Getting young people into education, employment or training, what works?

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Abstract

Background

This paper reports the findings of a longitudinal cohort study of 98 young people who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) after finishing compulsory schooling in July 2009 in the London Borough of Greenwich. Improvements in attendance, attainment, exclusions and the work of the Connexions Service have contributed to a reduction in the number of young people who became NEET in Greenwich (from 218 in 2006/07 to 98 in 2008/09). The aim of the cohort study is to identify common characteristics and circumstances of these young people to inform the development of future interventions that will ensure a sustained reduction in the numbers of young people who become NEET.

Research questions

What are the common characteristics and circumstances of young people who become NEET after finishing compulsory schooling?

What interventions can be successful in reducing the number of young people who become NEET?

Research methods

The research is based on a quantitative and qualitative two year longitudinal cohort study of young people who were NEET after leaving Year 11 in July 2009. The study includes quantitative analysis on the contextual characteristics of the cohort, quantifiable information from qualitative case notes and qualitative information from interviews. In-depth interviews using semi-structured questionnaires will be conducted with Connexions Advisors.

Analytical framework

Greenwich Connexions Service supplied standard demographic information on the 98 young people in the NEET cohort. Additional contextual data was matched into the spreadsheet on attendance, exclusions, attainment, offending, social care and youth service involvement. Qualitative case notes held on Framework-I (Greenwich’s Social Care Information System) were analysed and quantified for 80 young people in the cohort who were known to social care.
Research findings and contribution to knowledge

Four characteristics were most common within the NEET cohort; known to social care (80 out of 98), White British (80 out of 98), Special Educational Needs (67 out of 98) and persistent absenteeism (49 out of 83, with matched attendance data). Only one young person achieved 5+ A* - C grades (including English and maths) but 63 achieved at least 1 A* - G grade. There is strong evidence that the effective application of early intervention strategies can be successful in reducing the numbers of young people who become NEET.

Key words
Introduction and background

Greenwich Children’s Services is a directorate in the London Borough of Greenwich with six divisions: Safeguarding and Social Care; Inclusion, Learning and Achievement; Integrated Support for Children and Young People; Integrated Support for Children and Families; Strategic Projects; and Commissioning for Outcomes.

Greenwich Connexions personal advisors work within the Integrated Support for Children and Young People division and are responsible for delivering careers education and guidance to young people to support their progression into education, employment or training (EET). Personal advisors also work with partner agencies to secure positive outcomes for those who are vulnerable in terms of progression into EET.

The number of young people who are NEET after leaving Year 11 has been decreasing year on year in Greenwich (from 218 in 2007 to 153 in 2008 and 98 in 2009). Following this reduction in numbers, the Greenwich Information, Research and Statistics team were approached to do a longitudinal cohort study on the 98 young people who were NEET after completing Year 11 in Greenwich schools or alternative provision in 2009. The aim of the cohort study was to identify common characteristics and circumstances which would assist with future intervention.

Since the longitudinal cohort study, there has been a further reduction in the number of young people becoming NEET after leaving Year 11 in Greenwich; 54 young people in 2010 compared to 98 in 2009 (2.1% of the Year 11 cohort in 2010 compared with 3.3% of the Year 11 cohort in 2009). This continuous reduction in the number of NEET young people who are 16 years old in Greenwich mirrors the national trend; 6.8% of 16 year olds were NEET in 1999 compared to 3.8% in 2009 and 2.3% in 2010.

Overall the proportion of young people aged 16 to 18 who are NEET has decreased in Greenwich from 12.0% in 2006/07 to 6.2% in 2010/11 (measured over 3 month average figures for November to January).

Review of the literature

The latest data published by the DfE shows that 141,800 of 16 to 18 year olds were NEET at the end of 2010 (7.3% of the 16 to 18 year old population). The proportion of NEET young people varies by age; 2.3% of 16 year olds, 6.8% of 17 year olds and 12.4% of 18 year olds.

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1 From September 2011 responsibility will transfer to schools who will be expected to secure independent careers information, advice and guidance during Key Stage 4. Careers education will not be statutory but will be expected as best practice. LAs will provide targeted support to enable vulnerable young people to participate in EET. LAs will commission these services, but they will not be Connexions services.

2 The majority of young people who were NEET after leaving Year 11 attended maintained schools (80 out of 98), while 18 were in alternative provision.


4 See footnote 3
Young people who are NEET are a diverse group with wide ranging characteristics and needs and do not form a homogenous group (Spielhofer et al, 2007). However, there are some characteristics that are more prevalent among young people who become NEET.

There is a strong link between a young person obtaining no qualifications or performing poorly at GCSE and their likelihood of becoming NEET (EdComs, 2007). Analysis from the Youth Cohort Study and Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (2009) shows that 73% of young people with no qualifications were NEET for at least a month between the ages of 16 and 18 compared to 18% of young people who achieved 8+ A* - C grades at GCSE.

In addition to low attainment, a National Audit Office report for the DCSF (now DfE) in 20085 identified some common characteristics for young people who were at greatest risk of being NEET:

- Males are more likely to be NEET than females
- A slightly higher proportion of young people who are of White, Pakistani or from mixed ethnic backgrounds are NEET (based on 16 and 17 year olds only)
- NEET young people are twice as likely as others to have a disability of some kind
- Children in local authority care are much more likely than their peers to be NEET
- Young people who received free school meals in Year 11 were more than twice as likely to be NEET at the ages of 16 and 17 as those who did not have free school meals
- Young people were more likely to be NEET at the ages of 16 and 17 if their parents were from less advantaged socio-economic groups
- Parents with fewer qualifications or who left school at a younger age, have children who were more likely to be NEET at the ages of 16 and 17
- NEET young people aged 16 and 17 years old are more likely to have engaged in risky behaviours (smoking or vandalism, for example) by the age of 14 than others
- More NEET 16 to 18 year olds live in lone-parent families than those in EET
- NEET young people were more likely to have played truant at the ages of 13 and 14 than those in EET

The Greenwich longitudinal cohort study reflected most of the National Audit Office findings and found that the majority of NEET young people faced multiple disadvantage. Research studies by Stone et al. (2000) and Archer et al. (2005) also refer to multiple disadvantage among young people who are NEET.

Stone et al. (2000) identified a list of themes which affected participation in EET including adverse family circumstances, traumatic events including bereavement, behavioural difficulties, disaffection with school, learning difficulties, truancy, health problems, bullying, being in care, drug abuse, crime, homelessness, immaturity, support and a lack of money. They found that ‘respondents talked about experiencing not just one or two of the factors, but many’.

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5 This report draws on data and research findings from the Labour Force Survey, data collected by Connexions about its clients, and a combined data set built from the Youth Cohort Study and Longitudinal Study of Young People in England
Archer et al. (2005) also make reference to a combination of factors:

‘There was no single or simple reason underpinning the young people’s disengagement and their likelihood or risk of ‘not progressing’. Rather, disengagement, non attendance and underachievement were underpinned by a complex interplay of multiple factors, which spanned social, cultural, educational and other fields’

Methodology

The research had two strands. The first strand was to conduct a longitudinal cohort study of 98 young people who were NEET after completing Year 11 in Greenwich schools or alternative provision in 2009 to identify common characteristics or circumstances for future intervention. The second strand of the research was to carry out interviews with Connexions personal advisors to get an insight into their work with NEET young people.

As part of the longitudinal cohort study, the Greenwich Information, Research and Statistics team matched data from a wide range of sources for the 98 young people who were NEET. The Greenwich Connexions Service supplied standard demographic information on the 98 young people in the NEET cohort and the Information, Research and Statistics team matched in additional contextual data on attendance, exclusions, attainment, offending, social care and youth service involvement. Comparisons were made between the data from the Year 11 NEET cohort with 98 pupils and the overall Year 11 cohort in Greenwich with 2,424 pupils so that the research team could see where NEET young people were over or under represented.

Greenwich Children’s Services use a web based system called Framework-I for recording information on any children and young people who have any involvement with social care. As part of the research, qualitative case notes held on Framework-I were analysed and quantified for 80 young people in the cohort who were known to social care. Information was recorded on the young person’s level of involvement with social care, the circumstances of their involvement and how long they had been known to social care.

Three in-depth, face to face interviews were carried out with Connexions personal advisors by a researcher from Greenwich Children’s Services. In order to obtain a range of perspectives the personal advisors were all linked to different services; one personal advisor was linked to the Youth Offending Service, one was linked to alternative education provision and one was linked to mainstream education.

The interviews took place at Greenwich Council offices and lasted between 30 and 40 minutes. A semi-structured questionnaire was used for the interviews and all of the interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. The aim of the interviews was to find out personal advisors’ strategies for reducing the number of NEET young people in Greenwich, their strategies for moving young people from NEET to EET and to discuss the findings from the longitudinal cohort study and recent policy changes.
Research findings

Low attainment

In line with other NEET research studies, low attainment was a common factor among the 98 young people who were NEET after leaving Year 11 in Greenwich. Out of 98 young people who were NEET, 74 could be matched to GCSE qualifications. Of the 74 NEET who could be matched to GCSE qualifications, one achieved 5+ A* - C grades including English and maths, 6 achieved 5+ A* - C grades, 30 achieved 5+ A* - G grades and 63 achieved 1+ A* - G grade.

Although most of the NEET cohort did not perform well in traditional GCSE exams i.e. only seven young people achieved Level 2, there was a 100% success rate in Basic Skills qualifications, BTEC First Certificates and Diplomas, Entry Level Qualifications, Key Skills and Vocational Related Qualifications.

Low prior attainment at previous Key Stages has been identified as a potential risk factor for young people becoming NEET. Fewer young people from the NEET cohort reached the national expectation of Level 4 or above at Key Stage 2. Out of 95 young people in the NEET cohort who could be matched to Key Stage 2 results, 42 achieved Level 4 or above in English (44% compared to a 70% Greenwich borough average in 2004), 38 achieved Level 4 or above in maths (40% compared to a 68% Greenwich average in 2004) and 57 achieved Level 4 or above in science (60% compared to a 79% Greenwich average in 2004).

At Key Stage 3 the gap between young people in the NEET cohort and the borough averages was even more marked. Out of 92 young people in the NEET cohort who could be matched to Key Stage 3 results, 25 NEET young people achieved Level 5 or above in English (27% compared to a 67% Greenwich borough average in 2007), 24 achieved Level 5 or above in maths (26% compared to a 66% Greenwich average in 2007) and 16 achieved Level 5 or above in Science (17% compared to a 62% Greenwich average in 2007).

Involvement with social care

The majority of NEET young people who were part of the longitudinal cohort study had been known to social care at some point in their lives (80 out of 98 – 82%). A detailed analysis of case notes and documents on Framework revealed that 41 young people were involved with social care at Level 2 (a vulnerable/early intervention stage), 20 were at Level 3 (a complex stage) and 19 were at Level 4 (these were young people who had Child Protection Plans in the past and/or had been Looked After Children). One in seven young people in the NEET cohort (14 out of 98) had been looked after at some point in their lives. Six out of the 14 had been in care within the last year.

As part of the research, all 80 young people’s records were analysed in detail to find out the reasons for their involvement with social care. In most cases (61 out of 80)
the young people had more than one circumstance affecting their lives and outcomes and faced multiple disadvantage. The most frequent reasons for social care involvement included unstable home life (in 47 cases), persistent absence (28 cases), domestic violence (21 cases), physical abuse (20 cases) and the young person’s criminal activity (18 cases). Please see Appendix 1 for a full list of reasons for social care involvement.

Most young people in the NEET cohort first came to the attention of social care during their secondary schooling (48 out of 80). Of the remaining 32 NEET young people, seven had social care involvement before they started primary school and 25 had social care involvement during their years at primary school.

**Ethnicity**

White British young people were overrepresented in the NEET cohort; 82% of the NEET cohort were White British compared to 48% in the Greenwich Year 11 cohort.

**Special Educational Needs/Disabilities**

Around two thirds of young people in the NEET cohort (67 out of 98 - 68%) had special educational needs (SEN), which was more than double the proportion in the Greenwich Year 11 cohort (33%). There were 23 at School Action, 35 at School Action Plus and 9 Statemented young people within the NEET cohort.

Of the NEET young people with a Statement or at School Action Plus (44 out of 98 – 45%), the majority had behaviour, emotional and social difficulties (BESD) - 25 out of 44. Young people with BESD were overrepresented in the NEET cohort; 57% had BESD compared to 41% in the Greenwich Year 11 SEN cohort.

**Absence**

Truancy was a significant issue among the Greenwich NEET cohort. Out of 98 young people who were NEET, 83 had matched attendance data. Six in ten young people in the NEET cohort were persistently absent from school in Year 11 (49 out of 83 - 59%). This was more than six times the rate of persistent absence among the Greenwich Year 11 cohort (59% compared with 9.5%).

The average total absence of the 83 NEET in 2009 was 28% (20% unauthorised absence and 8% authorised absence). Only 12 out of 83 young people in the NEET cohort attended school 95% or more of the time.

**Other key findings**

- **Youth Offending**: Over a third of young people who were NEET (34 out of 98 – 35%) were known to the Youth Offending Service.
- **Teenage Mothers**: Around a third of females in the NEET cohort (18 out of 52 - 35%) were either pregnant or teenage mothers.
- **Free School Meals**: A higher proportion of NEET young people were eligible for free school meals (34% compared with 22% in the Greenwich Year 11 cohort).

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10 It was not possible to obtain attendance data for 15 of the NEET young people i.e. those who were home educated, not registered in education/out of education or if it was unknown where the young person was last educated.
• **Housing:** Six young people within the NEET cohort were presenting as homeless and a further seven young people were known to housing.

• **Mobility:** There were higher levels of mobility in the NEET cohort; 81% of the 2009 Year 11 cohort started at their secondary school in Year 7 compared with 67% of the NEET cohort. Double the proportion of NEET started at their last school in Years 10 or 11 compared with the 2009 Year 11 cohort (16% compared to 8%).

• **Exclusions:** None of the 98 young people were permanently excluded from school. However, 13 out of 98 had fixed term exclusions in the 2009 academic year. Persistent disruptive behaviour and verbal abuse of an adult were the most frequent reasons for fixed term exclusions among the NEET cohort.

• **Youth Services:** Almost half of the young people who were NEET (46 out of 98 - 47%) had been engaged with Integrated Youth Support Services. Out of the 46, 31 had attended services within the last year.

The National Audit Office report (2008) found that males were more likely to be NEET than females. However, in the Greenwich NEET cohort, the gender profile was identical to the gender profile of the Greenwich Year 11 cohort (53% female compared to 47% male). Greenwich has a higher proportion of teenage mothers compared to statistical neighbours and the national average. It may be that the relatively high number of teenage mothers in the cohort (18) meant that females were just as likely as males to become NEET in Greenwich.

**Current status of the NEET cohort**

The lead Connexions personal advisor produced an update on the 98 young people in the 2009 NEET cohort as at May 2011. There have been some positive developments since the original 2009 cohort analysis. By May 2011, 38 were in EET; 10 were in employment, 20 were in education, one was in work based learning and seven were on apprenticeships. Therefore, within two years 39% of the cohort were no longer NEET. Personal advisors were still working with 25 young people who were still NEET and able to participate. Of the other 35 young people, eight had moved away from the area, three were unable to participate because of health issues, four were on custodial sentences and one was travelling abroad. The service had lost contact with the remaining 19 young people.

**Reasons for the reduction in NEET young people in Greenwich**

There are a number of reasons for the continuous reduction in the number of NEET young people in Greenwich including increased retention of Greenwich students in post 16 education (from 77% in 2004 to 88% in 2010), effective implementation of the September Guarantee\(^{11}\) to ensure students have an offer of a post 16 destination, improved attainment across the key stages, significant reductions in absenteeism and exclusions, a more diverse curriculum offer across Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5, a Key Stage 4 Engagement Programme, the use of the Common Assessment Framework and/or Team Around the Child\(^{12}\) meetings for vulnerable young people.

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\(^{11}\) The September Guarantee is an offer of a suitable place in education or training to young people completing compulsory education by the end of September.

\(^{12}\) The Common Assessment Framework is a shared assessment and planning framework for use across all local authorities in England. Its aim is to help with the early identification of children and young people’s additional needs and promote co-ordinated service provision to meet these needs. A Team Around the Child is a multi-disciplinary team of practitioners established on a case by case basis to support a child, young person or family.
and financial support for less affluent students through the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA)\textsuperscript{13}.

The work of the Connexions Service has also made a significant contribution to reducing the number of NEET young people in Greenwich. Interviews were conducted with three personal advisors to find out what their service had done to achieve the reduction in NEET Year 11 leavers. All three personal advisors mentioned the intense follow up work that they had done with young people at risk of becoming NEET:

‘I think more follow up. We did a lot before but we have been more intense about the follow up. Probably more targeting of individuals, the people that you think are most likely to become NEET’

‘I think we do a lot more intense work. We are more proactive as opposed to reactive. Advisors are in schools more often. For those young people that are not attending school, the advisors will go out and do a home visit. Our detached team that we have got with our youth service will sometimes come with us and engage with those young people that are not attending’

The personal advisors commented on tighter links between agencies. Greenwich Council has a service called ‘The Point’ which is a multi-agency, ‘one stop shop’ for young people, based in one building which provides a range of information, advice, guidance and support services. It targets vulnerable young people to ensure that they get help to access the services they need. Services include education, employment, housing, options and support, personal development programmes, sexual health service, drug and alcohol support, positive activities and volunteering opportunities. All of the services use the same web based database (IYSS) to record their contact with young people:

‘We have got so many links into different agencies now. I think it all works tighter together. We’ve got housing and substance misuse here and very often young people will come in for housing who we cannot get hold of. So if they see young people that we don’t they are always fed straight to us’

Personal advisors also carry out outreach work to try and get non engaging families on side:

‘If they are not engaging I have been out quite a few times to home addresses, engaging with the family or carers. Anyway we can get them involved and get the family on side. Obviously if that works we can start breaking down the barriers and getting people in. A lot of it is getting the family on side’

‘Some parents don’t want to engage and sometimes that is half the problem. If parents aren’t engaging with the school, the young person isn’t going to appreciate what they are trying to do either’

All three personal advisors made reference to the importance of early tracking and building relationships with the young people:

\textsuperscript{13} The EMA which cost the government £560 million is going to be replaced by a £180 million 16 - 19 Bursary Fund to be allocated by schools, colleges and work based training providers.
‘We start in Year 9 when they are thinking about options. You would probably identify some [vulnerable] individuals then and keep an eye on them’

‘Prevention wise it is about getting them early and building that rapport from an early age. They know my face, they see me around and I think it is really key that they have got that’

Greenwich ran a Key Stage 4 Engagement Programme up until July 2011 for pupils identified as at risk of disengagement from learning. There were 279 pupils on the Key Stage 4 Engagement Programme in 2009 and around three quarters of the Year 11 pupils on this programme progressed into EET.

Vulnerable young people aged between 8 and 19 are also targeted to take part in Greenwich’s Summer Uni programme during the summer holidays. In Summer 2009, Greenwich offered young people 110 different activities and courses to choose from. The majority of the activities and courses were accredited (79 out of 110) to be recognised by employers and educational establishments.

Personal advisors also try to ensure smooth transitions from secondary school into Post 16 education for vulnerable young people. For example, they arrange the fast tracking of vulnerable young people’s applications for Post 16 study at local Post 16 providers such as Greenwich Community College and Lewisham College.

When trying to move young people from NEET to EET all three personal advisors thought that Activity Agreements were useful and made a real difference to young people. Activity Agreements are agreements that a young person will take part in a programme of learning and activity which helps them to become ready for formal learning or employment.

‘It was very effective because it was purchasing alternative courses that you would not see in a college or a sixth form. It was for those young people where we had already explored all their aspirations and they wanted to work in a warehouse, they wanted to do forklift driving, they wanted to be a bricklayer so the Activity Agreement would pay them £50 a week to do that. That meant they would come off Jobseekers and they would purchase these small courses for them that would make them job ready. The CSCS card for them to work on a building site as a labourer, that was £65. Under a little bit of pressure they would pay for fork lift truck driving courses and even driving licenses. These were tangible things they had and then they could go to an agency and work. It made a huge, real difference’

The three personal advisors also thought that initiatives such as the On Track programme, Entry to Employment (E2E) and apprenticeships had an impact with reducing the number of NEET.

‘There have been projects set up such as the On Track programme which gave us the opportunity to pick up the young people who weren’t going to college or weren’t aware of what was available. We set up some programmes

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14 Summer Uni schemes are run by all London Boroughs.
15 Funding for Activity Agreements was discontinued in December 2010 in Greenwich.
16 CSCS stands for Construction Skills Certification Scheme. CSCS cards provide proof of occupational competence and cover hundreds of occupations within the construction industry.
that were tailored for these young people to get them into something they were interested in’

‘We have tangible Apprenticeships now which we have really good links with and we really do nurture that. We’ve got a security company over the road who are offering security apprenticeships, we’ve got chef apprenticeships and customer services’

Intense work is also carried out with teenage mothers to encourage them to go into EET:

‘We’ve got two teenage pregnancy advisors who work solidly just with our teenage mums about what is out there. And to be fair a lot of them do go and do short courses. Our advisors work very closely with the Bluebell Centre where midwives are based’

Looking to the future, personal advisors were asked to give their views on policy changes including raising the participation age\(^\text{17}\), reduced funding and changes to the delivery of careers advice. Personal advisors were cynical about the impact of raising the participation age:

‘It is just for the government to say right you have to be here, there is no NEETs anymore. So NEETs will be out of the equation. There are no NEETs there will just be non attenders and non attenders we already have and the Attendance Advisory will just have to employ a few more people’

‘It is all great putting the leaving age up to 18 but they’re really ignoring a problem there. If a 14 year old is not going to school, an 18 year old is not going to’

Personal advisors were also concerned about schools being given the responsibility for providing independent careers advice:

‘I think because the budget is not protected, not ringfenced, I can’t see them giving the same level of independent [careers] advice. I don’t think they will buy in the level that they get now’

‘There is not going to be enough time for teachers to do that, they have got enough work on their plate, delivering the GCSEs. So they might do odd days here and there for jobs fairs but I don’t think it is going to be the same’

**Conclusion**

Many of the 98 young people in the NEET cohort faced significant challenges. However, only 11 of them left school with no educational qualifications (0.5% of the Year 11 GCSE cohort). This represents a significant improvement compared to four or five years earlier when 5% of the Year 11 cohort left school with no qualifications. In addition, within two years of leaving school, 39% of the NEET cohort had ceased to be NEET.

\(^{17}\) The Coalition Government has confirmed that it will proceed with the policy of raising the age of compulsory participation. The age of compulsory participation will be raised to 17 in 2013 and 18 in 2015.
In Greenwich the most common characteristics and circumstances of young people who become NEET after finishing school were being known to social care (80 out of 98), having Special Educational Needs (67 out of 98), being persistently absent (49 out of 83) and having low attainment (67 out of 74 had not attained Level 2 at GCSE). There was also an overrepresentation of White British young people (80 out of 98).

The vast majority of the NEET cohort (97 out of 98) had at least one of these characteristics and many faced multiple disadvantage. Around a third of the young people in the NEET cohort (30 out of 98) were White British, known to social care, persistently absent from school and had special educational needs. 32 had a combination of three out of these four characteristics, 24 had a combination of two characteristics and 11 had one of the characteristics (please see Chart 2 in the Appendix which shows the common characteristics of the 2009 NEET cohort).

There have been a number of interventions which have been successful in reducing the number of young people who become NEET in Greenwich. Personal advisors have carried out intense follow up and tracking of young people in mainstream and alternative education, outreach to disengaged young people and their families and established tighter links with other services including housing, substance misuse, youth offending and youth services. Integrated work between services has been supported by the establishment of ‘The Point’ in Greenwich which is a ‘one stop shop’ providing information, advice, guidance and support to all young people with a particular focus on the most vulnerable.

The sustained focus on reducing the number of young people becoming NEET in Greenwich has also been complemented by a range of flexible learning opportunities such as the Key Stage 4 Engagement Programme which targeted students in Years 10 and 11 who were identified as at risk of disengagement from learning and Activity Agreements which have helped young people to make the transition into EET. There has been a strong focus on the retention of vulnerable post 16 students to prevent them from dropping out of education and becoming NEET. Greenwich has deployed ‘flying mentors’ from the Connexions Service to support schools and colleges recruiting students who may be at risk of disengaging. There are also more opportunities for young people through links with employers offering apprenticeships. A major hotel chain in Greenwich offers apprenticeships for young people who have left school with no qualifications.

Early intervention has also been critical to reducing the number of NEET young people. In Greenwich, a Common Assessment Framework and/or Team Around the Child meeting is carried out as a matter of good practice for ten vulnerable groups of young people including those who are persistently absent, teenage mothers, missing children, homeless 16 and 17 year olds, children with a disability, substance misusers, youth offenders, young carers, young people in families receiving targeted parenting programmes and young people receiving support through the mental health in schools project. The aim of these interventions is to try and prevent reduced life chances in the long term.

Before the participation age is raised in 2013, the research team will explore whether or not the downward trend in the number of NEET young people continues in Greenwich. With cuts to initiatives, the replacement of the EMA and the abolition of the Connexions Service it is likely to be more difficult to sustain this trend.
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Notes

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**Appendix**

**Table 1: Circumstances recorded by Greenwich social care teams about young people within the NEET cohort**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circumstances</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unstable home life</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistent absence (court action taken in 13 out of 28 cases)</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic violence</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual or alleged physical abuse of young person</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young person’s criminal activity</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent’s/stepparent’s substance misuse (alcohol or drugs)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent’s mental health</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young person’s substance misuse</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police involvement - harassment/assault against young person by other young people</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young person’s anti social behaviour</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual or alleged sexual abuse of young person</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sexualised behaviour of young person</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Young person’s mental health</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police involvement - young person going missing</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young person’s hygiene concerns</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent’s criminal activity</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young person’s suicide attempt</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Police involvement – general incident regarding young person</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent’s physical disability</td>
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<td>Sibling’s physical disability</td>
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<td>Sibling’s mental health problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>History of physical/emotional abuse of the young person’s parent</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent’s suicide</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police involvement - harassment/assault against young person by a teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police involvement with sibling</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young carer for parent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young person’s physical disability</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent’s learning difficulties</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent’s anti social behaviour</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young person’s housing problems</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chart 2: Common characteristics of the 2008/09 NEET cohort

This document was added to the Education-line collection on 23 September 2011