

# **Education and Skills Strategy: A partnership framework for Staffordshire**

## **Consultation Document**



## **Education and Skills Strategy: a partnership framework for Staffordshire**

### **Foreword**

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*Every day, 23 babies are born to families across Staffordshire.*

*A new born baby is a precious thing. That baby, as it takes its first few breaths, has its whole life ahead of it. Families are full of joy, hope and aspiration. As this little person grows to become a toddler and pre-schooler, their heads are full of creativity and ambition.*

*Whatever their background, they crave new experiences and soak up information like sponges. Whether they live in a remote village in the Moorlands or a busy estate in one of our towns, it's our job to embrace this enthusiasm whilst they are young, help them to learn and give them the best possible start.*

*When they're at school or college, they will continue to grow and learn. It's our responsibility to support them and guide them in the choices they make. It's up to us to create opportunities for them to get the knowledge and skills they need for a great job, a rewarding career and the best shot at life.*

*As they become parents themselves, our children will have ambition and aspiration for their families and communities, making Staffordshire a great place to live for everyone.*

*This is what we want for our children, this is what we want for all children and young people and we're determined to work together to make it happen.*

## 1. Introduction

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- 1.1. This is a partnership framework for education and skills providers, partners and stakeholders across Staffordshire. This is not a county council strategy: it is a partnership framework that has been jointly developed by a reference group of education providers, partners and council officers from across Staffordshire.
- 1.2. The partnership framework being consulted on reflects our shared ambition to improve the life chances and opportunities for our learners and citizens.
- 1.3. This framework will steer our combined efforts and resources. Through working together, we know that we can make a real difference to the life chances of children and young people and to Staffordshire's future economy, providing we collectively aspire to help all children and young people to succeed in their education and ensure that no one is left behind.
- 1.4. This is a partnership framework that is based on education and skills providers as partners and leaders of the education landscape. A landscape that is characterised by multiple networks, alliances and overlapping partnerships, with their own internal governance and accountabilities.
- 1.5. Within the continually evolving education and skills landscape, there is a need for a shared vision with an agreed set of principles and clear priorities to help deliver that vision.
- 1.6. The partnership framework has been developed by a reference group of educational professionals and it seeks to:
  - *establish a Staffordshire-wide education culture based on a clear moral purpose where the conditions are such that providers are prepared to challenge and support each other*
  - *take decisions that are in the collective interest of children and young people in the wider community, as well as the interests of students, pupils and parents at their own institution.*
- 1.7. The framework will assist partners in the delivery of better outcomes for the people and communities of Staffordshire. Each partner plays a part in providing the opportunities for children and young people to get the best start in life, to acquire the knowledge and skills they need for a great job, a rewarding career and to be happy and healthy.

- 1.8. The education and skills strategy is an overarching partnership framework for Staffordshire under which other education and skill-based strategies and approaches are developed and implemented, reflecting and working towards the realisation of the ambition set out within this framework.
- 1.9. In the current economic climate, where partners and providers are under increasing financial pressure, working together within the resources available will be a more efficient and effective way to achieving our ambition for the children and young people of Staffordshire.

## 2. Current context

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- 2.1. The education landscape is changing nationally and locally. In Staffordshire there is a diverse mix and sizes of institutions providing opportunities to children and young people from early years through to adulthood, from individual childminders who may be caring for just a few children to universities with 15,000 students.
- 2.2. Existing networks are being remodelled, new partnerships are evolving and roles and responsibilities are changing. Clearly setting out how we will all work together, to champion the interests of all children and young people, will enable us to keep a clear focus on providing the very best outcomes for Staffordshire's children and young people in an outcomes-focused and highly inclusive environment.
- 2.3. This aspiration can only be delivered through a shared sense of moral purpose and responsibility across the education landscape in Staffordshire. Therefore, the ability to articulate our shared moral purpose and the need for effective system-wide collaboration to improve outcomes and realise our vision will be key.
- 2.4. We know that parents, carers and families have the most direct and lasting impact on children's learning and development. Where possible we will work in partnership with parents, carers and families to support them in helping their children succeed in education in its broadest sense. We will promote inclusion and cohesion in our education communities and equality of access and opportunity for all.
- 2.5. We can only achieve this through active collaboration by all educational providers and other partners. These include the West Midlands Regional Schools' Commissioner and representatives of the Department for Education; leaders of all our educational settings (from early years to higher/ further education skills and employment) whether they be, for example, private, voluntary or independent sector, maintained schools (including mainstream, special, PRUs), academies (including mainstream, special, PRUs), multi-academy trusts, teaching schools alliances, further education colleges and training providers.
- 2.6. In a county as big as Staffordshire, we have a flourishing and diverse population of children and young people. There are around 170,00 children: almost 12,000 have an ethnic minority background and around 150 languages are spoken. Over 80% of the county is classified as rural but just under 1 in 4 of the population live in rural areas. Some parts of the county are in the top 20% of

most affluent areas in the UK whilst others are in the 20% most deprived, but almost all consider Staffordshire as a safe place to live.

### 3. Vision and Principles

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- 3.1. This vision and underpinning principles describe our collective ambition and aspirations for education and skills in Staffordshire. We believe that the county of Staffordshire is a great place to grow up and live. Our children and young people deserve the best possible education to prepare them for their futures lives. Our shared aspiration is that Staffordshire should be one of the best places in England to access education and skills.
- 3.2. This vision and principles have been developed with reference to, and the engagement of, leaders from the sector and reflect the changing roles and accountabilities for education and skills in the County. They provide a basis to consult more widely with education leaders, learners, families and employers across the sector over the coming months.

#### Vision for Education and Skills for Staffordshire

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- 3.3. The vision encompasses education and skills from birth to leaving formal education and entering adulthood and will require leaders across the sector to work collectively to achieve it. We want our vision to be compelling, to inspire leaders in the system, and raise the aspiration of young people and families to live, learn and work in Staffordshire.
- 3.4. The vision is that:

***Every Staffordshire child deserves the best possible education and to leave school or college equipped with the learning, skills, aspirations and opportunities they need to continue lifelong learning and forge their successful career, with fulfilled healthy lives, as responsible adults.***

#### Principles for Education and Skills for Staffordshire

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- 3.5. There are three principles that underpin how we can achieve our Vision and these are:

***Principle 1: A sustainable education and skills landscape with leadership that is built on morals, ethics and trust, is underpinned by transparency and is accountable for the outcomes for all Staffordshire learners***

***Principle 2: All children get the best start in life from birth, helping children build strong foundations so they can continue to grow, learn and succeed in education.***

***Principle 3: Every child and young person has an equal opportunity to achieve and is equipped with the values, skills and knowledge necessary to progress into adulthood with a fulfilled life, to build their rewarding career and to continue their learning journey.***

***Principle 1: A sustainable education and skills landscape with leadership that is built on morals, ethics and trust, is underpinned by transparency and is accountable for the outcomes for all Staffordshire learners***

- 3.6. For the education and skills partnership framework to be delivered successfully, we need system leaders to engage and provide positive leadership whilst being accountable for institutional outcomes and holding others to account.
- 3.7. Through partnerships, alliances and networks we will continue to build new, collaborative ways of working effectively together to deliver our shared vision. The system will be self-supporting, sustainable and self-improving and will learn from the best people, institutions and evidence.
- 3.8. Through partnerships working to deliver this vision we will strive to improve life chances and opportunities for learners and citizens in Staffordshire.

***Principle 2: All children get the best start in life from birth, helping children build strong foundations so they can continue to grow, learn and succeed in education.***

- 3.9. We know that what happens at home is also a major influence on a child's development. We want to better support parents and carers to encourage early years learning by providing them with the right information and tools. We aim to provide them with the opportunity to develop their own skills as parents, families and communities through formal and informal learning.
- 3.10. Early education plays an essential role in childhood development, both socially and academically. We want to ensure that children from all backgrounds can access high quality early years education that will put them in the best position to thrive and learn when reaching school age.
- 3.11. The relationship between parents and providers is critical for children to grow, learn and succeed. Both share a responsibility to ensure a positive and productive relationship.

***Principle 3: Every child and young person has an equal opportunity to achieve and is equipped with the values, skills and knowledge necessary to progress into adulthood with a fulfilled life, to build their rewarding career and to continue their learning journey.***

- 3.12. We want all our children and young people to secure the knowledge and skills they need to succeed and achieve their potential through a high-quality education and skills system. Great teaching and learning across the whole of Staffordshire is key to ensuring that all children have an equal chance of success based on talent and potential, regardless of their background, disadvantage or vulnerability.
- 3.13. Staffordshire's education and skills system will be the passport to opportunity for our children and young people. We want to ensure that all our children and young people participate in this system and take advantage of the opportunities education can offer them.
- 3.14. Our children's core literacy and numerical skills, which provide the foundation for successful adulthood and a rewarding career, will be enriched by a creative, vibrant and appropriate curriculum. This will ensure that every child has the opportunity to develop their skills in a number of areas.
- 3.15. Parents and carers are fundamental in helping to guide a child's talents and ambition in building a career. Parents need to be given the right information advice and guidance to choose the best route their child, whether technical, academic or an apprenticeship. This also means ensuring that young people are equipped with the right attitudes and behaviours necessary for the world of work.
- 3.16. We recognise the importance of learning and development at home, through education and within the workplace because people who have a propensity to learn make good role models, successful employees and make a positive contribution to Staffordshire.
- 3.17. Staffordshire is a locality that prides itself on a culture of lifelong learning and healthy living, which is not only good for our children and young people it also makes economic sense, as it is good for productivity and the Staffordshire economy.



## 4. Governance and Structures

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- 4.1. The current educational landscape is complex and continues to evolve. This landscape is characterised by a plethora of overlapping partnerships, networks and alliances. Within this context we recognise the importance of the opportunity to bring leaders together, connect to best practice within and beyond the system, facilitate partnerships. This will enable all of us in Staffordshire to work towards shared strategic principles to improve outcomes and children's and young people's life chances.

### Individual provider

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- 4.2. We need and expect all those who are part of the education and skills system to understand their responsibility and accountability to achieve the outcomes and vision as set out within this partnership framework.



- 4.3. For institutions we want them to achieve the best outcomes for their communities with a responsibility to help parents. For parents we want them to have aspiration for their children to achieve the best outcomes and children to be inspired to build a rewarding career, have the right attitude for the world of work and be active citizens within the community with a love of learning.

### Locality or sector cluster

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- 4.4. We recognise that there are existing and developing locality structures, relationships and networks which include Early Years providers, training providers, employers, mainstream schools, FE, special education, PRU. We would rely on these to continue to address the needs of individual and local settings and providers whilst reflecting the Staffordshire ambition, vision and principles.



## Provider networks/ area groups

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- 4.5. These networks and groups would be necessary to provide the possibility of co-ordination of the partnership framework across a local area and the link with existing district/ area based/ county wide groups. The established groups and networks which include Early Years providers, training providers, employers, mainstream schools, FE, special schools and PRUs as well as district councils and providers of social care are continuing to develop and are implementing strategies including a place-based approach to earliest and early help, SEND prototypes and transformation, inclusion agenda, family health and wellbeing through the district family improvement boards.



## Proposal for the Education and Skills Strategic Group for Staffordshire

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- 4.6. Through partnerships, alliances and networks we will continue to build new, collaborative ways of working effectively together to deliver our shared vision. The system will be self-supporting, sustainable and self-improving and learn from the best people, institutions and evidence.
- 4.7. This group would be responsible for the facilitation of the Education and Skills partnership framework as an overarching umbrella embracing existing clusters and networks in Staffordshire.



- 4.8. This group will identify and agree Staffordshire wide priorities based on analysis of trend performance information and comparison to national data sets. Using this intelligence, the group will identify key hotspots and areas of success. The group will be responsible for the communication and information sharing with all stakeholders.
- 4.9. For the education and skills partnership framework to be delivered successfully, we need system leaders to engage and provide positive leadership, whilst being accountable for institutional outcomes and holding others to account.
- 4.10. Through partnerships working to deliver this framework we will strive to improve life chances and opportunities for learners and citizens in Staffordshire.
- 4.11. Once consultation ends on 21 December, the feedback will be reviewed and considered by the reference group on 24 January 2019 and the Education and Skills Strategy finalised and agreed.
- 4.12. By April, an Education and Skills Strategic Group would be established (see the draft Terms of Reference in Appendix 1) and its initial actions would be to:
- Assess available evidence to identify strengths and variation in outcomes
  - Agree the priorities that the group will take forward
  - Develop delivery plan/s that engage system leaders
  - Develop communications plan to engage with all involved within the sector.

#### Links to other strategic partnerships

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- 4.13. The Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is charged with the economic growth of the local economy and this partnership framework will support the education and skills priorities.
- 4.14. The Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB), through the Family Strategic Partnership Board (FSPB), is charged with giving children the best start in life and maximising potential and ability. These are reflected in the principles within this framework.

### **Terms of Reference for the Staffordshire Education and Skills Strategic Group**

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#### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of the group is to lead the delivery of the Education and Skills Strategy: a partnership framework for Staffordshire. The group members hold the responsibility for identifying priorities and reviewing available information to evaluate the impact on outcomes for the people and communities of Staffordshire.

#### **2. Membership**

To provide continuity, it is proposed to maintain representation from the range of providers and partners on the reference group:

- Early Years maintained providers
- Early Years PVI (private, voluntary and independent) providers
- Special School Headteacher Forum
- Primary School Headteacher Forum
- Middle School Headteacher Forum
- Secondary School Headteacher Forum
- University Technology College (UTC)
- Staffordshire Schools Forum
- Staffordshire Teaching Schools Alliances
- Staffordshire Governors
- A large Staffordshire MAT
- A large national MAT with schools in Staffordshire
- Staffordshire Joint Advisory Council (JAC)
- College/FE providers
- Staffordshire County Council
- Entrust

Membership would be widened to include representatives of:

- Staffordshire parent governors
- Staffordshire academy trustees
- Diocese of Lichfield
- The Archdiocese of Birmingham
- Training providers
- Universities
- Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP (Learning and Enterprise Partnership)
- Office of the Regional Schools Commissioner for West Midlands

### **3. Functions and outputs**

In the first instance, Staffordshire County Council will convene the strategic group. The strategic group is facilitated and co-ordinated by Staffordshire County Council.

The functions of the strategic group are to:

- Assess available evidence to identify strengths and variation
- Consider and agree the priorities for the Education and Skills partnership framework;
- Develop and implement a communication plan to engage with all involved across the sector and share success and hotspots
- Develop delivery plan/s that engage system leaders in focussing attention on the key outcomes that will lead change and have the greatest impact
- Share available information and intelligence
- Evaluate the impact and outcomes
- Promote the engagement and ownership of all stakeholders.
- Model the behaviours of support, challenge and accountability
- Continue to review and refresh the partnership framework and delivery plans in line local and national landscape

The outputs of this group will be:

- Education and skills partnership framework
- High level priorities
- Communication plan
- Delivery plan/s
- Evaluation of impact

### **4. Roles**

- We all commit to support the functions and outcomes of the group
- To share our perspectives on the current and future education landscape
- Share and exchange information which will assist in the delivery of the partnership framework
- The county council will convene and facilitate the Group
- The county council will ensure communication with all education providers, undertake consultation and collate and report feedback
- Education providers will act as a reference point for debate and dialogue with peers and reflect feedback and engagement

## **Roles and responsibilities**

**Parents:** a parent's role in their children's learning evolves as they grow, however, one thing remains constant: parents are their children's learning models. Attitudes about education can inspire their children and show them how to take charge of their own educational journey. They have a responsibility in providing guidance and information throughout their learning journey.

**Early years providers:** All providers must meet the standards identified within the Early Years Framework 'to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life'

**Governing Body and Trusts:** As the education system is changing, increasing focus is being placed on the role and effectiveness of governing boards. In fulfilling their role within the overall system of accountability, Governing Body and Responsible Authorities for Governance operate within a framework of autonomy and have the primary responsibility for their own performance. The Governing Body and Responsible Authorities for Governance hold responsibility for the delivery of an appropriate curriculum and, in secondary schools, option choices. They also have the responsibility for the development and embedding of rigorous self-evaluation using individual school outcomes to set priorities to drive planning to secure continuous improvement for the attainment and progress of all their pupils. They use all available resources as self-managing schools to secure improvement in standards and quality.

**The Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) in the West Midlands:** The RSC is responsible for approving and monitoring academies and free schools on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education. The RSC is accountable to the National Schools' Commissioner. The RSC also has a role to address underperformance in Staffordshire LA maintained schools that are "failing", through sponsored academy arrangements, and to address underperformance in coasting Staffordshire local authority maintained schools or maintained schools requiring improvement through warning notices and notice periods for improvement.

**Colleges, universities and training providers:** These education providers have the same responsibilities as other educational institutions but are also required to meet the priorities as set out by the appropriate Local Enterprise Partnership which includes working with employers to design flexible programmes and delivery methods. Delivering appropriate training/learning that improves people's chances of being competitive in the labour market. Delivering a high quality and appropriate curriculum through the required vocational qualifications. Giving graduates the right skills that employers need and are asking for. Improving employer involvement in designing courses including Higher Apprenticeships. Appropriate Labour Market Information (LMI) awareness and advice and guidance given to students.

**The local authority (LA):** The local authority retains statutory functions for early years and childcare including securing sufficient childcare for working parents, providing information, advice and assistance to parents and information, advice and training to childcare providers.

The LA supports the provision of excellent education for all children of compulsory school age so that every child has a school place, ensuring fair access through admissions and transport arrangements and ensuring the needs of vulnerable pupils are met.

Local authorities retain the duty to ensure that pupils have the opportunity to attend schools that are good or better, with powers to intervene where there are concerns about standards in maintained schools and to liaise with the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) where we have concerns about an academy school.

In respect of post-16 education and training the local authority responsibility is to secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all young people in their area aged 16-19 and up to 25 for those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). They promote the effective participation in education and training of 16 and 17-year olds and identify 16 and 17-year olds who are not participating in education or training and providing support to enable participation.

The role of the LA in education has evolved to encompass three key areas of responsibility: as a convenor of partnerships; as a champion of children, families and communities; and as a maker and shaper of effective commissioning.

**Employers:** Employers are responsible for articulating the skills required to meet business needs. Supporting and delivering activity that improves careers advice and guidance. Offering work experience and traineeships. Developing the workforce by implementing apprentice and graduate recruitment policies. They are also required to help meet the priorities as set out by the appropriate Local Enterprise Partnership.

***Principle 1: A sustainable education and skills landscape with leadership that is built on morals, ethics and trust, is underpinned by transparency and is accountable for the outcomes for all Staffordshire learners***

Draft outcome measures	Key Performance indicator Examples	Staffordshire	National	Statistical Neighbour (if available)	Variation Minimum (if available)	Variation Maximum (if available)
System leaders provide effective challenge and support to their peers	fixed term and permanent exclusions					
Levels of engagement in the system	Progress measures					
	Participation rates					
Sustainable and affordable that lives within means	Destinations					
	Looked After Children, Youth Offending Service, EHE					
Open, transparent and evidence led						



**Principle 2: All children get the best start in life from birth, helping children build strong foundations so they can continue to grow, learn and succeed in education.**

Draft outcome measures	Key Performance indicator Examples	Staffordshire	National	Statistical Neighbour (if available)	Variation Minimum (if available)	Variation Maximum (if available)
Parents are informed and equipped to support child development	take up of funded child care including vulnerable families					
	BRFC outcomes					
Parents engage with learning and education early– accessing the system before the age of 5	Literacy and language development					
	Social and emotional health					
	good level of development					

**Principle 3: Every child and young person has an equal opportunity to achieve and is equipped with the values, skills and knowledge necessary to progress into adulthood with a fulfilled life, to build their rewarding career and to continue their learning journey.**

Draft outcome measures	Key Performance indicator Examples	Staffordshire	National	Statistical Neighbour (if available)	Variation Minimum (if available)	Variation Maximum (if available)
<p>An inclusive system with an equal chance of success</p> <p>G&amp;T/Most able</p> <p>disadvantage, vulnerable learners, SEND performance</p> <p>High quality education and skills offer</p> <p>Parents and families are informed and engaged in securing the best outcomes for their families</p> <p>Children and young people are equipped through education to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors, responsible citizens</p>	Reduced fixed term and permanent exclusions					
	Improved attendance, reduced absence, reduced PA					
	Narrowing gaps data					
	Pupil Premium/Disadvantaged					
	SEND Performance					
	% Good & outstanding providers					
	NEETS, Youth unemployment, work readiness/experience					
	Gatsby Benchmarks					
	English & Maths 5+					
	English & Maths 7+					
STEM						

Young people are best prepared for the world of work and are career ready	Functional Skills					
	T-level/Apprenticeship					
Higher productivity, higher skills and better pay	SCYVS/NCS					
	Level 2 and Level 3 attainment at 19					
	Progression to HE/higher Apprenticeships					
	Improved skills levels					
	Basic skills, ESOL and digital					