

# Visit our Schools and Colleges

A national week to  
celebrate education  
and employers  
working together



The week celebrates the work schools, colleges and employers are doing in partnership. We encourage employers of all sizes and sectors to accept an invitation from local head teachers and principals to visit them and find out more about education today. We encourage schools, colleges and employers to look for sustainable opportunities for working together to make a difference to young people.

## Overview

**Before the visit:** By way of preparation, it may be helpful to think about questions like these:

**If you are a school:** What is your vision for the school? Where do your students go after leaving – FE, HE, employment? What are your most pressing priorities and challenges? What are you currently doing with employers? What other areas could involve employers? (see National Framework on page 3). What will children, young people and teachers get from working with employers? For more information: [www.teachers-guide.org](http://www.teachers-guide.org)

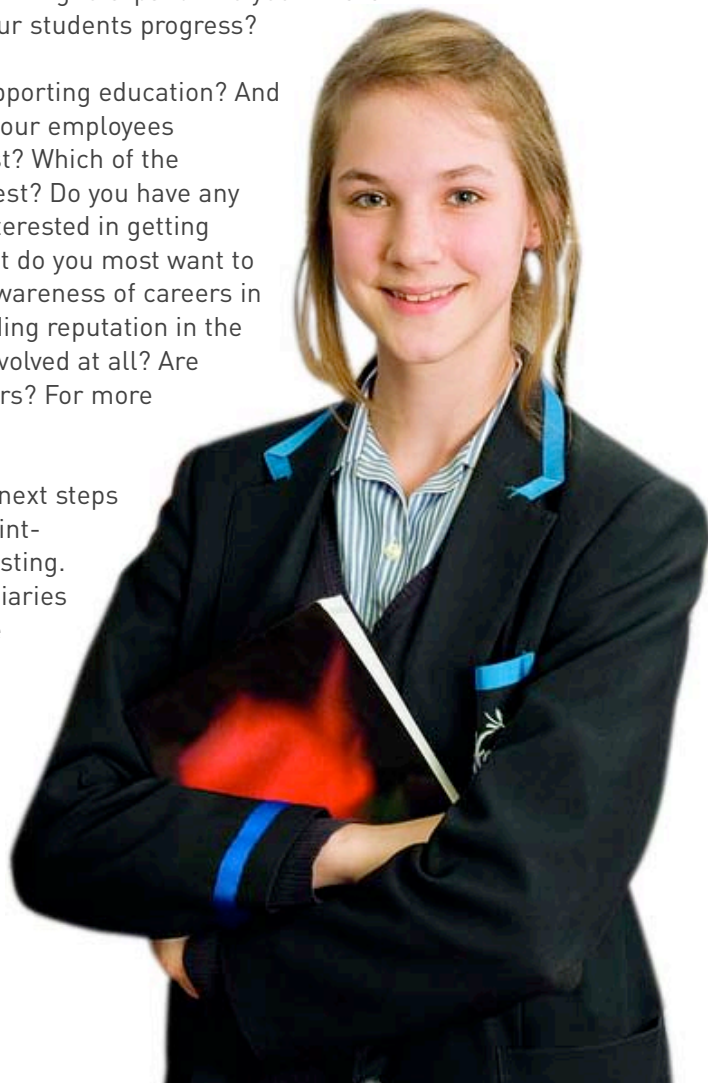
**If you are a college:** What employer links do you already have? Which curriculum areas would most benefit from more employer engagement? Which occupational sectors are you planning to expand? Do your A level students currently participate in work experience? Where do your students progress?

**If you are an employer/business:** In what ways are you now supporting education? And what is the most practical way you can do so in the future? Do your employees volunteer in schools and colleges? Have they done so in the past? Which of the activities listed in the National Framework are of greatest interest? Do you have any partner organisations, supply chains or clients that might be interested in getting involved? What has most impressed / surprised you today? What do you most want to get out of working with schools? Are you interested in raising awareness of careers in your sector, developing staff, improving staff motivation or building reputation in the community? What do you think of academies? Have you been involved at all? Are your managers benefiting from being school or college governors? For more information: [www.employers-guide.org](http://www.employers-guide.org)

**After the visit:** It's over to you – stay in touch to make sure any next steps agreed are followed through and keep an eye out for possible joint-projects or information that your new contacts might find interesting. Find out more about the things that national and local intermediaries (Education Business Partnership Organisations) can do to make partnership easy.

### January 2011

This is the first campaign of its type and we're keen to learn how to do it even better next time. We'll be interested in your experience of the visit. Shortly after the week, we will be following up very briefly with everyone who has taken part and again in January/February to find out what happened next. We'll feed the results into a **major education summit** bringing together senior people from the worlds of employment, education and government planned for early summer 2011.





# A possible structure for your visit

## Arriving at the school or college

It's up to the head teacher or principal how the visit is run. Typically, visits will start with a welcome from the school or college leader, possibly over coffee, followed by a short tour. Visiting a classroom or two will help visitors get a feel for the place. Students and teachers who have benefited themselves from working with employers in the past might be especially well placed to accompany visiting employers. If there's a student council, they might want to share their ideas too.

## The meeting itself

At the heart of every visit will be an open and practical conversation to explore how education works today and where employers might play a role. Please set aside up to one hour for this part of the visit. As well as visiting employers, participants might include representatives from our local partners (members of the Institute for Education Business Excellence) who have kindly volunteered to arrange visits. During the meeting, it could be useful to cover the following topics:

- **Introduction** – who's here and what do they do
- **History and background** – on each side, does either party have experience of education-employer partnerships? What kind of school are you e.g. state maintained, academy, faith, grammar?
- **Priorities and strengths on each side** – an excellent starting point is the National Framework of activities as these will be areas participants are likely to have in mind before the visit
- **Areas of overlap** – where's the best place to start? Which activities will have the biggest impact on the success of the school, college and students? Which activities are easiest for employers to support and are of greatest benefit to their employees?
- **Partnership working** – if you've successfully identified potential areas for working together, what would be a reasonable process for taking things forward? What are the next steps and who will be responsible for making them happen?

Many will decide on at least one practical action and fix to meet again before Christmas. Even if there are no immediate activities to do together, plan to keep in touch, perhaps through the local partner, because new projects might come up or you might find other colleagues have inspiration for collaboration.

## After the meeting

While at the school or college, it's a great opportunity for a visitor to get involved. For example some schools / colleges are considering a 10-15 minute careers Q&A with interested students or one or two mock interviews with individual students based around general competencies like team-working and taking the initiative. Activities might also be tailored to existing activities taking place. If you have ideas for what might work in a short visit, share them with the team which is arranging your visit.





# National Framework of partnership activities

There are dozens of activities that employers and schools/colleges do together. The National Framework is a helpful starting point as it is endorsed by the leading national schools, colleges, classroom teacher and employers associations.

## Supporting the Curriculum including:

- **Literacy and numeracy** – volunteers working with younger pupils often on a one-to-one basis
- **Supporting STEM subjects** – scientists and other industry professionals exciting and informing young people about science, technology, engineering and maths
- **Supporting modern foreign languages** – staff from a wide range of enterprises supporting the teaching and demonstrating the relevance of languages
- **Diploma support** – employers working closely with schools and colleges to support teaching of the employer-designed sector-specific 14-19 Diplomas
- **Developing learning materials** – bringing a real-world flavour to classroom examples or real-life materials

## Enterprise and employability skills including:

- **Work experience** – a short unpaid placement typically of one to two weeks in schools and often longer in colleges
- **Workplace visits** – employers hosting visits to their premises
- **Classroom talks to students** – to small groups of students and whole classes
- **Mentoring** – one-to-one, group or e-mentoring of young people
- **Supporting enterprise and employability activities** – for instance, being an adviser, problem setter or a coach, as in a 'Dragon's Den' style competition
- **Supporting information, advice and guidance/careers** – helping young people to make the best decisions about their futures including careers days, mock interviews, CV workshops
- **Young Apprenticeships** – a sector-specific qualification for 14-19 year olds taught by some schools and colleges
- **Supporting projects** – advising and coaching 14-19 year olds on specific projects
- **Online support** – emailing to answer questions or sharing ideas

## Leadership and Governance including:

- **Being a school or college governor** – encouraging and supporting staff to volunteer to serve on a board of governors
- **Providing expert help to schools and colleges** – for instance, providing advice on procurement, marketing, IT, management, finance, facilities or programme development
- **Offering professional development for teachers and leaders** – such as supporting teaching staff, partnering with school leaders, work shadowing to help teachers and tutors keep their professional knowledge fresh
- **Some employers also play an active role in supporting schools to develop specialisms or become academies**



## What the evidence says

**Overwhelmingly schools and colleges want employers to be more closely involved in the education of children and young people:** 87% of senior school leaders want to work more closely with employers; just 1% of classroom teachers think their schools work too closely with employers; 68% of school leaders think that employer engagement helps young people do better in exams; Ofsted tells us that the best examples of employer engagement in education “significantly enhance the learning and enthusiasm” of pupils for their subject of study.

**Young people enjoy, value and benefit from working with employers:** 90% of young people say they understand better why education matters and plan to work harder at school, after work experience; 95% of young people want employers to be more involved in careers advice at school; 75% of young people agree that, after completing work experience, they were clearer about what they want to do in their future education and career.

**Benefits for employers:** Employers gain real benefits from volunteering with schools and colleges in recruiting, developing and motivating staff, and in building corporate reputation. The OECD and EU agree that closer links between education and work can reduce youth unemployment. Employers who have never worked with schools or colleges before think that it's far more difficult than it actually is.

For the full references and for more evidence in this area, please visit [www.educationandemployers.org/research.aspx](http://www.educationandemployers.org/research.aspx) and select *What is to be gained*.

## Supporters of Visit our Schools and Colleges

This campaign has been organised by the charity, The Education and Employers Taskforce through the commitment and support of its trustees, partners and sponsors, in particular Deloitte and Experian.



**The Taskforce vision is that every school and college has an effective partnership with employers.** To keep in touch with developments please register for the Taskforce News e-bulletin by emailing [carol.glover@educationandemployers.org](mailto:carol.glover@educationandemployers.org) with Registration in the subject line.

The Taskforce is an independent charity – number 1130760