

CONSULTATION DRAFT

TRANSFORMING SECONDARY AND POST-16 LEARNING IN LEEDS

...making a real difference to young people ...
...whatever it takes!

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to outline a vision and approach to the transformation of secondary and post-16 provision in Leeds that will provide the foundations for developing a detailed implementation plan in conjunction with key partners.

The Education and Inspection Act 2006 gives the local authority the strategic lead for school provision and for securing the 14-19 entitlement for young people, with the essential role of making sure that schools and colleges between them make the full range of opportunities available in the area. Because the statutory responsibilities for 14-19 learning are shared by the Local Authority and the Learning and Skills Council, both parties have been working closely on a shared strategy.

The recommendations contained in this report will help shape the future delivery of secondary learning in the city and as such will have a major impact on the lives of thousands of young people schools, colleges and other providers here in Leeds.

The National Agenda

There are significant national pressures that will play a role in shaping the future of secondary and post-16 learning in Leeds:

- The 'Every Child Matters' agenda;
- The new commissioning role of the local authority;
- the revised Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 programmes;
- the current national 14-19 curriculum reform programme;
- the Leitch Review focusing on the steps we need to take to raise the skills levels of the workforce;
- the Building Schools for the Future programme;
- Trusts, federations and partnerships;
- the 400 Academies programme;
- the recent Green paper on compulsory participation in learning until 18;
- the recent DfES consultation on a demand-led 14-19 funding system that is based around minimum performance standards that will eliminate poor quality and inefficient provision.

Challenges and Opportunities

The Building Schools for the Future programme, 14-19 curriculum reform programme and the emerging skills agenda present real opportunities for Leeds. The Learning and Skills Council has made it clear that, provided an appropriate model can be agreed, the Further Education estate will attract a capital investment in the region of £200 million that will transform the estate here in Leeds. At the same time, Leeds is implementing a major building programme across the secondary estate through PFI and Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programmes.

Discussions over recent months have revealed a broadly held commitment amongst partners and stakeholders that we have to work together to ensure that young people in Leeds achieve much more. There is an emerging consensus that the scale of these ambitions will require a fundamental improvement in provision so that more of our learners are inspired, engaged and committed to relevant, rewarding and worthwhile learning pathways.

The agenda can be summarised as follows:

- Maximising and aligning the FE investment, PFI, BSF, Academies and 14-19 funding streams to create a city wide investment programme to transform the learning landscape
- Re-affirming, refreshing and delivering the Leeds Learner Entitlement and seeking feedback from young people on their experiences so we can be more sure that provision is raising aspirations, securing engagement and meeting their needs and expectations
- Providing choice and diversity for all learners through relevant and accessible pathways that lead to further learning and employment opportunities
- More systematically nurturing the skills needed for all our people to meet the five outcomes of Every Child Matters and to better provide for those learners with additional and/or special educational needs
- Developing stronger partnerships across the city, addressing underachievement by focusing on the areas of greatest need, to drive the standards agenda and achieve the following outcomes by 2015:
 - 80% of 16 year olds achieving level 2 qualifications
 - 95% of our young people progressing to further learning beyond 16
 - 60% of 19 year olds achieving level 3 qualifications
- Developing leadership and governance models to deliver these ambitions by focussing the combined expertise of partners and achieving a more collective ownership of the outcomes achieved by all young people in the city.

Vision and Values

Our vision for learning in Leeds places schools at the heart of universal provision. Schools that develop, nurture and maintain strong, innovative and creative relationships with each other and with their stakeholders and partners to drive good attendance, positive behaviour, high standards and significantly improved outcomes for all our learners.

Discussions with stakeholders have highlighted particular priorities and aspirations. This section attempts to identify these as a series of vision statements. They are offered here to assist in building a consensus on what needs to be achieved.

We will create a network of brilliant learning places across Leeds. Learning places that are:

- inclusive, improving and good at what they do;
- at the heart of their communities supporting regeneration and lifelong learning;
- centres of extended services, tackling underachievement, poor attendance, anti-social behaviour and health inequalities;
- creative, inspiring, innovative centres of excellence;
- viable and sustainable learning environments;
- working together to share their expertise and deliver services and pathways in partnership;
- committed to developing a coaching, mentoring and nurturing culture for all young people;
- working with the Leeds FE colleges, the University of Leeds Metropolitan University, other HEIs and providers together with the business community to meet the social, environmental and skills needs and aspirations of Leeds and the region.
- committed to listening to and involving all stakeholders including the active participation of young people and their parents and carers.
- catering for the diverse needs of our young people, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, and ensuring they are on pathways to successful outcomes.

We want to work with partners and stakeholders who share our enthusiasm, passion, commitment and energy and will help us drive forward the partnerships needed to deliver a transformation in the outcomes achieved by all our young people.

Key Strategies

The key strategies proposed are:

- Developing the curriculum in Key Stage 3 with a greater emphasis on functional skills, literacy and numeracy and social skills;
- Developing a coaching and mentoring framework to support all learners through their secondary learning;
- Developing new models of leadership and governance to support this new approach to locality working;
- The joint development of a number of Post 14 Centres between the LA/school sector and the LSC/FE sector to deliver significant elements of Post 14 vocational provision on a local basis
- That steps are taken to ensure that Post 16 provision in schools is high quality, viable, sustainable, cost effective and linked to the new FE infrastructure and the Post 14 Centres.
- The strengthening and further development of 14-19 Partnership across the city including the development of a new Partnership arrangement for Central Leeds.

- Support for a re-structuring of the FE sector into fewer colleges to reduce duplication and improve co-ordination, planning and the use of resources;
- Aligning the workstreams for 14-19, the inclusion strategy and the development of the integrated youth offer to ensure the development of a coherent infrastructure for learning.

What works

We are working to develop consistent practice across the city to ensure:

- strong leadership, management and governance;
- highly effective teaching;
- high expectations;
- individualised curriculum pathways;
- positive discipline and behaviour management;
- tracking, monitoring and intervention;
- coaching and mentoring;
- partnership with parents, partners and communities.

Coherent infrastructure development and city-wide planning

We plan to ensure the coherent development of the learning infrastructure in Leeds to create learning environments that would better meet the needs of all our young people and establish greater connectivity between education, skills, employment and regeneration.

We will ensure that all young people and adults are able to achieve their full potential through personalised learning pathways built on access to the widest possible range of high quality learning opportunities. Collaboration between the City Council, Education Leeds and the Learning and Skills Council will ensure the investment in the Building Schools for the Future programme and the capital investment in the Further Education sector will result in a world class environment for the delivery of inclusive learning in Leeds.

We will continue to work with primary schools to ensure that more young people leave primary education at eleven with good literacy, numeracy and ICT skills so that they can better access and take advantage of the secondary and post-16 curriculum offer.

We will continue to develop the Key Stage 3 curriculum to develop strong personal and social skills and those functional skills necessary to access and take advantage of the learning pathways we are building at Key Stage 4.

Work is currently underway on the development of a Leeds Curriculum Framework that will ensure that Leeds is able to meet the statutory requirement to ensure that all young people can access all 14 specialised Diploma lines by 2013 and deliver the Leeds Learner Entitlement (see Appendix 3). This framework will ensure an agreed 14-19 curriculum offer for the city where all programmes have clear progression routes.

The foundations of city-wide planning of the 14-19 curriculum are currently being supported through a number of other developments including:

- The Leeds on-line Area Prospectus that is now available and include details of all programmes delivered by schools, colleges and other providers in the city together with extensive impartial information and advice that will support learner choice.
- A Common Application System for Post 16 courses that is being piloted during the 2007-8 academic year and will be available to all learners from September 2008. This will simplify the application process for the learner and provide valuable management information for the tracking of learners and the planning of the curriculum.
- Work is about to start on the development of a city-wide electronic Individual Learning Plan that will be use by all learners aged 9 to 19 to support personalised learning.
- Further development of the central co-ordination and quality assurance of the 14-16 vocational learning offer to include minimum performance standards to ensure that poor quality provision is eliminated.
- The development of a cross sector city-wide e-learning strategy to enable learners to access learning resources from a number of different locations;
- The Inclusion Strategy, ensuring that high quality provision is available in localities, areas and across the city;
- The development of the Integrated Youth Offer so that all young people have somewhere to go, something to do and someone to talk to.

Partnership and collaboration

Partnerships and collaborations that add value are essential if we are to create a viable and sustainable learning infrastructure with learning pathways for all our young people. We will be seeking to build on existing successful local partnerships across schools and between schools, colleges and universities utilising the good practice that has developed over recent years. The Education Leeds School Improvement Policy works to ensure that all our schools have a strong partnership with Education Leeds and actively builds partnerships between schools where there will be a mutual benefit. Currently all primary and secondary schools are in family and locality groups and around three quarters of schools and a number of colleges are involved in 14-19 partnerships with shared management, timetabling and other supporting arrangements. Support will be provided to ensure these partnerships arrangements continue to develop to include other settings, other providers and other partners.

Central Leeds School Improvement and Learning Alliance

These arrangements will be further strengthened for schools in central Leeds through the creation of a Central Leeds School Improvement and Learning Alliance that will complement existing arrangements and galvanise the support of key strategic partners for schools facing the greatest challenge.

Education Leeds has secured the interest of several existing and potential partners for this agenda. We aim to develop a partnership arrangement which will capture, nurture, engage and strategically direct programmes to transform attainment across the city of Leeds.

We propose to form four clusters of high schools in the central areas of the City. One in the centre, one in the east, one in the south and one in the west. These clusters would build on existing locality partnerships but be realigned around the new college sector and proposed new Post-14 Centres.

It is envisaged that the 'Central Leeds School Improvement and Learning Alliance' would:

- sponsor and support educational programmes and initiatives;
- have a role in the governance of the proposed Post 14 Centres;
- play a major role in developing the Leeds post 14 Learning Strategy;
- create a framework to maximise funding streams to support learning;
- harness the talents of everyone who shares the vision for learning in Leeds;
- be a strong partner for schools and other providers across the whole of Leeds

Academies in Leeds

We are developing a cluster model for the development of further Academies here in Leeds. We aim to explore, with partners and stakeholders and our children and young people, the potential of establishing Academies in South Leeds, West Leeds and the Centre of Leeds to complement the existing David Young Community Academy in East Leeds. These Academies would work within area clusters and establish strong, dynamic partnerships with other local schools. The twelve central area schools will be encouraged to work together and be supported by the development of the Central Leeds School Improvement and Learning Alliance.

Skills development

As part of its transformational agenda, Education Leeds is working with schools and other partners to review the place of skills in the curriculum. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority has published a Personal Learning and Thinking Skills Framework for 11-18 year olds and is keen to work with local authorities on how to further this agenda. We believe that the development of these 'soft skills' is central to the transformation we are seeking.

We want all our young people to have the skills they need to achieve the five outcomes: literacy and communication; numeracy; ICT; creativity; adaptability; innovation; design; enterprise; self and peer coaching; teamwork; empathy.

Projects have already been commissioned to develop the methodology required to nurture these skills. Several schools are contributing to these developments and piloting new approaches based on coaching and advocacy. Through these approaches we will raise aspirations; build self esteem and remove the barriers to learning. We will engage all our young people as successful positive lifelong learners.

Commitments

To take this agenda forward and develop an integrated approach to transforming secondary and post-16 provision here in Leeds we will work with all schools, colleges and providers to agree the following commitments:

- Agreement of overall, school and college based targets for 2015;
- Agreement of overall, school and college milestones for 2009 and 2012;
- Development and agreement to a NEW 'Leeds Learner Entitlement';

- Development and agreement of NEW quality assurance and performance management approaches around:
 - Levels of performance;
 - Minimum group size;
 - Course and programme quality;
 - Resourcing.
- Development and agreement to common and shared timetabling arrangements;
- Development and agreement to financial incentives around pathways and outcomes.

Next Steps

To take this agenda forward and develop an agreed approach to further developing secondary and post-16 provision here in Leeds we will:

- Consult with ward councillors and communities;
- Consult with young people;
- Consult with stakeholders and partners;
- Consult with schools;
- Establish working groups to progress key workstreams:
 - Leadership, management and governance issues;
 - The NEW Leeds Learner Entitlement;
 - The curriculum framework and pathways.
- Develop an estates strategy;
- Develop a workforce development strategy;
- Develop the financial strategy.

Conclusions

Delivering the major improvements in achievement and progression that will ensure Leeds has highly effective secondary schools and the highly skilled workforce it needs to continue to compete in a global economy is only possible through major transformational change. Taking forward the recommendations in this report represents the best opportunity we will ever have to transform learning in Leeds and deliver the step change in outcomes required to secure the long term prosperity of our great city.

A detailed implementation plan will be developed after further discussion with key stakeholders and partners and this will be brought to Executive Board for approval. This will be followed by formal public consultation on any proposals.

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