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Inst tute for Employment Studies

IES is an independent, apolit cal, internat onal centre of research and consultancy in public employment policy and HR management. It works closely with employers in all sectors, government departments, agencies, professional bodies and associat ons. IES is a



providers sought to identify a trusted adult in the young person's life to mediate on their behalf, help introduce the project and broker their involvement.

- Maintaining young peoples' engagement with the project throughout delivery was also crucial to successful implementation. For all the target groups, providers emphasised the need to be flexible and adaptable in their support model to ensure it was responsive to participant needs.
- Common adaptations cited included altering the timing and intensity of activities if participants struggled to absorb the content of career information sessions, for instance. Where projects were less practically orientated and focused more on information delivery, interactive elements were also utilised to help maintain participants' attention. This included team building exercises, quizzes, answering mock interview questions and role play.

Ef ect ve approaches to support

- In relation to recruiting employers to offer encounters for young people and workplace experiences, focussing on businesses who are 'disability confident' or have a strong CSR ethos was seen to work well.
- Employers vary in the time and resources they can commit and so offering a menu of options around how they can contribute to careers provision is likely to be more effective than requiring a minimum input or being highly prescriptive.
- Employers could be hesitant to support delivery despite recognising its social value, due to a lack of confidence and experience in engaging with young people with SEND. Where providers were able to offer free disability awareness training to employers, this was seen to be an effective means of overcoming this initial hesitancy and building confidence.
- Support for employers was also required from providers once they began to engage with young people with SEND to set expectations and provide reassurance about their approach. Where employers were engaged in mentorship, for instance, providers gave examples of what successful interactions would look like and what would represent progress for young people with varying levels of need.

Κ еŠ Us еј b U t etter The Ú; töEr h tÚ t I SUO hf têe her The e r; The Fund evaluat on ident f ed a range of perceived outcomes that the project act vit es were successful in achieving. The emphasis on these outcomes dif ered by target group, ref ect ng their dif erent start ng points and needs j 1 Urtee refeect ng ib nee he j 1 Theth 1 j SUO

- The development of employability skills was another commonly reported outcome, particularly for projects supporting young people with SEND, which generally had a stronger employment related focus. Providers found that many young people could be unfamiliar with these concepts and terminology (e.g. 'skill', 'quality', 'strength', 'task', 'job-ready'). They noted that these ideas were better introduced and made explicit through practical activities and events, such as the group-based projects described previously, which gave young people a chance to apply these concepts to real world situations and make them more memorable.
- The projects delivered through the Fund were also seen to be successful in raising the career aspirations of the young people involved. Again, these outcomes were more commonly reported among projects supporting young people with SEND, due to their greater focus on planning later transitions. This outcome could be achieved through various activities: through myth busting exercises around roles available to young people with SEND; the presentation of role models with similar needs; via personal guidance interviews where providers highlighted how a young person's existing skills and interests could be pursued as a career; and workplace visits where the range of roles available in large organisations was highlighted.
- For projects focused on young people from GRT
 communities, these outcomes could be achieved via
 the group-based, practical activities they were taskedistica
 with completing. Where projects involved elements
 of construction, for instance, some participants
 subsequently expressed an interest in working
 outdoors and using tools in their future employment.
- For projects supporting LAC, as noted, their focus
 was developing participants' self-confidence and
 encouraging them to express their views and
 opinions. The development of career aspirations
 as part of these projects was therefore not always
 explicit, but was seen as a secondary, later outcome

- of this foundational work. In one instance, however, it was observed that groups sessions facilitated by a care leaver who had progressed into further education and then employment was an effective means of highlighting to participants that these options were open to them.
- Finally, several projects were also seen to increase participants knowledge of potential careers, pathways to employment (such as education and training courses) and sources of information, advice and guidance (IAG). These reported outcomes were most often facilitated through personal guidance interviews and the development of a careers plan, which encouraged young people to research potential options. Providers also sought to provide reassurances as part of this process, such as explaining the differences in attending college compared to school for those with negative experiences of mainstream education.
- For GRT focused projects, delivering this information via pop-up events hosted within these communities was identified as a successful approach. Where providers attempted to arrange visits to local FE colleges or host a presentation at their own premises, they could have low levels of attendance. However, delivery within the community was seen as an effective means of overcoming these logistical difficulties and ensu\u00fc1 and
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- Both providers and employers spoke extensively about how their exposure to young people with SEND had positively challenged their presumptions regarding participants' skills, capabilities and behaviours.
- Several employers commented that they had now learned the importance of looking past a 'label' and treating each young person as an individual with their own set of needs and abilities.
- Some organisations stated that they hoped their increased confidence and knowledge in working with these groups would enable them to look at their recruitment processes and ensure they are inclusive in future.



The Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) appointed the Inst tute for Employment Studies (IES) and the Nat onal Inst tute for Economic and Social Research (NIESR) to evaluate the Careers & Enterprise Fund 2018 (CEF18) Part B. The Fund supports the delivery of the Government's careers strategy, launched in 2017. It was designed to test ef ect ve pract ce in delivering career guidance act vit es with disadvantaged groups. The career guidance act vit es that were tested were aligned with the Gatsby Foundat on's 8 Good Career Guidance benchmarks.

The evaluat on was designed to capture lessons about the implementat on of the programme for the CEC as fund managers, and wider partners, stakeholders and grant recipients. It also aimed to assess the 'evidence of promise' of funded projects in raising aspirat ons for young people, increasing their awareness of dif erent routes and developing career plans. Finally, the evaluat on sought to understand which models of delivering career guidance were ef ect ve in contribut ng towards the achievement of these outcomes. This report summarises the key findings from the evaluat como engag 1 and provide

The Fund aimed to test innovat ve approaches to

understand how to most ef ect vely support young people from disadvantaged groups. This included young people with Special Educat onal Needs and Disabilit es (SEND), Looked Af er Children (LAC) / Care Leavers and young people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) communit es.3 The funding was targeted at 11-18 year olds across the three ident fed disadvantaged groups. This included all Year 13 students or 19-25 year olds with a current educat on, health and care plan in place.

A total of £1.7 million was made available to fund new act vity to support young people in these groups. The funding was targeted at projects that would:

- Develop innovative ways to reach and provide career guidance to disadvantaged young people
- Link with organisations that support these communities to provide tailored support, where appropriate, and increase the engagement of these communities

1 Linekopole Militat Link the that As part of the Fund, £200,000 was available specifically for activity that increased employer engagement and support for young people with SEND. This funding aimed to improve employer confidence in working with these groups and create more employer encounters and workplace experiences.⁴

The Fund was init ally due to run from January 2019 to
September 2020. However, this was later extended to
March 2021 due to the disrupt on caused by the Covid19 pandemic. A total of 20 providers were awarded
funding to deliver innovat ve careers and enterprise
programmes over this period. They encompassed a
variety of careers andwotal n nrı e a eers i erı e

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from these interviews were used to refine and finalise the Theory of Change, in collaboration with CEC and providers.

The second set of interviews focussed on experiences of deA vrv

1.2.1 Evaluat on of careers programmes

In addit on to these main evaluat on act vit es, several semi-structured interviews were also completed from February-March 2021 with stakeholders involved in the delivery of the addit onal projects targeted at young people outside of the mainstream educat on system. In total, 12 interviews were completed with a mix of delivery staf, teachers and parents. Where possible, feedback was also sought from young people in receipt of support. Interviews were completed with 5 young people engaged in two of the four funded projects.

1.3 Limitations

The challenges of conduct ng f eldwork over the period March-September 2020 meant that fewer project stakeholders part cipated in the case study research than intended. Consequently, the evaluat on drew mostly on informat on and evidence provided by project delivery staf themselves, with relat vely limited triangulat on of experiences and views from employers, teachers, young people, parents and carers.

Similar challenges were encountered when complet ng

f eldwork as part oeA w asas careeö

The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

Chapter 2 discusses the intended act vit es and outcomes of the projects

Chapter 3 presents an overview of the number of young people that took part in the funded act vit es and their main demographic characterist cs.

Chapter 4 summarises findings about initial set-up of the projects

Chapter 5 assesses providers' experiences of project delivery

Chapter 6 examines the recorded and perceived outcomes of the projects for young people and parents/carers

Chapter 7 presents points of learning from the evaluat on for providing ef ect ve careers support for disadvantaged young people.

This chapter provides an overview of the funded projects in terms of: the delivery models and main

project act vit es providents intended to complette ls annotate de liverfut height lise and de lis

2.1 Act vit es

The main act vit es delivered as part of the Fund, ident f ed through the review of programme applicat ons and f rst wave of provider interviews, are categorised below.

These act vit es were always delivered as part of a package, in combinat on with one another, and were not always mutually exclusive. For instance, employability skills could be learnt through the complet on of enterprise act vit es, while careers informat on could be delivered via career talks by employers. Further, some providers ordered their vædænl€ e, elap G elaf act vit es in such a way to support a young person's linear development and progression through the project. For instance, work with an employer mentor could precede work-retlated exFtinB racith wixtaes d W G pı b aelatedfinstance, vvoirkstancerork sv £lateP 1 Æ cou sv tsevlafeka,tbJ aib e, to cox ou wa~

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The main short to medium term outcomes that providers hoped their project act vit es would contribute towards are outlined below. Short to medium term outcomes were loosely defined as the outcomes providers expected to achieve during and in the months immediately following young people's engagement in the project. These are presented separately for each of the groups of stakeholders targeted by the Fund.

Table 2.2: Overview of funded projects

| Provider organisat on | Project descript on |
|------------------------------|--|
| Clif on Learning Partnership | Provides transit on/employability skills development through outdoor learning to Roma young people |
| | Supported work experience for young people with SEND with personal job coach support |
| | Varied programme including careers fairs, pop up events, and networking events support ng GRT young people |
| | A borough wide joined up approach delivered in Ealing to support young people with SEND into work experience |
| | Employability skills and raising aspirat ons for 200 Roma young people and young people with SEND in Shef eld |
| | Working with LAC in the evenings/weekends/holidays to undertake leadership/social act on projects |
| | Aims to target learners with communicat on dif cult es through 'Talk about Talk Secondary' programme. The intervent ons help students to develop the skills they need to co-deliver a workshop about communicat on to an audience of local employers |
| | Bespoke mentoring programme for young people with SEND. Provides individual guidance, transit on planning and support and close liaison with family and other relevant services |

| | 'Journey to Work' programme which combines provides supported internships alongside a volunteering programme to boost life and work-related skills to young people with SEND |
|--------------------------|--|
| | 2 x 12 week pathway programmes for young people aged 16-18 from Irish traveller and Roma communit es |
| Nat onal Deaf Children's | Careers informat on workshops and guidance interviews for deaf young people alongside a training programme for local authorit es to bet er support deaf young people |
| | Raising aspirat ons, 1-2-1 and peer support for LAC/Care Leavers in North Somerset |
| | 5 part programme which includes training staf, an employability passport for young people with SEND in Years 9 - 11, a programme of work related learning and experience in hospitality for young people with SEND, careers fairs for students and families and a programme of work experience in the construct on industry for young people with SEND |
| Pure Innovat ons Ltd | Sessions designed for small groups of young people with SEND, which will involve preparing a port olio of learning, meet ng with stakeholders like agencies, employers and previous SEND learners to share their experiences |
| | 10 day programme across two terms to provide young people with SEND with employment routes into the Creat ve and Digital Industries workforce |
| | Providing career guidance to young people with SEND and LAC / Care Leavers via 1-2-1 and group sessions |
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Table 2.3: Ant cipated programme outcomes

| Outcomes for young people and parents/carers |
|---|
| Raising career aspirations (exposure to workplaces/settings/vocations not previously considered) |
| Confidence building/developing self-efficacy |
| Better knowledge of potential careers, pathways to employment and sources of IAG |
| Motivation to do well in education/see value to career path |
| Individual career plan / clear idea of next steps after programme has ended |
| Developing agency/empowered to make decisions around learning and employment (identifying best career option) |
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The first set of outcomes for young people and their parents/carers are presented together. Many providers noted that for the groups of young people targeted by the Fund, parents/carers are key f gures in deciding what act vit es their child/foster child will engage in and shaping and inf uencing their potent al career path. They could be very protect ve of their child/foster child and uncomfortable with the idea of them engaging in an act vity they are not familiar with or which takes them out of their local community. As a result, several of the funded projects recognised that a key part of their work was to simultaneously raise the career aspirat ons of parents/carers for their child/foster child and improve their knowledge of potent al pathways to employment so that they could enable and support posit ve transit ons into further educat on or training, for instance.

This first set of outcomes presented in Table 3 was also seen to be achieved in combinat on rather than in isolat on from one another, with one outcome supporting the achievement of others. For instance, developing bet er knowledge of potential careers and pathways to employment was seen to support young people's mot vat on to do well in education by highlighting its role in gaining labour market entry and supporting the achievement of their career ambitions. Reflecting the aims of the Fund, many providers also specified that they wanted part cipants to leave their project 1 bD on

2.3 Key features of project design

Within the first wave of interviews, providers were asked to specify how the packages of act vit es they were delivering had been designed in such a way as to produce the intended outcomes. When discussing how the target outcomes would be achieved for young people as well as their parents/carers, providers commonly spoke about how the project act vit es would at ract a young person's engagement and interest. From this init al wave of conversat ons with providers, a provisional list of common principles for ef ect ve engagement across all of the target groups was developed. These were presented to providers at a workshop event in November 2019 where they were further ref ned following their feedback. The f nalised list is presented and discussed in greater detail below. They specified that their projects would:

Providers were intending to deliver a set of experiences or support that are currently missing or absent from a young person's life. For instance, in the case of the projects focused on LAC, some providers specified that they were attempting to provide careers advice that young people not in care may receive from parental figures. For young people with SEND, the providers were intending to give these groups early exposure to employers, workplaces and workplace experiences, which is typically absent at this point in their lives. Finally, for young people from GRT communities, the activity was viewed as giving these groups an insight and information into post-16 options, which they may not normally receive due to disrupted educational experiences.

· Be tailored to young people's circumstances, : Providers spoke about tailoring in different respects. At a practical level, this was to do with ensuring that young people had the means of engaging in the proposed activities. This involved considerations about their geographical spread and the need to travel to events where these were not facilitated by their school/college, and whether they had the necessary IT equipment if activities were partly delivered online. Some providers also discussed ensuring their projects brought in technologies or topics that participants tb opics and he'

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• Be responsive to young people's and other : Providers



With regards to ethnicity, Figure 5.4 shows that just over half of part cipants ident f ed as White Brit sh. ⁷ The second and third largest ethnic minority groups that part cipated projects were those from a Gypsy, Roma or Traveller (17 per cent) or Asian (12 per cent) backgrounds.

Figure 5.5 provides a breakdown of ethnicity by main target group. It shows that projects targeted at young people with SEND worked with slightly more ethnically diverse populat ons than those projects focused on LAC. Overall, 38 per cent of part cipants in SEND projects were from minority ethnic groups, compared with 23 per cent in LAC projects. It is also worth not ng that some part cipants in projects targeted at GRT communit es described their ethnic ident ty in a variety of ways, which did not always match this init al broad categorisat on D s with

In terms of age, the majority of project part cipants were between the ages of 10-15 years (63 per cent), while two-thirds were aged between 16-20 years.8 Only 5 per cent of part cipants were in the oldest age bracket of 21-25 years. Across the whole sample, part cipants' aver

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4.3 Resources and facilities

Many providers relied on their own venues, facilities and equipment to deliver their project. Resources developed by providers included informat on and market ng material like videos, slide presentations, music as well as tools for act vities, which providers either adapted or created for the purpose of the project.

Many providers explained that they did not encounter any dif cult es with this process. This was at ributed to their prior experience of delivering similar projects and because they could work f exibly to adapt resources and delivery structures to make them suitable for the target group.

O thers reported that the process of developing resources took longer than ant cipated. This was the case, for example, for providers delivering in a new area for the first time. Providers reported challenges in developing their knowledge of what local provision was available to support the career guidance they would deliver to young people and their parents/carers. They explained that of en informat on about the local support of er is inconsistent and collating informat on took longer than expected.

Where grant holders planned to use public facilit es but had not secured an agreement with the local authority in advance, the process was reported to be lengthy. Clif on Learning Partnership for example explained that they had originally intended to improve the green space within their community and had planned to deliver the project in a public space. However, because they could not reach agreement with the local authority on which green spaces they could use, they had to adapt and change to deliver the project on their own premises instead.

4.4 Contracts and administrat on

While many grant holders were on track with delivery at the time of the first wave of interviews, some experienced delays during this initial set-up phase.

As well as the issues discussed above, additional challenges that were highlighted including delays in receiving a contract from CEC, which set out their funding allocation and agreed milestones. In a few cases, providers also reported that the tem is also tem is to a greed on the stems of the stems of



treat them as a dist nct group as they do not want to be considered dif erent. Addit onally, in cases where young people are living in a children's home, they can lack support and encouragement that LAC with foster parents may receive to sign up to the project, which providers reported can help in highlight ng the potent al benef ts.

Providers reported that LAC experienced anxiety and apprehension about part cipat ng in project act vit es, which could af ect at endance even af er they had agreed to take part. However, once they had established a trust ng relat onship with the staf, young people became more engaged. In some cases, engagement and commitment of foster carers was reported as an issue. This was associated with the t ming of the act vit es which were of en run during school holidays, which meant that foster parents had to balance family holidays and facilitate their child's at endance, which was not always pract cal or convenient.

Providers working with young people with SEND not ced that in some cases there was a percept on among young people that the project was not suitable for them or that they did not need the support. High levels of anxiety and the specificity of the young person's needs or disabilities were also reported as barriers to engagement. Anxiety could be a particular issue in set ings where support was delivered 1-2-1 or in a group where participants did not know one another. Parents/carers accompanying young people to these activities was identified as one way of en ying what these there was a percept on another.

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When asked specif cally about recruitment strategies used to encourage employers to part cipate, many providers explained that they prepared an informat on pack to be shared with employers. The pack contained informat on on what the project involves, or in the case of young people with SEND, more detailed informat on about their specific needs as well as case studies and success stories. In some cases, providers working with GRT communities of ered free cultural awareness training, using the occasion to present the project and gain employers' buy-in.

Regular communicat on with employers appeared to be a successful engagement pract ce. A provider working with young people with SEND explained that they called employers and explained the project exploring employers' interests and availability. The discussion allowed them to explain the different needs the young people had and discuss how these could be accommodated in the workplace.

The recruitment of employers was driven and to some extent constrained by the local delivery context. One provider working with LAC explained that because part cipants were widely spread across London, they worked with nat onal employers to support part cipants locally as they have a presence in most parts of the city.

When asked about messages used to encourage employers' part cipat on, many interviewees explained that they used a f exible approach. Key messages included support ng the wider community, support ng the needs of young people and also reaching out to new groups of people for the industry. Providers working with young people with SEND also ment oned reassuring employers that they do not necessarily have to have experience of working with these groups.

Mot vat ons to take part

When asked about employers' mot vat ons for taking part in the project, providers explained that many were driven by their social mission and by the willingness to give disadvantaged young people a chance to succeed.

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Barriers to part cipat on

Reasons given by providers for employers not engaging or withdraawing from the project later on were:

- Lack of time and capacity due to being a small business
- Concerns around health and safety, particularly when asked to work with younger children
- A view that they did not have suitable premises to enable participation
- Rigid recruitment processes that prohibited recruiting people without certain qualifications where providers were seeking apprenticeship or traineeship opportunities

In a few cases, providers noted that while many employers could not provide the adequate resources to of er a workplace experience, they were keen to contribute in some other way, such as visit ng a school or college to give a talk.

4.5.3 Recruit ng and engaging with schools/

While many providers had well-established links with schools and colleges and a history of working with them on various projects, others had to build new links by approaching schools and explaining the of er and exploring interests.

The criteria used to select schools varied between providers. Some selected schools in more deprived areas that were more in need of support with their work experience provision. In other cases priority was given to: the schools' capacity to deliver the tasks (where some contribut on from educators was required); f exibility in the t metable which enabled them to take students out of lessons for the purpose of the project; willingness to accommodate researchers coming in to deliver test ng where providers had their own evaluat on processes in place and having exist ng links with employers.

To promote their projects to educat onal set ngs, providers at ended different events organised by schools and colleges. In one case a provider explained that they approached special schools and put forward a targeted, bespoke programme, which would best meet the needs of their pupils.

When asked about the mot vat ons of schools to take part in the project, providers explained that because schools all have a statutory duty to provide careers advice and guidance to pupils, the of er of addit onal funded provision with innovat ve elements, was recognised as beneficial by all schools. Providers reported that schools saw the bD saw and elements,

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some cases, due to health and wellbeing issues, some students struggled to engage for a full working day and extra support was provided.

- A few providers realised that due to the high needs of participants, extra support was needed on a 1-2-1 basis, especially when conducting safety-critical tasks. Providers reported that activities have become more inclusive as a result and participants benefitted more from the sessions by being able to effectively engage with them.
- Changes were made to the types of activities on offer to avoid duplication.
 One provider working with GRT youê on o on the the Width the able the theable GRoao o the able able able

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1-2-1 interact ons. Similarly, other providers were able to adapt in situat ons in which young people felt unable to engage in group act vit es due to high levels of social anxiety, instead of ering them more hours of 1-2-1 support, ensuring they received the same amount of support as those part cipat ng in group act vit es.

For young people with SEND, some providers also

The young people said ' yiked act vit es ' f o respond to mock f eropiteest ons. Educaf ors said ' recommend to facilit tors not to stand and talk otoo long but to keep it s r, visual and f eractTvýe. aylso suggest role play as ' young people always respond humour and f er. f employers fwas in f erviewedw en part in e event in f saidd yed more second event af er responded to esent tons from ofemployers.

highlighted the importance of communicat ng clearly the nature of the act vity, its purpose as well as the potent al outcomes from taking part to support ef ect ve engagement. One example was provided of explaining to the young people that some act vit es were designed so they could be part of a celebrat on event at the end of the programme, where skills would be demonstrated to friends and family. Other providers noted the importance of ident fying opportunit es

which young people related to and which were relevant to their specific needs. This included, for example, finding opportunities relevant to the young person's interests and within organisations that had experience of working with young people with similar needs. In relation to work experience placements, providers placed significant emphasis on pre-placement work with young people, and it was considered key to developing young people's understanding of aspects such as time management and employer expectations.

Some providers noted the success of the learning itself, based on approaches and strategies used. One provider focused on the use of experient al, strength-based learning in the delivery of a series of enterprise act vit es. They considered this to be crucial in mot vat ng young people to part cipate, by highlight ng and building on their latent skills.

Many providers noted the success of various aspects of employer support they were able to of er, namely of support a employer toolkits

Providers of erecomanaged mentor

Providers were asked to ident fy the elements of their approach that had been most successful over the course of project delivery. Across all projects, a common theme that arose was providers' ability to of er f exible, responsive and personalised packages of support to project part cipants.

Feedback from providers indicated that, in line with the Theory of Change, a key success factor in the delivery of projects for young people with SEND had been their ability to be f exible and provide individualised support. This enabled them to modify aspects of delivery and adapt to part cipants' support needs. Some providers responded to behavioural issues which emerged during delivery – for instance, in the delivery of careers talks – by ensuring act vit es were interact ve and held part cipants' at ent on.

One provider was proact ve in using interact ve resources and also had alternat ves planned in case act vit es did not go as planned. Where act vit es were delivered by school staf rather than provider staf, schools were encouraged to of er f exibility in the structure and content of sessions to ensure suf cient adaptat on to meet young people's needs. For example, in one instance, Teaching Assistants who delivered group workshops were encouraged to cut content if a young person was feeling overwhelmed with the amount of informat on being provided.

Regularity of sessions and act vit es was also f exible. Providers personalised the delivery model to every individual, ensuring the length and frequency of sessions was manageable from part cipants' perspect ve. Providers also adapted the mode of delivery where appropriate. A few noted the success of delivering group sessions rather than 1-2-1 sessions. It was felt that group sessions could help reduce the anxiety of some part cipants who felt pressured in

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Across all projects the recruitment and engagement of key stakeholders were of en highlighted as the main challenges providers faced during delivery. In the case of the SEND projects, engaging employers and making sure they met their agreed commitments was a consistent challenge. For GRT and LAC projects, maintaining the engagement of young people themselves was more of a dif culty. In general, SEND projects struggled less with this aspect as they of en recruited part cipants via intermediaries such as schools and colleges.

School and parent/carer engagement

Issues surrounding the cont nued engagement of schools and parents/carers have also occurred. Some providers, for instance, had experiences of schools dropping out of employer-facing act vit es at short not ce, which in turn damaged relat onships with employers as they had commit ed t me and resources to the act vit es. These incidences highlighted the dif cult es faced by schools in organising external act vit es within a busy school schedule, part cularly when O fsted inspect ons are upcoming. Several providers also commented on staf turnover within partner schools, which could delay the start of project act vity while the transfer of responsibilit es to colleagues was arranged.

Providers also noted delays in gaining consent forms from parents/carers of young people and in communicating the purpose and importance of these documents. These difficulties were accentuated where providers were not in direct contact with parents/carers and were in contact via schools.

Where providers experienced few issues with school/college engagement, this was again at ributed to the

extensiveness of their network and the strength of their pre-exist ng relat onships with these inst tut ons having worked with them to deliver careers educat on provision in the past. This enabled providers to gain buy-in for the project more easily from educat onal inst tut ons, and quickly replace schools and part cipants where they had to withdraw unexpectedly from the project.

Providers delivering projects to young people with SEND ident f ed several challenges over the course of their projects. These mainly centred on how to ensure that the project was accessible to all part cipants and how best to engage employers in project delivery.

In line with the Theory of Change, providers reported that they were responsive to requirements of individual part cipants and quick to adapt delivery to ensure the project was accessible to their needs. For example, one provider made changes in response to baseline data and part cipant self-assessments which indicated that they did not feel they were building teamwork skills as a result of the project, despite it including teambased exercises and group work. Af er speaking with part cipants, the provider realised students were not always aware of what teamwork const tuted and so felt unable to pinpoint when they were learning part cular skills. As a result, the project was altered to include act vit es overtly teaching the concept of teamwork and encouraging its pract ce.

Similarly, another case study provider (Dynamic Training) found it challenging to gather feedback from part cipants. Many of the young people engaged struggled with literacy and so it was dif cult to obtain writ en feedback. Instead, the project manager captured verbal feedback through videoing part cipants and asking for feedback from part via feedback part c videoing

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environment when assigning an individual requiring wheelchair access for work experience there. They adapted the physical environment, moving furniture and re-arranging the shop f oor, ensuring the kitchen was accessible and facilities could be used by the part cipant.

However, providers could find it part cularly challenging to be adaptive to young people's needs and careers interest wever, foor, providers the 1 bechtmineeds needs and

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awareness training for employers. For example, one of workplaces, 1-2-1 personal guidance interviews for provider was planning to of er short videos made by examiltopart Eispant employaattpisatadsintatherjueliidepilaterailitettersibnaliotaetoopersspersoo a papersiov Young people would be provided with a worksheet to complete af er watching the video, encouraging them to refect on what they had learnt. It was hoped that this would help to st II provide a degree of personalisat on. The provider noted they were st II developing ideas about how they could make part cipants' experience of watching these videos more interact ve, such as set ng them challenges to complete. They also intended to provide virtual tours

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Providers delivering programmes aimed at young people from GRT communit es also encountered signif cant issues with engaging part cipants as a result of Covid-19. Init ally, act vit es and events planned by providers were cancelled due to the nat onwide lockdown. Some providers decided to stop or delay delivery at that point, while others sought to move provision online.

Providers cont nuing with online delivery noted that they experienced a signif cant decline in levels of engagement from the community. This was partly at ributed to a lack of access to IT equipment in their home environments, which was part cularly acute during the school closures. However, some young people cont nued to engage, and providers reported that they were able to achieve some of the init al outputs planned as part of the project. This was achieved by of ering alternat ves to the work experience, such as virtual employer talks explaining the workplace and the roles within the organisat on.

Providers who stopped delivery completely, highlighted issues with part cipant recruitment and engagement. They stated that local GRT communit es had become more apprehensive about their children engaging with any external providers or services due to Covid-19 risks. Some providers also noted that sect ons of these communit es had moved out of the area in search of bet er employment opportunit es as their income levels had been adversely af ected by the pandemic.

Providers delivering projects for LAC, which were cont nuing with delivery at the t me of the nat onwide lockdown, needed to translate the programme into an online format. Init ally, some providers encountered resistance from carers to online engagement which delayed the delivery of the project. Over t me however, it was reported that more carers had become accustomed to online delivery and their reluctance to part cipate had diminished.

The addit onal funded projects aimed at young people outside of mainstream provision were designed in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and ongoing social distancing restrict ons. As a result, providers either designed the ent re project to be delivered online, or in most cases were delivering the project through local intermediaries who would be able to have face-to-face engagement with part cipants. However, with the onset of the third wave of Covid-19 infect ons and subsequent nat onal lockdown in January 2021, many providers' original plans were disrupted with some having to temporarily change their mode of delivery to accommodate the stay at home order.

In most cases, providers looked to deliver sessions that were originally designed to take place face-to-face over video conferencing sof ware. The act vit es that were due to take place included 1-2-1 careers guidance interviews as well as group discussions of work produced following online tutorials (e.g. in digital skills). As noted, this had mixed success, and some young people did not want to join and contribute to an online theet ng, part cultarl— iu had this t youtha people in led ole tot e is EMIe

in st II being engaging for part cipants while giving them the opportunity to pract ce the same skills as previously.

A few providers were unable to adapt their delivery model to an online mode. This was at ributed to some pupils not having the necessary equipment to engage in online, interact ve sessions (i.e. a working camera an af mera a online sessions

The following chapter presents quant tat ve data on outcomes achieved by the Fund. It draws on the analysis of management informat on compiled by providers, and sets out rates of complet on for the main target groups and whether they lef the project with a career plan or goal in mind.

It also present qualitative findings on the perceived outcomes of project activity on young people, parents/carers and employers, from the perspective of providers as well as the stakeholders themselves. The full range of expected outcomes for each of these groups is set out in Table 3.

This chapter also considers the contextual factors that providers and other stakeholders feel have af ected the outcomes their projects were able to achieve; any addit onal delivery costs their projects incurred to support the achievement of the target outcomes; providers' ref ect ons on what adaptat ons would be needed for future delivery to enhance their project's ef ect veness; as well as their plans for sustaining the project and its associated outcomes beyond the Careers & Enterprise funding period.

6.1.1 Rates of complet on and outcomes

6.2 Perceived outcomes for young people and parents/carers 6.2.1 SEND

According to providers, the projects targeted at young people with SEND achieved the full range of intended outcomes set out in the Theory of Change. However, individual projects had different areas of emphasis depending on the level of need among the target populat on and the nature of the act vit es undertaken with them.

Greater agency/independence

A few projects where young people were supported more extensively on a 1-2-1 basis spoke about how they had encouraged part cipants, over the course of the project, to take on a greater degree of agency with regards to their search for further educat on opt ons or employment. Some providers spoke of how this was achieved by set ng clear limits of what work they were prepared to do in terms of researching potent al opt ons and making applicat ons. They would discuss with the young person, for instance, what

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According to providers, these two approaches in combinat on encouraged young people to engage, speak up and gain conf dence in their peer interact ons as their contribut ons were posit vely received. In this sense, young people's experiences on the project were dist nct from their normal day-to-day experiences in so far as they felt that they were listened to and that their views were valued. In one case a provider noted that a part cipant with ASD who had been select vely mute while in school started communicat ng with others again as a result of these experiences.

A caveat to the use of this approach was that it was less successful with young people who had signif cant behavioural problems. One provider noted that one of the groups they engaged in the project were pupils from a Pupil Referral Unit. In this instance, part cipants found collaborat on challenging and could not agree on a shared focus for the enterprise project.

Several SEND 2 projects also reported improvements in part cipants' conf dence (evidenced through improvements in their communicat on skills) via direct posit ve encounters with employers and exposure to workplaces. Providers at ributed these changes to young people being taken out of their 'sheltered' everyday schedule, which provided a greater sense of independence, and being spoken to and valued as an adult in their interact ons with employers.

One provider noted that young people in their group were used to be distributed in the provider noted that young people in their group were used to be distributed in the provider noted that young people in their group

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labour market gained more from these experiences.

This was linked to levels of maturity as well as the t theTf to 1 minq

In terms of work placements, providers noted similar ef ects with young people learning more about part cular occupat ons and the types of roles that businesses support. These were seen to be most beneficial when they were tailored to a young person's pre-exist ng interests. Providers were able to more easily facilitate this where they had developed extensive networks with a broad range of employers across different sectors. In the case of these projects, work placements were seen to help extend and refine

young person's pre-exist ng aspirat ons by providing a more comprehensive view of what certain occupat ons entail and helping to clarify what aspects of the role they do and do not enjoy.

Bet er knowledge of potent al careers, pathways to

Building on the above work, providers described delivering personal guidance interviews or mentoring

Nat onal Deaf Children's Society

The careers advisers would contact part cipant's Sensory Support Worker (SSW) prior to the interview to check whether there were any communicat on needs they should be aware of. The interviews themselves would last between 45-50 minutes. They would begin by contextualising the discussion: explaining to the young person that it was part of the same support package as the workshop and asking whether they recalled being part of this session.

The individual interviews would cover where the part cipant is now (predicted grades for GCSEs, what subjects they enjoy, what work experience they are planning to get). They would then look forward to the part cipants future educat on and consider what opt ons would be appropriate, what they should consider in making these choices, and where they should go for further informat on on funding and what these courses/placements would entail. These choices would be t ed to part cipant's careers aspirat ons. The advisers noted that all of

the young people could volunteer ideas on these, but in some cases they needed to do a bit more research on what they needed to do to get a job in this area and develop a bet er understanding of what this pathway would entail.

They would f nish the interview by drawing up a short careers act on plan of what they agreed the part cipant and adviser would do following the meet ng and moving forward in helping to consider post-16 opt ons. The adviser would generally email this to the part cipant following the meet ng with support ng informat on to assist with their research of further educat on and careers opt ons. So they did not overwhelm the part cipant with informat on, they also have a general signpost ng sect on at the bot om of the act on plan that refers part cipants to further support and resources that will support them to think about their further choices when they are ready.

The adviser would also include their contact details and encourage the part cipant to get in touch if they had any further quest ons or required more ad-hoc advice around what was discussed.

sessions to help develop part cipants' aspirat ons into an agreed careers plan. This typically set out next steps in terms of researching the entry criteria for specific roles and considering potent all post-16 options, which would help in fulfilling these requirements.

Some providers were able to point to the direct impacts of this work, such as college enrolments or securing apprent ceship placements for part cipants. An example of the structure of these personal guidance interviews was provided by the NDCS case study.

These interviews were typically delivered 4-6 weeks af er the careers informat on workshops:

Some young people who had negat ve experiences of mainstream educat on fed back that in their approach careers advisers also tried to reassure part cipants about what it would be like to undertake further educat on and training. For instance, one young person stated that their adviser made clear the differences between at ending a Further Educat on College and school: they would need to at end for fewer days, were able to wear their own clothes and there would be a more relaxed relations.

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6.2.2 GRT

Providers and other stakeholders involved in the projects target ng GRT communit es described achieving a similar similar

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Bet er knowledge of potent al careers, pathways to

A few providers reported that they were able to broaden part cipants awareness of potent al careers and pathways to employment through their projects. In the case of one provider, they arranged pop-up events at an Irish traveller site, which included talks by local colleges and Universit es as well as employers.

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Changes in how parents/carers communicate with

One outcome noted as part of the Amaze case study that did not explicitly feature as part of the Theory of Change was changes in how parents broached the subject of careers with their child. One parent who was interviewed stated that as their child had ASD and high-levels of anxiety, they also at ended all of the 1-2-1 personal guidance sessions Amaze had arranged for them. They observed how Amaze staf spoke with and engaged with their child, which they tried to replicate so that they could have construct ve conversat ons about their next steps in terms of educat on and training.

The parent not ced how Amaze staf spoke with their child 'on a level'; they have tried to model that style of interact on when discussing similar topics with them. They commented that they not ced that they usually spoke to their child as a mother parent tha pa

6. 3 Perceived outcomes for

Several outcomes were observed for employers where these groups were engaged in project delivery. They were most prominent among the SEND 2 projects that overall had achieved a greater level of employer engagement. The outcomes centred on two main areas: changes in percept ons of the target groups and changes in pract ces.

Change in percept ons of target group

Both providers and employers spoke extensively about how their exposure to young people with SEND had signif cantly challenged their presumpt ons regarding part cipants skills, capabilit es and behaviours as well as levels of need in a posit ve way. This was part cularly evident for the SEND 2 projects, where employers admit ed that they had preconcept ons about how certain disabilit es would manifest in their encounters with young people.

Several providers and employers noted that af er having met project part cipants, they were now aware that these assumpt ons were incorrect and that all disabilities encompass a broad spectrum of conditions. As a result, several employers commented that they learned the importance of looking past a 'label' and treating each young person as an individual with their own set of needs and abilities.

Feedback from employers involved in Dynamic Training's SEND 2 project, which involved disability awareness training, summarised these points well.



employers could meet these needs in the workplace were reportedly very posit ve about their experience. They fed back that they intended to make some of the suggested accommodat ons, such as giving young people more t me to provide a response. Employers involved in other projects that included SEND awareness training and the provision of work placements for young people reported similar gains based on their experience:

O ther employers who had been involved in the delivery of careers talks, for instance, also stated that the experien of

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Changes in pract ces of Æ

In several cases, providers and employers highlighted how the outcomes achieved above had contributed towards changes in employer pract ces. These were mainly focused on how employers continuicate with young people with SEAD.

Employers who had at ended workshops delivered by young people with speech, language and communicat on needs, which were focused on how 1 for

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6.4 Facilitators and inhibitors of

Providers were asked to ident fy and discuss the broader contextual factors that had af ected the outcomes their projects were able to achieve. In their answers, providers focused in many cases on the local labour market in which they were operat ng as well as their experiences of working with employers as part of these projects. Employers interviewed as part of the case studies also fed back on where they felt the outcomes they were able to achieve were inhibit experient ng

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6.5 Addit onal delivery costs

Providers were asked to consider whether there had been any addit onal delivery costs that they had not init ally budgeted for as part of their funding allocat ons. This quest on was asked to bet er understand the true costs of delivery in relat on to each project. Providers responses were varied. Some of the addit onal costs cited stemmed from issues encountered over the course of delivery, while others were put down to oversights when put ng together the original budget. The range of provider responses is detailed below:

Some providers, particularly those engaged in GRT and LAC projects, noted that they spent more time than anticipated in generating referrals and/or securing agreement from families for

their child to participate. In the case of GRT projects, a few providers noted that parents had safeguarding concerns around their child engaging in any external activity. As a result, a lot of staff time went into building relationships of trust with parents and providing assurances that their child would be looked after.

Several providers noted that they did not budget for staff travel time and expenses associated with project delivery. These costs were particularly acute where delivery. Cute in a U 1 ted cute of the point acute where a U 1 ted cute of the point acute where and 1 experiments.



personal guidance interviews to participants and their parents.

- : A few providers commented that the staff time required to conduct risks assessments for workplace visits and its associated costs were higher than they initially anticipated.
- A few providers noted that they did not budget for the quarterly reporting requirements that have been required as a condition of receiving funding. They stated that these requirements have changed over the course of the project, with additional data/information being requested. Providers commented that had they been aware of the extent of these requirements prior to submitting their proposal, they would have increased the size of their budget to take account of these costs. commented had tize r ts

as some had already moved into employment. Targeting younger Roma participants who are still in mainstream education was therefore suggested as a more effective means of providing support at a point where there is an apparent need: for instance, to help support their academic achievement.

- Several providers noted that some of the young people they were working with required more intensive models of support to produce the expected outcomes. Providers delivering projects for LAC discussed extending the length of any future intervention to enable more progress for this group. In the first instance, many LAC need support with their social and emotional development before they are ready to consider possible transitions. In this way, some providers said it would be helpful to introduce a more therapeutic element of support for LAC to support their overall wellbeing, which in the long-term could lead to more positive outcomes. Other providers delivering 1-2-1 support sessions as part SEND projects commented that their funded delivery model was not sufficient to support those with more complex needs. They noted that these young people needed a more intensive, 5-day model of support structured, for instance, around outdoor learning activities, which can help build their self-confidence as well as other latent skills.
- recall in online delivery: Providers that moved to online delivery noted that participants recollection of what was covered in previous sessions could be poor. This made them question whether all the information participants received would be available to them when they needed it in future. To help address this issue, one provider noted that if they were to run these sessions again, they intended to host an additional workshop 4 weeks after the main intervention was complete. This 'work readiness' workshop would give participants a chance put into

- practice what they have learnt by working through practical scenarios (such as mock interviews) and help reinforce their learning.
- Extend support beyond young people's transitions:
 Some providers noted that they were not able to sustain all of the outcomes they were able to achieve as they had no funding to continue to support participants when they moved into further education, training or employment. The case study with Amaze highlighted this issue in the context of their project:

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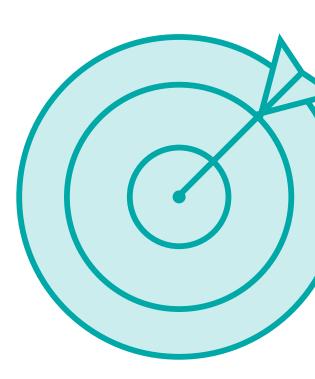
Other SEND providers who had secured additional funding to provide personalised guidance interviews commented that they expected their work from September onwards to init ally be quite react ve. They ant cipated that there would be some young people for whom they had secured a posit ve outcome (such as enrolling at a local college) who they would need to support to find an alternative option. Due to Covid-19, the learning or work environment they expected to be entering may need to change signif cantly. At the t me of the research, the provider commented that informat on was also not init ally forthcoming on what changes would need to be implemented in these set ngs due to general uncertainty about how spread of the virus would develop and what measures it was feasible to put in place to support students/employees returning. For young people with condit ons such as ASD, who the provider noted generally needed a sense of rout ne and did not deal well with uncertainty, this experience could be enormously disrupt ve and cause them to drop-out of college or leave their place of work.

A few providers meanwhile had incorporated sustainability into their project delivery by developing resources and toolkits that could be used by local stakeholders to deliver future iterat ons of the project. In the case of NDCS, the provider had developed a toolkit that could be used by Sensory Support Workers in local authorit es. While the provider had the resource required to promote this toolkit beyond the Careers & Enterprise funding period, they commented however that the ability of local authority staf to engage with this material and deliver the project locally was potent ally challenging given the limited f nances of local government.

Several providers working directly with schools noted that they hoped these inst tut ons would cont nue to deliver the project to future cohorts of students. Some providers had trained local specialists, such as speech and language therapists, to facilitate future project delivery with the schools they work with. This would

mean that schools did not have to buy-in any addit onal services. O ther projects had trained teachers to deliver the project to pupils, with support and assistance from the provider team. They hoped this would provide schools with the skills and conf dence to deliver the project again under their own volit on, again without needing to secure the services of an external provider.

Where providers had act vely brokered relat onships between schools/colleges and employers as part of the project - for instance, via careers talks and events as well as employer mentoring – they hoped these relat onships would be sustained, and educat onal inst tut ons could invite the same employers to repeat these act vit es in subsequent years.



7.1 Init al set up

- The Fund selection and grant award process was generally successful in identifying providers with appropriate previous experience of working with the target groups. Providers demonstrated the ability to draw on this prior experience to design packages of support for young people. This suggests similar selection criteria could be used in future funding programmes.
- Grant-funded projects often experience challenges recruiting staff to posts with short-term contracts. The difficulties appear to be exacerbated when staff with specialist skills and experience in working with particular disadvantaged groups are required. Future funding programmes focussed and disadvantaged young people should consider this when deciding on the duration of projects. If timeframes cannot be extended, priority should be given to providers with staff already in post.
- Strong partnership working between a range of stakeholders is required to provide effective careers information, advice and guidance. Where grant holders do not have existing relationships with partner organisations, it can take time to build these links. This can delay providers' ability to start delivering their projects and working directly with young people. Consequently, at the point of commissioning, it is useful to be clear about whether one of the aims of the funding is to stimulate new partnerships or whether the priority is immediate delivery of careers provision. If the latter, then providers with existing partnerships should be prioritised.

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Providers receiving funding used the initial stages of projects to adapt their delivery models and planned activities based on early experiences and feedback. This enabled them to tailor and flex project activities to better meet the needs of young people for the remainder of project delivery. The capability to work in this responsive, agile manner could usefully inform future selection and monitoring of funded providers.

In relation to recruiting employers to offer encounters with the world of work, including work experience specifically for young people with SEND, focussing on those who are 'disability confident' businesses or have a strong CSR ethos works well.

- Employers vary in the time and resources they can commit and so offering a menu of options around how they can contribute to careers provision is likely to be more effective than requiring a minimum input or being highly prescriptive.
- Employers need to be given detailed information to raise awareness, enable informed choice and provide reassurances. The Fund providers reported that there was an appetite among many employers to support disadvantaged young people but that employers also felt ill-informed about their needs and backgrounds. This could act as a barrier to them contributing to careers provision and so information and training was required to overcome this.
- Messages focused on contributing to the local community, helping young people, widening the talent pool from which they recruit and opportunities to 'try out' a candidate before offering an apprenticeship, can be persuasive and useful in engaging employers in activities for disadvantaged young people.

7.4 Working ef ect vely with

Pressures within the school context may affect
a school's ability to lead and facilitate employer
encounters. When support is focussed on
disadvantaged young people, there may be additional
steps that need to be taken by schools too, which
can be an extra demand on resources and time.
 To help overcome this, a clear Memorandum of
Understanding stating the roles and responsibilities of
all parties (employers, schools and providers) can help
to secure commitment and ensure senior leaders are
willing to help create the time required for effective
participation.



