

28th March 2011

Education Business Partnership Services Funding Withdrawn

The Department for Education (DfE) today confirmed that, from the end of this financial year, the funding for Education Business Partnerships will be withdrawn.

The decision has been made by the Secretary of State in the context of the DfE spending review settlement. Substantial savings are needed and Ministers have made it clear that the priority for education expenditure will be front line services in schools. Funding for Education Business Partnership services (EBPs) does not come within that category. Therefore the £25m a year for commissioning and funding EBPs will be withdrawn at the end of this financial year on 31st March 2011. In future, it will be for schools to decide whether or not to buy in services from Education Business Partnership Organisations (EBPOs) locally.

Many schools will have already planned work experience activities for the summer term and beyond. Schools remain responsible for ensuring that any work experience which takes place meets the current child protection and health & safety requirements.

I am aware that many schools will still wish to purchase the services of EBPOs to help them deliver work-related learning locally. Therefore EBPOs will need to ensure they are offering a high quality and cost-effective service. Both DfE and the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) see the Award for Education Business Excellence as the way of signifying the quality of such services.

As the funding is being withdrawn at the end of the financial year the requirement for Local Authorities to provide a detailed academic year end data return will also be withdrawn. However, Local Authorities will still be required to complete a simple return for the period 1st September 2010 to 31st March 2011. The template for this return will be provided shortly.

Finally Local Authorities are reminded that the information held within databases of local employer work-related learning contacts, which have been developed with public funding, should remain with the Local Authority.

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