

Leeds NEET Strategy (2007-2010)

1) Vision

It is our vision that all young people in Leeds, aged 13-19 (up to 25 for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD)) are able to make positive choices about their future and are given the support they need to achieve the five outcomes of Every Child Matters, particularly Economic Well Being.

2) Introduction

a) The number of young people aged 16-18 who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) is an indicator of the number of young people who will be unemployed for long periods in their lives. Long-term unemployment can have a significant negative impact on people's lives. The vision is that all young people will have the skills and support they need to engage in learning, in order to build better futures.

b) The development of an Integrated Youth Support Service (IYSS) presents an opportunity to take a more holistic approach to the needs of children and young people and see the current Connexions strategy in the context of a wider 0-19 agenda. Targeted Youth Support, as a key element and expectation of the IYSS, will be a driving influence for resource deployment. Every Child Matters, Youth Matters and the 14-19 Strategy all combine to create an opportunity to develop the way organisations work together to achieve the five outcomes, increase participation in learning and reduce the number of young people who are NEET. Furthermore, as we move towards the raising of the participation age, in 2013, the engagement of 16-18 year olds in learning will increasingly influence policy. Based on the principle of 'Something for everyone and more for those who need it' targeted work will be part of the Universal Service available to all young people.

c) The NEET Strategy supports the Children and Young People's plan, the Teenage Pregnancy and Parenthood Strategy, the Multi Agency Looked After Plan, the Local Area Agreement, the 14-19 Strategy, the Youth Justice Plan and the Education Leeds Inclusion Strategy. The strategy will take place in the context of the 14-19 Area Review.

d) The development of the Connexions service necessitated the development of joint ways of working across Leeds. Organisations from the public, private and third sector came together to inform, drive forward and deliver the Connexions strategy, supported at a sub-regional level by Connexions West Yorkshire. The participation of young people was and continues to be a key part of the establishment, design and review of the Connexions service.

e) The Leeds NEET Plan 2006-08 analysed the NEET cohort in detail and identified groups of young people who are most likely to be NEET. This updated strategy and the attached NEET Action Plan build on this work and set out the way forward for Leeds to 2010.

3) Where we are

As a result of successful partnership working in Leeds the following has been achieved:

- a) A reduction in the percentage of young people who are NEET from 9.3% (2,096 individuals) in November 2004 to 9.0% (2,078) in November 2006¹. (Comparison between Leeds and its Statistical Neighbours is attached as Appendix 1).
- b) A significant reduction in the percentage of young people whose situation is Not Known from 9.8% (2,366 individuals) in November 2004 to 7.8% (1,918) in November 2006.
- c) Partnership Agreements and Information Sharing Protocols are in place between most of the key organisations that work with young people.
- d) An increased number of 16-19 year olds in learning (by approximately 2,000 in the last 3 years).
- e) Groups of young people who are more likely to become NEET have been identified and resources targeted at these groups. The priorities are: young offenders, teenage mothers, care leavers and young people with LDD.
- f) Excellent training is in place to ensure Connexions PAs have the necessary skills and knowledge to engage with and support young people.

The progression of young people from Year 11 into Education Employment or Training (EET) continues to be a priority. Resources have been targeted at key transition points and the percentage entering EET has been maintained during a period when the number of young people in the cohort has risen. The number of young people who are NEET at age 17 is an area of concern to be considered in the development of targeted actions.

4) Where we want to be

a) The 2010 Public Sector Agreement (PSA) percentage NEET target is designed to measure the progress that Leeds makes over the next 3 years in reducing the size of this group. The target for Leeds is set at 6.8%.

b) It should be the expectation for all young people, and those working with them, that they will be engaged in learning² post-16. Young people will be given support to help them overcome barriers.

c) It is acknowledged that there are situations where not engaging in EET is a necessary choice and young people will be given the support they need to negotiate a route back into EET at the appropriate time.

5) What next?

This updated NEET Strategy is a reflection of the partnership's evaluation of where we've come from, achievements to date and assessment of gaps in provision.

¹ Using the Local Authority NEET definition.

² In learning includes young people in full-time education, work based learning and employment with training.

APPENDIX 3

Report to Scrutiny Board, 17th January 2008

In order to ensure we continue to improve we will:

- a) Produce an Action Plan to increase participation in learning and reduce NEET, in which all partners are aware of their role and responsibilities. The plan will contain both early preventative measures and remedial actions. The plan will be reviewed and updated quarterly.
- b) Ensure young people continue to be involved in the development of services, so that their views, experiences and aspirations become part of the solution to reducing NEET.
- c) Ensure the involvement of all organisations working with young people age 13-19 (up to 25 for young people with LDD) in the development and review of the NEET Strategy and Action Plan.
- d) Use the available Management Information to fully understand the characteristics of the NEET and potential NEET cohort and inform provision of resources, by location as well as type of service.
- e) Establish ownership by all relevant organisations of their role in reducing the number of young people who are NEET.
- f) Contribute to developing strategies to raise the expectations of young people, families and communities.
- g) Seek to ensure that the opportunities are available for all young people to access appropriate Education, Training or Employment together with support to help them sustain that activity.
- h) Seek to ensure that preparatory support, including personal development and volunteering opportunities, is available to young people to enable progression to long term EET outcomes.

Leeds compared to Children's Services Statistical Neighbours³

% of 16-18 year olds NEET, 2006 ⁴

	NEET %	Not Known %
Leeds	9.1	7.7
Bolton	12.7	5.6
Bury	8.0	3.7
Calderdale	9.7	6.8
Darlington	6.7	4.1
Derby	8.4	5.4
Kirklees	9.7	6.4
North Tyneside	11.4	7.5
Sheffield	10.5	6.7
Stockton on Tees	9.9	4.9
St Helens	10.0	2.8

Leeds compared to Core Cities

% of 16-18 year olds NEET, 2006 ⁵

	NEET %	Not Known %
Leeds	9.1	7.7
Birmingham	11.4	3.9
Bristol	7.8	5.5
Liverpool	13.2	4.5
Manchester	11.4	5.3
Newcastle	9.4	8.7
Nottingham	8.0	6.8
Sheffield	10.5	6.7

³ The Children's Services Statistical Neighbours tool was commissioned by the DFES. It is designed so that statistical neighbours assigned to each Local Authority are appropriate for comparing performance in terms of the five Every Child Matters outcomes. The model uses recent census information (2001).

⁴ Figure used is the average of the NEET figure for the end of November 2006, December 2006 and January 2007.

⁵ Figure used is the average of the NEET figure for the end of November 2006, December 2006 and January 2007.