

# SCHOOL LEADER VIEWS ON CAREER GUIDANCE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

December 2021



GATSBY

## INTRODUCTION

The Gatsby Benchmarks<sup>1</sup>, which have been central to the government's careers strategy and statutory guidance since 2017, recognise school leaders as a crucial enabler of a stable and high-quality careers programme. Decisions made by school leaders around budgets or timetabling, and the backing they give to their Careers Leader, have a significant impact on the success of the programme<sup>2,3</sup>. The Gatsby Foundation therefore has a strong interest in school leaders' views on career guidance and how practice is developing.

In December 2021, Gatsby commissioned Opinium Research to survey school leaders in England in relation to career guidance, and in particular to explore how practice has changed since the 2020/21 academic year, when delivery was being disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic<sup>4</sup>.

Opinium surveyed 206 secondary school leaders (from maintained schools and academies) between 2-8 December 2021. Job titles reported were principally headteacher, deputy headteacher or assistant headteacher but also included CEO, Principal and Director of Education.

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1 Gatsby Charitable Foundation. (2014). Good Career Guidance. London: Gatsby Charitable Foundation.

2 Tanner, E., Percy, C. and Andrews, D. (2019). Careers Leaders in Secondary Schools: The first year. London: The Careers & Enterprise Company.

3 Hanson, J., Moore, N., Clark, L. and Neary, S. (2021). An Evaluation of the North East of England pilot of the Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance. Derby: International Centre for Guidance Studies. University of Derby.

4 Pye Tait Consulting. (2020). Secondary School and College leadership views on the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Careers Guidance. Harrogate: Pye Tait Consulting.

## FINDINGS

### **Career guidance prioritisation**

47% of school leaders say that career guidance is one of their top five priorities.

45% also say that career guidance has become more of a priority since the last academic year. Only 5% say prioritisation has decreased.

### **Career guidance investment**

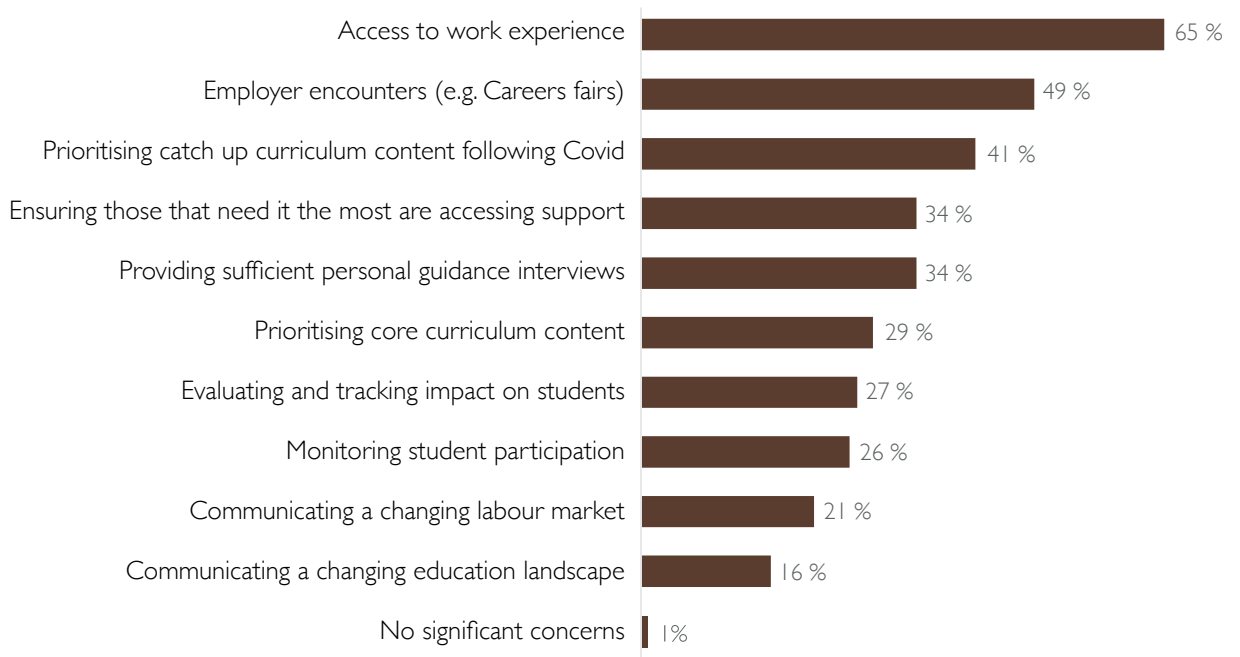
While money for careers guidance may not have increased for many schools, students and staff are spending more time on career guidance.

Six in ten school leaders (61%) say that their budget for career guidance has remained the same, and 31% that it has increased. However, half (52%) say that the time students spend on career guidance activities has increased, and 42% report staff time allocated to career guidance has increased.

### **Concerns related to career guidance**

School leaders are most concerned about access to experiences of the workplace (65%) and employer encounters (49%).

**Figure 1: Top concerns in relation to career guidance**



Question: "Which of the following, if any, are significant concerns in relation to career guidance in this academic year (2021/22)?"

### ***The role of parents***

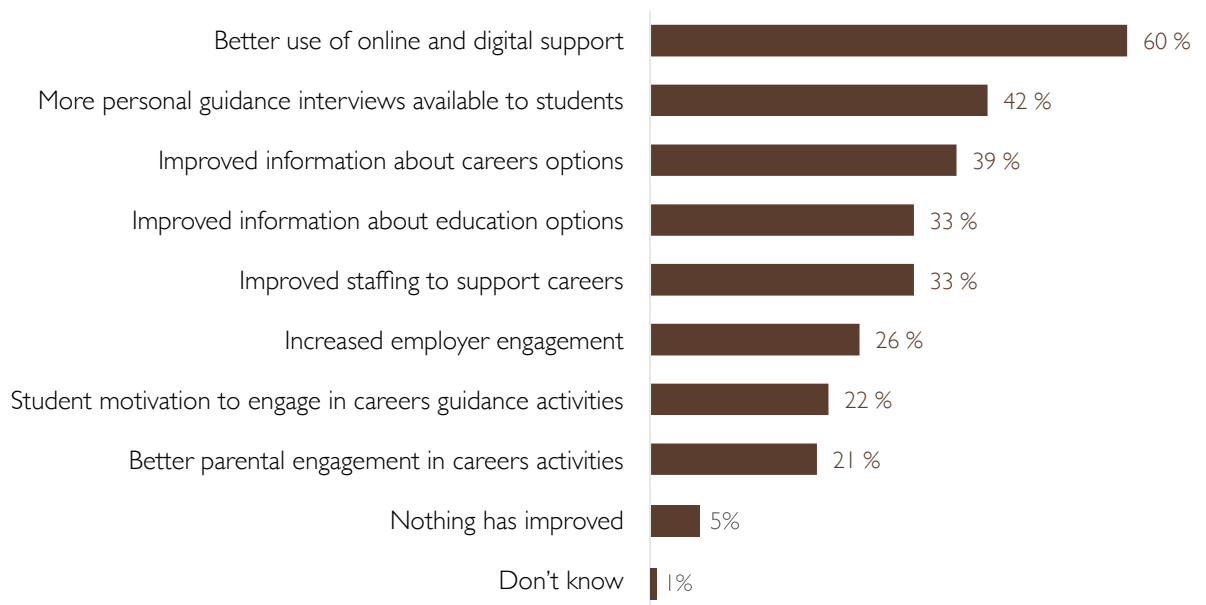
Parents<sup>5</sup> are becoming more influential in their involvement in careers guidance. Half of school leaders (50%) say that parents are becoming more influential.

A third of school leaders (35%) also think that parents are having a closer relationship to school careers activities this academic year, compared to the previous year.

### ***How career guidance programmes have improved***

Only 5% of school leaders say that nothing has improved in their school's career guidance programme in the last year, while 60% say that they now make better use of online and digital support.

**Figure 2: How careers guidance programmes have improved**



*Question: "Compared to the last academic year (2020/21) how do you think your planned career guidance programmes have improved?"*

5 When using the term 'parents' throughout this report, we are also referring to carers and guardians.

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