

# Raising Participation Age

Fact sheet

## Important information for young people

### What does RPA mean?

It means that at the end of **Year 11**, you will have to continue in education and training until your 18<sup>th</sup> birthday; usually you will complete two years of education or training and achieve your qualifications.

This doesn't mean that you have to stay on at school after Year 11 if you don't want to. You will have three choices:

- Full-time education, such as school or college
- Apprenticeship
- Part-time education or training if you are employed, self employed or volunteering for 20 hours or more a week

Talk to your teachers about getting some face-to-face advice if you would like some help to work through the pros and cons of the different options.

### What is the reason for the change?

The law is changing because the world of work is changing. It's harder to get a job these days. Employers now choose to recruit people with skills. Getting qualifications and a wide range of skills improve your chance of getting a good job and making a career. It will also increase the total earnings you can expect over your working life.

Therefore the law has been changed to ensure every young person can benefit from two years free education and training to gain better qualifications and skills.

### Why will this change be beneficial?

Most young people in Barnet continue their learning when they complete year 11 in one of the three ways listed above. Parents and schools can help you in advance to plan a pathway which really motivates you and that you are happy to follow for two years and beyond. Teachers and careers advisers can help you with this.

By ensuring you can access free education and training for 2 years, RPA will give you the best chance to gain the skills and qualifications you need to help you to achieve in whatever you go on to do – whether that's a job or further study. Qualifications greatly increase your chance of getting a job later on.

### Does RPA just mean that you are raising the school leaving age?

No. The school leaving age will remain the same. You will be able to choose the post-16 option that is best for you, and you will still be able to leave school after Year 11 if you want to. The three options are:

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- full-time education, such as school or college
- work-based learning, such as an apprenticeship
- part-time education or training if you are employed, self-employed or volunteering for 20 hours or more a week

## **Does this mean you're stopping me working full-time?**

No. You'll still be able to work full time if you want to, or volunteer full-time or set up your own business. The change in the law means that you are also entitled and expected to take advantage of the benefit of part-time training which leads to an accredited qualification alongside this.

## **Where can I find out more information?**

Ask at your school. Alternatively you can go to these useful websites:

[www.apprenticeships.gov.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk)

[www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk](http://www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk)