



County Durham 14-19 Partnership

A Strategy to Increase the Number of Young People in County Durham in Education, Employment or Training

September 2007



1. Aim

To have a coherent cross agency plan to increase the number of young people engaged in education employment and training

2. Principles

2.1 By identifying “what works”, to have a positive impact on the existing activities of organisations/agencies in increasing EET

2.2 To focus specifically on six major theme areas:

1. Data management, policy and provision planning
2. NEET Preventative work
3. Supporting Transition
4. NEET Re-engagement work
5. Specialist Support
6. Involving young people, their parents/carers and communities

2.3 To forge effective links between the Strategy and local Needs Assessments and Action Plans

3. Background

Key partners in this strategy include the Learning and Skills Council, Children’s Services Authority, Connexions County Durham, the Voluntary and Community Sector, Education and Training providers, Local Strategic Partnerships and Health trusts but a wide range of other agencies are also involved with young people and their parents/carers. All these partners need to be committed to the strategy and to work together if the targets which have been set by central government are to be met as many of the barriers facing young people relate to social, community, health and attitudinal issues.

These **Targets** are:

- A PSA target for reduction of those known not to be in education, training or employment to 10.5% [unadjusted] by November 2007.
- A LA target of 8.8% [adjusted] by 2010
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Individual partners and partnerships also have targets which will contribute to the achievement of these NEET targets e.g. progression of care leavers, school attendance and attainment, under 18 conception rate.

Analysis of the NEET figures has shown that the NEET figure for 30 November 2006 was 12.7% against the LA target (1871 young people).

There are two sub-groups within the NEETs:

370 16 year olds make up 25% of those who are **available to the labour market**

557 17 year olds make up 37% of this sub-group
576 18 year olds make up 38% of this sub-group

39 16 year olds make up 11%% of those 16-18 year olds **not available to the labour market**
119 17 year olds make up 33%% of these
210 18 year olds make up 56%% of these

- 18% of those young people aged 16-18 who have a learning difficulty or disability are in the NEET group
- 29.5% of known care leavers at age 19 are NEET
- 55% of young mothers aged 16-19 are NEET
- Participation rate for young offenders is less than that of their peers.
- Young people who are NEET are more likely to have a history of ill-health, particularly mental health, or offending behaviour than their peers.

The partnership has identified these groups who are disproportionately represented in the NEETs as **priority** groups.

The **pattern** of participation varies across the county and the highest rates of non-participation are in Easington and South-west Durham. Even in districts with high participation, however, there are significant areas with high levels of NEETs. As a result the strategy adopted will need to be flexible enough to meet the local need.

4. Theme Objectives

4.1 Data management, policy and provision planning

4.1a All services contributing to the work of the NEET strategy will have robust, annually reviewed service level agreements and information sharing protocols with partner agencies.

4.1b Regular analysis of “NEET available to labour market” data to identify trends and inform planning to ensure that appropriate provision is available in the right locality.

4.1c Raise the profile of the importance of progression and retention rates with learning providers and produce quarterly statistical reports. Provide support to post-16 providers to improve retention and establish tri-partite meetings if retention is poor.

4.1d Local dialogue regarding learning provision which includes feedback from Connexions to the LSC on any gaps in the learning provision available

4.1e “Intended Destination” data will be collected (method to be agreed locally) and this will be analysed by LSC to inform the above provision planning.

4.2 Preventative Work

- 4.2a Ensure the provision of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) to all young people pre- and post 16 that meets national IAG Quality Standards and reflects local, regional and national Labour Market Information (LMI). A variety of media will be essential including use of ICT.
- 4.2b Take steps to raise aspirations
- 4.2c In line with the requirement for a September Guarantee ensure that work is carried out with all learning providers to provide an offer of a suitable place in education or training to all Year 11 school leavers, thus enabling those at risk of not progressing to be identified and given additional support where necessary.
- 4.2d Ensure that all staff within the partnership are aware of their role in delivering the September Guarantee
- 4.2e Plan work with parents and carers, as the group with the biggest single influence on the learning choices of young people, to ensure that they are aware of current progression routes, financial support for continued learning and opportunities locally, nationally and regionally.
- 4.2f Explore the possibility of identifying and working with “workless households” with young people resident in a holistic way, linking with adult IAG services and regional/local pilots, with the aim of reducing generational NEET.
- 4.2g Increase awareness of the range of information and training in IAG and LMI for non-careers professionals e.g. teachers, youth workers, to ensure that they know when they are able to offer information and when they need to refer young people for more in-depth IAG. Provide such information at a sub-regional and local level.
- 4.2h Ensure that all practitioners are aware of and can support access to any financial support available to learners and their parents/carers.

4.3 Supported Transition

- 4.3a Early identification of young people likely to experience difficulty with transition, for whatever reason, to their next stage of learning and ensure that plans and support are in place to assist their progression.
- 4.3b Follow-up of those young people identified via 4.3.a in their next stage of learning to offer support if retention appears to be an issue.
- 4.3c Ensure that parents and carers are aware of the support available during transition.
- 4.3d Ensure that responsibility for developing and implementing action plans to support transition are clearly defined in organisational partnership agreements/contracts.
- 4.3e Provide support to build the capacity of providers so that they can improve their retention and achievement rates

4.4 Remedial Work

- 4.4a Maintain regular contact with young people who are NEET in line, at least, with CCIS currency regulations and ensure that they are made aware of and supported to access employment, education and training opportunities (EET).
- 4.4b Work with young people who are ‘NEET’ to ascertain why they are not accessing opportunities, and how they would prefer to be made aware of potential progression routes available to them e.g. via NEET Newsletter, text messaging, e-mail etc.

4.4c Ensure that agencies involved with the young person's holistic well-being are aware of the young person's NEET status so that a coherent multi-agency remedial plan can be delivered.

4.4d Ensure that practitioners record all methods of contacting young people who are NEET during interventions: address, landline, mobile and e-mail to give maximum potential of keeping them informed of opportunities open to them.

4.4e Where young people who are NEET face additional barriers that hinder their learning progression ensure that these are prioritised and addressed, either directly or via referral to another agency, until they are in a position to consider employment, education or training opportunities.

4.4f Ensure that effective use is made of all initiatives to enable young people to develop the skills and confidence to access full-time EET opportunities and have the best chance of succeeding in these.

4.4g Target work to geographical hot-spots to address inequalities.

4.4h Ensure close liaison with Jobcentre Plus regarding those young people who are, or may be, choosing Jobcentre Plus to support their search for EET/move away from benefits.

4.5 Work with Key Specialist/Vulnerable Groups

4.5a Identify key groups and individuals who may experience difficulties in progressing due to their circumstances or needs and ensure that their particular issues are explored and plans put into place to support them in the most effective way to ensure that they reach their potential in EET.

4.5b Ensure that in the identification of key vulnerable groups emphasis is not just given to those with very obvious needs but that attention is also given to those groups who are statistically recognised as having issues in terms of progression

4.5c Ensure that practitioners are fully trained to provide effective information, advice, guidance, support and advocacy to young people from vulnerable groups and their parents and carers.

4.5d Where appropriate consider the development of specialist workers to lead on work with key vulnerable groups and act as advisers to other practitioners, managers and policy makers.

4.6 Involving Young People

4.6a Ensure that the 'learner voice' is heard using the various youth forums which exist within the partner organisations and Area Advisory Groups.

5. Delivery and Monitoring Arrangements

These are detailed in:

- 14-19 Development Plan
- Connexions County Durham Business Plan
- L.S.C. Annual Plan
- Local Strategic Partnership Action Plans

The developing action plan of the Participation Task group will also deliver examples of good practice which are successful in raising participation rates.

All action plans will include performance measures and evaluation plans and can be cross-referenced to this strategy.

6. Glossary

CCIS Connexions Customer Information System: a national specification of information required by DfES on all young people in the Connexions cohort and subsequently the responsibility of the local authority to maintain and develop.

Currency Within CCIS rules are laid down requiring young people's current destination to be checked at prescribed intervals. If contact is not made for any reason the destination is said to have lapsed and is replaced by 'Not Known'.

NEET Young people who are known not to be in Employment, Education or Training.

Intended Destination In Year 11 young people indicate that their intended destination on leaving statutory education is to enter:

- Employment with a definite start date
- Employment but no definite offer
- Sixth form in own school
- Other Sixth Form
- College
- Training
- Higher Education
- Undecided
- Not available

I.A.G. Information, Advice and Guidance for which national quality standards are to be published.

L.M.I. Labour Market Information which includes information about routes into particular occupations and sectors and trends in employment

Reducing the Number of Young People in County Durham Not in Education, Employment or Training

Core Objectives		Sub Obj. Ref.	Major Themes					
Ref	Description		Data Management, Policy and Provision planning	NEET Preventative Work	Supporting Transition	NEET Remedial Work	Specialist Support	Involving Young People and their Communities
CO1	Need Identification To identify, on an annual basis, the specific needs of all sectors of young people who are potential or actual NEETs through communication and engagement.	4.1d, 4.2g, 4.4a, 4.4d, 4.4i 4.6	√	√		√		√
CO2	Awareness Raising To raise awareness of all NEET issues and initiatives amongst appropriate stakeholder groups	4.1c, 4.2e, 4.2h, 4.3c 4.4c	√	√	√	√		
CO3	Supporting Stakeholders To improve the capacity of all providers of programmes to address the NEETs issue	4.3e			√			
CO4	Overcoming Barriers to Progression To recognise the barriers to progression and to ensure that they are addressed through effective responses including e.g alternative provision, taster sessions etc, and that aspirations are raised.	4.2b 4.4e, 4.5a, 4.5b 4.6		√		√	√	√
CO5	Staff Development & Deployment To develop and deploy mainstream practitioners and specialist staff to provide effective information, advice, guidance support and advocacy to vulnerable groups, parents/carers, other practitioners, managers and policy makers.	4.2a, 4.2f 4.5c, 4.5d		√			√	

CO6	Targeting Individuals and Groups. To identify and target, as early as possible, young people who are likely to experience difficulty with progression, or face inequalities in specific geographical areas and to ensure that support is in place in response.	4.3a, 4.3b 4.4h 4.6			√	√		√
CO7	NEET & the September Guarantee. In line with the requirement for a September Guarantee, ensure that all those at risk of not progressing are identified, provided with additional support and that all staff involved are aware of their role in its deliverance.	4.2c, 4.2d 4.6		√				√
CO8	Data & Information Management To identify, collect , analyse and disseminate information concerning young people who are NEET and also existing level of provision and location to inform future planning	4.1b, 4.1e	√					
CO9	Monitoring & Controlling Provision. To evaluate the use made of all initiatives to enable young people to access full-time EET opportunities and develop action plans with responsibilities in response.	4.3d, 4.4b, 4.4f 4.6			√	√		√
CO10	Managing Relationships To ensure that all services contributing to NEET provision will have robust, annually reviewed Service Level agreements and information sharing protocols with partner agencies.	4.1a	√					

Where objectives cut across more than one theme, activity/action plans need to reflect this.