



House of Commons
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SW1A 0AA

Press Release – For immediate release

Sarah Champion
Member of Parliament for Rotherham
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Press Release

MP tackles David Cameron on Rotherham's youth unemployment crisis

Sarah Champion challenged the Prime Minister to explain why Rotherham College of Arts and Technology is set to lose 280 places while youth unemployment remains such a serious local problem.

At Prime Ministers Questions, the Rotherham MP said: "Rotherham College of Arts and Technology has just had a cut of 280 places for 16 to 18-year-olds. That is a 10 per cent cut, despite Rotherham being a youth unemployment hot spot.

With rising youth unemployment and a flat-lining economy, why is the Prime Minister denying the young people of Rotherham an education?"

David Cameron refused to engage with the MP's question, instead he simply read out statistics prepared by civil servants:

"Let me just tell the honourable lady that in her region employment is up by 21,000 this quarter, and by 74,000 since the election. We have taken 192,000 people in her region out of tax altogether, and youth unemployment has fallen since the election."

Figures* show that youth unemployment in Rotherham stands at 14.7 per cent, more than twice the UK average.

There are 4,132 unemployed people claiming Job Seekers Allowance in Rotherham and long-term unemployment in the constituency has gone up by 59 per cent in the past year.

Sarah Champion MP said: "I asked the Prime Minister a direct question about the loss of opportunities for young people, which is a serious concern and one that I am working hard to address. He refused to answer, instead quoting figures about national employment and not even mentioning young people in his reply. To me, it just proved that he is out of touch with the reality of everyday life."

Ends

NOTES

*Constituency unemployment figures for January 2013, Office for National Statistics

Sarah champion asked the question at PMQ on 6.3.13: (Hansard)

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130306/debtext/130306-0001.htm#13030658000898>

Sarah Champion is supporting the Employers Breakfast event organised by Jobcentre Plus at the New York Stadium on Thursday 21st March at 8.30am.

This event is to encourage and support employers to help inspire young people and to offer work experience, apprenticeships and employment opportunities for all 18-24 year old job seekers in Rotherham.

There will be opportunities for networking and sharing good practice around recruitment and skills agenda with other employers. For further details please contact the Job Centre Plus on 01709 343197 or via Rotherham.Imra@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk