

# Education & Skills 2030 Strategy

## Draft Version

29 January 2021

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# Foreword

*Education & Skills 2030* is our long-term strategy for the future of lifelong learning in our borough. It sets out the strengths and challenges of the system as it is now, and then provides an ambitious, progressive vision for the future, including details of what an even more effective and forward-looking system will look like.

We want Doncaster to evolve as a place where all our residents have equitable and consistent access to a range of high quality learning opportunities. We call this inclusive learning, and it cannot work unless our all-age offer is open to all, regardless of background. We want a system that provides the best possible start, accelerates achievement for all, including vulnerable people and places, leading to fulfilling careers and better, more satisfying lives. There is never a good time to stop learning, and learning new things has enormous benefits both professionally and personally, not least in terms of health and happiness.

This is not an easy task and it will not happen all at once. This strategy is ambitious, innovative and daring – but it is also necessary: if we are to keep pace with a changing world we also need to change, and even those things that work well now may not be right in the future. Change on this scale will require greater distributed leadership, wider involvement, and collaborative work towards our shared objectives for the future. We all need to feel part of the process; we all need to feel part of the solution.

Doncaster is a place of enormous potential, a place of culture and heritage filled with people with a reputation for hard work, honesty and determination. Our past has been full of shocks and strains, but we remain strong, optimistic and open to change. Our history also demonstrates our ability to innovate, and lead from the front – drawing on our strengths as place, Doncaster in 2030 can be whatever we want it to be, including a place where people genuinely feel that they are fulfilling their potential and living their best lives.

Recent events around the COVID-19 pandemic have had a huge impact on our educational establishments, but they have risen to the challenge, working tirelessly to ensure pupils get the lessons they need whilst feeling safe, valued and included. Educational settings are more than just places of learning: they are places of community, places of safety, and places where people can fulfil their aspirations. 2020 has been year of hardship, of sadness, of lost time – but it has also brought out the best in people. Education and skills colleagues and partners have been at the absolute forefront of that: with innovation, with dedication, and, above all, with kindness, courage and compassion.

*The future is ours to write – and the work starts here.*

[Signatures and pictures to go here](#)

# Strategic Context

Team Doncaster has transformed its approach to the delivery of learning provision over the past four years, undertaking key transformational projects such as developing the borough as a University City, undertaking an ambitious Inclusion Programme, and implementing the Social Mobility Opportunity Area Delivery Plan. Such activity has been instrumental in raising standards and outcomes in learning. Despite these achievements, outcomes must continue to improve at pace – to make sure, not just that we close the gap between ourselves and the national average, but also so that we close the gap between disadvantaged learners and their peers. Not enough of our young people leave school with the required grades in English and Maths at GCSE, too many of our residents have no formal qualifications to their name, and too few of our residents manage to access highly skilled, highly paid employment.

The international, national, regional, and local strategic context is also changing, and the education and skills system in Doncaster must adapt to reflect these changes. Employment and society in the 21st Century increasingly requires a solid foundation in traditional core academic skills and knowledge, as well as technical skills and essential life skills. Our younger generations are facing longer working careers which may require them to re-skill a number of times. How we deliver learning and how we skill our residents needs to adapt and respond to these changes – ensuring that learning is cross-disciplinary, personalised, and focussed on transferable and human skills to ensure future resilience.

In addition to this, the Covid-19 pandemic has created the largest disruption of education systems in history. The impact on employment could also hardly be starker – particularly for our young, minority, and disadvantaged residents – with a jobs recovery not expected until after 2021. On the other hand, the pandemic has acted as a catalyst for innovation. New, innovative approaches to education and training have emerged, with provision for distance and digital learning progressing rapidly. As a society, we have also been reminded of the essential role of educators and educational settings play within the community. There is therefore a pressing need to address the widening levels of disparity and develop resilience for future challenges through capitalising on these innovations and opportunities – championing lifelong learning as a crucial way to raise levels of wellbeing across the borough.

This is why we are taking a long-term view for Education and Skills, through this co-produced and co-owned ten-year plan for learning in Doncaster. We know that we need to deliver a system fit for the future, that benefits everyone, and we believe that we can achieve this through working collaboratively to leverage our community assets and raise both expectations and aspirations within the place. This is a key strategic moment for Doncaster to go beyond simply ‘catching up with the national average’ – and to forge its own path as a leading location for innovative learning.

## 1. International & National Drivers for Change

- Over the past few years, the government has introduced a new **National Curriculum and reformed qualifications and assessment at GCSE and A Level**. The curriculum has been transformed, with a focus on the ‘essential knowledge and skills every child should have’. The bar has been raised considerably for children’s learning in the areas of maths, English, computing and science.
- **Further major changes to the national education and skills agenda include:** the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy, changes to the Ofsted framework, increasing academisation of schools, publication of the government’s Industrial Strategy, and the introduction of T (Technical) Level courses. In addition, an unfolding devolution agenda has seen the Adult Education Budget devolved to Mayoral Combined Authorities.
- The ‘**Fourth Industrial Revolution**’ has brought inventions such as artificial intelligence, 3D printing, autonomous vehicles, and biotechnology. These rapidly developing technologies are changing the way we work and the jobs and skills required to do them. The useful skills in the workplace of the future are likely to be different from those needed today.
- The Government Office for Science Foresight Report: ***Future of Skills & Lifelong Learning*** (2017) identifies five challenges:
  1. Young adults in the UK have relatively poor literacy and numeracy by international comparisons.
  2. Employers believe labour market entrants are not properly prepared for the workforce.
  3. The UK has relatively large mismatches between the supply of and the demand for skills.
  4. Many places and sectors in the UK are in ‘low skills equilibrium’.
  5. Participation in formal learning declines with age, and adult learning is in decline.
- The notion of societal well-being has changed over the years to encompass far more than economic and material prosperity. Linked to the ***UN Sustainable Development Goals***, the ***OECD’s Learning Compass 2030*** sets out the competencies

students need to thrive in 2030. These include core literacy and numeracy skills, as well as data and digital literacy, good physical and mental health, and social and emotional skills and competencies. In addition, Nesta's ***Creativity and the Future of Skills*** report (2018) highlights the increasing importance of creativity to the growth of jobs between now and 2030.

- The House of Lords report: ***Tackling Intergenerational Unfairness*** (2019) highlights a number of challenges that are posed by an ageing population, the global financial crisis, and government policies that have failed to consider generational issues:
  - Younger people are disadvantaged by an education and training system that is ill equipped for the needs of the rapidly changing labour market, and all generations will need support in adapting to technological change.
  - Post-16 vocational education is underfunded and has not received sustained policy focus from central government.
  - The options to retrain and reskill in later life are incoherent and underfunded. Much more investment is needed in both vocational education and lifelong learning to prepare younger generations for a 100-year life.
  - Younger generations are seeing slowing pay progression and increasingly precarious employment.

## 2. Regional Drivers for Change

The ***Sheffield City Region Strategic Economic Plan 2020-2040*** sets out what needs to be done to grow the economy and transform the lives and wellbeing of people across the region. Skills, Education, and Employment is one of the major priorities within the plan, which has the following intervention areas:

- Establishing the Sheffield City Region as a place for world class technical education with leadership and investment;
- Deliver an all-age careers service that is truly best in class and meets the needs of our people and employers;
- Deep and effective collaborations between businesses, education, and training providers to drive skills development;
- Investment in our apprenticeship system to build upon existing high-quality education assets;
- Maximising devolution levers and investment to support education quality and progression;
- Working with UK Government, institutions, and businesses to raise aspirations, careers knowledge and investment in skills;

## 3. Local Drivers for Change

### Borough Strategy & Wellbeing Goals



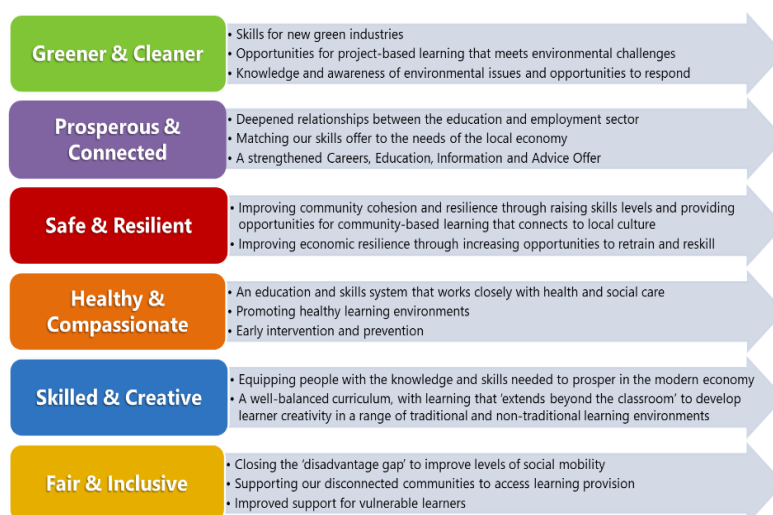
tackling inequalities and supporting culture and creativity.

Delivering the Borough Strategy will require closer working with communities, shared responsibilities and a more regenerative approach to development.

The Education and Skills strategy will have a significant impact on the following Borough Strategy wellbeing goals →

A revised Doncaster Borough Strategy will be launched in 2021. It will build upon the successes of *Doncaster Growing Together* to deliver a transformation in the wellbeing of Doncaster people and places over the next 10 years.

The Strategy will focus on the local quality of life issues residents have identified through 'Doncaster Talks' and global shared challenges like the climate change and biodiversity crisis. Wellbeing goals to be considered include creating a greener and cleaner borough, improving the safety and resilience of places to challenges like flooding, and developing a more compassionate Doncaster. Alongside these will be creating quality jobs, improving education and skills,



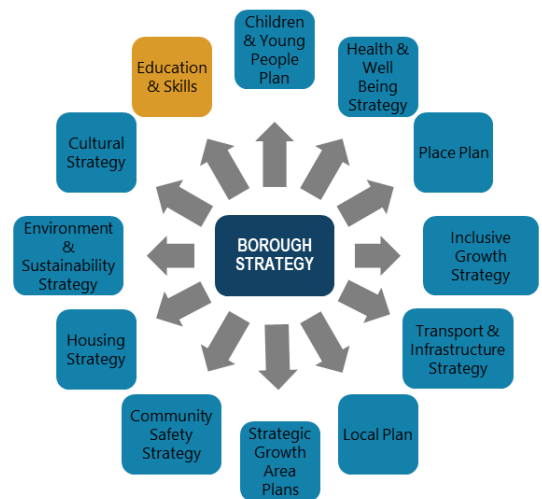
## Key Strategies

The Education and Skills 2030 Strategy is just one of a number of key strategies that will support the delivery of the Borough Strategy and achievement of our wellbeing goals. Each second tier strategy is consistent with and complementary to the borough strategy, as well as to each other.

## Supporting Documents

This strategy is part of a package of documents. The reader can access the data, research and insight upon which it has been derived via Our Online Policy Hub. The actions following this strategy will be outlined in a separate Action Plan. The Education and Skills 2030 strategy has several sub-strategies and plans that address specific topics; some of which are listed below:

- Adult Family & Community Curriculum Strategy
- Children and Young People Plan
- Doncaster Culture Education Partnership Action Plan
- Maths & Reading Strategies
- Organisation of Learning Provision Strategy
- Parenting and Family Support Strategy
- School Improvement Strategy
- Special Education Needs and Disabilities Strategy
- Starting Well Strategy



## 4. Place & Population

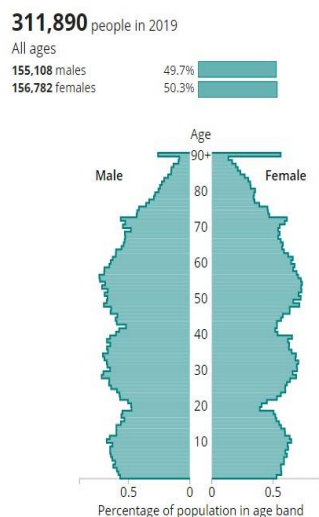
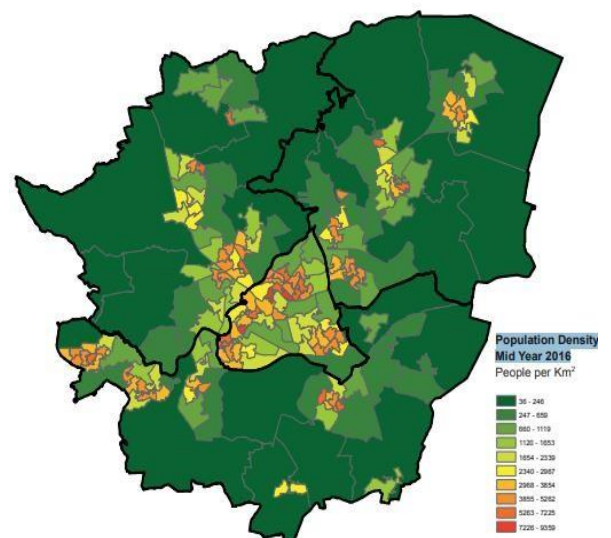
### Size & Profile

The social and economic profile of Doncaster as a place to grow up, work and live has a huge bearing on education and skills outcomes. Doncaster has many strengths, including one of the best rail hubs in the North, an international airport and a rich heritage going back to Roman times. We have a high proportion of employment in Health, Engineering Education, Logistics, Construction, Manufacturing and Business Administration.

Doncaster is the largest metropolitan borough in England, covering a diverse landscape of approximately 568 square kilometres. The borough has a population of 311,890, which is predicted to increase by 3.7% by 2030. The map on the right shows the geographical spread and concentration of Doncaster's resident population.

The map below show where the greatest concentration of people are:

Doncaster Map - People per Square Km (2016)

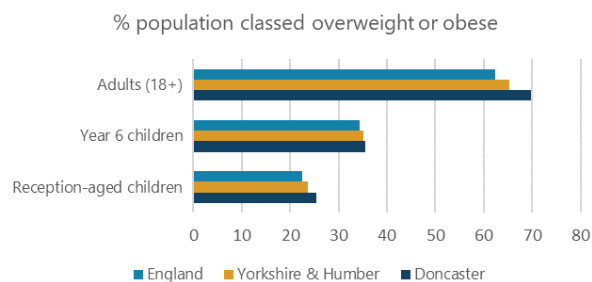


Any intervention commissioned under this strategy will be tailored to the needs, assets and priorities of each local area. A key priority for this strategy is to ensure that all residents, no matter where they live, are connected to opportunities for lifelong learning.

Doncaster has an age profile that is broadly comparable to other areas. However, it has a lower percentage of population in the 20 to 25 age group and a slightly higher proportion in the 55-64 age group; something that has implications for Doncaster's economy (something addressed by Priority 4). With 91.8% of Doncaster residents self-identifying as White British, Doncaster is less ethnically diverse than similar local authority areas. The next two largest groups after this are 'Other White' (3.4%) and 'Asian' (2.5%). Doncaster does have, however, a significant Gypsy, Roma and Traveller population.

## Health

By the age of 30, those with the highest levels of education can expect to live four years longer than those with the lowest levels of education. Poor mental and physical health can also affect learning outcomes. School pupils with better emotional wellbeing at age seven can expect to progress the equivalent of an additional term's worth of progress than peers with poorer emotional wellbeing. A positive association also exists between academic attainment and the physical activity levels of pupils – yet Doncaster remains one of the least active places in the region, with only half of residents taking part in the recommended 150 minutes of physical activity per week. This means that promoting the health and wellbeing of students within nurseries, schools, colleges, and other settings has the potential to improve their educational outcomes.



This is especially important for our borough. The health of people in Doncaster is generally worse than the England average, and is reflected by the fact that both life and healthy life expectancy is lower for our residents than the England average.

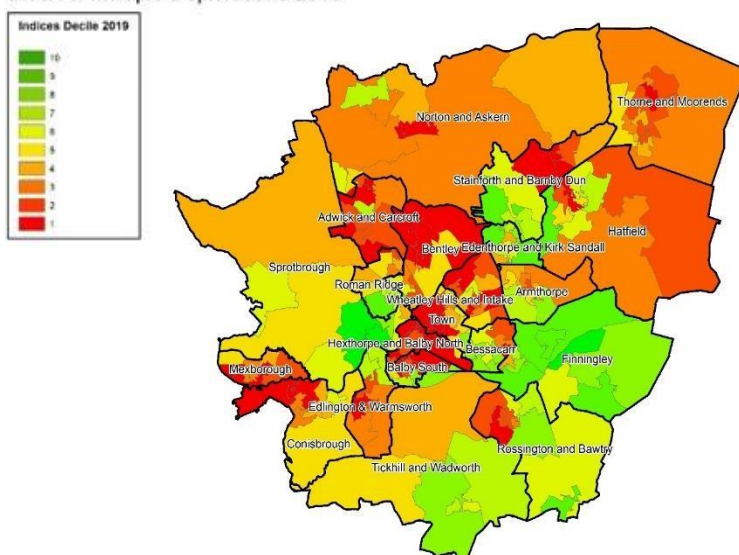
Excess weight is a particular longstanding challenge, with 25.4% of reception-aged children, and 35.6% of Year 6 children in Doncaster being classed as either overweight or obese. Overweight and obese children are at increased risk of becoming overweight adults. In Doncaster, 69.5% of residents aged over 18 are classed as either overweight or obese.

## Deprivation

Poverty and socio-economic background also have a significant impact on learning and cognition. Doncaster is in the top 20% of most deprived Local Authority Areas in England. Just under a quarter (22.6%) of children in the borough live in low income families. Doncaster's overall level of *relative* deprivation ranking has increased over the last five years, moving 48<sup>th</sup> to 41<sup>st</sup> out of 317 local authority areas (1 being the most deprived). The map to the right illustrates shows how levels of deprivation vary considerably across our communities.

Health and educational outcomes also vary significantly across the population, with a strong correlation between deprivation and these poor outcomes. Life expectancy is 10.9 years lower for men and 8.2 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Doncaster compared to the least deprived areas. Where appropriate, the actions within the strategy will be targeted at those specific areas where people face greater barriers to learning.

Index of Multiple Deprivations 2019



## Culture & Heritage

Doncaster has a rich cultural, industrial, and sporting heritage and a variety of valuable cultural assets, all of which have a positive impact on education and economy. Recent capital investments in the borough have expanded Doncaster's cultural infrastructure. This includes the expansion of the borough's Civic and Cultural quarter, with the new Danum Gallery, Library and Museum, CAST theatre, and cinema complex. This infrastructure will help to inspire creativity, informal learning, and innovation, providing a range of spaces that offer learning and employment opportunities. Doncaster's Creative and Culture Strategy 2016-2021 aims to encourage people from all communities, and particularly families, children and young people to access and take part in creative and cultural activities. This Strategy will support these aims (and the emerging *new* Culture Strategy) through continued support for the Cultural Education Partnership and encouraging school curriculum to incorporate opportunities for arts and cultural community learning.



## 5. Education

### Education Providers

The learning provision landscape in Doncaster includes:

- 69 day nurseries and 265 childminders
- 99 primary schools
- 20 secondary schools
- 5 special schools
- 1 non-maintained special school (School for the Deaf)
- 3 pupil referral units
- 5 independent schools – range of mainstream, specialist and alternative provision
- A variety of tertiary education providers including school sixth forms, Doncaster College, New College Doncaster, a University Technical College, and the National College for Advanced Transport and Infrastructure
- A variety of voluntary and community learning providers

As a consequence of national policy changes, all of Doncaster’s Secondaries and nearly two-thirds of Doncaster’s Primaries are now Academies or part of Multi Academy Trusts, with Local Authority’s role shifting from direct provision of support to a systems leadership role. Although Doncaster does not formally host a university, it is well placed regionally in terms of access to high quality Higher Education, with Sheffield University and Sheffield Hallam University in close proximity. It also has a number of Further and Higher Education colleges offering a range of technical, vocational and ‘traditional’ academic courses.

### Educational Outcomes

Of 317 local authority areas, Doncaster ranks as the 20th most deprived in terms of attainment of qualifications and skills provision, as measured by the Education and Skills Deprivation measure. 37.6% of our Lower Super Output Areas are in the 10% most deprived nationally. Attainment is therefore a clear and present challenge for Doncaster.

Doncaster’s average GCSE attainment score (Attainment 8) is lower than similar authorities and the national average, but overall it is an improving picture.

Current Ofsted ratings across the borough are as follows:

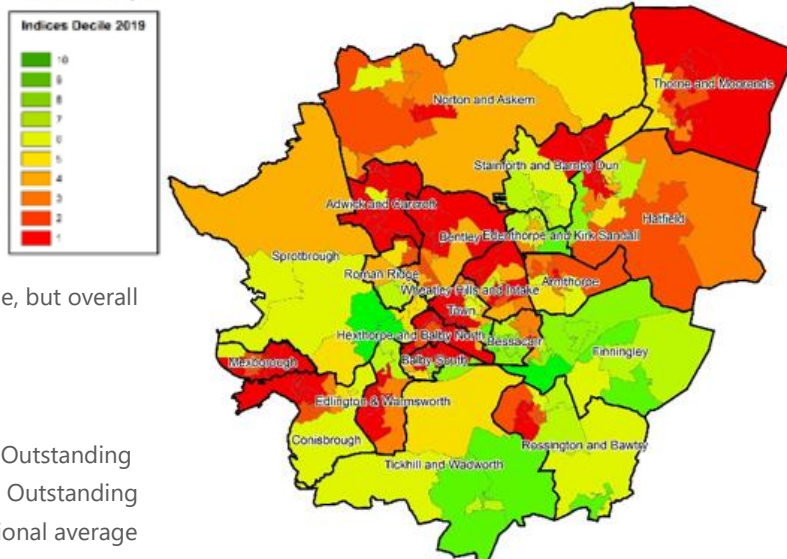
- 99% of Early Years settings are rated as Good or Outstanding
- 69% of primary schools are rated Good or Outstanding (ranking worst in the country, well below the national average of 88%, as well as the Yorkshire & Humber average of 83%)
- 50% of secondary schools are Good or Outstanding (ranking 142 out of 151 local authorities, well below the 76.3% seen nationally and 72% seen regionally)

### Pupil Characteristics

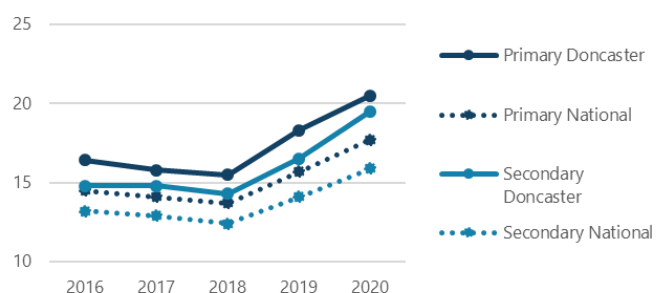
There are currently just over 48,000 pupils attending a Doncaster school, of which 60% are in a state-funded primary school and 37% in a state-funded secondary school. Over the past three years, the number of pupils attending Doncaster’s primary schools has decreased by 395 pupils, and the number of pupils attending Doncaster’s secondary schools has increased by 110 pupils.

In recent years, the rates of Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility in Doncaster have been rising. Currently these rates are higher than the national averages, with just over one fifth of pupils in

Education, Skills & Training 2019

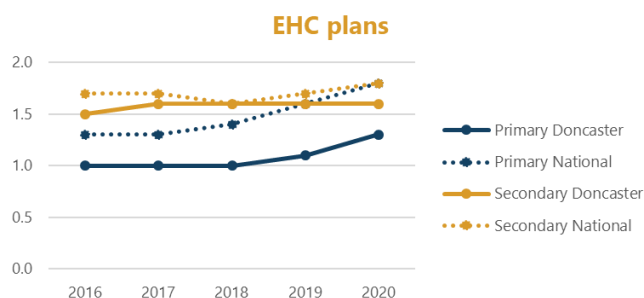
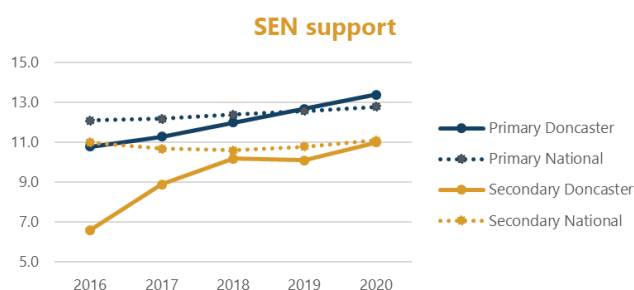


Free School Meal Eligibility



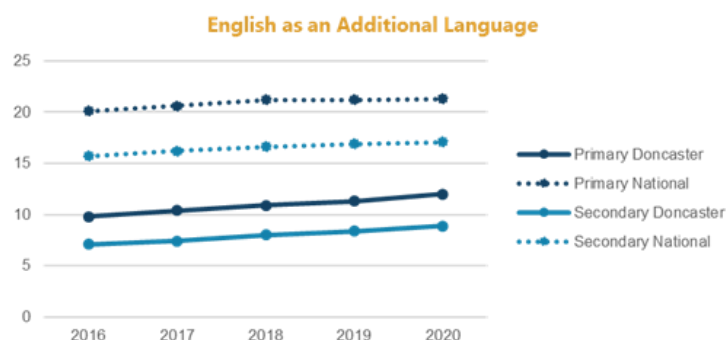
Doncaster's state-funded primaries and just under one fifth of pupils in state-funded secondaries eligible. Nearly 2 out of 5 pupils in state-funded special schools are eligible.

13.4% of primary school pupils and 11% of secondary pupils in Doncaster are registered for Special Educational Needs (SEN) support. 1.3% of primary school pupils and 1.6% of secondary school pupils in Doncaster have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). EHC plans are for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through SEN support, and they identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support to meet those needs.



The vast majority of the school population in Doncaster's state-funded schools is from a White British ethnic background; this has remained stable and well above the national average for the years shown. Doncaster has a higher proportion of Gypsy, Roma Traveller pupils than nationally, particularly in primary schools.

Doncaster has a relatively low prevalence of pupils who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL), when compared to the national average. The language most commonly spoken by these pupils is Polish (currently a third of all Primary and Secondary EAL pupils). The proportion of EAL students in Doncaster's primary schools has been increasing over the past four years (an increase of 1.1pp and 0.9pp respectively).





# Our Vision and Priorities for 2030

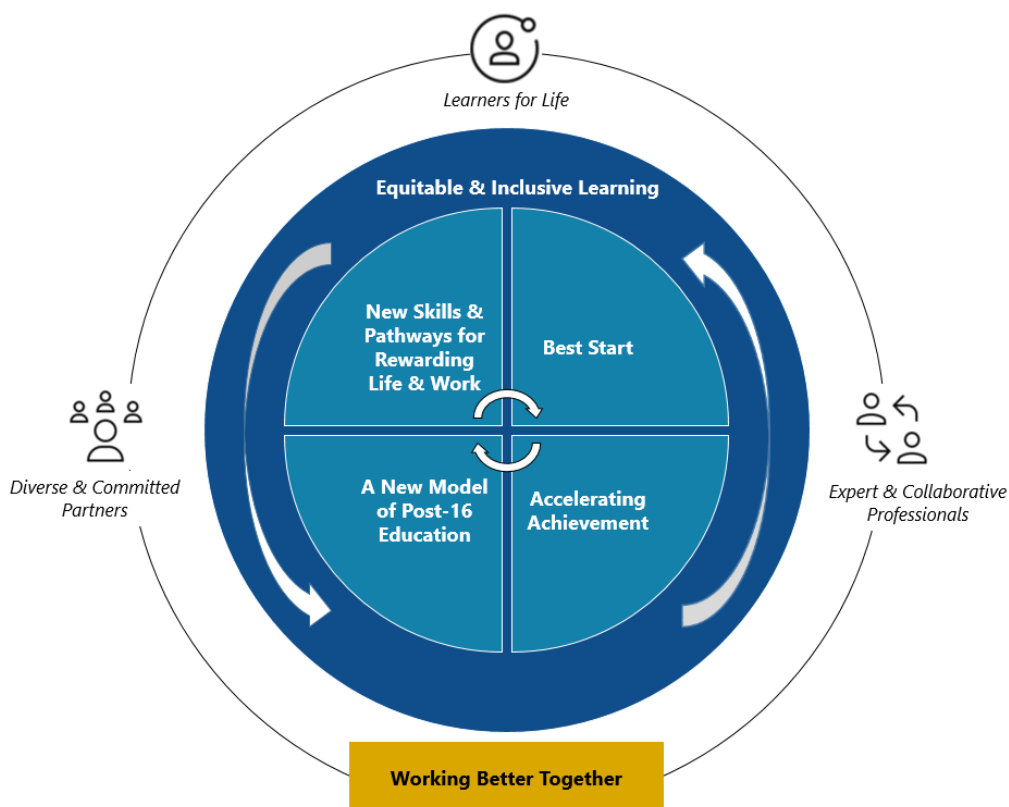
## Our Vision

*Equitable and inclusive lifelong learning that empowers people to fulfil their potential and thrive in life and work.*

## Our Priorities

Over the next decade, we will focus on five key areas for transformation and action. Priorities One to Four cover key learner age stages, whereas Priority Five is a crosscutting 'golden thread':

- 1. Best Start** — ensuring children and young people are ready to learn. This includes increasing levels of parental engagement, renewing our focus on speech and language acquisition and development, and providing a strong Early Help, Health, and Social Care offer.
- 2. Accelerating Achievement** — ensuring that every child and young person achieves their full potential at Key Stages 2 to 4. This includes implementing consistent behavioural approaches, offering an inclusive and well-rounded curriculum that develops essential life skills and supports emotional and physical wellbeing, and recruiting and retaining the best teachers and leaders.
- 3. A New Model of Post-16 Education** — reforming our Post-16 education and skills system to equip residents with the skills, ambition and attributes that allow them to thrive in life and work. This includes improving the quality, diversity and availability of vocational and technical educational that gives parity of esteem with academic routes.
- 4. New Skills & Pathways to Fulfilling Life & Work** — providing opportunities for residents to learn and acquire new skills throughout life, and to access (and progress within) secure, rewarding employment. This includes working closely with industry to develop sectoral career pathways, strengthening our all-age careers, advice, and guidance offer, and improving the availability and accessibility of adult learning.
- 5. Equitable & Inclusive Learning** — addressing educational and skills disparities across our communities and the issue of social mobility. This includes extending the work of the Social Mobility Opportunity Area, increasing support for vulnerable learners, and utilising our local assets to extend our community-learning offer.



# Key Challenges & Opportunities

Challenges	Strengths & Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ High rates of absence and fixed term exclusions</li> <li>✗ Outcomes at Key Stage 2 and 4 are notably lower than national average (particularly for disadvantaged learners)</li> <li>✗ Low levels of social mobility</li> <li>✗ High rates of child poverty and obesity</li> <li>✗ High percentage of working age residents with no formal qualifications, and a low percentage with Level 3 and 4</li> <li>✗ A need to increase the proportion of schools rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ One of the best Early Years sectors in the country, and an improving picture in terms of Primary, Secondary and Post-16 achievement</li> <li>✓ An enthusiastic and open approach to innovation in learning</li> <li>✓ A highly engaged business sector</li> <li>✓ Potential to develop Centres of Excellence at Levels 3 and 4 to support specialist local and regional industries</li> <li>✓ A developing culture and heritage provision and a wealth of community assets</li> <li>✓ An emerging hybrid model of tertiary education</li> </ul>

## Working Better Together – Our Approach

Three important factors underpin the changes and improvements that will deliver our ambitious priorities:

### 1. The key messages from consultation with key partners, which clearly signal a collective desire for change.

- Improve communication and collaboration across the system
- Prioritise initiatives and secure sustainable funding
- Simplify strategy and governance arrangements

### 2. How we plan to approach the delivery of this strategy through a set of shared principles.

#### Learners for life:

- Learning that develops the whole-person
- Opportunities to learn across the whole life course
- Education that is learner-centred

#### Expert & collaborative professionals:

- A system that is expert-led
- Innovative teachers and leaders
- Collaborative learning professionals

#### Diverse & committed partners:

- Strong partnerships that embed a whole-system approach
- A system with distributed leadership
- Place-based learning connected to culture and heritage, communities, and families

### 3. The importance of an effective Talent & Innovation Ecosystem to drive the system and cultural change necessary to deliver our priorities. This will shift the focus from a traditional academic institution centred model of learning to a more diverse and inclusive borough-wide learning community providing a mixed – or ‘hybrid’ – model that caters to the individual needs of all residents. This work will draw on international best practice to bring together learners and employers, community partners and educators to apply learning to real world problems.

# OUR PRIORITIES ON A PAGE

Priority	Aims	Key Challenges	Key Indicators
<b>Best Start</b> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve Readiness to Learn &amp; Build Strong Foundations in Learning</li> <li>2. Support Effective Learning through High Quality Early Years Settings and Multi-Agency Working</li> <li>3. Promote Family &amp; Community Learning to Support Families &amp; Strengthen Parental Engagement</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Relatively low levels of parental engagement, with take-up of funded childcare varying considerably across localities</li> <li>➤ Outcomes up to KS1 vary considerably across localities and pupil characteristics</li> <li>➤ A number of poor health outcomes for children and mothers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ % of pupils reaching achieving expected in the communication and language, and literacy areas of learning at EYFS</li> <li>➤ % of pupils achieving the expected standard or better in Reading Writing and Maths combined at KS1</li> <li>➤ % take up of engagement with a Family Hub, and greater consistency across the borough</li> </ul>
<b>Accelerating Achievement</b> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Establish a Broad Curriculum &amp; Approaches to Teaching &amp; Learning that Develop the Whole Person</li> <li>5. Raise Levels of Achievement &amp; Ensure Pupils Reach their Full Potential at Key Stages 2 to 4</li> <li>6. Nurture an Outstanding Educational Workforce</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Outcomes at Key Stages 2 and 4 are notably below the national average – particularly in English and Maths</li> <li>➤ High rates of absence, increasing numbers of permanent exclusions, and very high rates of fixed term exclusions in secondary schools</li> <li>➤ A low percentage of schools rated either Good or Outstanding, and difficulties in recruiting and retaining teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ English and Maths</li> <li>➤ Attainment gap at KS2 &amp; KS4 &amp; ensuring consistency across schools</li> <li>➤ Exclusions/attendance &amp; consistency</li> </ul>
<b>A New Model of Post-16 Education</b> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Ensure the Education &amp; Skills System is Responsive to the Needs of the Local &amp; National Economy</li> <li>8. Develop a Coordinated Post-16 Education Offer that Gives Learners the Skills they Need to Prosper</li> <li>9. Transform Doncaster into a University City that Provides Advanced Learning through Centres of Excellence</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A higher rate of pupils finishing secondary school without achieving English and mathematics than seen nationally</li> <li>➤ A fragmented Post-16 offer</li> <li>➤ Sectoral strengths, and the opportunity to establish Doncaster as a University City</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ % of population taking up (advanced) apprenticeships</li> <li>➤ 19 year olds with L3</li> <li>➤ % of working population qualified to L3 &amp; L4</li> </ul>
<b>New Skills &amp; Pathways to Fulfilling Life &amp; Work</b> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Establish Learning Partnerships with Local &amp; Regional Industries that Provide Quality, Sustainable Employment</li> <li>11. Ensure all Residents have Opportunity to Access &amp; Thrive in Fulfilling Careers</li> <li>12. Remove Barriers to Employment &amp; Develop, Retain, &amp; Attract Talent</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The % of our working population with level 3 and 4 qualifications is starting to flat-line or decline, with a large gap to regional and national comparators; however, vocational qualifications are above regional and national averages</li> <li>➤ Doncaster's productivity per worker is relatively low and our economy is low skilled, low wage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 18-25 year old retention</li> <li>➤ % of population in skilled occupations</li> <li>➤ Average weekly pay</li> <li>➤ % of population Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET)</li> </ul>
<b>Equitable &amp; Inclusive Learning</b> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13. Champion &amp; Empower Disadvantaged Learners to Enable Social Mobility</li> <li>14. Improve Outcomes for Minority &amp; Vulnerable Learners</li> <li>15. Equitable Lifelong Learning for Every Community</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Low levels of social mobility</li> <li>➤ Disconnected communities with variable access to learning and employment opportunities</li> <li>➤ Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are substantially lower than their peers</li> <li>➤ Outcomes for EAL pupils are substantially lower than their peers across the majority of key stages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Increased access, engagement and take-up with informal learning opportunities</li> <li>➤ KS2, KS4, L3 - Stakeholder type, locality</li> <li>➤ % working population with no formal qualifications</li> </ul>



# Priority One: *Best Start*

## About this Priority

Doncaster has a long-standing ambition to be the most child-friendly borough in the country. This strategy contributes to that ambition by ensuring children will get the *Best Start*, through the provision of high quality early education, childcare, and family learning, as well as integrated early intervention and prevention during those vital early years.

The ***first eight years of a child's life are crucial*** for their development. What happens during this period lays the ground for virtually every aspect of a person's life, including cognitive development, social behaviour, personality, and personal agency. ***Parents and carers play a crucial role*** in ensuring children have a strong start to their learning, through providing a nurturing, secure, healthy and stimulating environment. Building upon the learning that has taken place in the home, high quality Early Years and Primary education should provide children with a rich variety of experiences that equip them with the 'core' skills in literacy and numeracy, as well as social and emotional skills that will serve as a foundation for positive outcomes in later life.

Children who receive these strong foundations typically go on to achieve better in secondary school and secure better employment, further learning, health and social outcomes than those who do not. All of this is enabled through a ***strong family learning, early help, health and social care offer***, which clearly shows that early disadvantage, can be significantly reduced through effective intervention and prevention. Doncaster already has a strong Early Years and Key Stage 1 offer, which has seen sustained improvement in recent years. However, there are further opportunities to build on these successes. This includes addressing variations in take-up rates for early education entitlement and relatively low levels of parental engagement, as well reducing disparities in outcomes across pupil stakeholder groups.

**Key Challenges**

- Relatively low levels of parental engagement, with take-up of funded childcare varying considerably across localities
- Outcomes up to KS1 vary considerably across localities and pupil characteristics
- A number of poor health outcomes for children and mothers

## Our Aims

<p><b>Aim 1</b></p> <p><b>Improve Readiness to Learn &amp; Build Strong Foundations in Learning</b></p>	<p><b>Aim 2</b></p> <p><b>Support Effective Learning through High Quality Early Years Settings and Multi-Agency Working</b></p>	<p><b>Aim 3</b></p> <p><b>Promote Family &amp; Community Learning to Support Families &amp; Strengthen Parental Engagement</b></p>
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## What do we need to focus on?

***Doncaster has achieved a number of successes across Early Year's provision and now needs to sustain and build on these; further- strengthening provision in order to make a long-lasting positive impact on life outcomes.*** Whilst we can demonstrate a strong improvement journey, there is a significant amount of variation in access and outcomes across localities and specific pupil types, as well as some wider barriers to achievement. Addressing these is of paramount importance, not just to level-up achievement across the board for Early Years and Infants-aged children, but also to set the foundations for achievement through Key Stages 2 to 4.

In 2019, ***99% of the borough's Early Years settings were rated as being 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted*** (against a national average of 94%). Overall outcomes at the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) are also an area of strength, with 73% of children reaching a Good Level of Development at the end of Early Years in 2019. This figure has increased by 28 percentage points (pp) since 2013, and currently exceeds national and regional averages.

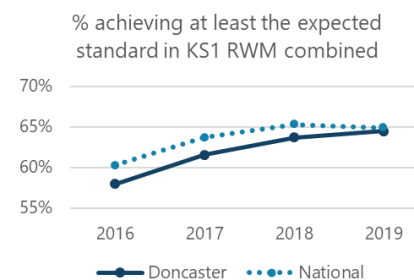
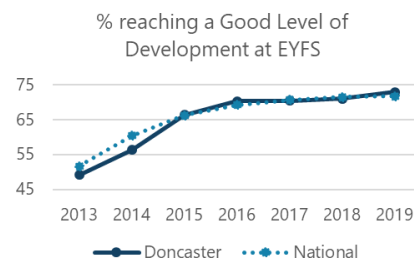
**Doncaster also has a strong Family Hub offer**, which brings a number of key services together to provide vital opportunities for families to learn and grow together. A high proportion of families in Doncaster are accessing Family Hub services, with 83% having registered at the beginning of 2020. Overall take up of funded entitlement in Doncaster is also high:

- The proportion of eligible 2 year olds accessing their funded entitlement has increased significantly over the past five years, and now far surpasses the national and regional averages (80% compared to 69% and 72% respectively)
- Currently 94% of 3 and 4 year olds are accessing free education, which is in line with the national average.

Looking beyond the borough averages, however, it is clear that **not all children who could benefit from free entitlements and services are doing so**. Whilst 74% of children and young people were accessing a Hub at the beginning of 2020, only 60% attended more than twice. There is also a significant disparity across Doncaster’s localities, with a 23pp difference between the highest and lowest levels of take up for 2-year-old free education entitlement, and a 14pp difference for 3 and 4 year-old entitlement.

**Overall outcomes at Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 are positive:**

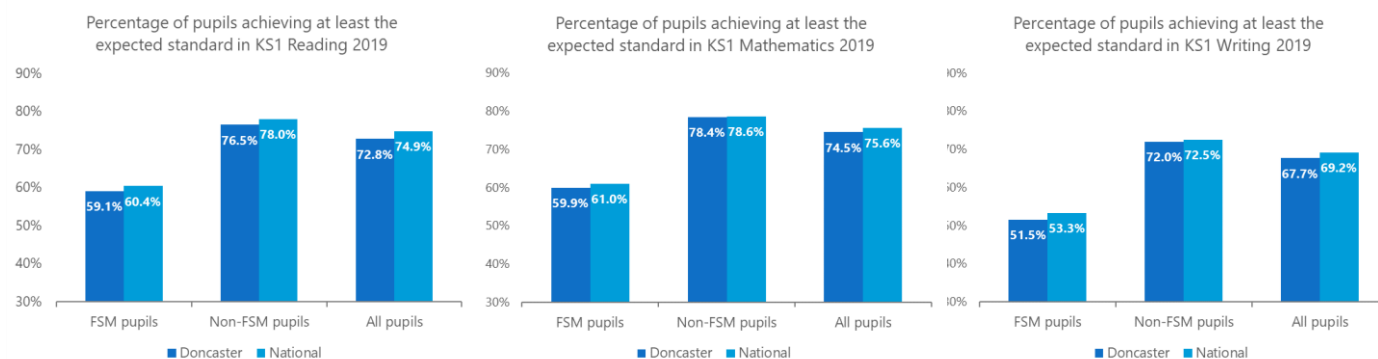
- The proportion of children reaching a Good Level of Development (GLD) at EYFS has improved steadily in the last five years, and is now above the national average (72.5% compared to 71.8% respectively).
- The proportion pupils at Key Stage 1 achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing, and Maths combined also shows steady improvement, with a 7pp increase between 2016 and 2019, bringing Doncaster in line with the national average.



**Speech and language development, Literacy, and Numeracy are particularly important** as foundations for broader academic achievement, and were identified as areas of importance in the independent strategic review (see Appendix XX). Overall, outcomes in Communication and Language within the EYFS have improved in recent years, with the proportion of children at their expected levels of learning, currently above national average.

Similarly, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard of phonetic decoding in Year 1 has also improved steadily over the past 4 years, closing the gap to the national average. However, acknowledging the school readiness needs assessment, we will need to continue to increase the proportion of children who are at, or above the expected level of development in communication skills at 2-2½ years.

There are also **wide variations in outcomes at EYFS and Key Stage 1** when looking across localities and pupil groups. These include gender disparity, with girls outperforming boys across most Early Learning Goals, with gaps that are higher than exist nationally. For example, whilst outcomes for girls in Year 1 Phonics are in line with the national average, outcomes for boys in Doncaster are 4pp below national. There are also clear differences in outcomes across Doncaster’s localities for Reading, Writing, and Maths at Key Stage 1, with the gap for Writing being particularly stark (i.e. the percentage of pupils achieving at least the expected standard is 7.8pp below the national average in Central compared to 3.1pp above the national in South). As a borough with relatively high levels of deprivation, one of the most common gaps in outcomes is between disadvantaged pupils and their more affluent peers; particularly for literacy and numeracy.



These disparities, coupled with the renewed emphasis on Early Reading and Phonics in the new OFSTED framework, demonstrate a clear need to **continue the focus on the development of these core academic skills**, as well as an imperative to **support children to develop the emotional and social skills** needed to ensure they are ‘ready to learn’ at any age and stage. **In addition, we must:**

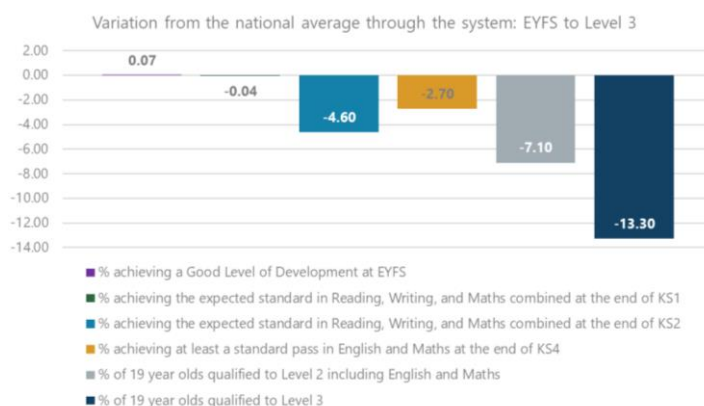
**Support Early Years settings to recruit and retain experienced practitioners** - to provide a strong Continuous Professional Development (CPD) offer for all, including working with the sector to encourage staff to gain appropriate levels of professional qualifications. The CPD offer within school-based settings is already strong, but feedback from consultation has highlighted the need to extend this to practitioners within the private sector. The Early Years Inclusion Team, teaching school hub partners, local universities and colleges also have a role to play here in to strengthening research and evidence-based practice as part of our CPD offer (something further highlighted under Priority Two). By reducing inequities in access to high quality professional learning, we will thereby reduce variations in learner outcomes.

**Improve levels of parental engagement through the Early Years** – something that is a long-standing area of challenge in Doncaster, and further highlighted in consultation. However, as research from The Royal Foundation has highlighted, it is crucial to ensure that there are mechanisms in place to support this, and to therefore continue to champion and support Doncaster’s vibrant parent forums, and services such as [Short Breaks](#) and the [Families Information Service](#). Parental competence in foundational literacy and numeracy are also crucial factors to help them engage in their child’s learning. Yet, as a borough with relatively low levels of qualifications amongst working age adults, this has been a long-standing challenge. Doncaster’s [Adult and Family Community Learning](#) offer plays a vital role here, especially given the impact family literacy, language and numeracy programmes can have on children’s academic and learning related outcomes. However, feedback from consultation has also indicated a need to widen the type and extent of our family learning offer to encourage wider participation, as well as to expanding the role of [ADVANCE](#), and other skills initiatives, along with better communicating the benefits of Early Years education, family learning, and take up of childcare entitlement.

**Address the health, environmental and social factors that impact strongly on educational outcomes** - particularly at the earliest ages. Health and social care services and community providers all have an important role to play in promoting the development of young children. This is particularly important for our borough – we are among the worst performing 25% of Local Authorities for breastfeeding initiation rates and smoking at the time of delivery, and we have a higher proportion of reception-aged children who are overweight or obese than nationally. In addition, Doncaster has a higher percentage of *Children in Need* than both national and regional rates, with referrals to Early Help most often relating to behaviour, parenting or emotional well-being. The partnership must continue to work through a joined-up and integrated multi-agency working approach to mitigate the negative effects of these wider determinants of educational outcomes. In recent years, Doncaster’s locality based Early Years Inclusion Service has also moved to a locality-working model, which has been highlighted as a strength by Ofsted. In addition, Doncaster’s [Starting Well Strategy](#) provides a multi-disciplinary performance framework for education, health, and care, covering work with the conception to age-2 group. A continued and unrelenting focus on the first 1001 days of a child’s life remains an important general objective for the borough. This this must involve investing in, promoting and supporting key services such as midwifery, health visiting and [Early Help](#); improving children’s readiness to learn through delivery of the [Healthy Child Programme](#); and continuing to embed a multi-disciplinary approach to trauma-informed practice.

**Tackle the ‘drop-off’ in outcomes as pupils progress through the system.**

Whilst children perform relatively well, up until the end of Key Stage 1, the story is somewhat different by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 4 and progress on to tertiary education, with 19 year olds in Doncaster significantly less likely to achieve a Level 3 qualification than their peers nationally. Despite strong foundations for early and reception years, the current system does not deliver consistent and satisfactory outcomes between Key Stages 2 and 4 – Therefore, we need to understand why by examining what works well during the earliest years of education, and sharing this knowledge and practice with the primary and secondary school sector. This means looking at the strengths of the system up to Key Stage 1 and replicating this across KS2 and KS4. Understanding the learner journey and facilitating smooth transitions through the Key Stages is crucial here. Building relationships across settings, providing opportunities for children to familiarise themselves with new people and settings, preparing them for new ways of learning, and involving parents and carers in this transition are all important factors in facilitating this.





## Key areas for action

- Continue the focus on the first 1,001 days
- Continue to provide strong Early Years settings support, including support for CPD
- Increase access to quality childcare, including take-up of Free Early Education Entitlement
- Increase Family Hubs engagement & expand access to this service across the borough
- Renew our focus on speech and language development and numeracy and literacy skills
- Promote the development of social and emotional skills to ensure children are ready to learn
- Target support to level up access to early education to ensure there is a 'consistency of opportunity and outcomes' across the borough
- Support families at the earliest opportunity through Early Help & social care services
- Strengthen parental engagement and links with the home learning environment, including through broadening the whole family and community learning offer
- Mitigate the effects of poverty, inequality and disadvantage by supporting parents and carers and narrowing early development and achievement gaps

## Key measures of success

- % of pupils reaching achieving the expected standard in the communication and language, and literacy areas of learning at EYFS
- % of pupils achieving the expected standard or better in Reading Writing and Maths combined at Key Stage 1
- % take up of engagement with a Family Hub, and greater consistency across the borough



# Priority Two: Accelerating Achievement

## About this Priority

**Doncaster has made some significant improvements in attainment over the past five years**, and has started to close the gap on the national average – particularly at Key Stage 2. However, there are still a number of challenges and failures across our education system that are preventing too many young people from reaching their full potential.

Rather than constantly striving to make incremental changes to chase the UK average, which is often moving further out of reach, **we need to make some fundamental systemic changes**.

As children progress into and through junior phase and secondary school, they must be more empowered to learn within a creative, stimulating, and challenging school environment that provides them with the knowledge and skills needed to progress into tertiary education and high quality employment. Preparing young people for the world of further education and work in an increasingly uncertain and rapidly changing future requires us to continually adapt school curriculum and teaching methods. There are now increasing opportunities for pupils to engage in problem-based learning that is shaped by local employers. This also allows them to develop the core non-cognitive skills and characteristics required to meet these challenges.

The drive towards even better outcomes for children will therefore be characterised by a strong focus on ‘the basics’, and enriching curriculum that develops essential life skills, connects learning to the culture and heritage of the borough, and school environments that promote the health and wellbeing of children and young people. All of this requires a:

- continued focus on the recruitment and retention of high quality teachers and education leaders;
- strong school improvement offer supported by collaboration across the system;
- supportive approach to parental engagement with effective transition planning across all stages and phases.

### Key Challenges

- High rates of absence and fixed-term exclusions
- A need to improve transitions across key phases
- A need to improve outcomes at KS2 and KS4, particularly in English and Maths, and particularly for disadvantaged learners
- Difficulties in recruiting & retaining excellent teachers and leaders

## Our Aims

<p><b>Aim 4</b></p> <p><b>Establish a Broad Curriculum &amp; Approaches to Teaching &amp; Learning that Develop the Whole Person</b></p>	<p><b>Aim 5</b></p> <p><b>Raise Levels of Achievement &amp; Ensure Pupils Reach their Full Potential at Key Stages 2 to 4</b></p>	<p><b>Aim 6</b></p> <p><b>Nurture an Outstanding Educational Workforce</b></p>
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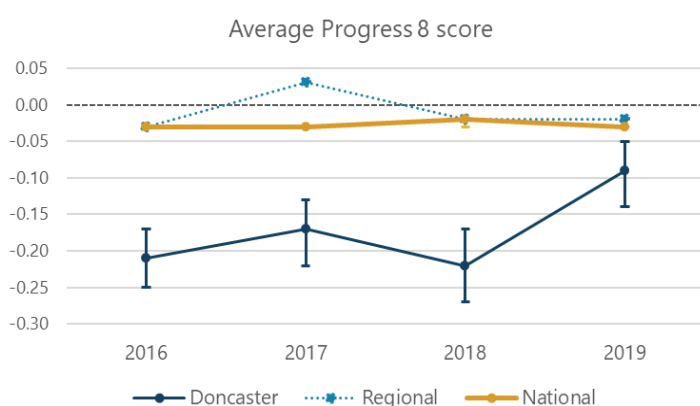
## What do we need to focus on?

Too many young people in Doncaster are leaving school without reaching the expected standard in English and Maths, and are therefore excluded from a range of opportunities in adult life. Data shows us they are much less likely to progress in further education, and they have fewer opportunities to take up fulfilling jobs and careers. Therefore, whilst outcomes need to continue to improve across the board, **there must therefore be a persistent focus on delivery of the Basics** (English and Maths) across all of our schools. This imperative is cemented by feedback received from across the schools system, that there is a need to simplify the number of objectives within local learning strategy – *to focus on a fewer number of core elements, and to do them well*.

Overall outcomes at Key Stage 2 have been a real success story for Doncaster over the course of the last four years, demonstrating sustained improvement. However, despite narrowing, the gap to the national average remains at 4.6pp. **Reading is the biggest area of challenge**, with the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard currently well below the national average (Doncaster currently ranks 146th out of 151 Local Authorities for this measure). Progress scores for reading are also significantly below average.

The fact that Key Stage 2 pupils struggle with Reading has also had a **knock-on effect with their ability to progress in Maths**. Progress scores for Maths have improved recently, but still stand below the national average. Key Stage 2 results in Doncaster also show that children in many of our schools perform significantly worse at questions involving Reasoning and Problem Solving, which suggests language is an issue.

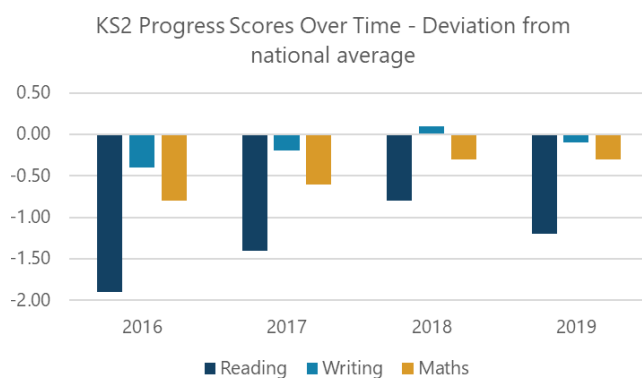
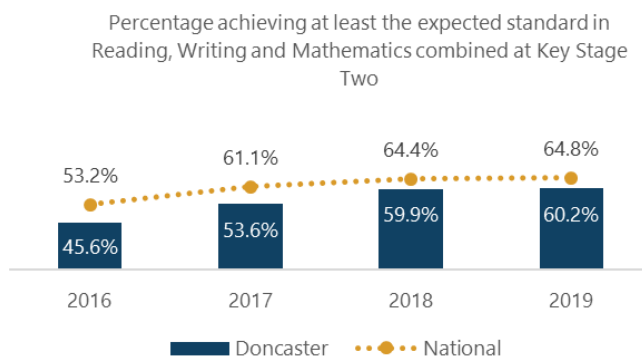
At Key Stage 4, Average Progress Scores have improved and the gap to national has begun to close. As with Key Stage 2, the proportion of children receiving a standard pass in Basics is lower than the national average, and currently stands at -3.7pp.



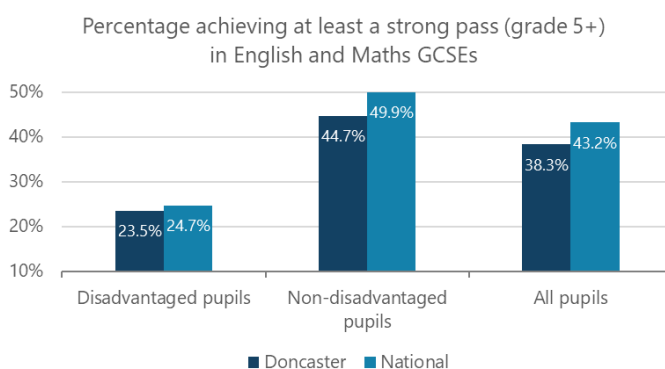
Although there has been a substantial improvement in outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in Doncaster at Key Stage 4 over the past three years, there are still significant areas for improvement – particularly in terms of pupils achieving a standard pass in Maths, and a good pass in the Basics. It is crucial that we sustain these recent improvements considering the disproportionate impact of lost learning through the pandemic.

So **Maths and English are the key foundations for our young people**, but our focus needs to extend beyond this. The capacity of local residents to flourish in changing social and economic conditions is increasingly dependent upon traditional outcomes (measured by national assessments) and a wider set of outcomes that relate to their non-cognitive abilities. There is wide-ranging consensus that **no single skill set or area of subject expertise is likely to be able to sustain a long-term career in future economic climates**. The core skills of the 21st century – such as complex problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and digital literacy – are important enablers for people to adapt to changing needs of the job market. The importance of this is underlined by feedback from local employers, who stressed the need for school-leavers to be better equipped with the attitudes, skills, and behaviours that would prepare them for the work place.

Feedback from Doncaster’s young people has also highlighted some key issues. Many felt they had been pigeonholed into vocational or academic routes far too early and expressed a desire to have more choice and control in building a curriculum that works for them.



**Both Maths and English also require improvement for all pupils at Key Stage 4.** However, there are a number of pupil groups performing notably worse than their peers nationally. For example, only 56.1% of male pupils received at least a standard pass in Basics in 2019 compared to 67.4% of female pupils – a gender gap that is significantly worse than national. Likewise, EAL pupils in Doncaster are much less likely to receive a standard pass in Basics than their peers nationally, with an 11.4pp gap to national average.



They wanted better careers advice on the range of options open to them on leaving statutory education. They require more mental health and well-being support. Parents and carers also raised the importance of a positive school ethos - one that **values each child as an individual, raises aspirations, and respects difference**. Parents felt that schools need to improve the mental and emotional health provision available to children. Our education system must therefore deliver a curriculum that engenders positive social relationships, values diversity, and celebrates creativity.

% Settings Rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted

	Early Years	Primary	Secondary
Doncaster	99%	68%	56%
National average	94%	88%	77%
Gap	+5%	-20%	-21%

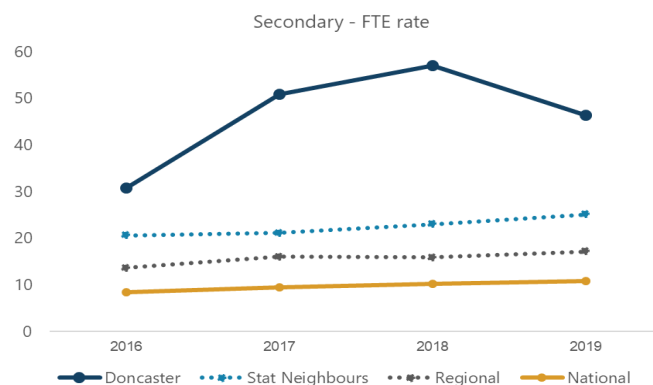
The drive to improve outcomes in these areas will require changes across the school system. This needs to also be reflected in the proportion of our school rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted, as this is key factor for attracting families and teachers to live and work in Doncaster. Although our Early Years provision is now well above the national average - and we have made some good improvements across both primary and secondary schools over the past 5 years, the proportion of **children attending a school that is**

**rated by Ofsted as either Good or Outstanding is still significantly lower** than both the national and regional averages. It is clear, therefore, that there is still a significant gap to bridge.

**The drive to improve outcomes across these areas will action targeted in a number of areas:**

**A continued focus on improving rates of absence and exclusions in our schools.**

Much has been done across the partnership to address exclusions over the past 18 months, with permanent exclusion rates falling quickly, and the majority of schools seeing strong improvements in their data (particularly for vulnerable groups). However, despite this progress, there is still some way to go. Published fixed-term exclusion rate in Secondary schools are currently 4.5 times the national average, with considerable variability across schools (ranging between 0.8% and 27.2%). These exclusion rates also vary across pupil groups, with those from disadvantaged backgrounds much more likely than their peers to receive an exclusion. In order to ensure recent progress is sustained, we will need to continue to support the priorities within the SEND Strategy, alongside the work to increase the impact of trauma-informed practice, devolved funding and locality working.



**A continued focus on developing consistent and effective transition planning.** Pupils can struggle to make the jump to secondary education, finding the move to a larger school and more challenging curriculum daunting. As well as often resulting in a dip in a pupil's educational performance, which can persist throughout their time at school (as highlighted by Priority 1), poor transitions can negatively affect behaviour, with pupils ill-prepared for a secondary environment. This has a knock-on effect to a range of outcomes related to behaviour, inclusion, SEND, aspirations, destinations, attendance and exclusions as well as restricting social mobility, employability and healthy adult lives. *Doncaster is proud to be a regional leader in transition strategy and practice*, having recently developed an Opportunity Area-funded all-age transitions project. This has developed a transformational programme and sector-leading resources which have been well valued by schools. We shall build on this by strengthening transition protocols, continuing to improve the quality of provision and engaging pupils to support progression through the system.

**A sustained focus on ensuring the education system has high quality, motivated and effective teachers and leaders** is another crucial component in driving up educational outcomes. Teacher recruitment and retention is a national challenge, as highlighted by the UK Government's Teacher and Retention Strategy (2019), but one that is particularly pressing across Doncaster, with local school leaders having reported difficulties in attracting and retaining talented teachers – especially in some core subjects (e.g. Maths and Sciences). Teacher recruitment and retention has been a key theme for the Doncaster Opportunity Area and we will seek to build this work by:

- providing high quality CPD for teachers, and promoting teacher wellbeing through our [Be Well at Work](#) programme
- continuing to 'tell the Doncaster Story' for teaching, through creating a sense of shared purpose and promoting Doncaster as a thriving and vibrant place to live and work
- establishing forums for cross-borough teacher collaboration, mentoring, and peer reviews.

**Ensuring there is a range of formal and informal opportunities for stakeholders to collaborate and coordinate activity across the system.** In the past, there have been barriers to establishing the infrastructure needed to support this collaboration – in part, due to the nature and extent of academisation in the secondary sector, and in part, due to a lack of coherence in the structure of the delivery models for supporting services provided by the Local Authority. This lack of coordination has led to a fragmented system, with fluctuating demand for school places. To address this, we will improve our digital infrastructure, convene regular strategic forums for systems leaders, and develop a common language for school improvement.

**Providing effective challenge and collaboration through a strong and targeted School Improvement Programme and dissemination of best practice** – this will involve identifying best practice from across the country, facilitating peer-challenge, as well as to better-connect the system to wider services such as health and social care; enabling us to address the barriers to learning. Across the partnership, Doncaster has already taken steps towards embedding global best practice. Examples of this include the Local Authority’s working with the OECD, and the hosting of a visit of Australian delegates in October 2018, and establishing [Big Picture Learning Doncaster](#); work undertaken by [Partners in Learning](#) and the [Research School](#); collaboration with [Challenge Partners](#); and best practice shaped and modelled by individual schools as Multi Academy Trusts. These endeavours have provided valuable models to waymark further system participation, and are indicative of our intention to constantly seek to innovate and practice share global good practice with elsewhere. This is one of our core strengths as a borough – we are increasingly outward facing, and with further plans to host the [Global Education Leadership Partnership Conference](#) in 2021, the partnership will look to further-explore opportunities to embed international best practice throughout the system, including through the development of a school improvement website and practice sharing forum.

**Building on the work of our Behaviour Transformation Programme** – The work done over the last two years has refashioned the landscape of provision, practice and decision-making, and already this work is shifting outcomes and changing practice, linking to the trauma informed schools and school mental health project. We recognise the criticality of unmet needs to the profile of demand and the tests around sufficiency and therefore will launch the new SEND strategy in Spring 2021. The causal relationship between SEND support outcomes and challenges around place planning, exclusions and attendance will now be addressed. This new strategy will build on the behaviour project, bringing increased resources from the High Needs Funding Block closer to schools, ensuring more locality working and delivering the 5 year sufficiency plan for specialist places - all based around an agreed, local, graduated approach to meeting need.

**Driving up outcomes in the Basics, through development and implementation of Reading and Maths Strategies and Hubs** - through improved teaching of literacy and numeracy to raise pupil attainment and close the national outcomes gap, particularly for vulnerable, disadvantaged, and minority ethnic children. This includes developing the leadership of numeracy and literacy so that subject leaders are equipped to improve teaching and learning across all phases and embed a whole-school approach to reading writing, and maths. It further involves continuing to work closely in partnership with the [National Literacy Trust](#) to promote and deliver the [Doncaster Stories Campaign](#), which is helping to inspire a love of reading for school age children and adults.

**Supporting schools to offer a broad and balanced curriculum** – to provide children with the opportunities to learn about themselves, their community and the wider world. This includes increasing the extent to which learning links to the culture and heritage of the place, with integrated programmes for participation in creative learning. Through the [Doncaster Cultural Education Partnership](#), we must continue to drive joined-up local arts and heritage offer for children and young people both in and out of school that capitalises on the borough’s rich cultural assets. In addition, we must increase opportunities for pupils to engage in *problem-based learning*, and to develop the *essential life skills* that will ensure they are better prepared to participate in learning and work at later ages.

**A strategic and comprehensive approach to parental engagement** – as mentioned in Priority One, this is a powerful lever for improving outcomes in the Early Years; and this is also crucial for Key Stages 2 to 4. We must therefore create effective home-school partnerships as a way to improve attendance and reduce exclusions through these later phases. Building on the work of the [Opportunity Area’s Parental Engagement Project](#), work to achieve this might include increasing opportunities for school staff and parents to meet informally, involving parents in transition planning, and increasing opportunities for parents to share their views.

**Addressing the health and social care-related barriers to learning, and promoting learner well-being** – by developing a whole-school approach to promoting health in schools. Childhood obesity and low levels of physical activity are long-standing areas of challenge in Doncaster, as is oral health – something that has notable impact on educational outcomes, with around 60,000 days missed from school during the year due to poor-oral health nationally. As well as supporting schools to gain [Healthy Learning, Healthy Lives accreditation](#), key areas of activity over the coming years will therefore include:

- Promoting the importance of movement and physical activity within learning environments (as a way to improve mental and physical health, as an aid to learning, and as a protective factor in relation to adverse childhood experiences), for example, through encouraging more schools to use the [Creating Active Schools Framework](#),
- A strong emphasis on the implementation of quality Relationship, Sex, and Health Education in line with recent legislative requirements.
- Increasing the availability and access to mental health and wellbeing support for pupils, for example, through the [Mental Health Trailblazer Pilot](#).
- Building on the *Wellbeing & Curriculum* work that has emerged through the Covid-19 pandemic, establishing a borough-wide framework and curriculum principles to support children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing.
- Extending the good practice that happens within Early Years settings to embed closer multi-disciplinary partnership working to ensure effective early intervention and prevention across school settings.

### **Key areas for action**

- Improve delivery of the 'basics' (English and Maths), with an increased focus on narrowing the gender gap
- Reduce the number of permanent and fixed term exclusions, and the numbers of those electively home educated
- Work with parents to support their children's learning outcomes and career pathways
- Recruit and retain the best teachers and leaders who are committed to equity and diversity
- Provide high quality Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for teachers, and promote teacher wellbeing
- Work collaboratively to shape evidence-based best practice - particularly in relation to reducing educational disparities
- Prepare all pupils to participate in a global society, through problem based learning and activities that promote development of Essential Life Skills
- Address the health and social care barriers to learning and encourage schools to attain Healthy Learning, Healthy Lives accreditation
- Promote a broad and creative curriculum offer that links to local arts, heritage and culture
- Improve transitions planning and support, particularly between Key Stages 2 and 3

### **Key measures of success**

- Improved KS2 and KS4 outcomes, and greater consistency of outcomes across schools, pupil groups, and localities
- A higher % of pupils achieving at least a standard pass within English and Maths at Key Stage 2 and 4
- Reduced rates of fixed term and permanent exclusions





# Priority Three: *A New Model of Post-16 Education*

## About this Priority

The options for post-16 education, training and learning are now much more diverse. The range of pathways allow more choice to suit different strengths, learning preferences and aspirations. Since 2015, school leavers are required to continue full-time education, training, apprenticeships; or to undertake part-time education or training whilst in employment until they reach age 18.

Further and Higher Education participation rates have risen significantly over the past 30 years, driven by changes in government policy. Today around 50% of people participate in university education, but the rate is lower in Doncaster – often leading to lower skilled and paid employment and less economically resilient career paths.

Universities and Colleges have a leading role to play in helping to increase opportunity and prosperity, whilst also developing skills that meet the needs of local, regional and national industry. Our ambition is to provide an effective form of **place-based education** that caters for a much more diverse set of learning styles, needs and career ambitions. This priority aims to develop a new model of Post-16 Education that is inclusive and accessible to all. One that embraces **hybrid vocational centred** further and higher education, delivered in partnership with business and industry, whilst also encouraging the traditional academic degree route.

### Key Challenges

- Need to increase the proportion of pupils finishing secondary school with a pass in English and Maths GCSEs
- Fragmented Post-16 provision and the need to increase visibility of the collective offer.
- Post-16 learning is currently too focused on traditional academic routes.
- Too many young people leave Doncaster for Higher Education and quality work
- Need to address the stigma around apprenticeships and to recognise their potential as an effective route to employment

## Our Aims

### Aim 7

**An Education & Skills System that is Responsive to the needs of the Local & National Economy**

### Aim 8

**A Coordinated Post-16 Education Offer that Gives Learners the Skills they Need to Prosper**

### Aim 9

**Transform Doncaster into a University City that Provides Advanced Learning through Centres of Excellence**

## What do we need to focus on?

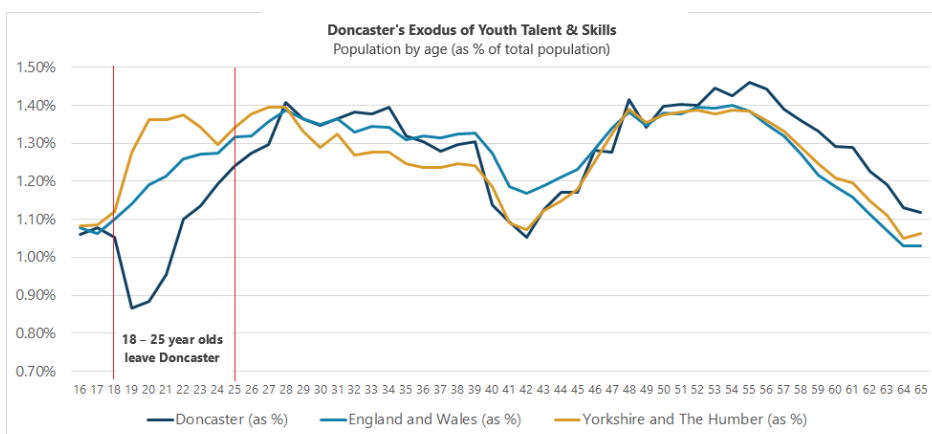
In 2018, a review of Post-16 education in Doncaster set out a number of key recommendations to improve outcomes for young people and raise achievement levels across the borough. These included:

- Increasing engagement and enabling people to fulfil individual ambitions by looking at the ‘whole person’ and providing personalised packages of support that address barriers to employment, education or training.
- Strengthening the vocational routes into employment and higher education – including supporting apprenticeships.
- Extending careers education, information, advice and guidance (see *Priority Four*).
- Improving the quality of provision and support to ensure young people with special educational needs and disabilities are prepared for the transition to adult life (see *Priority Five*).

These recommendations highlight the fact that **Post-16 education, learning and training needs constantly adapt** - to meet fast-changing career paths and skills requirements of our economy and changing lifestyles. Currently, around half of UK graduates end up in employment that is deemed to have non-graduate status, whilst many growth sector jobs remain unfilled and key industries

(such as medical health, engineering and advanced manufacturing) reporting skills shortages. Many of these require vocational experience mixed with Level 3 and 4 qualifications and are now the backbone of the UK's economy.

The majority of young people move away from their hometown to go to university and many never return. For many major ex-industrial towns like Doncaster, this can lead to a **skills drain and exodus of qualified residents**. The ambition for this Priority is therefore to provide an effective form of place-based education that caters for a much more diverse set of learning styles, needs and career ambitions.



Area	% of population aged 20-25
Doncaster	5.82%
Similar towns to Doncaster	7.30%
UK	7.88%
Yorkshire & Humber	8.95%
University Cities	13.01%

By developing such a model, we are thereby aiming to establish a greater parity of esteem between vocational Post-16 choices and more 'traditional', academic routes. This type of **'hybrid' place-based model of tertiary education** requires a greater shift towards delivering courses in partnership with local industry to create effective pathways to quality, sustainable employment. It thereby can help to retain local talent and increase opportunity and prosperity in a way that benefits the learner, the place, and our local economy.

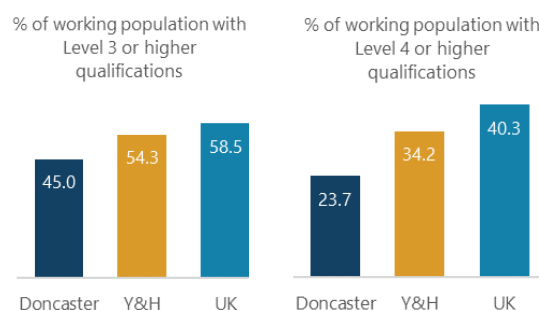
The government recently highlighted the need for Further and Higher Education organisations to gear up for the 100-year life becoming the norm, rather than the exception. It is likely this will also drive a gradual increase in retirement age, meaning that **people will work 50-55 year careers**, with many young people today needing to work until 70+ before they retire. This requires that we change the way we look at Post-16 education. The idea that young people must get a degree and know what career they want to enter by age 21 is outdated. Life-long-learning will become a desire and a requirement, with many people needing to reskill two or three times over their working careers.

The **Covid-19 pandemic has been a major catalyst for changing the way Post-16 education and working practices** need to operate in the future. It has fast-tracked innovation and the use of technology to change the way people work and learn - in particular, online learning. Universities, colleges and voluntary sector training providers are already making changes to the way we access education and learning, to meet more flexible lifestyles that increasingly require a more *'anytime and anywhere'* centred Post-16 offer.

**Doncaster is home to some excellent colleges** - including [Doncaster College](#), the [National College for Advanced Transport and Infrastructure](#), a [Teaching Hospital](#), [New College](#) and a brand new [University Technical College](#). They all have a vital role to play in developing and delivering a hybrid Post-16 offer, which links up learning and career pathways from Key Stage 4 and for adult learners. They can also help respond to current and future global trends like climate change and the fast moving pace of technology by designing curriculum that helps local employers train and upskill future and current employees.

This place-centred role for colleges and universities is particularly critical in Doncaster, as we try to transform our predominantly low skilled and low pay economy. The proportion of Doncaster's 19 year olds qualified to Level 3 is currently 13% below the national average and the gap for the proportion of our working population qualified to Level 4 is even wider, at just 24% compared to 40% nationally.

This is why we formed the **University City Partnership** in Doncaster, which aims to increase the proportion of our working population with Level 3 and 4 qualifications - and develop effective learning and careers pathways from early years through to adult learning.





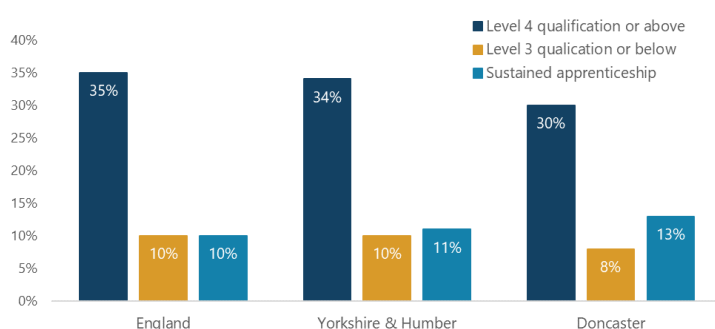
The main goal of the partnership is to develop a joint Further and Higher Education prospectus, specialising in four Centres of Excellence – **Health & Medical**, **Engineering, Creative & Digital** and **Green Technology** – all areas of economic growth potential with existing skills gaps within Doncaster and the Sheffield City Region.

This new prospectus and curriculum must be co-designed in partnership with business, to increase practical work experience and ensure learners gain the right vocational skills and knowledge to secure sustainable employment.

**Apprenticeships** (especially advanced apprenticeships) **are crucial to an effective hybrid model**, but we must support business to increase take-up. This will also help us continue to reduce the proportion of young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET). Doncaster already has a higher proportion of 18 year olds who take up sustained apprenticeships than nationally and regionally, so providing an excellent hybrid offer of tertiary education through our University City Partnership serves to meet an increasing local demand and address local skills gaps, as well as to keep pace with local and global trends.

Many Sixth Form schools and voluntary organisations provide learning within reach of many rural and suburban communities. We must also recognise the benefits that collaborative partnerships can achieve in terms of facilities, curriculum choice and vocational work experience. **Doncaster Central Sixth Form** (DC6) is a town centre partnership between Hall Cross Sixth Form, the University Technical College and Doncaster College, which offers expansive work and learning experience through multiple partners across many sectors. We need to expand this collaborative approach as the government continue implementing Post-16 curriculum changes.

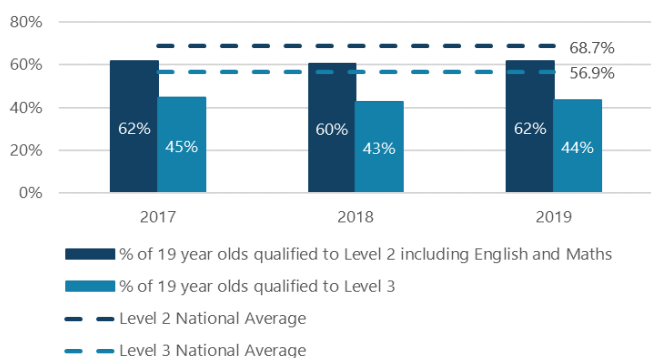
Further and higher education or training destinations for 18 year olds



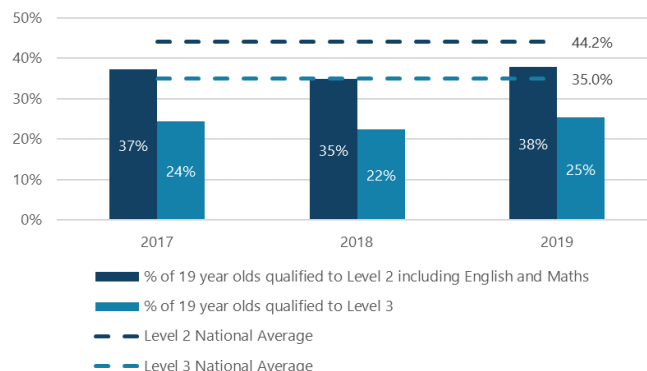
The current role-out of **T-levels** for example, will also play a crucial role in moving towards this hybrid model. These courses also require closer working between learners, educators and employers to ensure further education study can also help meet real-world and commercial challenges. It also requires **more co-design and co-delivery of learning experiences and outcomes**, which can make further education more rewarding and lead to more employment potential. Doncaster College and Sheffield Hallam University are leading a bid to gain **Institute of Technology status for the Sheffield City Region**, which will specialise in Engineering, Digital skills, Construction and Medical Sciences.

**So the challenges are clear in terms of delivering on our aims** - we need to increase the proportion of 19 year olds with Level 3 qualifications. Although we are well below the national average, this is much worse for disadvantaged young people, with only one in four gaining Level 3 qualifications at this age. Probably the most significant barrier to Further and Higher Education is the requirement to achieve GCSE passes in Maths and English. Regardless of the preferred route (traditional core academic or vocational learning) still requires a solid grounding in the Basics as a passport to further learning.

Qualified 19 year olds in Doncaster (All Pupils)



Qualified 19 year olds in Doncaster (Disadvantaged Pupils)



The key factors at the centre of changing our system are talent development mixed with business innovation, through the power of problem-based learning. Incorporating this into Post-16 learning offers a more inspiring and relevant learning experience across a range of learning settings, for people of all ages and backgrounds. Delivering education alongside employers, means that learners have the opportunity to demonstrate their value. Equally, through exposure to learners, employers can identify candidates for internships, placements, apprenticeships and full-time jobs.

### Key areas for action

- Develop a unified post-16 partnership that delivers a more joined up education & skills offer
- Ensure learning pathways match 'skills for the future' required by existing and emerging industry specialisms
- More Further & Higher Education curriculum designed in partnership with business
- Increase work experience opportunities to support T-levels
- Retain and attract talent and skills through a post-16 learning offer that leads to sustained employment in specialist/growth sectors
- More focus on life and transferrable skills, alongside qualifications
- Increase advanced apprenticeship opportunities at all ages
- Reduce the number of young people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training)
- Provide 'career mentors' and increase parental engagement to develop effective pathways into Post-16 Centres of Excellence
- Build strong links between business and education through the Doncaster Promise

### Measure of success

- % of population taking up (advanced) apprenticeships
- % 19 year olds with a Level 3 qualification
- % of working population qualified to L3 & L4



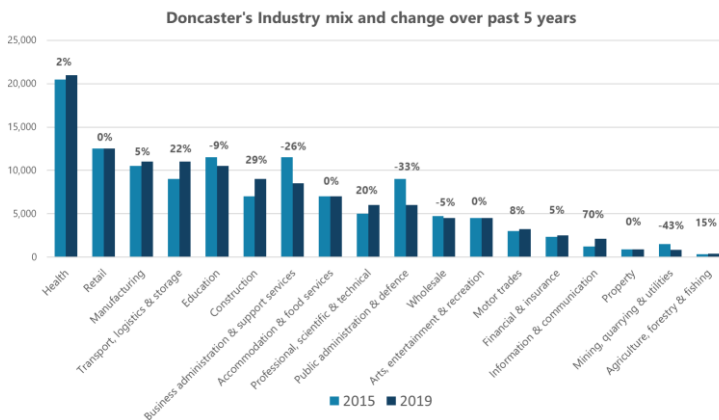
# Priority Four: *New Skills & Pathways to Fulfilling Life & Work*

## About this Priority

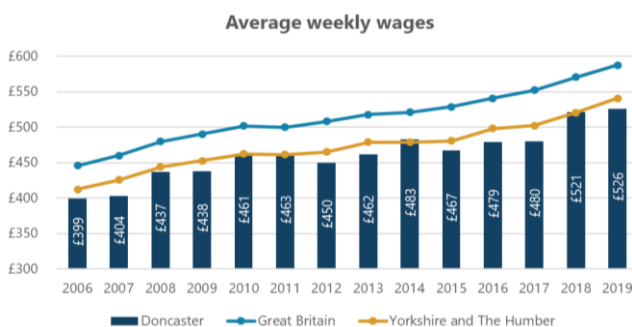
Over the five-year period to the end of 2019, Doncaster's economy grew by 30%, driven by new business growth and investment. Despite the challenges of 2020, we aim to continue this growth and ensure prosperity reaches people, places and businesses throughout the borough. Economic shocks can become a catalyst for change and create opportunities for education, re-skilling and innovation. Doncaster already has a number of well-established and emerging industry specialisms, including rail engineering, future mobility, logistics, health & medical, creative & digital and green industries. However, we also have high numbers of people employed in more volatile shrinking sectors such as retail and hospitality, with many looking to change careers.

### Key Challenges

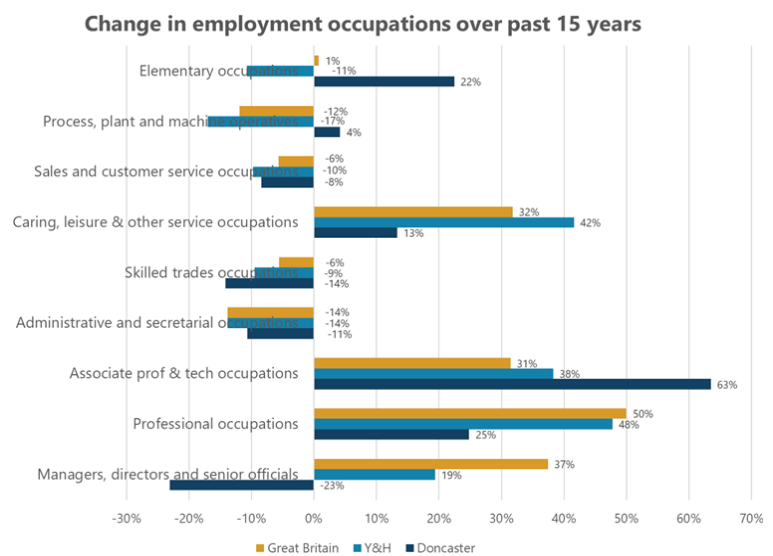
- Doncaster's productivity per worker is relatively low and our economy is low skilled, low wage
- More than half of 19 year olds don't achieve Level 3 qualifications – a crucial driver for social mobility
- The proportion of the working population with Level 3 & 4 qualifications is well below national average and the gap is widening
- A need to change our industry mix and develop more partnerships with local employers to develop effective learning pathways to quality work and resilient careers



We have also seen an increase in lower skilled, less resilient occupations. Doncaster's largest employment is in the health, retail and logistics sectors. Many of these are low skilled, low pay, with some on zero hour contracts. This has driven up elementary occupations (*low skilled, routine work such as freight handlers, warehouse workers, delivery and labourers*), with a 26% rise over the past 10 years. The recent surge in on-line shopping has also contributed to increasing the cycle of low skilled and low pay employment across the borough.



Our industry mix is slowly changing, but we still need other factors to change if we are to retain and attract talent, and ensure the borough as an ideal place to learn, work and live. Doncaster's occupations are also changing, with encouraging increases in more resilient high paid professional, technical and information & communications occupations, and although this rise is lower than national increases, these collectively now make up 27% of Doncaster's workforce. There has also been a 33% increase in skilled trade occupations, partly driven by a surge in the construction industry.

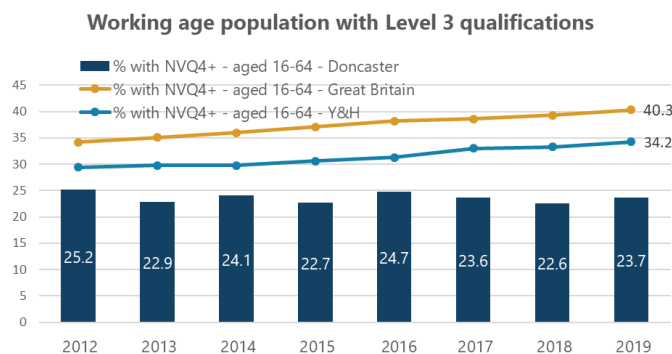
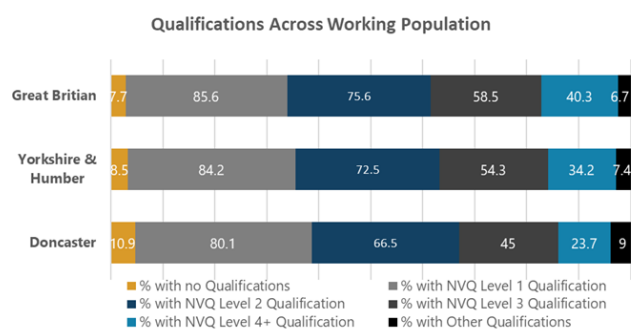


# Our Aims

<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: #f0c000;">Aim 10</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: #f0c000;">Establish Learning Partnerships with Local &amp; Regional Industries that Provide Quality, Sustainable Employment</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: #f0c000;">Aim 11</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: #f0c000;">Ensure All Residents have Opportunity to Thrive &amp; Access Fulfilling Careers</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: #f0c000;">Aim 12</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: #f0c000;">Remove Barriers to Employment &amp; Develop, Retain &amp; Attract Talent</p>
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## What do we need to focus on?

Our aim over the next 10 years will be to ensure we match local skills and education pathways to economic recovery through high quality sector growth. The challenge is compelling however, with less than 1 in 4 of Doncaster’s working age population qualified to Level 4 (16% less than the national average) and with almost 11% having no formal qualifications at all.



There are currently too many qualified and skilled people leaving Doncaster for better work and career prospects. For those who stay, there are limited pathways into sustainable employment. Many local jobs are transient, low-wage and insecure and there is now a pressing need to build a culture of learning that enables people to up-skill and retrain. Doncaster’s [Inclusive Growth Strategy](#) aims to increase the working age population with a Level 3 qualification or above, reduce the number adults claiming out-of-work benefits and increase people with disabilities back into sustained and fulfilling work.

Achieving this requires a radical shift in our current education and skills system, including more effective vocational learning and apprenticeships. The Covid pandemic has already triggered a potential culture change in education, learning and training across all ages. It has also helped to improve collaboration, enabling educators and employers to better understand the potential how to design a shared system of training and learning that delivers more sustainable careers and addresses skills shortages. We believe there are exciting education and reskilling opportunities ahead that can deliver benefits to all involved, but this requires a number of system transformations to take place:

- Strong **partnerships with local and regional employers**, who can co-design and co-deliver curriculum that supports our University City Centres of Excellence, helps address future skills gaps and leads to quality, well paid and economically sustainable jobs.
- More effective **adult reskilling** and career change opportunities, supported by the Doncaster Promise (see page XX) and [Employment Hub](#) support programmes like [South Yorkshire Workforce Hub](#), [Youth Hub](#) and [Launchpad](#). These schemes enable easy access and gateways to quality careers and training information that is co-produced with employers to support current and future recruitment opportunities. Further support is also provided to residents to help them upskill. Other programmes like [Kickstart](#) are also important to help young people on Universal Credit to develop the skills and experience they need to find work.
- Employers need to provide more **flexible working** to fit with family, caring and to support older people who may not want to work full-time. Demand for more flexible working is currently high across both genders and all ages, with surveys showing that 84% of men and 91% of women want more of it. The Health and Social Care sector provides around 25% flexible job opportunities, whereas manufacturing, engineering and Information Technology sectors are much lower at between 3 and 5%.



- Embedding early and regular **careers advice and planning** to inform learning pathways to Further and Higher Education, through locally developed career advice partnerships (including working with the Careers Hub and [ADVANCE](#), which supports in-work skills development and learning for a career change), as well as national frameworks such as the Gatsby Benchmarks. The [START](#) initiative is a good example of providing a co-ordinated approach to help bring many of the borough's careers resources into one place, as your single point of contact for skills and careers and to increase meaningful workplace encounters.

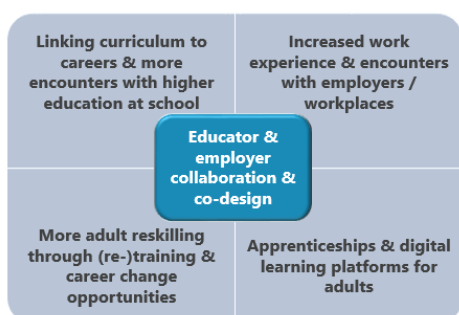
It is never too early to engage young people with the working environment and show how learning can lead to future career aspirations. This should start as early as Key Stage 2 to inform learning pathway choices and eventual skills platforms. Many of our key educational institutions (i.e. UTC, NCATI, Doncaster College, New College and the Doncaster & Bassetlaw Hospital Teaching Trust), specialise in vocational learning, with well-established employer partnerships and apprenticeship opportunities. They will play a pivotal role in providing joined up learning pathways from secondary right through to graduate employment. Doncaster's **Primary Aspiration Raising Programme** and the **Primary Futures** initiative is also raising children's aspirations and awareness of the world of work at Key Stage 2 and is helping to expand the links between employers and schools. The programme can also help to challenge gender stereotypes.

**Gatsby Benchmark Performance for Doncaster**



The decline of some of Doncaster's legacy industries, together with high street retail over recent years has affected some communities and residents - especially those with low skills and a lack of qualifications. However, this is an ideal opportunity for local residents to embrace lifelong learning and reskill. Two of our largest employment sectors are currently reporting significant skills shortages and recruitment gaps and other emerging growth sectors could provide secure, well-paid and resilient work for adults wanting to make a career change.

Well established employment sectors in Doncaster	Emerging high growth sectors in Doncaster
<p><b>Health &amp; Medical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Our largest employment sector (18% of working population)</li> <li>➤ 65,000 additional staff needed across UK over next 5 years</li> <li>➤ Projected 50% increase in undergraduate nursing places</li> <li>➤ Large recruitment gaps for primary care workers, specialist medical staff and community nurses</li> </ul>	<p><b>Green and Carbon Reduction Economy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Doncaster declared a climate emergency in 2019 and has set an ambitious Carbon Zero target by 2040</li> <li>➤ Government have estimated that there could be 700,000 additional green jobs by 2030</li> <li>➤ Doncaster looking for 3,700 new green jobs by 2030</li> </ul>
<p><b>Engineering</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Doncaster has more than double the national average engineering companies and this sector has seen a 40% increase in GVA (Gross Value Added) over past 6 years</li> <li>➤ Rail industry is predicted to lose 50,000 engineers by 2033 due to retirement and the highways sector needs an additional 25,000 staff by 2025</li> </ul>	<p><b>Creative &amp; Digital</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ This is the UK's fastest growing sector. Employment in the film and TV industry grew by 88% in Yorkshire &amp; Humber, compared to 32% nationally</li> <li>➤ Doncaster is already working with film and gaming industry investors to develop bespoke training courses to help establish local roots to grow this sector</li> </ul>



We need to work with our regional and local partners to channel learning, training and apprenticeships into these sectors – especially advanced apprenticeships for the over 25 year olds. A number of initiatives are already in place, or are being developed, including [Adult Family and Community Learning](#), and [Working-Win](#), which include a [Pathways to Progression](#) Programme. We also need to consider joining or replicating regional programmes such as the [Sector Routeways](#) programme, which provides training to help people secure jobs in growth sectors. This scheme targets unemployed people and is designed by employers to enable work placements that lead to employment in Construction, Care, Digital, Engineering and Manufacturing.

One of the challenges of expanding these programmes, together with the increase in work experience, is the capacity of local and regional employers to help co-design and support this change - especially given the high proportion of SMEs (Small to Medium Enterprises) in the borough. Under Team Doncaster, participation from all sectors of the economy and the local community has expanded over recent years, but there is still much more to be done to **broaden the range of local and external partners** involved in education and reskilling. Given the importance of employer and educator partnerships, the curriculum, courses and training we offer will need to meet the requirements of our local and regional industries. This must develop a win-win relationship that:

- Meets the demand for **STEM qualifications** by offering more customised vocational or technical based learning packages in mainstream and higher education, to cater for different career path choices.
- Increases the provision of **high quality apprenticeships** through better information, advice and joined up co-ordination.
- Taps into the economic growth opportunities and addresses skills gaps presented by our **industry specialisms** – including Green Technology and more engineering jobs driven by HS2 and the Northern Rail network developments.
- Develops more **transferable skills** to allow our residents work across many roles and sectors.

If we can achieve this, it will increase economic resilience and align well with the Government's four [Grand Challenges](#) and five [Foundations of Productivity](#), which encourage cross-sectoral learning, working and collaboration. Re-skilling is now even more important given the impact Brexit could have on the supply of skilled migrant workers. Improving skills and training provision for adults is a key priority to support in-work progression, social mobility and increase productivity. This is particularly important for residents currently in more precarious, lower paid employment.

In many of Doncaster's more deprived wards, over a third of the working age population have no formal qualifications and are often disengaged from learning and skills development. It is therefore crucial that we direct these opportunities and help them access learning and enter quality, sustainable employment through:

- Developing a **whole-family intergenerational approach** to help raise learning aspirations and increase awareness of employment pathways. This includes increased use of Doncaster's hugely successful [Adult Family and Community Learning Service](#), which provide family learning courses and helps develop functional skills for adults who have no qualifications.
- **Voluntary organisations** that provide part-time learning for adults in a way that challenges and inspires individuals at a community level through learner-centred courses.
- **More informal learning solutions**, including through on-line learning platforms with digital badges as pathways to accredited courses, promoting learning in the workplace and in community settings.
- The **Doncaster Promise** (see below) and improving transport and access to learning and employment.

## Doncaster Promise

The [Doncaster Promise](#) is an agreement between business and education to support the borough's goal to build a growing, productive and inclusive local economy. It contains a set of entitlements and expectations between businesses, learning institutions and the local public sector, covering expectations (the things we need residents to do) and entitlements (the things they are entitled to receive). Building on extensive analysis of the local labour market, skills base and future growth sectors it contains five key objectives:

- **Labour and productivity** - A higher skilled and better paid workforce for Doncaster, with businesses equipped with the skills they need to meet the productivity challenge.
- **Meaningful encounters** - Meaningful encounters with the world of work as an entitlement for all learners in the borough.
- **Curriculum for life** - Delivering a high quality vocational 'curriculum for life' in Doncaster that also provides the qualifications and skills that businesses want and need.
- **High quality all-age careers advice** - High quality Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance consistently available across the borough, with all schools supported to meet the eight Gatsby Benchmarks. Learners will be able to access careers advice that enables them to meet their aspirations, no matter what their background.
- **Facilitative public sector** - Supporting the development of constructive partnerships between businesses and education.

**So, the challenges for delivering on our aims are clear.** We need to upskill people by making it easier to learn throughout education and working lives. Doncaster aims to create 26,000 new jobs by 2032 and these must be quality, well-paid jobs that help to close our productivity gap. Raising education and skills standards across the borough over the long-term will serve to attract quality business

and investment, leading to better paid jobs, increased productivity and economic resilience. However, we have a more immediate opportunity to support adults who may want to get back into employment or change careers.

### Key areas for action

- Increase Level 4 qualification attainment and reduce the proportion of working age residents with no formal qualifications
- Embed early careers advice into educational curriculum pathways learning choices – driven by labour market data
- Support the Careers Hub to embed the Gatsby Benchmarks across the system to ensure learning is linked to more encounters with higher education and employers
- Support the achievement of carbon net-zero through specialised courses and training that leads to green skills and careers
- Increase learning and training opportunities for re-skilling and career change
- Develop digital learning platforms and badges to improve skills and pathways to further learning and employment
- Build stronger links between business and education through the Doncaster Promise
- Develop an intergenerational approach to raise learning aspirations and increase awareness of employment pathways
- Develop STEM based transferrable skills
- Engage local employers to increase the number of flexible jobs in our economy

### Key Measures of Success

- 18-25 year old retention - studying, living or working in Doncaster
- % of population in skilled occupations
- % of 16-21 population who are NEET



# Priority Five: *Equitable & Inclusive Learning*

## About this Priority

Whilst Priorities One to Four aim to drive forward outcomes for each key life phase, *Priority Five* focuses on addressing **educational disparities** between minority, disadvantaged, and vulnerable groups - and their peers. As outcomes continue to improve across the board, it is imperative that we work together to close these gaps and deliver equity across the educational system. *Equitable and Inclusive Learning* is therefore a *golden thread* that weaves through the heart of our other priorities.

**Key Challenges**

- Lower educational outcomes and high rates of exclusion for vulnerable, minority and disadvantaged groups
- High levels of deprivation
- Low levels of social mobility
- Disconnected communities, with unequal access to education and employment opportunities

Partly as a consequence of its industrial past, Doncaster has a number of long-standing socio-economic challenges, reflected by high levels of deprivation, **low levels of social mobility, low healthy life expectancy and intergenerational unemployment**. As a result, educational, employment and skills-related outcomes and opportunities, vary considerably across our localities and demographic groups. Doncaster’s [Inclusive Growth Strategy](#) is also instrumental in ensuring that prosperity reaches people, places and businesses throughout the borough, enabling residents to participate in the highly paid, highly skilled future growth sectors and to benefit from raised living standards within a more prosperous borough. Lifelong learning should be no exception.

Delivering Equitable & Inclusive Learning involves a collective commitment, not just to equality of opportunity and outcomes, but also to **‘level the playing field’** – doing more for those who need it. This includes a specific and targeted focus on a number of key areas, including: removing the systemic barriers that prevent disadvantaged learners from reaching their full potential; strengthening provision for those for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL) and those with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND); and those people in more disconnected communities have access to high quality learning provision.

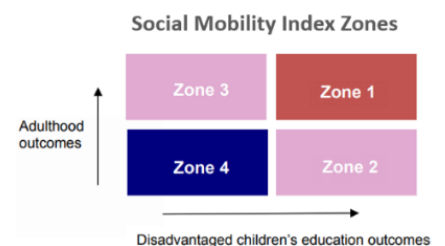
Moreover, inclusion is not merely about shifting outcomes for the vulnerable. It is a process of championing difference and inclusion, and **enriching all of our people, settings and workplaces through fostering a commitment to diversity** and ensuring deep and sustainable practices to support improved access and opportunity.

## Our Aims

<p><b>Aim 13</b></p> <p><b>Champion &amp; Empower Disadvantaged Learners to Enable Social Mobility</b></p>	<p><b>Aim 14</b></p> <p><b>Improve Outcomes for Minority &amp; Vulnerable Learners</b></p>	<p><b>Aim 15</b></p> <p><b>Equitable Lifelong Learning for Every Community</b></p>
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## What do we need to focus on?

Life outcomes should not be dictated by the circumstances people are born into, where they grow up, or by any changes in their personal circumstances. In Doncaster however, this has all-too-often been the case. The 2017 **Social Mobility & Child Poverty Commission Index**, identified the borough as a social mobility ‘cold spot’, having consistently ranked amongst the lowest performing areas (‘Zone 4’) in terms of providing opportunities for young people to acquire the education and skills they need to achieve good outcomes as an adult.

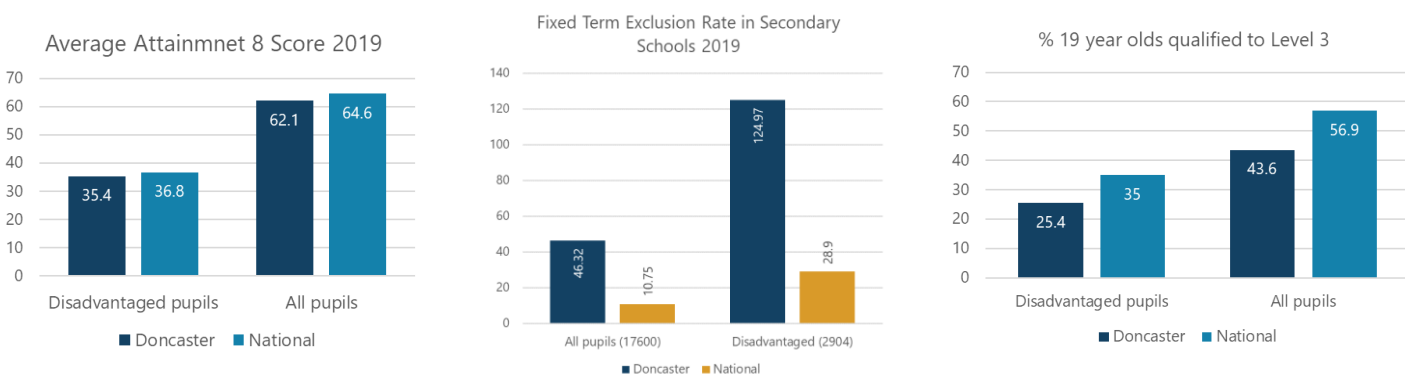


Over the past three years, the [Doncaster Opportunity Area](#) programme and cross-sectoral partnership has taken great steps to improve life chances for the children and young people of Doncaster in a number of key areas. These include:

- Improving the quality of careers advice and guidance through the [Doncaster START platform](#);
- Narrowing the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged primary pupils in literacy and numeracy, through the [Strategic School Improvement Fund Literacy and Maths Mastery Programmes, and Learning Matters Programme](#);
- Developing essential life skills for young people facing disadvantage through the [EXPECT Summer programme](#).

It will take time to see the full impact of these interventions - and for the outcomes to be realised, so there is still much more work to do to ensure continuity of the programme and achieve long-term sustainable change. In addition to these outcomes, there are still other notable challenges to address, many of which have been touched on within Priorities One to Four. These include:

- Disproportionately **high rates of fixed-term exclusions for disadvantaged learners** in both primary and secondary school, with just under a quarter of all disadvantaged secondary school children receiving at least one Fixed Term Exclusion in 2019.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving the expected standard in **Reading, Writing, and Maths** at Key Stage 2 is significantly lower than the national average, with Reading being the biggest area of challenge.
- A relatively low proportion of disadvantaged pupils **aged 19 qualified to Level 3** including English and Maths (currently 25.4%, which is approximately ten points below the national average of 35%).
- A **higher proportion of disadvantaged young people** in Doncaster are **not in a sustained education or employment destination** following Key Stage 5 compared to their local, regional and national peers.
- Disadvantaged children in Doncaster are far **less likely to access high paid, high skilled employment** and Higher Education than their more affluent peers. These low levels of social mobility are also reflected in our **university applicants entering Oxbridge or Russell Group Universities**, which is currently 1 in 50 compared to 1 in 6 nationally.



In addition to socio-economically disadvantaged learners, there are a number of other notable achievement gaps and low social mobility outcomes for other vulnerable and minority pupil groups. There have been persistent challenges around outcomes for those with SEND, particularly those who require 'SEN support'. These pupils are over-represented in absence and exclusion data and all too often underperform with regard to academic outcomes, compared to national peers:

- Across the key stages, those receiving SEN support in Doncaster have underperformed in both attainment and progress measures in comparison to their national peers. There have been some notable improvement in these outcomes over the past three years, but these have been limited to primary school age (GLD to KS2).
- 19-year-old qualification rates for SEN support pupils are significantly lower than the national average.
- There is a disproportionately high number of SEN support and EHCP (Education Health Care Plan) pupils receiving at least one fixed term exclusion at both primary and secondary school.
- A relatively high number of SEND young people are educated outside of mainstream education (i.e. within specialist of alternative provision settings).

Findings from the recent SEND Ofsted report have pointed out that this profile is partially the consequence of inconsistent provision and lack of strategic ownership in relation to the outcomes of children with a variety of learning and behavioural needs. There is a significant challenge ahead of us as we try to unite the system in producing a single multi-agency approach to developing greater capacity and consistency of provisions in and out of school.

This is why we have been maintaining a strong strategic focus on supporting learners with SEND and why we developed a **SEND Code of Practice** in 2015, and more recently a **Learning Disability and Autism Strategy and SEND Strategy** in 2019. We have also invested in our infrastructure, with the opening of the [Bader Academy](#), which is providing specialist provision for pupils with communication and interaction needs. A recent Local Area SEND Ofsted inspection acknowledged the good work done in this area to support young people and families, but concluded that a local graduated approach to meeting need was still needed. This includes a **stronger emphasis on early intervention and building capability across the system**, alongside a more concerted approach to supporting young people with SEND into adulthood. The [Behaviour Transformation Programme](#) needs to continue resetting the landscape around provision, practice and partnerships in relation to behaviour, building on the recent reductions in exclusions and use of alternative placements across the borough.

Doncaster has a **smaller proportion of English as an Additional Language (EAL) pupils** compared to the national average, but these pupils still perform substantially worse than their national peers. Particularly in primary school, where there are large gaps to national average. This underperformance continues into KS4 where there is a **-7pp gap between Doncaster and national average Attainment 8 scores**. Those EAL pupils who stayed in the school system have similar Progress 8 scores to their national peers. The [Virtual School](#) plays a pivotal role in working together with schools and settings to improve engagement and provision to help close the attainment gap for EAL pupils. However, as a place of relatively low ethnic diversity, a key issue raised in consultation with stakeholder was that many Doncaster schools are reluctant to buy in support for a relatively small cohort of pupils. Additionally, a relatively large proportion of our EAL pupils are **Gypsy, Roma Traveller (GRT), which are amongst the lowest achieving ethnic groups in England**. This group is four times more likely to be excluded from school because of behaviour. This may be due to factors such as interrupted education, family educational disadvantage and lack of engagement. In 2018, the percentage of Doncaster children from a GRT background achieving a GLD were the lowest amongst all ethnicities.

Doncaster consists of a number of distinct communities, each with their own profile and needs for development. These also reflect a number of significant educational and skill disparities. In Thorne and Mexborough, for example, two thirds of the working-age population have no National Qualification Framework-recognised qualifications at all (against roughly half that proportion in Tickhill, Sprotborough and Finningley). In terms of national average ranking on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation for education, skills, and training, Conisborough, Hexthorpe and Balby North, Adwick Le Street, Carcroft, Mexborough, and Thorne - all rank within the 20% most deprived areas.

**IMD Rankings for Education & Skills:  
Doncaster's most deprived areas**

- Conisborough = 1
- Hexthorpe and Balby North = 1.2
- Adwick Le Street and Carcroft = 1.5
- Mexborough = 1.7
- Thorne = 2

Through consultation, many residents highlighted a number of barriers to accessing learning and employment. For example, high transport costs, an absence of radial transport around the borough, and the fact that often learning provision in neighbouring boroughs is easier to access or is nearer than provision within Doncaster. Adult learners felt there was a **stigma around returning to a formal education setting** to participate in learning, and that this could be daunting - particularly if they had not had a positive experience at school, or had left with no formal qualifications. Many identified a desire to learn with peers in more informal community settings as being key to overcoming this stigma.

**So our focus on delivering Equitable & Inclusive Learning over the next ten years must include addressing the systemic barriers faced by minority and disadvantaged learners, as well as taking a localities-based approach to provision:**

**We must continue to champion and empower minority and disadvantaged learners; removing barriers to improve outcomes and drive social mobility** – securing sustainable funding and collaborating across the system to enable us to:

- Develop a strategic approach to widening access to leading universities, which includes CPD for teachers and advisers to help them support students' progression to university, establishing mentoring programmes (building on the recent success of the [Zero Gravity](#) initiative), as well as raising aspirations and awareness of Higher Education (building on the [Primary Aspirations](#) programme).
- Increase the supply of supported internships and apprenticeships and work experience placements for disadvantaged learners and learners with SEN.
- Continue to encourage collaboration between schools that have large proportions of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds through the [Doncaster Inclusion Network](#).
- Ensure that schools and settings are supported to meet needs as early and as close to home as is possible, supported by a harmonised local authority offer under the [Behaviour Transformation Programme](#). The new [SEND strategy](#) will play a key



role here, helping to identify and act on emerging needs quickly and reducing the need for further escalation. This will require agencies around schools to work cohesively to support this. The new 'graduated approach' and toolkit will also set out the key responsibilities, escalations and points of access to ensure support at each level. This will be strengthened by a new funding and sufficiency strategy, which aims to ensure enough high quality provision is available beyond mainstream schools and improve school capacity and capability through a needs led funding system.

- Improve links between education settings and health and social care, through the development of a sector-wide approach to mental health and wellbeing. This will build on support already in place (via school counsellors, nurses, educational psychologists) to support those with mild to moderate mental health issues in school (including through piloting the [Mental Health Trailblazer Programme](#)), as well as developing greater support for adults with physical and mental disabilities to access employment through making informal and formal learning more accessible.
- Address the socio-economic barriers to learning, acknowledging, as the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted, that not all disadvantaged learners are classed as such. This will include encouraging schools to collaborate with Public Health to review and address the [cost of the school day](#).
- Increase the availability of and access to language support here, and continuing to engage to work with GRT outreach officers to develop support for engagement, transition, and improving outcomes for GRT learners.
- Improve support for care leavers to reduce the proportion of those who are NEET.

***We must reach and engage communities across the borough*** – to ensure we enable residents to continue to learn reskill and increase their career horizons. This includes:

- Greater availability of online learning and provision for digital badging – connecting people to learning opportunities that exist across a place through creating a system of digital Open Badges. This includes developing a free-at-the-point-of-use online learning platform that will make a variety of formal and informal opportunities visible, and allow residents to develop personalised progression routes into new opportunities, as well as showcase their achievements. This should be tailored to the Doncaster context, and built in partnership with local learning providers, employers and civic leaders.
- Further-developing our Adult and Family Community Learning offer, and better communicating this to residents, as well as extending our Careers, Information, and Advice offer to adult learners.
- Ensuring local community assets are shared and accessed by all. This can help broaden our partnership working and decision-making arrangements to include the Voluntary, Community, and Faith sectors, to help extend provision of community-based learning.
- Placing cultural capital at the centre of our borough-learning offer wide offer will be a crucial vehicle for this, alongside preparing all learners for living in a diverse and cohesive society of mutual respect and understanding, valuing all pupils' backgrounds and heritages, both reaching and (re-)engaging those who are all too often disconnected from learning.
- All partners should foster a strong ethos of valuing and celebrating diversity and difference, while encouraging learners to spread the values of inclusion and cultural respect in their everyday lives.
- Addressing the transport-related barriers to learning, including through implementing the [School Transport Strategy](#).
- Provide greater support for migrant workers to gain formal recognition of foreign qualifications

## Key areas for action

- Secure sustainable funding to continue the work of the Opportunity Area programme in order to narrow the attainment gap for disadvantaged pupils
- Widen access to Higher Education, including top-performing Universities (e.g. Oxbridge and Russell Group)
- Reduce absenteeism and exclusion rates for disadvantaged and SEN support pupils
- Increase work experience placements, supported internships and apprenticeships to improve post-16 destinations for disadvantaged and vulnerable learners
- Ensure effective Alternative Provision is available and meets learner needs
- Improve social, emotional, and mental health support across the education system
- Increase language support to improve outcomes for EAL learners
- Develop a community learning approach to improve engagement and support for isolated individuals and communities that engages arts & culture and the voluntary sector to engage communities in place based learning and skills development
- Address digital poverty/exclusion as a barrier to learning
- Increase support for older people and those with health and well-being issues to secure and sustain quality employment through learning and training

## Key Measures of Success

- A higher % of EAL pupils reaching a Good Level of Development at Early Years Foundation Stage
- A lower % of EHCP pupils receiving a Fixed Term Exclusion in Secondary School
- A higher % of disadvantaged pupils achieving a standard pass in English and Maths at Key Stage 4
- A higher % SEN support pupils qualified to Level 3 by age 19

# Working Better Together – Our Approach to System Transformation

## Greater than the sum of our parts...

*All agencies across the borough recognise the importance of lifelong learning on the economy and future prosperity of the borough. It is now time to shape a new partnership role, which requires inspiration and leadership from every sector to play their part developing a new education and skills system for Doncaster.*

In order to develop an education and skills system that works for everyone, we must strengthen our ability to work together. When the Independent Commission revisited Doncaster in October 2018, they attested to the strength of the Team Doncaster partnership and the quality of work being done to transform the delivery of education and skills across the borough. This is an enduring strength, and is one of the key assets that we will build on over the next decade.

There is still much more to do. We have made great progress in terms of attainment in Doncaster and we are now recognised as frontrunners for our Early Years provision, but we now need to take a transformational approach. We want to build a system that is *distinctly Doncaster*. We have an opportunity, not just to catch up with the national average, but to push ahead to develop a system that meets the needs of our people and economy. This requires that we harness our collective commitment to offer a strong cradle to career pathway for all people and to embed a form of learning that is vocationally relevant, socially situated and accessible to all.

Everybody who has a stake in our local education and skills sector, from learners in statutory education to our local employers and community organisations, can get involved. We will mobilise our local assets, share our expertise, target our resources and take collective action to champion lifelong learning as a way to transform lives and communities. *Working better together* is not just a slogan; it signals our intention to collaborate and integrate the system at all levels – internally, across formal education, and externally across health, social care, economy, arts and culture. This section sets out three important factors that will underpin the changes and improvements that will deliver our ambitious priorities:

1. The **key messages from consultation with key partners**, which clearly signal a collective desire for change.
2. How we plan to approach the delivery of this strategy through a set of **shared principles**.
3. Developing a **Talent & Innovation Ecosystem** to drive the system and cultural change necessary to deliver our priorities

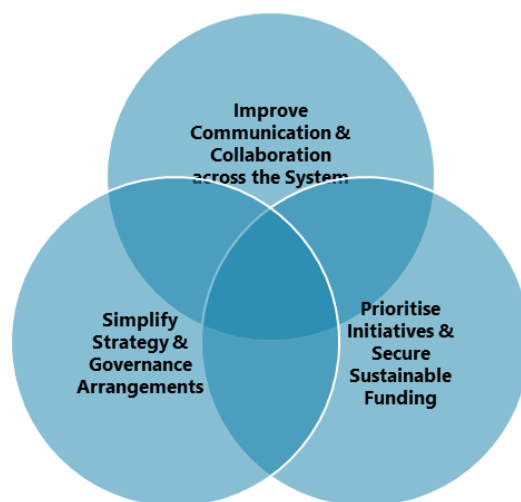
## Key messages from consultation

Team Doncaster must **outline the shared responsibilities for all of our key stakeholders**, including learners and parents, in shaping and delivering outcomes for lifelong learning in Doncaster. This approach will build on the success of the Doncaster Promise, which has helped our private, public and third sector organisations to work together to improve the quality of work-based learning, careers advice and corporate social responsibility.

It is also crucial that we **remove barriers** and listen to all delivery partners to ensure the environment and shared operating framework helps support collaboration and joined up delivery. Here are the key messages:

**Celebrate our achievements** - focus on strong, clear and consistent messages of success for all learners and do not allow others to define Doncaster as a place of low aspiration, low achievement, and limited opportunity. This is inaccurate and presents a barrier to people's aspirations. It is time to 'change the conversation' and reframe how we view ourselves, and reform how we communicate as a system.

**Positive communication about Doncaster as a place to live, work and learn** – this will also be crucial in encouraging recruitment and retention of an effective workforce across our Education and Skills sector. The borough has transformed itself over the past 10 years and is now a key economic and transport hub, with an international airport, superb leisure and affordable housing. We need to



provide more consistent and consolidated communications to ensure that everyone is aware of this and the local learning offer that is developing to help drive our wider plans for the borough and the region.

**Consolidation of policies, strategy and initiatives** – There was a broad consensus that there are too many strategies, policies, and plans, and a need to consolidate these under a clear set of priorities. This document will therefore sit as the principal strategic framework for Education and Skills in Doncaster between 2020 and 2030, enabling all stakeholders to work towards a common vision. There is also a need to simplify the current governance arrangements to ensure better monitoring of these actions and targets – and ensure prioritised funding and resources are allocated effectively. This means agreeing to do some things and not others.

**Effective governance** – The delivery of priorities, improvement, and sustainability targets set out in this strategy must be underpinned by clear and effective governance arrangements. As a result, a new governance framework is being implemented in 2021 to provide more focus on delivery and improvement, rather than purely functional activity groups. This new framework will ensure there is sufficient opportunity for all partners, including the voluntary and community sector to engage, and to encourage people to ‘think outside of their silos’. The education and skills agenda straddles both education, culture and economic development, so it is particularly important to ensure broader and joined up distributed leadership from across the system, with clear lines of accountability.

**More sustainable funding** – There must be a concerted and coordinated effort to secure and allocate more sustainable long-term funding across the system. In addition to achieving sustainable continuity for some of our key partners and voluntary organisations, we need to understand how the funding will support change and deliver our strategic aims. All too often initiatives arise out of the quest to secure funding, rather than strategic need and can often be directed towards ‘firefighting’ rather than long-term sustained improvement. However, we need to think different too and ask - ‘how can we work together to achieve this?’ rather than ‘who is going to pay for this?’

**Understand where we can add value by working together** – This also includes being clear about where responsibility for particular activities and interventions is best held by partner organisations. We plan to use our three ‘Team Doncaster Tests’ to help prioritise activities and service chains that would benefit from partnership delivery – and identify ‘sweet spots’ for maximum impact:

- ❖ *Is it collective?* Does it require collaboration from Team Doncaster partners? Can it be co-produced with collective ownership?
- ❖ *Is it urgent?* Does it have to be progressed now?
- ❖ *Is it transformational?* Does it deliver significant changes to outcomes or systems?

## Our Shared Principles

As we transform towards a future learning environment, we will use three core dimensions we call **agents for innovation and change** – *learners for life; expert and collaborative professionals; and diverse and committed partners*. These principles for delivering our vision are based on leading academic research, including the OECD Learning Compass.



### Learners for Life

As a partnership, we have a responsibility to provide high quality learning opportunities for all residents. However, learners themselves have a role to play too. This means that in addition to equipping learners with the skills and competencies needed to thrive in life and work, the system should enable learners to create opportunities for themselves and shape their own learning journey. By giving residents greater choice in terms of what, when and how they will learn, we hope to increase their motivation to learn and their ability to ‘learn how to learn’ – an essential life skill. Thereby, shifting the focus from ‘earning a living’ to ‘learning a living’. To enable this, the learning environment must be learner-centred, acknowledging individual learner differences, and recognising the wider factors that enable them to thrive.

- 1. Whole-person:** A learning offer that develops the ‘whole person’, equipping learners with agency and the skills, attitudes, and competencies needed to thrive at individual, community, societal, and global levels.
- 2. Whole-life:** A system that encourages learners to take an active role in their own learning, and provides them with opportunities to learn, re-learn, and up-learn at every stage of life.
- 3. Learner-centred:** An environment that recognises the importance of social and creative learning and that is sensitive to the individual learner’s strengths, interests, needs, backgrounds, abilities and characteristics – providing opportunities to explore their creativity within the context of the local culture.



## Expert & Collaborative Professionals

A successful learning system must value and cultivate its professional workforce. Leaders and educators must be highly trained and subject specialists, who each have a valuable and different set of skills, knowledge, and experience to offer in terms of shaping a positive learning environment. Learning professionals must utilise research, evaluation, technology, and community assets, as well as nationally and internationally recognised 'best practice' models to drive forward innovation within the local learning sector. In addition, learning professionals must have an openness to work collaboratively.

4. **Expert-led:** A culture that values and cultivates teachers and leaders as highly skilled differentiated professionals and subject-experts.
5. **Innovative:** Learning led by educators who are constantly engaged in professional learning, driven by data, intelligence, and best practice, and who have an open approach to innovation and reflection.
6. **Collaborative:** A self-sustaining learning ecosystem in which a networks of learning professionals collaborate across, and outside of the system, to support, challenge, and learn from each other.



## Diverse & Committed Partners

Successful education and skills systems are those that look outwards to connect learning to the wider world, enabling learners to apply and transfer their knowledge and skills in a variety of ways. Developing a wide network of partners is crucial for ensuring the learning environment is not isolated. An effective future learning environment must involve a range of diverse, long-term partners and assets that extends across and beyond the education sector. These partnerships include parents, families, local community bodies, businesses and cultural institutions. Distributing leadership across these partnerships enables collective and extended responsibility for driving change and continuous improvement.

7. **Whole-system:** Learning coordinated by a diverse range of committed partners who promote connectedness across systems, disciplines and communities; integrating commissioning, decision-making and interventions to improve collective well-being and equity.
8. **Distributed leadership:** A system that mobilises leadership at all levels and across partnerships and communities to take shared responsibility for improvement, and for promoting learning as a way to transform lives.
9. **Place-based:** A learning offer that is rooted in Doncaster as a place, connecting learning to families and diverse communities, and which places culture and heritage at the centre.

## Developing a System for Talent & Innovation

It's now clear that we need to make some *fundamental changes* to our existing education and skills delivery model. The full scale of the impact of COVID-19 on our people and economy is not yet known, but it's clear that this has fast-tracked many opportunities for change the system in a way that ensures our residents and organisations are better equipped to deal with future uncertainties. Recent events have shown that there are other ways of doing things; methods that may not have previously been seen as 'best practice' are now emerging as having potential to meet the changing needs of people in more dynamic, flexible, and inclusive ways.

There is even further scope to adopt new and innovative approaches that fit well with Doncaster's ambitions. A good place to start is to understand the variety of learning pathways and destinations that are available for our residents. Historically, learning provision has been biased towards traditional, academic, formal routes that are not always suited to learner strengths and needs. We need to offer greater opportunities for work experience and develop transferrable skills that lead to flexible careers and lifelong learning.

Introducing a *Talent and Innovation Ecosystem* will help to achieve this. It will support a more diverse and inclusive borough-wide learning community that caters to the individual needs of all residents and encourages them to get (and stay) involved. This requires a **whole-system approach** involving partners from across and outside of the sector, and perhaps most importantly, learners.



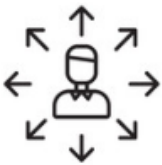
## Learning for the real world

... Bringing together learners of all ages, employers and community partners to **collaborate on meeting real-world design and commercial challenges**. This includes national and global issues such as climate change, artificial intelligence, and pandemics. By putting learners at the forefront of innovation, the Talent and Innovation Ecosystem will provide learners with opportunities to develop both soft and hard skills, as well as conceptual and practical knowledge that will allow them to flourish in life and work. Our residents must feel that they have a part to play in the world, and that they are trusted, valued and able to contribute to positive change. **Working to establish innovative forms of teaching, assessment and accreditation for these wider capabilities** alongside the more traditional assessments dealing with the mastery of content will be crucial enablers for this – ensuring learners can develop the essential, transferable skills needed for lifelong learning.



## Education to employment through hybrid learning

... **Making available informal and formal, traditional and non-traditional, academic and vocational learning opportunities** to ensure that all residents can learn, train, re-skill and up-skill at all ages and stages, no matter what their learning style or ability. Establishing this Doncaster-specific hybrid model of education will require a number of collaborative developments across the system. Within and across formal education settings, this will involve curriculum enrichment to ensure that skills and qualifications support local jobs. The informal learning offer will also be enhanced through a digital learning platform that develops existing skills and often-unrecognised ability through digital micro-credentials, and makes available local learning an employment opportunities. This will create a series of pathways for local learners to access and progress fulfilling careers, as well as encouraging the learning of new skills as one of the five 'ways to wellbeing'.



## Learning coordinated by local experts

... Utilising the wealth of expertise and assets across the system by **establishing a local partnership with representation from across education, business, and the community, to develop and coordinate the local ecosystem**, in alignment with our Centres of Excellence and local industry specialisms. The partnership will act as:

- **Provider** – co-designing and co-delivering learning experiences, including through assessment and accreditation
- **Curator** – creating a digital library of learning resources
- **Enabler** – supporting learners' progress through new and existing pathways
- **Broker** – building relationships between business, communities and education providers

As well as drawing on expertise from within the local area, the partnership will also look outwards to draw on best practice and expertise from regional, national and international arenas, to develop accreditation, curriculum enhancement and professional development. This will serve to raise aspirations and put Doncaster at the forefront of innovation.

## How an ecosystem will help deliver the five priorities

- supporting learners to develop essential life skills such as collaboration, resilience and empathy, ensuring that both children and their parents have the **best start**
- motivating and engaging young people by giving them the opportunity to apply their knowledge to complex challenges in a way that **accelerates their achievement**
- developing **a new model of Post-16 education** by giving learners opportunities to demonstrate their value to employers, and increasing the supply of internships, placements, apprenticeships and skilled employment
- creating opportunities for residents to **learn new skills in formal and informal settings**, and designing integrated pathways from all forms of learning **to fulfilling employment**
- achieving **equality through inclusive and equitable learning** by creating and highlighting a multitude of academic, and vocational, traditional, and non-traditional learning opportunities available to suit individual needs



# Delivering on Our Priorities

**Actions plans** will need to be developed for each of the five priorities, through collaboration from key partner stakeholders involved in improvements and delivering the changes. These action plans will include **clear stretched performance targets linked to the above outlined key measures of success** to ensure we achieve transitional change that moves Doncaster above the national average for many key educational and economic outcomes, rather than constantly chasing incremental improvement. The key areas for action under the five priorities are shown in a table within Appendix xxx, including how they map to 15 aims under each priority. The Education & Skills Board under the new governance structure will monitor progress on these actions plans

## Empowering local communities & integrating delivery

The priorities laid out in this strategy have been informed by discussions with local people about what matters to them, and what they want to see done differently in the future. They have also been shaped by discussions with a range of stakeholders and partners from across the borough and Sheffield City Region; ensuring that these priorities support and are supported by our wider strategic vision. *Delivery* of this strategy must also be a partnership enterprise – with educators, employers, health, and cultural partners working in a joined-up, locally responsive way to manage, maintain, and develop the local learning environment. Rather than adopting a ‘one size-fits-all’ approach, Doncaster’s integrated **Locality Approach** will also involve working together with communities to tailor and target the education and skills offer in a way that reflects the specific identities, strengths, assets and needs of the different areas of Doncaster. This will combine asset-based community development, integrated strengths-based delivery and locality commissioning in a ‘whole system’ way of working. Community networks, trusted information sources and local employers will play a crucial role in designing solutions that work at a local level.

## Governing this strategy

The delivery of the Education & Skills 2030 Strategy will be a key area of focus for the Team Doncaster Strategic Partnership Board, who will regularly receive progress and monitoring reports and provide oversight to ensure delivery remains on track. Delivery of the action plan itself will be driven by the Education and Skills Board, which will govern a set of priority-related sub-groups. Governance arrangements will be kept under review to ensure they are fit for purpose in driving this crucial strategy for Doncaster.

## Further information

[Link to Online Policy Hub here](#)

Appendices:

1. Table with Actions Mapped to Aims
2. Executive Summary

## Glossary

**Basics:** English and Maths

**CPD:** Continuous Professional Development

**EYFS(P):** Early Years Foundation Stage (Profile)

**EAL:** English as an Additional Language

**FSMs:** Free School Meals

**GLD:** Good Level of Development

**GRT:** Gypsy, Roma, Traveller

**OECD:** Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

**pp:** percentage points

**SEN(D):** Special Educational Needs (and Disabilities)