

ImpactEd

**Start Small;
Dream Big**
Primary careers
pilot programme

THE **CAREERS &
ENTERPRISE**
COMPANY

Insight briefing 1: **The promise of primary**

Early insights on the impact of career-related learning in primary schools from Wave 1 of The Careers & Enterprise Company's Start Small; Dream Big pilot.

About the pilot and Wave 1

When it comes to careers education, the earlier you start the better.

Young people start forming ideas about the jobs and careers they want to do when they grow up at an early age. Those ideas are influenced by what they see around them, their peers, parents, other adults and, of course, teachers.

To shape their ambitions and aspirations, young people need to see and meet a wide range of people from the world of work. The goal is to challenge stereotypes and widen horizons - keeping them as broad as possible for as long as possible. This is particularly important for those in disadvantaged communities who often lack sufficiently wide social and professional networks and where there can be a limited range of local businesses.

That is why The Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) has launched its careers pilot for primary schools – [Start Small; Dream Big](#). Over two and a half years, the [CEC's national network of Careers Hubs](#) will reach hundreds of thousands of pupils and thousands of primary schools in targeted disadvantaged communities across the country.

This Insight Briefing captures early insights from four 'trailblazer' Careers Hubs selected to participate in the first wave of the pilot: Cornwall & Isles of Scilly, Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, Greater Cambridgeshire & Peterborough and North East Combined Authority. 302 primary schools were recruited to the start of the first wave. These areas have significantly higher levels of disadvantage than the national average, with an average Pupil Premium rate of 30% compared to the national average of 24%. Two further waves are currently being implemented by other Careers Hubs.

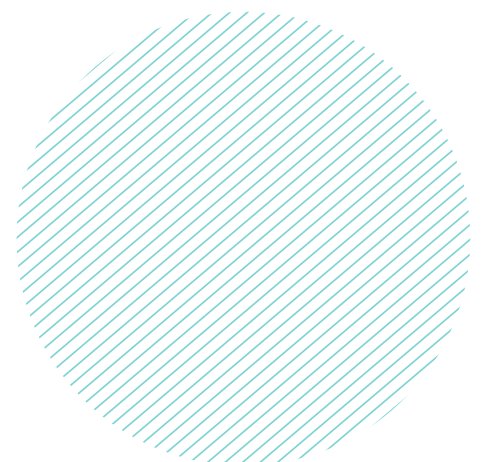
The pilot is based on two key interventions:

- training for teachers (delivered by Teach First) to support them in developing their knowledge and practice of career-related learning and improve their confidence in having careers conversations with pupils and parents.
- connecting schools with employers giving pupils the opportunity to meet people doing different jobs and see what the world of work is all about.

A key goal of the interventions is to enrich the day-to-day curriculum with career-related content and learning – taking it from the margins to the mainstream.

Early indications from the first wave of the pilot show real promise, including a range of positive outcomes for schools, teachers, pupils, parents and employers.

Looking ahead, laying the foundations of career-related learning (CRL) in primary offers the opportunity to smooth the transition between primary schools and the careers education system in secondary schools.



Impact of Wave 1 of the pilot

Based on this first wave of the pilot, the top three early insights are:



Insight 1: School careers provision and leadership commitment improved

Teachers' careers-related knowledge and skills improved; 55% included careers content in the curriculum (up from 14%) and 52% of schools had a formal written careers strategy in place (up from 10%).



Insight 2: Pupil careers knowledge and confidence rose, the influence of stereotypes fell, and parents noticed a difference

Girls showed increased interest in non-gender-stereotyped jobs such as law, finance, construction and building. There was a 6% improvement in pupil understanding of jobs beyond those their family did and a third of parents said they were having more conversations with their children about the world of work.



Insight 3: Employers valued working with primary pupils and want to do more

73% valued working with primary schools and 92% said they were strongly committed to continuing the work.

Insight 1

School careers provision and leadership commitment improved

Evidence shows the first wave of the pilot made significant progress in upskilling teachers and schools in career-related learning. Teachers' understanding of key skills needed by pupils improved by 19%; their knowledge of biases and stereotypes in the work world improved by 16%.

There was also evidence of significant improvements for schools, with many reporting an increased leadership commitment to CRL and intending to continue beyond the pilot. 77% of teachers stated their Senior Leadership Team (SLT) was engaged in embedding CRL at their school (up from 40%); 55% of teachers reported that CRL had been included in the school's curriculum (up from 14%); and 52% said their school had a formal written careers strategy in place (up from 10%).

There was a 43% increase in teachers saying their school helps pupils explore changes in the future world and a 37% increase in those saying their school supports pupils to explore a wide range of careers. There was a 28% rise in teachers saying their school supports pupils to challenge assumptions about the correct jobs for them and a 36% increase in those saying they help students understand how stereotyping affects the workplace.

As a consequence of the programme, there was a 68% increase in schools saying they were now part of a network of primary schools embedding careers in learning. There was a 48% rise in those saying they engage parents in career-related plans and activities and a 42% increase in schools saying they now had links to local employers.



77%

of teachers stated their Senior Leadership Team (SLT) was engaged in embedding CRL at their school (up from 40%).

Insight 2

Pupil careers knowledge and confidence rose, the influence of stereotypes fell and parents noticed a difference

The evaluation of Wave 1 found significant evidence of improvements in pupils' general understanding of the world of work and their choice of future career interests – together with good evidence pupils were considering a wider range of jobs and had broadened their career horizons.

Improvement in pupils' general understanding of the world of work was evident in a 6% increase in average scores for 'learning about different jobs other than those of my family/carers'.

A shift in areas of interest in future career options started to emerge. Pupils were asked at the beginning and end of the wave to choose areas of the world of work they might be interested in the future, with results showing a more balanced distribution by the end of the wave. The two most popular choices 'Caring for animals and nature' and 'Sports and fitness' reduced; small increases were seen in 'Construction and building', 'Digital and computing' and 'Administration, business and finance'.

Interests by the end of the wave were less gender biased. For girls, there was less interest in career areas, such as 'Caring for animals' (down 17%), and increased interest in 'Law' (up 34%), 'Admin, business and finance' (up 36%) and 'Construction and building' (up 25%).

Qualitative research suggested a positive impact on ambition and aspiration with pupils interested in a diverse range of future careers. Children spoke enthusiastically about becoming scientists, marine biologists, entrepreneurs and Olympic athletes. Interest in the arts led some pupils to be considering career choices as actors and dancers, and others mentioned more contemporary careers such as content creators and influencers.

Teachers commented positively on the impact on pupil confidence: 64% reported their pupils' confidence about future employment options available to them had increased and 65% reported a decrease in pupils feeling that they were restricted by stereotypes in relation to their future job or career.

There were positive signs from parents that children were talking more about careers at home and showing increased understanding of the subject. A third of parents (33%) said they were having more conversations with their child about the world of work. Of these parents, half said their child had been bringing up the topic and 17% reported the school had been engaging with parents about careers. A third of parents also believed that their child's understanding of the world of work had increased as a result of the pilot.

"They've really caught the [CRL] vision here. We did an assembly [with the employer encounter] and the children were really excited about it. They're talking about careers now. It's just opened up a new area of thinking I think for children."

Teacher, Greater Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority (GCPA)



Girls' career interests broadened and boosted

- Law up 34%
- Business & Finance up 36%
- Construction & Building up 25%



64%

of teachers reported their pupils' confidence about future employment options available to them had increased.

Insight 3

Employers valued working with primary pupils and want to do more

Employers successfully delivered 278 encounters across the four areas, attended by over 24,000 pupils. In a majority of cases (58%), encounters consisted of in-person presentations in a class or assembly. Almost three quarters of pupils (73%) that attended encounters attended either an assembly or an in-class presentation. The evidence showed a strong relationship between in-person employer encounters and better pupil learning.

Employers considered their involvement in the wave a worthwhile experience. They were generally satisfied with their engagement with schools (73% very satisfied) and were particularly impressed with their relationship with their Careers Hub (91% very satisfied).

92% of employers that participated were strongly committed to continuing to engage with primary schools, with 73% valuing working with primary schools. All surveyed employers reported they would continue supporting local primary schools in the future.



92%

of employers that participated were strongly committed to continuing to engage with primary schools.

“They’re opening up to different [career] options when we speak to them. They’re talking about other jobs that they could do [...] and they talk about ‘oh I might need this skill and this skill to do this job’. Some of them are already talking about what universities they want to go to and what they want to do and they’re there so it’s [CRL] definitely raised their aspirations.”

Teacher, North East Combined Authority (NECA)

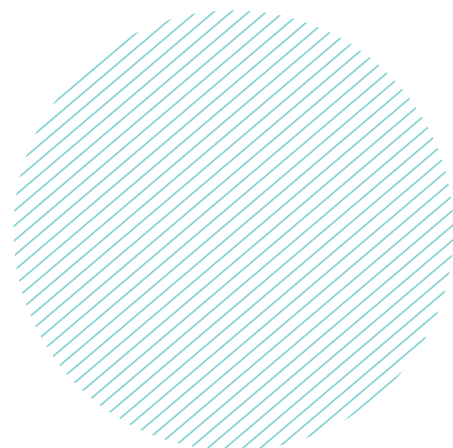
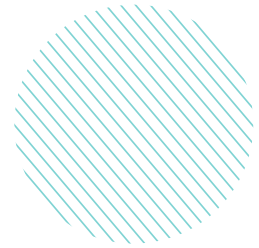
Next steps

Over the course of the next year, delivery of the CEC's Start Small; Dream Big pilot will continue to evolve, building on the Wave 1 schools covered in this report to include a further two waves. 21 of the CEC's 44 Careers Hubs will deliver the pilot in local communities across the country.

The emerging evidence shows that, with the right support and professional development, primary schools and teachers are keen to bring career-related learning into their curriculum and develop a more strategic approach within their schools.

Employers also recognise the benefits of and see value in starting careers conversations and inspiration early. It is important to capitalise on this enthusiasm to build and deepen further employer engagement across all levels of education, so there is continuity in young people's opportunity to see into and experience of the world of work.

Over the next year, data and evidence from the primary pilot will continue to expand to provide richer and authoritative insight into what works best to achieve optimal outcomes and impact in career-related learning in primary.



THE CAREERS & ENTERPRISE COMPANY

Associated Wave 1 delivery partners:

Cornwall &
the Isles of Scilly
CAREERS HUB

D2N2
CAREERS HUB

Cambridgeshire
& Peterborough
CAREERS HUB

North East
CAREERS HUB

 Teach
First
