

# Children's Trust – Children and Young People's Plan Report Cards January 2012

## Appendix 3

**Meeting:** Children's Trust Board - 30 January 2012  
**Outcome 2:** Children and young people do well at all levels of learning and have the skills for life  
**LCC lead:** Paul Brennan

**Population:** Young people of academic age 16, 17 and 18 (age on 31 Aug)  
**Priority 4a:** Increase numbers in employment, education or training (EET)  
**CTB lead:** Martin Fleetwood and Diana Towler

**Why is this an obsession** Being in EET increases young people's confidence, prospects and economic independence and therefore supports the city's overall economic performance. By targeting groups and areas where NEET is a particular challenge, we can raise aspirations and prospects for young people who often have multiple poor outcomes. The current economic downturn presents challenges for young people looking to enter the workplace for the first time.

**OBSESSION**  
**Overall Progress**  
**Amber æ**

**RAG:** Gap to national performance **Direction of travel:** Good rates of young people in learning

### Story behind the baseline

At the end of November there were 1926 NEET young people in Leeds who were known to the Connexions service. Leeds has a higher NEET rate than national levels. The rate of young people in learning (78.4%) is slightly above the national level. The rate in learning is important to monitor alongside NEET rates, for when raising the participation age (RPA) to 18 comes into effect in 2015.

The government monitors local authority performance based on data from November to January each year. The Leeds NEET rate for November 2011 was 8.1%, compared to 9.2% in November 2010.

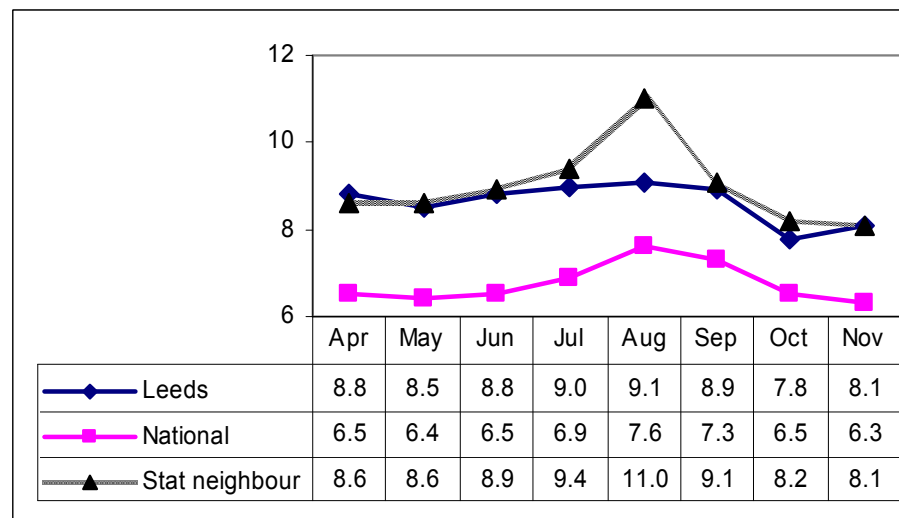
Affecting the baseline is a rise in the proportion of young people whose status is 'Not Known' to 11.4% (2770 young people), compared to 7.8% in November 2010. Where young people's status is unknown, they cannot be targeted for support. The rise in Not Knowns is in part down to national reductions in funding for Connexions services. Levels of 'Not Known' have also risen to a similar rate nationally (11.2%, Nov 11).

Young people become NEET for complex and diverse reasons. NEET levels are higher in deprived areas, and for teenage parents, young people with special educational needs, those with lower school attendance, lower levels of qualifications and young offenders. NEET rates are more than 50% among young parents and pregnant young women.

Transition between learning opportunities can trigger disengagement; as can missing out on good quality impartial information, advice and guidance (IAG). Family networks have a major influence on a young person's decision-making. Improvement activity includes work with families to ensure young people are positive about their ability to succeed, access to IAG to help choose the right learning pathway; and support at transition points.

Risks include: changes to the provision of careers education and IAG with more responsibility for schools in September 2012, but without increases in funding; reductions in post-16 funding for all providers, but that will hit schools particularly hard; and changes to which vocational qualifications count in the performance tables. Another factor is the economic downturn and its likely impact on apprenticeship and other employment opportunities.

**Curve:** Percentage of young people who are NEET (April-Nov 2011)



**What do children and young people think** A diverse group of NEET young people were consulted as part of the development of the Children and Young People's Plan. Young people said that the current economic climate had a big impact on their employability, however they also experienced other difficulties in finding employment, education or training, such as: difficulties using the systems in Jobcentres; access to IT to apply for jobs or courses; lack of confidence; struggling with interview skills; travel and financial barriers; poor reading and writing skills; and coping with complex personal circumstances.

**What we have done**

- Work is continuing with schools to support them in meeting new statutory requirements for careers education and IAG responsibilities.
- Leeds City Council has invested over £400,000 with matched funding from Leeds City College and Jobcentre Plus as part of the YOUTH Inspire programme, managed by Learning Partnerships which will support 580 young people aged 16-24 to access the support and skills training needed to help them secure a job, apprenticeship or further work-related training.
- In the autumn term high schools received NEET rates for 16-18 year olds (Years 12-14) previously at their school; allowing them to see outcomes for their former pupils and focus resources on current pupils at risk of becoming NEET.
- Arrangements for administering the new 16-19 bursary scheme are now in place.
- To increase parental engagement, parent and carer advice pages have been developed on Leeds Pathways. There is a development plan in place to ensure that labour market information that is accessible to young people and parents is available on Leeds Pathways. This will include video clips of local employers explaining the qualities they look for.

**New actions**

- The Education Business Partnership are making funding available for secondary schools to take up programmes that will help young people develop the skills they need to make the transition into work and improve their career management skills.
- Training is being offered to primary schools about career-related learning in Key Stage 2. Some children growing up in workless households may assume that the world of work is not them; career related learning can help raise aspirations from a young age.
- Plans are being developed to prepare for RPA, including identifying the needs of priority groups who do not engage with the current learning offer, through the 11-19 (25) Learning and Support Partnership and its sub-groups.
- One of the priorities of the Child Friendly City programme is to increase work experience opportunities across the city; and to ensure that young people know where to go to find out about job vacancies, apprenticeships, work experience and careers IAG. Young people will be leading work to make this priority happen.
- Increase understanding of the help available through Jobcentre Plus as a result of the introduction of the Youth Employment Support offer and the development of the Youth Contract.

**What works locally**

Accurate data and tracking, increased information sharing and improved learning options have all contributed to reducing NEET. At the same time the loss of some funding and the economic downturn pose major challenges.

**Data development**

- Planning for systems and data transfer processes in preparation for the end of the Connexions service.
- Improved data exchange agreements to reduce the tracking of young people who are in contact with other services, e.g., Jobcentre Plus and the National Apprenticeship Service.

**Partners with a role to play** Adult social care, schools and FE colleges, Connexions, housing services, young people, parents and family, employers, 14-19 confederations, Jobcentre Plus, offsite providers