

Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb hwn i'r [Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg](#) ar [Llwybrau at addysg a hyfforddiant ôl-16](#)

This response was submitted to the [Children, Young People and Education Committee](#) on the [Routes into post-16 education and training](#)

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Ymateb gan: Coleg Sir Gâr

Response from: Coleg Sir Gâr

To what extent are further education colleges able to engage directly with learners in schools?

Further Education colleges actively work to establish meaningful engagement with schools to support learner transitions. We have been particularly successful in collaborating with schools that do not have sixth form provision, beginning outreach efforts with Year 9 students and continuing through Year 11 to support their transition to FE. With additional resources, we would like to expand this engagement further to ensure learners are fully informed about their options and receive the necessary advice and guidance to make well-considered decisions. However, engagement with schools that have sixth form provision presents greater challenges.

To what extent are learners in schools made aware of the options available to them in school sixth forms and local further education colleges? How closely do schools engage with local colleges? Are there conflicts of interest between sixth forms and further education colleges, and is this more prevalent in some areas of Wales than others?

It is essential to ensure learners are fully aware of the breadth of options available to them, including those offered by school sixth forms, FE colleges, and apprenticeship pathways. As noted, engagement with schools that have sixth form provision tends to be more limited. While FE colleges provide advice and guidance to these schools, particularly on vocational and apprenticeship pathways, such engagement is often met with reluctance.

To what extent are employers able to engage directly with learners in schools, for example, at careers events?

Employer engagement is a vital component in helping learners explore potential career pathways. In previous years, events such as *Choose Your Future*, organised in collaboration with Careers Wales, have provided young people in Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion with opportunities to engage with employers, colleges, universities, and training providers. Unfortunately, due to funding constraints, this event can no longer be hosted. While alternative solutions are being explored, many schools are reluctant to attend events hosted solely by FE providers, which impacts learners' access to these valuable opportunities.

How effective is careers support at compulsory school age? To what extent does careers support at pre-16 result in positive or negative outcomes post-16, such as young people becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training)?

Effective careers support at the pre-16 stage plays a crucial role in shaping learners' post-16 outcomes. From an FE perspective, many learners attend open evenings and interviews without having received sufficient advice and guidance to make informed decisions. This often requires FE colleges to allocate resources to bridge this gap, providing additional support to learners. Significant time is also invested at the start of the academic year to assist with transitions, ensuring learners explore appropriate career pathways and progression routes.

Is there evidence that learners are changing their choices post-18, including a drop in Higher Education enrolments, and if so, why?

There is clear evidence of shifts in learners' post-18 choices, including a decline in Higher Education (HE) enrolments. This trend is reflected in our FE-provided HE offerings.

What is the availability of post-16 options (both academic and vocational) through the medium of Welsh, and how does this impact young people's choices?

The availability of Welsh-medium provision is an important consideration in learners' decision-making processes. Our college highlights these opportunities on its website and during open evenings and interviews. However, promoting Welsh-medium options directly in schools is challenging, as most Welsh-speaking schools in our counties have their own sixth form provision, limiting the reach of FE offerings in this area.

Is there sufficient post-16 destination data collected to understand trends and inform what education institutions deliver? If not, what data is required to fully understand the post-16 landscape?

Currently, post-16 destination data is not collected or published in a timely manner, limiting its utility for planning future academic years. This has prompted us to explore alternative methods for gathering and analysing data more efficiently, which would allow for better-informed decisions and planning.

How effective is the Welsh Government's approach to supporting participation in the full range of post-16 education and training options? Are learners, their families, and schools aware of available Wales-wide support and programmes, such as the Young Person's Guarantee?

The Welsh Government's initiatives, such as the Young Person's Guarantee, have provided valuable resources to support learners in accessing a full range of post-16 education and training options. Programs like the Employability Bureaus are particularly effective, offering impartial advice and guidance, connecting learners with employers, and promoting clear progression pathways. Continued efforts are needed

to ensure widespread awareness among learners, families, and schools about these resources and programs.