

# Education to employment transitions 2024: technical report

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# Introduction

This document sets out the processes and methods used for the education to employment transitions 2024 project, by the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) for Youth Futures Foundation. It includes details of the approaches used for the different strands of work within the project, including the:

- support mapping;
- review by expert advisers (professionals and a Youth Advisory Group);
- local authority case studies; and
- data mapping.

The Appendices include the definitions of the four groups of interest, search results and inclusion criteria for the support mapping, questions included in the professional experts' review, and data mapping inclusion criteria.

# Support mapping

## Support mapping approach

### Searching for support

In the first stage of work, a list of support available to the four groups of young people (described in Appendix A) was created. This covered support available to young people in education and training, and support for people as they transition through education and training into employment. The available support reflected policies set up by government departments including, but not limited to, the:

- Department for Education (DfE);
- Department for Work & Pensions (DWP);
- Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC);
- Home Office (HO);
- Ministry of Justice (MoJ);
- Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government<sup>1</sup> (MHCLG); and
- HM Treasury.

### How 'support' was defined

For the purposes of this work, 'support' was defined as services which support young people as they transition through education or training and/or as they transition from education and training into employment, and available to people aged 14-30, living in England, and in one of the four groups of interest. The support must be at least part-funded by central government, regardless of the organisation delivering the support, and delivered in 2024.

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<sup>1</sup> In July 2024, part way through the support mapping exercise, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities became the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. For consistency, the Ministry's new title is used throughout this report.

## The search process

The list of support and associated policies relevant to those young people was gained from a number of sources (listed in Appendix B), including:

- scoping interviews with experts;
- gov.uk and departmental pages such as DfE, DWP, DHSC, MoJ and MHCLG; and
- third-sector organisation websites who are key in supporting these young people (such as Catch 22, Nasen, Centrepont, Mind, Young Minds).

Gov.uk and support organisation websites were searched using search strings (see Appendix B) tailored to each of the four groups of interest to surface relevant support. Where relevant, we also filtered for published works in English only.

## Documenting search activities

IES understands Youth Futures' requirements to replicate this work. Therefore, the following aspects of the search method approach taken were documented (see Appendix B), including:

- the source/website searched;
- search method (e.g. full search, title search of the first 50/100 documents etc.);
- who completed the search (IES staff initials);
- the search string or term used;
- any additional filters applied (if any);
- the number of 'hits' returned (count of results);
- search process status (to do, search completed); and
- any additional notes relevant to the search.

## Documenting the search results

Individual spreadsheets were used to track the results of the searches for each of the four groups of young people. These spreadsheets were used to record all webpages and documents with information relevant to the support available for a particular group, as well as potential inclusions for the support mapping framework.

The spreadsheets included details on the webpages and documents, including:

- search source (such as specific Government department webpages, LGA, and third-sector organisations);
- links to information on specific policies;
- date of publication or most recent update;
- a summary of the webpage or document from the researcher; and
- an AI (ChatGPT) summary of the webpage or document using to provide comparison to researcher generated summaries<sup>2</sup>;

## Mapping the support

### How support was deemed eligible for inclusion

Support identified through the search process outlined above was screened against criteria agreed between Youth Futures and IES, to determine whether it was eligible for inclusion in the support mapping framework. Where support did not meet select criteria it was reallocated to another area of classification (i.e. universal support, peripheral support, or out-of-scope) or excluded. Criteria for inclusion of support in the mapping framework is included in Appendix C.

Whilst this inclusion criteria largely determined what support was and was not included in the support mapping framework, discussions between IES and Youth Futures identified the need for an iterative inclusion process to ensure all support of interest was included in the final support map. As a result, Youth Futures and IES discussed support that did not wholly meet the inclusion criteria results to agree inclusion/exclusion decisions in four weekly meetings from the end of September to the end of October 2024.

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<sup>2</sup> Researchers used the same prompts for AI summaries. The prompt used was: 'You are an expert at summarising information from links I give you into a concise two sentence summary. Including key information around what the information is telling you, and who it is targeted towards (demographic group, + group of young people of interest)'

## The support mapping process

Support identified to either be in-scope or on the periphery of scope was mapped in an Excel framework which captured the following information:<sup>3</sup>

- The name of the support.
- A description of support.
- The organisation delivering the support (such as central government, agencies/public bodies, local authority, combined authority, provider).
- Where the support was delivered (such as UK-wide / England-wide / in what regions).
- Whether the support was targeted or universal, and in what ways.
- Which groups of interest can access the support.
- The target age range of the support.
- What life stage the support targets (e.g. education, training, employment, unemployed & job seeking, or other).
- Information on any other eligibility / exclusion criteria for accessing support.
- Links to the information source(s) used to populate the framework.

Additional detail was recorded for support deemed to be 'fully in-scope'. This included:

- Datasets associated with the support.
- Legislation that dictates the support available in 2024 (sourced from legislation.gov as needed).
- Detail of the policy, legislation, guidance etc. to which the support is linked.
- Which government department(s)/organisation(s) have ownership of the legislation/policy/plan/statutory duty.

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<sup>3</sup> The information provided here is, in places, a more concise version of the full column heading used in the framework document.

- Funding source(s) for the support.
- The duration of funding and, if relevant, when the funding is due to end.
- Links to, and information from, any evaluations conducted before or after the roll out of support.

## Ongoing review and quality assurance

As part of the mapping process, support was classified into four categories (in-scope, universal support, peripheral support, and out-of-scope). Upon completion, a second researcher reviewed both the search and mapping process, documenting their initials, the date of their review, and any comments on further actions to take if necessary.

This review stage was implemented to ensure support being classified as in-scope was eligible to be so, and to ensure it was classified under the correct category. Similarly, support classified as out-of-scope was reviewed to confirm its exclusion was appropriate.

Periodically, complete framework entries were shared with Youth Futures to ensure consensus between organisations on the inclusion/exclusion decisions being made. In some instances, this included support that was confidently in scope, but was largely comprised of framework entries that required further discussion on whether the support was eligible for inclusion. Weekly meetings were held with IES and Youth Futures staff to review support mapping progress in October 2024. In the framework, the date the entry was shared with Youth Futures, and the date an agreement was made on its inclusion/exclusion was recorded. This information was later removed when no longer required.

During this time, it was felt by both IES and Youth Futures that it was important to include support available to all young people aged 14 to 30 years, not just those within the four groups of interest. Therefore, additional work was undertaken by IES to map 'universal support'. It was agreed this would not capture the same amount of information as that recorded for 'fully in scope' support. This list was drawn together from discussions with colleagues at IES and did not follow a systematic search process.

## Expert advisers

IES shared a summary of the support list of 'in scope support' with academics and experts in the field of criminal justice, care experienced young people, special educational needs and disabilities and mental ill-health. The emerging findings were tailored to the individual's area of expertise, to not over burden them with information.

The findings were shared with experts in November 2024, with an initial deadline of 29<sup>th</sup> November, which was extended for a few experts. See Appendix D for the feedback questions for expert advisers. The list of experts to contact was compiled by IES from knowledge of people working in the area, recent event speakers and suggestions from Youth Futures.

**Figure 1:** Summary of findings sent, and feedback received

Area of expertise	Sent	Responded
Mental ill-health	7	2
Care experienced	8	6
SEND	11	3
CJS	11	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>13</b>

Source: IES, 2025.

In total, 13 responses were received, which were all very detailed and informative. Some examples of additional support to add to framework were given, along with some adjustments to descriptions of support listed and queries as to where on the continuum of 'in scope' the support belonged.

Attempts were made to increase the number of responses by offering extension of feedback deadlines to early 2025, and by contacting two additional organisations in January 2025. Youth Futures staff also issued a small number of email reminders in early 2025 to try to maximise responses. None of these approaches elicited further responses.

IES shared a spreadsheet of expert adviser comments and IES suggested actions, with Youth Futures in February 2025 prior to actioning these comments. IES re-shared an updated support mapping framework with Youth Futures in March 2025 for their review.

At this stage the support mapping framework was mostly complete, with the option of conducting more work to surface evaluations of support for the fully 'in scope' support. Where pre- or post-roll-out of delivery evaluations were found during the searches for the support, these were noted in the framework.

## Youth advisory group

The Youth Futures' Future Voices advisory group did not have capacity to consult for this work. Therefore, IES scoped out potential recruitment avenues, and after careful consideration of the options, advertised for young advisers through McPin and Participation People.

Young advisers were asked to express interest in participating in the Youth Advisory groups by emailing IES. A member of the IES team arranged individual video calls with all young people to further explain what the group involved, answer any questions they may have, discuss any additional support needs they may have to aid participation and to verify their age through photo identification, such as a driving licence. If the person was happy to take part, they were emailed a summary of support available for their group (either care experienced, criminal justice experience, special educational needs and / disabilities, or experience of mental ill-health), along with the questions that would be discussed during the discussions. Young people who participated in the discussions received a £30 Amazon or Love2Shop voucher as a 'thank you' for their time, and a letter / certificate of participation with a summary paragraph they could add to their CV about their participation in the discussions.

Headline findings from the support mapping work were re-shared with young advisers during groups discussions and interviews. Topics discussed included types of support they had received during education, employment, or transitions from education / training into employment; awareness of the support listed; and other sources of support they were aware of or had used. Where appropriate, IES shared further information about the support available to them following the discussions.

Group discussions were held on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024, and two interviews were completed on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

**Figure 2:** Summary of youth advisory group participation

	Advisory groups and interviews <sup>1</sup>
Young people with special educational needs and / or disabilities	4
Young people with experience of the care system	1

Young people with experience of the criminal justice system	1
Young people with experience of mental ill-health	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

Source: IES, 2025.

All young advisers were aged 18+ and had accessed support as an adult. Most accessed local, charitable support beyond scope of this work. Most people had experience of university, so they were not entirely representative of the population of interest to Youth Futures.

Feedback from the youth advisory group was used in the final review of the support mapping framework by the IES Project Manager and was shared with Youth Futures in March 2025.

## Local authority case studies

### **Mapping of all local support available for helping 14 – 30-year-olds transition from education into work in two local authorities in the North East**

The local authority case studies included the mapping of all local support, including third sector support without any government funding, available to young people in County Durham and Newcastle. The timescale for the mapping of the support was April – May 2025 (noting that the national support mapping included support that was available in 2024). This strand of the research aimed to help address the following research question, focussing on the local policy and support landscape: *What are the national, devolved, regional and local policy and support landscapes for young people (and their families) as they transition through education and training into work?*

#### **Inclusion criteria**

The following list outlines the inclusion criteria for the local authority case studies in County Durham and Newcastle.

- Populations:

- Young people with experience of special educational needs.
- Young people with mental ill-health.
- Young people with experience of the criminal justice system.
- Care experienced young people.
- In County Durham and Newcastle.
- Available for people aged 14-30 years.
- Interventions studied:
  - Mental ill-health.
  - Special educational needs.
  - Care system.
  - Criminal justice.
- All local support available April – May 2025, including third sector support without any government funding.
- Outcomes measured: entry into all types of employment.

## Search strategy

A rigorous search strategy was used, which incorporated AI (ChatGPT) with a critical, human quality assurance (QA). To complement this search, Hannah King and Peter Traynor of the Youth Futures were provided with the lists of websites and support for feedback.

### Step 1: List of websites to search for support

The first step was to identify relevant websites to search for support that was available in County Durham and Newcastle. To achieve this, we used Google to search using relevant terms (e.g. “SEND support County Durham” “Third Sector SEND support County Durham”). In addition, ChatGPT was provided with the following prompt, which mirrored the national-level support mapping work and used both cross-cutting key phrases and phrases that were tailored to each group of interest. The example below was for County Durham, and it was repeated for Newcastle.

*"I want to know what statutory support and third sector support is available to 14–30-year-olds in County Durham UK. I want the support classified into one of the following four categories: SEND needs, Mental Health, Care Leavers, and people with Criminal Justice Experience. I want it broken down into local authority and third-sector provision. Provide links and information for each resource. Avoid duplication. Present the information in a table with four columns: Category, name of support, link to support, and description of support. 1. Only currently active services. 2. include national services but try to focus mainly on County Durham. 3. Those that include 14–30-year-olds among a wider age range is okay. Identify when they are strictly for young people."*

The results from these Google and ChatGPT searches enabled the exploration of the local offers in County Durham and Newcastle, whether these local authorities had EET workers and/or supported employment teams, as well as whether there were local projects using the Shared Prosperity Fund, Changing Futures programme or Life Chances Fund.

### Step 2: Website results

The search results were collated in tables to track relevant websites for both County Durham and Newcastle. These tables captured information about available support for the specific groups, as well as potential entries for the support mapping frameworks.

The tables included details on the websites, including:

- Name of websites.
- Links to websites.
- Relevant groups of interest.
- A summary of the webpage or document from the researcher.

A total of 39 relevant websites were generated for County Durham, and 38 relevant websites were generated for Newcastle.

### Step 3: Mapping support

The following prompt in ChatGPT was then used to search for relevant support mentioned in the County Durham and Newcastle websites.

*"Please search the following website to find and list support services and provision for young people aged between 14-30 (excluding services for people aged 50 and over) using these key search terms plus synonyms "Support", "Young person", "Education", "Transition", "Employment", "Work", "Special educational needs", "Disability", "Autism",*

*“ADHD”, “Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder”, “Neuro-diverse”, “Neuro-divergent”, “Mental ill-health”, “Depression”, “Anxiety”, “GAD”, “Generalised anxiety disorder”, “Offender”, “Care leaver”, “Care experienced”, “Education”, “School”, “College” [link to website]*

The following types of information were collected in Excel spreadsheets based on the relevant available support in the area:

- Name of support.
- Link to support.
- Description of support.
- Delivery organisation(s).
- Notes on delivery.
- Areas of delivery.
- Targeted or universal support.
- Which groups of young people the support applies to (criminal justice system experienced, care experienced, SEND, mental ill-health).

Search results initially generated a total of 25 instances of support in County Durham and 47 instances of support in Newcastle.

# Data mapping

In this section we describe the process of identifying data sources that are likely include education to employment support for young people across the four themes of interest: criminal justice system, care experienced, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and mental ill-health. A few key earnings datasets were also included, such as HMRC self-assessment and PAYE real time information.

The data sources generally include datasets, linked datasets, and databases, which for the purposes of this work were defined as:

- **Dataset:** A dataset is a structured collection of data, often in a tabular format, representing a specific body of work (e.g., LSYPE2).
- **Linked datasets:** A linked dataset builds upon this by establishing connections and relationships between different datasets, enabling them to be viewed as a unified whole. This interconnection allows for more comprehensive analysis and insights by combining information from various sources (e.g., ECHILD).
- **Database:** A database is a system that stores, manages, and retrieves large amounts of data efficiently, supporting ongoing operations and data manipulation (e.g., p-NOMIS).

## Stage 1: Identification of data sources

Data sources were identified through:

- searching data portals and data archives;
- using a snowballing approach to identify data sources referenced in UK government policy reports and third-sector organisations reports;
- cross-checking with similar data mapping work; and
- consulting with Youth Futures colleagues about data sources of interest.

### Searching data portals and data archives

The following data portals and data archives were searched:

- UK Data service <https://ukdataservice.ac.uk/>;

- ONS Metadata catalogue <https://ons.metadata.works/browser/landing>;
- ADR UK [www.adruk.org/](http://www.adruk.org/); and
- Health Data Gateway <https://healthdatagateway.org/en>.

## UK Data Service

The UK Data Service is the principal repository for economic, population, and social research data in the UK. The UK Data Service holds 9,911 datasets across 80 data series, including census data, governmental and non-governmental longitudinal survey data, along with several cross-sectional studies data.

These are broadly classified under 14 themed groups, several of which are relevant to the goals of this project, such as education, health and labour. Searches of the UK Data Service used their themes and filters as detailed in Figure 3 below, to which the inclusion criteria (see Appendix E) were then applied to identify data sources potentially in scope for this work.

**Figure 3** UK data service search results

Search criteria	Number of data sources returned	Number potentially in scope
Education, England, and 2024-25	1	0
Education, England, and 2020-25	15	2
Social welfare policy and systems, UK, 2020-2025, UK survey data	12	2
Social welfare policy and systems, UK, 2020-2025, cohort and longitudinal studies	14	1
Social welfare policy and systems, UK, 2020-2025, other surveys	13	0
Labour and employment, UK, 2020-2025, cohort and longitudinal studies	57	4
Labour and employment, UK, 2020-2025, UK survey data	78	2
Labour and employment, UK, 2020-2025, other surveys	13	0

Source: IES, 2025.



Datasets = all		
"Support**" OR "Education**" OR "Transition" OR "Employment/work**" OR "Young person**" OR "youth" OR "young person" OR "young people" OR "teenager*" OR "adolescent" OR "young" OR "teenage*" OR "adolscen**" OR "SEND" OR "special educational needs**" OR "disability**" OR "neurodiverg*" OR "neuro-diverg*" OR "ADHD**" OR "attention deficit hyperactivity disorder" OR "autis*"	52	18
Spatial = England		
Datasets = all		
"Support**" OR "Education**" OR "Transition" OR "Employment/work**" OR "Young person**" OR "youth" OR "young person" OR "young people" OR "teenager*" OR "adolescent" OR "young" OR "teenage*" OR "adolscen**" OR "crime**" OR "offender**" OR "community order" OR "prevention"	50	17
Spatial = England		
Datasets = all		
Labour and employment, UK, 2020-2025, cohort and longitudinal studies	57	4
Labour and employment, UK, 2020-2025, UK survey data	78	2
Labour and employment, UK, 2020-2025, other surveys	13	0

Source: IES, 2025.

## ADR UK

ADR UK is a data gateway seeking to make de-identified administrative data accessible to researchers. The user interface of ADR UK is powered by the same metadata catalogue as the ONS Metadata Browser, therefore there is a large overlap between the datasets listed between the two data gateways. The ADR UK catalogue lists 166,066 units of information across 338 datasets, along with 1848 combinations of data of specific variables.

The ADR UK does not implement the optional category filters offered in the ONS Metadata Browser. Therefore, the search of this catalogue used a combination of search strings and filters, detailed below in Figure 5. Seven potentially in-scope data sources were identified from ADR UK data gateway, as subsequent searches tailored to specific experiences yielded the same results as the initial generic search.

Figure 5 ADR UK search results

Search criteria	Number of data sources returned	Number potentially in scope
<p>“Support**” OR “Education**” OR “Transition” OR                      “Employment/work**” OR “Young person**” OR “youth” OR                      “young person” OR “young people” OR “teenager*” OR                      “adolescent” OR “young” OR “teenage*” OR “adolscen*”                      Spatial = England                      Theme = Children and young people                      Datasets = all</p>	14	7
<p>“Support**” OR “Education**” OR “Transition” OR                      “Employment/work**” OR “Young person**” OR “youth” OR                      “young person” OR “young people” OR “teenager*” OR                      “adolescent” OR “young” OR “teenage*” OR “adolscen*”                      OR Care leaver** OR Care experienced**                      Spatial = England                      Theme = Children and young people                      Datasets = all</p>	14	7 <sup>1</sup>
<p>Mental ill-health focussed search string used: “Support**” OR                      “Education**” OR “Transition” OR “Employment/work**” OR                      “Young person**” OR “youth” OR “young person” OR                      “young people” OR “teenager*” OR “adolescent” OR                      “young” OR “teenage*” OR “adolscen*” OR “Mental ill-                      health**” OR “Depress*” OR “Anxiety**” OR “anxi*” OR                      “GAD” OR “generalised anxiety disorder”                      Spatial = England                      Theme = Children and young people                      Datasets = all</p>	15	6 <sup>1</sup>
<p>“Support**” OR “Education**” OR “Transition” OR                      “Employment/work**” OR “Young person**” OR “youth” OR                      “young person” OR “young people” OR “teenager*” OR                      “adolescent” OR “young” OR “teenage*” OR “adolscen*”                      OR “SEND” OR “special educational needs**” OR “disability**”                      OR “neurodiverg*” OR “neuro-diverg*” OR “ADHD**” OR                      “attention deficit hyperactivity disorder” OR “autis*”                      Spatial = England                      Theme = Children and young people                      Datasets = all</p>	15	7 <sup>1</sup>

"Support**" OR "Education**" OR "Transition" OR "Employment/work**" OR "Young person**" OR "youth" OR "young person" OR "young people" OR "teenager*" OR "adolescent" OR "young" OR "teenage*" OR "adolscen*" OR "crime**" OR "offender**" OR "community order" OR "prevention" Spatial = England Theme = Children and young people Datasets = all	14	7 <sup>1</sup>
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1. All duplicates of first search results.

Source: IES, 2025.

### Health data gateway

The Health Data Gateway is a platform managed by HDR UK that provides a centralised location for researchers to discover and request access to UK health datasets. There are 1312 datasets listed on the Gateway. The Health Data Gateway limits the returned results to 100, hence it is challenging to easily know the exact number of results, and searches can create duplicates. However, the search of this site resulted in 11 data sources being identified, of which two were potentially in scope (see Figure 6).

**Figure 6** Health data gateway search results

Search criteria	Number of data sources returned	Number potentially in scope
"Data sets & bio samples" data set type = socioeconomic	11	2

Source: IES, 2025.

### Snowballing approach

During scoping interviews, a small number of websites were identified as potential useful sources of reports that may contain reference to relevant data sources. These were National Association for Special Educational Needs (nasen), Catch-22, Become, and Mind. A snowballing approach was used to identify reports and data sources relevant to support transitions through education and training into employment from these websites. For example, an initial search of the charity National Association for Special Educational Needs' (nasen) identified the 'Improving Health Care: learning disabilities and autism

miniguide'. Through this document we identified the 'Joint Strategic Needs Assessment', which led us to NHS 'Transforming Care' where we identified the Assuring Transformation (AT) data collection. This snowballing approach was a small part of the methods used to identify data sources as it was time-consuming and not particularly effective. For example, data sources were often mentioned in the reviewed publications, but only as generic data processes, such as 'collected by local authorities' or indications of organisation specific surveys, without identification of a specific dataset. If this work is repeated, we would recommend the websites be used for familiarisation with the support landscape, but not for the content of the data sources.

## Cross-checking with similar data mapping work

IES and Youth Futures were aware of other youth transitions data mapping work that had been conducted. Firstly, a previous IES project that mapped school to work transitions in longitudinal data<sup>4</sup> was checked for data sources relevant to this project. And in March 2025, IES cross-checked their work with NfER's data mapping of education to employment transitions, also for Youth Futures<sup>5</sup>, which highlighted an additional three data sources to add to this project.

## Consulting with Youth Futures colleagues

The list of 56 data sources gained from the data portals, searching charity websites, and cross-checking with other work was shared with Youth Futures for review. Youth Futures identified 36 of these data sources that were of most interest and value to their work, generally excluding surveys, cohort studies and individual datasets that feed into the Data First linked dataset.

## Populating the data mapping framework

IES sought to populate the data mapping framework with the following information within the time available, for each of the 36 agreed data sources. It is possible that with more time, additional information could be recorded about each of these datasets. The fields in the data mapping framework were:

- Data source.

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<sup>4</sup> Source: [www.employment-studies.co.uk/resource/capturing-school-work-transitions-longitudinal-data-sources](http://www.employment-studies.co.uk/resource/capturing-school-work-transitions-longitudinal-data-sources) Accessed June 2025.

<sup>5</sup> [https://youth-transitions-data-map.shinyapps.io/transitions\\_app/](https://youth-transitions-data-map.shinyapps.io/transitions_app/) Accessed June 2025.

- Summary.
- Type of dataset.
- Subject / participant level.
- Data holder (e.g. DfE).
- Year dataset first established (all to still be active in 2024).
- Population age range (ages young people will be captured in this dataset).
- Geographical coverage.
- Sample size (cohort studies only).
- Criteria for being on/off dataset – flag for entering.
- How often the is data updated.
- Relevance.
- Limitations.
- Notes.
- Groups captured in data (special educational need, experience of CJS, experience of mental ill-health, care experienced young people).
- Personal identifiers.
- Variable(s) of interest (for four groups).
- Documentation (includes sources of further information, user guides and data dictionaries if separate).
- Support included in dataset (IES's assessment based on available documentation).
- Data collector.
- Accessibility.
- Data access contacts.
- Weblink to access data.

- Linking notes (examples of where this data is linked to other or issues preventing it from linking to other data sources).<sup>6</sup>

### Challenges encountered when undertaking the searches for datasets

Several challenges were encountered when undertaking the data mapping searches. These and IES's actions taken to overcome them are summarised in Figure 7 below.

**Figure 7** Challenges and solutions to undertaking data mapping work

Challenge	Solution
Specific data information in policy reports and/or relevant studies was often challenging to identify.	Limited time spent on this.
Data used in some policy reports and/or relevant studies had been sometimes subject to study-specific data collection or Freedom of Information (FOI) requests.	Information recorded about the data source was limited to what was known.
Search results within and between data portals yielded a high proportion of duplicates.	Duplicates identified and not checked against inclusion criteria multiple times
Broken links to dataset dedicated webpages.	Alternative routes to content sought, but if none identified data in framework may be partial. Data custodians were contacted for additional information in a number of instances, but this was time consuming.
Challenging to retrieve details about several datasets without accessing the data.	Data mapping framework populated with as much information as possible without accessing data.

Source: IES, 2025.

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<sup>6</sup> Due to time constraints this was not fully searched for or populated in the framework.

# Methodological challenges and resolutions

To help inform future work of a similar nature, we outline below the methodological challenges of this project and how they were resolved.

**Mapping policies or support:** Initial discussions between Youth Futures and IES focussed on clarifying whether the primary aim was to map policies or support. At the time that the project was commissioned, the intention was to undertake policy mapping. However, it was agreed that mapping support that an individual received, and, where possible, the underlying government policy and legislation would be a more practical approach and provide the most benefit to stakeholders.

**Pre-agreed inclusion criteria versus an iterative process:** During the scoping phase, inclusion criteria for the support mapping work were agreed. However, in sharing emerging findings of what support was deemed in scope or out of scope it became apparent that a more iterative approach was needed. During October 2024, Youth Futures and IES met weekly to discuss the emerging findings of the support mapping work any required revisions to the inclusion criteria.

**Data mapping – people versus support:** Mapping all data sources that included young people with special educational needs or disabilities, and/or experience of care, mental ill-health, or the criminal justice system, would be an enormous task. The project intent was to capture where support engagement triggered data collection by a provider or delivery organisation, and the nature, extent, and accessibility of that data to evaluation organisations such as Youth Futures. The final data mapping framework was for Youth Futures internal use and to be built upon in the future as needed.

**Process versus outcome-focused methods:** Due to the evolution of public policy and administrative data, there was a requirement for this work to be replicable and repeatable, to enable Youth Futures to keep the findings updated. It was agreed that there would be an element of systematic searches in both the support mapping and data mapping work, but this would be supplemented by snowballing, staff knowledge, expert review and cross-checking with other similar projects.

**Infographics – the problem versus the solution:** One component of this project was to create infographic outputs to help Youth Futures and other professionals working in the youth sector understand the landscape of support. The target boards gave an indication of the complexity of the support landscape, and the 'train line' style infographic was limited to targeted support with an element of government funding.

# Appendix A: Definitions of the key target groups

The following section outlines the definitions used to identify the four groups of young people of interest within this project. Across all four groups, the age range of interest was between 14 and 30 years old.

**Young people with special education needs and disabilities:** a person who has been assessed by a health professional as having special educational needs or a disability, irrespective of whether or not they have an EHCP (up to age 25). This follows the Children and Families Act 2014 definition of special educational needs and disabilities.

**Young people with experience of mental ill-health:** a person who has experienced at least one period of moderate mental ill-health that had a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. We feel this is in line with the Equality Act 2010 that states a person has a disability if they have a "physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".<sup>7</sup>

A young person does not necessarily have to be under the care of CAMHS or AMHS due to current high levels of demand, long waiting lists. Furthermore, people can access mental health support without diagnosis (e.g., through education providers, NHS and local partnerships, and Jobcentre referrals). For the purposes of this project, IES focused on what support is available. People with very severe mental ill-health that would prevent them from moving into employment were also out-of-scope, although they are likely to access some of the same support as people with moderate mental ill-health.

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<sup>7</sup> YFF raised that some policies may not have a clearly defined threshold for mental ill-health. Consequently, IES relaxed this definition where needed. For example, IPS provision within Health Led Trials was for mild to moderate mental and physical health conditions which may not have met our definition but was of interest and relevant to this support mapping.

<sup>7</sup> Civil injunctions, CPNs and CBOs replaced Antisocial Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland in 2014 as part of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (ASBCPA 2014). <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/12/section/1>

<sup>7</sup> CPNs are for people aged 16 and over, whereas civil injunctions and CBOs can be issued against people aged 10 and over. <https://www.gov.uk/civil-injunctions-criminal-behaviour-orders>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/knife-crime-prevention-orders-kcpos>.

**Young people with experience of the criminal justice system (CJS):** defined for the purposes of this work as people with cautions, convictions, civil injunctions<sup>8</sup>, Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs), Community Protection Notices (CPNs)<sup>9</sup> or Knife Crime Prevention Orders (KCPOs)<sup>10</sup>, as these would trigger additional support, show on DBS checks and put them in CJS datasets (e.g. PNC includes cautions and convictions).

**Care experienced young people:** defined here as a person with experience of one or more care settings. This includes foster care, residential children's homes, adopted young people (includes kinship care), care leavers (defined as someone who has been looked after by the local authority for 14 weeks or more).

We feel this definition is in line with the [Children Act 1989](#) which defines 'looked-after children' as those who are under the care of local authorities; including being provided with accommodation for at least 24 hours, individuals who have received care orders and individuals who have received placement orders.

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<sup>8</sup> Civil injunctions, CPNs and CBOs replaced Antisocial Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland in 2014 as part of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (ASBCPA 2014). <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/12/section/1>

<sup>9</sup> CPNs are for people aged 16 and over, whereas civil injunctions and CBOs can be issued against people aged 10 and over. <https://www.gov.uk/civil-injunctions-criminal-behaviour-orders>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/knife-crime-prevention-orders-kcpos>.

## Appendix B: Summary of support mapping search strings and hits

**Figure 8:** Search process summary for searches relevant for young people with special educational needs and disabilities

Database	Search method (e.g. full search, title search the first 50/100 documents etc.)	Search string used	Additional filters	Number of hits
GOV.UK main site	Appraisal of first 50 documents	("Youth" OR "Young Person" OR "Teenage*" OR "Adolescen*" OR "Young" OR "Young Adult") AND ("Educat*" OR "School" OR "College" OR "Sixth Form" OR "University" OR "Learn*" OR "Transition" OR "Employ*" OR "Job*" OR "Work*") AND ("SEND" OR "SEN*" OR "Special educational needs" OR "Disability" OR "Disabled" OR	None	19,431

		“Provision” OR “EHCP” OR “Autis*” OR “ADHD” OR “Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder” OR “Neurodiverg*” OR “Neuro- diver*”)		
DCMS	Appraisal of first 50 documents	””	None	263
DfE	Appraisal of first 50 documents	””	None	3,072
MHCLG	Appraisal of first 50 documents	””	None	421
DWP	Appraisal of first 50 documents	””	None	2,785
DHSC	Appraisal of first 50 documents	””	None	1,667
Home Office	Appraisal of first 50 documents	””	None	1,121

MoJ	Appraisal of first 50 documents	""	None	545
LGA	Appraisal of first 50 documents	("Youth" OR "Young Person" OR "Teenage*" OR "Adolescen*" OR "Young" OR "Young Adult") AND ("Educat*" OR "School" OR "College")	None	209
Nasen	Appraisal of first 50 documents	"Youth"	None	65

Source: IES, 2025.

**Figure 9:** Search process summary for searches relevant for young people with mental ill-health

Database	Search method (e.g. full search, title search the first 50/100 documents etc.)	Search string used	Additional filters	Number of hits
GOV.UK	Appraisal of first 50 documents	("Youth" OR "Young Person" OR "Teenage*" OR "Adolescen*" OR "Young" OR "Young Adult") AND ("Educat*" OR "School" OR "College" OR "Sixth Form" OR "University" OR "Learn*" OR "Transition" OR "Employ*" OR "Job*" OR "Work*") AND ("support") AND ("mental health" OR "mental ill	None	12,963

		health" OR "mental ill- health" OR "mental illness")		
DCMS	Appraisal of first 50 documents	""	None	230
DfE	Appraisal of first 50 documents	""	None	1,719
MHCLG	Appraisal of first 50 documents	""	None	206
DWP	Appraisal of first 50 documents	""	None	1,803
DHSC	Appraisal of first 50 documents	""	None	1,952
Home Office	Appraisal of first 50 documents	""	None	1,106
MoJ	Appraisal of first 50 documents	""	None	648
LGA	Appraisal of first 50 documents	("Youth" OR "Young Person" OR "Teenage*" OR	None	211

		"Adolescen*" OR "Young" OR "Young Adult") AND ("Mental")		
MIND	Appraisal of first 50 documents	"Youth" and "support" and "mental"	None	1,312
The Health Foundation	Appraisal of first 50 documents	"Mental health"	None	38
Young Minds	Appraisal of first 50 documents	"youth" "support" "mental" "health"	None	150
Mental Health Foundation	Appraisal of first 50 documents within the filtered searches in the notes column	("Youth" OR "Young Person" OR "Teenage*" OR "Adolescen*" OR "Young" OR "Young Adult") AND ("Mental")	Ran the search using the 'report', 'guide', 'policy' and 'research' filters and reviewed first 50 of each	0
Papyrus	Appraisal of first 50 documents	n/a	None	0

Source: IES, 2025.

**Figure 10:** Search process summary for searches relevant for young people with experience of the criminal justice system

Database	Search method (e.g. full search, title search the first 50/100 documents etc.)	Search string used	Additional filters	Number of hits
GOV.UK main site	Appraisal of first 50 documents	("Youth" OR "Young Person" OR "Teenage*" OR "Adolescen*" OR "Young" OR "Young Adult") AND ("Educat*" OR "School" OR "College" OR "Sixth Form" OR "University" OR "Learn*" OR "Transition" OR "Employ*" OR "Job*" OR "Work*") AND ("Support") AND ("Offender" OR "Criminal")	None	9,605

		OR "Delinquent" OR "Perpetrator" OR "Crime")		
DCMS	Appraisal of first 50 documents	""	None	100
DfE	Appraisal of first 50 documents	""	None	740
MHCLG	Appraisal of first 50 documents	""	None	154
DWP	Appraisal of first 50 documents	""	None	429
DHSC	Appraisal of first 50 documents	""	None	397
Home Office	Appraisal of first 50 documents	""	None	1,457
MoJ	Appraisal of first 100 docs	""	None	1,400
LGA	Appraisal of all results	Youth Crime	None	45

Catch 22	Appraisal of first 50 documents	Youth Crime	None	87
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Source: IES, 2025.

**Figure 11:** Search process summary for searches relevant for care experienced young people

Database	Search method (e.g. full search, title search the first 50/100 documents etc.)	Search string used	Additional filters	Number of hits
GOV.UK main site	Appraisal of first 50 documents	("Youth" OR "Young Person" OR "Teenage*" OR "Adolescen*" OR "Young" OR "Young Adult") AND ("Educat*" OR "School" OR "College" OR "Sixth Form" OR "University" OR "Learn*" OR "Transition" OR "Employ*" OR "Job*" OR "Work*") AND ("Support") AND ("Care exp*" OR "Looked after" OR "Looked-	None	14,133

		after" OR "Foster" OR "Care system" OR "Care leaver")		
DCMS	Appraisal of first 50 documents	""	None	188
DfE	Appraisal of first 50 documents	""	None	2,070
MHCLG	Appraisal of first 50 documents	""	None	222
DWP	Appraisal of first 50 documents	""	None	2,015
DHSC	Appraisal of first 50 documents	""	None	1,626
Home Office	Appraisal of first 50 documents	""	None	1,142
MoJ	Appraisal of first 100 docs	""	None	591
LGA	Appraisal of first 50 documents	Looked after	Type: Research / Policy	85

Centrepoint	Appraisal of all results	Care leave	None	17
Mind	Appraisal of first 50 documents	Care leaver	None	536
Nasen	Appraisal of all results	Care leave	None	4
Catch 22	Appraisal of first 50 documents	Care leaver	None	115

Source: IES, 2025.

## Appendix C: Support mapping inclusion criteria

1. Can a member of one or more of the four groups, aged 14 to 30 years old, in England, access this support?

Y: Move to Q2

N: EXCLUDE

### How is the support funded?

2a. The support is wholly funded by central government or local authorities.

Y: Move to Q3

N: Move to Q2B

2b. The support is part-funded by central government or local authorities, even if it also part-funded by charitable means or employers.

Y: Move to Q3

N: Move to Q2C

2c. Receives no (0%) government / local authority funding.

Exclude

### Is the support delivered in person?

3a. Is the support delivered in person by a support worker / adviser / key worker to a young person?

Y: Add to list of support and complete all columns in spreadsheet

N: Move to Q3B

3b. Is the support delivered online, but bespoke / tailored by a support worker / adviser / key worker?

Y: Add to list of support and complete columns A - T only

N: Move to Q3C

3c. Is the support a website with no interaction either in person or online with an adviser offering tailored support or advice?

Y: Note on 'out-of-scope' tab if relevant to research aims

N: Exclude

3d. Is the support financial?

Y: Move to Q4

N: Move to Q3E

3e. Unsure? Flag as 'to discuss' for next team meeting.

#### **How is the support targeted?**

4a. The support directly and intentionally supports one or more of the four groups young people as they transition through education and training, or from education / training into employment.

Y: Add to list of support and complete all columns

N: Move to Q4B

4b. The provision indirectly supports young people (in one or more of the four groups of interest) as through education or training, or from education / training into employment.

Y: Add to list of support and complete columns A - T only

N: Move to Q4C

4c. The provision directly supports young people (in one or more of the four groups of interest) as they transition from NEET or unemployment into employment.

Y: Add to list of support and complete all columns

N: Move to Q4D

4d. The provision indirectly supports young people (in one or more of the four groups of interest) as they transition from NEET or unemployment into employment.

Y: Add to list of support and complete columns A - T only

N: Move to Q4E

4e. The support is universal, near universal / non-targeted and supports transitions through education or training, from education/training to employment, or unemployment to employment and has a notable impact on, or interactions with, transitions through education and from education to work: i.e. JCP, Youth Offer, the national careers service, skills bootcamps, etc.

Y: Add to list of universal support and complete all columns A - T only

N: Move to Q4F

4f. The support is universal, near universal / non-targeted and has a notable impact on, or interactions with, transitions through education and from education to work, such as the main benefits (UC), housing & health support.

Y: Add to list of Periphery support – housing, health and benefits and complete all columns A - T only

N: Move to Q4G

4g. None of the above - Move to Q5.

### **Is the support financial?**

5a. Is the support financial, such as a bursary, paid directly to the young person to support their transition through education or training or from education / training into employment?

Y: Add to list of support and complete all columns in spreadsheet

N: Move to Q5B

5b. Is the support financial, such as a grant or fund, paid to delivery organisations supporting young people as they transition through education / training, or as they transition from education / training into employment?

Y: Add to list of support and complete columns A - T only

N: Move to Q5C

5c. The provision directly or indirectly supports young people (in one or more of the four groups of interest) as they transition from NEET or unemployment into employment.

Y: Add to list of support and complete columns A - T only

N: Move to Q5D

5d. None of the above – Exclude.

5e. Unsure - Flag as 'to discuss' for next team meeting.

## Appendix D: Review questions for expert advisers

The panel of expert advisers were sent a summary of support available to people aged 14 to 30 years, for one of the four groups of interest (people with special educational needs and / or disabilities, care experienced people, people with experience of mental ill-health, or people with experience of the criminal justice system). Expert advisers were asked to review the summary information and answer as many of the questions below as they were able or had time to. The question wording was adapted accordingly by areas of expertise, with the below example for experts in support available for care experienced young people.

**Please could you answer as many of the following questions as you feel able and/or have time to, and email your answers to IES no later than the end of Friday 29th November?**

What support\* available to people with experience of the care system as they transition through education and training, and from education and training into employment, if any, is missing from the support summary table attached to this email?

*Note: \*Support must be/have been available in England in 2024, for people aged 14 to 30 years old, with an element of government funding.*

Please answer here...

What support\* do you see as the most useful to young people with experience of the care system as they transition through education and training, and from education and training into work?

*Note: \*This might be targeted support for people with special educational needs and disabilities, or universal support available to everyone between the ages of 14 and 30 years.*

Please answer here...

If you have time, please also provide a short paragraph in answer to one or more of the following:

In your opinion, what are the key transition points in relation to education and work for this group of young people?

*Please answer here...*

Please rate the current landscape of support available to help people aged 14 to 30 with experience of the care system make successful transitions into work from 1 to 5, with 1 being not effective at all to 5 being very effective.

1	2	3	4	5
Not effective at all				Very effective

*Please answer here...*

4a. If you have the time, please also provide 2-3 sentences to explain your rating.

*Please answer here...*

What barriers or support gaps create the biggest challenges to people with experience of the care system as they transition through education and training into employment?

*Please answer here...*

## Appendix E: Data mapping inclusion criteria

1. Does the data include people living in England?
  - a. Yes (continue)
  - b. No (exclude)
2. Can individuals be identified in the set? E.g. if household survey data, can individuals be identified with this data.
  - a. Yes (continue)
  - b. No (exclude)
3. Does the dataset include people aged 14 to 30 as they move through education, unemployment, CJS into employment? Does not need to include full age range but must include people within this age range.
  - a. Yes (continue)
  - b. No (exclude)
4. Does the data include people within one or more of the following: special educational needs and/or disabilities, care experience, criminal justice experience, mental ill-health?
  - a. Yes (continue)
  - b. No (exclude)
5. Does the data set **currently** include support aimed at helping these groups of people transition from education or training into employment, or from unemployment into employment?
  - a. Yes (continue)
  - b. No (continue)
6. Does the data set **have the potential to** include support aimed at helping these groups of people transition from education or training into employment, or from unemployment into employment?
  - a. Yes (continue but only record limited data – flag as 'Amber')
  - b. No (exclude)
7. Is the dataset related solely to higher education? E.g. HESA, UCAS, National Student Survey, Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT survey).
  - a. Yes (exclude)
  - b. No (continue)

8. Was the data recorded in 2024 or is it a survey ongoing?
  - a. Yes (include)
  - b. No (exclude)

## Inclusive Terminology

The terminology used to define ethnicity continues to evolve, and greater awareness has arisen about gender, cognitive differences as well as of disability. IES seeks to be a learning organisation; as such we are adapting our practice in line with these shifts. We aim to be specific when referring to each individual's ethnicity and use their own self-descriptor wherever possible. Where this is not feasible, we are aligned with Race Disparity Unit (RDU) which uses the term 'ethnic minorities' to refer to all ethnic groups except white British. RDU does not use the terms BAME (black, Asian, and minority ethnic) or BME (black and minority ethnic) as these terms emphasise certain ethnic groups and exclude others. It also recommends not capitalising ethnic groups, (such as 'black' or 'white') unless that group's name includes a geographic place. More broadly, we understand that while individuals may have impairments it is society that disables them, hence we refer to disabled people. Not all people identify with male or female and we reflect their self-descriptions in our work and use the term non-binary should abbreviation be necessary. We value neurodiversity. Where possible we always use people's self-descriptors rather than impose categories upon them.

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