

CAREERS GUIDANCE: GUARANTEED

SUMMARY REPORT OF ONLINE SURVEY

Prepared for the Association of Colleges

Funded by The Skills Show

January 2014



Contents

Summary	3
Key Findings	4
Methodology	12

Summary

While children are aspirational in their career choices and generally positive in their outlook, they require further advice and help to understand the job market.

Children often have a clear idea of what job they would like to do in the future but these jobs are typically 'traditional' and perhaps reflect a lack of awareness of the reality and breadth of the current job market. Indeed, one in five children said they do not feel informed about what jobs are available. This is unsurprising given the rapid pace of change in the UK jobs market. The top 10 jobs in 2010 did not exist in 2004 and over the last decade there have been 12 jobs created in the knowledge industries for every one job created elsewhere.¹

As might be expected, parents and teachers are critical in informing children's career choices, as these are the people children will most commonly approach for advice. Teachers and careers advisers become more important for those in Years 10 and 11. Despite many knowing what job they want to do, only two-thirds of children were positive about their future job options and six in ten believed they could do any job they wanted. As they get older, children's likelihood to agree with these statements declines, suggesting they feel more limited in their career options as they approach the end of Key Stage 4.

Almost all pupils expect to enter education or employment after finishing school. Just over half expected to go to university and a similar proportion expected to go to college after school. Younger pupils were no more or less likely to expect to enter university or college.

This report is built on the results of stage one of FreshMinds' research for the Association of Colleges, funded by The Skills Show, and consisted of an online survey of 2,001 pupils aged 11 to 16 in schools across the country and was well balanced between 'older' and 'younger' pupils and male and female pupils.

¹ Great Britain. Department for Children, Schools and Families (2009) Quality, Choice and Aspiration: A strategy for young people's information, advice and guidance, October 2009, See more at: <https://www.nationalstemcentre.org.uk/res/documents/page/IAG-Report-v2.pdf>

	Younger (11-13 years old)	Older (14-16 years old)	Year 7 (11-12 years old)	Year 8 (12-13 years old)	Year 10 (14-15 years old)	Year 11 (15-16 years old)
Percentage of sample	50%	50%	24%	26%	22%	27%
Count	1,001	1,000	484	517	450	550
	Male	Female	Male Younger	Male Older	Female Younger	Female Older
Percentage of sample	45%	55%	23%	22%	27%	28%
Count	905	1,096	462	443	539	557

In addition, the number of pupils receiving free school meals (FSMs) was roughly in line with the national average. Please see section 5 'Background and Methodology' for further information.

1 Most children know what kind of job they want and are fairly traditional in their aspirations

Almost three-quarters of children surveyed (72%) agreed they 'know what kind of job I want to do in the future'. Though agreement was high overall, children receiving free school meals (FSM) were significantly more likely to agree (77%) than non-FSM (71%) children, with 80% of Year 10 and 11 children on FSM agreeing with the statements. While agreement overall was high, more than one in five children (22%) 'don't know' what job they want to do in the future.

Children aspired to a wide range of jobs in a variety of sectors with teachers and doctors being the most common jobs.

Responses to the question "What job would you most like to do in the future?"

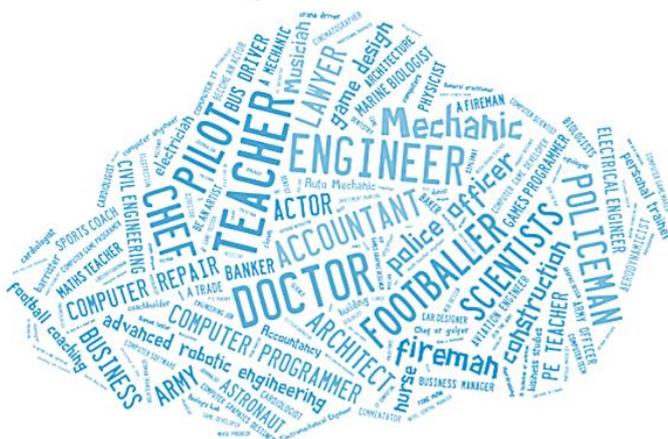
Boys

Girls

Years 7 and 8

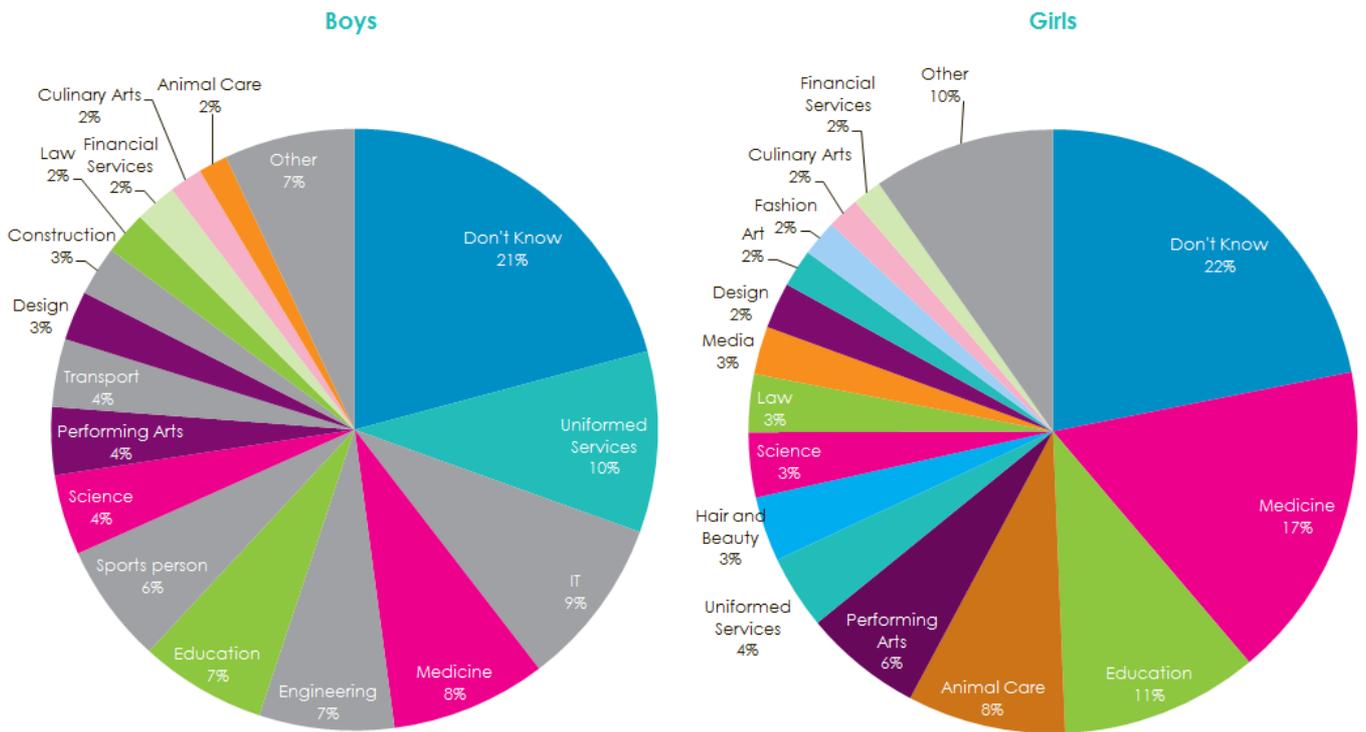


Years 10 and 11



However, children did tend to conform to gender norms and were relatively traditional in their preferences. Although boys and girls were equally likely not to know what they wanted to do in the future, the top three sectors for boys were uniformed services, IT and medicine; while for girls medicine, education, and animal care were the top three sectors.

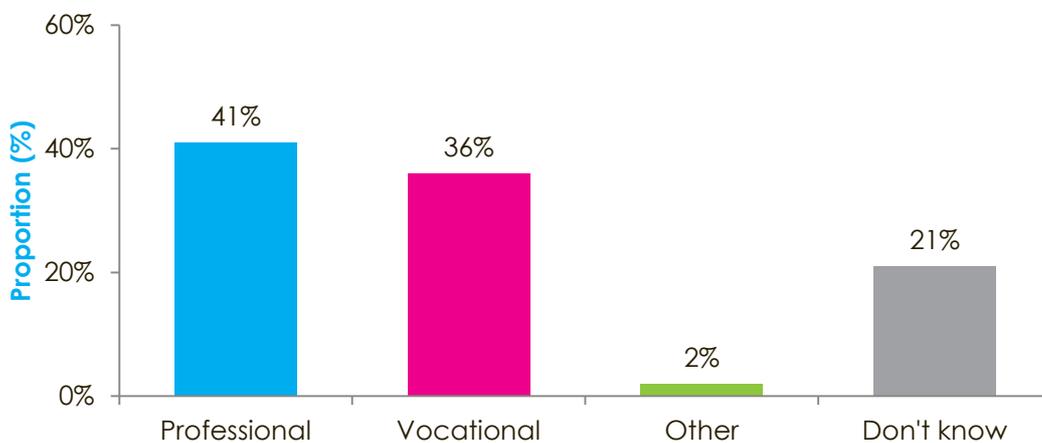
Future job by gender and sector



When grouped together the children were more likely to say they wanted a 'professional' job (41%) than a 'vocational' job (36%). These figures remain steady across different age groups, except in Year 11 where there is a further significant shift away from vocational jobs towards professional jobs (29% vs 47% respectively).

Boys (43%) were more likely than girls (29%) to aspire to a vocational job while girls were more likely to look for a professional role (47% compared to 34% of boys). Girls (19%) were more likely than boys (12%) to look for a 'creative' role (for example, artists and musicians), with jobs in 'creative sectors' (for example, fashion and design) as a whole appealing to fewer than one in five pupils (16%).

Types of jobs that children wanted

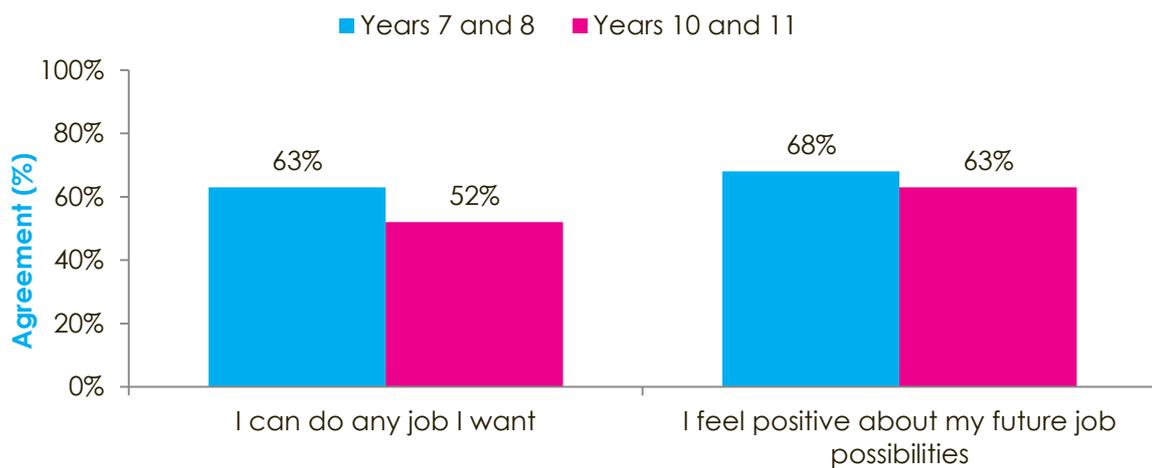


It appears that there is a degree of dissonance between the aspirations of children and the current jobs market. Part of our analysis divided the jobs children wanted to do into '1984 jobs' (those which would have been available and common place in the 1980s, for example nursing or teaching) and '2014 jobs' (jobs in emerging sectors, such as low carbon industry, which would have not been available or common in the 1980s). Of the jobs children selected only 5% could be described as '2014 job'. This 5% were all in IT or technology-related areas.

2 Older children are more pessimistic and less confident about their future careers

Despite knowing what kind of job they wanted to do, [around two-thirds \(65%\) of children were 'positive about their future job options'](#) and [six in ten \(58%\) believe they 'can do any job they want'](#). But it appears that [as children get older they become more pessimistic about their future job prospects](#). Agreement with the statement 'I can do any job I want' declined from 67% of Year 7s to 50% of Year 11s. Children in Year 10 and 11 were also far more likely to actively disagree with the statement than those in years 7 and 8 (27% vs 17% disagreeing respectively), with Year 10 and 11 girls the most pessimistic of all those surveyed (30% disagree).

Agreement with statements by year group of student



A similar pattern can be seen for agreement with the statement 'I feel positive about my future job possibilities'. Year 10 and 11 children (63%) were significantly less likely than children in Years 7 and 8 (68%) to agree, with girls in Years 10 and 11 again being the least likely of all groups to agree (60%), and the most likely to actively disagree (17%).

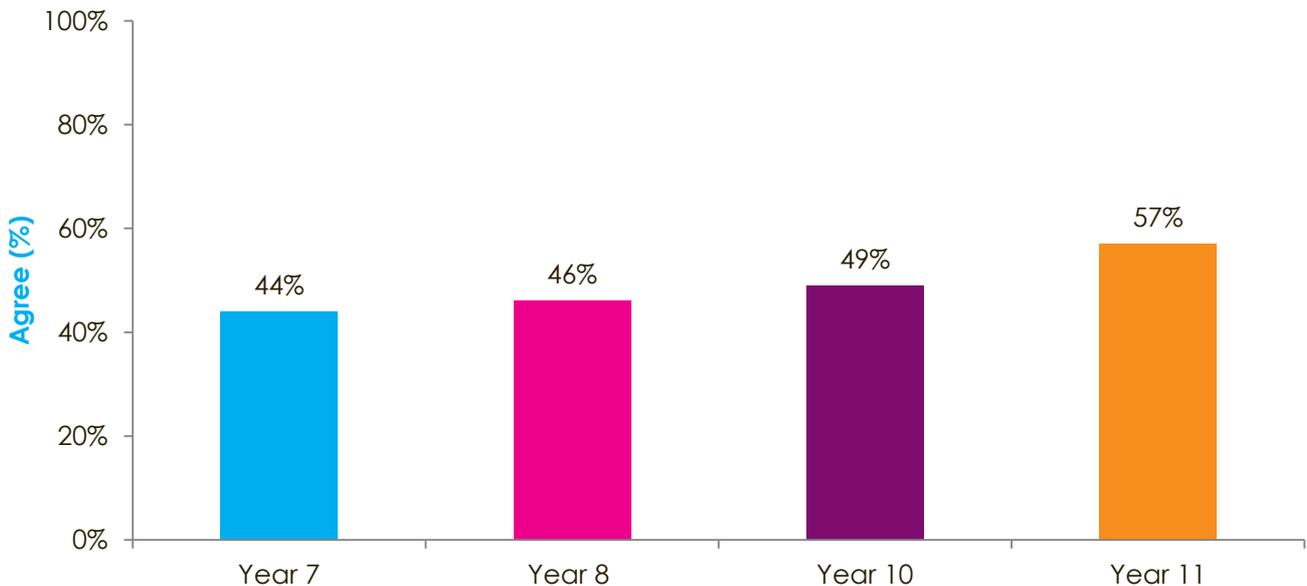
Children who were not on free school meals saw the greatest decline in agreement with the statement. Of these children only 50% of children in Year 10 and 11, compared to 64% of children in Years 7 and 8, agreed that 'they can do any job they want'. [Children receiving free school meals were more optimistic, with 63% of children in Year 7 and 8 and 60% of children in Year 10 and 11, agreeing.](#) The difference between children receiving free school meals and those not receiving free school meals may be the result of children receiving free school meals benefiting from additional support from their schools.

3 Parents and teachers are the most common source of careers advice

Even though two-thirds (67%) of children agree that they are 'getting the support they need to make decisions about their future', **only half (49%) 'feel well-informed about what jobs are available'**. In fact, 21% of children disagreed with the latter statement, suggesting one in five children do not feel informed about what jobs are available.

The number of children agreeing they 'feel well-informed about what jobs are available' differs significantly with the age of the child. Pupils in Year 11 are the most likely to describe themselves as 'well-informed', although this still accounts for fewer than six in ten (57%) of this age group. These differences by age are reflected in the patterns and sources of information used by children at different ages.

Agreement with the statement 'I feel well-informed about what jobs are available'



While most children used a variety of sources of information, **parents/guardians (70%) and teachers (57%) were the most frequently approached source for careers advice**, overall. Professional careers advisers were only used by 27% of those surveyed, with significantly more children relying instead on friends (48%), relatives (42%) or general internet searches (32%) for advice about their future careers.

The information sources children used changed with their age. Around two-thirds (64%) of Year 11 pupils approach a teacher for advice compared with just 50% of Year 7 pupils. Year 11 pupils were substantially more likely to access a careers adviser.

Only 9% of Year 7s had spoken to a careers adviser compared to 49% of Year 11s. However, this still represents less than half a year group (Year 11) accessing a careers adviser at a time when these pupils are in the process of making significant life choices.

Aside from approaching a person (a teacher, parent or careers adviser), [pupils in Years 10 and 11 were more likely \(40%\) than those in Years 7 or 8 \(14%\) to proactively seek out and use 'new media'](#), such as careers information websites, as part of their search. The difference in the behaviour of older pupils reflects the greater provision and the more immediate need for guidance for this age group.

[Children on FSM were far less likely to speak to their parents/guardians](#) (60% compared to 72% of non-FSM children). In addition, they were more likely (38%) to use 'old media', such as the radio or magazines, compared to non-FSM children (27%). These differences may reflect the socio-economic background of the children themselves.

4 Children expect to enter university or college after school

Almost all of the children (97%) surveyed had some expectation of what they would be doing after they left school. Children most commonly expected to go either to university (57%) or college (53%). Just 14% expected to do an apprenticeship, and fewer than one in ten (9%) expected to get a job straight away. Positively, only 2% of children expected to be unemployed when they leave school. Interestingly, there were not significant differences by age: younger children had the same expectations as older ones for what they would do in the future.

There were significant gender differences in what children expected to do when they leave school. Just over half (53%) of boys compared to six in ten girls (60%) plan to go to university, with girls also being more likely (55%) to plan to go to college than boys (51%). The only pathway which boys were significantly more likely than girls to consider was an apprenticeship (17% of boys, compared to 12% of girls).

Children receiving free school meals had different expectations than children not receiving free school meals. Compared to children not receiving free school meals, those receiving free school meals were significantly less likely to expect to go to university (46% compared to 60%) but more likely to consider going to college (58% compared to 52%) or to get a job straight away (13% compared to 8%). However, they were no more likely to expect to be unemployed (2% of both children expected this) and were less likely, though not statistically significantly so, not to know what they would do in the future (2% compared to 4%).

5 Methodology

The Association of Colleges is working closely with The Skills Show on best practice around careers guidance and how The Skills Show activity set (Have a Go, showcasing, collaborative guidance partnerships with colleges at the heart) can be used as an innovative and helpful way forward. AoC is interested in how aspirations and sources of information and influence develop during the time that children are in secondary school, and commissioned FreshMinds to explore:

- / the aspirations of children
- / the sources of influence on these aspirations and how they develop throughout secondary school
- / who influences children's aspirations and how this changes over time
- / where possible, build understanding of what children require from careers advice and to build a picture of what support should be provided for careers advisers

FreshMinds designed a dual stage approach to this research: an online survey and workshops across the country. This document summarises the findings of the online survey, which was designed to understand the people and sources that influence children's decision making, the development of their aspirations and how both aspects change over time.

In total, 2,001 children responded to the survey: 1,001 were 'younger' children (Years 7 (484) and 8 (517)), and 1,000 were 'older' children (Years 10 (450) and 11 (550)). The gender of respondents was well balanced overall - 45% of those surveyed were male, and 55% female - and also within different age groups allowing accurate comparisons to be made both between year groups and across genders.

	Younger (11-13 years old)	Older (14-16 years old)	Year 7 (11-12 years old)	Year 8 (12-13 years old)	Year 10 (14-15 years old)	Year 11 (15-16 years old)
Percentage of sample	50%	50%	24%	26%	22%	27%
Count	1,001	1,000	484	517	450	550
	Male	Female	Male Younger	Male Older	Female Younger	Female Older
Percentage of sample	45%	55%	23%	22%	27%	28%
Count	905	1,096	462	443	539	557

Although we did not specifically set quotas for it, the sample was also roughly nationally representative. While there were slightly more respondents from the South of England, numbers were such that comparisons could be made between pupils living in different regions.

	North East	North West	Yorkshire & Humberside	East of England	East Midlands	West Midlands	South East	South West	London
Percentage of sample	6%	15%	9%	8%	8%	9%	19%	11%	14%
Count	125	300	175	164	166	182	378	224	287

Of the sample as a whole, 19% of respondents were receiving Free School Meals (FSMs) at the time of the survey. This is broadly in line with the national average: 16% of pupils in state-funded secondary schools and 38% in special schools were eligible and claiming FSM in 2013.² In addition the numbers of pupils on FSM was relatively evenly spread across age groups: there were 207 younger children on FSM (10% of the total sample) and 183 older children on FSM (9% of the total sample). Again, this allowed for comparisons to be made both between FSM children and non-FSM children, and different cohorts.

Children's responses to the question 'What job would you most like to do in the future?' were coded in to three sets of two mutually exclusive categories: creative or non-creative; vocational or professional; and, '1984' or '2014'. As these categories were exclusive, a job could be 'creative', 'vocational' and '2014', for example, but could not be both 'vocational' and 'professional' or 'creative' and 'non-creative'. This coding enabled us to compare the 'types' of jobs children aspired to, independent of what sector of job title children specified.

² Great Britain. Department for Education (2013) Schools, Pupils, and their Characteristics, January 2013, See more at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/207670/Main_text-_SFR21_2013.pdf



FreshMinds works with global brand to navigate a digital world; driving growth and sparking innovation. Our team of consultants will help you to uncover new markets, rapidly iterate and develop product propositions, and devise effective marketing strategies and communications that drive profitable growth.

229-231 High Holborn
London/WC1V 7DA
0207 692 4300
www.freshminds.net
info@freshminds.net
@FreshMindsTeam



CLAIRE
PURCHASE

Director

0207 611 1039
Claire.Purchase@freshminds.net



ADAM
WILSON

Senior Associate

0207 611 1051
Adam.Wilson@freshminds.net

IF YOU HAVE ANY
QUESTIONS,
PLEASE DO GET IN TOUCH