



Doncaster Council

To the Chair and Members of the OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

SOCIAL MOBILITY OPPORTUNITY AREA PROGRAMME

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Cllr Nuala Fennelly Lead Member Children, Young People and Schools	All	Yes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This paper provides detail regarding the recent publication of the Doncaster Opportunity Area (OA) Delivery Plan (DP) and sets out the funding associated with the OA programme which is due to be transferred to DMBC over the life of the programme (2017/18 to 2019/20). It reports the outcomes of a Cabinet decision on this work on the 6th of February and provides an update on progress made towards implementation.
2. The Delivery Plan includes 4 priorities:
 - Building solid foundation for all children;
 - Brilliant teaching and leadership for all secondary pupils programme;
 - No career out of bounds; and
 - Opportunities extend to all
3. Each priority is led by a working group made up of local stakeholders and the programme is governed by a Partnership Board (PB) into which all the working groups report. The Partnership Board is responsible for making decisions relating to the OA Programme, these will then need to be signed off through Council governance in accordance with relevant guidelines. For expediency we are seeking Partnership Board approval of these proposals in parallel. Any substantive changes resulting from this process will need to be signed off by Cabinet.
4. The paper sets out the approach Cabinet have agreed to commissioning services with the dedicated funding to implement the activities promised in the Delivery Plan, in 2017/18 this includes a £1,050k grant to Expect Youth to deliver the Essential Life Skills element of the OA programme and an associated mentoring offer, a £300k grant to Partners in Learning (PIL) to deliver tailored training to teachers and school leaders, in line with identified need and £100k of further expenditure through contracted services, grants of under £50k to, for example, schools or staff salaries.
5. Cabinet also agreed that the Council will provide commissioning support to Expect Youth and PIL, to both enable them to commission further activity in year and to develop each organisations internal commissioning capacity.

6. We also plan to work with other OAs and DfE to establish a National framework for 2018/19 and 2019/20.
7. The Delivery Plan is attached via the following link [Doncaster plan](#)

EXEMPT REPORT

8. This report is not exempt.

RECOMMENDATIONS

9. It is recommended that O&S:
 - a) Note to the decisions that have been taken by Cabinet and the progress made on implementation;
 - b) Agree to take 6 monthly updates on progress.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

10. The Doncaster Opportunity Area Delivery Plan sets out an ambitious agenda to improve social mobility for the children and young people of Doncaster by reducing the gap in attainment between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children at primary school; improving the performance of the borough's secondary schools, helping Doncaster's young people to find the right academic and vocational routes to the careers they aspire to; and taking active steps to help the most vulnerable, to access opportunities that will support them in and out of education.

BACKGROUND

11. The Opportunity Area Programme was launched in January by the Department for Education (DfE), it identified 6 social mobility hotspots and allocated each £6m over three years to tackle social mobility, building on the available evidence base. On 18th January a further 6 regions were announced, including Doncaster.
12. Over the last year DfE, working closely with the Council, have analysed available data, engaged local stakeholders and consulted with young people and professionals to develop a plan to improve the life chances of Doncaster's young people. The plan, that was published on the 19th January sets out high level proposals for change and improvements and particular activities in 2018.
13. The OA programme has established a working group for each of the 4 priorities and a Partnership Board (PB) to govern the programme. The PB is chaired by Professor Chris Husbands, Vice Chancellor of Sheffield Hallam University and Damian Allen, Director of People is a PB member. The full membership of the working groups and the partnership board is at Annex B. The working groups' role now is to develop detailed proposals to deliver the DP commitments. All decisions relating to the OA will be taken by the PB.
14. To ensure synergy with wider Council activity the OA work also sits within the learning theme in the Doncaster Growing Together Programme. We will monitor and report on progress and manage dependencies with related projects and programme through the DGT programme.

15. We have recruited a Programme Manager, Robin MacNeill to lead on implementation of the plan, working closely with colleagues across the Council, DfE and wider stakeholders. David Ayre Head of Service in the Strategy & Performance Unit, has acted as the LA lead on the development of the plan, working in partnership with DfE and drawing on expertise of colleagues across the Council and the wider Team Doncaster partnership, as required.
16. Development of the delivery plan has been informed by the views of children and young people, who were engaged through a variety of approaches including an event at the Doncaster Dome and visits to particular vulnerable groups, including looked after children. We will continue this engagement through implementation to ensure the views of children and young people have not only informed the identification of high level priorities but also the detail of the activities we put in place.
17. An Essential Life Skills Programme has also been launched, this aims to share opportunities to engage in extra-curricular activities with the more disadvantaged to develop non-cognitive abilities, collectively named, 'essential life skills'. There is additional funding associated with this programme. The ELS programme brings £2.75m over the 3 year lifetime of the programme. It is funding released by the 'sugar tax' and has been distributed between OAs on the basis of the number of disadvantaged children in the areas. More detail on the rationale for the ELS programme can be found in Annex C.
18. Expect Youth is the name the Strategic Youth Alliance (SYA) have taken since they were established as an association. The Council committed £475k over 3 years to develop the SYA to deliver the youth offer element of starting well. This was grant funding approved through a Cabinet report in June 2016. Since their formation Expect Youth have performed well against the principles in their grant agreement including exceeding ambitions in terms of identifying match funding to sit alongside the Council grant, including successfully bidding for £1m of #iwill¹ funding.
19. Expect Youth's partners are already delivering a range of high quality youth-centred provision across the borough. Partners include Club Doncaster Foundation, Flying Futures, Doncaster Community Arts, Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust, Doncaster Children's Service Trust, Active Fusion, the Chamber of Commerce, Public Health and Doncaster Council Youth Services.

¹ The #iwill campaign vision is to make involvement in social action the norm for 10 to 20 year-olds across the UK by 2020. The provision of high quality opportunities, available to all, will enable social action to become a part of life for young people and, it is hoped, form a lifelong habit of community engagement.

FUNDING

20. In addition the ELS funding of £2.75m, the OA Programmes brings with it £6m of funding which will be transferred through to the Council, in quarterly instalments. The assumption is that this funding will be used to deliver the activities and ambitions in the plan. £450k is profiled for 2017/18 and £1m of ELS is profiled for 2017/18. The annual profile of funding for the OA and ELS funding streams is included in table 1 below.

Table 1

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
OA ²	£450,000	c£3.5m	c£2m
ELS	£1,008,267.22	£1,750,199.70	0
total	£1,458,267.22	£5,250,199.70	£2,000,000

21. In addition to these dedicated funds national programmes are also being focussed on OAs. This includes the Teaching and Leadership Fund and the Strategic School Improvement Fund. This funding will go to national providers who will deliver training to teachers in schools in the borough, this is managed nationally so the Council will not be required to commission this provision.

Commissioning in 2017/18

22. 2017/18 is the first year of a three year programme, we are keen to drive implementation forward and give our interventions as much time as possible to have an impact. DfE share this desire to see implementation progress and as such have asked that we commit funding profiled for 2017/18 by the end of March 2018 and that funding is spent promptly within an agreed timeframe but at latest by the end of the next academic year, August 2019, with spent meaning spent in the fullest sense, for example delivering services to children and young people. There is a risk that failure to commit and spend funding could result in future years payments from DfE reducing or in extreme cases being stopped.

23. We are keen to move quickly to implementation while ensuring the funding is used effectively and in line with the relevant finance and procurement guidelines, we are also keen to strike a balance between expenditure on the issues now and investment in the future. Part of the approach taken is to recommend using organisations already actively engaged in the programme, with whom the Council already has grant funding arrangements, on the basis these organisations will be well placed to hit the ground running.

Essential life skills

24. We plan to grant fund £1,050k to Expect Youth to deliver an Essential Life Skills offer to the schools in the borough and an associated mentoring programme targeted at the most vulnerable children in Doncaster. Vulnerable children include children in care of the state, those supported by national programmes, like the Troubled Families Programme, those with Special Educational Needs or elective home schooled children.

² The 2018/19 and 2019/20 figures are estimates, DfE will be confirming the 2018/19 figure in the New Year, the total transferred to DMBC from the OA line will be less than £6m as there are some central costs around for example evaluation that have been taken out at source.

The offer would take the form of a directory of extra-curricular activities schools could pick from to best meet the needs of their children, supported by mentoring and coaching to help children make the most of these opportunities. These would be designed to develop essential life skills. We would ask that in developing the directory of activities they carry out a tendering exercise to both broaden the offer available to Doncaster children but also to further develop the voluntary community sector (VCS) in the borough, in line with the objective we gave them when they were established. This increased investment in the VCS would bring wider benefits to local communities, where we can find ways to engage this valuable sector in delivery of delivery agreement priorities, with the vulnerable children priority being a particularly good fit. Expect Youth do not currently have commissioning capacity so we propose the Council provide commissioning support to the tendering exercise with a view to developing internal commissioning capacity in Expect Youth.

25. A specification for this activity is included in Annex D, this sets out what needs to be delivered plus ongoing performance management arrangements, to monitor spend and impact.

Continuing Professional Development in Doncaster Schools

26. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is a significant part of the offer to schools and the DP sets out a range of strands of activity to both establish and meet CPD needs in Doncaster schools

27. Cabinet have agreed a £300k grant to Partners in Learning to meet the variety of training needs expected to arise over the first year of the programme.

28. Some of the training would be delivered by PIL, some through national programmes and some through training providers procured by PIL. The benefit of this approach is it allocates funding within the required timeframe but enables us to take time working with schools to identify specific training needs, for example through the proposed curriculum review of secondary schools maths, English and science provision. PIL do not have significant commissioning capacity so we would offer commissioning support to both carry out any tendering and develop commissioning capacity in PIL.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

29. We are not asking the O&S to make any decisions, this section reflects the advice we put to Cabinet to inform their decision making. Cabinet agreed our recommendations.

30. Do nothing. Clearly this is not a viable option, it would cause reputational damage with DfE and fail to realise the benefits of this funding on local children and young people. Failure to spend the funding in year 1 is likely to result in funding being withdrawn in future years.

31. A competitive tender process. The timeframes associated with a competitive tender of this scale are prohibitive if we are looking to commit funding this financial year. It is not possible in the available time.

32. Grant fund another provider. This was considered but discounted based on the strong track record PIL have in this area and the breadth of partners EY bring together.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

33. Both EY and PIL have been closely engaged with the OA programme to date so can help moved swiftly to implementation and maintain momentum developed through the early planning phase of the work. They are both exceptionally well placed to take this work on. Supporting local middle tier organisations brings additional sustainability, not only will the investment deliver immediate gains but it will also increase local capacity and strengthen partnerships, to the benefit of the region for years to come.
34. The plan that they both carry out onward commissioning brings on opportunity to test the market and bring in additional capacity and capability to enhance the offer they can bring as organisations and partnerships. This offers a best of both worlds solution.

Remaining areas of commissioning

35. The range of services we anticipate funding / commissioning with the remaining £100k of 2017/18 OA funding includes: salary associated with the programme manager role; the Post 16 Review; a study looking at parental engagement and funding for Children's University places for disadvantaged children.

Commissioning in 2018/19 to 2019/20

36. Decisions on this spend will be made through the priority working groups and agreed with the PB. To support commissioning in future years we aim to establish a national framework, spanning all OAs, hosted either by DfE or one of the OA Local Authorities. The benefits of this approach include:
- Provide a structure for organisations to work with OAs;
 - Support organisations with a "national footprint" to deliver in OAs and encourage them to think about an offer to OAs;
 - Enable OAs to act with scale, improving our purchasing power and our collective ability to deliver VfM;
 - Enable greater efficiency in delivery through collaborative advantage;
 - Ensure "compliance" and "transparency" across OA delivery.
37. We will work with DfE and other OAs to implement this over early stages of the coming year. We will update Cabinet on progress on a 6 monthly basis and will seek approval for spend in years 2 and 3 of the programme through these updates.

Update on implementation progress

38. Now the plan has been published we need to move quickly to implementation. On that front we have made good progress across the priorities in terms of engaging stakeholders and beginning to develop the detailed plans that will drive our implementation efforts.
39. The PB have agreed a business case allocating funding to PiL to: recruit an education adviser to support a number of primary schools; develop a bespoke leadership programme for primary heads and senior leaders; develop and coordinate implementation of a primary maths strategy, drawing on existing resources in the local maths hubs and to deliver a curriculum reviews in all secondary schools in the borough

with a view to identifying potential areas for improvement and best practice that can be shared between schools.

40. We have met with secondary heads to agree what else we can do to forward this priority both this year and in the future. They are engaged and have promised to nominate future leaders in their organisations to help shape this priority. Teacher recruitment and retention is a big issue locally and we have arranged for Partners for Attainment (PfA), a Sheffield Hallam University led initiative looking at teacher recruitment and retention regionally, to meet with secondary heads to understand the problem in Doncaster and collectively develop solutions. We are also engaging colleagues in the Council to agree how the PfA response can be augmented locally if required.
41. We are working with a range of local stakeholders, including the Doncaster Chamber of Commerce and Sheffield Hallam University to develop detailed plans for improving careers advice in schools and better coordinating business engagement with education. The Post 16 review had also reported interim findings and the final recommendations in April will be brought into the OA programme to be implemented.
42. On the vulnerable strand we have also made good progress. We expect a business case to go to the February PB seeking agreement to fund EXPECT Youth to deliver an Essential Life Skills Programme and to run a number of pilots looking at different approaches to mentoring and coaching disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people. We are also working closely with colleagues in the Council on the behaviour strategy, to agree how the OA programme can support this important agenda.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

43. There is strong correlation between the priorities in the Delivery Plan, and the council's key outcomes. The implications for these are set out below:

	Outcomes	Implications
	<p>All people in Doncaster benefit from a thriving and resilient economy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Creating Jobs and Housing</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Be a strong voice for our veterans</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Protecting Doncaster's vital services</i> 	<p>Young people, particularly those from a disadvantaged background are equipped to access education, employment or training with a view to moving into further or higher education and employment.</p>
	<p>People live safe, healthy, active and independent lives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Safeguarding our Communities</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Bringing down the cost of living</i> 	<p>Most vulnerable children supported in engaging in school and extra-curricular activities to equip them with the skills they need to thrive.</p>
	<p>People in Doncaster benefit from a high quality built and natural environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Creating Jobs and Housing</i> 	<p>Allocation of funding to the voluntary community sector will strengthen this sector, to the benefit of Doncaster citizens.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Safeguarding our Communities</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Bringing down the cost of living</i> 	
	<p>All families thrive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Protecting Doncaster's vital services</i> 	Families from disadvantaged backgrounds encouraged to engage in their children's education.
	Council services are modern and value for money.	
	Working with our partners we will provide strong leadership and governance.	

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

44. The DfE ambition to have all 2017/18 funding spent within the next 2 academic year is potentially challenging. There is a risk that a drive to spend could impact on the quality of service or that a failure to spend could lead to reputational damage between the Council and the DfE and potentially to lower sums being transferred in future. To mitigate this risk we will work with partners to model a likely profile of spend across the large spend areas and share this with DfE with a view to agreeing an ambitious but deliverable spend profile.
45. Working across all OAs to commission in 2018/19 and 2019/20 would bring significant advantages but in turn requires greater coordination and proactive project management. A failure to successfully delivery a national framework brings a risk of each OA going through its own labour intensive and potentially sub-optimal procurement processes. To mitigate this risk OA leads need to develop a robust project plan for activity and ensure the project maintains momentum.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (NJD 7/2/18)

46. Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides the Council with a general power of competence, allowing the Council to do anything that individuals generally may do. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 gives an Authority power to purchase goods and services.
47. The Council will be expected to sign a funding agreement in order to access this funding. It is important that legal advice is provided on the terms of that funding agreement and that the responsible Directorate understand the terms under which the funding is provided. It is standard practice within such funding agreements to require clawback of funded monies (or refuse payment) if funding conditions are not complied with.
48. All funding (including the £1 050 000.00 funding to Expect Youth and the £300 000.00 to the PIL) should be the subject of a funding agreement, approved by Legal Services and should only be entered into when the Director is satisfied that the obligations in the FPRs have been satisfied. Such funding agreements should mirror the terms of the funding agreement referred to in the above paragraph in order to protect the interests of the Council.

49. The service contracts referred to in this report should be procured in compliance with the Council Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (if applicable).
50. Further specific legal advice will be given throughout the life of the project.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (DB 21.2.18)

51. The funding of up to £8.76m will be received from DfE in the form of Section 31 non-ringing fenced grant, £6m for the Opportunity Area (OA) Programme and £2.76m for the Essential Life Skills (ELS) Programme, and under the grant determination we are required to confirm at the end of each financial year that the funding has been properly expended. The funding will be received in instalments as agreed through the delivery plans with the first payments of the OA programme funding having been received in October 2017 (£100k) and the remaining £350k for 2017/18 received in January 2018. The indicative OA funding profile for 2018/19 (£3.5m) and 2019/20 (£2m) shown in the report covers the overall programme however elements of this funding will be retained centrally by DfE for expenditure on elements such as programme evaluation, therefore the final grant the Council will receive will be less than the totals shown.
52. The grants to be made from the 2017/18 allocations for the OA and ELS programmes, as outlined in the report, of £1,050k to Expect Youth and a grant of £300k to Partners in Learning were approved by Cabinet on 6th February 2018 (FPR) E14. Appropriate funding agreements will be required for these grants, as outlined in under financial procedure rules E15-E16. The remaining 2017/18 allocations for the OA programme of £100k will be required to cover programme lead and support costs, contracted services and grants of under £50k, as covered in the report, in order to meet the delivery plan objectives, with the final spend profile for 2017/18 still to be agreed with DfE.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (MLV 21/02/18)

53. There are no specific HR implications related to the content of this report for the council. There may be HR implications for organisations who are given grants depending on how they are using the money which will be for them to consider. If there are HR implications arising from specific elements of the Opportunity Area Delivery Plan and any other associated delivery plans these will be addressed at the appropriate time.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS (PW 21/02/18)

54. There are no specific technology implications related to the content of this report. Where requirements for new, enhanced or replacement technology to support the delivery of the Opportunity Area Delivery Plan are identified, these would need to be considered by the ICT Governance Board (IGB).

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS (VJ 22/02/18)

55. Evidence shows that education, training and employment are key determinants, while socio-economic factors help to determined 50% of health status (Marmot, 2010). The Social Mobility Opportunity Area programme provides for enhancing education, training and employment prospects for children in Doncaster. With its focus on reducing the gap in educational attainment between the disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children, the programme is likely to impact positively in reducing long-term health inequalities in Doncaster. The health impact of this programme will need to be

monitored in the course of its implementation, and public health can provide the appropriate advice in assessing the health impact.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS (RM 21/2/18)

56. The OA programme's explicit aspiration is to narrow the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children and young people and to support the most vulnerable. Improving the equality and inclusivity of the education system sits at the heart of the programme. On this basis the programme should have a disproportionately positive impact on protected groups. We will carry out an equality impact assessment on major activities to ensure there are no unexpected negative impacts on protected groups.

CONSULTATION

57. The DP has been consulted on extensively with partners across Doncaster during its production. The full list of partners that have engaged with the Plan is reflected by the range of organisations represented through the working groups, we have also consulted with children from a variety of backgrounds and school heads.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

58. Strategic Youth Alliance Cabinet Report 18th October 2016, agenda item 8.
<https://doncasterintranet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=131&MId=2416&Ver=4>

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Opportunity Area (OA) Partnership Board and Working Groups

OA Partnership Board

Professor Chris Husbands – Chair – Vice Chancellor, Sheffield Hallam University
Damian Allen - Director of People, Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council
Carolyn Blundell - Associate Executive Principal, Outwood Grange Academy Trust
Nigel Brewster - Partner of Brewster Pratap & Vice Chair of Sheffield City Region LEP
John Edwards - Regional Schools Commissioner, East Midlands and Humber Region
Janet Foster - Executive Headteacher, Kirk Sandall Academy Trust
Clare Hutchinson - Area Manager, Careers and Enterprise Company
Jim Lord - Club Doncaster Foundation Chief Executive
Paul Moffatt - Chief Executive, Doncaster Children's Services Trust
Helen Redford-Hernandez – Headteacher, Hungerhill School
Lisa Suter – Headteacher, Heatherwood Special School
Anne Tyrrell - Interim CEO, Doncaster College

Primary Working Group (this reflects people who have attended previously, membership of this group is being reviewed as the work moves from planning to implementation)

Gill Ayre - Director of NQT's - School Improvement & QA Consultant
Helen Bellinger - Director of School Improvement & Research School for Partners in Learning
Dianne Dunn - Strategic Lead for NQT's - School Improvement & QA Consultant -
Strategic Lead for School Improvement
Janet Foster - Executive Headteacher, Kirk Sandall Academy Trust
Jill Foster – CEO, The Rose Learning Trust
Sara Harle – Business Manager, Partners in Learning
Helen Harrison – Headteacher, Woodfield Primary School
Jeremy Harris – Headteacher, Hatchell Wood Primary School
Helena Honeybone – Headteacher, Townfield Primary School
Janis James – Headteacher, Bentley High Street Primary School and Rosedale Primary School
Bev Lockwood – Headteacher, Kirkby Avenue Primary School
Alison Navas – Headteacher, Cannon Popham Primary School Church of England Primary School
Beryce Nixon – Headteacher, Hill Top Academy

Jonathon Sharpe - Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council

Secondary Working Group

Lisa Allott – Principal, Outwood Academy Adwick

Tom Ashley – Headteacher, Balby Carr Academy

Carolyn Blundell – Associate Executive Principal, Outwood Grange Academy Trust

Yvonne Bootman – Sir Thomas Wharton

Richard Brooke – Principal, Don Valley Academy

Rob Burton – Associate Principal, Rossington All Saints

Adam Dale – Headteacher, Campsmount

Pippa Dodghson – Headteacher, Hall Cross Academy

Maggie Dunn – Headteacher, Ridgewood

Lisa Fox – Headteacher, The Hayfield School

Jayne Gaunt – Principal, Outwood Academy Danum

John Higgins – Principal, Ash Hill Academy

David Page – Principal, Trinity Academy

Andy Peirson – Headteacher, Armthorpe Academy

Lucie Pond – Deputy Head, Hungerhill School

Helen Redford-Hernandez – Headteacher, Hungerhill School

Anna Rooney – Principal, De Warenne Academy

John Rooney – Headteacher, McAuley

Andy Sprakes - Executive Principal, XP

Richard Wood – Headteacher, Mexborough Academy

Post 16 Working Group

Nigel Brewster – Partner, Brewster Pratap & Vice Chair Sheffield City Region LEP

Greg Burke – Director, South Yorkshire Futures

Eleanor Churchward - Advice Transition and Quality Manager, Doncaster Council

Lee Douglas – Enterprise Coordinator, Careers and Enterprise Company

Brendon Fletcher – Principal, New College

Mike Garnock-Jones - Director, Higher Education Progression Partnership

Andy Hood – Head of Service, Youth Offending Service

Clare Hutchinson – Area Manager, Careers and Enterprise Company

Jacqui Jameson – Director, Careers Inc

Maria Lowry - Student Services and Marketing Manager, Doncaster College

Tina Slater - Head of Business and Education, Doncaster Chamber

Vulnerable Children Working Group

Debbie Burton - Partnership and Engagement Officer, Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council

Jan Budtz – NCS, Programme Manager

Andy Hood - Head of Service, Youth Offending Service

Alison Leeming – Partnership Manager, Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council

Dean Mangham – Youth Alliance Lead

Simon Noble - Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council

Peter Norman - Strategic Development Director, EXPECT Youth

Lauren O'gboru – NCS, Innovation Project Manager

Ruth Rickman-Williams - Regional Youth Work Adviser, West Midlands

Pauline Turner - Head of Service, Doncaster Children's Services Trust

Doncaster Opportunity Area Essential Life Skills' programme

Introduction

1. The Secretary of State is committed to ensuring we have an education system that prepares young people for life in modern Britain, regardless of their background or where they grew up. This means all schools offering a broad, academically rigorous curriculum, which is supported by the development of essential life skills such as resilience, confidence, team working and leadership skills.
2. The department has been supporting schools, through both the curriculum and extra-curricular programmes, to help them embed the development of non-cognitive skills into the school system to guarantee that pupils in every school receive the best possible education.
3. DfE will continue with this by funding a £22m Essential Life Skills programme in the 12 Opportunity Areas (OAs) over two years, to enable children and young people aged 5 - 18 years old to participate in regular extra-curricular activities. Children and young people will be able to participate in extra-curricular activities such as sports, volunteering and social action projects.

Doncaster Coast funding allocation

4. The allocation of this funding for Doncaster Opportunity Area is approximately £2.75m indicatively split over this and the next financial year with c. £1m in 2017-18 and c. £1.75m in 2018/19. This has been based on Doncaster having some 47,124 eligible children, making up 12.68% of all eligible pupils across all 12 OAs.

Rationale for intervention

5. There is a growing body of evidence that links non-cognitive skills such as resilience, self-efficacy, emotional and social skills with improved outcomes. These life skills have shown to be highly predictive of educational and labour market success and good mental health³. The evidence also suggests that school interventions such as extra-curricular activities can play a role in building these skills.
6. Extra-curricular activities can benefit disadvantaged pupils, including improving outcomes around attainment⁴. However, the Sutton Trust's 2014 report found that wealthier children and those in private schools are more likely to access and utilise extra-curricular provision.⁵ Other reports also found a strong socio-economic gradient in participation in a range of both physical and cultural activities, with those with parents in higher professional occupations much more likely to participate than those with non-working parents or those in routine occupations⁶.

³ Cunha, F., Heckman, J. J., & Schennach, S. M. (2010). Estimating the technology of cognitive and non-cognitive skill formation. *Econometrica*, Vol 78 (No 3), 883-931.

⁴ <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/resources/teaching-learning-toolkit/extending-school-time/technical-appendix>

⁵ Sutton Trust (2014). 'Research Brief: Extra-curricular Inequality'

⁶ Richards, L., Garratt, E, and Heath, A.F. with Anderson, L. and Altintas, E. (2016) 'The childhood origins of social mobility: socio-economic inequalities and changing opportunities'. Centre for Social Investigation, Nuffield College, Oxford University, page 41 (survey data collected 2006-2008)

7. A number of studies have shown that regular and persistent attendance at after school club programmes is positively associated with many academic and non-academic youth outcomes including higher academic achievement and grades, long-term educational and occupational outcomes, lower problem behaviour, higher beliefs about abilities and better emotional adjustment⁷. These studies also suggest that positive youth outcomes increase, the longer the duration of activities⁸.
8. Based on the evidence, we recommend that ELS programme should fund regular participation in extra-curricular activities to ensure the best outcomes possible for the young people involved.

⁷ Harvard Family Research Project. (2004). *Issues and Opportunities in Out-of-School Time Evaluation*, 7, 3-4. ; Vandell, D. L., Larson, R. W., Mahoney, J. L. and Watts, T. W. (2015). Children's Organized Activities. *Handbook of Child Psychology and Developmental Science*. 4:8:1–40.

⁸ Harvard Family Research Project. (2004). *Issues and Opportunities in Out-of-School Time Evaluation*, 7, 4-5.

Essential Life Skills Specification

1. We propose grant funding £1m to Expect Youth to deliver an Essential Life Skills offer to the schools in the Borough. This offer should take the form of a directory of extra-curricular activities schools could pick from to best meet the needs of their children. These would be designed to develop essential life skills including but not limited to:
 - Resilience, perseverance and persistence.
 - Hard work, self-control, discipline, good time keeping.
 - Self-confidence, leadership and team working.
 - Honesty, integrity and engaged citizenship.
 - Attitude, respect and empathy.
 - Curiosity and problem solving.
2. Expect Youth will be asked to demonstrate how the activity/projects included in the directory will advance these skills. Ultimately the Opportunity Area (OA) Partnership Board (PB) will agree the directory of activities. They will be keen to see activities that require committing time to practice, involve team participation and require perseverance to progress. These can be activities such as sports, art, social action or volunteering, young enterprise, Guides and Scouts.
3. Based on the evidence around effective interventions, all directory activities should:
 - Take place on a regular basis, in most weeks of the term and throughout the school year where possible. Residential, weekend or holiday activities that take place over a short period can be very useful but should be considered as part of a wider package of regular term-time activities for those pupils involved. Funding for one-off activities which are not part of a long-term programme should be kept to a minimum.
 - Collectively form a broad offer across the OA, ensuring that there is sufficient variety and appeal to children and young people of both genders, all ethnic backgrounds and across a range of abilities across the various areas within the borough.
 - Take account of young people's views on the types of activities that could improve their life skills. Ultimately, it will be the responsibility of the Partnership Board to ensure activities deliver the desired outcomes.
 - Be targeted to address the needs of pupils, including those with mental health issues.
 - Increase the number of children and young people with SEND and non-able bodied pupils' involved in activities, both with and without Education Health and Care plans.

- Provide an activity that goes beyond what could reasonably be expected as part of the standard school day and does not duplicate or act as a substitute for core curriculum teaching.
- Should be developed actively with schools and pupils from within the opportunity area. There should also be clear evidence that the schools and pupils are benefitting from such activities.
- Not be for any activity which is already being funded whether directly or indirectly by HM Government or its agencies.

4. The PB will be particularly keen to see activities that:

- a. Offer new or significantly extended access to relevant activities for disadvantaged children within the area
- b. Are financially sustainable beyond the initial funding period. Where possible, schools involved should be encouraged to adapt or adopt successful activities to increase the range of high quality activities that they offer. OAs may work with schools to consider how they could utilise existing budgets to fund successful activities beyond the funding period, for example through the use of pupil premium funding – where there is good evidence that developing these skills in eligible pupils should support improved academic achievement.

5. To ensure the breadth of the offer, and that this funding reaches every corner of the borough we will ask Expect Youth to run a commissioning process to enable a wider range of providers to deliver activities for schools. This will be to the benefit of local children but also to the wider network of community facing organisations who could benefit from this offer.

6. We will put in place project management arrangements in partnership with Expect Youth to track development of the directory of activities, including the commissioning beyond existing Expect Youth partners.

7. We will establish performance management arrangements to track delivery of activities and take up by young people. This will include financial information on funding spent to date and profiles of take up and funding going forward. This will also involve the collection of data to inform a national evaluation of ELS expenditure. This will report into the PB.

8. We will work with Expect Youth to develop an ambitious but deliverable profile of delivery.

9. Failure to spend allocated funding to within an agreed variance of this profile may result in funding being withdrawn.