



Department
for Work &
Pensions

THE RT HON PAT MCFADDEN MP
Secretary of State for Work & Pensions

Caxton House
6-12 Tothill Street
London, SW1H 9NA

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Debbie Abrahams MP
Work and Pension Select Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear Debbie,

YOUTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Government's number one mission is to grow the economy and raise living standards across the UK. However, almost one million young people across the UK are not in education, employment, or training (NEET). That is why our manifesto set out the ambition to transform young people's prospects by ensuring every one of them has the chance to earn and learn through a Youth Guarantee.

Today, I'm updating you on the next phase of delivering that promise and creating brighter futures for young people across Great Britain.

We have already taken the first steps by committing to a Youth Guarantee, ensuring that all 16-24-year-olds in Great Britain can access support to find work, training, or an apprenticeship. We have implemented Youth Guarantee Trailblazers in England, increased funding to almost double our Youth Hubs across Great Britain, and we recently launched an Independent Report into Young People and Work, led by Alan Milburn, to identify potential areas for reform to better support young people with health conditions and disabilities.

We are now going further through an expansion of the Youth Guarantee. This expansion is backed by an £820 million investment over the Spending Review period to reach almost 900,000 young people. This will include Youth Hubs in every area in Great Britain and a new Youth Guarantee Gateway, offering a dedicated session and follow-up support to 16-24-year-olds on Universal Credit. This investment will also create around 300,000 additional opportunities to gain workplace experience and training and provide guaranteed jobs to around 55,000 young people aged 18-21.

We know young people need support quickly and that is why we are announcing we will begin delivery of the Jobs Guarantee in six areas from spring 2026. Delivering the first jobs for young people in: Birmingham & Solihull, the East Midlands, Greater Manchester, Hertfordshire & Essex, Central & East Scotland, Southwest & Southeast Wales. We are going first in these six areas, but this will be followed by national roll-out of the Jobs Guarantee across GB from autumn 2026. We are also announcing measures to support our ambition for 50,000 more young people in England to access apprenticeships through the Growth and Skills Levy, backed by £725 million of additional funding.

We are fully funding apprenticeship training for all eligible 16-24-year-olds in small and medium-sized businesses, removing the cost barrier for employers and opening up more opportunities for young people. The measures will also introduce greater flexibility and new short courses to meet the needs of a modern workforce. Further, we are expanding foundation apprenticeships into wider sectors where young people are traditionally recruited, such as hospitality and retail.

As part of the next phase of the Growth and Skills Levy reforms, we will make available £140m to pilot new approaches to better connect young people aged 16–24, especially those who are NEET, to local apprenticeship opportunities. This will test different ways of helping and supporting more young people to access apprenticeships. We will provide further details about the pilot in the new year.

Alongside this, the Department for Education's Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper, published earlier this autumn, set out our comprehensive NEET prevention package, which includes measures to support smooth transitions for young people into post-16 education, and then stay on and succeed until at least age 18. We will work with schools in transitions, automatic FE placements for young people, improved data collection and sharing to identify those at risk of becoming NEET, and an enhanced role for Strategic Authorities in local oversight and accountability. These measures will be crucial in helping to stem the flow of young people who require employment support further down the line. Today's announcement of additional investment strengthens this package, allowing us to go further to improve data sharing, develop new Risk of NEET Indicator tools backed by artificial intelligence, provide support for monitoring attendance in further education, and give targeted help for young people at particular risk of becoming NEET to secure work experience, focused on pupils in state-funded Alternative Provision settings.

Taken together, these measures show the Government's commitment to backing young people, transforming lives, driving the economy and ensuring background is no barrier to success. Delivered in partnership with local government and devolved authorities, they will ensure no young person falls through the cracks.

I thank you for your work in supporting these measures.

Best wishes,



The Rt Hon Pat McFadden MP

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions