



RAISING THE PARTICIPATION AGE
Developing an Engaging Offer to
Young People

Emerging Findings
March 2011

The National Youth Agency (NYA) is one of three Education Support organisations to receive funding from Department for Communities and Local Government, under the Local Government Finance Act 1988. The Local Government Association (LG Association) has oversight of NYA's work supported by this funding. The annual funding supports key areas of NYA's work and promotes the role of local government and its partners in youth policy.

Raising the participation age: developing an engaging offer

Emerging Findings

Executive summary

The NYA, in partnership with the Local Government Association, undertook research to explore young people's views on the coalition government's plans to increase the age for young people remaining in education and training to 18. The research had two elements: an online survey of around 1,000 young people and 900 parents/carers, reported on separately in November 2010 (Raising the Participation Age: views of young people and parents, 2010), and five focus groups with young people undertaken between December 2010 and February 2011. This report is primarily based on the views expressed during the focus groups, which involved 80 young people between the ages of 11 and 23 with a range of different experiences.

Key findings

- There is a clear need for a comprehensive campaign explaining to young people and those who advise and support them that the options will include college and employment as well as school. Even when NYA staff explained the range of options, the young people in the focus groups continued to equate 'staying in education or training' with 'staying on at school'. Many of those against staying on used arguments which ignored the potential for combining employment and learning.
- Just over half (55%) of the focus group participants were in favour of raising the age for staying on in education or training to 18; around a quarter (24%) were opposed to it and the remainder (21%) were unsure. This is in line with previous research including the NYA's own survey.
- Both the positive and negative experiences of schools reported by young people highlighted the importance of teachers being able to communicate well with young people, use a variety of teaching methods, respond to their individual needs, and avoid or manage disruptive behaviour.
- Young people believe that education should be challenging, interesting and fun. It should use a range of approaches to respond to individual circumstances and learning styles, including practical work, one-to one learning and opportunities for group work, and a variety of assessment methods.
- Vocational qualifications should have equal status to academic qualifications and young people should be able to choose from a range of options at 14.
- Young people want a learning environment that makes it clear that they are valued and respected. Specific elements identified as important included being treated as a young adult, being involved in identifying how they learn best, good quality premises and equipment, and smaller classes.
- Young people identified the importance of accurate and impartial information, advice and guidance about the opportunities available and how they would help young people achieve their employment or higher education ambitions.
- The young people identified the need for more appropriate and individual support for young people with additional needs or who had struggled at school, offered in a way which did not stigmatise the young people concerned. Schools should foster understanding of the circumstances of specific groups of young people, such as those in care, and actively promote equal opportunities and cultural diversity.
- The need for young people to be involved in decisions about education, and for students to have opportunities to provide feedback on all aspects of their education, was stressed.

- Many, but not all, young people feel strongly that the ending of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) will discourage young people from staying on in education, based on their own experience and those of their peers.

Background

The National Youth Agency (NYA), in partnership with the Local Government Association, undertook research to explore young people's views on the coalition government's plans to increase the age for young people remaining in education or training – frequently referred to as raising the participation age (RPA). As part of the spending review and the White Paper *The Importance of Teaching*, the government made clear its continued commitment to raising the participation age to 17 in 2013 and to 18 in 2015, in line with the provisions of the Education and Skills Act 2008. However, in order to ensure that young people are not criminalised, the White Paper announced that the government would legislate, through the Education Bill 2011, to allow the enforcement process to be introduced progressively over a longer period (*The Importance of Teaching – the Schools White Paper 2010*, p50). Young people will be able to choose one of three options:

- Full-time education, such as school, college or home education;
- Work-based learning, such as an apprenticeship; and
- Part-time education or training if they are employed, self-employed or volunteering for more than 20 hours a week.

The research had two elements: an analysis of an online survey of around 1,000 young people and 900 parents/carers reported on separately in November 2010, and the results of five focus groups with 80 young people run by the NYA between December 2010 and February 2011. This report is primarily based on the views expressed during the focus groups, although it also draws on the survey and on findings from earlier research and consultations. It covers three main areas: the young people's experiences of education; their views on staying in education and training up to the age of 18; and their vision for an engaging learning offer.

The NYA online survey found that 57 per cent of young people were in favour of staying in learning until 18. This is broadly in line with research undertaken after the previous government announced its plans for RPA. The Edge Foundation's Youth Commission, set up to investigate what would make staying on a positive experience for all young people, found that 58 per cent of the 4,000 young people it surveyed were in favour of staying on until 18, around one-third (31%) were against it and the remainder were undecided (Low and Kenyon, 2009, p6). However, the issues of compulsion and enforcement - now deferred by the coalition government – were more contentious. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) received nearly 1,000 written responses from young people as part of its *Raising Expectations* consultation. It reported 'wide acceptance of the principle that young people would benefit from continuing to develop skills formally until they were 18', but found that only a minority of young people and adults (36 and 44 per cent respectively) were in favour of the proposal to 'raise the compulsory participation age to 18' (DCSF, 2007, p2, 4). The British Youth Council also opposed the introduction of compulsory participation until 18 (BYC, 2007, pp2-3).

The DCSF also commissioned research exploring how young people in year 7 in 2008-09 – the first cohort to be affected by RPA - think about education and career issues. The study, which involved a total of 610 pupils, found that most were not aware of changes to the education leaving age. However, most pupils were described as 'not troubled' by the plans,

provided they were able to exercise choice in their learning destinations, since they saw education as vital for future career progression (Atherton et al, 2009, pp21-24).

Focus group participants

The NYA organised five focus groups between December 2010 and February 2011. They were held at Southend-on-Sea Youth Centre (Eastern Region), Leicestershire County Hall (East Midlands), Bexley Connexions Centre (London), the Krunch Project, Sandwell (West Midlands) and Sheffield Futures (Yorkshire & the Humber). They involved a total of 80 young people, of whom 44 were male and 36 were female. Just over half (42) were aged 16 to 18, 25 were aged 11 to 15, and 13 were 19 or older. Participants in three of the groups were asked about their current education or employment status. Most were at school or college (28 and 18 respectively), and three were at university. Four participants were in work with training, three in work without training, one was doing an apprenticeship and one was unemployed. Five young people said they were volunteering (mostly alongside other options), although discussions indicated that many more were part-time volunteers.

Between them, the five focus groups involved a diverse range of young people, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, an 'accelerated cohort' (year 10 age young people placed into year 11), young people involved in a range of participation structures and in developing a young person's website, those with experience of homelessness, young offenders, looked after young people and young people who had not attended or had been excluded from school. While the focus groups used a common discussion and activity framework, there were variations according to the nature of the young people involved, the spaces where the focus groups were held, and the time available.

Staying on in education or training up to the age of 18

The young people's awareness of the changes to the education leaving age was varied. Some young people were aware of the changes, while others – including those who will be directly affected – had only very limited knowledge. Very few of the young people were aware of the full range of potential options. Following an explanation of the options, they were asked whether they thought that staying in education or training until 18 was a good or bad idea. This indicated that just over half (55%) of the young people were in favour, around a quarter (24%) were opposed to it and the remainder (21%) were unsure. This is broadly in line with the NYA's online survey, where 57 per cent of respondents were in favour staying in learning until the age of 18.

The focus group participants were then asked to give reasons for their choices. Those in favour of staying on stressed the importance of gaining qualifications and skills, which they saw as directly linked to getting better and more well paid jobs. Interestingly, many of those who reported negative experiences of schools were in favour of staying on to 18, now believing that this would give them more time to learn and better opportunities in later life. This is in line with DCSF research into the experiences of 120 young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) or in jobs without training. This found that that almost half of those interviewed were positive about RPA. They believed it would encourage young people to make more positive choices at 16; require schools and colleges to give young people who had failed at school a second chance; and force providers to develop and offer courses suitable to all young people's needs, levels of learning and preferred learning

styles. Just over a quarter expressed more negative views, while others were unsure (Spielhofer, 2009, pp101-04).

'As long as you have information and choices I don't see a problem.'

'You need to stay on if you want to get on in life.'

'It would give you a chance to catch up with coursework, you're more grown up then so it could give people a second chance.'

'Yes – as long as it ensures that kids get qualifications at the end! There's no point in wasting two more years if you're still on the dole at the end of it.'

'Everyone knows that you have less chance if you don't go to college.'

Most of those who were in favour of staying on stressed the importance of being offered a range of choices. Young people in two groups were particularly keen on apprenticeships, with around three-quarters preferring this option, which they saw as offering opportunities to earn money while gaining relevant skills and qualifications. Many young people in the focus groups also said that they would want to learn in an environment where they would be treated more like adults, for instance a further education college rather than school, although others stressed the benefits of staying on in a familiar environment where teachers were known and trusted. This may be one reason why the NYA's online survey found that young people were most likely to choose staying on at school.

'It's important that you can get a variety of work experience and can change if things aren't working out for you.'

'I hated school, but I got good grades so the only option I was given was sixth-form college and I didn't get on with it so I left. It would have been different if I'd been given more choices.'

'If you do an apprenticeship they don't judge you on GCSEs or school, they're more interested in you actually doing the work.'

'If young people know what the options are, then you should have fewer NEETs as they get more choice.'

'The main reason why students can't get jobs after education is because a lack of experience. Staying on in education won't help unless apprenticeships are offered.'

'It would need to offer learning in a different environment – the older you are the less likely you are to want to stay in a classroom all day.'

Some of those who opposed staying on simply said that school was boring, or that they had had enough of studying. Other reasons given by those who were unsure or against staying on included the belief that young people have the right to choose to work at the age of 16; that staying on would mean that young people lack relevant experience when trying to get a job; and that staying on would only appeal to those young people who 'love learning'. Some young people also pointed out that the current economic climate means that many well qualified people have been unable to gain employment in their chosen areas. Some young people, while agreeing with staying on in principle, felt strongly that it should not be compulsory. They argued that compulsion would be counter-productive for those young people who do not want to stay on, who could in turn disrupt the learning of those who do want to stay in education or training.

'Staying on would just waste people's time more.'

'You can work harder and longer but that doesn't mean you get a job.'

'Choice is essential – if you're forced to do something you may turn up but you don't listen.'

'There shouldn't be compulsion – if you say "you have to" you get more people rebelling.'

'My brother who has just finished uni can't get a job with a degree so I have no chance!'

'Don't bother making kids learn who don't want to. I don't want to be with people who don't want to be there – they messed it up for me.'

During discussions, it became clear, however, that many young people continued to equate 'staying on' with 'staying on at school', and therefore as preventing young people getting the work experience they needed for employment. One young person, for instance, argued that staying on was pointless for those who had a clear idea of what they wanted to do, but then changed their views once reminded about the employment with training option. Other research has also highlighted the need to ensure that young people and those advising them have an accurate understanding of the RPA options. The Edge Foundation report expressed concern about the number of young people who 'believe that staying on until 18 means they will be confined to a classroom studying those same subjects that have already made them lose interest in the education system' (Low and Kenyon, 2010, p7). A report on the RPA trials currently underway in ten local authorities and one sub-region also highlighted the importance of starting to prepare for RPA from the age of 14. It argued that while young people need to understand that staying in education and training does not necessarily mean staying on at school, the 'core message which young people, parents and staff all need reminding of and explaining in more detail is about the different pathways which young people can take through post 14 education' (ISOS Partnership, 2010, p24).

The young people were asked what would encourage or discourage them from staying in education or training. Many young people highlighted the need for improved information, advice and guidance (IAG) about the opportunities available and how they would help them achieve their employment or higher education ambitions. Some young people said that they had not received enough information about the options available and the implications of their choices. Some also indicated that they were not given impartial advice, for instance when schools wanted to retain young people. In contrast, one young person was very positive about her school's approach, where students at the end of year 10 are given a full range of information about academic and vocational options and opportunities for 'taster' sessions. This concern about IAG reflects the findings of the Staying On project, with nearly one-fifth (18%) of the young people surveyed reporting that they did not have enough information and advice to make choices about their future (Benetto, 2009, p7). From another perspective, around a quarter (24%) of heads of Connexions and local authority strategic managers with responsibility for IAG did not feel confident that their existing IAG provision would respond sufficiently well to RPA (McCrone et al, 2010, p11).

'I got to year 11 before I knew what I wanted to do and what I needed to do to achieve this.'

'If you don't know what opportunities are available, you miss out.'

'Teachers should be honest about what's best. I'd rather they said that you can take these courses if you like but realistically you would be better doing this.'

There was considerable discussion about the role of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) in enabling young people to stay in education. Many young people felt strongly that the ending of EMA would discourage young people from staying on in education, citing their own experience and those of their peers. They argued that even if young people are not absolutely dependant on EMA to cover their educational costs, it offers a strong incentive. While they recognised that it is abused by some young people who use the money to

support their social lives, most young people who received it said that they spent it on lunch, equipment and – most importantly – travel. A minority, however, argued against EMA, on the grounds that education should be an end in itself and offering a financial incentive is therefore inappropriate, or that the arrangements for means testing should be tightened up to ensure that any financial support goes to those who really need it. One young person also highlighted inconsistencies in the allocation of EMA, since the arrangements are not flexible enough to respond to changed family circumstances; this young person felt disadvantaged by not being entitled to EMA although others in her family had received it.

'Scrapping EMA is stupid, it discourages young people from staying on.'

'Half of my college relies on EMA.'

'It's why I went to sixth-form, if I didn't get it I'd never be able to go.'

'I get EMA, but it's not why I go to college, it's for the education.'

'EMA, EMA, EMA – to deserving people!'

There were also mixed views about the effects of higher university fees. Some young people believed that as university becomes more expensive, staying in education and training until 18 will become an important alternative, while others suggested that not being able to progress to university may mean young people see less point in staying on.

'With the rise in university fees, only the rich kids and the posh kids can be anything in life.'

Participants in one focus group were also asked to work in small groups to identify what qualities employers are seeking, particularly in the context of increased unemployment. They all highlighted the importance of qualifications and numeracy and literacy, but also identified a range of personal and social characteristics and skills which would help young people succeed in work, including attributes such as honesty, good communication skills, punctuality, self-confidence and reliability. While research carried out by the CBI has highlighted employers' dissatisfaction with young people's 'employability' skills, which it defines as including self-management; team-working; business and customer awareness; problem-solving; communication and literacy; numeracy; and IT, these young people appeared to be aware of the importance of this range of skills (CBI, 2010, pp23-4).

The same group was also asked if they thought whether the recession has made it more important to stay in education longer. Most believe that it has, although some young people argued that life and work experiences are more important than qualifications. Just over two-thirds (11 out of 16) thought that staying in education and training until 18 will help their future job prospects. This is in line with earlier NYA research into young people's experiences of the recession, which found that over two-thirds (71%) of the 1,500 young people surveyed believed that staying on in education would be the most effective strategy in helping them cope with the recession and the greater competition for jobs (*Exploring Volunteering in a Recession: talking with young people*, 2010, p11).

Experiences of education

The young people were asked to identify the best, worst and most interesting aspects of their educational experiences.. Most reported both good and bad experiences, but for a sizeable number their experience of school had been consistently negative.

The young people cited a variety of positive experiences of school. These included learning new skills and gaining qualifications; teachers responding to individual needs and interests

and using a variety of interactive and group work approaches; and making friends and socialising – highlighted by some young people who disliked school as well as those who enjoyed it. Several young people stressed the value of educational opportunities outside the school, for instance school exchanges, field trips or visits to museums, which they thought offered more interesting approaches to learning. Some young people with specific needs highlighted the importance of schools or alternative education providers using flexible approaches, such as allowing them to leave lessons or sit exams in private, or providing extra support for their dyslexia.

'I like the subjects where you get on with teachers and they make me feel good about myself.'

'Doing stuff outside the school is a good way of learning, you meet new people, and get to learn from their different experiences.'

'It's good that the behaviour teacher can take us out if we're not enjoying a lesson or if we're not given enough time to keep up.'

'We went to a concentration camp, it really brought home what we'd done at school.'

'We've got one teacher who's really good, she teaches us normally for 50 minutes and then we spend the last 10 minutes looking at different ways of learning.'

The most frequently cited negative experiences related to teachers and the quality of teaching. Specific aspects included teachers not respecting young people, not listening or treating them 'like kids'; being unable to control classes; being boring or badly organised; and judging and writing off young people without knowing them or their circumstances. Some young people simply perceived the school curriculum as irrelevant to them and their lives. Other negative experiences included gender stereotyping - which young women in particular felt had limited their opportunities; being bullied and getting into fights; young people feeling under pressure from exams and teachers' expectations; and the behaviour of other students.

'People put you down so you think you can't do anything.'

'Classes where the teachers don't listen to you and just teach in the same way every lesson.'

One teacher said "if you don't want to get taught get out – I still get paid the same".'

'Teachers not listening when there was a problem therefore I left.'

'Dealing with mental illness with teachers who didn't understand and/or didn't have the patience to support me.'

'My science teacher always puts me at the back even though he knows I work better when I'm at the front.'

Experiences described as 'interesting' again tended to highlight the importance of schools using less formal educational approaches, for instance work experience, taking part in practical activities through a science week, visiting hospitals, and working with other young people. Young people also highlighted the subjects they enjoyed, which ranged from practical activities such as sport, art, design technology and cooking to academic subjects such as history and advanced maths. One group was very positive about an enterprise initiative where they ran their own company, which provided opportunities to develop skills such as planning, budgeting and communication.

The young people were asked to identify what would have improved their experiences of education. Their responses focused on three main areas: relationships with teachers; the use of varied educational approaches; and consistent enforcement of school rules. Comments about teachers included the need for mutual respect, the importance of teachers having good training in communication skills and classroom control, and the value of young people being involved in interviews for new staff. Some young people also argued that teachers should not be concerned with issues such as uniform or jewellery, since this could distract them from teaching, have a negative effect on their relationships with young people, and, in some cases, could provide an excuse for young people to avoid school through not complying with its requirements. Suggestions for improving teaching approaches included having more interactive and practical lessons, lessons being shorter, and teachers going at young people's own pace. Some young people also highlighted the need for schools to deal more effectively with bullying and fighting, arguing that the schools were 'too soft' on bullies, even when they had anti-bullying policies in place.

'We need more respect between teachers and young people, which would make it more pleasant. It's two-way, we can't just blame teachers but they should take a lead.'

'Lessons need to be more hands-on so you get to experience things.'

'Teachers shouldn't make unrealistic grade predictions, it puts too much pressure on you.'

'Tutors need to realise when I don't understand.'

What should learning look like?

The Youth Commission identified 'six solutions' to making staying on a more positive experience for young people. These included overhauling careers advice, ensuring that teachers use their influence over young people's lives more positively; promoting pride in vocational learning; more practical options and flexibility; using financial support to ensure success; and involving young people in decisions about RPA (Low and Kenyon, 2009, pp16-18). Young people surveyed as part of the Equalities and Human Rights Commission as part of its 'Staying On' project were asked what would make learning more attractive. Their top four suggestions were to make learning more fun and enjoyable; to make a better range of subjects available; to make learning more practical and hands-on; and to offer more help, advice, support and guidance (Benetto, 2009, p51). These views were generally shared by the young people involved in the NYA's focus groups. When asked to identify 'what should learning look like?', key messages included ensuring that education is both challenging and enjoyable; having greater parity between vocational and academic studies; using a range of activities and approaches in response to young people's individual needs and experiences; and offering improved and non-stigmatised support for vulnerable young people. Issues covered in the discussions included:

- Education should not be a passive process, but should respond to individual learning needs and life experiences, while ensuring that everyone has a basic level of essential skills such as maths, science and English. There should be a wider range of GCSE options, and a variety of teaching methods should be used to engage young people and recognise different learning styles, including practical work, group work, interactive approaches, and one-to-one learning. Assessment methods should include continuous assessment and coursework as well as tests and exams. More non-formal learning opportunities should be available, including sports, volunteering, field trips and after-school and holiday programmes. Taken together, these approaches should mean that learning can be challenging, interesting and fun.

- Vocational qualifications should have equal status to academic qualifications, and young people should be able to choose from a range of options, including a mix of academic and vocational programmes, at the age of 14. It will be important to ensure that enough vocational options are provided to meet the anticipated demand, particularly as vocational options may be more likely to appeal to young people who would not currently stay in learning. More flexibility is needed, giving young people a chance to change direction if necessary, and communications between schools and FE colleges should be improved. Taster sessions were thought to be useful to allow young people to try out different options before making a long-term commitment. The NYA outlined the proposals for new university technical colleges, which will be sponsored by universities and will offer full-time courses combining practical and academic studies, and these were generally thought to be a good idea.
- Young people need a learning environment which makes it clear that they are valued and respected. Specific elements identified as important included being treated as a young adult, being involved in identifying how they learn best, good quality premises and equipment, and smaller classes.
- The groups identified the need for more appropriate and individual support for vulnerable young people and those who have struggled at school. Schools need to encourage greater understanding of the circumstances and needs of different young people, such as looked after children and young people and those with dyslexia; more respect for different religions and cultures, and actively promote equal opportunities and combat prejudice. Discussion highlighted the importance of providing non-stigmatising access to support, since many young people did not want to become labelled or judged by other young people and staff. Some young people expressed a preference for support outside schools, for instance through youth workers, counsellors or specialist services, believing that they would be more responsive and offered a higher level of confidentiality. However, others believed that schools should provide support services such as counselling and mentoring as part of the learning experience, and cited positive examples such as a head of year and learning mentors being located in the same office, so that it is not clear who young people are seeing.
- It was felt to be important that schools and colleges are perceived to be fair. Young people stressed the importance of teachers treating students consistently - no favourites, no assumptions and no labelling. Some young people believed that schools reward disruptive young people, for instance giving them more individual attention and out-of-school activities, and that young people who are doing well at school miss out on these opportunities. However, it was also argued that it is important that teachers do not write off young people as 'trouble-makers', but seek to understand the reasons why they are being disruptive.
- The need for young people to be involved in decisions about education was stressed. School councils need to be more effective and taken more seriously by staff and students. Schools and colleges need to develop clearly understood complaints procedures, including the opportunity to remain anonymous, and students' complaints should be taken seriously at all levels, whether about the quality of food, equipment or teaching. Young people should also be offered opportunities to support other young people, for instance through mentoring programmes (including those who have left school acting as mentors) and promoting RPA options to other young people. It was also suggested that it would be useful to involve young people in teacher training courses.

- There were different opinions about the merits of mixed ability classes and sets. Where sets are used, it was suggested that these might spur pupils on, but some young people reported that they had found being placed in lower sets demotivating, and would prefer to be working with young people who were doing better than her and could offer help and a positive role model. However, other young people were concerned that more motivated young people in mixed ability classes would be held back by those who wanted to 'mess around'. It was suggested that teaching might be better organised according to young people's individual learning styles rather than ability.

'It's ok if it's difficult as long as it's still interesting and fun.'

'I'm receiving special support because of my dyslexia, my tutor is teaching me what I want to know.'

'If you really want something you'll do everything it takes.'

'You should wake up and actually want to go school, rather than always wishing it was Friday.'

It is clear from this research that there are significant challenges for schools and other learning providers, not only in disseminating accurate information about the RPA arrangements, but in responding to young people's wider concerns about education to ensure that staying on in learning is a positive and valuable experience for all young people.

References

Atherton, Dr G et al (2009), *How Young People Formulate their Views about the Future – exploratory research*. DCSF.

<http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-RR152.pdf>

Benetto, J (2009), *Staying On*. Human Rights Commission.

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/key-projects/youth-projects/staying-on/>

British Youth Council (2007), *Raising Expectations: staying in education and training post-16, British Youth Council response*. <http://www.byc.org.uk>

CBI (2010), *Ready to Grow: business priorities for education and skills, education and skills survey 2010*. <http://www.cbi.org.uk/pdf/2010-cbi-edi-ready-to-grow-business-priorities-for%20education-and-skills.pdf>

Exploring Volunteering in a Recession: talking with young people (2010). National Youth Agency. <http://www.nya.org.uk/policy/research>

The Importance of Teaching – the Schools White Paper 2010. Department for Education. <http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/Page1/CM%207980#downloadableparts>

ISOS Partnership (2010), *Raising the Participation Age (RPA) Trials: phase 1 evaluation final report*. Department for Education.

<http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DFE-RR020.pdf>

Low, D and Kenyon, J (2009), *How to make staying on a carrot and not a stick*. Youth Commission/Edge Learner Forum.

<http://www.edge.co.uk/media/uploads/Downloadable/92c53a56-1918-4dd5-888c-004b404bedb0.pdf>

McCrone, T et al (2010). *Information, Advice and Guidance for Young People* (LG Group Research Report). NFER. <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/aio/13562350>

Raising Expectations: staying in education and training post-16 Consultation Report (2007). Department for Children, Schools and Families.

<http://education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/ACFE99-2.pdf>

Raising the Participation Age: views of young people and parents, interim report November 2010. The National Youth Agency.

Spielhofer, T et al (2009), *Increasing Participation: Understanding Young People who do not Participate in Education or Training at 16 and 17*. DCSF.

<http://education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DCSF-RB072>