

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Agenda Item: 5 MyGo (young person's employment service) and Young People Age 16 - 18 Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

Evidence Set: 1

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Title:	MyGo and Young People age 16-18 who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)
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Context

Raising the Bar¹ confirms our commitment to all young people to have access to high quality education and for young people to be well prepared for further education, higher education and work. We want to make sure that there are high quality options for young people to undertake both academic and vocational education, including apprenticeships and traineeships.

Young people should have the tools and opportunities they need to fulfil their potential, regardless of background or life circumstances. We believe that all young people should have access to local and national opportunities to develop skills for life and work and to create a more responsible, engaged and cohesive society.

To achieve this, Suffolk has developed a Participation and NEET Prevention Strategy which outlines our plans and the activities that contribute to this key priority.

Raising the Participation Age (RPA)

In 2013 the Government raised the age of participation to 17. In 2015 this was increased further to 18. The law now requires all young people in England to continue in education or training until their 18th birthday. This was seen as a key policy change that has contributed positively to the Country's NEET rates. Schools, Colleges and Post 16 providers have the primary duty of supporting young people to continue in learning post-16 but Suffolk County Council also has a critical role to play in supporting young people to access education and training – and therefore in understanding the characteristics and current activity of young people in our area.

We have broad duties² to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate in education or training. Specifically, these are:

- To promote the effective participation in education and training of 16 and 17 year olds with a view to ensuring that those persons fulfil the duty to participate in education or training.
- To maintain a tracking system to identify 16 and 17 year olds who are not participating in education or training.

¹ <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/raising-the-bar/>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/participation-of-young-people-education-employment-and-training>

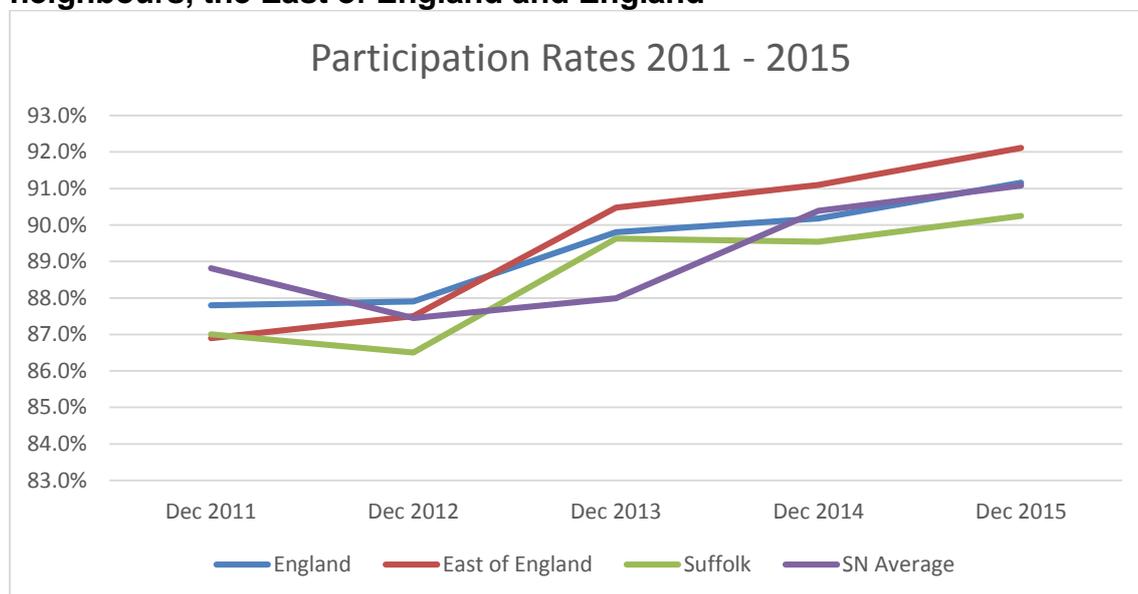
- To make available to all young people aged 13-19 and to those between 20 and 25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), support that will encourage, enable or assist them to participate in education or training under Section 68 of ESA 2008³
- To secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all young people who are over compulsory school age but under 19 or aged 19-25 and for whom an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan is maintained. This is a duty under the Education Act 1996⁴. To fulfil this, we need to have a strategic overview of the provision available and to identify and resolve gaps in provision.

The Council provides strategic leadership through the Children and Young People’s Directorate Management Team (DMT) who have established an internal RPA Delivery Board to oversee Suffolk’s Participation and NEET Prevention Strategy. This work is led on a daily basis by the Participation Manager within the CYP Skills Team.

Analysis of current Participation Performance in Suffolk

Suffolk’s performance of Participation & NEET is measured using three key data indicators; NEET data, Participation data and the number of young people whose current status is unknown to the local authority. Whilst our Participation performance is moving in the right direction, we have not yet closed the gap between our performance and that of our statistical neighbours, local authorities in the East of England and England’s performance overall.

Figure 1. Suffolk’s Participation Rates 2011 – 2015 compared to our statistical neighbours, the East of England and England



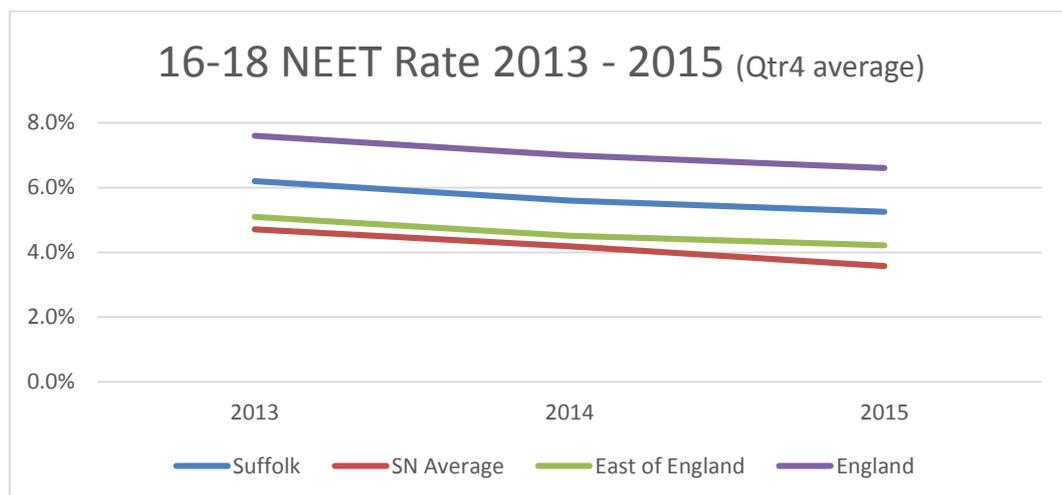
(Data Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/participation-in-education-and-training-by-local-authority>)

³ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/section/3>

⁴ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents>

Suffolk's NEET rate is performing better than England overall and is steadily improving over time, however, it continues to perform poorly compared to local authorities in the East of England and the gap in performance between Suffolk and our statistical neighbours is widening.

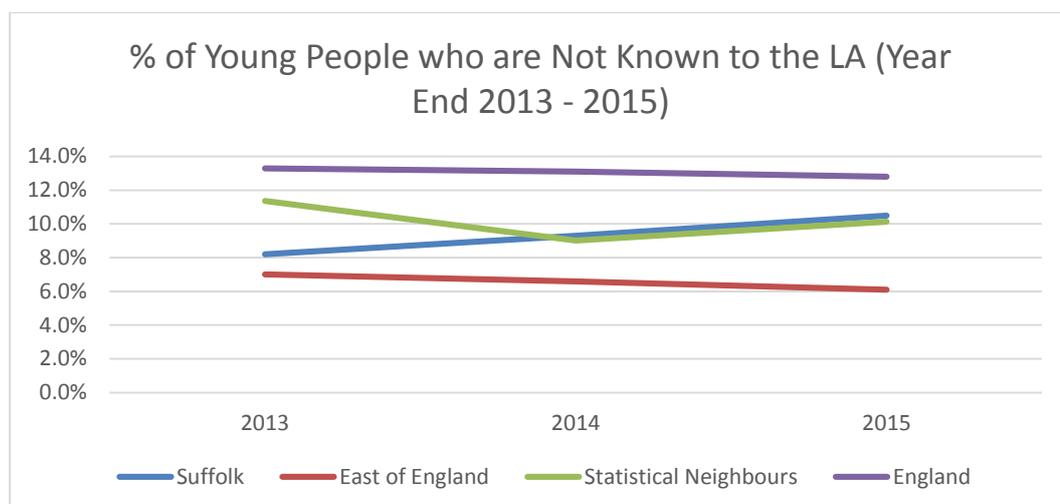
Figure 2. Suffolk's NEET Rate (qtr. 4 average) 2013 – 2015 compared to our statistical neighbours, the East of England and England



(Data source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/neet-statistics-quarterly-brief-october-to-december-2015>)

Suffolk's 'unknown' figure is a concern as we have seen a steady and persistent increase in the number of young people whose status is unknown to the local authority. Although this increase has been in line with our statistical neighbours and our performance is better than England, our figure must improve. This has been a key priority in 2016 and we have seen a steady decline in the number of 'unknowns' in-year which has demonstrated the effectiveness of the additional measures we have implemented to tackle this issue. On the 1st of September each year, the cohort of young people changes. This brings about new challenges to track and record the status of each young person. We are therefore expecting to see an initial increase in our unknowns as the cohort settles, followed by a more positive figure at the end of quarter 4 2016 (October/November/December 2016) compared to 2015.

Figure 3. Suffolk's Unknown figure (end of Qtr4) 2013-2015 compared to our statistical neighbours, the East of England and England



In response to the number of activities we have implemented in the past year to increase our performance, we are expecting to see a continued rise in Participation as more young people remain in learning at 16 and 17 and a gradual decline in our NEET and unknown figures. The next publicly available data report that will enable us to reflect on our performance will be published in February 2016:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-neet#neet-2016-to-2017-data>

Delivering services to support participation

Suffolk's Participation and NEET Prevention strategy outlines our plan and current activities to support participation in education, training and employment and how we will work with and influence partners by encouraging services to come together to meet the needs of young people.

The four key priorities outlined in the strategy are:

To ensure all young people have:

1. Access to the right education and training
2. Access to high quality careers guidance
3. Early identification and robust support if they are at risk of NEET or are NEET
4. A full range of opportunities to progress into skilled employment

Examples of activity against each priority

Priority 1: In April 2016 Suffolk County Council set up the Suffolk SEND Further Education and Learning Committee which is a strategic group that oversees the development of a high quality local post-16 learning offer that can meet the needs of all young people with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) across Suffolk. It is the place where providers and strategic partners can collaborate to deliver the best possible learning offer for young people.

This committee is supported by a Post 16 SEND Forum that will implement many of the operational aspects of this area of work and in particular will lead on the assessment of quality for high needs and SEND provision in Suffolk.

This committee has successfully supported the development of two new programmes for young people with SEND. Supported Internships are now being delivered by West Suffolk College for young people age 16-24 with an EHC plan across Suffolk and age 16+ study programmes are now delivered at Angel Hill in Bury St Edmunds. This is a new Post 16 provision delivered by The Priory School/SENDAT and in partnership with West Suffolk College.

In addition to these specific examples, we work with all of our post 16 providers to have the right provision that is good or outstanding in quality to meet the needs of young people and local employers. The forthcoming Post 16 Area Based Review⁵ for Norfolk and Suffolk will provide an excellent opportunity for us to take stock of the post-16 offer and to ensure it is meeting need.

Priority 2: In September 2015 the New Anglia Enterprise Advisor Network was established. Its purpose is to create powerful, lasting connections between local businesses and schools and colleges. Enterprise Advisers (EAs) are volunteers drawn from businesses who will work directly with the school's leadership team to develop effective employer engagement plans. They will work with other local businesses to establish activities and strategies that will equip young people with the skills they need to enter and sustain their place in work.

Priority 2: In June 2016, Suffolk County Council concluded the second year of Participation Reviews in Suffolk. These reviews are conducted within all schools, special schools, PRUs, sixth forms and FE colleges and are designed to evaluate the quality of the measures the institution has in place to support young people's transition to post 16 education and employment. The quality of careers advice and guidance would be one measure that is evaluated. Institutions that require improvement are then supported by the local authority. This work is led by the county Careers and Enterprise Lead.

Priority 3: The Early Help service assess all young people in Yr10 and 11 using a 'Learner Classification of Need Tool' which assesses the likelihood of a young person becoming NEET after year 11. These young people are offered targeted support by a Transition Coach or Specialist Youth Support Worker. At age 16 and 17 young people who are at risk of NEET or who are NEET are supported by a Specialist Youth Support Worker. They will work directly with the young person and professionals to enable, encourage and assist the young person to source and secure a place in education or employment with training.

At age 18+ young people continue to be supported by the range of universal services available within the county such as MyGo. However, if a young person has an Education, Health and Care Plan, they will continue to have access to a Specialist Youth Support Worker who can provide support up until the age of 25.

⁵ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/520838/BIS-16-118-reviewing-post-16-education-and-training-institutions-updated-guidance-on-area-reviews.pdf

Priority 4: MyGo and Apprenticeships Suffolk

MyGo – Youth Employment Service

The Greater Ipswich City Deal was the catalyst for launching MyGo Ipswich in November 2014. MyGo was set up with funding from the Ipswich City Deal and in May 2016, Suffolk County Council was successful in securing an additional £2.4m of European Social Funding which will be used to secure the future delivery and development of the service until December 2017. We are currently looking to secure further funding for the ongoing development of the service from Dec 2017 and beyond.

MyGo is an employment service for all young people age 16-24 regardless of their claimant status or whether they are NEET or in EET. This is an enhanced service to that offered by Job Centre Plus which only provides assistance to those who are unemployed and claiming benefits. Young people can access a range of services such as personalised job coaching, bespoke training and high level support to market themselves to a range of local employers and education providers.

Since MyGo launched in 2014 over 6,000 young people have accessed the service with 2,331 young people benefitting from the universal offer and a further 3,669 have received tailored coaching support. 2,025 young people have made a positive progression into work, further training, or education with 580 young people sustaining their job or place in learning for six months or more.

Figure 4. Cumulative number of registrants at MyGo Ipswich

Number of young people registering with MyGo (cumulative)	Age	
	16-17	18+
Claiming Benefit	39(4%)	2541(49%)
Not Claiming Benefit	933(96%)	2657(51%)

Job Centre Plus is a key strategic partner and is fully integrated at MyGo Ipswich. Young people who are claiming benefits are able to manage their benefit requirements at MyGo with a JCP staff member rather than having to visit the traditional JCP centre in town.

All young people are individually assessed to establish the level of support required to enable them to progress into employment with training or education. For those young people who are assessed as furthest from the labour market, a MyGo Coach is allocated who supports the young person with their Work and Career Plan thus enabling them to access the appropriate support directly from MyGo or through partner agencies.

MyGo Lowestoft opened in July 2016 and is delivered through a range of partners and led by Suffolk County Council. Since opening at the end of July 2016, over 200 young people have registered with the service with just over 100 receiving dedicated coaching. 31 young people have progressed to employment, apprenticeships or education since July 16.

Example of evidence: Apprenticeships Suffolk

Following Suffolk County Council's commitment in 2014 to grow the quantity and quality of Apprenticeships, more young people aged 16-18 are now starting an Apprenticeship than ever before. Apprenticeships Suffolk is a service for young people, schools, parents and employers and has been extremely successful in engaging with service users in the past 2 years.

The Young Persons Service (ASYPS) currently has 1,500 young people registered and works with young people to raise awareness of and support young people into local Apprenticeship opportunities. The service works with a range of multi-disciplinary teams across the council, and externally, with a focus on supporting young people to submit high quality applications to secure their apprenticeship.

Apprenticeships Suffolk has successfully delivered Apprenticeship work-shops in 100% of schools throughout the county. These work-shops provide impartial advice and guidance on Apprenticeships as an alternative route into employment post 16 to young people, parents and school staff.

Moving forward we will maintain this high level of engagement and develop high quality toolkits and resources that can be used by school staff to deliver sessions directly to young people. The service will also continue to provide work-shops and CPD for school staff and other professionals so that they can provide young people with accurate advice and guidance.

In August 2016 the Apprenticeship Grant for Employers (AGE) was devolved to the New Anglia region. AGE is a funding stream set up by Government to support small employers to take on a young apprentice (16-24). The AGE grant has historically been disseminated through provider allocations and then onto employers. From August 2016 the administration of the AGE grant moved from the SFA to Norfolk County Council on behalf of employers across Norfolk and Suffolk. This is allocated directly to employers, rather than via a training provider with allocations. Between August 16 and early November 16 over 280 grant applications have been approved.

As the Apprenticeships Suffolk service develops it will focus on driving up the number of Apprenticeship vacancies in the county as well as supporting young people, and the services that work with them, to be prepared for gaining and sustaining an Apprenticeship.

We will continue to be proactive and provide appropriate support to our employers, throughout this significant time of change, to enable them to make the most of the Apprenticeship reforms and increase the quality of Apprenticeships at all levels. We will focus on driving up the number of higher level Apprenticeships as an additional route to higher education.

Conclusion

Suffolk does face challenges in increasing the number of young people age 16-18 who participate in education, employment or training. There is no one simple solution, but our over-arching strategy for this area of work will guide and steer the local authority and key stakeholders towards a better outcome for the young people of Suffolk. We have ambitious

targets to increase Participation rates so that they are in line with national rates, to decrease our NEET figure so that we are in line with our statistical neighbours and to improve our unknown figure so that we are in line with local authorities in the East of England.

We are positive that the strong range of activities and measures in place will make a significant contribution to achieving our targets.

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15th November 2016

Annex A

What causes a young person to be NEET⁶?

In 2010 the Audit Commission published a report, *Against the Odds*, which examined NEET characteristics, the geographical distribution of NEET people and how the government can work effectively to help them. Contained in this report is a table (below) which summarises the increased likelihood of young people becoming NEET associated with certain risk factors.

Factor	Increased Likelihood
Being NEET at least once before	7.9 times more likely
Pregnancy or parenthood	2.8 times more likely
Supervision by youth offending team	2.6 times more likely
Fewer than three months post-16 Education	2.3 times more likely
Disclosed substance abuse	2.1 times more likely
Responsibilities as a Carer	2.0 times more likely

In addition, a longitudinal study of young people in England⁷ (age 19 in 2010) gives some more detailed information on characteristics of young people who are NEET:

- Young people who have achieved five or more GCSEs A*-C are less likely to be NEET.
- Those eligible for free school meals are more likely to be NEET than those not eligible.
- Those who have been excluded or suspended from school are more likely to be NEET than those who have not.
- Those with their own child are more likely to be NEET than those without.
- Those who have a disability are more likely to be NEET than those who do not.

Identifying and supporting young people to participate in Suffolk

Suffolk has identified our own key characteristics and risk factors of NEET which were established from historical data between 2010 – 2014. These are:

- Attendance
- Attainment
- Attitude to learning
- Behaviour
- Confidence/Self-esteem
- Support from parents/carers
- SEN
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- Additional Needs
- Future progression

These risk factors have been embedded in our 'Learner Classification of Need Tool' which is used to identify young people most at risk of NEET post 16. Through a robust identification process we are able to provide targeted support that enables, encourages and assists the young person to source and secure a place in education or employment with training.

⁶ <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06705/SN06705.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/youth-cohort-study-and-longitudinal-study-of-young-people-in-england-the-activities-and-experiences-of-19-year-olds-2010>

