Response to All-Party Parliamentary Group for Education from Jenny Connick
Founder Talentino Career Development Company 12th June 2016

www.talentinocareers.co.uk jenny@talentinocareers.co.uk

We have pleasure in providing information for your enquiry named
'*Do Schools prepare young people for their future careers' Call for Evidence*

Introduction Talentino is an innovative career development company created by senior people from business four years ago. Our team believes that many people contribute to and value to a young person's career conversations and we wanted to professionalise their involvement which is delivered face to face the method young people prefer.

We have created two sustainable research based early career development coaching programmes, one is for mainstream schools and one is for young people with learning difficulties in Special Schools. We train and accredit staff, volunteers and people from business to become trained early career coaches to support young people from the age of 12 years.

In mainstream schools, the core process is designed to enable young people to understand what their core passion is in relation to different career characteristics and this becomes their terms of reference for future career decisions. They then explore the widest range of potential options, understand what career pathways look like , develop their employability skills and knowledge, create personal career development action plans and build their portfolio so they can compete for their chosen career goals. In effect they become their own career manager but with huge support.

In Special Schools, the programme – *Careers at Every Level* – the focus of the programme is to improve the possibility and probability of paid work. We have included a research paper in this document – ***'Same and Different'*** making the case that this group of young people should have the same level of focus and attention that their mainstream peers are getting. We have identified seven recommendations. We measure the progress of this programme using a toll created by a PHD student from the University of Warwick

The evidence we are providing is based on our experience of training over 300 Early Career Coaches who continue to reach over 15000 young people including 1000 with learning difficulties.

Terms of Reference The Inquiry seeks written evidence in response to the following questions:

1. **What should our schools be focusing on in order to prepare young people for the future?**

We believe that there are some inherent dichotomies for schools in answering this question for example:

- Schools 'core business' is to educate young people so they successfully transition to the next stage of their lives but were given the statutory responsibility for careers education without preparation and without any additional financial resources to deliver it. They lacked guidance or any real capacity and capability in many schools.
- Schools are 'lumped together' with one name but many manage islandic budgets, are not part of a group purchasing network and do not really understand how to make effective commercial decisions.
- Schools are measured on their academic results and the destinations that they students go to and the careers element somehow eludes any real accountability despite being a legal requirement
- The future scoping of what work and will not look like in the future and the skills and competencies young people will need to succeed are rarely considered within mainstream education. However, there is a fabulous opportunity to start to develop these 'intrinsic capabilities' as part of a solid early career development programme at school. There is also an opportunity to develop in other areas of the curriculum but schools need to understand what these look like.

Schools should focus on the personal, social, educational and economic ((employment) outcomes they want to achieve for pupils and create and deliver content which delivers against this. This includes but is not exclusively about educational attainment but it is about being able to answer the question 'so what' when it comes to qualifications. Schools priorities should be reorganised so they stop competing and conflicting with each and work to complement each other. Schools should own the early career development process but have the capacity and capability to deliver this being effectively resourced.

2. **Should schools play a role in developing skills, or should subject knowledge be prioritised?**
    - For us, we think that these two are not mutually exclusive. The methods that young people use to acquire knowledge across a range of curriculum subjects can mirror the types of skills they will need in work in the future. There is also some value in replaying the behaviours that successful students model at school which are relevant in a future working / training / higher education environments again integral but discrete from knowledge.
    - The terms of reference we usually take for our programme would come from surveys such as the annual one published by the CBI who describe what their businesses need from young people and where they need to improve, they continually refer to:
        - Effective Communication
        - Self-starter and Using Initiative
        - Team working
        - Negotiating and influencing
        - Time management
        - Organisational skills
        - Entrepreneurial / 'Intrapreneurial'

Enabling schools to better understand how this joins up and what a cohesive personal, social and educational programme looks like that leads to future economic (working) success. If ownership of this subject area resided with the senior leadership team and not tucked away in a discretionary timetable area, more progress could be made.

3. **Who should be responsible for ensuring that young people develop soft, financial and entrepreneurial skills?**

We believe that there are key stakeholder groups who have responsibility for young people's early career development in the area of soft, financial and entrepreneurial skills:

- Government
- Schools
- Business
- Parents/ Carers
- Young people themselves

- Careers Provider organisations
- Additional agencies need to be involved in the career development of young people with learning difficulties such as Supported Employment providers, Job Coaches

There are particular challenges for some groups being able to jointly deliver and being jointly accountable for their responsibilities including:

- Diminishing Resources – time and money
- Competing demands for resources – people, time, money
- Cultural change needed around early career development
- Seamless early career development process that is delivered by a range of Early Career Coaches from different backgrounds
- Protectionism by some traditional, larger careers providers and a fragmented delivery picture with a lack of imagination by many schools when it comes to the core early career development process ie very often it is about providing 1-1 interviews for Year 11 and yet the first career decisions are made at 12 years of age! (The new guidance does refer to this however but many schools have not caught up)
- Accurate, timely and navigable information

However, employers need to have a broader and *deeper* involvement in early career development. The Careers and Enterprise Company is engaging Employer volunteers through their Enterprise Adviser Network but the majority of these people are engaged in management level conversations about creating a careers strategy and the ways employers can be involved in schools. The project is set to last for an initial two years so the question is what comes after in terms of sustainability.

Government needs to hold schools to account and stop treating early career development as a discretionary activity, done well it is a critical contributor to the economic success of UKPLC.

Schools need to be resourced properly to deliver their responsibilities (£486 million was saved from stopping the centralised careers service and spent on the National Careers Service and schools got no funding to deliver their new responsibilities.

Business is getting involved but their sustained engagement needs to be mechanistic and not left to chance

Parents/ Carers need to be more involved in a systematic way but they are a fragmented group, no longer at the school gate as they might have been in Primary Schools Utilising the national PTA might be a start offering a free simple workshop to parents remotely.

Young people themselves need to experience a different careers model where they learn how to own their own career development (with support) and are encouraged to stop being tacit in the careers conversation.

Careers Provider organisations need to step up to the mark and start innovating to reflect what is needed by all the stakeholders in early career development, rebrand as a proactive skilled group of career coaches. That innovation needs to be encouraged and nurtured.

Additional agencies need to be involved in the career development of young people with learning difficulties such as Supported Employment providers, Job Coaches

4. **Do education providers have the resources to prepare young people for the workforce?**

We have been marketing our programmes to schools since the statutory responsibilities changed and in our experience we have found that in terms of having the resources schools will:

- Have to manage increasingly competing demands on their budgets
- Often rely on internal careers staff which do not deliver against their statutory responsibility to work with external careers providers (and haver to pay for them)
- Purchase careers services focused on 1-1 interviews with Year 11students
- Lack timetable time and squeeze careers related activities into tutorials for example

Some will find the resources because they go beyond their day job to support young people. Some will organise the bare minimum to comply with the requirement to work with external careers providers. Some will abdicate. Resourcing properly shows early career development matters and more schools will take this seriously.

5. To help the APPG create a practical set of approaches and recommendations:

a. What example are there of schools and colleges preparing young people well for the workforce? See case studies within this document and see https://vimeo.com/163406325

b. What examples are there of employer-led initiatives that have had an impact? Experian has worked with Talentino to help increase the access to early career coaches for young people in the community of St Anne's and Sneinton. They have sponsored three groups of volunteer early career coaches to be trained by Talentino. These Early Career Coaches will be working within schools, community settings, Special Schools, a city Farm and business to provide career coaching opportunities. They have enabled some of their staff to become trained too working in the local schools.

In addition, the APPG for Education would welcome details of any relevant research carried out by your organisation which it would be willing to share with the Inquiry. We have copied a further document (below) called ' Same and Different' which puts the case for the early career development for young people with learning difficulties making seven recommendations. This has been presented to the Minister Sam Gyimah through Clare Worsdale who is working on the National Careers Strategy for England.

The Same and Different - Early Career Development for Young People with Learning Disabilities in Special Schools

Ensuring Diversity and Inclusion delivered in the new National Careers Strategy 2016

This is the final version of the paper prepared by Jenny Connick, Founder of Talentino Ltd in conjunction with Brookfields Special School for Clare Worsdale at the Department of Education to contribute to the new Careers Strategy Paper and ensure that the career development needs of young people with learning difficulties in Special Schools in England are acknowledged.

2nd May 2016

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Executive Summary

This report lays out the current landscape of the lack of attention being paid at a policy level around the early career development at school for young people with learning difficulties in Special Schools and makes recommendations as to how to remedy this in the new Careers Policy.

Information has been taken from the national terms of reference for mainstream careers education – Gatsby benchmarks, Cold spot survey, CDI, Careers and Enterprise Company as well using case studies and impact data from Special schools working with a purposefully designed Career Development programme for young people with learning difficulties *Careers at Every Level* from Talentino.

The key points made in this report are:

- There are over 100,000 young people with learning difficulties aged 13-18 in Special Schools in England whose early career development lacks visibility
- There is no visibility of what employer engagement looks like as they were not included in recent national level research which has since influenced the national approach to early career development in schools in England
- Up to the draft version of this paper being submitted, this group was not included in the new Careers Strategy but the Minister has now agreed at a principle level that they should be included
- The new national policy needs to identify where careers education looks the same and more importantly where it is different and make provision for it starting with commissioning research to surface ‘what good looks like’ and building a model of best practice
- Career related goals may come in different guises for young people with learning difficulties but they are all equally valid to the individual and their family
- Additional support is needed in Special schools around engaging supported employment providers and Job Coaches to enable young people to develop specific work related skills
- Employers need additional training and support to engage with Special Schools and their pupils for working experiences

There are 7 recommendations:

Recommendation One – *Commission research to gain visibility at a national level of the early career development experiences of young people with learning difficulties in Special Schools*

Recommendation Two – *As part of the research in recommendation one, gain an insight at a national level of what 'good' looks like in existing programmes and employer engagement for young people with learning difficulties in Special Schools*

Recommendation Three – *Ensure that within the new Careers Policy this group is included explicitly and that they can be included in exactly the same way as the Gatsby benchmarks but accept the delivery methodology of a careers programme will be different and that this is relevant, acceptable and of equal value*

Recommendation Four – *Following on from recommendation three, make the point overtly that the Career goals may be different and articulated at three levels but have equal value to the career goals of more able young people*

Recommendation Five – *Mandate the Careers and Enterprise Company so that Special Schools are overtly included, the Enterprise Coordinators and Enterprise Advisers are trained to understand the contribution employers can make to a range of career development needs of a diverse group of young people.*

Recommendation 6 – *Find out what the level of spending is in different Local Authorities, what the activities are which they are supporting and what impact measurement is taking place. There may be further recommendations to divert the funding directly into schools to make the best choice and possibly engage in the new careers clusters and benefit from economy of scale as many Special Schools are very small*

Recommendation 7 – *Carry out a cost (Supported employment and Job Coaching) benefit (reduction in benefits and contribution in tax returns) analysis in terms of securing Job coaching and Supported employment provision for all Special Schools in England in conjunction with specialist organisations like BASE and leading employers who are already committed to this cohort.*

Introduction

The Government, through the Department of Education, is publishing a new Careers Strategy paper for England in the summer 2016. It will outline the responsibilities of all stakeholders in the area of careers education and enable young people in England to receive a high quality, relevant career development experience that results in them making smarter career decisions that benefit them and UKPLC.

Currently, young people with learning difficulties in Special Schools had not been included in the new policy paper and this is viewed by Talentino® and many other careers organisations, BASE and Special Schools as a significant oversight at best. At worst, it is a negation of the obligation for diversity and inclusion to be inculcated into all policies and procedures created by Government.

However since the first draft of this paper April 7th 2016, there has been agreement from the Minister to include this group within new policy guidelines.

There is some small attention paid to young people with SEN in mainstream schools but these young people would normally be able to access a mainstream type careers programme with additional support and the career destination would be further education / training or employment.

Pupils with learning difficulties in Special Schools have different career development needs and will benefit from a wider range of career related outcomes so their needs are different and need to be surfaced. The career development methodology also differs and needs to be addressed in policy guidelines.

Purpose – why bother?

People with learning difficulties are more likely to be NEET, suffer mental health issues, have lower levels of qualifications, qualifications which are not recognised or understood by employers, are more likely to be unemployed, be bullied as adults and die at a younger age.

According to Government statistics in January 2015 there were 103,970 young people in Special Schools with 101,575 with EHC Plans. 45,780 were aged between 13 and 19.

In mainstream schools, there were 444,020 SEN young people in year 7 and above with 57,245 with EHC plans.

Talentino wants to create a dialogue where the people working on the National Careers Strategy understand more about what is needed for young people with learning difficulties and ways that their early career development can be delivered as well as the significant benefit and impact it can have.

Ultimately, it wants the new Careers Strategy paper to include the career development needs of young people with learning difficulties and outline how they can be met and funded so that ALL young people have an equal chance of paid employment and enjoy improved social, personal, educational and economic outcomes.

This paper is being written from a positive perspective, using evidence from case studies and seeks to put the notion that early career development is equally as important for young people with learning difficulties as that of their able bodied peers and equally achievable. The Career development journey and outcomes may be different may they are equally valid. This has significant economic advantages to the individual young person, their families and the UK economy.

Policy Context

The **Special Educational needs and disability code of practice – 0-25 years Jan 2015** identifies - *8.28 Schools and colleges should raise the career aspirations of their SEN students and broaden their employment horizons. They should use a wide range of imaginative approaches, such as taster opportunities, work experience, mentoring, exploring entrepreneurial options, role models and inspiring speakers.*

Two key terms of reference for the current careers landscapes include The **Lord Young Report – Enterprise for All 2014** and the **Gatsby Report 2014** do not directly include young people with learning difficulties but could be used in the same way for them. The Lord Young report talks about Enterprise for young people being:

1.**Captive** and meaningful to young people through real-life contact with business and work, particularly for those put off by more theoretical or academic learning; and made relevant in the way the curriculum and exams are designed and delivered.

2.**Continuous**, beginning with inspiration and a first taste of enterprise in primary and secondary education and then the application of that learning through further and higher education, and later in life.
3. **Coherent**, first as a strong and consistent government message to empower educators to embed enterprise in their teaching; second, in the way we measure and distinguish the impact of an institution's enterprise activity; and third, through better coordination and consistency in what already exists, to ensure that all young people are able to access enterprise-related programmes.

The **Gatsby** report identifies 8 benchmarks namely:

1. **A stable careers programme** Every school and college should have an embedded programme of career education and guidance that is known and understood by pupils, parents, teachers, governors and employers.
2. **Learning from career and labour market information** Every pupil, and their parents, should have access to good quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities. They will need the support of an informed adviser to make best use of available information.
3. **Addressing the needs of each pupil** Pupils have different career guidance needs at different stages. Opportunities for advice and support need to be tailored to the needs of each pupil. A school's careers programme should embed equality and diversity considerations throughout.
4. **Linking curriculum learning to careers** All teachers should link curriculum learning with careers. STEM subject teachers should highlight the relevance of STEM subjects for a wide range of future career paths.
5. **Encounters with employers and employees** Every pupil should have multiple opportunities to learn from employers about work, employment and the skills that are valued in the workplace. This can be through a range of enrichment activities including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes.
6. **Experiences of workplaces** Every pupil should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities, and expand their networks.
7. **Encounters with further and higher education** All pupils should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them. This includes both

academic and vocational routes and learning in schools, colleges, universities and in the workplace.

8. **Personal guidance** Every pupil should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a career adviser, who could be internal (a member of school staff) or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level. These should be available whenever significant study or career choices are being made. They should be expected for all pupils but should be timed to meet their individual needs.

The reason for including these two significant reference papers is to start to make the point that all the benchmarks and indicators apply equally to ALL young people but those with learning difficulties in Special Schools are not mentioned.

Careers Bodies and Influencers

Unfortunately, many of the stakeholders in the current energetic wave around career development for young people have also not overtly included young people with learning difficulties.

For example, the **new CDI framework** does not include any reference to this group.

The **report from the UK Commission for Skills identifying 'cold spots'**, did not look at work experience in this group or even mention this group in their 25 page report.

The **new Careers and Enterprise Company** says it is keen to develop more material for use in its toolkit for Enterprise Advisers to use with young people with learning difficulties although its initial focus is mainstream schools and Colleges which is probably the reason why **none of the fifteen recent Innovation award winners were focused on young people with learning difficulties**. It does not currently have a formal stance / statement on this group but does say it intends to include Special Schools in the next wave of its activities. Talentino has been meeting Enterprise co-ordinators around the country and some are including Special Schools and some are not. Talentino® has also contributed to the Enterprise Adviser 'Toolkit' in this area in conjunction with their founder Special School, Brookfields which is an outstanding Special School in Berkshire.

The new Northern Ireland Careers Strategy does give a small mention to young people with disabilities as getting additional support as a group which experiences additional barriers to work.

Current career development for young people with learning difficulties

The statutory duty and funding for careers advice and guidance for young people with learning difficulties lies with Local Authorities but with the increasing cuts and diminishing services, the bare minimum is being done in some areas focusing on the statutory reporting element. Payment is now having to be picked up by schools in some areas which needs investigating.

Many Special Schools create their own career development programme but this can lack visibility and or achieve economies of scale. For example, a national picture has been gained of what mainstream schools are doing but not so for Special Schools. So these young people's career development needs lack profile and prominence and are not getting prioritised in the same way as young people in mainstream which can't be right.

Mencap statistics show the **number of people with learning difficulties who want a paid job is 65% but only 6% have one. This has gone down from 10% five years ago.** If the employment rates were the same for disabled and non-disabled people the economy would lift by £30 billion a year.

There has been a lot of very recent acrimony with the cuts to disability allowances resulting in a member of the Cabinet resigning but this paper is not wholly about money it is about treating young people with disabilities the same as those without.

On leaving school, young people can access Work Choice a programme offered through Job Centre plus or utilise Access to Work funding to support their needs for a particular job. Alternatively they can go to College and often will complete very similar programmes to those they might have had at school but on a part time basis which is not the best pattern of learning as many benefit from full time learning opportunities and begin to deteriorate if courses are part time.

Career Possibilities for Young People with learning difficulties - Working is good for everyone.

Research about the reasons why people work include:

- To develop new skills
- Opportunity to use talents
- Being recognised for a job well done
- Social benefits around working collaboratively in a team
- Financial independence
- Better Health
- Better Mental Health

All these reasons apply equally to young people with or without learning difficulties so it is logical to address the career development needs on an equal footing.

Employing young people with learning difficulties is good for employers too.

Employers want people who can be trusted to do a good job, who represent their brand and positively impact your customers. Research shows that young people with learning difficulties do all of these things really well.

Employers are often risk averse and uncomfortable when things are unfamiliar. Many employers have no experience of young people with learning difficulties and make assumptions about what they *cannot* gain from working.

But the benefits and advantages of working for everyone whether they have a learning difficulty or not are the same – an opportunity to learn new skills, use our talents and be recognised for a job well done.

Career development for Young People with learning difficulties in Special Schools – what is the same and what is different?

The aims of a career development programme in Special Schools are the same as those in a mainstream school and can sit comfortably under the Gatsby benchmarks and Lord Young respective banners. The programme can include many of the activities identified in the Careers and Enterprise toolkit.

Elements that are the same include:

- Increase aspirations
- Inspire young people
- Early preparation from KS4 as a minimum
- Involvement and support of families/ carers
- Engagement with employers in a range of employer led activities

- Increased understanding of what a working environment is like and the protocols involved
- Exploring the widest range of potential career options
- Making Career decisions that are right for the individual young person
- Work experience
- Supported Internships
- Development of work related skills
- Securing the benefit of paid part time work whilst still at school
- CV preparation
- Interview preparation and practise
- Becoming employable around what employers want including mitigating the lack of formal educational qualifications as they will very often be competing without GCSEs
- Understanding the local employment picture
- Understanding the soft skills employers will be interested in e.g. communication, working in a team
- Understanding what Enterprise and self-employment looks like
- Utilising external careers organisations

So many elements are exactly the same as for young people without learning difficulties. But there are differences and these do need to be surfaced and factored into the new Careers Strategy. Additional elements and considerations that need to be factored in include:

- Additional agencies including the Local Authority, supported employment providers, Job Coaches, possibly Social Services, Health and therapy professionals and others as the needs of the child dictate
- Extra attention given to how to compete for paid jobs without the benefit of academic qualifications
- Development of Vocational Profile - similar to the new Enterprise Passport
- Dedicated Job Coaching to develop specific job related skills
- Local employers recruitment policies and procedures being conducive to applicants with a range of abilities

A '**Career Development Value Chain'** needs to be created for young people with learning difficulties which clearly identifies who would be involved at which stage and which starts in schools at the beginning of KS4 and extends throughout school and extends into post school at College and in employment giving the best chance of a positive career outcome. The initial and ongoing engagement would look like this:

Career Development Value Chain	KS3	KS4	Post 16	After school	19- 25
School Careers Programme		start			
Parents/carers involvement and support	Start				
Employer engagement		start			
Job Coaches			start		
Supported employment provider			start		
Annual EHC Plan	ongoing				
Transition Planning Year 9	starts				
Work experience		start			
College			introduce		
Supported Internships			introduce		
Work based training programmes			introduce		
Social /Childrens' Services support *not for all*					
Housing support *not for all*					
Other agency support					

The aspects that are different for young people with learning difficulties from mainstream careers education and development are:

- Extended time is necessary to reinforce learning with lots of repetition need and specialist learning materials so classroom based career development needs to start whenever the child is ready, at the end of KS3 or start of KS4
- Extended and ongoing support and encouragement for parents/families to provide a positive backdrop. It is not unusual for parents to have learning difficulties themselves and not work or and be worried about losing benefits. There is also the aspect of their own unresolved grief which can really surface when they think about their child leaving school. Their concern for the safety of their child is often a huge issue too. These aspects are very different from parents of able bodied children. Support for parents can come in the form of school based meetings or 1-1s or and at the EHC Plan reviews where employment outcomes are identified

- Employers need to be brought into the programme early and their involvement sustained to maximise the possibility of young people achieving paid work
- Engaging with local employers who are confident about working with young people with disabilities or who can be trained and developed to become confident with a diverse workforce and are willing to review recruitment policies and procedures which are conducive to enabling young people with learning difficulties to get paid work
- Additional time and input to develop work related skills and time to rehearse working which will include Job Coaches, extensive work experience, engagement in Enterprise and other work related learning activities
- A local supported employment provider needs to get engaged early before the young person leaves school and form a bridge between local employers, the Job Coach, the young person, their family and the employers. They can provide support to all the key stakeholders ensuring that everyone is well prepared and that employment is secured and sustained.
- Local providers of work based supported internships and accessible Apprenticeships need to get involved at school too to provide serious options for young people to consider

Another key area of difference is the goals of the school careers programme for students which will be relative to their level of ability and potential career destination. So for students with moderate learning difficulties their career goal maybe to:

- **Improve the possibility and probability of paid work** and could include permanent paid full time employment to which they can travel independently

For students with severe learning difficulties, for some it may include the previous goal but may also be articulated as:

- **Improving quality of life through the development and acquisition of work related skills** which could be used in supported employment, supported volunteering or and to complete tasks more successfully in their everyday life

For students with profound and multiple learning difficulties, the goal could be:

- **Enrich life experience through work related Enterprise activities** these students would require extensive support to participate in work related activities

In terms of the goals a career development programme in Special Schools, these goals are rightly differentiated but sit on a continuum so that it is not automatic that some students are considered as being suitable for working and some are not but that all are given the best possible opportunity to develop to their fullest potential.

<u>Measuring Impact</u> – case studies

Talentino has been working with Special Schools for over four years. They have trained staff and volunteers in Special Schools to run their programme *Careers at Every Level* which is purposefully created for young people with learning difficulties.
The programme has three parts – Classroom based career coaching, Working experience and work placements and Enterprise businesses in school.

Since 2011 and by summer 2016 they will have trained 130 Early Career Coaches to run the Careers at Every Level programme with just over 2000 young people with learning difficulties in scope.

The first founder school was Brookfields who commissioned Talentino to help them create a programme which would improve the possibility and probability of work for the most able (SLD and MLD) students. At the beginning, a handful of students would go out on work experience. Four years later, all MLD and SLD students in KS4 and post 16 enjoy regular and meaningful work experience which impacts positively on their career aspirations. The school has created a network of 50+ local employers who regularly offer work experience. Last year between January and April 80 students went out on work experience. The local employer Sainsbury's has created a 6 week induction programme for all Brookfields students who can access it as an introduction to work and have started to employ adults with disabilities.

Note: Talentino train staff and volunteers who qualify Early Career Coaches in Special Schools to run their programme *Careers at Every Level* which is purposefully created for young people with learning difficulties. The qualification is accredited by the European Mentoring and Coaching Council.

For the last two years Talentino and Brookfields have run a small annual conference for all the Special Schools working with Talentino to update Career Coaches on latest developments and run an internal 'marketplace' so schools can help each other with various projects.

At the conference, Talentino also runs an impact measurement tool created by a PHD student at the University of Warwick. The tool identified the 27 different areas that schools expect careers education to have a positive impact on. In the first year 5 schools responded and in November 2015 12 schools responded. The results can be seen in the table below identifying the level of improvement observed by teachers in schools running the programme.

The tool is completed by the Special Schools who work with Talentino but it is completed anonymously. They are asked what level of impact in terms of the level of improvement they think the career development programme has generated for young people with learning difficulties (*Careers at Every Level*) has had on the 27 indicators.

Many of the indicators are concerned with a wide range of aspects of early career development and employability. In addition, some of the indicators focus on improvements in school life like interaction and engagement and positive behaviours. Others look at health and wellbeing. Any school using this tool would be able to assess the impact of their careers programme on pupils.
The indicators can be grouped as follows:

- **School / student performance**
    - Grades
    - Engagement with school
    - Subject specific drop-out rate
- **Early Career Development**
    - Early Career Choice
    - Confidence in achieving career goals
    - Confidence in career choice
    - Suitability of subject to desired career
- **Employability**
    - Employability

    - Employability in desired field
    - SEN specific employability
    - Work related skills
    - Probability of paid employment
    - Probability of unpaid employment
    - Confidence in finding employment
- **Health and wellbeing**
    - Wellbeing
    - Happiness
    - Positive behaviour
    - Interaction with peers
    - Family life
- **Positive classroom environment**
    - Teacher interaction
    - Confidence in careers services
    - School enjoyment
    - Subject enjoyment
- **Personal development and independence**
    - Confidence in achieving career goals
    - Peer interaction
    - Confidence in personal skills
    - Probability of financial independence
    - Probability of independent living
    - Involvement in the community
    - Communication skills
- **Parental Involvement**
    - Parental involvement
    - Family life

The top scores for 2015 showing an improvement or slight improvement (which is just as relevant in Special schools) for 80% or more responses have been highlighted in green. The red ones are not so relevant to Special Schools.

	No effect	slight improve	improve		SI & I
Grades	5	4	3	12	**58**
Engagement with School	2	4	6	12	**83**
Early Career Choice	4	5	4	13	**69**
Employability	**1**	**6**	**6**	**13**	**92**
Wellbeing	**0**	**7**	**6**	**13**	**100**
Teacher Interaction	**1**	**5**	**6**	**12**	**92**
Confidence in achieving career goals	**2**	**6**	**5**	**13**	**85**
Confidence in career choice	**2**	**6**	**5**	**13**	**85**
Confidence in career services	2	6	5	13	**85**
School Enjoyment	5	1	7	13	**62**
Parental Involvement	5	6	2	13	**62**
Peer Interaction	3	6	3	12	**75**
Subject specific drop-out rate	2	0	2	4	**50**
Suitability of subject to desired career	2	0	3	5	**60**
Employability in desired field	1	1	3	5	**80**
Subject enjoyment	1	1	3	5	**80**
SEN specific Employability	5	5	4	14	**64**
work-related skills	**2**	**4**	**9**	**15**	**87**
probability of paid employment	3	7	5	15	**80**
probability of unpaid employment	**1**	**8**	**6**	**15**	**94**
confidence in finding employment	3	7	5	15	**80**
confidence in personal skills	**2**	**7**	**6**	**15**	**87**
probability of financial independence	5	7	2	14	**64**
probability of independent living	4	6	5	15	**74**
happiness	**0**	**8**	**7**	**15**	**100**
positive behaviour	**2**	**6**	**7**	**15**	**87**
involvement in community	**0**	**8**	**7**	**15**	**100**
interaction with peers	**2**	**6**	**7**	**15**	**87**
family life	3	9	3	15	**80**
communication skills	**2**	**6**	**7**	**15**	**87**

There is a clear picture of what the impact is and it can be tracked going forwards and repeated annually in conjunction with destination data.

Other Case studies – snapshot of other Special schools working with Talentino

Charlton Park Academy is a large Special School in Greenwich. Since October 2013, they have run an in school Enterprise business – *Munchies* - based around food enabling sixth formers with Severe learning difficulties to develop skills which could improve the possibility of external work experience which could lead to supported employment, improve the quality of independent living either at home or in residential care.
Evaluation has shown improved confidence in students, improved communication, more positive behaviours, and increased aspirations of both students and their families. The Enterprise business continues to run making a weekly profit which provides their opportunities for students.

Northfield is an EBD school in Oxford that has been running the programme for three years. They have seen an engagement with students who are hard to reach and raised aspirations which have resulted in less students becoming NEET after leaving school. The school has also saved money because they have been trained to deliver the programme.

Hill House is a small residential school in Dorset for young people with severe Autism and associated challenging behaviours. Their staff have become the first cohort of formally qualified Early Career Coaches. They have seen improvements in the behaviour and communication and motivation of students. They have also created Enterprises and engaged local employers.

Videos of both Brookfields Special School and Charlton Park Academy '*Munchies*' can be found on www.talentinocareers.co.uk

A Careers policy that is inclusive and respects Diversity will need to make reference to and provision for meeting those additional requirements as well as identifying what remains the same with respect to terms of reference.

The aspects which are different are different for young people in Special Schools with learning difficulties will have ramifications for:

- Making the point that many of the same terms of reference are the same as for mainstream but that this is not enough to ensure young people with learning difficulties will enjoy the same career outcomes
- Appreciation and valuing all the different levels of careers outcomes for young people with a range of learning difficulties
- Appreciation and valuing the learning style of a young person with a learning difficulty will require a different career development programme provision
- Promoting the valuable difference young people with learning difficulties can make to employers businesses
- Identifying the Career Development Value chain as a model for early engagement for all key stakeholder groups
- Additional CPD for staff in Special Schools who will need additional training to deliver a cohesive career development programme
- Employer training (possibly via the Careers and Enterprise Company EA network?) to increase confidence, engagement, access to selection processes
- Provision for parent/family encouragement
- Ensuring that Job Coaches and supported employment provision is available locally across England utilising ‘excellent ‘ organisations e.g. BASE
- Local providers of supported internships and accessible Apprenticeships are involved early on in schools
- Special Schools have an opportunity to showcase best practise and help other schools to deliver impactful career development programmes
- Impact data is collated and reported on as well as destinations data

Recommendations

1. There is no collective visibility of early career development including work experience, employer engagement, employer engagement and employment related outcomes in Special Schools in the same way that there is for mainstream schools

Recommendation One – Commission research to gain visibility at a national level of the early career development experiences of young people with learning difficulties in Special Schools

2. There is no visibility of what 'good' looks like in terms of early career development for young people with learning difficulties in Special Schools

Recommendation Two – As part of the research in recommendation one, gain an insight at a national level of what 'good' looks like tin existing programmes and employer engagement for young people with learning difficulties in Special Schools

3. There is no mention of the early career development needs of young people with learning difficulties in Special Schools against the Gatsby benchmarks or the Lord Young Enterprise Passport ideology

Recommendation Three – Ensure that within the new Careers Policy this group is included explicitly and that they can be included in exactly the same way but the delivery methodology of a careers programme will be different and that this is relevant, acceptable and of equal value

4. There is no mention of the early career goals of young people with learning difficulties in Special Schools against the Gatsby benchmarks or the Lord Young Enterprise Passport ideology

Recommendation Four – following on from this inclusion to make the point overtly that the Career goals may be different and articulated at three levels but have equal value to the career goals of more able young people

5. The Careers and Enterprise Company does not have an overt mandate for Special Schools. Their inclusion in the first wave of employer engagement varies from LEP to LEP.

Recommendation Five – Mandate the Careers and Enterprise training so that Special Schools are overtly included, the Enterprise Coordinators and Enterprise Advisers are trained to understand the contribution employers can make to a range of career development needs of a diverse group of young people.

6. With regards to the current funding provided for career development for young people with disabilities or disadvantage, the statutory responsibility resides with Local Authorities who will approach this differently in terms of the amounts spent and what it will be spent on

Recommendation 6 – Find out what the level of spending is in different Local Authorities, what the activities are which they are supporting and what impact measurement is taking place. There may be further recommendations to divert the funding directly into schools to make the best choice and possibly engage in the new careers clusters and benefit from economy of scale as many Special Schools are very small

7. Young people with learning difficulties need additional early career development support through the provision of job coaches and supported employment providers whilst still at school. The outcome of this is to give them the greatest possibility of paid employment after school. This needs to be funded and is a particular requirement of early career development in Special Schools which does not exist in the mainstream sector. A potential funding model from a combined Department (Education, DWP, and Health) approach could be considered.

Recommendation 7 – Carry out a cost (Supported employment and Job Coaching) benefit (reduction in benefits and contribution in tax returns)
analysis in terms of securing Job coaching and Supported employment provision for all Special Schools in England in conjunction with specialist organisations like BASE and leading employers who are already committed to this cohort.

Conclusion

Creating better life outcomes – educational, social, personal and economic - for the 103,970 young people aged between 13 and 18 in Special Schools in England today is worth it at every level, for the individual, their family, the employers and the public purse.

Many of the Government's aspirations to improve the career development experience of young people in the mainstream in England apply equally to these young people.

There are some differences but these can be incorporated by educating the careers industry and helping Special Schools to deliver careers education excellence locally. Employers can be encouraged and supported to engage benefiting their customers and their organisations as research shows.

Understanding how these young people can achieve their full career potential, however that is described, needs better understanding by surfacing existing best practise, involving the experts and supporting equality of opportunity for all these young people acknowledging their potential in statute has to be the right thing to do.

When I started Talentino I was inspired by Dave Barker of the National Valuing Families Forum who said 'We believe in the presumption of paid work for young people with learning difficulties' – do you?

Jenny Connick Founder Talentino! **2nd May 2016**