenged even after re-inspection failures (FE college)
Specialist providers	Providers should develop areas of specialism which play to their strengths and areas of guaranteed quality. I suggest that providers become 'licensed' to deliver areas of specialisms only (FE college)
Funding issues	A fully funded place should be available for every learner at every level (FE college)
Curriculum entitlement	Core subjects, appropriate enhancement either academic route, vocational or a mix. Physical education too. (School)
National policy	Tomlinson has it about right, but providers of post level 3 training/education should 'trim' pre-17 (mostly GCSE) requirements accordingly, or uni-bound students will not take full advantage of the variety of provision at KS4 (Sixth form college)
Best they can be – vocational or academic. Tailored to needs	Pupils should be given the opportunity to be the best that they can be by either following a broad and balanced curriculum or a vocational course (School)

Section 6 Conclusions

This concluding section is structured to reflect the main issues arising from the data, as agreed by the project Steering Group in October 2004. It highlights the main issues raised by young people.

Funding

"...lack of participation in education post-16 is not only caused by lack of financial support. There has to be recognition that a new system of financial support may overlook other ways in which young adults can be re-engaged: through informal and non-formal activities, through community involvement, and through programmes such as "Getting Connected" (NIACE/NYA)"

The response from NIACE to the government document *Supporting Young People to Achieve: Towards a new deal for skills*, is pertinent in relation to funding issues raised by the research:

Young people in North Lincolnshire considered financial support the 4th most important area of support in need of development. In consultations financial support was not a key factor in terms of accessing education but money (long term) is a motivating factor in terms of decision making about courses, jobs etc.

Central Government has focused on financial incentives to encourage young people to stay in education post 16. This is laudable and is unlikely to have a detrimental effect but it may not address the issues underlying why young people may choose not to stay on. Whilst 43% of young people said that money influenced their decisions. This was often coupled with a statement which suggested that it was money in the long term, rather than short-term incentives, which was uppermost in their minds. The research data suggests therefore that personal funding (targeted at young people such as the Educational Maintenance Allowance) is not the biggest issue stopping young people from remaining in education or training rather it is the range of appropriate provision. Fewer young people thought financial support would help them than the number who thought more or improved work experience, more practical or active learning, or more flexible hours would help. Data from learning providers suggests that the funding system for providers may prevent a wider range of provision and choice being made available, thus restricting young people's desire and motivation to stay on in education or training. As an education consultant notes in an article in the Guardian, "*new arrangements are needed for the mainstreaming of funding for 14 to 15-year-olds who are pursuing vocational education and training programmes at FE colleges and work-based learning providers.*" (The Guardian, 9th September 2004, Opinion, page15)

Advice and Guidance

Young People receive information, advice and guidance from multiple sources both formally and informally. Many young people say that their parents influence the decisions they make. The research suggests that there are implications for the way advice and guidance companies, Connexions, schools, colleges and other professionals supporting young people work not only with young people but also with parents/carers and with each other.

- ⇒ 10 % of young people who responded to the survey in North Lincolnshire said they had not received advice and guidance or did not respond to the question.
- ⇒ All parents and carers in North Lincolnshire felt advice and guidance had been excellent, good or OK.
- ⇒ 29% of young people in North Lincolnshire say that Connexions PAs influenced their decision making. This is the only area of the sub region where professional advice and guidance is more influential than the advice of friends and peers on the decisions they make about their future.
- ⇒ 14% of young people in North Lincolnshire felt that the advice and guidance they had received was very poor or poor. These young people said the advice and guidance they had received was school based or from careers fairs.
- ⇒ Both parents and young people suggest that their future plans are the biggest influence on the decisions they make. Young people said that their parents influence the decisions they make but few parents recognised that they influenced their child(ren)s decision making.
- ⇒ Parents/carers in North Lincolnshire felt that career planning was an area of support that would help their child(ren) to achieve their goals.

Provision

- ⇒ Young people focused on curriculum flexibility and relevance to their needs, often expressing a desire for more practical or active learning activities.
- ⇒ Young people suggested changes to provision that would have an impact on their learning. Many relate to the creation of a comfortable and respectful learning environment, for example, more understanding of you as a person/ less prejudgement, stopping bullying, friendlier teachers and better behaviour of others. Many young people just want support and understanding.
- ⇒ A greater proportion of young people in North Lincolnshire than other areas of the sub region, suggested that more flexible learning hours, different or more relevant subjects and more one to one support would have an impact on their future learning.
- ⇒ Parents/carers in Hull suggested changes to provision which they felt would have a high impact, they were:-
 - 1) **Curriculum flexibility and appropriateness to young persons needs**
Work placements for their qualifications instead of academic qualifications – ie as an option to GCSE/A levels or college, from age 14 (*N Lincs*)
Make college more interesting and suitable for young people (*N Lincs*)

- 2) **Increased or more accessible provision**
 Suitable and sufficient provision for disabled and autistic in college and with work providers (*N Lincs*)
 Provision in outlying villages, not just big areas (*N Lincs*)
 More transport and free for young people (*N Lincs*)
- 3) **Implementing support for young people on managing their behaviour**
 Support for young people on managing their behaviour (*N Lincs*)
 Practitioners based in school who are link workers between young people and teachers (*N Lincs*)
- 4) **Support for parents and carers.**
 Parental support to develop parenting skills and managing young people's behaviour (*N Lincs*)

By stating a need for change in these areas parents and carers are implying that current provision is not flexible enough, does not meet young people's needs, is not accessible and that there is not enough support to address behaviour or raise motivation.

Future Learning Needs

"The Government's ambition for improving the skills of young people is that the proportion of young people remaining in education and training post-16 will move from being one of the lowest in the OECD to one of the highest. Building on the success of Education Maintenance Allowances in raising participation in full-time education, the aim of this review is to ensure all young people aged 16-19 have the support and incentives they need to participate in education and training." (HM Treasury, 2004, Supporting Young People to Achieve: Towards a new deal for skills, HMSO page 5)

- ⇒ In North Lincolnshire 10% of young people said they wanted to leave education or training before the age of 18 (compared to 10% sub regionally) yet government statistics show that approximately 25% of young people leave education and training before they are 18. The disparity between the number of young people who wish to leave education or training before the age of 18 and the number that actually do so suggests that current provision may not meet some young people's needs.
- ⇒ 43% of young people in North Lincolnshire wanted to remain in some form of education or training until they were between 20 and 30 years of age, compared to 42% sub regionally
- ⇒ 24% of young people in North Lincolnshire felt that they needed to learn a vocational qualification over the coming two years
- ⇒ 24% of young people in North Lincolnshire said they needed to 'learn' traditional academic qualifications such as GCSEs, A Levels and degrees.

Transport

- ⇒ Transport, was seen as an influence by a third of parents and carers in North Lincolnshire on the decisions made about their future by their child(ren) though it was not seen as being the most important factor by any.
- ⇒ Transport was not considered to be as important by young people in North Lincolnshire as it was by their parents - it influenced the decisions made by 9% of young people responding to the survey

Work Based Learning/ Vocational Learning

- ⇒ Of the options available to young people at the end of year 11 parents/carers and young people know least about school sixth forms and Entry to Employment (E2E).
- ⇒ Additional support through work experience was seen by parents and carers as being extremely important in helping their child(ren) with their learning.
- ⇒ Young people thought that work experience was the area of support that would help them most with their learning.
- ⇒ 29% of young people in North Lincolnshire said they would prefer at least some of their learning to be in the workplace.
- ⇒ One third of the young people in North Lincolnshire who said they would prefer at least some of their learning to be in the workplace were currently at school.
- ⇒ Poor apprenticeship provision both in the variety available and numbers of placements available.

The research suggests that current WBL could be improved and that the profile of E2E and apprenticeships as legitimate learning opportunities needs to be enhanced. It also highlights the need to encourage more employers to make placements available.

Learner Entitlement

- ⇒ When given a free choice as to what should be included in a minimum entitlement young people suggested it should include:
 1. Respect for young people
 2. Motivation
 3. Personal centred learning
 4. Individual programmes tailored to individual needs – not necessarily all academic
 5. More real life examples and relate subjects to everyday issues
 6. Better citizenship education

7. Practical application of skills
8. Avoid jargon – more plain explanations
9. Value of enrichment / social and recreational experiences – more flexibility with all schools. Colleges, training providers encouraging enrichment – volunteering, time off for youth council etc
10. Deal with transport difficulties

⇒ Young people acknowledged that if these were their rights then they too had responsibilities. They suggested their responsibilities included:

1. Be good
2. Do the work
3. Be determined to do the best you can
4. Give hard work and effort
5. Get work completed
6. 'Get your head on'
7. Give 100% to education and get more in return
8. Offer commitment, timekeeping, be conscientious and hardworking
9. Be motivated enough to do something about it yourself rather than letting others do it for you.

Support needed to ensure access and success

- ⇒ 29% of young people in North Lincolnshire said they would like some or all of their learning to take place in college. Of these almost all were currently learning in a school environment. Typically young people said they would prefer to learn in college because they would be treated more like an adult, it was perceived to be more like 'real life' or they said they preferred that type of environment.
- ⇒ Young people in North Lincolnshire considered practical work and flexible study hours important.
- ⇒ Learning providers felt that opportunities for informal and community based learning should be established across the area. They also felt there was a need for more flexible / distance / family / support learning models.

Engagement and Personalisation

"Despite changes in policy and labour market conditions, a persistent nine per cent of the 16-19 cohort in England have been NEET each year since 1994." (HM Treasury, 2004, Supporting Young People to Achieve: Towards a new deal for skills, HMSO page 9)

- ⇒ Many young people '*want a good education so I can get a good job*'.
- ⇒ Young people often mentioned the importance of interest in the subject and enjoying what they are doing in order to learn.

- ⇒ Many young people see rewards as a good means of motivating them to learn.
- ⇒ Learner involvement in setting targets is seen to be an important area of support in need of development by young people in North Lincolnshire
- ⇒ Learning providers recognised the need to be young person focused and reflect young people's preferences and learning styles as well as increased involvement for young people in addressing their individual needs.

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Appendix I:- Sample Graffiti Wall, Learner Entitlement

Understanding people to listen and talk to	Good understanding teachers who try and keep order, also give the children the chances to show their own abilities, and skills, not only by learning but by experience	Respect	Honesty to themselves and others	Respect to the teachers
Schools, colleges should offer equality and access regardless of ability or access to learning		Respect each other, work and get on with people		Respect to people of all ages
Support	What do you expect a school, college or training provider to offer you?	Hard work, make best effort. Produce a first-class or near first-class work and confidence		
High standard of education and support for those with difficulties	Support	Good behaviour	Is there anything you should offer in return?	
Don't take an instant liking/disliking to a pupil/person	Help and Support	Respect and behave in class	Respect for them	Young people should learn and offer in return important values i.e loyalty/ honesty
Teachers to understand your needs	More understanding from teachers	Good behaviour and a desire to learn	Respect others	Respect
Teachers to understand why you are late and if you were absent offer support when come back	Teachers should teach properly not just give work out, should not swear at pupils	Behave, respect the people who you are in contact with (others)		Child should attend school every day, definitely more respect from pupils, be punctual, better behaviour from pupils, listening, more work done
Correct info	Support, understanding			