

Northumberland
County Council
2018/19

Education and Skills



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Education and Skills Service Statement

Introduction and Vision

The Council's Corporate Plan says we want children and young people to achieve and realise their potential. The provision of good education is fundamental to the future of our county. We want all of our schools and academies to be outstanding but also places where success is not just measured narrowly in terms of league tables but also fulfills the potential of every child. Achieving good academic and vocational qualifications including English and Mathematics, provides the cornerstone for success for future employment.

We encourage schools, colleges and academies to develop the full capacity of every child. This includes their spiritual, social, cultural and emotional development. Schools and academies across Northumberland serve approximately 45,000 children and make a significant contribution to them becoming good citizens with clear moral principles that guide their lives and help them build relationships.

It is the prime responsibility of the Education and Skills Service of the Local Authority to act as champions for these children and their families to support and challenge schools, academies and colleges to ensure they all get the best start in life. A key priority in the north east of England and for Northumberland County Council is to increase social mobility by reducing the gap between achievement of children eligible for free school meals and their peers.

Purpose:

We will drive educational excellence by: enhancing resident's skills and employment opportunities; providing sufficient and high quality school places to meet local demand and services that support the quality of early years, primary and secondary education; and by delivering services to support those with special educational needs, disabilities (SEND) and additional needs. We will act as a champion for children and parents.

Our primary functions:

Early Years Foundation Stage / Primary Schools Commissioning

- Primary Schools
- School Improvement
- Early Years Foundation Stage
- Portage
- E-Learning

Secondary / Post 16 Schools Commissioning

- Secondary Schools
- School Improvement
- Governance / School Support
- Music Partnership North
- Equalities

SEND Strategies

- Special Educational Needs and Disability

- Sensory Support (Visual and Hearing Impairment)
- Specific LD/ Literacy / Speech and Language
- Behaviour / ASD
- Education Psychology

Inclusion (Virtual School Headteacher)

- Education Support for Looked After Children and previously looked after children
- Education Welfare - including children missing education and elective home education, child employment and performance licences, permanent exclusions
- EOTAS health needs provision
- Safeguarding standards in schools, education and the MASH
- Emotional health and wellbeing

School Organisation and Resources

- School Organisation
- Admissions and Place Planning
- Capital Development
- School Meals
- Academisation
- Buildings and Assets
- School Funding
- Business Support

Skills and Employability

- Northumberland Adult Learning Service
- Employability
- Careers guidance

Many of the above functions rely heavily on providing effective and swift responses to decisions taken by schools and academies. For example, the decision to exclude a pupil is made by a school or academy, not the local authority (LA), but it is the duty of the LA to then arrange alternative provision. Therefore, the priorities and targets set out in this service statement should be seen as part of a wider system where these functions work with external services to deliver improvements.

Key Statistics and benchmarking (also see [Director of Education and Skills Annual Report 2017](#) for analysis of comparisons)

Early years

- 85% of all eligible 2 year olds took up their statutory entitlement to early education in the Autumn term 2017. This is a 21% increase on the summer term 2015, and is better than the national average of 71%. However, there is a significant level of variation across the county.
- In 2016-17, 74.9% achieved a good level of development compared to a national average of 70.7% and this shows a 4 year rising trend.

School choice

- There are 170 schools, 25 of which were academies in March 2018. There were 34 secondary schools; 123 primary; 9 special; 1 Pupil Referral Unit and 3 Independent. Around 45,000 children attend them.
- In September 2017, 96.5% of parents got their first choice of primary school compared with 90.0% nationally. 98.2% of parents got their first choice of secondary school compared with 83.5% nationally.
- Across the county there is a 15% surplus school place capacity which is in excess of the 5% expectation of the department for education (DfE). We are in discussion with the DfE about how to reduce this.

Primary age school children

- 85% of year one pupils passed the phonics test at the end of year 1 compared to a national average of 81%. This compares with 83.7% the previous year.
- 81%, 74% and 79% reached the expected standard in reading, writing and maths, respectively at the end of Key Stage 1, compared to the national average of 76%, 68% and 75%. This an increase from 2016 (78%, 70% and 76% respectively)
- 61% of pupils reach the expected standard in reading, writing and maths combined at the end of Key Stage 2, 1% lower than the national average of 62% and an increase from 56% in 2016.
- The rate of fixed period exclusion for primary schools is 0.9% compared with a national average of 1.02%.
- 12 children have been permanently excluded from a primary school since September 2017, there were six primary school permanent exclusions in 2016-17.
- In the primary phase overall absence out-performs the national average and north east averages. Persistent absence is particularly impressive at 7.2%, an improvement on last year but significantly better than national and north-east averages, at 8.3% and 8.8% respectively.

Secondary age school children

- At the end of key stage 4, the average attainment 8 score was 44.7 compared with a national average of 46.3, this is a decrease from 48.1 in 2016.
- By the end of key stage 4, the average progress 8 score was -0.16 compared with a national average of -0.03 and a progress 8 score of -0.14 in 2016.
- 76 children have been permanently excluded from secondary schools since September 2017 compared with 70 permanent exclusions during the whole of 2016-17 school year.
- The fixed period exclusion rate is 4.7% compared with the national average of 6.62%.
- In the secondary phase overall absence of 5.2% comfortably out-performs the national and north-east averages of 5.4% and 5.6%. Persistent absence also out-performs the national and regional averages - the Northumberland figure is 12.3% compared to 13.5% and 14.7%,

making us the top performing North East local authority.

Alternative Provision

- The local authority commissions places in alternative provision for pupils who have been permanently excluded from school. Provision at alternative providers or new schools has to be arranged within 6 days of an exclusion taking place, for 2016-17 this occurred within timescale for 75% of cases.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

- Attainment for children with SEND is much lower than those of their peer group.
- Children with SEND make good or outstanding progress if they are attending one of our special schools.
- Attendance in special schools is very good. Overall absence in special schools has reduced to 8.8% (national 9.7% and north east 9.4%), and persistent absence is much better than north east and national averages, staying constant at 24%.
- 287 new Education and Health Care Plans for children and young people with special educational needs were completed in 2017; 92.6% were completed within time scale. In comparison, in the first 3 months of 2018, we completed 58, and 100% were completed on time, a significant improvement.
- 533 special educational needs (SEN) transfer reviews (ie transfers from previous SEN statements), were completed in 2017 and 95% were completed within time scale. In the first 3 months of 2018, we completed 119, of which 100% were completed on time, again a significant improvement. All transfer reviews were completed by the end of March 2018, as required by central government.
- 270 statutory pieces of Psychological Advice were completed during the academic year 2016-2017 by Educational Psychologists as part of the requests for Education and Health Care Assessments. This was a significant increase on the number requested the previous year of 232.

(Data relating to Looked After Children and Young People's education outcomes can be found in the Children's Social Care service statement)

Young People in work based learning, sixth forms or colleges and adult learners

- The Learning and Skills Service was inspected by Ofsted in June 2014 and was judged good.
- Achievement rates for 16-18 year olds are 89.9%, 8.4% above the 16/17 national average.
- Achievement rates for 19+ year olds are 92.3%, 5.4% above the 16/17 national average.
- 680 courses were offered to 4455 learners.
- 440 apprentices were supported in 2016/17. Outcomes for this group remain outstanding. Overall achievement is 83.9%, which is 16.2% above the 2016/17 national average. Of those that were unemployed and needed skills training to return to work, 73.5% gain employment during or on completion of their programme and 462 job outcomes were secured.
- The percentage of young people aged 16-17 leaving full time education whose subsequent destination is categorised as Not Known is down to 0.5% at March 2018, while the percentage categorised as not in education employment or training (NEET) is at 4.1%, a combined figure of 4.6%, comparing favourably with 6.7% nationally.
- There is wide variation between the performance of our young people in our sixth forms, but in general it is slightly below average.
- At its last Ofsted inspection Northumberland College was judged to be good by Ofsted.

Performance of Education and Skills according to Ofsted

- 94% of early years providers in Northumberland were judged by Ofsted to be good or outstanding at August 2017, equal to the national average.
- 85% of our first and primary schools are judged to be good or better compared to 91% nationally, and similarly 86% of primary aged pupils are in good or outstanding schools, again compared to 91% nationally. All the RI primary schools inspected in 17/18 moved to good.
- 69% of our secondary schools are judged to be good or better compared to 79% nationally. 66% of secondary aged pupils are in good or outstanding schools compared against 82% nationally .
- 100% of our special schools are judged to be good or outstanding compared to 93% nationally.
- The pupil referral unit is judged to be good.
- The Northumberland Adult Learning Service (NALS) was judged to be good in June 2014.
- The Virtual School that provides education for children who are looked after or who are missing from education was identified as a strength by Ofsted in the SIF inspection (Feb 2016).

Summary of Service Resources at 1 April 2018

Service	Number of FTE posts	Staffing Expenditure	Non Staffing Expenditure	Income	Capital Investment
Total for Service	334.8	£129,513,580	£87,376,406	-£206,970,436	£59,162,025
Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)	139.93	£8,230,220	£39,430,040	-£159,926,830	-
Non-DSG	85.37	£8,603,560	£7,846,700	-£7,095,630	-
Schools	n/a	£109,185,250	£38,894,950	-£35,813,630	-
Learning and Skills Service	109.5	£3,494,550	£1,204,716	-£4,13,346	-

DSG = Dedicated Schools Grant received for education in Northumberland. This forms the major element of education and schools funding in Northumberland.

The service manages a significant annual capital programme in excess of £10m, that is used to improve and adapt the existing school estate through a combination of new build, extension, alteration, and refurbishment projects. The programme funded through DfE grants and the council's own resources.

Customer perception of the education and skills service

a) Parents with children with special educational needs and disabilities

Consultation was held between 19 October and 8 December 2017, where options to increase our specialist educational provision school capacity for children and young people with SEND and the SEND Draft Strategy 2017-2020 were consulted on. Five public events were held from Berwick to Hexham with online and paper forms of consultation available. These events were well attended, by parents, carers, students, education and health professionals who attended to find out more detail and express their views. As a result of this consultation we received 206 written responses.

There were two key aims of the consultation, they were to seek views on:

- Our vision and strategy for the local area in supporting children and young people with SEND between 2017-2020.
- Gaining views to develop a draft place planning strategy to grow specialist provision within Northumberland to ensure children with SEND are educated close to home in high quality education establishments, giving greater opportunity for social inclusion within the communities in which they live.

The outcome of the consultation in relation to the vision and strategy, was very encouraging in that the vast majority of respondents were in broad agreement that the key strategic objectives within the draft strategy were suitable to drive the improvements necessary to ensure that the code of practice was fully implemented. The following key themes were identified.

Capacity, Funding and Resources. This was the most frequently raised issue within the consultation. Where views expressed agreement with the statement, they were often followed by concern that funding issues may affect its achievement. In addition there were many comments around the fact that meeting SEND effectively in our schools is at present compromised by lack of resources and/or inequalities in funding. Concern about lack of a continuum of support was frequently raised; a lack of places in specialist provisions combined with the geographical challenge of the county. Suggestions were made about additionally resourced provisions being established to meet need

Training and Workforce Development. Developments suggested focussed on the perceived urgent need to develop skills and knowledge around supporting children and young people with SEND in frontline education and health staff. This would promote more inclusive schools and enable children and young people to remain in schools close to their communities. Training and workforce development would also further promote early identification and support staff to be more confident in meeting identified needs. There were a number of responses which suggested that there is significant mainstream provision which is not inclusive in its philosophy. The council is reviewing its service level agreement with schools and the SEND Support Services as part of this work.

Listening to children, Young People and Families. There were strong responses from parents/carers whose experiences had clearly been difficult, but the widespread view was that the voice of learners and their families should hold higher value than it currently does. There is a need to ensure that the voice of the child or young person and their family is central to all decision making about services, their provision and their development.

Communication, collaboration and multi agency working. Developing joined up working across health, education and social care was identified as being a priority throughout the consultation. Communication between agencies including schools and other professionals and

between professionals and parent/carer/learner was often perceived to be inconsistent. The communication of information to parents and children/young people in accessible formats was raised a number of times.

Timeliness. Time taken to identify needs, response time following referrals (particularly to CYPS) and delays associated with unclear pathways were all frequently cited as areas for development. It was referenced in questions relating to early identification, school aged SEND provision and for post 16.

Preparation for Adulthood. The need for clearer pathways into adulthood was identified alongside greater clarity over provision available and how to access it was cited by parents as an area for improvement.

In addition to the above key themes, there were other common themes within the consultation. These included:

- **Joint commissioning** and the need to develop more joined up commissioning between education, health and social care.
- **Increased accountability** within the system to ensure equitable allocation of scarce resources. This covered internal LA (Local Authority) data systems and those for additional fund allocation (EHCP and top up) and also systems by which schools could be held to account to ensure the appropriate use of funds to effectively meet need.
- **Sharing best practice** between some of the highly inclusive mainstream settings in Northumberland. Delivering a curriculum which suits individual learners in specialist and mainstream provisions.

There was considerable positivity about the vision statement reflecting that the respondents felt it to be 'ethical and inclusive', representing that it presents a coordinated approach to SEND services across the county. There was also evidence that multi-agency working is being established and developing well, for example, the early intervention hubs, the Children's hearing Services Working Group. Some individual schools noted that aspects of SEND support have been readily available. Positive comments were also made around provision for SEND in first and primary schools in particular e.g. 'My experience is that the majority of first schools meet the goal of being welcoming, accessible and inclusive'.

As a result of these key findings of the consultation a revised Vision and Strategy for the local area in supporting children and young people with SEND 2017-2020 has been produced.

b) Learning and Skills Service

- Northumberland Careers Fairs in 2016/17 were organised and hosted by the Careers Guidance Team. 63% of participants completed an evaluation. 100% were either very satisfied or satisfied with the overall event and benefits of attending. 97% of young people who completed the evaluation found the event useful for making post 16 choices.

The National Learner and Employer Satisfaction Surveys for 2016/17 showed an overall satisfaction score of 9.5/10 for learners and 9.1/10 for employers with 95.7% likely to recommend us.

There is a continuous improvement in the quality of programmes. Learner feedback shows

satisfaction scores rising from 2015/16 to 2016/17 as follows:

- Quality of our teaching has risen from 93% to 94%
- Quality of learner treatment is stable at 97%
- Quality of advice is stable at 88%
- Quality of support for learners has risen from 92% to 94%
- Courses meeting learner expectations has risen from 92% to 93%
- Responsiveness to views of learners has risen from 91% to 94%
- Overall learner satisfaction is 95.7%

Adult Learning monitors the impact of learning on learners' lives through the National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education (NIACE) indicators. The key measure has been those who express that the positive impacts have been moderate to very strong. Scores are collected for 6 months after learners leave their programme but the data set to date shows moderate to very strong positive impacts in all of the measures and they have all increased from previous years:

- home has risen from 63% to 72%
- finance has risen from 37% to 53%
- emotions and feelings has risen from 71% to 78%
- health has risen from 53% to 63%
- social skills has risen from 66% to 74%
- employability has risen from 49% to 60%
- and community life has risen from 52% to 60%.

Although Work Programme is a mandatory programme the service still seeks and acts upon feedback from customers to ensure quality assurance standards are met and to help improve the service that we deliver. 90% of customers stated that were happy with the service they received from their Employment Coach. 75% of Generation North East customers would recommend the programme to peers seeking similar employability support.

The independent survey of our Skills Support for the Unemployed programme found that 94.4% of customers rated their satisfaction as good or excellent, with 100% of customers recommending the programme to other unemployed learners.

Staff survey

We have reviewed the results from the recent staff survey and heads of service are developing action plans for their service with team managers, having analysed the areas rag rated as green and red for the Education and Skills service. Headlines were as follows:

Positives:

- Relatively few staff had experienced physical or verbal abuse, harassment or bullying from service users or relatives
- Relatively few staff had seen errors or near misses that could have hurt service users or colleagues

More work needed on:

- Understanding how staff roles are important to the Council's vision and values
- Career progression

Appendix 1 - Data Measures Used in Performance Framework

Measure	National Average	3 Year academic yr out-turn unless asterisked *				Target 2018/19				2019/20	2020/21
		2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4		
% children taking up the Statutory entitlement to early education for all eligible 2 year olds *	71%	N.A.	77.6	82.0	85.0	85	85	85	85	86	87
% of pupils in primary schools judged by Ofsted to be good or outstanding (at end of year) *	90	N.A.	88	83	86	86	87	89	91	92	93
EYFSP - % of pupils achieving a Good Level of Development	70.7	64.9	73.4	74.9	N.Av	75				76	77
Phonics - % of year 1 pupils working at the expected standard	81	78	83.7	85	N.Av	86				87	88
KS1 - % of pupils achieving the expected standard	Reading - 76 Writing - 68 Maths - 75	N.A.	Reading - 78.5 Writing - 70.1 Maths - 76.2	Reading - 80.7 Writing - 73.8 Maths - 79.0	N.Av	R- 81 Wr - 74 M - 80				R- 82 Wr - 75 M - 81	R- 83 Wr - 76 M - 82
KS2 - % of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths	61	N.A.	55.6	61	N.Av	62				63	64
Number of permanent exclusions from primary schools in academic year	N.A.	7	3	6	12 (YTD) est 20	20				10	0
KS4 - average Attainment 8 score	46	N.A.	N.A.	44.4	N.Av	46				46	46
KS4 - average Progress 8 score	-0.03	N.A.	N.A.	-0.17	N.Av	0				0	0
% of pupils in secondary school judged by Ofsted to be good or outstanding (at end of year) *	82	N.A.	55	64.0	66.4	67	67	68	70	74	78
Number of schools on vulnerable list at risk of being Requires Improvement or Inadequate that are currently good or outstanding *	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	24	4	4	4	4	4	3	2

School year		14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19				19/20	20/21
Number of permanent exclusions from secondary schools in academic year	N.A.	37	41	70	76 (YTD) est 110	100				70	40
% permanently excluded pupils receiving full-time education by 6th day following exclusion	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	75	67 (YTD) est 79	100				100	100
% of 16 - 17 year olds Not in education, employment or training (NEET)	6.7	4.2	4.1	3.9	3.7 target	3.6				3.5	3.5
% of 16 - 17 year olds Not Known	3.5	1.5	1.1	0.7	0.7 target	0.6				0.6	0.5
% of 16 - 17 year olds NEET and Not Known	6.7	5.7	5.2	4.8	4.5 target	4.3				4.1	4.0

% of apprenticeship leavers who progress into a positive destination over the total number of leavers.	N.A.	90.00	90.58	96.76	90.0 target	90.0	90.0	90.0	90.0	90.0	90.0
% overall success of apprenticeships in NVQ, Technical Certificate and Functional Skills Framework	67.0.	82.15	78.50	83.90	85.00 target	85.50				86.00	86.50
Financial year		14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19				19/20	20/21
% of new Education and Health Care Plans successfully completed within statutory 20 week time scale *	64.3	14	TBC	TBC	93	100	100	100	100	100	100
Transfer reviews completed within 20 week time scale *	N.A.	2	72	79.3	95	Completed in 2017/18 so this PI will cease after the 2017/18 outturn is reported				N.A.	N.A.

Appendix 2 - Service statement priorities

To deliver our high level objectives outlined at the start of this plan, the following priorities have been adopted.

1. Play a part in strategic leadership of improvement.
2. Ensure access to quality places where they are needed.
3. Support and protect vulnerable children by intervening and using our formal powers.
4. Work with children's social care colleagues and broker good support.
5. Help build pupils' character and resilience.
6. Ensure excellent early years provisions.
7. Deliver excellent 16-19 skills provisions.
8. Support fair and sustainable funding and good use of capital funds to focus on the greatest need.
9. Assist schools with curriculum and assessment reforms.
10. Know our schools, their performance and the standards they achieve to report to Council and community.
11. Help to recruit, develop, support and retain teachers to accelerate school improvement.
12. Play a part in strategic leadership of improvement to educational outcomes.
13. Embed Graduated Approach to identify SEN within mainstream settings.

In line with national legislative changes about information sharing, the service has, and will continue, to place high importance on compliance with the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation).