

Mapping and review of enterprise and employer engagement activity across schools in Wales

Final report

Presented to **Welsh Government** by **Arad Research**

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Arad Research
8 Columbus Walk
Brigantine Place
Cardiff / Caerdydd CF10 4SD
029 2044 0552
www.aradresearch.com

ymchwil
arad
research

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the study

Welsh Government commissioned Arad Research to undertake a mapping and review of enterprise and employer engagement (EEE) activity and initiatives across schools in Wales. This report presents the findings of research carried out between September and March 2021.

The study forms part of the wider planning for the new curriculum in Wales. At the heart of the curriculum are the four purposes, setting out the aspirations for all children and young people by the age of 16; enabling them to be successful learners, who play an active part in their community and wider society, and who are prepared to thrive in an increasingly complex world. The curriculum organises learning around six areas of learning and experience (AoLE), each has been designed to support learners to realise the four purposes of the curriculum, providing the starting point and aspiration when developing a school-level curriculum.

Careers and work-related experiences (CWRE) features within all six AoLEs. CWRE will help learners develop the awareness and aspiration of a range of career choices, creating a more diverse, economically engaged workforce in Wales. An understanding of the world of work should begin at an early age. Primary aged learners should benefit from a greater awareness of job roles. This forms the basis of continued learning, enabling learners in secondary school to make informed and appropriate careers decisions. CWRE should enable learners to develop:

- understanding of the factors that guide, shape and influence career prospects and development, and the skills needed to progress their career plans and development
- awareness of individual skills, attributes and interests, and how they impact on career choices, raising learner aspiration and understanding of consequences
- employment and enterprise knowledge, which can be applied when seeking, applying for and sustaining employment, or self-employment
- the skills to manage everyday life as independently as they can.

New guidance for CWRE across the curriculum will be made available in 2021, for the rollout in September 2022 for all year groups in primary school and year 7 in secondary schools. It will roll out to year 8 in September 2023 and year on year until it is introduced to year 11 in 2026.

During the period this report was being drafted, Careers Wales published its new strategic vision for 2021-26, *Brighter Futures*. The strategy sets out Careers Wales' vision to support young people and adults in Wales by providing access to high quality, impartial careers advice that makes a positive impact on individuals' education, economic and wellbeing outcomes.

Finally, a note on terminology: there is frequent reference in this report to work-related experiences. Work-related experiences encompass a range of activities including employer

visits, masterclasses and mentoring, structured work experience, taster sessions and careers fairs.

1.2 Aims of the review

The aims of the review were to:

- undertake an analysis of the projects identified in a previous mapping exercise conducted by Careers Wales;
- identify activities that have worked well and enhanced learners' understanding of the world of work;
- identify any potential gaps in current provision;
- assess the potential demand from schools for digital interventions;
- make recommendations to Welsh Government to improve employer engagement activity in schools.

1.3 Methodology

Arad designed a mixed method approach to the research, involving the following tasks.

- Scoping interviews with 10 stakeholders in Welsh Government and programme leads for employer engagement activities;
- Literature review: an examination of UK and international support for enterprise and employer engagement, exploring evidence of what works well and the barriers to successful delivery and impact.
- Review of mapping exercise previously conducted by Careers Wales, comprising desk-based research, data collection from employer engagement providers and follow up interviews with contacts in provider organisations.
- School survey: Examining levels of employer engagement and its impact on schools in Wales. Responses were received from 90 primary, secondary and special schools across Wales. See section 4 and Annex B of the report for further detail.
- Analysis and reporting.

This report presents findings from the research carried out between August 2020 to March 2021.

2. Summary of literature review

This section provides a summary of the literature review, drawing on evidence included in published literature in Wales, the rest of the UK and internationally. It provides an insight into the types of enterprise and employer engagement activities delivered, common design features for effective practice, evidence of benefits for learners and schools, and challenges relating to delivering provision and evaluating impact.

The full literature review is included in Annex A, citing the sources and publications on which this summary is based. The full review provides an overview of the Welsh Government's priorities for careers education in the context of the wider policy landscape and examples of EEE policy and activity delivered in the other UK nations. It also identifies examples of good practice and innovation at national and international levels.

2.1 Key messages from the literature

2.1.1 Types and roles of enterprise and employer engagement

The literature categorises EEE activity on three levels: at school level, at teacher level and at student or learner level. Each of these areas of activity is driven by focuses on a particular

- At the **school level**, employer engagement is centred around **leadership and governance activities**: e.g. working with governing bodies; providing financial and in-kind support for employer engagement; investing in professional learning opportunities for staff.
- At **teacher level**, resources and lesson plans are developed to incorporate EEE as part of **curriculum delivery**.
- At **learner level**, a range of work-related experiences activities such as work experience, school/workplace visits, training schemes and mentoring can **raise learners' skills and awareness** of careers and the world of work.

Alongside these different categories of employer engagement activity, research highlights the various ways in which employer engagement contributes to learning. The literature denotes three 'roles' of employer engagement, comprising:

- Employer engagement can be **supplementary**: where it directly supports conventional teaching and learning approaches to achieve established learning outcomes e.g. reading support programmes.
- Employer engagement can be **complementary**: where it offers an alternative way of achieving established learning outcomes, e.g. mentoring programmes to help learners improve attainment.

- Thirdly, employer engagement can also be **additional**: where it offers a way of achieving learning outcomes additional to those found in conventional teaching and learning e.g. enterprise activities to develop employability skills.

2.1.2 Principles underpinning the design of employer engagement activity

Literature underlines the importance of ensuring that employer engagement activities are **effective, efficient, equitable** and **evidenced**. Research notes the need to draw on existing employer networks to support efficiency and emphasises the importance of equality of access in order to improve social capital and raise aspirations for all learners. Literature emphasises the need to build longitudinal data that can deliver useful insights on the impact of different employer engagement activities.

The literature highlights the value of employer role models in **raising aspirations** and opening learners' eyes to a range of possible career opportunities, with this particularly helpful in raising awareness of vocational pathways and labour market opportunities in local areas.

The literature review also identifies the range of employer engagement and career education activities **that are appropriate for various stages of education**. Figure 6.4 in Annex A sets out how activity typically progresses from general awareness raising of the world of work in primary schools into more focused activities and direct interaction with employers as learners progress through secondary education.

Research has identified several **challenges in delivering work experience**. These include teachers' workload; the availability of placements by sector, employer size and location; and difficulties in engaging with employers in particular sectors, notably the health, manufacturing/construction and creative and media sectors. The cost of travel to placements and the availability of public transport can also create challenges.

On the matter of **equity**, the literature notes that learners with lower socio-economic status are less likely to have access to work experience in 'high status' workplaces, be less confident in their choice of work experience and more likely be given menial tasks.

2.1.3 Enterprise and entrepreneurship skills

Developing awareness and skills in entrepreneurship has been a priority for policy-makers across the European Union in recent years. The European Commission's EntreComp programme¹ contains 15 competences under the thematic areas of 'ideas and opportunities', 'resources' and 'into action' with each competency stipulating foundation, intermediate, advanced and expert level criteria. The broad structure of the framework can be seen in Annex 2.

Entrepreneurship education aims to develop an entrepreneurial mindset, improve academic engagement, increase employability, stimulate quality entrepreneurship and expand

¹ [EntreComp](#) – The Entrepreneurship Competence Framework offers a tool to improve the entrepreneurial capacity of European citizens and organisations.

access. Equity and fairness in entrepreneurship education are increasingly being promoted: research in Wales led to the publication of a good practice guide on support for entrepreneurial women in Wales and highlights the barrier of gender stereotyping. It advocated a ‘mainstream gender-aware approach’ (Business Wales, 2019).

2.1.4 Delivering effective employer engagement activity

There are many features that effective employer engagement activity with schools is believed to require (see Table 2.1 below). Some of these key features focus on the nature of the relationship between the school and the employer, such as a clear vision of what is expected to be achieved, and the need for good communication between all partners. Other elements are specific to the nature of the activities delivered, for example, the frequency of engagement and the authenticity of the activities.

Table 2.1: Features of effective school-employer relationships and engagement activities.

School-employer relationships and engagement	
 Authentic – first-hand encounters with the world of work	 Valued – when learners’ testify to their value better outcomes follow
 Recurrent – at least four memorable encounters across schooling	 Personalised – those with limited access to work-related networks should be targeted
 A clear vision of what all parties want to achieve	 Flexibility – varied activities have potential to improve outcomes for different types of learners
 Good communication among partners	 Focus on curriculum
 Partnership working	 Well-structured programme design
 Commitment, cooperation and leadership across all stakeholders	 Consideration of regional economic and development priorities
 Time to build relationships and for professional development	 Early intervention – begin in primary school

(DYW, 2019, p. 42; Mann et al., 2018, p. 72; Burge et al., 2012, p. 22)

The above features of effective school-employer engagement are consistent with findings by Estyn, who have reported that schools with good employer links display the following characteristics:

- Strong vision and commitment from senior leaders;
- Learners engaged in work-related experiences that impact on their wellbeing, employability skills and career choices;
- Strong, purposeful links with employers;
- Appropriate deployment and development of staff who understand learners’ career aspirations, and how to prepare learners for the world of work;

- Use of labour market intelligence and tracking data to understand the local economy;
- Evaluation of partnerships with employers;
- High-quality partnerships with other providers, initiatives and engagement with parents.

Other literature reviewed explores the practical implications of delivering effective employer engagement activities in schools. Table 2.2 summarises possible practical implications that need to be addressed to help maximise the impact of employer engagement activity in schools.

Table 2.2: *The practical implications for effective employer engagement activity.*

Employer engagement good practice and practical implications	
	Starting early: activities likely to benefit younger learners include those that explore the relationship between learning in school and the world of work; insights into job roles and challenging stereotypes.
	Authenticity: activities should be aligned to key features and trends in the local labour market and workplace visits should be developed with employers in the growth sectors.
	Repeat engagement: employers should be encouraged to build long term and sustained partnerships. Guidance could provide structure as to when along a learner's journey particular employer engagement activities are most beneficial.
	Varied activities: relationships with a wide range of employers, including those of different sizes, will contribute to learners being exposed to a range of careers and gain insight of the labour market.
	Tailoring activities: offering a range of activities will benefit different types of learners.
	Quality of activities: guidelines for schools and employers could provide an assurance of quality for implementing activities.
	An employer engagement management tool: to provide opportunity for learners to reflect on their employer engagement and career aspirations.
	Benefits to business: participation in schools could be incentivised by advertising how activities can develop employees' soft skills and raise organisations' reputations.

(Adapted from DYW, 2019, pp. 42-49).

2.1.5 Monitoring and evaluation processes for employer engagement activity

The literature reviewed suggests there is limited robust evidence on the impact of employer involvement on achievement and post-16 destinations. The evidence base on the effectiveness and quality of employer engagement activity can be reliant on self-reported outcomes, underlining the need for more rigorous research based on quasi-experimental methods and stronger data on longer-term destinations. This, it is suggested, would provide

'more robust insight' into the impact of employer engagement activity, and the type of participant with whom different types of intervention work best. Other literature also notes the emphasis on self-reported student satisfaction or one-off destination information and again highlights limitations. It also notes that issues remain in defining desirable outcomes, and how best to measure them.

The limitations in the existing evidence base are also noted in the context of Wales: although Estyn report that schools in Wales evaluate partnership working with employers, this is only the case in a 'very few schools.'

Despite the limitations identified in the literature, there is consistent evidence that work-related experiences including workplace visits, masterclasses and job shadowing are associated with positive impacts for learners across several areas. These include impacts on learners' readiness and ability to make informed choices and on knowledge, skills and outcomes.

Table 2.3: Examples of reported outcomes of employer engagement activities

Reported outcomes of employer engagement	
Improved vocational skills, knowledge and understanding , e.g. enhanced career aspirations, knowledge of certain industries	Career reflection - develop thinking about one's own motivation, self-determination, and resilience;
Improved academic and learning outcomes , e.g. deeper understanding of particular subjects, better integration of theory and practice in subjects;	Career exploration - give shape to one's own career path by exploring the options for study or work;
Health and well-being addressed, e.g. improved self-esteem	Career action - opportunities to make sense of, and act upon, the learning gained from differing interventions;
More enjoyment and engagement , e.g. improved attendance, positive relationships with mentors;	Networking - build and maintain a network of key contacts;
Better employment and earnings opportunities , e.g. creation of personal networks.	Learning environment - stimulate real-life experiences with work and a dialogue about these experiences;
Commitment, cooperation and leadership across all stakeholders	Career dialogue - meaningful conversations with teachers, parents or carers, employers, alumni, and trained career development professionals.

Adapted from Burge et al., 2012 ; Hughes et al., 2016.

2.2 Conclusions

The literature is consistent in reporting the benefits of enterprise and employer engagement for learners. These include enhancing learners' understanding of the contemporary labour market and the jobs, careers and progression routes that exist within it, along with greater

appreciation of the knowledge and skills demanded in the world of work. **The literature also suggests a positive impact on learners' wellbeing, self-esteem, engagement with learning and creation of personal networks** through engagement with employers and opportunities for reflection, exploration and dialogue.

The literature highlights many of the key features of successful employer engagement, which should be effective, efficient, equitable and evidenced. **Developing a clear vision and mutual understanding** of what is expected to be achieved through partnerships between schools and employers is viewed as an essential starting point for this engagement process.

Other essential features include a focus on fairer access to address current inequalities in careers provision and access to employers; the frequency and authenticity of engagement; **a focus on starting early in learners' journeys to support their aspirations and influence attitudes**; and ensuring the delivery of a variety of the activities linked to the curriculum and local economic needs to support learner progress through primary and secondary school.

The use of **impartial, personalised careers advice** was linked to engaging with learners and supporting staff to understand their aspirations as another key element of successful school to work transition. Other important features include **supporting learners to have repeated engagement opportunities with employers** throughout the academic year and matching learners with appropriate opportunities relating to their interests, providing them with time for preparation and reflection. **Developing employability skills such as team working, communication and problem-solving alongside an entrepreneurial mindset** can enrich learners' education and deliver additional learning outcomes.

The international literature has outlined a range of challenges to successful employer engagement including the availability of work placements by sector, employer size and location plus issues such as red tape for small firms. **A lack of support, resources and time for schools in developing links with employers can be exacerbated by a lack of employer understanding as to how they can benefit**, for example through shaping the future skills supply, opportunity to promote careers within their organisation or helping to enhance young people's employability skills.

Addressing these challenges through the design and implementation of key features outlined above should therefore be a focus of employer engagement design. The literature suggests that this take place alongside **a greater focus on producing robust evidence on the impact of enterprise and employer engagement provision** on outcomes such as achievement, post-16 destinations learners' social backgrounds and the quality and quantity of activities.

Issues for consideration in the context of CWRE and employer engagement

- i. Are the categorisations and frameworks outlined in section 2.1.4 helpful in supporting school-level planning for employer engagement?

- ii. Taking into account the different types and 'roles' of employer engagement outlined, should schools be encouraged to reflect on how they plan and support provision and the rationale for the activities they deliver?
- iii. Do the features of effective practice identified in the literature provide a useful steer for schools as they develop CWRE as a cross-cutting element in the new curriculum?
- iv. It is important that schools are able to define and communicate the outcomes that their programme of employer engagement aims to achieve. The table above provides examples of outcomes that schools could be working towards. They also provide ideas for promoting the value of employer engagement to staff, learners and the wider school community.

3. Enterprise and employer engagement activity in Wales

This chapter sets out the findings of an analysis of the mapping exercise of enterprise and employer engagement activity (EEE) in Wales, supported by interviews with providers and key stakeholders. The aim of the exercise was to examine the different types of EEE activity delivered and stakeholders' views on current provision and gaps. It also examines how providers are adapting provision to offer experiences to schools and learners in more flexible ways, reflecting the changes arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. The chapter also contains 5 case studies of EEE activities in Wales which identify activities that work well, the reasons for this and their impact on learners.

3.1 Overview

There is an extensive range of initiatives and programmes delivered across Wales, led by public, third and private sector organisations, which vary significantly in terms of scale. At one end, there are Wales-wide programmes, centrally funded by Welsh Government, frequently offering a suite of activities and support; other activities are subject-specific (often focused on promoting careers in STEM), also delivered across Wales or in specific regions; there are local authority-led initiatives which take a coordinated approach to EEE, focusing on particular areas or regions; and there are individual projects and initiatives promoted and delivered by third and private sector organisations.

3.2 National programmes and initiatives

Below we provide an overview of programmes and activities with a national remit or delivered Wales-wide.

Careers Wales

Careers Wales is a wholly owned subsidiary of Welsh Government, providing an all age national careers service. The organisation leads and contributes to a range of national EEE initiatives. It also supports schools to engage with employers to improve learners' understanding of the work of work. This is achieved through universal services like large scale careers fairs, via digital approaches including employer-led webinars, as well as a range of bespoke activities and events. Careers Wales Advisors also provide bespoke support to enable schools to enhance careers and work-related experiences as part of curriculum delivery.

The Education Business Exchange (EBE) was launched by Careers Wales in 2017 as a database to be used by schools to identify employers who can work with them to deliver programmes and activity that enhances their curriculum delivery and work-related experiences. Employers sign up to be included on the database and specify the type of activities that they are able to deliver or support. The database gives schools the opportunity to work with employers to arrange industry visits, employer workshops, volunteering opportunities, and work placements. Careers Wales Business Engagement

teams facilitate communication between schools and businesses to start the process and support employers and schools to sustain engagement. The process allows employers to work directly with schools, raising awareness of their companies within local communities and allowing them to get involved with the next generation workforce and possible future employment opportunities.

Through the Activate programme, Careers Wales works in partnership with local authorities across Wales to provide support to young people most vulnerable to becoming NEET. This has included working in partnership with local authorities on European Union-funded programmes, helping to coordinate employer visits to schools and tailored work placements for vulnerable learners through the Inspire 2 Achieve, Cynnydd and TRAC projects.

Careers Wales has recently published its new strategic vision, *Brighter Futures*.² Brighter Futures includes four goals that will steer Careers Wales' work over the next five years. The goals and overarching commitments are summarised below.

Goal one: To provide a bilingual, inclusive, impartial careers guidance and coaching service for the people of Wales

- support young people to make positive transitions into education, employment or training (EET);
- support customers who require enhanced levels of support to make positive transitions into appropriate provision;
- raise customer awareness of EET and other progression opportunities;
- improve access to the benefits of careers guidance and coaching through collaboration and engagement with partners and influencers.

Goal two: To develop our work with employers, training providers and entrepreneurs to understand their skills requirements and opportunities for young people and adults

- inform and motivate young people about the world of work through engagement with employers;
- raise young people's awareness of the skills required by economic priority sectors and how they link to the curriculum.

Goal three: To support delivery of the Curriculum for Wales and contribute to the achievement of the four purposes

- deliver a high-quality professional learning service to build the skills, knowledge and confidence of educational professionals to deliver effective CWRE;
- design and deliver a new CWRE award for excellence in the curriculum;
- proactively support the implementation of the CWRE statutory guidance.

Goal four: To develop a skilled, engaged and agile Careers Wales workforce and enable the delivery of high performing, customer-centred services

- develop personalised, customer-centred services, enhanced by technology, responsive to user needs and accessible to all;
- create a skilled, engaged and agile Careers Wales workforce that is inclusive and supportive of employee wellbeing;
- optimise our use of technology to transform our ways of working and develop the digital skills and capabilities of all Careers Wales employees;

² Careers Wales (2021), [Brighter Futures](#)

- ensure our policy and service developments are informed by customer insight, business intelligence, data and analytics.

Big Ideas Wales (BIW)

Big Ideas Wales is an initiative led by the Welsh Government to develop an entrepreneurial culture in Wales to support the delivery of the Economic Action Plan. BIW operates in schools across Wales, providing opportunities for entrepreneurs to deliver one or two-hour workshops to explore enterprise, typically with learners from Year 9 and above. The events are designed to provide an inspiring engagement with entrepreneurs, explore the entrepreneurial mind-set, generate ideas and develop an understanding of business creation. BIW also delivers the Enterprise Troopers Competition. This competition is for primary school-aged children across Wales, providing an opportunity to showcase their enterprise activities whilst developing entrepreneurial skills in a fun and interactive way.

Business Class

Funded by Welsh Government from 2015 until early 2021, Business Class was an initiative led by Business in the Community (BiTC) and Careers Wales that facilitated and promoted partnerships between employers and schools. By bringing together schools and businesses, Business Class aimed to improve learners' understanding of the world of work, enhance their career choices and develop their employability skills.

Other Wales-wide projects

There are numerous other Wales-wide projects, initiatives and EEE interventions delivered in primary and secondary schools. In some cases, these are public sector-funded or third sector projects that initiated in Wales, with a focus on activities to promote STEM (e.g. Technocamps, which promotes digital upskilling and the Engineering Education Scheme Wales). Some of these are well-established programmes with strong partnerships with schools across Wales.

3.3 Regional and local projects and programmes

There are a wide range of initiatives focused in particular regions or areas of Wales. These have evolved over time in response to a number of drivers, including opportunities presented by European Union funding, initiatives and strategies developed by local authorities or regional strategic partnerships, further and higher education-led projects and private sector partners working in particular areas.

As part of the ESF Operational Programme in Wales, TRAC, Cynnydd and Inspire 2 Achieve are local authority led projects across Wales that seek to reduce the risk of young people aged between 11 and 24 years old not progressing into employment, education or training (NEET). Careers Wales are a partner in delivering these ESF programmes through delivery of the bespoke enhanced EEE programme 'Activate' which provides careers support, coaching and guidance to young people and where appropriate a tailored work experience offer. These interventions, which include arranging employer presentations, workplace visits and work experience placements, typically require more intensive planning and support.

STEM Gogledd is a project aimed at encouraging the take-up of, and attainment in, STEM subjects for secondary school students in Gwynedd, Anglesey and Conwy. There is extensive EEE activity through the delivery of employer presentations, site visits, digital interactions, short term work experience, masterclasses, and STEM careers fairs.

Young Dragons deliver entrepreneurship competitions that engage with primary and secondary schools in south west Wales. The competitions provide opportunities for young people to showcase their skills to sponsors and employers, whilst also developing their entrepreneurship skills.

The mapping exercise also explored examples of models of provision developed by local authorities to support and promote EEE and careers-related activity. Rhondda Cynon Taf's Employment, Education and Training Team delivers a wide-ranging Careers and the World of Work programme. This includes design bespoke employability programmes with individual schools, including engagement with employers through industry talks; Positive Achievement awards for schools, which encourage skills for the world of work; mock interviews; programme of work experience.

Rhondda Cynon Taf has also hosted a pilot programme to work towards the Gatsby Good Career Guidance Benchmarks and the Careers and the World of Work Programme is also structured around providing support to schools to enable them to make progress towards the benchmarks. (See case study for further details.)

Cardiff City Council has developed its Cardiff Commitment, which aims to raise aspirations and develop skills for the world of work among young people through school, employer, community and higher and further education partnerships. Employer networks, in the growth sectors of the economy in particular, will provide opportunities for pupil engagement, and in collaboration with schools and wider education providers will support the co-construction of teaching and learning experiences and experiences to enhance the new Curriculum offer. The Cardiff Commitment includes a broad programme of work that is aligned with the City Council's Corporate Plan and is structured around:

- Governance: (working to ensure senior business representatives on schools governing bodies)
- Experiences of Work (Creating school/business partnerships to deliver experiences of work and target skills development in the key economic growth sectors of the Cardiff Capital Region, including virtual work experience placements)
- Developing and promoting apprenticeship options for young people aged 16–19 with partners
- Support schools with the implementation of the new Curriculum for Wales
- Social value: Developing a social value framework, via the planning and procurement of Council goods and services, that delivers meaningful opportunities to young people.

Although a monitoring and evaluation framework for the Cardiff Commitment has not yet been fully developed, the authority has set out its success criteria, which include: ensuring that young people are able to make informed decisions on their learning pathways based on excellent careers and work related knowledge, skills and experiences which are

embedded into their school life. The programme also aspires to improve educational attainment across the city and ensure schools work with business, industry, FE and HE to develop and enhance knowledge, skills and experiences for staff and pupils.

3.4 More focused programmes and projects

Other smaller programmes and projects, often delivered by third or private sector partners, are in evidence across Wales. There is a diversity of approach and content, which reflects some of the activities and international good practice highlighted in the literature section. Projects range in terms of the focus on nature of their activities. Selected examples of the type of EEE offered are:

- Activities that seek to reduce inequality (economic and gender inequality) targeting interventions in particular types of school or with specific target groups;
- Organisations that provide programmes or resources focusing on particular topics or sectors e.g. careers in media and film (see **Into Film** case study), financial literacy, STEM.
- Structured programmes, masterclasses, mentoring and workplace visits to promote entrepreneurship skills (see **Young Enterprise Wales** case study);
- Organisations that connect schools with business leaders (providing a brokerage service that shares similar aims to other provision);
- Work experience opportunities and other engagement tailored to vulnerable young people or learners with additional learning needs (see **Cynnydd** and **Work Fit Wales** case studies);
- Virtual work experience provision.
- Teacher professional learning also forms an integral part of some projects, for example the Welsh Valleys Engineering Project in Blaenau Gwent and Merthyr and the Gatsby Benchmarking Pilot in Rhondda Cynon Taf (see **RCT Gatsby pilot** case study).

3.5 Observations on enterprise and employer engagement activity in Wales

The following section draws on interviews with stakeholders and EEE providers across Wales.

3.5.1 Planning and coordination of activity

The enterprise and employer engagement 'offer' available to schools appears diverse, with a plethora of projects, initiatives and interventions targeting a range of year groups in primary and secondary schools. These include a range of delivery models and are focused on many topics and subject areas and with increasing attention on activity to support the vision for CWRE in the new curriculum. However, based on interviews conducted with partners, it is unclear whether distribution and delivery is equitable across Wales.

"There is little that is uniform across Wales in terms of the employer engagement offer." (EEE provider)

It was reported that the functions and activities delivered by many partners have evolved over time in response to range of factors: changes in funding arrangements; opportunities presented through EU structural funds; the emergence of new regional and local partnerships and structures; identified priorities at the sectoral level; responses to identified need; and commercial interests. While these approaches can be seen to have responded flexibly to needs and opportunities there has been little overall strategic oversight as to how provision has developed and a lack of guiding principles to support it.

Additionally, some stakeholders raised questions about how well coordinated some of the activity is. It was suggested that there is overlap and duplication in EEE initiatives – for example, brokerage and facilitation activity that links schools with employers is carried out by many different organisations operating at national, regional or local levels. For these stakeholders a more streamlined and planned approach was therefore required in future.

Some stakeholders also considered that recent policy and activities have lacked focus on SMEs, which are fundamental to the Welsh economy, but recognised as potentially harder to engage with due to size, location and capacity. This links to the barriers to engagement highlighted in the literature, with red tape for small firms reported as being an issue that discouraged their engagement. For stakeholders, engaging with smaller local employers was also key to supporting greater focus on vocational and work-based learning pathways, which were considered to offer the opportunity to address inequalities in provision in line with Welsh Government commitments to support more apprenticeships.

3.5.2 Comments on the quality and impact of provision

Estyn expressed concern in its 2017 report about the decline in school-employer partnerships and noted gaps in knowledge regarding the impact or quality of such partnerships.

Careers Wales carries out extensive evaluation of its education-business activity, including gathering feedback from learners, teachers and parents on the school-based events and larger careers fairs delivered. This is used to inform ongoing adaptations and improvements to activity. Careers Wales also commissioned external research into its education business partnership activity in 2019, which included examining the perceived effectiveness and benefits of Business Class and the EBE. The data collected through both internal and external research and evaluation indicates high levels of satisfaction among users with regard to existing provision and reveals that EEE activities are valued by schools.

In Brighter Futures, Careers Wales has also committed to the goal of ‘ensuring our policy and service developments are informed by customer insight, business intelligence, data and analytics.’

A number of partner organisations felt that little had changed in the years since Estyn reported weaknesses in partnerships between schools and employers. This research heard that partnership working (particularly in the context of work experience opportunities) remained under-developed in many cases. It was suggested that the variability seen in EEE was due in part to a lack of coordination of activity locally and regionally. In other cases,

however, stakeholders felt that there has been evidence of a shift towards more coordinated and holistic planning, with schools recognising the potential of the new curriculum as a catalyst for a greater whole-school emphasis on careers and work-related experiences.

While the diversity and coverage of EEE programmes and projects in Wales illustrates the amount of activity that has, or continues, to take place there is limited longer-term impact assessment or tracking evaluation available to evidence its impact. As outlined in the literature there is a lack of robust evidence as to the impact of these types of activities, with particular regard to impact on learners' achievements, destinations and the quality and quantity of activities.

This makes it difficult to address questions regarding the type of activities and settings that work well, whether there are certain activities most appropriate for target groups and evidence of their overall value. Many interventions and EEE activities could be described as isolated or 'one-off' events, whose impact on progression pathways and career choices, it was acknowledged, is likely to be very limited.

Partners interviewed agreed that there are gaps in evidence about what is working well in schools in Wales and that it is unclear how to measure the impact and success of many activities. These views link to the findings of the literature, which indicate that schools do not have sufficiently rigorous processes in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the contribution of partnerships with employers or clear criteria to measure the impact or value for money offered by external partners.

'There is little evaluation and monitoring and this need to be more focused – taking into account consolidated learning and post-event evaluations. A lot of data is collected by Careers Wales and Welsh Government but I don't think it has been used effectively up until now.' **Stakeholder**

'We have good LMI and insights, which we use to inform our activities with schools. We're also good at collecting data from learners at Year 10 about their aspirations for the future. What we don't do is track destinations so that we can understand what impact engagement has down the line. Some pieces of the jigsaw are there but we still aren't able to see the full picture.' **Stakeholder**

Partners also noted that more needs to be done to understand any correlations between schools that are 'engaged' and proactive in their planning and delivery and a range of measures, including: attainment, attendance and destinations data.

'There is a lack of knowledge about what works well. Do those schools that work most closely with us have higher numbers progressing into apprenticeships, or continuing into further and higher education? We don't know and improving our knowledge is important to inform planning and future delivery.' **Stakeholder**

The recommended areas for improvement set out in Estyn's 2017 remain in need of attention. Schools still need to be supported to be able to evaluate careers-related activity

more systematically and to monitor and track trends in pupils' achievement and progression. They also need to integrate evaluation of their Careers and Work-Related Experiences as part of wide self-evaluation and improvement planning.

There is recognition of the need to both strengthen the evidence base and provide support to schools: Careers Wales have commissioned a study looking at the return on investment through EEE, which is due to report this year. Also, importantly, the Minister for Education has tasked Careers Wales with developing a Careers Wales Quality Award (CWQA) for good careers guidance in schools. This includes the development of a self-assessment toolkit for CWRE that will enable primary and secondary schools to assess their current provision and develop an improvement plan.

3.5.3 Curriculum for Wales and the importance of early and sustained engagement

Stakeholders underlined the importance of providing learners with opportunities to engage with employers and gain insights into the world of work at an early stage. This echoes the findings of the literature review, which indicated that starting early is a key feature of successful EEE provision. A range of programmes and projects in Wales are designed for primary schools, including activities focused on STEM, projects that promote skills and awareness of enterprise and activities that challenge gender stereotypes about future career opportunities.

'Primary can be a formative age to learn about careers, it's also an opportunity for teachers to break the cycle of unemployment and links to the idea of a 3-16 curriculum.' **Stakeholder**

Interviewees proposed that the new Curriculum for Wales offers opportunities to embed EEE as part of curriculum delivery across all stages of learning. Schools are being required to plan Careers and Work-Related Experiences (CWRE) as a cross-cutting element of the curriculum, which should lead it being a more visible and integral part of the learning experience. This also has the potential to ensure that opportunities to learn about the world of work and to develop learners' knowledge are delivered more consistently across all schools in Wales. Several also noted the importance of enterprise within the Welsh Bac along with a growing awareness of its value by employers.

'There needs to be more focus on entrepreneurship, which could help learners to create their own jobs, to be innovative, to express their ideas. The focus on enterprise within the new curriculum and especially with regards to the Welsh Bac will help with this, as will initiatives such as role models who can provide students with real life examples. Key for youngsters is confidence and awareness of opportunities, locally and further afield.' **Stakeholder**

Achieving this will depend on schools' ability to coordinate activity at a whole-school level and, crucially, ensure that teachers, governors, external partners and the wider school community are able to work together to plan and deliver a programme of activity that responds to their needs. Support for schools to take this approach therefore requires clear

guidance from Welsh Government and support from partners such as Careers Wales in line with the structures of the co-construction approach to deliver CWRE reported in the literature.

'Planning employer engagement in schools can't be the domain of a single teacher, there also needs to be cooperation between governors, mentors and coaches. It has to be part of an approach that looks at long term influence and embedding. The new curriculum will be key for this and for developing an entrepreneurial creative spirit in young people.' **Stakeholder**

Stakeholders and practitioners who responded to the school survey (see Section 4) emphasised the importance of professional learning opportunities to ensure teachers are able to support CWRE plans. They outlined a need to support dedicated training for careers leaders and regular CPD opportunities for primary and secondary school teachers. One stakeholder commented *'careers leaders are needed to support delivery of new schemes of work but will need level 6 qualifications to do this effectively'*.

Careers Wales have delivered level 6 training to three cohorts of secondary school teachers as part of a wider professional learning (PL) offer but acknowledge that the 3-16 age range for CWRE within the new curriculum will require an extension of support for schools. Although some resources will be available through Hwb, stakeholders suggested that, without this investment, gaps in knowledge and qualifications in many schools that could impact on efforts to improve the quality of enterprise and employer engagement.

The Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) conducted to support the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 acknowledged that there will be financial costs to schools as a result of professional learning needs in relation to curriculum familiarisation, design and planning to ensure practitioners have the skills and knowledge to deliver cross-curricular elements of the new curriculum, including CWRE. These precise costs are not known, although Consortia provided a 'rough indication' during the RIA of the required professional learning time during the transition period as the new curriculum is implemented.³

3.5.4 Digital and virtual enterprise and employer engagement

Digital delivery has accelerated in response to the restrictions through the Covid-19 pandemic and the need for providers to adapt to alternative ways of engaging with schools. Providers have shown agility and flexibility in increasing the range of digital opportunities. For stakeholders a more comprehensive digital offer is key to the development of future EEE provision and discussions with providers revealed a range of ways in which provision has been developed to support learners and practitioners. Examples of activities delivered virtually include:

- Industry talks: interviews and presentations with employer representatives which are streamed live to schools. Schools also have the opportunity to watch back and to ask questions in advance of the talks.

³ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-04/curriculum-and-assessment-act-explanatory-memorandum.pdf> (see p118-119).

- Virtual work experience: e.g. one local authority has produced a series of videos showcasing the work of six diverse roles and careers within the council.
- Distance learning resources produced by Careers Wales, including webinars that provide insight into careers in different sectors. This is part of a broader digital offer being developed by the organisation, elements of which are being user tested for efficacy and relevance;
- Virtual careers fairs.

These often provide greater flexibility, and present opportunities to reach larger numbers of schools, offering efficient models of provision.

Some providers also highlighted the key role that direct engagement with employers in schools and workplaces will continue to play and that a blended approach will offer the flexibility and adaptability required in future.

'You still can't beat the classroom environment for employer engagement, it opens the door to engagement, face to face with employers and entrepreneurs is so beneficial but the role of digital can be influential too.' **Stakeholder**

Evidence from the school survey revealed that they have also adapted to more virtual and digital delivery. Schools noted that looking ahead, digital activity is likely to remain a key aspect of their plans. Schools cited a range of digital activities that are being used, including resources produced by Careers Wales, virtual workplace visits, mock interviews through online platforms, pre-recorded employer videos and arranging for employers to provide written feedback on CVs.

Some schools expressed concern about the possible impact of school closures on the destinations and pathways of the most vulnerable learners in Year 11. Schools reported delivering one-to-one on-line sessions (via careers advisors) targeting at risk groups of learners in order to ensure that they are aware of the support available and the pathways that are open to them.

3.5.5 Future provision

In order to deliver a more coordinated and equitable approach in future stakeholders considered that there is potential to build on the strengths of current provision while streamlining structures and organisational delivery as part of a more coordinated national strategy.

Stakeholders were united in their desire to see greater quality and depth of engagement between employers and schools, noting the opportunities provided through the requirement on schools to plan CWRE as a cross-cutting element of the new curriculum. This, it was suggested, has the potential to raise the profile of EEE. Stakeholders also noted that the pandemic has demonstrated that partners and providers are able to work flexibly in delivering activities digitally.

The emphasis in Curriculum for Wales guidance on ensuring schools provide pupils with opportunities to learn about careers and work-related experiences through each AoLE

underlines the need for effective coordination of activity. Where schools need to access support from external partners it was suggested that a more streamlined model of provision and brokerage should be in place. Building on existing functions and initiatives delivered by Careers Wales, this could involve ensuring that coordinated brokerage takes place locally or regionally to enable schools to access support from employer and partners on a range of areas:

- insights into local, national and international labour market trends;
- activities that highlight links between the overarching aims of the curriculum and the work of work: how the four purposes and the skills that underpin them are central to preparing learners for careers and work;
- opportunities to benefit from links with business and/or employers.

3.5.6 Case studies

Below are five case studies where evaluations have taken place and are publicly available. These illustrate examples of the types of activities taking place across Wales and the target groups involved. Most projects offer a range of EEE approaches, with flexibility of provision a common feature. Positive outcomes identified include increases in young people's confidence, aspirations and knowledge of the world and work and their motivation to progress. Several projects also identify learner progress in terms of academic attainment and soft skills such as teamwork and communication.

Key success factors identified in evaluations of EEE activities include the importance of aligning activities with the curriculum to enhance and sustain learning and the necessity for good quality resources to encourage learner engagement and support practitioners. The commitment of teaching staff and mentors along with the support of senior management to deliver the projects was also cited in several evaluations. While some evidence of positive impact on learner attainment was recorded, demonstrating the direct effects of interventions is challenging.



The Media Literacy Project in Wales, 2014-15 (12-month pilot) delivered by [Into Film](#).

Project aims: To develop reading and writing skills in Key Stage 2 using film to engage, educate and inspire learners.

Project support: Three formal professional *training sessions* for teachers; a wide range of film-related *resources* and *one-to-one support*.

Project activities: Teachers used film to stimulate discussion, supported learners to make their own films and developed or planned to develop digital leaders.

Extent of pilot: Six schools (including one special school); one in north Wales, two in west Wales and three in south Wales. Class sizes ranged from 17-27.

Evaluation: The independent evaluation used learner data, observations of activities, and interviews with learners, teachers and school senior leaders. Teachers reported that film was valuable for engaging learners and allowed everyone to be involved on an equal footing. Lower ability learners' *achievement improved* as confidence developed. Schools were able to attribute some learner's progress in writing, reading and oral skills to using film [*reading scores increased* by more than two levels in Welsh and English]. Improvement in learners' *group work skills* and *engagement* were also reported.

Success factors: *Close alignment to the curriculum* was reported to be key to the project's success. The availability of extensive physical *resources*, including lesson plans were suggested as an improvement by teachers. The commitment and priorities of senior management and the availability of appropriate technology in the school, along with the commitment and passion of the teachers were also important. (Trilein, 2016)



The Young Enterprise Wales (YEW) Programme

Project aims: An annual competition to assist 16-19 year-old learners acquire entrepreneurial skills through running a business.

Project support: Business supporters, advisors and teachers support and motivate teams.

Project activities: Business start-up and development activities.

Evaluation: Questionnaires and interviews with 44 regional final winners. More than half of the participants reported that YEW had positively *influenced their career choice* and the same number wanted to *continue enterprise education* at university. Self-confidence to succeed agreed by 82%, with 97% reporting improvement in teamwork skills.

Success factors: *Supportive mentors and advisors* significantly beneficial, along with participation in the *competition*, which provided opportunity to showcase the businesses developed and *benchmark* achievements against other participants. (Jones and Colwill, 2013)



Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC Gatsby Benchmarking [Pilot](#)

Project aims: Schools worked towards delivering specific targets related to all eight Gatsby benchmarks, overseen by a by a project manager and monitored using an annual audit.

Project support: A *programme manager* to help schools understand the benchmarks and map their provision against the benchmarks, moderate school assessments for consistency and help with the development of action plans to enable continuous self-assessment of progress. £2,000 to free individuals to plan and implement activities, and cover the cost of events, trips and external arrangements.

Project activities: Schools deliver activities to enable them to make progress in achieving the eight Gatsby benchmarks (Gatsby, 2020).

Evaluation: To date, an interim evaluation completed, which considered pupil destinations, impact on attainment, career readiness, enablers and barriers and wider impact on the community and businesses. Sources of data included 21 interviews with key personnel, monitoring data, 90 responses to an online survey. Key findings include that the benchmarks have only been partially implemented, *some benchmarks are more difficult to achieve* than others, the audit provided a *'roadmap'* to identify gaps in provision, the seed fund of £2,000 was key to resourcing activity, support from the *programme manager* was valued, *evidencing impact on learners* believed to be challenging, involvement in the pilot helped to intensify external engagement for schools, the benchmarks provided schools with an idea of 'what good looks like', which increases the confidence of staff. A key challenge was ensuring *consistency* and avoiding using a *tokenistic approach* to 'ticking the boxes'.

Success factors: The *programme manager careers leader* were key to implementation, *seed funding*, the *structure* offered by the benchmarks to support the delivery of the Careers and World of Work. The Framework provided clear *accountability*.

(Powel et al., 2020)

WorkFit Wales

Project aims: WorkFit Wales is the Down's Syndrome Association's employment programme, initially funded from 2014-17 by Big Lottery. The project brings together individuals aged 14-25 who have Down's syndrome and employers from across Wales.

Project support: It is a tailored service dedicated to training employers about the learning profile of people who have Down's Syndrome so that they can be supported in the workplace. It supports the young participants with their skills development and encourages them in their aspirations to succeed.

Project activities: The options include paid and voluntary work, supported apprenticeships, and work with special schools to offer young people work experience opportunities and progression opportunities.

Evaluation: The Association published a short summary of the external evaluation of the programme, which outlines positive benefits for participants in terms of aspirations, confidence and expanding their social and professional contacts. Employees were also reported to have a greater awareness of Down's syndrome and feel more confident to support a person with Down's syndrome in work.

Success factors: The project is providing a bridge between employers and special schools and providing opportunities for disabled young people to consider a range of careers which match their aspirations and interests.

Cynnydd: ESF Project delivered in north Wales

Project aims: Cynnydd is a local authority led project aimed at young people who are at risk of becoming NEET. Similar projects also take place in north Wales (TRAC) and East Wales and West Wales and the Valleys (Inspire 2 Work).

Project support: Careers Advisers deliver group sessions and 1:2:1 support on goal setting, young people can also access a range of employer engagement activities like presentations and site visits, and young people can also take part in tailored work experience placements.

Evaluation: Monitoring and evaluation plans were put in place, including distance travelled tools for participants, however full evaluations of these projects are not currently in the public domain. The Cynnydd project's design and planning did, however, benefit from the completion of the Pembrokeshire Youth Guarantee project, funded through the European Commission. This pilot aimed at assisting young people into employment, work-focused education or training within four months of leaving school/Further Education (FE) or becoming unemployed through mentoring, activities to better understand the world of work in the context of the local labour market, employability skills, employer events, visits and presentations and support with career planning and progression.

Success factors: A key success to the pilot was the offer of a variety of support and engagement activities to learners, which were delivered flexibly to suit their learning needs and lives.

Key findings from the research

- There is an extensive and diverse range of enterprise and employer engagement initiatives and programmes delivered across Wales, led by public, third and private sector organisations, which vary significantly in terms of scale, content, target groups and structure.
- Stakeholders questioned whether delivery of activities and distribution of resources is equitable and how well coordinated some of this activity is. It was suggested that there is overlap and duplication in some elements of EEE provision;
- There is a current lack of robust evidence as to the impact of these types of activities on learners' achievements, destinations and the quality, quantity and relevance of activities. It was suggested that longer term tracking of learner achievements and destinations could address this in future;
- There is also a need to develop greater understanding at school-level about effective interventions and potential improvements to CWRE. The production of a self-assessment toolkit will enable primary and secondary schools to assess current provision and develop an improvement plan for CWRE. Over time this will enhance knowledge among teachers, contributing to the wider evidence base.
- The new Curriculum for Wales offers opportunities to embed EEE as part of curriculum delivery and for it to be a more visible and integral part of the learning experience;
- Achieving this will depend on schools' ability to coordinate activity at a whole-school level and ensure that teachers, governors, external partners and the wider school community are able to work together to plan and deliver EEE.
- Professional learning opportunities will be required to support teachers to deliver the CWRE element of the new curriculum across primary and secondary schools;
- Digital delivery has accelerated in response to the restrictions through the Covid-19 pandemic and the need for providers to adapt to alternative ways of engaging with schools and is seen as an integral part of future provision;
- Positive outcomes identified from case studies include increases in learners' confidence, soft skills, aspirations, attainment, knowledge of the world and work and their motivation to progress;
- Stakeholders support a more coordinated and equitable approach in future, building on the strengths of current provision while streamlining structures and organisational delivery.

4. Analysis of school survey data

4.1 Introduction

As part of the study an electronic questionnaire was design and distributed to all primary, secondary and special schools in Wales. The survey was publicised through the Welsh Government’s Dysgu Cymru / Learning Wales newsletter and through direct contact to all headteachers in Wales. A copy of the survey can be seen in Annex B.

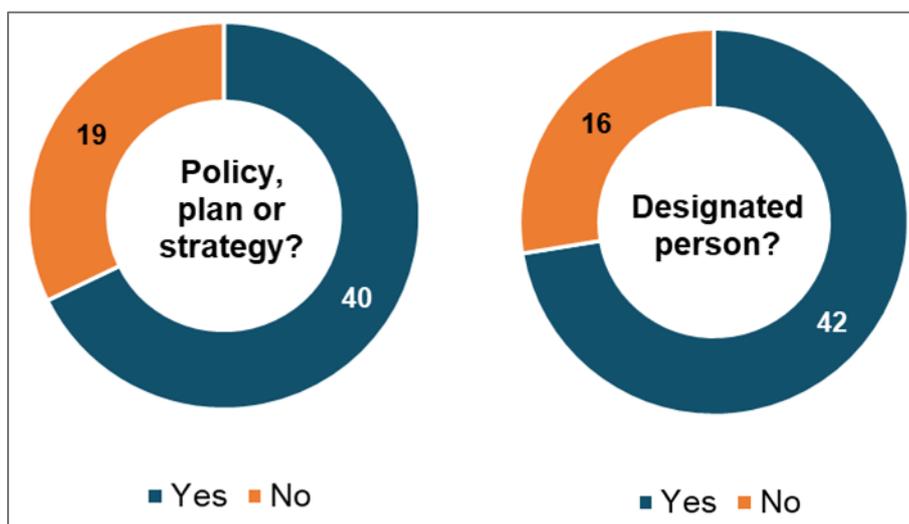
Although all schools were notified of the survey, completing the questionnaire was optional. The survey also took place at a time of uncertainty and additional pressure on the education system due to the effects of the continuing pandemic. 161 individuals began to complete the questionnaire, with 90 providing sufficiently complete responses to be included in analysis. Of the 90 completed responses, 57 were received from secondary schools, 4 from middle schools, 24 from primary schools and 5 special schools.

The scale of responses means that the findings should be seen as illustrative rather than representative of all schools. In addition, not all respondents answered all questions, which is reflected in the datasets presented in this section.

4.2 Planning enterprise and employer engagement (EEE) activity in secondary schools

40 of the 59 secondary and middle schools (68 per cent) who responded to this question reported that they have a written policy, plan or strategy for careers education, while the remaining 19 (32%) reported that they have not. A similar number of schools (42 out of 58 (72%)) noted that they have a designated person responsible for enterprise or employer engagement.

Figure 4.1: Whether secondary schools have a policy, plan or strategy for EEE, or a designated person



Most respondents also highlighted the range of roles and responsibilities that these designated individuals have. For many of these schools these individuals lead all EEE and wider careers-related activities including, developing and maintaining links with key organisations (such as Careers Wales and their Education Business Exchange (EBE) tool, and Big Ideas Wales), leading on mock interviews, linking with employers and sharing good practice across the school.

Several of these individuals had senior leaderships roles, for example an assistant headteacher overseeing World of Work education across all key stages and an assistant headteacher working in partnership with a careers coordinator and local Careers Wales representatives. Others act as heads of careers or careers coordinators.

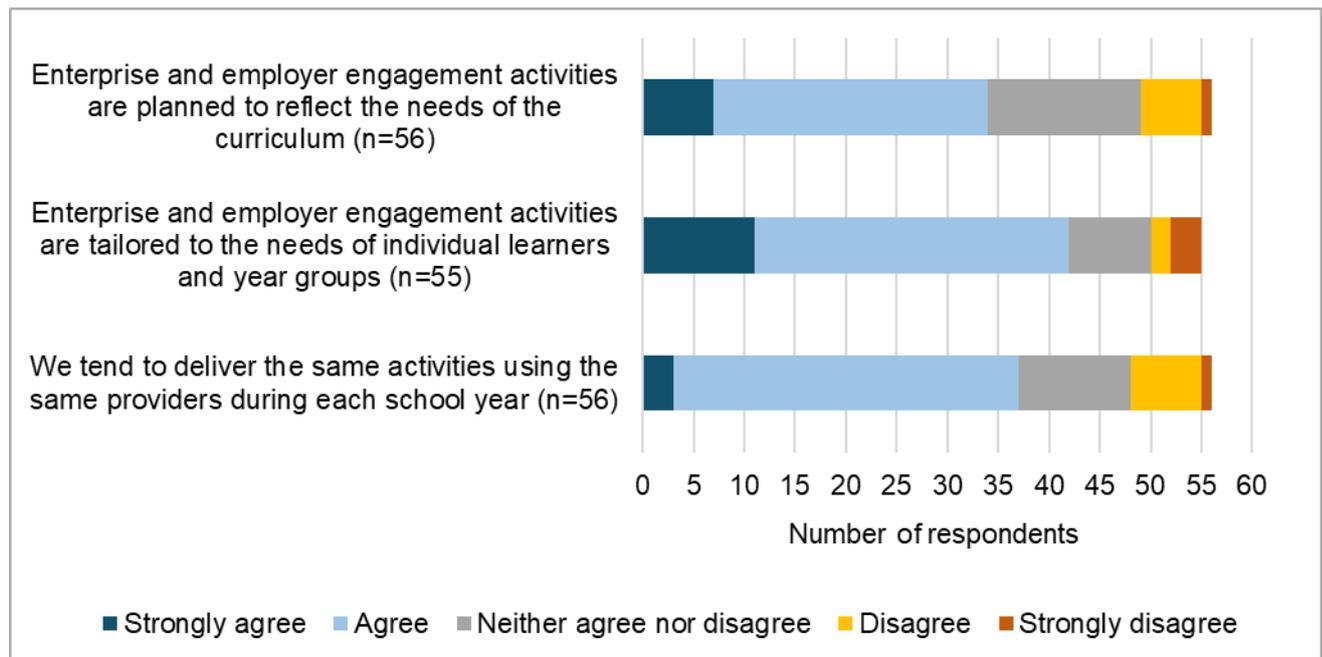
The majority of respondents either agreed (27 out of 56 – 48%) or strongly agreed (7 out of 56 – 13%) that EEE activities are planned to reflect the needs of the curriculum. Slightly higher numbers also either agreed (31 out of 55 – 56%) or strongly agreed (11 out of 55 – 20%) that EEE activities are tailored to the needs of individual learners and year groups. In some cases, schools cited the Careers Wales Career Check that is carried out to support and inform schools' planning of CWRE activities. Survey data suggests that the majority of secondary schools have embedded EEE activities within school structures for curriculum planning and are also offering personalised experiences for learners, highlighted as a key feature of successful delivery in the literature review.

A small minority disagreed (6 out of 56 – 11%) or strongly disagreed (1 – 2%) with regards to planning EEE to reflect the needs of the curriculum, however, suggesting that for some schools EEE activities remain more ad hoc.

'We audit the career interests of the students and try to tailor our employer engagement to address their needs. We are keen to try a variety of employer engagement each year. Welsh Bac and Careers Wales are integral to our system.'
Survey respondent (secondary school)

The majority of respondents either agreed (34 out of 56 – 61%) or strongly agreed (3 out of 56 – 5%) that they tended to deliver the same activities, using the same providers, year on year. This indicates that most schools have a consistent offer and partnership structures in place with employers and supporting agencies such as Careers Wales, with one respondent noting, *'there are core activities that are repeated annually'* while another reported *'we are growing our employer engagement offer.'*

Figure 4.2: Respondent views on planning and tailoring EEE activities



Source: School survey

4.3 Types of enterprise and employer engagement (EEE) activities in schools

The most frequent EEE activities delivered by secondary schools that responded to the survey are activities that develop learners’ enterprise skills and knowledge of business at KS4 (29 out of 51 responses – 57%); attendance at careers fairs for KS4 students (27 out of 51 responses – 53%), presentations from local employers to KS4 students (26 out of 51 – 51%) and mock interviews for KS4 students (22 out of 51 responses – 43%). Workplace experiences for KS4 students are provided by a little under half of the schools that responded (21 out of 51 responses – 41%) and other activities taking place at KS4 include STEM-focused activities (13 out of 51 – 25%) and digital activities (14 out of 51 responses – 27%).

These figures highlight that the majority of careers advice and EEE activities take place at KS4 level, year 10 and 11 students, focusing on students who will be making choices with regards to further learning, more specialised learning or training pathways or potentially leaving school and aiming to find employment. While the main focus is currently on KS4 students the survey findings illustrate that some secondary schools are developing a continuum of provision from KS3 onwards and through to the sixth form.

It is notable that 20 out of 51 schools (39%) deliver STEM activities at KS3 level, illustrating the renewed focus on developing learner engagement and progression in these subjects through initiatives such as Technocamps and STEM Cymru. Some schools (9 out of 51 – 18%) organise presentations by local employers at KS3, indicating that some EEE activities are targeted towards younger learners and their aspirations rather than just those students who are making key choices. The literature review findings suggest that starting early is a

key feature of successful EEE provision and these findings plus those from the primary schools outlined in questions 7 and 8 indicate that there is a growing focus on developing this type of provision.

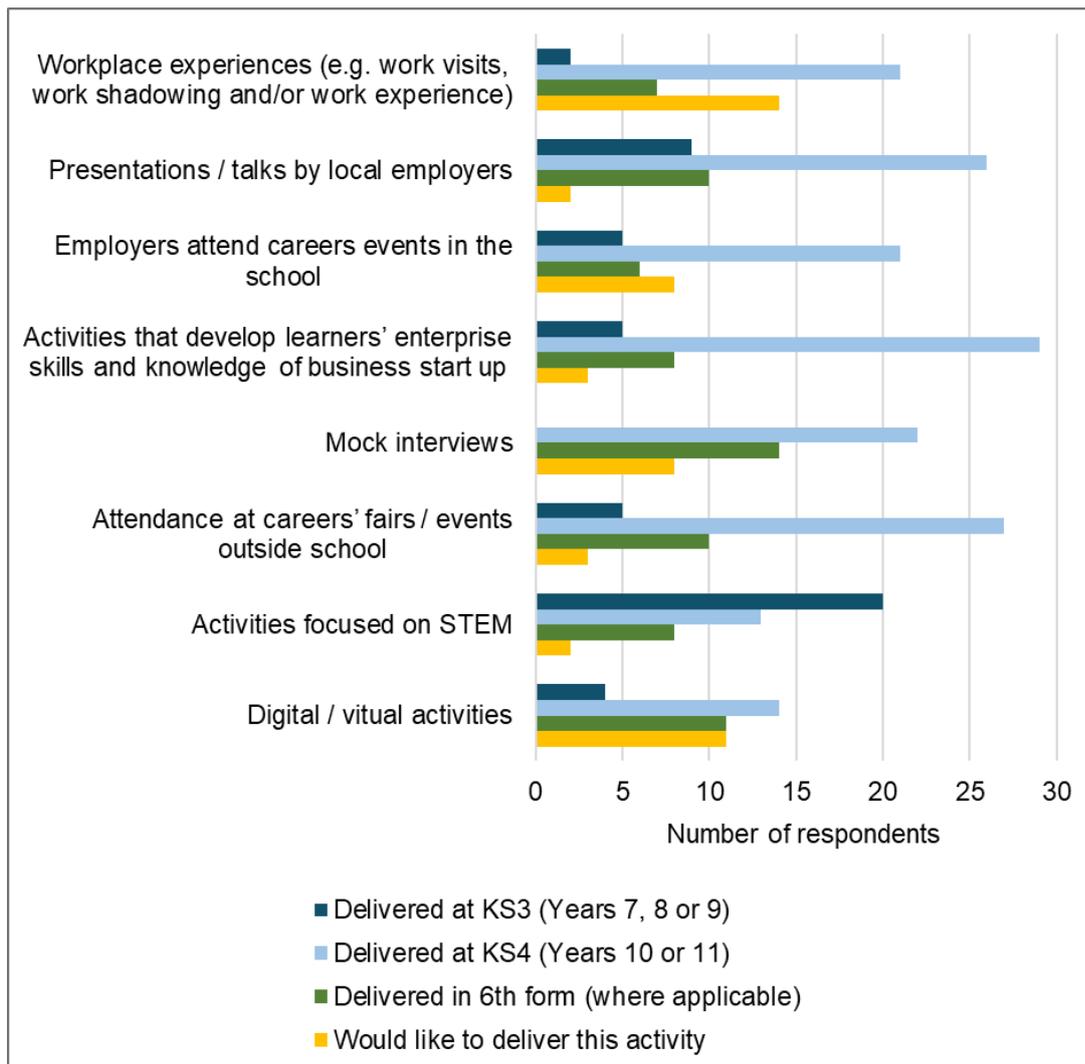
Schools that reported on activities delivered at sixth form referred most commonly to mock interviews, digital activities, employer talks and opportunities to attend careers fairs. This suggests that, while there is a continuum of provision, it is not common across the majority of schools and that the intensity and scale of EEE activities in most schools diminishes after KS4.

Secondary schools also indicated the types of activities they would like to deliver. The most common desired activities were workplace experiences with 14 out of 51 schools (27%) and digital learning (11 out of 51 – 22%). A smaller number of schools would like employers to attend events in schools and develop mock interviews. These findings indicate that, while some schools provide comprehensive EEE activities others face barriers in providing a range of opportunities to engage with employers. Written comments cite resources as a barrier, along with limited capacity to develop digital provision. Further commentary on potential barriers that may account for these gaps in provision is outlined in section 4.7.

Respondents also provided additional qualitative comments to support their answers. Several noted that they target specific groups of learners through the activities outlined above. Examples include those learners at risk of being NEET and raising aspirations of female learners to study STEM subjects. Several schools also noted that they were in the process of developing some aspects of their provision e.g. digital provision and employer visits across key stages, which will contribute to addressing some of the gaps highlighted above and has the potential to embed EEE within the curriculum and wider school ethos.

'We are also involved with the Inspire to Achieve programme again this year for our potential NEET pupils. Last year was a great success with college visits arranged along with work experience, which the pupils found extremely beneficial.' **Survey respondent (secondary school)**

Figure 4.3: EEE activities delivered at different key stages by secondary schools



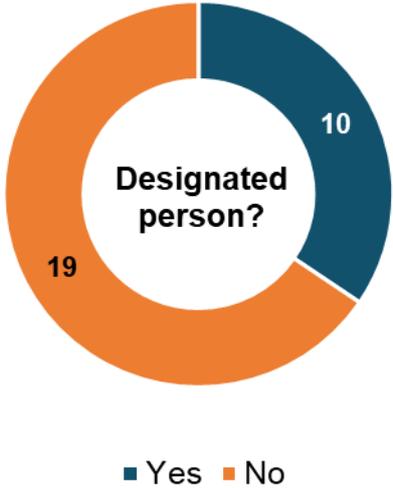
Source: School survey

4.4 Planning enterprise and employer engagement (EEE) activity in primary and special schools

10 (34%) of primary and special schools which responded to the survey have a designated person responsible for EEE while 19 (66%) do not. Eight respondents provided further detail regarding the nature of these designated individuals' roles and these include those at senior level e.g. a head teacher and deputy headteacher and those in other roles such as professional learning leads, team leaders and key stage leads.

'The deputy headteacher is also the Careers lead. The role encompasses leading and directing staff in a number of areas that include: Gaining Careers Wales quality mark accreditation; developing a careers curriculum and organising work experience.' **Survey respondent (Special school)**

Figure 4.4: Whether primary or special schools have a dedicated person for EEE

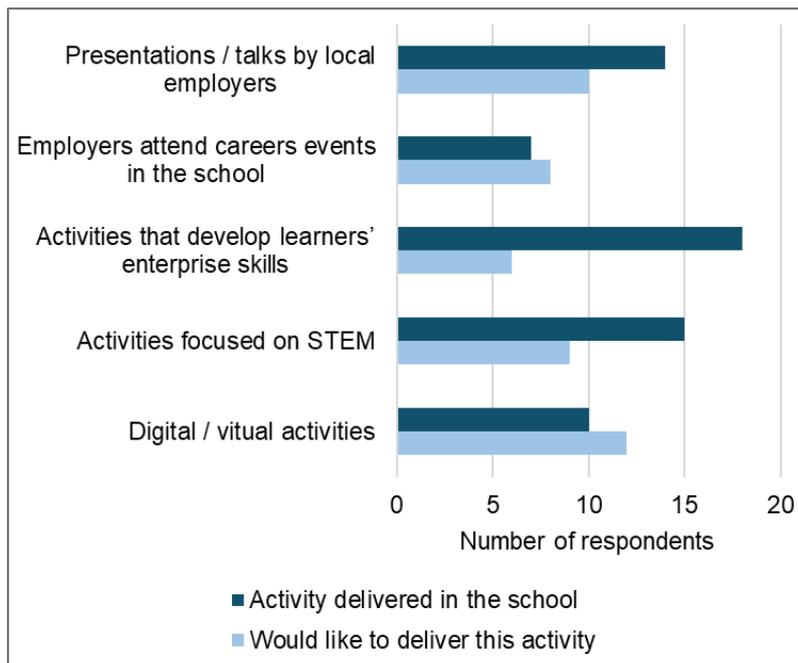


Source: School survey

The most frequent EEE activities delivered by surveyed primary and special schools are activities that develop learners’ enterprise skills (18 out of 29 respondents – 62%); activities focused on STEM (15 out of 29 – 52%) and presentations undertaken by local employers (14 out of 29 – 48%). 10 out of 29 respondents (34%) also reported delivering digital or virtual activities and 7 out of 29 (24%) reported arranging for employers to attend careers events in the school. Examples of these activities include learners visiting local retailers to discuss business and enterprise, starting a business club and arranging class visits to place of work on a life skills programme.

Some other primary and special schools that responded expressed a desire to deliver the activities above. The main gaps are digital provision with 12 out of 29 (41%) respondents noting they would like to develop this activity, as well as presentations from employers, with 10 out of 29 (34%) of respondents noting they would like to develop this activity. This suggests that while the majority of primary schools provide a broad range of EEE activities there is a significant minority that do not offer this provision and that key barriers exist to engaging with employers and organising events as well as access to digital provision.

Figure 4.5: EEE activities delivered by primary and special schools



Source: School survey

4.5 Awareness of enterprise and employer engagement (EEE) programmes and support

There is a divide amongst all school survey respondents with regards the range of EEE activities and resources available and the support they receive from their schools e.g. CPD and SMT support to deliver activities. Out of a total of 73 secondary and primary schools under half either agreed (28 – 38%) or strongly agreed (4 – 5%) that they were aware of the range of EEE activities, 15 (21%) neither agreed nor disagreed while 24 (33%) disagreed and 2 (3%) disagreed strongly. There was no marked difference in responses between primary and secondary schools.

Similar findings with regards to awareness of resources on Hwb to support enterprise teaching were reported, 28 out of 73 (38%) agreed, a further 5 (7%) strongly. 10 respondents (14%) neither agreed nor disagreed while 26 (36%) disagreed, a further 4 (5%) strongly.

These survey responses suggest that there remains a gap in awareness with regard to the support that exists to develop EEE and resources to enhance provision of enterprise teaching. Around a third of secondary schools disagreed that they were aware of the range of EEE activities available. A higher proportion (around 40 per cent) of primary and special schools disagreed with the same statement.

The literature review highlights inequalities in careers related provision and these responses suggest that there remain gaps in schools' awareness of EEE opportunities.

'I was unaware of any resources on Hwb nor am I aware of any training for newer staff.' **Survey respondent (special school)**

More positive findings were reported by schools with regards to support from senior management teams (SMT) to deliver EEE activities. 21 respondents out of 72 (29%) strongly agreed that they had SMT support while a further 30 respondents (42%) agreed. 14 respondents (19%) neither agreed nor disagreed while 7 (10%) either disagreed or disagreed strongly. This indicates that there are school support structures to allow staff to develop and lead EEE activities and that individuals from SMT are prepared to back their delivery.

Support can also be provided through professional learning however respondents were again split with regards to the provision of CPD to improve their ability to deliver EEE. 18 out of 72 (25%) respondents agreed with a further 3 (4%) strongly agreeing. 26 (36%) neither agreed nor disagreed, while 19 (26%) disagreed, a further 6 (8%) disagreed strongly. This indicates again a divide between schools and the capacity, resources and support they have.

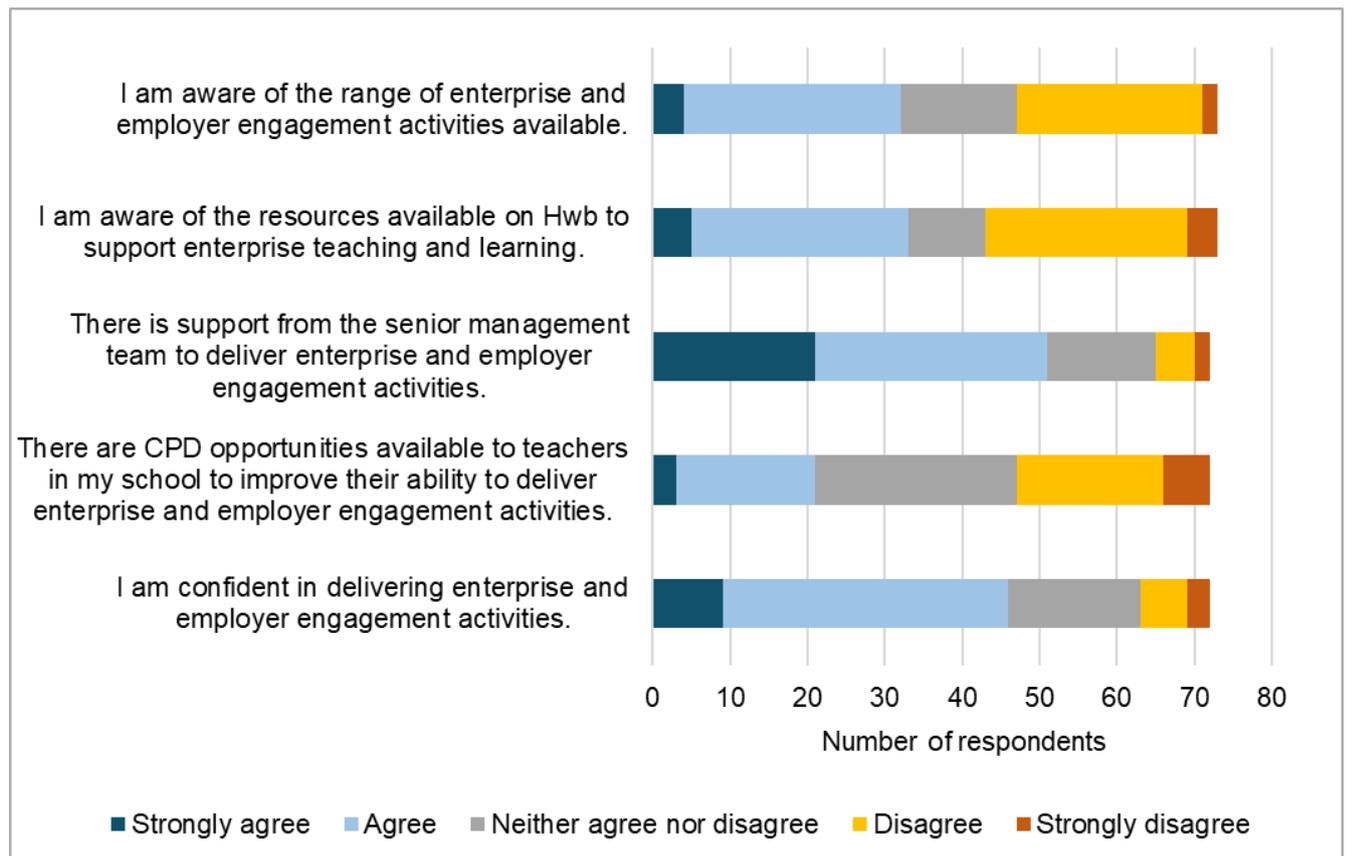
[Translated] 'I would like to develop the professional development opportunities for teachers in the school to improve their ability to run enterprise activities and maintain partnerships with employers, feel that some departments have strong connections but maybe there aren't other departments with connections.' **Survey respondent (secondary school)⁴**

Confidence levels to deliver EEE activities were nonetheless relatively high with the majority of respondents expressing positive views. 37 out of 72 respondents (51%) agreed that they were confident in delivering activities while a further 9 (13%) agreed strongly. 17 (24%) neither agreed nor disagreed while 6 (8%) disagreed, a further 3 (4%) strongly.

It therefore appears, that despite the lack of professional training and awareness of support for EEE activities in a majority of schools those charged with designing and delivering have confidence in their own abilities and the backing of SMT in many cases. This suggests a base of knowledge that could be built upon through better targeting and promotion of support and resources in future, particularly to those schools and areas of Wales that may currently be missing out.

⁴ Original: *'Hoffwn ddatblygu'r cyfleoedd datblygu proffesiynol i athrawon yn yr ysgol i wella'u gallu i gynnal gweithgareddau mentergarwch a chynnal partneriaethau gyda chyflogwyr, teimlo bod rhai adrannau gyda cysylltiadau cryf ond efallai nad oes adrannau eraill gyda chysylltiadau.'*

Figure 4.6: Views on EEE activities and resources available and support received



Source: School survey

4.6 Partners and providers

Schools most frequently reported working with Careers Wales to support EEE activities, with over three quarters of respondents (45 out of 58 – 78%) identifying Careers Wales as a partner.⁵ Schools also frequently reported working with various local and national private sector businesses, again with over three quarters of respondents identifying such partners (44 out of 58 – 76%). Examples of local and national businesses given by respondents include banks, industrial and manufacturing businesses, local shops and tourism and hospitality businesses.

Big Ideas Wales was also identified as a partner by 40% of respondents (23 out of 58)⁶, as well as a range of public bodies and associated projects which were identified by 34% of respondents (20 out of 58). Examples of public bodies given by respondents include local authorities, the NHS and education consortia.

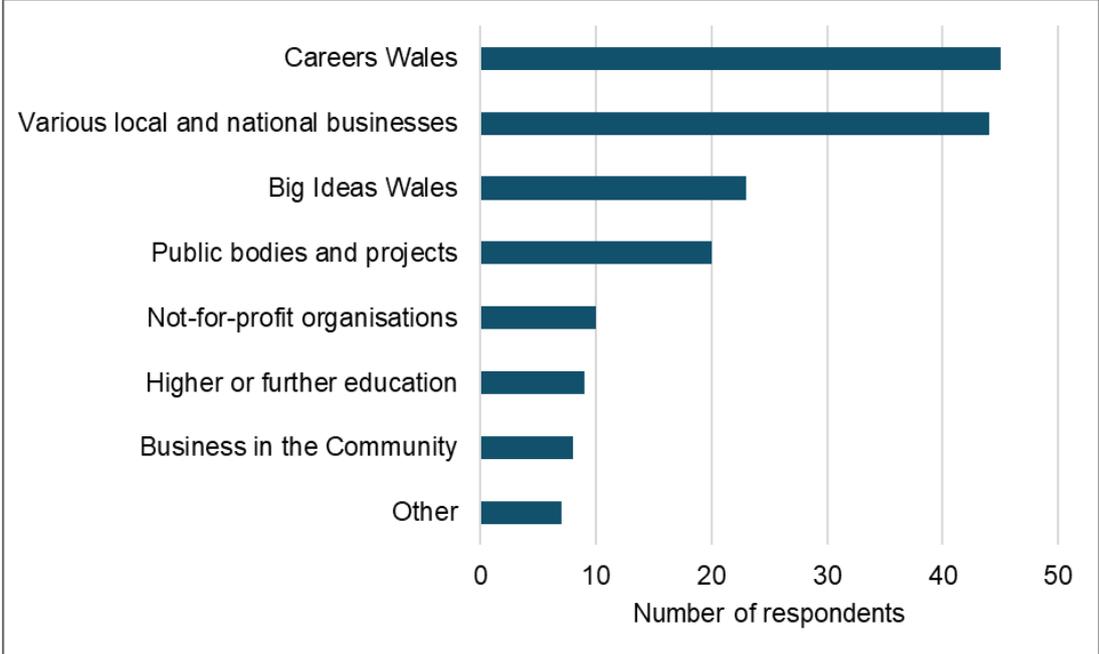
A smaller number of respondents also identified various not-for-profit organisations with which they have worked (10 out of 58 – 17%), such as STEM Cymru, or simply stated they

⁵ Of the 45 schools that indicated they were working with Careers Wales, 40 were secondary schools, 4 were special schools and 1 was a middle school.

⁶ Of the 23 schools that named Big Ideas Wales as a partner, 21 were secondary schools and 2 were primary schools.

had worked with 'charities'. A further nine respondents out of 58 (16%) identified various further and higher education institutions with which they had worked and eight respondents out of 58 (14%) identified Business in the Community as a partner.

Figure 4.7: Partners with which schools report having worked



Source: School survey

Respondents provided additional comments on a range of activities and initiatives delivered by these providers and partners that they consider having worked well for their learners. These have involved activities supported by national organisations and programmes along with more regional initiatives and individual school-led enterprise and employer engagement. Some have been whole-school activities while others were more targeted towards learners in certain year groups, particularly years 9, 10 and 11 in secondary schools.

Some activities were designed around awareness e.g. careers information events linked to subjects such as languages, catering, arts and media and parent children careers days while others directly engaged with a range of local employers to raise aspirations and provide work experience.

'The children have visited business premises to talk to the owners and learn about the industry (including Pizza Hut, Co-op and Tesco). This has been an excellent initiative for the children during our Entrepreneurial Weeks where the children have been learning about various aspects of business and marketing a product.' **Survey respondent (primary school)**

Careers Wales are reported to have helped some schools support the development of a coherent vision for careers and enterprise working while others pointed to the sharing of ideas through school clusters and regional initiatives. For several schools, follow up

activities to allow learners to engage independently once awareness has been raised were key to sustaining progress.

'The careers festival organised by Careers Wales and Powys council is a great way of engaging students. We take Y9,10,12 every year. Big Ideas Wales role models are very popular and students enjoy their sessions. Welsh Bac SCC provides excellent opportunities for students to develop innovative ideas linked to their career options. Careers Wales have been instrumental in supporting us with employer engagement through the EBE and through our careers advisor.' **Survey respondent (secondary school)**

4.7 Barriers to delivering enterprise and employer engagement (EEE) activities

The majority of schools responding to the survey have faced barriers to delivering EEE activities. 47 out of 66 responses (71%) indicated they had while 19 (29%) had not encountered any barriers. Those respondents which have faced barriers provided further detail regarding these. The most commonly cited was 'lack of staff time', reported by 27 out of 47 schools (57%), followed by the 'cost of accessing support / programmes' reported by 21 schools (45%).

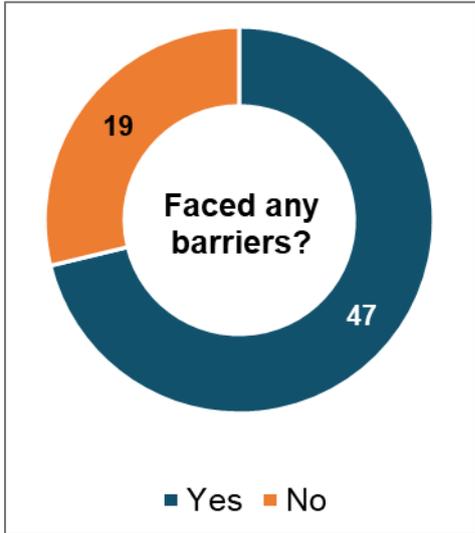
Where schools provided further information, they referred to transport costs associated with taking groups or classes to particular activities. Another barrier was EEE 'was considered less of a priority than other areas of learning', this was raised by 20 out of 47 schools (43%), while 'lack of staff knowledge and expertise' was cited by 14 out of 47 schools (30%).

Schools also outlined a range of other barriers in further qualitative comments. These included the demands of the curriculum on pupil time and the pressure of exams along with issues regarding some teachers being reluctant to release pupils for EEE activities. Schools also highlighted difficulties in getting local employers to engage alongside other challenges linked to inequalities in provision such as funding for transport and specialist clothing and not enough opportunities for learners with SLD/PMLD.

'The special school sector is poorly supported despite the fact that many of our young people are physically capable of work.' **Survey respondent (special school)**

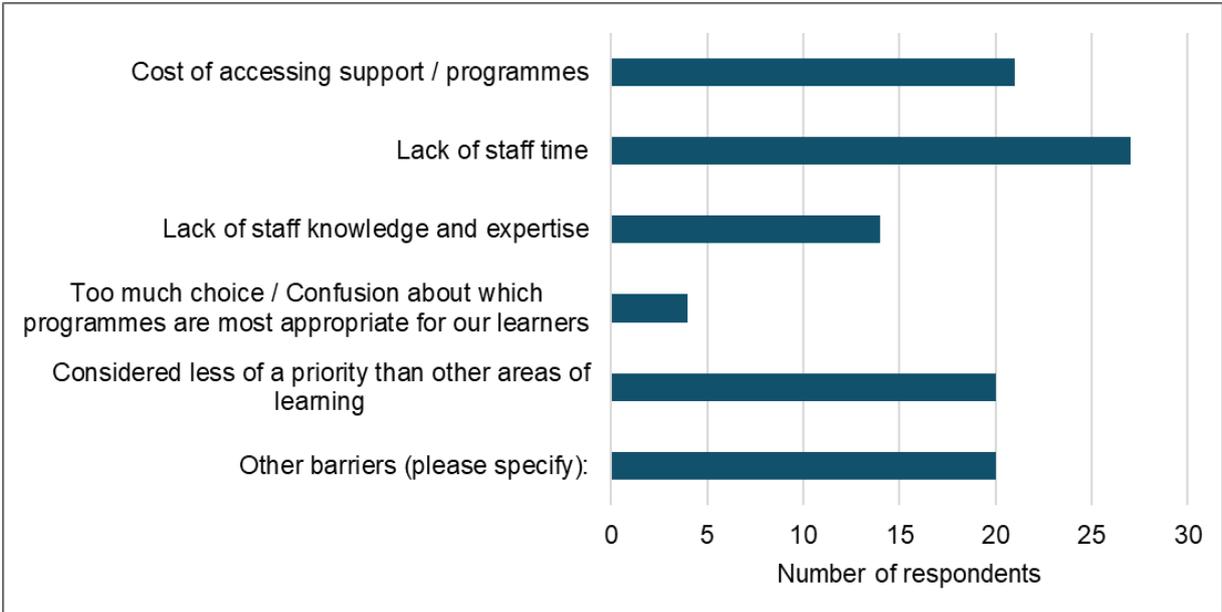
These challenges are similar to some of those highlighted in the literature review, for example the lack of support and time for practitioners to deliver EEE activities. The availability of, and access to, resources, trusted information and employers is linked to inequalities within some aspects of provision while some disadvantaged groups appear to miss out on opportunities to participate. Some of the main barriers highlighted by schools can be addressed through professional learning and a more consistent and embedded approach to EEE, linking to the curriculum and SMT support.

Figure 4.8: Whether schools have faced barriers to delivering EEE activities



Source: School survey

Figure 4.9: Barriers faced by schools in delivering EEE activities



Source: School survey

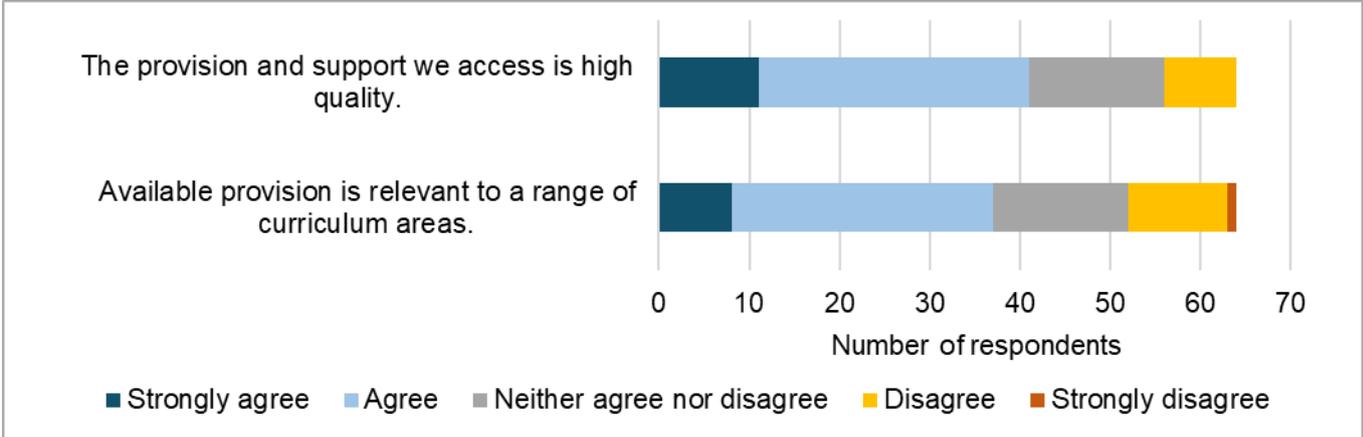
4.8 Quality and impact and enterprise and employer engagement (EEE)

Survey respondents expressed largely positive views on the provision and support available to them, with almost the majority agreeing (30 out of 64 – 47%) or agreeing strongly (11 out of 64 – 17%) that the provision and support they access is high quality. Over half of respondents also agreed (29 out of 64 – 45%) or agreed strongly (8 out of 64 – 13%) that available provision is relevant to a range of curriculum areas. Just under a quarter of respondents (15 out of 64 – 23%) neither agreed nor disagreed with both of these statements.

A minority disagreed with both statements (8 out of 64 – 13% and 11 out of 64 – 17%, respectively). Only one respondent strongly disagreed that available provision is relevant to a range of curriculum areas.

A few respondents elaborated on their response. Several noted that their experience of engaging with particular support organisations had been a positive experience. A couple of respondents noted that EEE is easier in some curriculum areas than others, one citing STEM subjects as an example.

Figure 4.10: Views on quality of provision available



Source: School survey

Survey respondents generally expressed positive views with regards to the impact of EEE activities on learners, staff and the wider school. Respondents were particularly positive with regards to the impact of activities in developing the skills and aspirations of learners. 39 out of 64 respondents (61%) agreed that EEE activities in their respective schools develops the enterprise skills of learners, with a further 11 (17%) strongly agreeing.

Similar numbers agreed that engagement with employers inspires and raises the aspirations of learners, with 39 out of 63 respondents (62%) agreeing and a further 12 (19%) strongly agreeing. Numbers disagreeing with these statements were small, 6 respondents out of 64 (9%), and 5 out of 63 (8%) respectively and no further qualitative evidence was offered for these views.

‘Through our world of work project, pupils surveyed responded that they had become more resilient and had developed increased confidence, competence and collaboration skills.’ **Survey respondent (primary school)**

Respondents were also generally in agreement with regards to the positive impact of EEE activities on learner attainment. 29 out of 62 respondents (47%) agreed that this was the case in their schools, with another 12 (19%) agreeing strongly. 13 respondents (21%) neither agreed nor disagreed, while 8 (13%) disagreed.

These figures indicate that, for the strong majority of schools, EEE activities are valued for their positive impact on learners. The findings link to those from the literature review, which

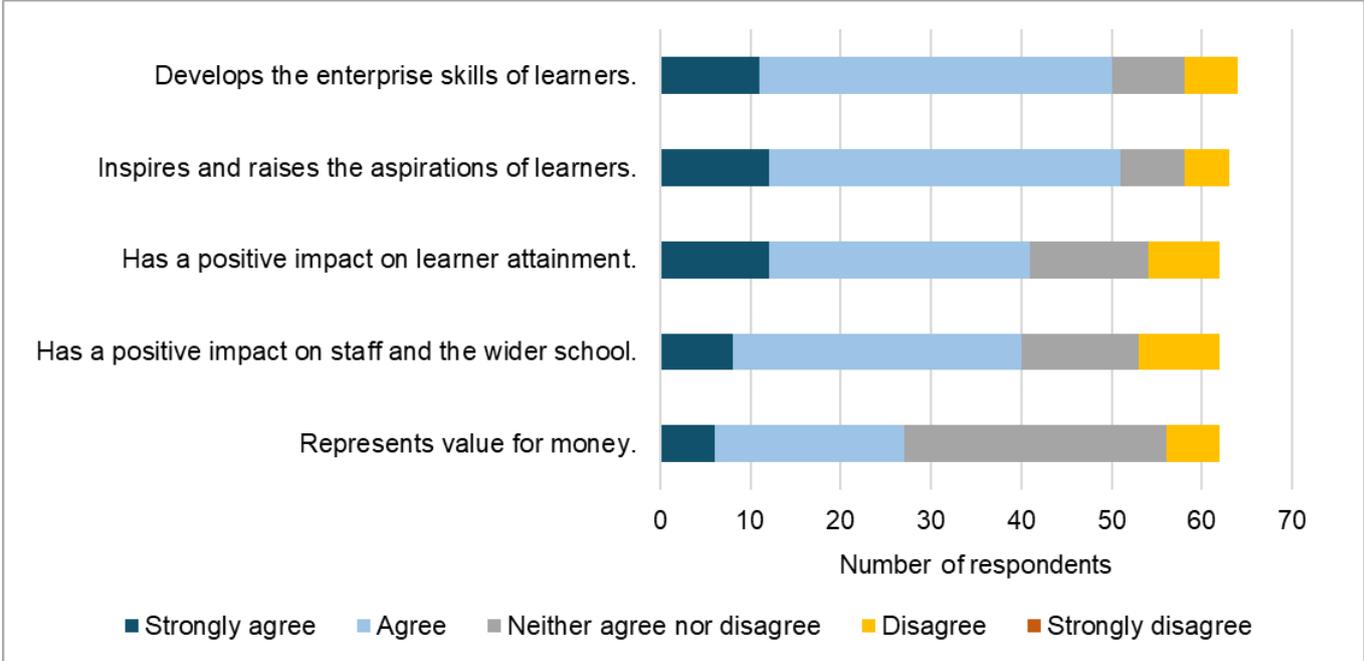
suggests a positive impact on learners’ wellbeing, self-esteem, engagement with learning and creation of personal networks along with developing a better understanding of the world of work, and the knowledge and skills required to progress in employment.

‘The careers festival organised by Careers Wales and the local authority is a great way of engaging students. Big Ideas Wales role models are very popular and students enjoy their sessions. The Welsh Bac Skills Challenge Certificate provides excellent opportunities for students to develop innovative ideas linked to their career options. Careers Wales have been instrumental in supporting employer engagement through the EBE and through our Careers Advisor.’ **Survey respondent (secondary school)**

Respondents were also largely in agreement with regards to the positive impact of EEE activities on their staff and the wider school. 32 out of 62 respondents (52%) agreed that this was the case, with a further 8 (13%) strongly agreeing. 13 respondents (21%) neither agreed nor disagreed while 9 (15%) disagreed. Little further qualitative evidence was supplied to support these views however several schools highlighted the positive impact that EEE was having on their partnerships in their communities and the development of staff skills and knowledge.

Respondents were more neutral on whether EEE activities represent value for money. Almost half of the respondents (29 out of 62 – 47%) neither agree nor disagreed. 21 out of 62 agreed (34%), a further 6 (10%) strongly, while another 6 (10%) disagreed. Further qualitative comments suggest that some schools develop their own provision with little or no financial support from elsewhere while others felt unqualified to answer this question.

Figure 4.11: Views on the impact of EEE activities



Source: School survey

4.9 Future priorities

Schools provided a wide range of responses as to how they plan to address the requirements of Curriculum for Wales (CfW) 2022 in relation to careers and work-related experiences (CWRE). Some schools have ambitious plans to further develop their careers policies including EEE activities at a whole school level and linking to CfW requirements is an integral aspect of these approaches and vision. These schools will review schemes of learning to ensure that CWRE is linked to all Areas of Learning and Experience (AOLE) and the four core purposes of the new curriculum. Several other schools noted that they had linked their progress to the Careers Wales Mark.⁷

'I plan to put together a policy that reflects the needs of all our pupils and is in line with the requirements of CfW 2022. My vision is to have CWRE throughout every year group through a variety of avenues e.g. employer visits, digital engagement in lessons, visits to careers fairs, activities in lessons linked to CWRE, mock interviews, CV writing skills, how to find careers information independently.' **Survey respondent (secondary school)**

Others were more cautious in their approach and plan to continue to build on the links with local business and industry in a more consistent and coherent way. For some schools, this will require a review of current and previous activity and the involvement of parents and pupils in delivering new 'innovative, enterprising and sustainable' activities'. Careers Wales was viewed as a key partner in moving forwards, while some schools also expressed plans to continue to engage with initiatives such as Big Ideas Wales and link these activities directly to CWRE.

'(Maintain) continued awareness for opportunities and/or teaching of CWRE; continued liaison with Careers Wales to access improved CWRE resources; to gain the Careers Wales Mark and thus to be in the annual cycle of development and evaluation ensuring that CWRE remains a key focus and priority for the school' **Survey respondent (secondary school)**

Around half a dozen respondents indicated they did not know, outlining that for some schools more identification of types of support available will be needed. A range of further suggestions were provided by respondents below.

4.10 Additional support

Respondents made a number of suggestions for additional support. Some respondents required more funding, with several suggesting grants for transport to careers events and employer visits while several others proposed incentives for employers to engage. More time for teachers to organise and prepare EEE activities was another suggestion from a number of respondents. Some schools require more strategic advice regarding linking activities to CWRE with suggestions for modelling of good practice and developing CWRE

⁷ Note: The Minister for Education announced that Careers Wales would take forward the development of a new Careers Wales Quality Award (CWQA) for good careers guidance in schools.

curriculum leads to support schools to embed provision effectively. This links to several comments from schools for more support for professional learning in order to allow their staff to embed EEE in their teaching.

Others, including a number of primary school representatives, called for a more locally focused approach using community partners to identify employers who are willing to work with schools. Sharing resources and using new technologies were additional suggestions to support schools, which link to the final views from schools as to how to support and sustain EEE activities with their partners under the 'new normal'.

'Signposting a list of employers who are willing to contribute to career's development in primary schools as this wasn't easy to find last time we did the topic. When we did find details of people through the Welsh Government careers website, many were unavailable or preferred to engage with secondary schools.' **Survey respondent (primary school)**

4.11 Digital provision

With regards to future EEE activity under the 'new normal' survey respondents provided a range of responses. The use of new technologies was obviously a key focus for respondents who outlined the potential for masterclasses, employer visits and motivational talks from entrepreneurs to take place online. For schools this could include digital activities designed for assemblies or for curriculum-based work as well as the opportunity to deliver mock interviews and pre-recorded employer question and answer sessions. For some respondents the use of new technologies was linked to a more flexible, personalised approach however others stated that digital activity could not provide the impact of visits to, and from, employers.

'We will be looking to use the digital resources that employers have created through Careers Wales, either in lessons, registration or assembly time and with any year group where applicable. Year 11 are our main focus this year along with Year 10, as careers advice this year is even more crucial under the current circumstances.' **Survey respondent (secondary school)**

Key findings from the survey

- The majority of secondary schools have a designated person responsible for EEE, have embedded activities within school structures and have established partnerships. However, in some schools activities remain more ad hoc with more limited opportunities to engage with employers or the capacity to develop digital provision.
- The majority of primary schools have a designated person responsible for EEE activities. The most frequent activities are developing learners' enterprise skills, activities focused on STEM and presentations by local employers. Key barriers are lack of opportunities to engage with employers and access to digital provision.

- Most EEE activities take place at KS4 (years 10 and 11 students) although some secondary schools are developing a continuum of provision from KS3 onwards. The most frequent activities are attendance at careers fairs, presentations by local employers and activities that develop learners' enterprise skills and knowledge of business.
- There is a lack of awareness among some primary and secondary schools of the resources and partnerships available to support EEE activities. A third of practitioners who responded to the survey disagreed that there are CPD opportunities available in their school to improve EEE provision.
- Key barriers to EEE are lack of staff time, the costs of accessing support, EEE being considered less of a priority than other areas of learning and a lack of staff knowledge and expertise.
- Enterprise and employer engagement activities are having a positive impact on learners' aspirations, skills and attainment in the majority of schools. Positive impacts were also reported on staff skills and engagement with local communities.
- Approaches considered to have worked well were:
 - Activities that enrich and tie in with areas of the curriculum across a range of subjects;
 - Support from national and local partners to develop a school-wide vision and strategy for careers and enterprise;
 - Presentations delivered by business role models (notably speakers arranged by Big Ideas Wales);
 - Careers fairs, including designated time to explore careers and enterprise as a whole-school topic, culminating in a careers fair with taster sessions and employer talks;
 - Presentations by employers to year groups, supplemented by opportunities to engage with employers/presenters in smaller groups; schools cited the benefits of contacts made through the EBE.
- Some activities were designed around awareness e.g. careers information events linked to subjects such as languages, catering, arts and media and parent children careers days while others directly engaged with a range of local employers to raise aspirations and provide work experience.
- Future priorities for schools' EEE activities include addressing the requirements of Curriculum for Wales in relation to careers and work-related experiences (CWRE) and developing a whole school approach to EEE provision and more consistent partnerships with employers.

- Schools expressed interest in further opportunities to access digital / virtual activities, strategic advice regarding linking EEE activities to CWRE and professional learning for staff.

5. Conclusions and next steps

5.1 Enterprise and employer engagement provision in Wales

The breadth and diversity of initiatives identified during this study can be viewed as a strength of the existing EEE landscape in Wales. It provides schools with choices - for those schools that are able to effectively assess options - and make informed decisions. It is not evident, however, that existing provision is necessarily rich and varied by design. Stakeholders considered that existing arrangements have sometimes emerged in an uncoordinated way, leading to examples of duplication of provision and suggesting that there is scope for a more systematic and streamlined approach.

Enterprise and employer engagement initiatives are delivered in all parts of Wales and coverage appears good, principally as a result of national initiatives delivered by Careers Wales and Big Ideas Wales, among others. However, some schools reported that they face challenges in forming sustainable partnerships with employers and in delivering workplace experiences. Stakeholders interviewed also reported that schools in rural and economically disadvantaged areas, in particular, can face barriers to engaging with employers.

5.2 Planning and delivery of enterprise and employer engagement in schools

The study found variations in schools' current planning and delivery of EEE activities. The majority of secondary schools that contributed to the research reported that they have well-established EEE arrangements in place, along with good partnerships that support planning. The support of external agencies, notably Careers Wales, is integral to EEE activity in many of these secondary schools. Schools reported that careers provision is tailored to the needs of learners, with some developing a continuum of provision from KS3 onwards.

Approximately a third of secondary schools who completed the survey reported that they did not have a written plan or strategy for careers. These schools were more likely to also report that they did not have a designated person responsible for enterprise / employer engagement. These schools also reported more limited opportunities to engage with employers through visits or workplace programmes. A similar situation was reported by primary schools, with a majority providing a range of EEE activities but with a significant minority not currently engaged.

While the survey reflects the situation in only a sample of schools across Wales the findings nevertheless illustrate inconsistency in how EEE is planned and delivered. The literature review highlights inequalities in careers related provision as being a key barrier to delivering positive outcomes for all students. Stakeholders interviewed also highlighted the variability and inconsistency of delivery across schools in Wales, highlighting challenges such as capacity, structures, resources and the skills and confidence of teaching staff.

Reflecting on EEE and careers programmes in the context of wider education reforms in Wales, it is essential that schools have embedded careers and employer engagement plans that meet their learners' needs and are supported at a whole-school level. The new Careers Quality Award and statutory guidance could potentially support schools in achieving this.

5.3 Delivery and demand for digital provision

The range of digital interventions and resources has increased, with providers demonstrating their ability to adapt their delivery in response to school closures and remote working during lockdown. Partners are committed to continuing to extend opportunities for schools to access EEE activities through virtual and digital methods. Evidence from schools indicates that there is likely to be sustained, with ongoing demand for digital interventions in a range of formats, including employer talks and masterclasses, virtual mock interviews, online careers fairs, and motivational talks from entrepreneurs

Schools also foresee a demand for digital activities designed for assemblies and to support curriculum delivery across a range of AoLEs. For some contributors to the study, the expansion of digital delivery provided the potential for more flexible, personalised approaches to support learners as they progress. Others highlighted the positive impact for learners of face to face encounters with employers through school or workplace visits and expressed a desire for these to continue. Moving forward, there will be the demand for a blended approach.

Evidence regarding the efficacy of existing digital approaches is limited. Providers are encouraged by the fact that virtual interventions carry the potential to engage with larger numbers of schools and learners, with schools able to signpost learners to resources, webinars, virtual workplace visits that are tailored to learners' areas of interest. However, as yet, little is known about the impact or influence of these approaches on learner decisions in comparison with face-to-face or *in situ* experiences and consideration will have to be given as to how these encounters can be measured. There are also considerations with regards to safeguarding, as with any face to face intervention.

It is important any future research on the efficacy of digital delivery considers its contribution to improving access to opportunities for learners. A key question to be examined – and one that was not part of the remit of this study – is whether digital interventions currently supporting greater equity, quality and depth of engagement with employers and, if so, what can be done to enhance this process in future? The potential of digital to contribute to brokerage activities also needs to be considered.

5.4 Impact of enterprise and employer engagement in Wales

Despite limited monitoring and evaluation there is nonetheless some evidence with regards to the impact of EEE activities. Surveyed schools were particularly positive about the impact of these activities in developing the enterprise skills and aspirations of learners, with the majority considering they have also had an impact of learner attainment. Key common impacts identified across case studies were increases in learners' confidence, knowledge of

the world of work and motivation to progress. Several of the case study projects also identified learner progress in terms of academic attainment and soft skills such as teamwork and communication.

The findings link to those from the literature, which suggests a positive impact on learners' wellbeing, self-esteem and engagement with wider learning through these activities. EEE was also reported by surveyed schools to enhance partnerships in their communities and the development of staff skills and knowledge. This again links to literature review findings, which sees opportunities for the creation of personal networks through engagement with employers to support learners' reflection, exploration and dialogue with the world of work.

Stakeholders underlined the importance of providing learners to gain insights into the world of work at an early stage and develop a creative and entrepreneurial mindset. This echoes the findings of the literature review, which indicated that starting early is a key feature of successful EEE provision. Developing further provision for primary schools should therefore be a focus of a more consistent and joined up approach to EEE.

Approaches considered to have worked well included activities that enrich and tie in with areas of the curriculum across a range of subjects; tailored support for schools to develop a vision and strategy for careers and enterprise; presentations from employers; themed enterprise projects; and careers fairs.

Key features of enterprise and employer engagement activity

Drawing on findings from across the three components of this study, features of effective EEE activity include:

- The development of a coordinated programme of activity across all Key Stages, ensuring there is a continuum of provision at a whole-school level that is aligned with the curriculum and meets learners' needs.
- Having an appropriately qualified and experienced careers leader;
- An emphasis on personalised experiences for individual learners;
- Partnerships between schools, external providers and employer representatives where there is a clear vision and mutual understanding of what is expected to be achieved.
- School-wide recognition of the value of EEE activities supported by provision of professional learning opportunities to enhance practitioner understanding and delivery.
- Good management and communication between employers, providers and schools to allow for successful partnership.

5.5 Barriers and gaps in provision

A number of barriers to EEE have been identified through the study, which are leading to gaps in provision. Key issues identified by surveyed schools are the demands of the curriculum and exams on learner time along with a perceived reluctance among some teachers to release learners for activities. For a minority of schools a lack of awareness about what support and resources are available and difficulties in engaging with local

employers are also barriers, indicating the challenges for some schools in planning and developing provision. While some professional learning opportunities have been developed for secondary schools more provision will be required across primary schools and along with those in specialist roles such as careers leads practitioners. Engaging with practitioners to promote their awareness of, and commitment to, EEE activities should be part of this process.

The availability of, and access to, resources is linked by the literature to inequalities in aspects of provision with disadvantaged groups of learners missing out on opportunities to participate in EEE activities. This specific gap in provision was also highlighted by surveyed schools which reported a lack of opportunities for learners with additional learning needs. The case studies in section 3 illustrate approaches to activities targeted at some of these groups of learners. Stakeholders also highlighted the need to put greater focus on engaging with employers to support vocational and work-based learning opportunities to address inequalities.

While there is some evaluation of EEE activities in Wales, led in particular by Careers Wales, there is limited longer-term impact assessment or tracking evaluation currently available. This is contributing to a lack of understanding of the impact of interventions and how to measure the success of EEE. A more frequent and longitudinal approach is therefore needed to understand the link between levels of learner engagement, destinations and attainment along with monitoring of learners' social backgrounds and the quality and quantity of delivery and partnerships.

This will allow schools, employers and programme designers to understand the impact of their activities and support the design of principles of effective EEE. Robust data could also have a more effective role in influencing policy by demonstrating its value and indicating where more support and resources are most needed.

5.6 Next steps

Findings from the three elements of the study identify a number of considerations the Welsh Government may wish to take forward to support the continued development of EEE provision across schools in Wales:

- The new Statutory Guidance for CWRE and the new Careers Wales Quality Award should:
 - promote the **EEE resources and partnerships** available,
 - **support schools** in linking EEE activities to CWRE,
 - identify the benefits and strongly encourage schools to have a **designated person responsible for EEE**; and
 - consider the importance of **developing a mutual understanding of what is expected to be achieved through EEE activities and partnerships** (see 2.1.4).
- The Welsh Government should work with stakeholders to develop a **greater understanding of the impact of EEE interventions** at school and programme level.

- Careers Wales' Quality Award should encourage schools to build evaluations into their CWRE programme design to support their understanding of the impact of EEE activities.
- The Welsh Government should support Careers Wales to evaluate careers-related activity more systematically, enabling them to monitor trends in pupils' achievement and progression.
- Monitoring, evaluation and longitudinal tracking of the impact of EEE on learners should be explored, this could then feed into ongoing policymaking and planning relating to EEE activities.
- The Welsh Government should work with Careers Wales, schools and regional education consortia representatives to ensure that **professional learning is available to CWRE curriculum leads as well as wider teaching staff across all schools.**
- Careers Wales could consider the feasibility of developing an expanded version of **Education Business Exchange for primary schools**, this could assist in promoting EEE activities.
- The Welsh Government should work with Careers Wales to consider the lessons learnt from projects such as Inspire 2 Achieve, TRAC and Cynnydd when **supporting vulnerable learners to engage with employers.**
- Further research to develop a better understanding on **digital interventions** exploring equity, quality and depth of engagement with employers should be considered.

6. Annex A: Literature review

This section provides sets the context for the review, drawing on evidence included in published literature in Wales, the rest of the UK and internationally.

The first section of this chapter provides an overview of the Welsh Government's priorities for careers education in the context of the wider policy landscape; it also reflects on the importance of ensuring equality and the potential impact of effective EEE activity on economic prosperity. Enterprise and employer engagement activity delivered in the other UK nations is also reviewed.

The literature reviewed includes the views of employers, educators and learners within the research and provides an insight into the range of EEE activities delivered and their impact; school level processes, systems and actions that support delivery; and the type of guidance and support available for schools. The chapter also refers to examples of good practice at national and international levels, including monitoring and evaluation of enterprise and employer engagement activities and innovative approaches to delivering initiatives.

6.1 Education in Wales

The Welsh Government's strategy *Education in Wales: Our National Mission* undertakes to provide young people with 'high-quality, independent careers advice and guidance to help them make sound learning choices, develop their career management competencies and succeed in the world of work' (Welsh Government, 2017a, p. 32). The strategy commits to raising standards of teaching and learning and providing young people with the foundations for lifelong achievement as part of the ongoing drive for economic prosperity and social cohesion. It thus envisions Wales needing individuals who 'not only have a strong grasp of literacy, numeracy and digital competency, but also the critical thinking skills, imagination and resilience'.

The Welsh Government's goals contained within this strategy to assess progress and gaps in provision, support equity and identify new opportunities to innovate in delivering educational and economic progress provide further important context for this research. Therefore, this research supports the Welsh Government to 'benchmark effectively within Wales and with our international partners and ensure that policy is evidence-driven and its implementation open to regular evaluation' (Welsh Government, 2017a, p. 32).

6.1.1 Careers Education and the curriculum

In 2017 Estyn reported that partnership working between schools, employers and other organisations had substantially declined since their previous review in 2012 (Estyn, 2017, p.5; Estyn, 2012). Additionally, Estyn identified that in most cases schools did not have sufficiently rigorous processes in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the contribution of partnerships with employers to support careers education, or clear criteria to measure the impact or value for money offered by external partners (Estyn, 2017, p. 14).

Others reported similar findings, for example the Federation of Small Businesses in Wales commented on disjointed links between education and business: the report noted that links in many cases were non-existent, or that employer engagement lacked consistency and relied on employers' own motivation (FSB, 2017, p.1). The development of the new curriculum was viewed as an ideal opportunity to consider measures to improve such links, incorporating provision to support a better understanding of careers and the world of work.

The new curriculum for Wales and associated guidance were published in January 2020 (Welsh Government 2020b). Six Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLE) are set out and careers and work-related experiences (CWRE) features across these. CWRE aims to help learners develop awareness and aspirations across a range of career choices, helping to create a more diverse, economically engaged Welsh workforce in the future. The new curriculum centres on four core purposes, including that all children and young people will be 'enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work'.

A key element of Welsh education policies has been a focus on 'co-construction', working in partnership with schools and their leaders, local authorities and other stakeholders. In its response to Estyn's report that examined partnerships with employers in secondary and special schools (Estyn, 2020), the Welsh Government committed to this co-constructed approach to deliver CWRE and 'to ensure it is fit for purpose and deliverable within a range of education settings' (Welsh Government, 2020c, p. 3). This approach also addresses earlier calls for a 'jointly-owned enterprise education strategy' (FSB, 2017, p. 28).

In response to the challenge of improving learners' engagement with the world of work, changes were introduced to the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification in 2015. The requirement for learners to undertake a work experience placement was replaced by the Enterprise and Employability challenge (WJEC, 2015, p. 17). This activity was designed to support partnerships with employers in secondary and special schools whilst providing opportunities for learners to develop enterprise skills and attributes and enhance their employability.

Careers Wales addressed the challenges of EEE in its strategy by aiming to establish clear and coordinated mechanisms for businesses to engage with young people and support schools. This included enhanced support to implement the new Curriculum for Wales, an EEE database the Education Business Exchange (EBE), a quality mark for employers, and the Business Ambassador Mark to recognise excellent partnerships between business and schools (Careers Wales, 2017). Careers Wales has also worked in partnership with the Welsh Government and organisations such as Business in the Community on the Business Class initiative.

In addition to national programmes, initiatives were being piloted at a local level: in Rhondda Cynon Taf a two-year pilot of the Gatsby benchmarks of good career guidance (Gatsby, 2020) was conducted, with 14 secondary schools being supported to work towards the benchmark (RCT Council, 2020).

6.1.2 Supporting equality in education

A key element of supporting effective careers and enterprise provision is that it can support greater equity in education if delivered effectively and targeted towards those individuals in greatest need (FSB, 2017, p.7). These aims are evident as the Welsh Government commits to instigating a culture change on the Apprenticeships programme to embrace diversity and increase participation levels of protected groups (Welsh Government, 2016a, p.19). This approach links to the wider commitment outlined by the Welsh Government to create a minimum of 100,000 high quality all-age apprenticeships as part of the process of providing 'skills for life to help break the cycle of disadvantage and inequality over the longer term' (Welsh Government, 2016b, p.4).

Apprenticeships provide additional progression routes for young people as well as being a tool for supporting close partnerships between schools, employers and the further and higher education sectors. This growing focus on apprenticeships in recent years has, however, coincided with a consistent decline in vocational and other qualifications awarded in Wales (Qualifications Wales, 2020).

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act also emphasises the importance of developing a skilled population, where all individuals fulfil their potential (Welsh Government, 2015). The Equality Plan envisages sectors working with employers to develop links with local schools to deliver gender, race and disability focused pre-employment events, for example STEM occupations.

6.1.3 Economic prosperity

A key priority of the Welsh Government's policy on skills is developing 'skills that employers value' (Welsh Government, 2014a, p. 5) with the economic action plan (EAP) committing to supporting 'an entrepreneurial culture in Wales, and establishing targets for the numbers of school, college, and university leavers starting companies' (Welsh Government, 2017b). Since the Welsh Government's implementation of policy actions needed to develop a sustainable skills system in Wales (Welsh Government, 2014b, p.2), Regional Skills Partnerships have provided employer-led insight (SQW, 2019, p. 6). Part of this approach involves assessing and matching skills to the needs of the economy to track and anticipate future skills needs.

However, similarly to other parts of the UK, there are inefficiencies and mismatches in skills in Wales (National Assembly for Wales, 2019, p.18) with resulting skills gaps and shortages (Government Office for Science, 2017, p. 56). For example, it is reported that more people are required to study STEM and take up technical apprenticeships to address shortages in STEM skills in Wales (Welsh Government, 2017c, p. 59). Therefore, links between businesses and education are key to connecting learners to potential work opportunities (CBI/Pearson Education, 2019, p.29). Working Wales also contributes to addressing skills shortages by supporting individuals to undertake job specific training (Welsh Government, 2019).

Youth unemployment in Wales is below that of the UK (11.2 per cent compared to 11.6 per cent), yet the rate is considerably higher than for those aged 16 and over (3.6 per cent in Wales and 3.8. per cent for the UK) (Welsh Government, 2020a). Experiencing enterprise

and employer engagement activities can positively impact individual's economic outcomes (Hughes et al., 2016, p. 31). At an individual level it is reported that there is a statistically significant correlation across all students who experience career talks and their receipt of a wage premium 10 years later (Kashefpakdel and Percy, 2017). Therefore, developing a better understanding of EEE activity and evidence of impact will help to inform and guide future delivery in schools in Wales.

The following section presents an overview of the enterprise and employer engagement activity in the other UK regions.

6.2 Careers education and EEE in the UK

Disconnect between young people's aspirations and available jobs has been reported by young people in the UK, along with reports of limited career support available to young people (Rogers et al., 2020, p.1). If enterprise and employer engagement activity across the other UK nations is examined similar observations observed in Wales are evident however, as in Wales, a range of national policies and activities are being developed in order to enhance EEE along with careers education.

6.2.1 England

Enterprise and employer engagement with schools was reported to be 'under-developed, lack leadership and require a brokering service in England' (Institute for Employment Research, 2014, p. 6). To address this in 2014 the UK Government established the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) to work with Local Enterprise Partnerships to employ co-ordinators to build careers and employer engagement plans (UK Government, 2014). From 2015, local Jobcentre Plus (JCP) advisers have worked directly with young people in schools, to advise on work experience opportunities, routes into traineeships and apprenticeships and the local labour market.

These initiatives were followed by a comprehensive new Careers Strategy for England (UK Government 2017), which included the aim of enabling '*all young people to understand the full range of opportunities available to them, to learn from employers about work and the skills that are valued in the workplace and to have first-hand experience of the workplace.*' (Department for Education, 2017, p.4). The Strategy outlines that entrepreneurship education is an '*important component*' of high-quality careers provision and also commits to '*a critical role for employers*' to inspire young people through activities such as work experience or shadowing, workshops or talks (p.10)

Initiatives developed through the Strategy included the introduction of Career Hubs organised by the Careers and Enterprise Company. The Hubs brought together approximately 30 schools to support joint working towards achieving the Gatsby Benchmarks which the Department for Education adopted as benchmarks for good careers guidance in England in 2017, with all schools being expected to work towards these benchmarks by 2020. Each learner in England is expected to engage at least once a year with an employer (Department for Education, 2017, p.11).

A report (CEC, 2018) subsequently explored the level of employer engagement in education in England against the government's benchmark for schools that each young person encounters at least one employer a year during secondary school and participates in work experience. The report identified a volume gap in the number of engagement and highlighted a patchiness of engagement with employers.

The additional support delivered by the Career Hubs is reported to have resulted in improved networks and employer engagement (Hutchinson et al., 2019). Following these successes the model was thus expanded, with a further £2.5 million investment (UK Government, 2019). Tracking learner engagement with employers in England found that 80 per cent of young people now meet an employer every year (Percy and Tanner, 2020, p. iv).

Case study: Inspiring the Future

Inspiring the Future is a website where English schools, colleges and volunteers from the world of work connect. It is based on the concept of online match making, deploying software used by leading companies for online shopping, to provide free interactions between schools and the world of work. Volunteers from various professions pledge one hour a year to volunteer in a state school or college near where they live or work to talk to young people about their job and career route. In addition, volunteers can select a number of areas of expertise that might be of interest to students, such as how maths is used at work, financial literacy, languages, or engineering and technology. Teachers select and invite people who best meet the needs of their students from a range of sectors and professions.

Two adjacent campaigns have been launched. The project has been extended to primary schools. Primary Futures works on the same principle, but targets pupils in primary schools. The Inspiring Women campaign links working females and girls at schools with the aim of exposing girls and young women to the wide variety of roles that women have in order to broaden their horizons and inform their ambitions.

6.2.2 Northern Ireland

An independent review of career guidance in Northern Ireland in 2014 reported the necessity for a clear quality assurance framework for careers, the importance of access to impartial career guidance delivering accessible and accurate information and the significance of strong partnerships with employers via the development of an employer engagement strategy were needed (Careers Review Panel, 2014, p. 43). Another review of employer engagement highlighted the lack of a strategic, planned approach when schools worked with employers (KPMG, 2014, p. 18).

These reviews contributed to the development of Northern Ireland's careers education strategy in 2016. The following commitments formed the main structure of the strategy:

- accountability and quality assurance;
- e-delivery and labour market information;
- work experience;
- impartial advice;

- recording achievements, with increased employer participation prioritised. (Department for Employment and Learning and Department of Education, 2016, p. 8; p.35).

A Careers Advisory Forum consisting of education, business, parent, community and voluntary sector representatives was established to support the delivery of the strategy. However, due to falling budgets the role of careers advisors has been diminishing, while the drive to engage teachers with industry has only happened recently. This therefore means there is currently a wide variation in the level of enterprise and employer engagement between schools (OECD, 2019, pp. 66-69).

6.2.3 Scotland

The Scottish Government's new careers strategy emphasises the importance of ensuring a clear route for learners and the significance of data sharing. Challenges of inequality and the constantly changing labour market mean that flexibility in careers guidance is believed to be critical to a successful careers system (Scottish Government, 2020, p. 4). Yet the delivery of the careers services in Scotland is fragmented and involves a range of providers. Nevertheless, the importance of employer engagement in the process is significant and an earlier strategy to support the development of the young workforce encouraged employer engagement (Scottish Government, 2014, p. 27).

The Career Education Standard (3-18) is a key element of this strategy and presents young people's entitlements regarding careers and the expectations of providers, and employers and parents (Education Scotland, 2015a, p. 12). A range of guidance published by the Scottish Government on employer engagement, includes a framework to support evaluation and improvement and a toolkit for schools to support the development of employer engagement (Education Scotland, 2020). Currently Scotland is the only UK nation offering young people a standardised work experience component in school and this places Scotland in a strong position to strengthen EEE further (Developing the Young Workforce Glasgow, 2018, p. 8).

School and employer partnerships are prioritised in Scotland, with guidance documents published targeting support for schools, employers, and regional groups and local authorities (Education Scotland, 2015b). How partnerships can support schools, the benefits to employers, the vision for any partnerships and approaches to establish school/employer partnerships are proposed:

- Build on existing partnerships;
- Have a nominated member of staff and contingency contact, who have protected time to develop partnerships;
- Identify contacts who will support and facilitate employer partnerships;
- Involve parents/carers in the development of partnerships;
- Consider all learners' needs;
- Involve linked primary schools and colleges if possible;
- Develop a shared understanding of the expectations for the partnerships.

(Education Scotland, 2015, p. 5)

It is suggested that partnerships will ‘evolve and improve’, with clarity of roles and intended outcomes important in ensuring quality in the school /employer relationship. Reflection on impact needs to take place and local authorities have a role in supporting quality. The guidance also highlights the importance of considering diversity and equality, and that understanding and skills for work should be developed from the early years onwards (Education Scotland, 2015, p. 6). A framework to support evaluation and improvement of school/employer partnerships is also part of the support available. To capture the range of partnership activity and measure impact three broad definitions are proposed of the types of enterprise and employer engagement on a ‘continuum of participation’ (Figure 6.1).

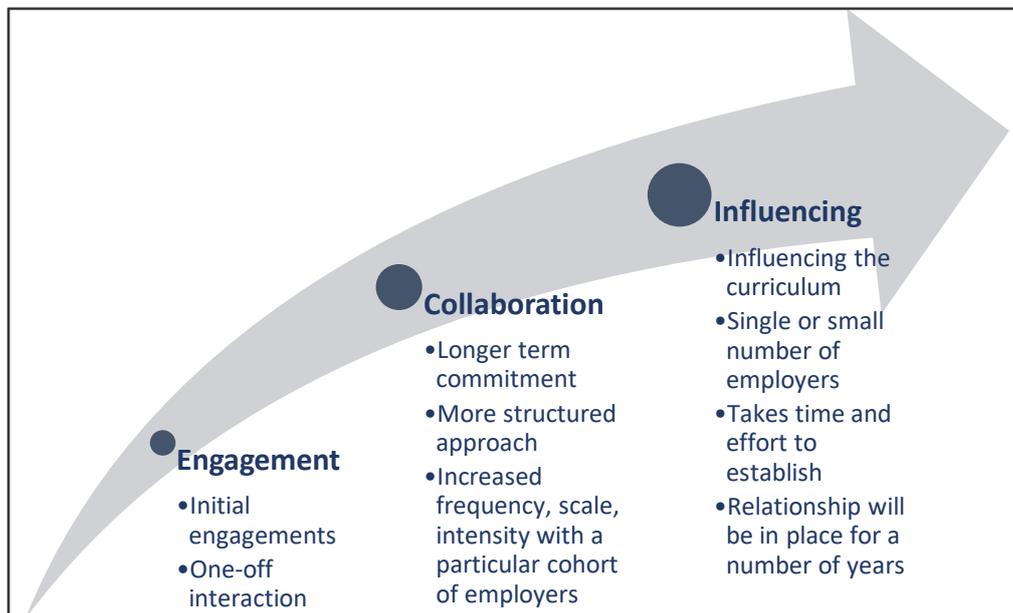


Figure 6.1 *Categories of partnership working between schools and employers.*

(Adapted from A framework to support evaluation and improvement (Education Scotland, 2020)).

With reference to Figure 6.1, it is accepted that indirect employer relationships are likely to exist under collaboration and influencing, with a wide breadth of local and specialist opportunities to be encouraged. Measuring progress is also taken into account, with external scrutiny to be included. Schools would self-evaluate their partnerships using the continuum (Education Scotland, 2020).

To support schools and employers in progressing partnerships and reflecting on their effectiveness a strategic tool kit is available, which includes learning tools (how enterprise and employer engagement can help schools and learners); reflection tools (supporting the reflection of EEE) and development tools (helping to develop the EEE offer for schools) (Education Scotland, 2020).

Examples include a management tool for pupils to plan their engagement and review their learning and career development: A review of work experience opportunities in the Midlothian Developing the Young Workforce Group conducted by Rocket Science recommended the introduction of “an appealing, easy to use approach to pupil progress planning, recording and reviewing that helps pupils design and manage their progression and maximise their learning from it in terms of employability skills’ (DYW 2019). The tool

can take the form of a paper or digital workbook where pupils can reflect on their engagement with employers and their career aspirations, track their progress of certain employability skills, and plan their future career development.

A framework to underpin all employer partnership activities also exists, this identifies at which key transition and decision making educational stage particular employer intervention activities should be offered, with links to learner outcomes, Career Education standards and the continuum of participation provide its structure (Education Scotland, 2020). It is important to note that all key documents to support planning, implementation and evaluation of enterprise and employer engagement and school partnerships are available within a single resource (Education Scotland, 2020).

6.3 Key messages from the literature

Several key literature reviews examine the evidence of enterprise and employer engagement activity. The following discussion presents an overview of these key reviews (Table 6.1) and includes evidence of school level processes, systems and actions as well as guidance and support available for schools to deliver effective enterprise and employer engagement activity. Evaluations and reports specific to activities delivered in Wales are also included.

Table 6*Error! No text of specified style in document.* 1: Key literature reviews on careers education/ employer engagement.

Literature review	Content
Burge, B., Wilson, R. and Smith-Crallan, K. (2012) Employer involvement in schools: a rapid review of UK and international evidence . Slough: NFER.	A review of 54 articles conducted as part of the NFER Research Programme - From Education to Employment. The aim was to establish what is known about employers' involvement in schools in the UK and internationally, in particular with regard to the specific involvement of those at risk of becoming NEET.
Hughes, D., Mann, A., Barnes, S-A, Baldauf, B. and McKeown, R. (2016) Careers education: International literature review . London: Education Endowment Foundation and Bank of America Merrill Lynch.	A literature review informed by 73 studies focused on careers education and 23 on part-time employment and examined the impact of careers education on skills and outcomes between 1996 and 2016. The majority of evidence is from the United States.
Mann, A., Rehill, J. and Kashefpakdel, E.T. (2018) Employer engagement in education: Insights from international evidence for effective practice and future research . UK: Education and Employers Research and Education Endowment Foundation.	This review conceptualised employer engagement in education as a strategic tool. Different types of employer engagement, outcomes and key features of successful practice are also reviewed based on evidence drawn from 42 articles. Areas requiring further research are also proposed.
DYW (2019) The impact of employer engagement with schools .	An international literature review informed by 62 studies; it links closely to the review by Mann et al., but also includes focus on Careers Education in Scotland.
OECD (2019) Musset, P and Mýtna Kureková, L Working it Out: Career Guidance and Employer Engagement	This paper looks at the need for, and delivery of, career guidance in OECD countries. It examines the features of good career guidance practice, including the need for

schools to begin early and the essential role of exposure to the world of work.

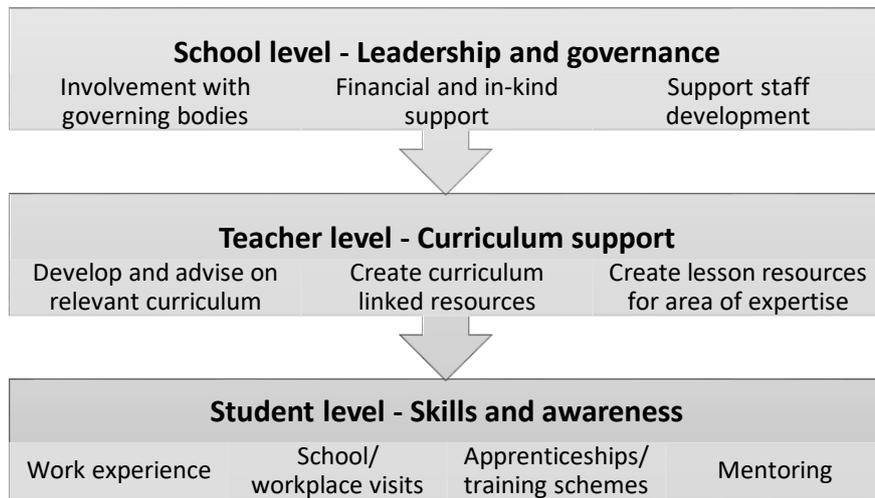
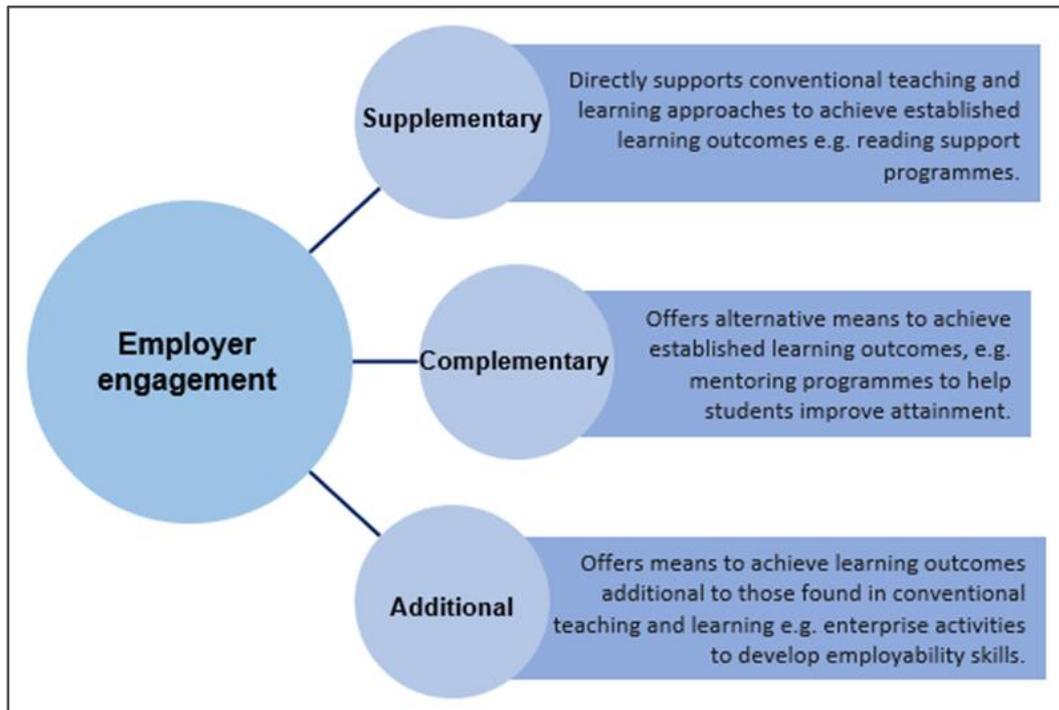


Figure 6Error! No text of specified style in document..2: Types of

It is also possible to consider such enterprise and employer engagement by linking activities to students' specific teaching and learning experiences. Figure 6.2 provides an interpretation of the different roles of employer engagement activities for learners and schools.

Employer engagement for schools is reported to exist on three levels (Figure 6.3).

Figure 6Error! No text of specified style in document..3: The different roles of employer engagement for learners.



(Adapted from Stanley and Mann, 2014, cited in Mann et al., 2018, p. 69).

Such an approach to enterprise and employer engagement activities for schools can allow for a deeper examination of effective practice. For instance, categorising the engagement in such a way is intended to be practical – by allowing schools to determine the rationale for selected activities; comprehensive – relevant to all professionals working with learners; and evidenced – outcomes are positioned within the evaluative literature (Mann et al., 2018, p. 37).

Vocational Education and Training (VET) mentoring programme in Denmark

In terms of engaging young people in progression towards employment in Denmark VET students act as role models and visit lower-secondary schools to promote VET through a campaign initiated and led by the Danish Vocational and Technical School Students Union. The role models visit schools and present their own experiences as to why they chose VET, their training and the possibilities they have both within the labour market and for progression in education and training. The campaign reflects a partnership between VET schools, employers and lower-secondary schools to increase first-hand encounters between younger students and older peers able to provide personal insight into VET pathways.

(Source: OECD report, 2019)

6.3.1 Delivering effective EEE activity

Enterprise and employer engagement has the potential to enhance young people's understanding of jobs and careers, providing them with the knowledge and skills demanded in the world of work and become better prepared to identify career progression routes through participating in workplaces. It is reported that young people are more likely to trust

the information about specific occupations they get from a first-hand experience with employers: providing insights which students commonly feel are both reliable and broad in scope in comparison to advice from parents and friends (seen as reliable but narrow in scope) or from the media/internet (seen as unreliable but broad in scope) (Musset and Kurekova, 2018 p69).

Engaging with employers: Germany

SchoolPLUS (SchulePLUS) networks schools and businesses from across Germany. Amongst other things, students join businesses, start-ups and universities to organise various events that aim to provide them with career guidance. SchulePLUS runs a platform that businesses across Germany can use to advertise traineeships for pupils. The programme JUNIOR offers career guidance, helps pupils to gain key skills, promotes vocational training readiness and career opportunities among young people, and passes on business knowledge. The programme can be integrated into the curriculum. Schools can also offer the programme as part of an after-school group activity.

Source: [Development of entrepreneurship competence | EACEA National Policies Platform \(europa.eu\)](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/npp/index.cfm)

There are many features that effective enterprise and employer engagement activity with schools is believed to require (see Table 6.2). Some of these key features focus on the nature of the relationship itself between the school and the employer, such as a clear vision of what is expected to be achieved, with good communication between all partners. Whereas other elements are specific to the nature of the activities delivered, for example, the frequency of engagement and the authenticity of the activities.

Table 6.2: Features of effective school-employer relationships and engagement activities.

School-employer relationships and engagement	
 Authentic – first-hand encounters with the world of work	 Valued – when learners' testify to their value better outcomes follow
 Recurrent – at least four memorable encounters across schooling	 Personalised – those with limited access to work-related networks should be targeted
 A clear vision of what all parties want to achieve	 Flexibility – varied activities have potential to improve outcomes for different types of learners
 Good communication among partners	 Focus on curriculum
 Partnership working	 Well-structured programme design
 Commitment, cooperation and leadership across all stakeholders	 Consideration of regional economic and development priorities
 Time to build relationships and for professional development	 Early intervention – begin in primary school

Using inspection evidence and targeted visits to 23 secondary and two special schools known to work with employers, Estyn highlight the characteristics of schools with effective employer links, and conclude that these schools display the following;

- Strong vision and commitment from senior leaders;
- Learners engaged in work-related experiences that impact on their wellbeing, employability skills and career choices;
- Strong, purposeful links with employers;
- Appropriate deployment and development of staff who know their learners and their career aspirations, and who understand how to prepare learners for the world of work;
- Use of labour market intelligence and tracking data to understand the local economy;
- Evaluation of partnerships with employers;
- High-quality partnerships with other providers, national initiatives and engagement with parents.

(Estyn, 2020, p. 13)

Professional learning: Externships

Secondary schools in Nottingham, Derby and the north east gave teachers the opportunity to link with local employers to form projects based around an externship day. The externships gave Year 8 teachers an insight into the world of work and the career opportunities available in local businesses and examples of how their subject area is used in the workplace. The externship day was managed by the employer and varied across subjects. After the one-day externship teachers complete a 6-week school-based project where the students learn more about the local employer the teacher visited. Students then develop a short presentation about the employer to either the employers themselves or to a group of their peers.

Source: Give Yourself the Edge. Evaluation Report (2018)

However, although the literature indicates the factors critical to successful enterprise and employer engagement, robust evidence on the impact of employer involvement on such outcomes as achievement and post-16 destinations is believed to be lacking (Burge, 2012, p. 4). Nevertheless, the following positive outcomes for learners as a result of employer relationships with schools are noted.

- Improved vocational skills, knowledge and understanding, e.g. enhanced career aspirations, knowledge of certain industries;
- Academic and learning outcomes improve, e.g. deeper understanding of particular subjects, better integration of theory and practice in subjects;
- Health and well-being addressed, e.g. improved self-esteem

- More enjoyment and engagement, e.g. improved attendance, positive relationships with mentors;
 - Better employment and earnings opportunities, e.g. creation of personal networks.
- (Burge et al., 2012, p. 26).

It is reported that the literature on quasi-experimental and experimental studies on careers education is weak, with some interventions lacking any evaluation (Burge et al., 2012; Hughes et al., 2016, p. 3). Therefore, testing the impact of different interventions using randomised controlled trials could help to identify effective activities (Dumitriu, 2020, p.28). Areas where further research is believed to be needed include; recipients' social backgrounds, the quality and quantity of activities, the broad outcomes to which enterprise and employer engagement is expected to contribute and the character of change in self-perception that results from interactions with the world of work (Mann et al., 2018, p. 73).

Some other gaps in the literature include; how careers education can support the greatest boost to academic achievement; personalised and targeted careers education; careers education and systems for tracking students' progression; the importance of social and cultural capital as a resource for schools (Hughes et al., 2016, p. 57). Even though such gaps in the literature are reported, it is also noted that the literature is consistent in reporting the benefits of enterprise and employer engagement with learners and features of particularly effective careers education practice are identified (Mann et al., 2018, p. 6). It is possible to draw parallels with some of the key features of enterprise and employer engagement discussed previously in Table 6.2;

- **career reflection** - make concrete the thinking about one's own motivation and aptitudes, self-regulation, self-determination, and resilience to cope with unforeseen setbacks;
- **career exploration** - give shape to one's own career path by exploring the options for study or work;
- **career action** - opportunities to make sense of, and act upon, the learning gained from differing types of interventions;
- **networking** - build and maintain a network of key contacts;
- **learning environment** - stimulate real-life experiences with work and a dialogue about these experiences;
- **career dialogue** - young people have meaningful conversations with teachers, parents or carers, employers and employees, alumni, and trained and qualified career development professionals; and
- **career conversations in the workplace** - give students exposure to, and experience of work in real-life situations.

(Hughes et al., 2016, p. 56).

These features are supported by others; Mann et al. (2018) comment that there are four key outcomes of enterprise and employer engagement for young people, with activities intended to:

- enhance understanding of jobs and careers;
- provide the knowledge and skills required by the contemporary labour market;
- provide the knowledge and skills required for successful school -to-work transitions

- enrich education and underpin attainment.

(Mann et al., 2018, p. 5).

Others explore the practical implications of delivering effective enterprise and employer engagement activities in schools and Table 6.3 summarises possible practical implications that need to be addressed to help maximise the impact of enterprise and employer engagement activity in schools.

Table 6.3: The practical implications for effective employer engagement activity.

Employer engagement good practice and practical implications	
	Starting early: activities likely to benefit younger learners include those that explore the relationship between learning in school and the world of work; insights into job roles and challenging stereotypes.
	Authenticity: activities should be aligned to key features and trends in the local labour market and workplace visits should be developed with employers in the growth sectors.
	Repeat engagement: employers should be encouraged to build long term and sustained partnerships. Guidance could provide structure as to when along a learner's journey particular employer engagement activities are most beneficial.
	Varied activities: relationships with a wide range of employers, including those of different sizes, will contribute to learners being exposed to a range of careers and gain insight of the labour market.
	Tailoring activities: offering a range of activities will benefit different types of learners.
	Quality of activities: guidelines for schools and employers could provide an assurance of quality for implementing activities.
	An employer engagement management tool: to provide opportunity for learners to reflect on their employer engagement and career aspirations.
	Benefits to business: participation in schools could be incentivised by advertising how activities can develop employees' soft skills and raise organisations' reputations.

(Adapted from DYW, 2019, pp. 42-49).

6.3.2 Types of EEE activities

Although the role of enterprise and employer engagement is recognised as essential, activities need to be 'effective, efficient, equitable and evidenced' (Mann et al., 2020, p. 42). For instance, any engagement needs to match the learners to the most appropriate employer, an efficient system can develop by using existing employer networks, equality of access can improve the social capital ensuring fair access for all learners, and opportunities to build longitudinal data to deliver useful insights on the impact of different EEE activities.

The development of knowledge and skills provides the focus for some primary school activities, with other opportunities designed to influence attitude and aspiration. Whereas, in secondary school the activities delivered centre more on achieving economic outcomes (Mann et al., 2018, p. 4).

As a key enterprise and employer engagement activity, work experience provides specific focus for some research. A review of literature accompanied with primary research with practitioners and experts concluded that to support effective work experience the following key actions are needed;

1. Match pupils with appropriately stretching opportunities;
2. Outline the benefits of hosting young people for work experience;
3. Support opportunities for work experience throughout the academic year;
4. Increase post-16 students' access to work experience;
5. Help pupils prepare for and debrief after work experience;
6. Support repeated interactions with employers;
7. Support host employers and businesses;
8. Support work experience opportunities within school and with suppliers;
9. Monitor and evaluate the quality of work experience, and;
10. Identify and address inequalities in access to work experience.

(Millard et al., 2019a, p. 22)

However, learners' with lower socio-economic status are less likely to have access to work experience in 'high status' workplaces, be less confident in their choice of work experience and more likely be given menial tasks (Millard et al., 2019a, p. 13).

Targeting disadvantaged groups: Switzerland

A key message from the literature has been the importance of targeting disadvantaged students in order to provide greater equity for opportunity. The LIFT programme in Switzerland targets these target groups in partnerships between education and social services. Students are identified early on and can benefit from targeted support for their career progression. Other pillars include exposure to work experience, remedial education, and counselling and mentoring to prepare students for the world of work. A survey of the practitioners involved in the programme (including the firms providing mentoring and work placements) highlighted its effectiveness although the impact on students, in terms of education and labour market outcomes, were not been evaluated.

Source: OECD (2019)

Another issue impacting the effectiveness of work experience is that of 'teachers' workload', with careers education viewed as an 'optional extra'. Having a staff member with overall responsibility for careers is important to maintain the profile. While they can become the 'point of contact for everything', this can result in a major challenge in encouraging other teachers to become involved and take on any responsibility for careers (Millard et al., 2019a, p. 51).

The types of activities believed to be appropriate for particular age groups are also suggested (Millard et al., 2019b, p. 8). Figure 4.5 illustrates the range of employer engagement /career education activities proposed for each education phase.

Previous research, with more than 700 schools/colleges examined the provision and operational practice of work-related activities in schools in England and found that work experience is the most frequently offered activity (NatCen Social Research and SQW, 2017, p. 21), with most success occurring when previous skills and knowledge delivered since year 7 are built upon (NatCen Social Research and SQW, 2017, p. 23); between years 7-9 employability skills such as team working, communication and problem-solving

provide the focus, with direct interaction with employers, via mock interviews/career fairs happening during years 10 and 11 (NatCen Social Research and SQW, 2017, p. 24).

However, several challenges to delivering work experience activities are reported. These include the availability of placements by sector, employer size and location; and students' age and ability (NatCen Social Research and SQW, 2017, p. 46). The health, manufacturing/construction and creative and media sectors can be the most difficult sectors to engage. Larger employers can also be difficult to 'get a foot in the door' with, whereas smaller organisations report difficulties with 'red tape' such as Health and Safety paperwork (NatCen Social Research and SQW, 2017, p. 47). The cost of travel to placements and the availability of public transport can also create challenges.

Recent research into the delivery of Careers Wales' Education Business Partnership service also found that mock interviews and work experience placements are of the most value to schools (Beaufort Research, 2019, p. 14). However, the loss of the Career Wales work experience database, which included employers that had been 'vetted', resulted in schools reporting a lack of time and expertise to carry out their own 'vetting' of potential placements (Beaufort Research, 2019, p. 17).

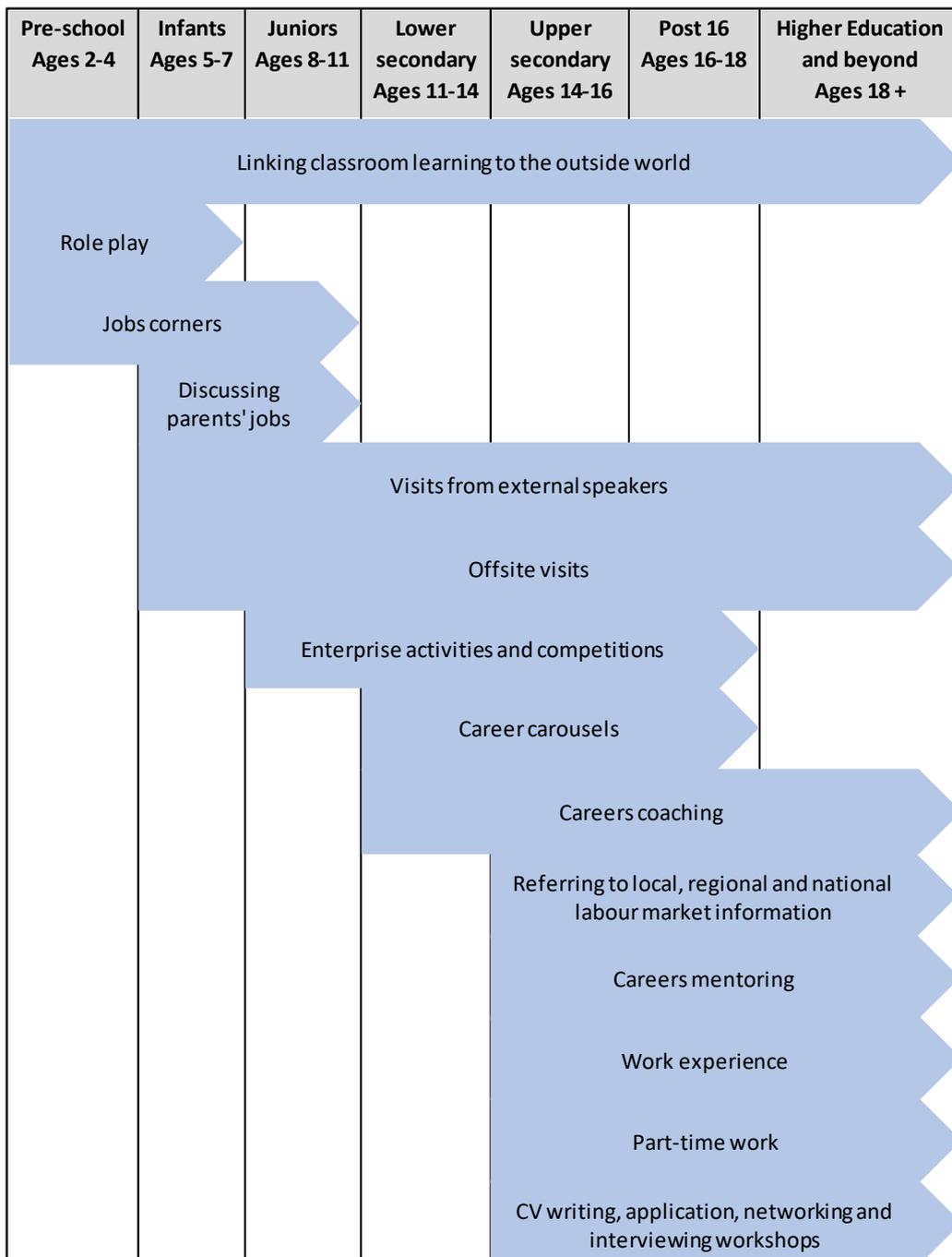


Figure 6: The type of activities that schools could support for each age group.

(Millard et al., 2019b, pp. 8-11).

Others also reiterate that effective enterprise and employer engagement activities should be personalised and started in primary school, with it noted that schools need to reach out to employers and clearly understand and address any barriers, such as any technical, legal or information barriers, as different activities come with different transactional costs (Musset, and Kurekova, 2018, p. 76 and p. 81). A key barrier for greater enterprise and employer engagement is highlighted as not knowing what schools and education providers need, what they can provide and how they can benefit.

Successful enterprise and employer engagement requires mutual understanding and addressing barriers to engagement. Employer motivations are reported to commonly fall therefore into one of four overlapping areas of interest, namely recruitment, staff development, staff engagement and corporate reputation (Mann and Glover, 2011). Other research also highlights the potential benefits for employers including shaping the future skills supply, the opportunity to promote careers within their organisation or sector, meet young people whom they may be interested in employing, and finally to help to enhance young people's employability skills so that they become more effective ultimate employees (Hooley, Watts and Andrews, 2015).

It is also recommended that schools 'retain a sense of ownership' and there should be a focus on delivering a number of interactions of quality, as perceived by students, with students from families which lack strong social networks particularly targeted (Musset, and Kurekova, 2018, p. 81). Case study research with 17 primary schools in England highlighted 'lack of support and time' as the biggest barrier for developing links with employers, with rural or isolated schools also reporting difficulties in finding local employers and volunteers (Kashefpakdel, Rehill and Hughes, 2019, p. 52).

Even though a lack of robust evidence of impact is noted, work experience, job shadowing and workplace visits are still associated with positive impacts for learners across several areas;

- Student satisfaction
- Employability skills
- Personal effectiveness
- Educational outcomes
- Career readiness
- Career outcomes

(Buzzeo and Cifci, 2017, p. 6)

Job Shadowing: Germany

The cross-industry network German Association of Young Entrepreneurs (Die Jungen Unternehmer) runs the Pupils in the Director's Chair (Schüler im Chefsessel) project. It gives school pupils a realistic look at what being an entrepreneur involves. The project is a competition for pupils of comprehensive schools, grammar schools and vocational colleges who are aged 15 and over. They spend a day shadowing an entrepreneur at their business. Pupils get to know the company and the employees, take part in consultations and customer meetings, and then write an essay on their experiences. The essays are rated by a regional panel of judges.

In light of the earlier point regarding a lack of experimental research, one study drew on data from 650 students from five schools in England, with 307 students in an intervention group that received three extra career talks in addition to the usual school career activities. Comparisons were made between predicted and actual GCSE grades, and students completed a survey. Relative to the control group those who experienced the additional careers talks showed improvement in confidence, attitude to school and confidence in fulfilling their career aspirations. There was also a 'statistically significant' increase in the

amount of revision hours in the intervention group. A modest effect was also reported on the intervention group outperforming predicted grades, with 'lower achievers and less engaged' responding the best (Kashefpakdel, Percy and Rehill, 2019, p. 8).

If enterprise education is examined in more detail, entrepreneurship education has provided the focus for competencies that policymakers are advised to target. The European Commission's EntreComp programme⁸ contains 15 competences under the thematic areas of 'ideas and opportunities', 'resources' and 'into action' (see Table 6.4) with each competency stipulating foundation, intermediate, advanced and expert level criteria (Bacigalupo et al., 2016, p. 23-35).

Table 6.4: The broad structure of the EntreComp framework.

Area	Competence				
Ideas and opportunities	Spotting opportunities	Creativity	Vision	Valuing ideas	Ethical and sustainable thinking
Resources	Self-awareness and self-efficacy	Motivation and perseverance	Mobilising resources	Financial and economic literacy	Mobilising others
Into action	Taking the initiative	Planning and management	Coping with uncertainty, ambiguity and risk	Working with others	Learning through experience

(Bacigalupo et al., 2016, p. 23-35).

However, tailoring any education programme to the needs and abilities of younger learners could provide challenges; with tailoring according to learners' nearness to the labour market possibly providing the answer (Dumitriu, 2020, p. 17). Entrepreneurship education's objectives of developing an entrepreneurial mindset, improving academic engagement, increasing employability, stimulating quality entrepreneurship and expanding access, provide the structure for an examination of a range of education programmes. This reiterates some of the key messages already discussed within enterprise and employer engagement activity such as authentic engagement, starting early and linking learning to the outside world (Dumitriu, 2020, p. 18-27).

Linking to the outside world of work: Finland

Me and My City in Finland is a project aimed at putting learning about entrepreneurship, economy and society into practice for students in year six (13 years old). The module of studies includes training of teachers, teaching material with 10 lessons based on the national curriculum and a one-day visit to the learning environment - MyCity. The location is a 500 square meter miniature city, built of mobile walls. The environment includes real businesses such as energy and telephone companies, public services and its own banking

⁸ [EntreComp](#) – The Entrepreneurship Competence Framework offers a tool to improve the entrepreneurial capacity of European citizens and organisations.

system. For one day, the students work, earn a virtual salary and act as members of society and consumers, under the constant supervision of a teacher.

Among the activities are applications for job vacancies and interviews. They also have to pay taxes and learn how to manage their expenses and their free time. Each MyCity environment reflects the characteristics of business life in the region. The first activities took place in Helsinki in 2010. Following this, several cities in the country received a visit from the project and eight municipalities established permanent versions. The programme is run by the Economic Information Office of the Finnish Government and operates in cooperation with municipal administrations and companies.

Source: [InnovEdu - Innovative educational experiences](#)

A recent good practice guide targeted support for entrepreneurial women in Wales and highlights the barrier of gender stereotyping, with a 'mainstream gender-aware approach needed' and a mentoring and coaching approach preferred by women, as opposed to delivering advice on a consultancy basis for men (Business Wales, 2019, p. 6; p. 12). This preferred difference in approach could be translated to the nature of any activities delivered in schools.

Addressing gender stereotyping: Baltic countries

The project BE the Future, aimed at young females from Sweden, Estonia and Latvia, is running between 2020 and 2022 and aimed at raising awareness of self-employment as a career option, creating a positive attitude towards entrepreneurial activity and a potential career option. The three-year project will promote entrepreneurial mindsets through peer networking, sharing of resources and mentors for inspiration and guidance. The project aims to prepare, coach and support 225 young future female entrepreneurs from the three countries in the planning and development of student companies. By the end of the project, at least 50 student companies will have been created, which will be able to translate entrepreneurial intention into practice.

Source: [bethefuture.global](#)

6.3.3 Monitoring and evaluation processes for enterprise and employer engagement activity

Although the literature suggests that EEE activity lacks robust evaluation (Burge, 2012, p. 4), several evaluations of large-scale entrepreneurship interventions are reported to deliver positive impact for learners (Dumitriu, 2020, p. 17-28). For example, students become more motivated at school and develop skills employers believe are important. It is also noted that evaluating entrepreneurship education as to whether or not participants go on to start their own businesses would be a mistake, as it is the development of the 'skills and ambitions' that is key (Dumitriu, 2020, p. 23). Nevertheless, taking a longer-term approach to the research is suggested so that the agenda is 'evidence-led' and complements the academic education offered (Dumitriu, 2020, p. 27).

To resolve this issue, policymakers should fund randomised-controlled trials (RCTs) to test the impact of different interventions (Dumitriu, 2020, p. 28).

Criticism of the evidence base on work experience placements is that it can be reliant on self-reported outcomes, reiterating the need for the incorporation of a control group and tracking participants over time. Such an approach would provide 'more robust insight' into the impact of the placement and the size of the effects, and the type of participant it works best with (Buzzeo and Cifci, 2017, p. 18). Other literature also notes the emphasis on self-reported student satisfaction or one-off destination information and again highlights these limitations. It also notes that issues remain on what are the desirable outcomes, and how then to measure them (Musset, and Kurekova, 2018, p. 42).

Research exploring issues such as the impact of work experience on labour market and educational outcomes, examining further the timing of placements and the positive association between work experience and improvement in attainment and understanding what mix of work processes and activities are of greater benefit during a placement would also help design high-quality work experience (Buzzeo and Cifci, 2017, p. 18). Although Estyn report that schools in Wales evaluate partnership working with employers, this is only the case in a 'very few schools' (Estyn, 2020, p. 17).

6.4 Conclusions

The literature is consistent in reporting the benefits of enterprise and employer engagement for learners. These include enhancing learners' understanding of the contemporary labour market and the jobs, careers and progression routes that exist within it, along with greater appreciation of the knowledge and skills demanded in the world of work. **The literature also suggests a positive impact on learners' wellbeing, self-esteem, engagement with learning and creation of personal networks** through engagement with employers and opportunities for reflection, exploration and dialogue.

The literature highlights many of the key features of successful enterprise and employer engagement, which should be effective, efficient, equitable and evidenced. **Developing a clear vision and mutual understanding** of what is expected to be achieved through partnerships between schools and employers is viewed as an essential starting point for this engagement process.

Other essential features include a focus on fairer access to address current inequalities in careers provision and access to employers; the frequency and authenticity of engagement; **a focus on starting early in learners' journeys to support their aspirations and influence attitudes**; and ensuring the delivery of a variety of the activities linked to the curriculum and local economic needs to support learner progress through primary and secondary school.

The use of **impartial, personalised careers advice** was linked to engaging with learners and supporting staff to understand their aspirations as another key element of successful

school to work transition. Other important features include **supporting learners to have repeated engagement opportunities with employers** throughout the academic year and matching learners with appropriate opportunities relating to their interests, providing them with time for preparation and reflection. **Developing employability skills such as team working, communication and problem-solving alongside an entrepreneurial mindset** can enrich learners' education and deliver additional learning outcomes.

The literature has outlined a range of challenges to successful enterprise and employer engagement including the availability of work placements by sector, employer size and location plus issues such as red tape for small firms. **A lack of support and time for schools in developing links with employers can be exacerbated by a lack of employer understanding as to how they can benefit**, for example through shaping the future skills supply, opportunity to promote careers within their organisation or helping to enhance young people's employability skills.

Addressing these challenges through the design and implementation of key features outlined above should therefore be a focus of enterprise and employer engagement design. The literature suggests that this take place alongside **a greater focus on producing robust evidence on the impact of enterprise and employer engagement provision** on outcomes such as achievement, post-16 destinations learners' social backgrounds and the quality and quantity of activities.

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7. Annex B: Questionnaire used during school survey

Introduction

Arad Research have been commissioned by the Welsh Government to complete a review of enterprise and employer engagement initiatives across primary, secondary and special schools in Wales. The review will help to inform future approaches to delivering employer engagement activity in schools.

As part of the study, we are keen to hear the views of school leaders and teachers. This short questionnaire has been designed to gain an insight into the employer engagement activities schools currently access.

The questionnaire is aimed at school senior managers with overall responsibility for enterprise and employer engagement. In your school this may be a senior leader, designated careers leader or coordinator, careers teacher or other nominated member of staff. The closing date for the survey is 20 November 2020.

Participation in the research is voluntary. All information collected will be reported anonymously. The evidence gathered will be included in a report, and possibly in other Welsh Government publications. This [privacy notice](#) explains how we will collect and store any personal information you provide in your response.

About your school

1. In which region is your school?

- North Wales (GwE consortium area)
- Mid and West Wales (ERW consortium area)
- Central South Wales (CSC consortium area)
- South East Wales (EAS consortium area)

2. Which of the following is your school? *

- Primary school
- Secondary school
- Middle school (3-16/3-19)
- Special school
- Other (please specify):

Planning enterprise and employer engagement activity (secondary)

3. Does your school have a written policy, plan or strategy for careers, enterprise and employer engagement?

- Yes
- No

4. Does your school have a designated person responsible for enterprise / employer engagement? This could be a careers leader, careers coordinator or other role.

- Yes
- No

If 'yes', please note briefly what this role involves.

5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Enterprise and employer engagement activities are planned to reflect the needs of the curriculum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enterprise and employer engagement activities are tailored to the needs of individual learners and year groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We tend to deliver the same activities using the same providers during each school year.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please provide any additional comments to support your answer.

Enterprise and employer engagement provision in your school (secondary)

6. Which of the following enterprise and employer engagement activities have been delivered at your school in recent years? Please also indicate any activities you would

like to deliver in your school. NB. We recognise that much activity is currently suspended - please indicate which activities your school delivers in a typical year.

	Delivered at KS3 (Years 7, 8 or 9)	Delivered at KS4 (Years 10 or 11)	Delivered in 6th form (where applicable)	Would like to deliver this activity
Workplace experiences (e.g. work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Presentations / talks by local employers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employers attend careers events in the school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities that develop learners' enterprise skills and knowledge of business start up	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mock interviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attendance at careers' fairs / events outside school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities focused on STEM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Digital / virtual activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are there other ways in which you engage with employers (please briefly note):

Enterprise and employer engagement provision in your school (primary)

7. Does your school have a designated person responsible for enterprise / employer engagement? This could be a careers leader, careers coordinator or other role.

- Yes
- No

If 'yes', please note briefly what this role involves.

8. Which of the following enterprise and employer engagement activities have been delivered at your school in recent years? Please also indicate any activities you would like to deliver in your school. NB. We recognise that much activity is currently suspended - please indicate which activities your school delivers in a typical year.

	Activity delivered in the school	Would like to deliver this activity
Presentations / talks by local employers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employers attend careers events in the school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities that develop learners' enterprise skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities focused on STEM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Digital / virtual activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are there other ways in which you engage with employers (please briefly note):

Awareness of employer engagement programmes and support

9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I am aware of the range of enterprise and employer engagement activities available.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am aware of the resources available on Hwb to support enterprise teaching and learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There is support from the senior management team to deliver enterprise and employer engagement activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There are CPD opportunities available to teachers in my school to improve their ability to deliver enterprise and employer engagement activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am confident in delivering enterprise and employer engagement activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please provide any additional comments to support your answer.

The partners and providers you work with

10. Please list the providers and partners you work with most frequently to support enterprise and employer engagement activities. Note. These may be national partners

(e.g. Careers Wales, Big Ideas Wales, Business in the Community), regional or local partners (e.g. local authorities, employers or others)

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

11. Thinking about the partners you have noted above, please provide any comments on what type of approaches have worked well in your school.

Barriers to delivering enterprise and employer engagement

12. Thinking back to the time prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, have you faced any barriers to delivering enterprise and employer engagement activities?

- Yes
- No

13. If you answered 'yes' above, please indicate whether the following factors have been a barrier for your school.

- Cost of accessing support / programmes
- Lack of staff time
- Lack of staff knowledge and expertise
- Too much choice / Confusion about which programmes are most appropriate for our learners
- Considered less of a priority than other areas of learning
- Other barriers (please specify):

Quality and impact of enterprise and employer engagement

14. Please note to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements in relation to the quality and range of existing employer engagement opportunities.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The provision and support we access is high quality.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Available provision is relevant to a range of curriculum areas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please provide any additional comments to support your answers::

15. Please note to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements in relation to the effectiveness and impact of existing employer engagement opportunities. Employer engagement activity delivered at our school:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Develops the enterprise skills of learners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inspires and raises the aspirations of learners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a positive impact on learner attainment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a positive impact on staff and the wider school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Represents value for money.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please provide any additional comments to support your answers.

Future priorities

16. How does your school plan to address the requirements of Curriculum for Wales 2022 in relation to careers and work-related experiences (CWRE)?

17. What additional support do you need in this area?

18. Looking ahead, how do you envisage enterprise and employer engagement activity being delivered under the new normal for schools and partners?

Follow-up contact

19. Our research team will be carrying out a number of follow-up discussions with school representatives to explore some of the above questions in further detail. If you are prepared to take part in a short follow-up discussion, please provide your name and contact details below.

Name

Email address

Telephone number