



Northumberland
County Council



Education and Skills Service Statement 2019 – 2021

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April 2019

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 to be 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 educational success and for future employment opportunities.

We will drive educational excellence by providing sufficient, high quality school places to meet local demand and services that support the quality of early years, primary and secondary education. We will deliver high quality services to support those with special educational needs, disabilities (SEND) and additional needs and those who are disadvantaged in any way. Ultimately, we are hoping to enhance all of our resident's education, skills, training and employment opportunities in both the short and long term.

Purpose

We encourage schools, colleges and academies to develop the full capacity of every child. This includes their spiritual, social, cultural and emotional development. Our schools and academies 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 to build relationships.

It is the prime responsibility of Northumberland's Education and Skills Service to act as the champion of children and their families by supporting and challenging schools, academies and colleges to provide our children and young people with the best start in life. A key priority in the north east of England and the council is to increase social mobility in the region by further reducing the gap between the achievement of those children who are eligible for free school meals and their peers. Underpinning this in Northumberland will be a strong working relationship between education and children's and adults' social care to ensure that our 0-25 years offer is fully inclusive and that all children and young people have the opportunity and support needed to succeed.

Considerable progress has been made in improving the education offer in Northumberland over the last five years. Pupil attainment in both the Early Years and Key Stage 1 is now in the top 20% nationally, attainment in Key Stage 2 is in line with the national average and attainment at GCSE is now higher than the national average. Ofsted good or outstanding outcomes for first, primary and middle schools now match the national average. Our four inadequate secondary schools are now under new governorship and we are confident that they will rapidly improve. Other notable successes include the Northumberland post-16 Learning and Skills Service that has been judged by OFSTED to be good overall with outstanding leadership and management and overall school attendance which is higher than the national average.

Priorities for the future include improving our Special Educational Needs (SEN) offer to children, young people and families by successfully addressing the areas of weakness identified by OFSTED and the CQC during our local area SEN inspection in October 2018. The council's Children and Family Services Scrutiny Exclusions Task and Finish group has been meeting to devise strategies for reducing the number of permanent and fixed-term exclusions from schools which are far too high.

Our Primary Functions:

Early Years Foundation Stage / Primary Schools

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

Secondary / Post 16 Schools

- Secondary Schools
- School Improvement
- Governance / School Support
- Music Partnership North
- Equalities / Traveller Children and Young People

SEND Strategies

- Special Educational Needs Team
- Sensory Support (Visual and Hearing Impairment)
- Specific Learning Difficulties/ Literacy / Speech and Language
- Behaviour / Aitistic Spectrum Disorder
- Educational Psychology
- 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

Learning and Skills Service

- Supported Internships, Traineeships and Apprenticeships
- Full and part time skills courses
- Employability support
- Work and Health Programme
- Generation North East
- Careers guidance and work related learning

Key Statistics and benchmarking (also see [Director of Education and Skills Annual Report 2018 for analysis of comparisons](#))

Early years

- 90% of all eligible 2 year olds took up their statutory entitlement to early education in the Autumn term 2018. This is a 1% increase on the summer term 2018, and is better than the national average of 71%. There is, however, a significant level of variation across the county.
- In 2017-18, 75.0% of children at the end of their Reception year in the county achieved a good level of development compared to a national average of 71.5%. This reflects a five year rising trend in Northumberland.

School choice

- There are 170 schools, 37 of which were academies in March 2019. There were 33 secondary schools; 122 primary; 10 special; 1 Pupil Referral Unit and 3 Independent Schools (Longridge Towers, Mowden Hall and Howard House). Around 45,000 children attend them.
- In September 2018, 97.4% of parents got their first choice of primary school compared with 91.0% nationally. 98.1% of parents got their first choice of secondary school compared with 82.1% 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 achieved the expected standard in the phonics test at the end of Year 1 compared to a national average of 82%. This is the same as in 2017.
- At the end of Key Stage 1, 81%, 74% and 79% of children reached the expected standard in reading, writing and maths respectively compared to the national average of 75%, 70% and 76%. These outcomes were similar to those achieved in Northumberland in 2017.
- At the end of Key Stage 2, 65% of pupils reach the expected standard in reading, writing and maths combined. This was 1% higher than the national average of 64% and an increase from 61% in 2017.
- The rate of fixed period exclusion for primary schools is 0.98% compared with a national average of 1.37%.¹
- Four children have been permanently excluded from a primary school since September 2018. There were seven primary school permanent exclusions in the 2017-18 academic year.
- In the primary phase, overall absence is below the national average and north east averages. Persistent absence (attendance of less than 90%) is particularly impressive at 7.4%, which is significantly better than national and north-east averages, at 8.7% and 9.1% respectively.²

Secondary age school children

- At the end of Key Stage 4, the average Attainment 8 score was 46.1 compared with a national average of 44.5. This is an improvement from 44.8 in 2017.
- By the end of Key Stage 4, the average Progress 8 score was -0.09 compared with a national average of -0.02 and an improvement on the Progress 8 score of -0.16 in 2017.
- There were 108 permanent exclusions in the 2017-18 school year which was a significant increase from 2016-17. Scrutiny have made reducing this figure a key priority.

¹ 2016/17 School Year from SFR - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-in-england-2016-to-2017>

² 2017/18 School Year from SFR - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/pupil-absence-in-schools-in-england-2017-to-2018>

- The fixed period exclusion rate is 6.18% compared with the national average of 9.40%.³
- In the secondary phase, overall absence of 5.4% is lower than the national and north-east averages of 5.5% and 5.9%. Persistent absence is also lower than the national and regional averages - the Northumberland figure is 13.0% compared to national 13.9%⁴

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 six days of an exclusion taking place. In 2017-18, sixth-day provision was arranged within timescale for 75% of cases, which is disappointingly low.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

- Attainment for children with SEND is much lower than those of their peer group, as indicated in the October 2018 OFSTED / CCG local area inspection.
- Children with SEND make good progress if they are attending one of our special schools.
- Attendance in special schools is very good. Overall absence in special schools is 9.2% (national 10.2% and north east 9.7%), and persistent absence is lower than north east and national averages, at 26.2%.⁵
- 343 new Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP) for children and young people with special educational needs were completed in 2018 with 91% completed within time scale.
- Alongside work undertaken through Service Level Agreements, 360 Psychological Advice statements were completed by NCC Educational Psychologists during 2017-2018 as part of statutory Education, Health and Care Assessments. This was a significant increase in the number of advice written the previous academic year (270).

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

- The Northumberland Learning and Skills Service was inspected by Ofsted in June 2018 and was judged to be Good overall with Outstanding leadership and management.
- Achievement rates for 16-18 year olds are 89.9%, which is 8.4% above the national average.
- Achievement rates for 19+ year olds are 90.5%, which is 3.6% above the national average.
- 700 courses were offered to 5272 learners.
- 533 apprentices were supported in 2017/18. Achievement rates for apprentices continue to be outstanding. For all ages, 87.9% completed their apprenticeship compared to 67.7% nationally. 81.8% completed on time compared to 59.4% nationally. The most notable rates are 16-18 year old achievement rates are exceptional at over 90%. 24+ timely achievement rates are 27.7% above the 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 0.3% 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.

³ 2016/17 School Year from SFR - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-in-england-2016-to-2017>

⁴ 2017/18 School Year from SFR - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/pupil-absence-in-schools-in-england-2017-to-2018>

⁵ 2017/18 School Year from SFR - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/pupil-absence-in-schools-in-england-2017-to-2018>

External Scrutiny of the Performance of Education and Skills ⁶

1. School Inspections

- 98% of Early Years providers in Northumberland were judged by Ofsted to be good or outstanding at December 2018, which is 2% higher than the national average.
- 85% of our first and primary schools are judged to be good or better compared to 87% nationally, and similarly, 85% of primary aged pupils are in good or outstanding schools, compared to 87% nationally. All the Requires Improvement primary schools inspected in 18/19 moved to good.
- 58% of our secondary schools are judged to be good or better compared to 75% nationally. 66% of secondary aged pupils are in good or outstanding schools compared against 80% nationally. Addressing this issue is a key priority for the council.
- 88% of special schools in Northumberland are judged to be good or outstanding compared to 92% nationally.
- The Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) is judged to be good.
- The Learning and Skills Service was judged to be good with outstanding leadership in June 2018.

2. Local Area Ofsted / CQC Inspection of Special Educational Needs

- The Ofsted / Care Quality Commission SEND joint local area inspection took place in October 2018. Amongst a number of strengths, it identified weaknesses in:
 - the local area's arrangements for jointly planning, commissioning and providing the SEN services children, young people and their families;
 - embedding the graduated response to identifying, assessing and meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND in mainstream primary and secondary schools;
 - the poor outcomes achieved by children and young people with SEND and weaknesses in successfully preparing them for their adult lives.

3. DfE Scrutiny of Surplus Places

The local authority is in regular contact with the Department for Education (DfE) regarding surplus school places in Northumberland. To respond to this challenge from the DfE, a number of surplus school places have been taken out of use through school closure and reorganisation. The DfE have, however, allowed reorganisation to take place at Meadowdale Academy in Bedlington and Ponteland Middle School which has created additional places in the county. In addition, the Schools' Adjudicator's decision to keep Bellingham Middle School open maintained a number of places that the council hoped to remove.

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

⁶ All figures taken from Ofsted Dataview as at 31st December 2018.

Summary of Service Resources at 1 April 2019

Service	Number of FTE posts	Staffing Expenditure	Non Staffing Expenditure	Income	Capital Investment
Total for Service	311.88	£20,650,900	£168,648,530	£170,043,660	£39,820,560
Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)	134.37	£8,647,970	£41,441,000	£157,030,950	-
Non-DSG	177.51	£12,002,930	£20,265,550	-£13,012,710	-
Schools	n/a		£106,941,980	-£35,813,630	-

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

The service manages an 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

Psychological Services - Summer 2018 Evaluation Questionnaire

Families agreed that:

- The Educational Psychologist communicated their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively and explained their role in the assessment process.
- The advice written by the Educational Psychologist was thorough and detailed and was helpful in planning how best to support the pupil's education

Behaviour Support Service - Evaluation of work September 2018 to April 2019

- Parents/carers reported that staff listened to them and took their views seriously, explained the purpose of their work and helped their child to make progress.
- Pupil reported that Behaviour Support Staff listened to them, were interested in what they had to say, clearly explained what targets had been set and helped them to achieve those targets.
- School reported that the Behaviour Support Service completed the agreed work and provided strategies and approaches that had enabled them to meet their young person's needs.

Autism Support Service: Evaluation of work September 2018 to April 2019

- Pupils reported that Autism Support Staff were interested in what they had to say and helped them to achieve their targets.
- Schools said that the work carried out by the Autism Support Service had a positive impact.

SEND Communication, Speech, Language & Communication Team - Evaluation April 2019

- Parents reported that assessments provided them with a detailed understanding of their child's needs and valued the service highly;
- Schools reported that Speech & Language staff involvement had proved to be beneficial to the pupil, met the child's needs and had a positive impact on the child and school
- Pupils said that Speech & Language staff listened to them and helped them to do new things and to do their work

Literacy (Dyslexia) Team - Evaluation of work September 2018 to April 2019

- Parents were pleased with the support received, felt as if they had been listened to and taken seriously and were provided with a detailed understanding of their child's needs.
- Schools said that good support and resources had been provided to meet pupils' needs, including high quality software that had made a positive impact on the pupil.

b) Learning and Skills Service

The National Learner and Employer Satisfaction Surveys for 2017/18 showed an overall satisfaction score of 9.7/10 for learners and 9.5/10 for employers with 97% likely to recommend the service to others.

There is a continuous improvement in the quality of programmes. Learner feedback shows satisfaction scores rising from 2016/17 to 2017/18 as follows:

- Quality of teaching has risen from 94% to 94.5%
- Quality of learner treatment is stable at 97%
- Quality of advice has risen from 88% to 90%
- Quality of support for learners has risen from 94% to 94.5%
- Courses meeting learner expectations has risen from 93% to 93.5%
- Responsiveness to views of learners is stable at 94%
- Overall learner satisfaction has risen from 95.7% to 97%

Complaints

The vast majority of complaints received by the Education and Skills Division are from parents, are related to the special educational needs issues and are managed well. In particular, they raise issues about the SEND assessment process, including time delays, inaccurate descriptions of a child's needs and the eventual placement. A smaller number are about the quality of the Education, Health and Care Plan produced and the timing of annual reviews. The service is currently looking at how it interacts with parents and a programme of customer relations training has been implemented.

A growing area of complaints are those received by the council from OFSTED following a parental complaint made directly to OFSTED about their child's school. OFSTED do not investigate these complaints themselves and, instead, immediately redirect the complaint to the Education and Skills

Service for resolution. These can number two or three complaints a week and take up a lot of council resource.

Complaints regarding admissions to schools peak at specific times of the year and are well managed by the very experienced Admissions Team. Similarly, complaints about school transport peak during the half term before the summer break and the first half term in September as new travel arrangements are arranged in the summer and implemented in September. Other specific increases in complaints occur during any reorganisation or restructuring of school provision. The reorganisation of Ponteland has, in particular, produced a high number of complaints over the last four years.

Staff Survey 2018

Following the 2018 Staff Survey, team managers and officers from the Education and Skills Division are developing an action plan for the service having analysed the outcomes. Headlines were as follows:

- Colleagues feel that they are doing a good job although they feel under pressure from deadlines and insufficient numbers of staff in the department.
- They are satisfied with their working conditions and the independence they have but would like greater appreciation and recognition from senior managers for their work.
- They feel well supported and respected by their line managers but would like a greater say in the future direction of the service.
- Some concerns were raised around the reporting of errors, near misses and incidents that could hurt people and the response to these by managers at all levels to prevent repetition. This area of survey responses will be explored in depth and will form one of the key priorities in the action plan.
- Colleagues feel that they are not discriminated against and only a very small number say reported that they have witnessed bullying, harassment or verbal abuse at work.
- Colleagues value appraisal as a means of improving how they do their job and the majority say that their training needs are met by the council to support them to do their job.
- Colleagues feel that they are not informed about feedback from service users and, as a consequence, it is not used effectively to inform the future direction of services.
- Around half of the staff feel that agile working has not improved their work-life balance although nearly 70% say that agile working helps them to be more effective in their job.
- Just under half of the staff who responded said that they were looking for a new job or thinking about leaving the council.

Education & Skills Priorities 2019-2022

Our Ambition: All learners in Northumberland receive the highest quality education possible.

Core focus for 2019/20 is on three areas:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Reducing permanent and fixed-term exclusions
- Supporting schools to improve pupil outcomes at Key Stage 4

EDUCATION & SKILLS PRIORITIES	ACTIONS
<p>1. We will take a key role in the strategic leadership of educational improvement in Northumberland.</p>	<p>Deliver on 'Northumberland Deal' to promote inclusion across all schools</p> <p>Progress Northumberland MAT with a view to delivery in 2019</p> <p>Further expand School Improvement Service through seconded senior SENCOs</p>
<p>2. Alongside other partners, we will hold all educational establishments to account for the safety and inclusion of their learners.</p>	<p>Report outcomes of Exclusions Task & Finish Group and implement Inclusion Action Plan from September 2019</p> <p>In conjunction with schools, continue to promote and improve educational outcomes for children targeting support at specific areas</p> <p>Strategic appraisal of specific alternative provision and the PRU assess need and ensure resources are available and targeted effectively</p>
<p>3. We will support and challenge providers to improve educational outcomes for all learners.</p>	<p>Reduce the number of schools on the Priority Support List to 15 approx with more intensive input</p> <p>Reinforce need for SEN learners to achieve highly through targeted support and challenge from seconded SENior SENCOs</p>
<p>4. We will know the strengths and weaknesses of our schools and other educational providers, challenge and support them to improve and report their performance to the Council and the community.</p>	<p>Extend range of areas that School Improvement Partners report on regularly to the county council to include SEN outcomes, inclusion and most vulnerable children and young people</p> <p>Provide extended support to schools most at risk including non-maintained state-funded provision</p>
<p>5. We will develop appropriate educational provision across the county, including</p>	<p>Accelerate and deliver on plans for capital investments into SEND provision and resources</p>

<p>specialist and alternative provision, that appropriately meets the needs of children, young people and communities.</p>	<p>Increase placement capacity for children with additional needs including ARCs/ARPs</p> <p>Increase ARC provision across the county</p>
<p>6. We will review and expand education resources to meet schools' and pupils' needs more efficiently.</p>	<p>Expansion of SEN places, including Additionally Resources Centres (ARCs) and additional places to existing provision</p> <p>Pursue DfE SEN Free School process throughout the year</p> <p>Work with school to meet additional demand through existing catchment area process</p>
<p>7. We will improve our collaboration with social care, health, and leisure and culture.</p>	<p>Greater sharing of resources and expertise through joint planning and procurement</p> <p>Develop leisure and culture offer to schools to enhance the taught curriculum via world-class resources within the county</p>
<p>8. We will support recruitment and workforce development in all educational providers.</p>	<p>Fulfill action points from North of Tyne proposed recruitment strategy over the next 24 months through partnership working and utilisation of external agencies</p> <p>Further enhance current CPD programme for providers following consultation on needs and emerging issues</p>
<p>9. With partners, we will act upon the areas for improvement identified in the SEND local area inspection in October 2018.</p>	<p>Evaluation and review of SEND services to schools and resources to ensure services can meet growing needs of schools</p> <p>Reform the current SEND SLA offer to school to move towards universal offer that all schools can access at source</p> <p>Hold officers to account for the improvement of SEND outcomes and the requirements of the Written Statement of Action</p>
<p>10. We will maximise the opportunities provided by Opportunity North East, the North of Tyne devolution deal and Borderlands.</p>	<p>Lead and promote the North of Tyne Education Challenge within Northumberland</p> <p>Deliver North of Tyne Education and Skills Conference</p> <p>Develop and deliver on business case linked to N of Tyne challenge</p>

Performance Framework

Measure	National Average	3 Year academic yr out-turn unless asterisked *				Target 2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
		15/16	16/17	17/18	2018/19	Qtr 4		
1 % children taking up the Statutory entitlement to early education for all eligible 2 year olds *	71	77.6	82.0	85.0	90	93	95	97
2 % getting their first choice of primary school.	91.0	96.0	94.7	96.5	97.4	98	98.2	98.3
3 % of pupils in primary schools judged by Ofsted to be good or outstanding *	87 ⁷	89	83	86	85	90	92	96
4 EYFSP - % of pupils achieving a Good Level of Development	71.5	73.4	74.9	75.0	Target 75.0	78.0	79.0	80.0
5 Phonics - % of year 1 pupils working at the expected standard plus	82	83.7	85	85.2	Target 86.0	87	88	90
6 KS1 - % of pupils achieving the expected standard plus in reading, writing and maths	Reading - 75 Writing - 70 Maths - 76	Reading - 78 Writing - 70 Maths - 76	Reading - 80 Writing - 74 Maths - 79	Reading - 81 Writing - 74 Maths - 79	Targets R- 81 Wr - 74 M - 80	Reading: 83 Writing: 75 Maths: 81	R: 84 W:76 M:82	R:85 W:77 M:83
7 KS2 - % of pupils achieving the expected standard plus in reading, writing and maths	65	56	61	65	Target 62	68	70	72
8a Raising KS2 outcomes for SEN EHCP (RWM Ex St)	9	13.0	8.0	1.1	NYA	9.0	10.0	11.0
8b Raising KS2 outcomes for SEN Support (RWM Ex St)	24	17.0	21.0	28.0	NYA	24.0	27.0	30.0
9 Number of permanent exclusions from primary schools in academic year	N.A.	N.R.	6	7	Year to Date 4	0	0	0
10 % getting their first choice secondary sch.	82.1	98.5	98.7	98.2	98.1	98.5	99	100
11 KS4 - average Attainment 8 score	44.5	48.1	44.8	46.1	Target 46.0	48.7	50.0	53.0
12 KS4 - average Progress 8 score	-0.02	-0.14	-0.16	-0.09	Target 0.00	+0.11	+0.2	+0.3
13a Raising KS4 outcomes for SEN EHCP (Attain 8)	13.5	14.9	11.1	10.5	NYA	12.0	15.0	18.0
13b Raising KS4 outcomes for SEN Support (Attain 8)	32.2	30.9	28.0	28.5	NYA	32.0	34.0	35.0

⁷ Taken from Ofsted Dataview as at 31st December 2018.

14 % of pupils in secondary schools judged by Ofsted to be good or outstanding *	79 ⁸	53.2	64.0	66.4	65.9	70	75	80
15 Number of schools at risk of not being at least good at their next inspection *	N.A.	35	23	4	5	4 maintained (m) 7 academies (a)	2 m 5 a	0 m 3 m
16 Number of permanent exclusions from secondary schools in academic year	N.A.	N.R.	70	108	Year to Date 65	40	0	0
17 % permanently excluded pupils receiving full-time education by 6th day following exclusion	N.A.	N.R.	75	75	Year to Date 75	100	100	100
18a % of SEND EHCP permanent exclusions	0.35	0.2	0.4	0.5	NYA	0	0	0
18b % of SEND Support permanent exclusions	0.2	0.2	0.4	1.1	NYA	0.5	0.1	0.1
19a % of SEND EHCP Fixed term exclusions	1.1	1.3	2.3	1.6	NYA	1.3	1.1	0.9
19b % of SEND Support fixed term exclusions	5.7	6.9	5.7	8.9	NYA	7.0	5.0	4.0
20 Achievement of the 2.3% of the workforce are apprentices, Public Service Apprenticeship *	2.3	N/A	N/A	2.4	2.5	2.3	2.3	2.3
21 % overall achievement by learners on apprenticeship standards and frameworks *	67.7	76.0	83.9	87.9	83.7	85	85	85
22 % of 16 - 17 year olds NEET and Not Known *	6.7	5.2	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.4	4.3	4.2
23 % of new Education and Health Care Plans successfully completed within statutory 20 week time scale *	61.3	28.3	78.4	93	Year to Date 90.4	92	100	100

**financial year*

⁸ Taken from Ofsted Dataview as at 31st December 2018.