

Education and Lifelong Learning Committee

Date: 10th November 2004

Title: Extending Entitlement Pilot Evaluation and Update

Purpose

For the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee to receive a presentation from the research team from Interactive Feedback Ltd. The team will give a presentation on the findings of the pilot study they have recently completed on the evaluation of Extending Entitlement. The study was undertaken in order to test the methodology prior to undertaking a full scale evaluation and establish an indicative baseline from which a full baseline and future progress against it can be measured. The research team will outline the main findings from the pilot study and issues it raises.

Following the presentation Officials will then provide an update on how some of the issues raised are being taken forward with particular reference to the next stage in the evaluation programme and taking forward the participation agenda. There will be opportunity for Committee Members to comment/ask questions.

Summary / Recommendations

The presentation will cover the methodology used to undertake the study and highlight some of the key issues that will need to be addressed in a longer term evaluation. The study has considered;

- current reported levels of access to entitlements
- the risk and protective factors which either facilitate or impede the access of young people to the ten entitlements

The findings are summarised in young person friendly format at Annex 1 (Young Persons Summary Report) and these should be noted by the Committee.

Background

Extending Entitlement is a flagship Welsh Assembly Government strategic policy that aims to ensure that all young people in Wales aged 11-25 have access to a universal basic entitlement to a broad range

of services – attached at Annex 2. It makes explicit the need to structure support for young people around 10 key entitlements. In turn this will promote their individual attainment and development, enhance their self-esteem and their capacity to participate in the labour market, society as a whole and the lives of their community both now and in the future.

The pilot study for evaluating Extending Entitlement has been undertaken during the last year. The study aimed to test a particular methodological approach to collecting data, provide an indicative snapshot of current levels of access and factors that influence them and identify any issues that need to be taken into account in a full scale evaluation. This study provides the first indication of the levels of access to the 10 entitlements experienced by young people.

The study consisted of a survey of young people split into two groups based on age (11-18 and 19-25) and survey with follow up interviews with a small sample of members of Young Peoples Partnerships (YPPs) which are the local vehicle taking forward the Extending Entitlement agenda).

The study has delivered a number of products including;

- A review of literature relating to the area
- A full final report of the findings of the study
- A methodology report
- Reports back to the school based sample that participated in the study
- A report back to YPPs on findings
- A plain English summary report
- A young person friendly summary report

As a pilot study the project has been undertaken pragmatically. As a result, the basis of selecting the sample and the response achieved are not statistically robust. The difficulties experienced with gaining a sample for the 18+ age range indicate that that different methods will be required to capture this information in the future. Therefore the findings from the study cannot be claimed to be representative of all young people in Wales at this stage although it does provide an indicative ‘snapshot.’

In addition to the methodological issues identified the study has highlighted a number of areas where lower access to entitlements are being reported by young people e.g. participation in decision making.

Despite the constraints identified above, the pilot study has successfully identified a number of key methodological issues that need to be addressed in the planned longer-term evaluative study of Extending Entitlement. On the basis of these findings a longer-term evaluative model has been designed that has a number of data collection points over a ten-year period in the form of a cross-sectional study. This will make it possible to clearly identify changes in levels of access to entitlements, factors which influence access and changes in service provision that can be used to influence the direction of and priorities of the policy initiative.

Conclusion

The study has provided a first indication of young peoples access to each entitlement and how levels of access vary between entitlements, thus identifying areas of focus for the future. It demonstrates that the risk and protective factor model is useful in identifying factors which influence levels of access to entitlements and the factors which exert most influence.

On the basis of this study, work is currently being developed to take forward a number of the areas identified including;

- expanding opportunities for young people to participate in decisions that affect them
- developing proactive approaches to promote levels of access to entitlements and keep in touch with the special interest groups and those who experience higher level of problems (who are more likely to experience lower levels of access to entitlements).

These areas have recently formed the basis of two successful applications for Objective 1 and 3 European Social Fund projects over a three-year period.

Compliance

There are no issues of regularity or propriety arising from this paper

Financial Implications

There are no additional financial implications arising from this presentation. Resources for taking forward the next stage in the evaluation programme will be found from within existing programme resources.

Cross Cutting Themes

The Extending Entitlement agenda is itself cross cutting in nature. Each Young People's Partnership (YPP) is made up of a range of statutory and voluntary sector service providers with a responsibility for delivering services to young people at a local level. This is the main mechanism for determining local services to address this agenda. All YPPs in Wales have received a summary report of the study and will link into the next stages in the evaluation.

Action for Subject Committee

No action required

Name: Jane Davidson AM

Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

Contact Point: Marcus Hill, Youth and Pupil Participation Division, tel: 5806

Jane Davidson AM

Annex 1

Extending Entitlement Evaluation

EVALUATING EXTENDING ENTITLEMENT:

YOUNG PERSON SUMMARY

SEPTEMBER 2004

Extending Entitlement: What is it?

In Wales every young person has an entitlement to:

- education and preparation for employment including;
- the development of skills to enable them to form relationships and take part in community life;
- be an active citizen and participate in volunteering;
- expect good quality services and facilities which are shaped to meet their needs including;
- independent support and guidance from careers, student support and counselling services;
- advice about health, housing and other issues in a place that is welcoming and easy to reach
- confidential personal support and advice when they need it;
- things to do and places to go that are safe and friendly;
- play sport, participate in arts and drama, experience outdoor pursuits or make music; to develop talents and widen horizons;
- the right to be consulted, to participate in decision-making and to be heard, on issues which concern them or affect their lives.

The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) feels that if these entitlements are met so will opportunity and choice for all young people in Wales aged between 11-25 years.

How will it be done?

The responsibility for making this happen rests with everyone but WAG has given the lead to the Young Peoples Partnership (YPPs). Based on local authority areas the YPP involves all the agencies whose

policies and actions effect young people's lives.

Evaluating Extending Entitlement

To help bring this about the Welsh Assembly Government's Youth and Pupil Participation Division commissioned research to ask YPPs in Wales what the main issues are about making it happen.

Young people across Wales were asked to complete questionnaires about the entitlements and how they access them. Questions were also asked about the things happening in their lives that made it easier or more difficult to access the entitlements. In total 3,226 young people of school age took part across Wales, with 72% of them coming from years 7-9, 52% were male, 48% were female.

The Results

Young People's Partnership

From the 6 YPP areas involved:

- most members surveyed thought that the aims of EXTENDING ENTITLEMENT were clear and there was a positive working relationship between the Assembly and the YPP.
- most members, over 80%, were familiar with the objectives of EXTENDING ENTITLEMENT and the entitlements themselves.
- nearly all believed that all the entitlements deserved to be part of the policy but that some were more important than others. Some were felt easier to achieve than others.
- many felt that young people were not aware of their entitlements.
- the biggest problems were: lack of time; lack of money and poor co-operation between the people who are needed to make it happen.
- most felt that things were improving and that by 2007 EXTENDING ENTITLEMENT would make a positive improvement to young people's lives.

Young People and Extending Entitlement

The computer based questionnaire survey collected two main types of information:

- young people's opinions of access to the ten entitlements
- what young people said were the good and bad.

Access to Entitlements

The majority of young people, 64%, felt they had moderate levels of access, 28% high levels of access, while 8% felt they had poor access to entitlements.

- Education - about 80% of young people said they had good skill levels in reading, writing and numeracy. 69% of young people reported that education met "quite a lot" of their needs or "to the maximum".
- Health – just over half of young people felt it was "easy" or "very easy" to get health information. Only one-third said they had access to confidential personal support and advice.
- Careers – 40% of young people felt they had good advice and guidance.
- Leisure and Recreation – 84% reported regular involvement in sport but fewer than half had access to artistic activity and under a third to musical activities.

Over half of young people questioned said there was a lack of good leisure activities to participate in resulting in 46% saying they often just hang around the streets.

40% said they had good opportunity to be active citizens or participate in volunteering activities.

- Consultation and Participation – while 43% of young people said they had opportunity to make choices and be independent only 22% of young people felt that they were consulted in a meaningful way about things that affect them. This was the lowest recorded positive response for 10 entitlements.

Positive and Negative Influences Affecting the Level of Access to Entitlements

Young People completing the inter-active questionnaire were asked to state their opinion about a range of issues. These included:

- Education
- Family and friends
- Personal and individual factors
- Lifestyle
- neighbourhood

This was to try and identify things that might have an influence on the ability of young people to take up their entitlements.

For example, most young people felt that school rules were clear. However, if rules were broken two-thirds stated they were not convinced that everyone would be treated the same way and just over a quarter felt they were not consulted or involved in the process of education. Other issues such as, bullying, dislike of school, feeling lonely or sad also affected the quality of education.

The most frequently reported negative issues were:

- a lack of involvement in positive leisure facilities leaving them hanging around the streets
- worries about the future

- dislike of school
- worries about crime in their neighbourhood and feeling unsafe
- concern about drugs and their availability

From a positive point:

- Overwhelmingly young people felt supported in their families and involved in decision taking.
- Most young people felt involved with where they lived even if they did not feel their needs were catered for.

Overall, those young people who reported lower levels of problems within each of the areas of their lives reported higher levels of access to entitlements.

These results are now being fed back to schools and organisations which participated in the pilot study so they can be used to inform future developments.

Annex 2

10 Entitlements for Young People

Every young person in Wales has a basic entitlement to:

- education, training and work experience – tailored to their needs;
- basic skills which open doors to a full life and promote social inclusion;
- a wide and varied range of opportunities to participate in volunteering and active citizenship;
- high quality, responsive, and accessible services and facilities ;
- independent, specialist careers advice and guidance and student support and counselling services;
- personal support and advice –where and when needed and in appropriate formats –with clear ground rules on confidentiality;
- advice on health, housing benefits and other issues provided in accessible and welcoming settings;
- recreational and social opportunities in a safe and accessible environment;
- sporting, artistic, musical and outdoor experiences to develop talents, broaden horizons and promote rounded perspectives including both national and international contexts;
- the right to be consulted, to participate in decision-making, and to be heard, on all matters which concern them or have an impact on their lives

in an environment where there is :

- a positive focus on achievement overall and what young people have to contribute;
- a focus on building young people’s capacity to become independent, make choices, and participate in the democratic process; and
- celebration of young people’s successes.