

Report of a Survey on

CAREERS EDUCATION, INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE IN POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS

2006




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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Careers education, information, advice and guidance, (CEIAG), play a major role in helping young people to make informed choices and in preparing them for adult and working life. Provision of good quality motivates pupils to make appropriate and realistic decisions about their education, training and employment options and provides them with opportunities and experiences to develop essential skills in order to become active and effective employees. There have been many developments in CEIAG in the past ten years, aspects of which have enhanced the quality of provision.
- 1.2 Under the Education Reform (NI) Order, 1989, schools were required to deliver careers education, as part of their compulsory curriculum, as an educational theme for all pupils aged 11-16. The Department of Education (DE) defined careers education in their publication 'Educational (Cross-Curricular) Themes - Objectives' as "the continuing educational process which is concerned with helping young people acquire the skills, attitudes and abilities they will need to chart their path through life with confidence and be effective in a variety of adult roles and spheres of life." The implementation of careers education as an educational theme was not successful because schools had difficulty in delivering an effective, progressive and coherent careers programme, which delivered measurable progress for pupils. Careers education was defined so broadly that it encompassed the whole educational process and many subject teachers lacked the expertise or commitment to deliver it as an educational theme.
- 1.3 Since the introduction of careers education as an educational theme schools have been increasingly aware that certain aspects of CEIAG are best provided outside the context of specific subjects, and almost all now make time available for discrete provision.
- 1.4 In 1995, the DE, (then DENI), and the Training and Employment Agency, (T&EA), published a report entitled, 'A Review of Careers Guidance: Improving Quality', in which it was recommended that the Education and Training Inspectorate, (Inspectorate), should publish quality indicators for careers education in schools and that there should be guidance developed for personal career planning, (PCP). As a result of these recommendations, the Inspectorate in 1996 produced



careers education quality indicators in a document entitled ‘Evaluating a Careers Programme’. In the same year the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), published ‘Career Planning for the Future’, which outlined PCP guidance. Both documents identified the six core components of a careers programme, as timetabled careers education, career information, careers guidance, PCP, cross-curricular careers education, and experiences of work. However, there remained a need for more specific guidance on the content of a progressive and coherent curriculum for careers education.

1.5 An inspection survey report by the Inspectorate on careers education in post-primary schools was published in 2000, and provided an evaluation of the quality of provision in the six core components and in the supporting structures and resources. The report recognised the good practice in the core components of careers education in at least half of the schools and identified areas for improvement in a number of important aspects of provision and practice. These included the need for:

- guidance on the content of the taught programme of careers education;
- co-ordination and management of the potential contribution of each area of study to careers education;
- the development of PCP;
- in-service training (INSET) courses to enable teachers to gain specialist qualifications in careers education;
- the further enhancement of information and communication technology (ICT) resources in careers; and
- a greater emphasis on the development of skills to equip pupils to make appropriate decisions at key transitional stages.

1.6 In September 2003, CCEA introduced the General Certificate in Secondary Education (GCSE) in Learning for Life and Work, which incorporates three taught externally assessed strands, namely personal social and health education, local and global citizenship and learning for work and an internally assessed coursework component. Each of

the three externally assessed strands is sub-divided into a number of elements. The three elements of the Learning for Work strand are career planning, the local and global economy, and enterprise and entrepreneurship. A significant minority of schools that introduced the Learning for Life and Work GCSE associated the Education for Employability strand as their CEIAG provision.

- 1.7 In September 2004, CCEA introduced the Education for Employability pilot to year 8 pupils. This key stage (KS) 3 pilot was introduced as one strand of the Learning for Life and Work area of the Revised Curriculum. The Education for Employability strand has three elements namely career management, local and global economy and enterprise and entrepreneurship.
- 1.8 The Progress File, which is to supersede The National Record of Achievement (NRA), is a set of interactive materials designed to help young people to manage their own learning and career planning. The Progress File provides a focus and sense of purpose for careers activities, helps to prepare young people for transition and supports them in taking ownership of their career development. The process of recognising achievement, setting targets, reviewing progress and presenting self to others enhances students' career management skills. Approximately 85% of NI post-primary schools are currently using the Progress File.
- 1.9 The importance of effective CEIAG within our education system has never been greater. The increased choice of education and training pathways available to young people, the modularisation of the curriculum and need to develop key employability skills, place CEIAG at the heart of the curriculum. This centrality is recognised in the DE Entitlement Framework Circular, 2005/18, which states that, with access to a wider choice of courses at both KS4 and post-16, it is vital that young people and, as appropriate, their parents are provided with high quality CEIAG to inform their decisions. The circular outlines clear definitions for CEIAG and in particular states 'the overall objective of an effective career education and guidance programme is to enable a learner to manage their own career development successfully, confidently and with due respect and care for their own needs, those of others and of their wider communities.' The circular also helpfully identifies the relationship between CEIAG and Learning for Life and

Work commenting that ‘while Career Management will be embedded as a key concept in Learning for Life and Work through the contributory strand of Employability at KS3 and 4, schools need to augment this provision to meet fully all the aims and objectives of a high quality CEIAG programme.’

- 1.10 This report is a follow-up to the Inspectorate’s report published in 2000, and is a summary of the findings of an inspection survey of the provision of CEIAG in a sample of post-primary schools in NI, to evaluate the range, quality, supporting structures and resources for CEIAG in schools amidst this changing and complex landscape. The inspection survey was carried out by the Inspectorate between January and March 2006. The survey aimed to evaluate the range and quality of provision and in particular the quality of teaching and learning, and the leadership and management arrangements.
- 1.11 The survey involved visits by inspectors to 21 post-primary schools (see Table 1) which are listed in the Appendix. During the visits, the inspectors observed 87 lessons, evaluated relevant documentation including samples of pupils’ work, and held discussions with 192 pupils, and, in a few schools, with parents. Discussions were also held with some 134 staff, including principals, members of the senior management team (SMT), CEIAG co-ordinators and with other staff with an interest in this area.


Table 1

Number and Type of School Visited

Board	Controlled	Maintained	Integrated	Grammar
BELB	1	1	-	3
NEELB	2	4	1	1
SEELB	-	1	-	-
SELB	2	-	-	1
WELB	1	1	-	2
TOTAL	6	7	1	7

2. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

- 2.1 There is a very wide variation across schools with regards to the content, organisation and time allocation for the components of a CEIAG programme.
- 2.2 The majority of schools provide a form of careers education through variable models of delivery. In the majority of schools there is inadequate time allocated to careers education.
- 2.3 The quality of teaching, in most of the lessons seen, was satisfactory or better. In one-third of the lessons inspected the quality of teaching was good or excellent. In just under 20% of the lessons, weaknesses outweighed strengths, with poor teaching observed in just over 8% of the lessons.
- 2.4 The recording and assessment of the pupils' work are inadequate in most of the schools; the assessment arrangements are satisfactory or better in only 25% of the schools.
- 2.5 Pupils, in the minority of schools with a coherent CEIAG programme, are well motivated and respond positively to careers work. They show initiative in researching their ideas and are becoming more aware of changes and challenges in the workplace.
- 2.6 In the majority of schools, PCP is under-developed. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to engage effectively in order to enhance and develop their career planning skills. In schools where the process is well developed, pupils benefit from opportunities to develop effective researching, evaluation and decision-making skills.
- 2.7 The quality of careers information is satisfactory or better in just over half of the schools. In the majority of schools, careers information is supplemented by opportunities for pupils to attend a range of appropriate events. In almost all schools there is insufficient use of current and accurate labour market information.
- 2.8 In the majority of schools the quality of provision for careers guidance is inadequate. There are more weaknesses than strengths in the provision in over 46% of the schools surveyed. In contrast, in two-fifths of the schools the provision for careers guidance ranges from good to



excellent. When the provision is well planned and delivered by qualified staff, pupils are better prepared to make appropriate and informed career decisions.

- 2.9 Almost all schools provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to participate in a range of work-related learning activities. Pupils value these activities and they play an important part in their understanding of the world of work.
- 2.10 There is insufficient monitoring, review and evaluation of provision to inform action for improvement; in particular, insufficient use is made of feedback from pupils, and management information data in relation to pupils' destinations, to inform strategic and operational planning.
- 2.11 In a significant minority of schools, CEIAG staff are given insufficient time to undertake their administrative duties. Careers teachers, who are predominately specialist teachers of other curricular subjects, on average have approximately two hours per week to carry out a wide range of administrative activities including organising work-placements, industry visits and preparation and distribution of resources.
- 2.12 Careers education, information, advice and guidance provision are most effective when the school principal provides clear strategic direction and is committed to the provision of an effective high quality CEIAG for all learners. The overall strategic planning of CEIAG, however, is weak in the majority of schools.
- 2.13 In the majority of schools, careers co-ordinators have specialist qualifications in careers education. In a significant minority of schools visited, however, teachers delivering the CEIAG programme lack appropriate professional development; their knowledge and understanding of CEIAG are limited. Furthermore, only a few teachers have undertaken any training or hold an appropriate qualification in careers guidance due to the lack of professional development opportunities in this area.
- 2.14 In the majority of schools, the pupils' learning is enhanced through the use of effective partnerships with appropriate stakeholders, such as employers, further education colleges, higher education institutes, young enterprise and other schools.

- 2.15 In the majority of schools, the quality of accommodation and resources is satisfactory or better with a minority of schools providing CEIAG accommodation and resources of a high standard. While pupils are encouraged to use these resources, in a significant minority of schools the pupils' access to the careers resources is poor.

3. PROVISION

- 3.1 There is a very wide variation in the content, organisation and time allocation of CEIAG provision. Pupils in the majority of schools do not have the opportunity to access an appropriate mix of the core CEIAG components, as only a significant minority of schools offer a planned, coherent and well-resourced CEIAG provision.
- 3.2 A minority of the schools in this survey have introduced CCEA's Education for Employability pilot at KS3 and/or the GCSE Learning for Life and Work at KS4 as central elements of their CEIAG provision. There is, however, a lack of progression between the programmes at KS3 and KS4, resulting in provision that often lacks coherence and consistency. There is an increasing awareness, particularly amongst experienced and well-qualified careers staff, that the Education for Employability programme and the GCSE in Learning for Life and Work, whilst important contributors to, do not meet adequately the requirements of, a coherent and progressive CEIAG programme.
- 3.3 A minority of schools, several with well-informed and qualified careers co-ordinators, report a lack of consistency in the terminology used in this area at KS3 and KS4. For example, at KS3 the employability strand is referred to as 'Education for Employability' while at KS4 it is referred to as 'Learning for Work'. At KS3 reference is made to career management, while at KS4 a similar strand is named career planning.

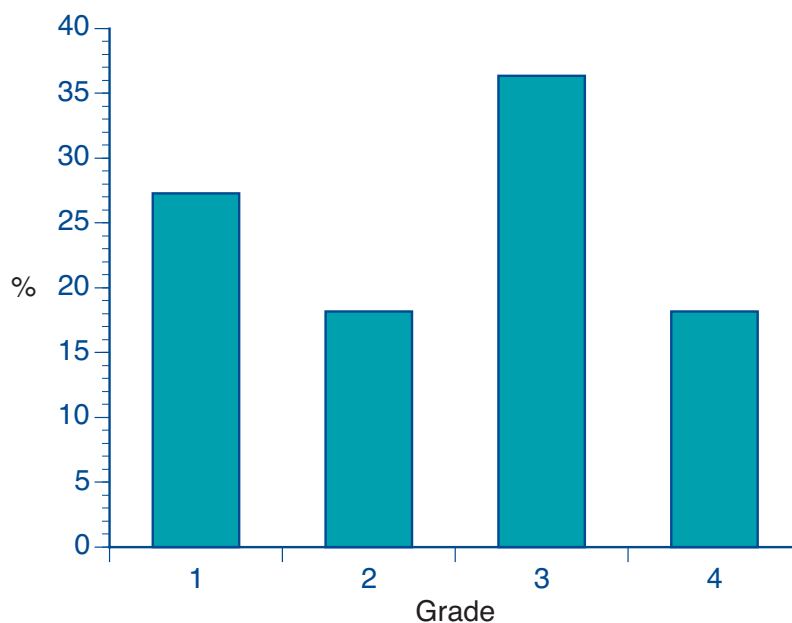
4. CAREERS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

- 4.1 There are very large differences in the organisation of the taught careers education programme within schools. There is virtually no evidence of careers education as a cross-curricular theme. At one extreme, in a minority of schools the only timetabled careers education provision is through Personal, Social and Health Education, (PSHE), modules in year 10 and year 12. In these schools, pupils are provided

with an incoherent programme. They do not have the opportunity to engage in progressive career planning and many are not fully aware of the wide range of pathways available to them. Often their work-related learning opportunities are not an integral element of their career education programme and subsequently the choices they make are not well informed. In contrast, in a small number of schools, all pupils are provided with a coherent taught programme of careers education, delivered on a weekly basis from years 8 to 14. The pupils in these schools are motivated and empowered by their learning experiences. They are fully aware of the opportunities available to them and in almost all cases are capable of making informed career choices.


Figure 1

Quality of Careers Education Programme



- 4.2 There is a wide variation in the organisation of the delivery of careers education at KS3. A significant minority of schools provide a weekly timetabled careers education programme for year 10 pupils only; in a small number of schools, a short module for year 10 pupils, which forms part of the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum, is the only careers education provision offered at KS3. A few schools offer no timetabled careers education provision at KS3.

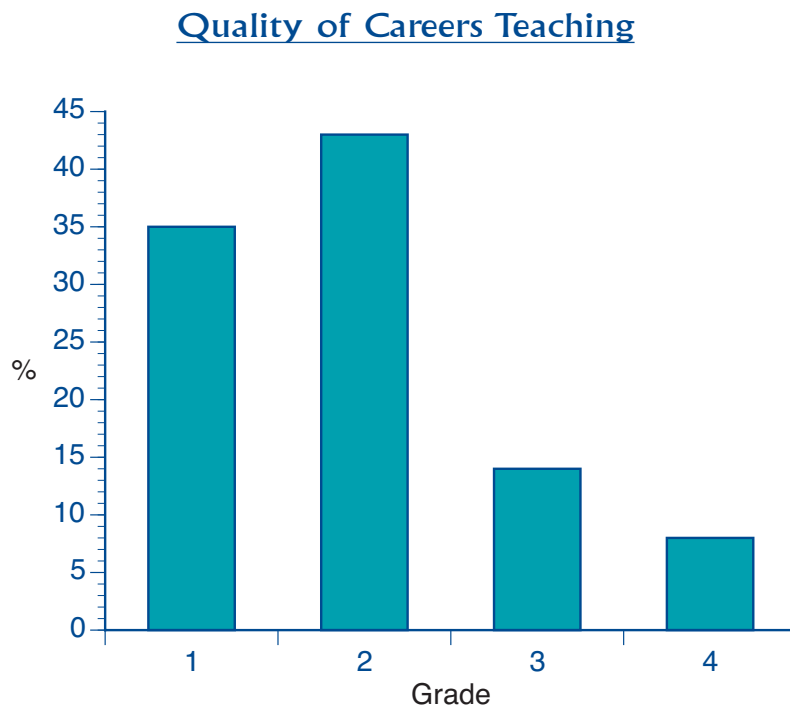
- 4.3 In a significant minority of schools the CCEA Education for Employability programme is provided as the careers education programme at KS3, however, there are different levels of participation by the schools involved. In some schools the pilot is offered to year 8 only, while in other schools it is provided only in year 9. In contrast, in a few schools the Education for Employability programme is offered to all pupils at KS3. In other schools, the Education for Employability pilot is offered to pupils at years 8 and 9 but in year 10 these school provided their own timetabled year 10 programme. In certain schools, the Education for Employability pilot was delivered in years 8 and 9 but only to the less academically able pupils. The Education for Employability programme can make a major contribution to a progressive careers education programme, however additional opportunities, based on the core components of a CEIAG programme, need to be provided if pupils are to be equipped with the skills, knowledge and experiences to make informed career choices.
- 4.4 Whilst almost all schools offer some careers education provision at KS4, the variation in the organisation of provision is most pronounced at this stage. In a significant minority of schools the GCSE in Learning for Life and Work is used to deliver the careers education programme. Some schools offer the appropriate Learning for Life and Work strand only to year 11 pupils while other schools offer it to year 12 pupils only. A few schools offer the appropriate strand of the Learning for Life and Work programme to all pupils at KS4. In a few other schools, timetabled careers education provision consists of the GCSE Learning for Life and Work for less able pupils in years 11 and 12. There is an increasing awareness, particularly amongst experienced careers practitioners, that the GCSE in Learning for Life and Work does not provide the pupils with the full range of learning experiences that would be experienced by pupils following a coherent and planned CEIAG programme. Subsequently a significant minority of schools offering Learning for Life and Work at KS4 have supplemented it with a planned structured and co-ordinated timetabled careers education programme in years 11 and 12 while others have supplemented it with a careers education module delivered by the form teachers. In a minority of schools, where this additional careers education provision has been introduced, the content has not been well planned, resulting in the duplication of provision. Often this duplication is compounded by the introduction of the Progress File.

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- 4.5 A significant minority of teachers in the schools who delivered the Learning for Life and Work programme at KS4 commented that teaching careers education as a stand-alone unit, had diluted the importance of CEIAG as a core part of the KS4 Curriculum. A majority of the teachers who had been delivering Learning for Life and Work considered that CEIAG should be delivered to pupils independently of the GCSE in Learning for Life and Work.
- 4.6 In a significant minority of the schools visited, and in the best practice, however, careers education is provided for all KS4 pupils entirely through a discrete planned programme. The provision is well coordinated, delivered and monitored. The provision is planned around the core component of a CEIAG programme and there is a strong emphasis on progressive personal career planning. There are appropriate linkages with the progress file providing opportunities for pupils to record achievements.
- 4.7 At post-16 the majority of schools provide sixth formers with timetabled careers education classes, and although these are of varying length and content, there is more consistency in the organisation of careers education provision at this level.
- 4.8 The inconsistency in the organisation of the careers education provision is also brought about by the variation in time allocation for careers education in each school. For example, year 10 students are allocated an average of nine hours of careers teaching with a range of three hours to 25 hours careers teaching.


5. THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

- 5.1 Most of the quality of teaching in careers education lessons showed more strengths than weaknesses. In just over one-third of the lessons, the quality of teaching is good or excellent; it is satisfactory in 43% of the lessons. In the remaining lessons, weaknesses outweigh strengths, with poor teaching observed in just over 8% of the lessons.

Figure 2



- 5.2 In the most effective lessons, highly committed and enthusiastic teachers foster good relationships with the pupils within an atmosphere conducive to learning. The sessions are well planned and purposeful with clear differentiated objectives and identified learning outcomes. An appropriate and wide range of teaching and learning strategies are employed actively to engage the pupils. The teachers set tasks that are both challenging and matched closely to the pupils' interests, skills and abilities. An appropriate range of resources, including ICT software, is deployed effectively to enhance the quality of the pupils' learning experience. The teachers use skilful questioning techniques to check the pupils' understanding and extend their thinking.
- 5.3 There are weaknesses in just under a quarter of the lessons observed. These lessons are not well planned and organised and do not sufficiently challenge the pupils. The teachers use a narrow range of teaching approaches. They rely too much on whole-class teaching and do not take account of the different capabilities of the pupils. The pupils are given too much information without sufficient opportunity to engage in discussion and they are not encouraged to take initiatives or co-operate in groups. In the weaker practice observed, the teachers took insufficient account of pupils' prior learning and there was little enjoyment evident in the pupils' responses.

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- 5.4 The recording and assessment of the pupils' work are weaknesses in the majority of schools visited. The quality of the assessment arrangements is satisfactory or better in only 25% of the schools surveyed. There is no agreed system for assessing and recording the pupils' progress in careers work, and procedures used to assess progress vary considerably. Careers teachers are not asked to provide written reports for parents on careers work, and homework in CEIAG is not seen to be part of the overall assessment system; few attempts are made to monitor the pupils' progress or assess their skills and abilities in careers lessons. Only a very small number of schools incorporate the Progress File into the CEIAG programme to record pupils' progress.

6. THE QUALITY OF LEARNING

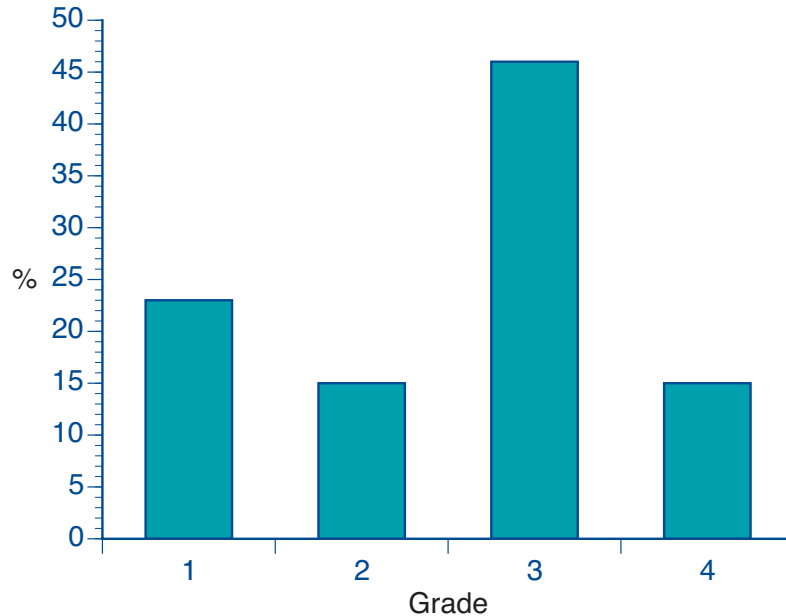
- 6.1 In schools where pupils have access to a coherent CEIAG programme, they respond positively to careers work. They show initiative in researching their ideas and are becoming more aware of changes and challenges in the workplace. The pupils are developing a growing ability to select and use relevant materials.
- 6.2 Only a small minority of pupils have well planned CEIAG opportunities with appropriate staff. Of one school, it was reported that, 'the pupils are encouraged, on a regular basis, to evaluate formally their experience of CEIAG, and this feedback is used effectively by teachers and by the careers staff to adapt and inform provision.'
- 6.3 In a significant minority of schools, however, some pupils make little progress in their learning. They are not aware of the full range of options available and they often aspire to higher education with no regard for progression to training, jobs or career pathways. Their knowledge of occupational areas is weak and they are not fully aware of career options or requirements for their chosen post-16 or post-19 pathway.

7. PERSONAL CAREER PLANNING

- 7.1 The PCP process is underdeveloped and on occasions not well understood in the majority of schools visited; in over 60% of the schools visited the weaknesses outweigh strengths.

Figure 3

Quality of Personal Career Planning



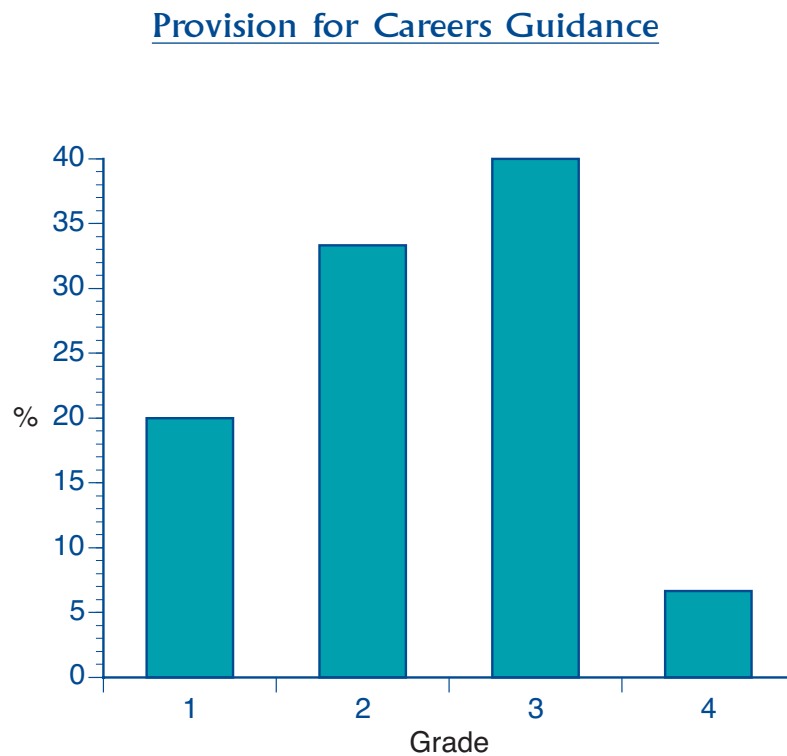
7.2 The PCP process is effective in just under 40% of the schools sampled. In the best practice, PCP is a continuous process integrated fully within the careers education programme enabling the pupils to present in a coherent manner, their strengths, weaknesses and potential, taking due account of their academic performance and preferences about education, training and employment. In one school, it was reported that “excellent use is made of the career planning process and time is set aside during the school year for all pupils to engage in target-setting. This contributes well to the development of the pupils’ understanding of their personal strengths and areas for development, abilities and aspirations.” The PCP process was most effective when the personal career plan is incorporated within a pupil’s Progress File and it is used to inform advice and guidance interviews. An inspector noted that, “the experience of the PCP process has enhanced the pupils’ decision-making ability and has effectively informed guidance interviews.” In the schools where the PCP is integrated effectively into the taught careers education programme the pupils also benefit from opportunities to develop effective researching and evaluation skills.

7.3 In the schools where PCP is weak there is a lack of consistent provision and limited curriculum planning for the progressive development of an integrated PCP process. In these schools the PCP process is mostly delivered in discrete disjointed modules. Little use is made of the PCP during advice and guidance interviews.

8. THE PROVISION FOR CAREERS GUIDANCE

8.1 There are more weaknesses than strengths in the provision for careers guidance in over 46% of the schools surveyed; in two-fifths of the schools the provision for guidance ranges from good to excellent.

Figure 4



8.2 There is a wide variation in the time allocated for guidance interviews. The majority of schools allocate insufficient time to ensure that all pupils have effective guidance interviews at key transitional stages. For example in year 10, one school devotes two days to whole school guidance interviews while another uses a self-referral system, which operates during a careers teacher's non-teaching time.

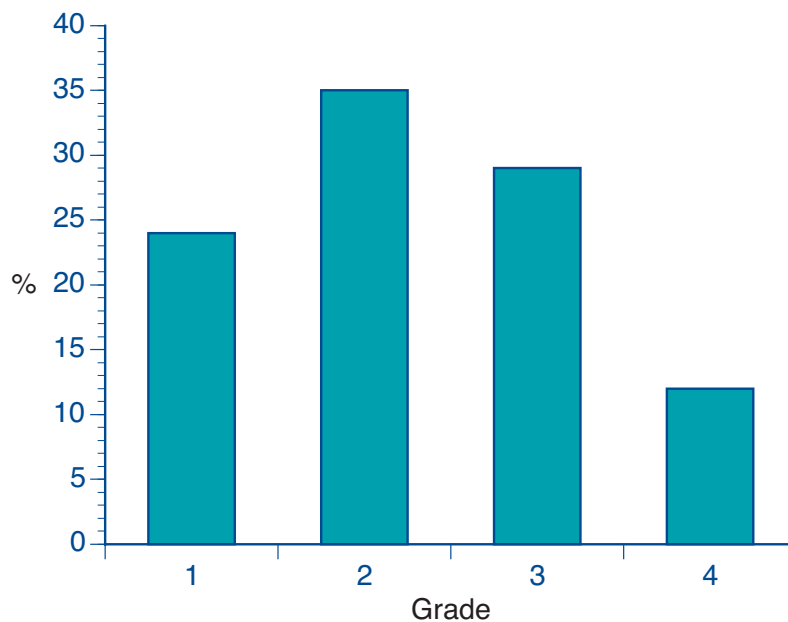
- 8.3 There is a greater responsibility on careers teachers to provide and conduct careers guidance interviews. However, whilst the majority of careers teachers have the acquired specialist knowledge and expertise to help guide pupils at key transitional stages, almost all careers teachers are inadequately qualified to fulfil this role. Careers teachers have had limited opportunities to acquire the necessary skills due to insufficient accredited or professional development opportunities.
- 8.4 In the majority of schools there is no systematic co-ordination of the different strands of advice and guidance. However, when careers guidance provision is well planned and delivered by qualified staff, pupils can demonstrate that the advice and guidance provided have helped them to explore possible progression routes and set goals and targets to achieve their career aspirations.


9. CAREERS INFORMATION

- 9.1 The quality of careers information is satisfactory or better in just over half of the schools sampled, however, in a significant minority of schools visited the weaknesses outweigh strengths.

Figure 5

Quality of Careers Information



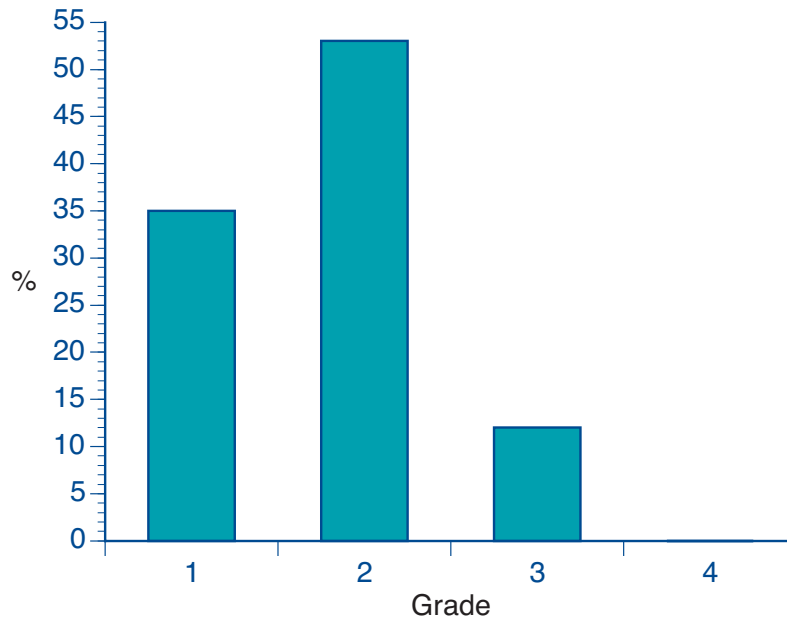
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- 9.2 In the best practice, a wide range of up-to-date and appropriate resources are presented in a range of formats, including computer-based career software packages. The software packages provided objective and relevant information in a flexible context, which is often well matched to the needs of the pupils.
- 9.3 In schools where the quality of information is poor, there is a very limited range of printed materials and often no provision for pupils with literacy difficulties or language barriers. A significant minority of the career resources available are out of date and there is too much emphasis on information relating to progression routes into higher education with few references to employment and training opportunities.
- 9.4 In almost all schools there is insufficient use of current and accurate labour market information to enable the pupils to make informed and realistic decisions about their future career pathways.
- 9.5 In the majority of schools, careers information is supplemented by opportunities for pupils to attend a range of appropriate events. Many careers teachers give much of their own time in organising a wide variety of informative talks, careers conventions, seminars, industry days and further and higher education open days.

10. WORK-RELATED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

- 10.1 The provision of work-related learning experiences is satisfactory or better in the majority of the schools visited; in 35% of the schools surveyed the provision is of a very high standard.


Figure 6

Provision of Work-Related Learning



10.2 Almost all pupils have the opportunity to participate in work-related learning experiences; the majority of schools offer work-placement as their main work-related learning activity. Whilst the majority of schools surveyed offer pupils a placement opportunity at KS4, there is a significant minority of schools who offer work-placement opportunities only to post-16 pupils. These schools offer insufficient work-placement opportunities for those year 12 pupils who will not progress to a post-16 course within the school. In contrast, a minority of schools offer an extensive work-placement programme to both KS4 and post-16 pupils.

10.3 In the majority of schools, the work-related learning activities range is not co-ordinated and often consists of disjointed events offered in isolation by various teachers. In the best practice, all work-related activities, including the full range of enterprising activities, are mapped across the curriculum, a policy is established and a coherent entitlement, to ensure accessibility to work-related learning activities for all pupils, is identified. The work-related learning is co-ordinated and effectively monitored to ensure that the pupils' experiences of work match their abilities, aspirations and learning programme. There is



also adequate time for preparation and debriefing of the work-related learning opportunity to ensure that the pupil gains the maximum benefit from the experience.

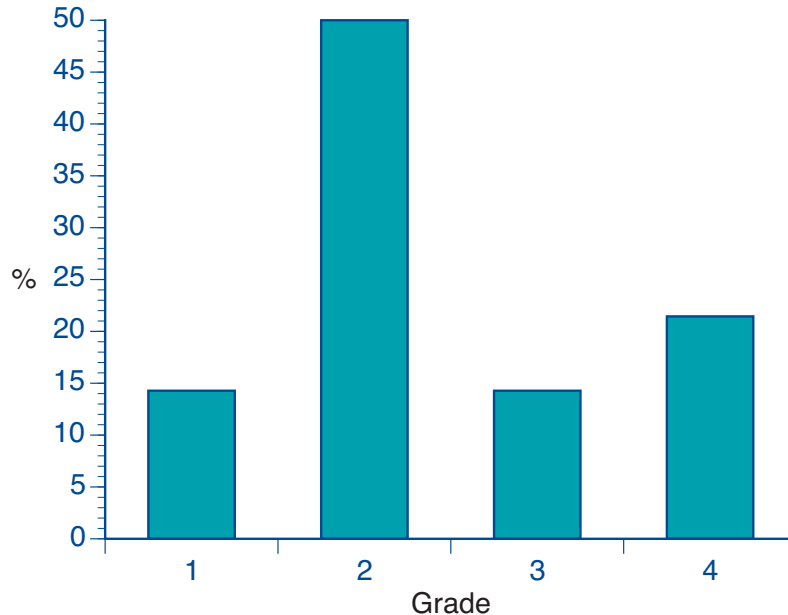
- 10.4 In several cases the work-placement has had a pivotal influence on the subsequent choice of pupils' career pathways. In a few schools, good use is made of work-placement for target-setting in year 12 and there is clear evidence that some low performing pupils made significant improvement as a result of addressing issues targeted during work-placement. Despite these positive outcomes, the majority of schools, however, indicate that the placement of students is becoming increasingly difficult because of employer insurance costs and a bigger demand on employers for places.
- 10.5 The majority of schools have developed effective external links with a wide range of relevant professionals, industrialists, and agencies, including further education colleges and sector skills councils to enhance their work-related learning provision. For example, in one school, all of the year 12 pupils participate in a two-day interview skills programme, in which the pupil is allocated to a mentor from business or industry. In another school, pupils who were interested in a modern apprenticeship had the opportunity to sample possible pathways at a local further education college. The majority of pupils report that these types of work-related activity are much valued as they play an important part in their understanding of the world of work.

II. DEVELOPMENT OF EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

- 11.1 In the majority of school there is effective development of pupils' employability skills. In just over 64% of the schools, the development of employability skills was satisfactory or better. In a significant majority of schools, however, there is little evidence of the development of employability skills. In just under 22% of schools the development of employability skills is poor. The employability skills of pupils are best developed when the CEIAG provision is well planned and provides an appropriate range of experiences.

Figure 7

Development of Employability Skills



- 11.2 In a majority of schools pupils are developing good skills in researching and analysing information and a majority of pupils demonstrate that they are able to use ICT for researching, presenting their assignments and for developing their action plans and logging their achievements. Many pupils can carry out effective searches and explore information on the Internet, CD-ROMs and databases to help them think about career options.
- 11.3 In a significant minority of schools, pupils have the opportunity to develop their communication skills. In a particular school, for example, pupils have the opportunity to select and read materials, and summarise and discuss information on career options. The majority of pupils have the opportunity to make a presentation on their work-placement.
- 11.4 In a minority of schools, pupils have the opportunity to improve their own learning. For example, the pupils in a particular school have the opportunity to identify and develop the skills necessary for a successful transition from KS3 to KS4.

11.5 There are much greater opportunities for pupils to develop and enhance their employability skills when teachers employ active teaching and learning strategies, which replicate the workplace. In the best practice, pupils are provided with planned opportunities in which they can learn, develop and consolidate these skills throughout their entire learning programme. In one school it was noted that, ‘employability skills are being developed throughout the school and in all subjects through active teaching and learning strategies used at each stage of the pupils’ development. For example, in one class seen, year 13 students were working very effectively in small groups to identify advantages and disadvantages of attending university, and in the process were identifying transferable skills that they had been developing through the work.


12. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

12.1 The leadership of CEIAG is satisfactory or better in nearly 60% of the schools surveyed; in over two-fifths of the schools there are more weaknesses than strengths.

Figure 8



- 12.2 In a significant majority of schools, where the quality of leadership and management is most effective, the Principal provides clear CEIAG strategic direction and is committed to the provision of an effective high quality CEIAG for all learners, in order to raise standards and pupils' aspirations and achievement.
- 12.3 In the majority of schools, the overall strategic planning of CEIAG is weak. Insufficient attention is given to the strategic co-ordination of the various strands of CEIAG resulting in an incoherent programme, which causes duplication and dilutes the quality of experiences of the pupils.
- 12.4 In a minority of schools, an effective CEIAG policy is in place, however, in a significant minority of schools the policy does not capture fully the full range of CEIAG activities in the school. In a minority of schools, there is a need to clarify the aims and objectives of the CEIAG programme.
- 12.5 In the majority of schools, systematic and rigorous CEIAG self-evaluation, to improve the quality of provision, is underdeveloped. Effective monitoring and evaluation of the provision do not inform the schools' development planning process and there is insufficient use of data to plan and review provision. In contrast, in one school, the monitoring, evaluation and review of provision were particularly effective. It was noted that, 'there is a strong culture of reflective practice in the school, and the programme is evaluated closely by the teachers and the leadership team. Considerable weight is placed on the feedback provided by pupils, which is used effectively to inform and adapt provision.'
- 12.6 A significant minority of schools nominate a member of the SMT to monitor and support the work of the careers co-ordinator. In most other schools, there is regular informal contact between senior management and the careers co-ordinator. In one school, in which the quality of leadership and management was excellent, the careers co-ordinator was a member of the SMT and was able to ensure that CEIAG received adequate time and appropriate support in terms of curriculum planning. In contrast, in a small minority of the schools careers co-ordinators are given limited senior management support.

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- 12.7 Almost all CEIAG departments are effectively led by a dedicated, hard working and committed co-ordinator who provides clear strategic direction and is committed to the provision of an effective high quality CEIAG for all learners. Almost all the careers co-ordinators spend the majority of their time delivering other curricular subjects. In addition to their CEIAG curricular duties, the majority of careers co-ordinators are expected to carry out a number of administrative roles, including the planning of events including career conventions and mock interview days, the preparation of teaching materials for use by teachers delivering the CEIAG programme, the supervision and maintenance of careers information resource areas, the organisation and co-ordination of work experience placements and the co-ordination and implementation of the UCAS (University and College Application System) application process when appropriate. In the majority of schools, staff are given insufficient time to undertake their administrative duties.
- 12.8 There is a wide variation in the budget allocated by the SMT to careers co-ordinators to support CEIAG in the school. The ability of a minority of careers co-ordinators to access limited external funding is helpful in improving the quality of CEIAG on offer.
- 12.9 In the majority of schools, effective partnerships with appropriate stakeholders are fostered to enhance the learning experiences of pupils. In the majority of schools, links with parents are satisfactory. A few schools use parents as a resource when organising careers events, including industry days, work-placements and mock interviews.

13. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- 13.1 In almost all of the schools visited there is an established careers team led by a careers co-ordinator. In the majority of the schools visited, the careers co-ordinator holds a specialist recognised careers education qualification. Almost all co-ordinators benefit from short course provision organised by the Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (CASS).
- 13.2 In the best practice, the designated CEIAG staff undertake appropriate and regular professional development and all staff are involved in some CEIAG staff development. The designated CEIAG staff are provided

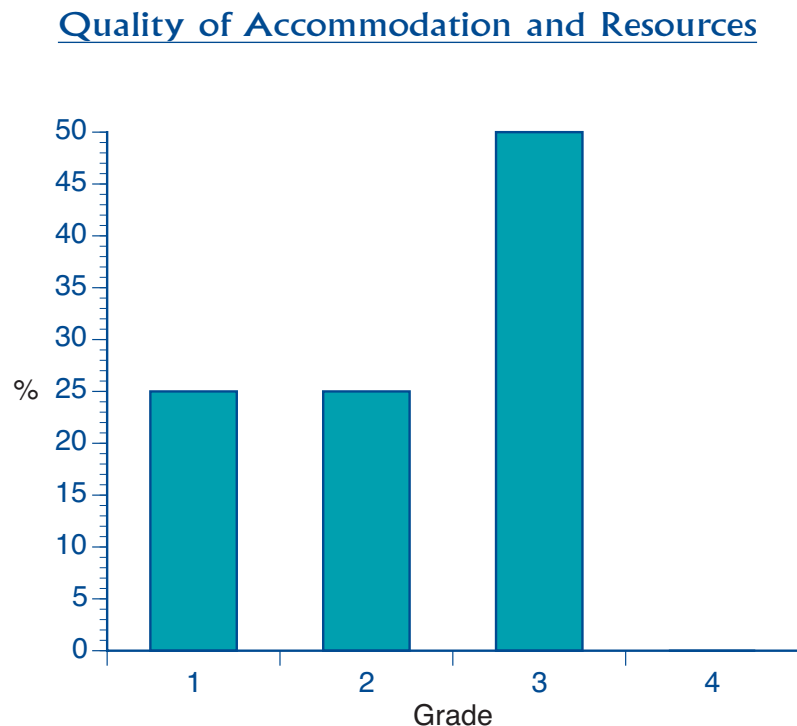
with a well planned induction, regular professional review and support which meet the needs of learners.


13.3 In a significant minority of schools visited, however, teachers delivering the CEIAG programme lack appropriate CEIAG training and their knowledge and understanding of CEIAG are limited; they are heavily reliant on materials and briefing packs prepared by career co-ordinators. In one school, a significant number of teachers responsible for the delivery of CEIAG had received no CEIAG professional development. In a few schools, the careers staff had received no CEIAG professional development for many years. A significant minority of schools welcomed the staff development provided by the Education and Library Boards (ELBs), in preparation for the CCEA Education for Employability pilot at KS3.

14. ACCOMMODATION AND RESOURCES

14.1 The quality of accommodation and learning resources for CEIAG varies considerably in the schools visited. In just under 50% of schools, the quality of accommodation and resources is satisfactory or better, with a minority of schools providing CEIAG accommodation and resources of a high standard.

Figure 9




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- 14.2 The quality of careers accommodation, in a minority of schools, is good. These schools have a dedicated careers suite, which incorporates a large general display area, a seated region suitable for discussions and browsing, an office which provides a base for careers teachers, at least one interview room and a store. In contrast, accommodation in other schools was poor. In one school it was noted that, 'there is a room in the school equipped as a careers suite, however, it is used much more extensively as a classroom for other subjects.'
- 14.3 The majority of schools maintain a careers library in which the careers information is clearly classified and organised. In one school, an excellent careers library area was established within the main school library; it was centrally located and pupils were able to gain access to a wide range of appropriate materials at all times throughout the school day an enthusiastic librarian worked well with the careers co-ordinator and pupils valued and made good use of this resource.
- 14.4 Interviewing facilities for career guidance interviews are satisfactory or better in the majority of schools. Guidance interviews are almost always conducted in an appropriate setting.
- 14.5 The majority of schools are making good use of ICT to support CEIAG activities, however, the provision of ICT resources for CEIAG work, in a minority of schools, is inadequate to enhance and support CEIAG teaching and learning. Almost all schools have access to a range of software to meet the needs of all pupils and in the majority of schools ICT is integrated effectively within the careers curriculum. The majority of careers teachers use the Internet to access up-to-date information about higher education courses, however, a significant minority of teachers are not aware of the range of very useful careers related Internet sites.
- 14.6 In the majority of schools surveyed, the careers resource area is well publicised and easily accessible to all pupils at recognised, regular times throughout the day. However, in a significant minority of schools pupils' access to careers resources is poor.

15. CONCLUSION

15.1 In almost all schools, CEIAG provision is improving gradually. Moreover, there has been an encouraging rise in the numbers of teachers who have participated in appropriate accredited careers education professional development courses. There are many important strengths in the provision in post-primary schools in NI. These include the:

- strong commitment from a significant majority of principals and almost all the careers co-ordinators to the provision of a high quality CEIAG programme for all pupils;
- interest and enthusiasm demonstrated by the majority of school staff involved in the delivery of CEIAG programmes;
- satisfactory or better and, on occasions, excellent quality of teaching in the majority of lessons;
- effective use of a broad range of learning and teaching approaches, which enable the pupils to develop effectively their employability skills;
- good use of work-related learning to improve and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of careers options;
- range of careers information, including relevant software, to inform pupils' career development plans;
- broad range of advice, information and support available, at critical points, for those pupils who have access to well-planned and coherent CEIAG provision;
- awareness, from those pupils who experienced a good quality CEIAG programme, of the various career pathways and options available; and
- majority of careers co-ordinators have a recognised careers education qualification.



15.2 While there has been progress made in aspects of CEIAG to enhance provision and practice in post-primary schools, much still remains to be done to improve the quality of CEIAG. The survey has identified a number of areas for improvement, including the need for:

- effective strategic planning within schools to incorporate effectively the various strands of CEIAG into a coherent programme that provides continuous and progressive opportunities to equip young people with the skills to manage their career development;
- rigorous and robust mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the quality of the CEIAG provision, including the opportunities for the pupils to provide feedback on their experiences;
- a whole-school review of all the existing work-related learning opportunities in order to provide coherent and enhanced set of experiences for all pupils;
- more consistent progressive provision for pupils to develop PCP skills;
- an improvement in the accessibility of careers resources, including the use of ICT facilities, for all pupils;
- the further development of learning materials to meet the needs of those pupils with learning difficulties and, in particular, those pupils with language barriers;
- improved provision for individual careers guidance;
- a review of the time allocated to careers co-ordinators in order to allow them to fulfil their roles and responsibilities;
- staff development training for all teachers involved in the delivery of CEIAG; and
- the establishment of an appropriate recording and assessment system to track pupils' progress in CEIAG.

16. KEY PRIORITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

16.1 This reports highlights the need to build on the current effective practice to ensure that pupils benefit from a coherent and planned CEIAG curriculum to enable them to make informed and appropriate choices. The findings provide a context in which schools can review and self-evaluate their current provision for CEIAG and identify aspects for further improvement. The report has been written to prompt reflection and promote action for improvement. However, in order to achieve this there are number of key priorities for development that need to be addressed, urgently, if the schools are to have the capacity to improve the quality of CEIAG. These include:

- the establishment of a CEIAG framework for 4 to 19 year olds that clearly identifies the learning outcomes for self-awareness, career exploration and career management;
- the development of a coherent programme of careers education to ensure that all pupils receive the same minimum entitlement to careers education;
- the review of the quality of careers guidance in schools;
- the establishment of a national framework of standards for the continuing professional development of teachers involved in CEIAG; and
- the establishment of a set of appropriate quality indicators for evaluating the quality of CEIAG.



THE SCHOOLS VISITED AS PART OF THE SURVEY

The following schools participated in the CEIAG survey either through focused inspections, area inspections or through inspection visits planned as part of the survey.

Belfast Boys' Model School
Bloomfield Collegiate, Belfast
Clounagh Junior High School, Portadown
Coleraine Academical Institution
Drumglass High School, Dungannon
Garvagh High School, Coleraine
Glengormley High School, Newtownabbey
Lisneal College, Londonderry
Loreto Grammar School, Omagh
Lumen Christi College, Londonderry
North Coast Integrated College, Coleraine
Our Lady of Lourdes High School, Ballymoney
Our Lady's Grammar School, Newry
St Brigid's College, Londonderry
St Joseph's College, Coleraine
St Louise's Comprehensive College, Belfast
St Malachy's High School, Castlewellan
St Mary's Christian Brothers' Grammar School, Belfast
St Olcan's High School, Randalstown
St Patrick's Co-Educational Comprehensive College, Maghera
Wellington College, Belfast



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