



A joint approach to post-16
education improvement in Bradford
and the need for change



BRADFORD
working in partnership

City of Bradford MDC

www.bradford.gov.uk

Bradford Council's position on post-16 education improvement

Foreword from
Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe and
Michael Jameson



This is a really important time for the future of post-16 education and training in the Bradford District. In spite of the hard work and commitment of all involved in 16-19 teaching, the need to accelerate improvements in both the quality and choice for learners is accepted by all. This report sets out a new approach outlining how we can work together to set a direction that drives up post-16 education standards and extends choice for young people.

At the heart of this must be our collective desire to work together to provide the best possible start for our young people by delivering education that inspires them to fulfil their potential.

Bradford Council want to make sure that all our young people have access to a wide range of high standard A level and technical vocational qualifications. The Council view is that collectively we must provide excellent learning pathways so young people can progress into employment and further and higher education.

Our approach must reflect the New Deal reforms that are taking place to build Bradford as a place where everyone is able to maintain stable employment, earn a family-supporting wage, enjoy a good quality of life, and contribute to their local community. It must also take account of the challenges presented by a changing national context.

The Council commissioned review of post-16 education was the start of this new approach. It enabled partners to consider together the direction we need to take. Headteachers, principals of further education, businesses, and the local authority have been able to consider ways to improve education standards together, in a spirit of genuine openness and partnership.

As a local education and business community, we all agreed on the content of the Review. Bradford Council knows that this is only the first staging post in

a wider debate that must now engage both education and business leaders across the District.

We welcome the recommended framework for collaboration that employs sector-led education improvement, a shift towards a Careers Pathway model, and deeper education-industry partnerships. This is important because it means that our local education will be directly linked to employers' talent needs.

The move towards a more autonomous education system means that the role of the Council has changed to one of enabling, brokering and challenging. For an enabling environment to be effective we, the Council, need to take a clear view on what we consider to be in the best interests of Bradford.

We, the Council, also see our role as championing the needs of young people, families, schools and colleges. There are some important decisions that need to be made if Bradford is to deliver the post-16 education that young people need and the Council and its partners cannot shy away from making them.

The current pattern of schools' sixth form provision is not sufficient to realise our collective ambitions. Evidence suggests that in its current form it is not financially sustainable and offers a limited curriculum for our young people. Moving forward the Council wants to see a reduction in the number of school sixth forms and the development of a small number of large school sixth colleges. The Council view is that these need to be located in areas of demographic demand: in Bradford city centre, in the Shipley/Keighley area, and in the north of the District, how this happens is down to our partners.

Alongside this, the Department for Education and Department for Business Innovation and Skills are undertaking a 'West Yorkshire Area Based Review of Further Education' as part of a national programme which will, "...move towards fewer, often larger, more

resilient and efficient providers". Our local approach and the Area Based Review must align to ensure that the young people of Bradford have access to a coherent offer of high quality academic and vocational pathways.

This report is driven by the overriding common purpose to enable every young person to achieve their best regardless of where they start. Bradford Council believes that this demands a transformational approach to raise educational standards and the way we work together. That means every stakeholder has an important role to play.



Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe
Leader of Bradford Council



Michael Jameson
Strategic Director of Children's Services



Acknowledgements

This report has been produced under the governance of the post-16 review steering group. The group is made up of the following members.

Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe

Leader of Bradford Council and Chair of the West Yorkshire Review of Further Education steering group

Michael Jameson

Bradford Council's Strategic Director of Children's Services and Chair of the Post-16 Review steering group

Judith Kirk

Bradford Council's Deputy Director of Education, Employment and Skills

Dr Phil Hunter

Bradford Council's Interim Head of Education, Employment and Skills

Matt Findull

Bradford Council's 14-19 Lead Officer - Funding & Sufficiency, Education, Employment & Enterprise Team

Andy Welsh

Chief Executive Officer, Bradford College

Don Brearley

Chief Executive, West Yorkshire Learning Providers

Frank Clayton

Chair, Workforce Development Advisory Committee

Peter Thompson

Director of Operations, Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust

Nicki Flynn

Assistant Partnership Operational Director, Bradford Partnership

Professor Gwendolen Bradshaw

Pro-Vice Chancellor for Learning, Teaching and Quality, University of Bradford

Adrian Kneeshaw

Headteacher, Carlton Bolling College

Andy Taylor

Headteacher, Parkside School

Liz Hart

Headteacher, Queensbury School

Helen Williams

Headteacher, Ilkley Grammar School

1.1 One District working together for our young people

The improvement of post-16 education standards and achievement is critical to ensuring that all of our young people in Bradford are able to achieve their potential and take advantage of the higher education, career and life opportunities on our doorstep and beyond. This report delivered under the governance of the post-16 review steering group outlines a new approach. It is an outcome of a detailed review of our post-16 education landscape. It has enabled us to consider the future of post-16 education improvement in Bradford from a fresh perspective. Senior leaders from schools, colleges, independent learning provider, the voluntary and community sector, the Council, Bradford University, and business have all had the opportunity to evaluate how we can best raise post-16 education standards together, in a spirit of genuine openness and collaboration.

Over the course of the review, we have closely examined the evidence, considered the different ways forwards and developed clear options for change for how best to work together to improve outcomes for our young people as an education and business community.



Through the course of the review our discussions about how to ensure post-education improvement have been thorough and robust. We have identified that there is a common purpose that unites us as an education and business community: to contribute and support our young people to achieve much more throughout their education, careers, and life.

Whilst the Council took the lead in commissioning the Review, it was produced and agreed by partners working across the post-16 sector. The role of Bradford Council in a collaborative post-16 education approach was also examined. The steering group is clear that the primary responsibility of post-16 education improvement rests with providers. But the Council has a key leadership role in developing effective partnership working, building relationships, sharing knowledge, facilitating peer learning, and upholding accountability. Indeed, we all share a common purpose.

As an education and business community, we have much more to do and we are developing a clear action plan with appropriate outcomes, timescales and measurements to achieve this. This report sets out the collaborative approach we want to take towards post-16 education improvement.

1.2 Our starting point

Over the course of the Review a shared story has been developed among our local education and business community about the current education and employment outcomes for Bradford's young people. The starting point is quite simple the education and employment outcomes for our young people are not yet good enough. From our Review, it is clear that our young people understand the value of remaining in education and training up to the age of 18. Whilst our young people are remaining in education in greater numbers than ever before their educational attainment is below the level of their national and international peers. This then is our starting point; the challenge is how we work together to deliver our common purpose.

As an education and business community we have achieved a lot and have a strong partnership ethos to build from. Yet we recognise that we still have much more to harness the strong collaborative spirit to deliver rapid improvement, and a high quality and sustainable post-16 education offer to our young people.

Overall results in our colleges, schools, and other post-16 setting are significantly below national performance levels at both level 2 and level 3. On average our young people take longer to achieve their qualifications, achieve at a lower level, and hold fewer qualifications than elsewhere in the country. And in our colleges, schools, and other post-16 settings, students from poorer backgrounds achieve less than their peers from more affluent homes.

To ensure that in the future all our young people have the best possible start to life the review emphasised the need to reinvigorate and reshape the current pattern and organisation of post-16 provision. Currently, the majority of post-16 providers in Bradford are not rated as good or outstanding, and whilst we have seen improvement in some post-16 settings others have fallen into difficulties. One of the peculiarities of the pattern of post-16 provision in Bradford is the high number of small school sixth forms. Typically, across the county, smaller institutions have poorer outcomes for post-16 and under the current funding arrangements it is difficult to see how small sixth forms can be sustained financially. Realistically financial viability for these settings can only be achieved by offering a limited range of courses in areas that traditionally attract high volumes. This approach can only serve to limit the opportunities for our young people in terms of the coherency of their post-16 programme of study and their transition to the labour market and/or higher education.

The post-16 education landscape is complex and the new reality is that post-16 providers are autonomous and responsible for their own planning, development and improvement. Taken together this context raises questions about how stakeholders from across the post-16 landscape can come together and best organise the current system to deliver rapid

improvement in educational standards, provide an offer to young people with path to employment, and meet the needs of local businesses.

This context sets our clear challenge to develop an approach that delivers long-term and sustainable improvement in post-16 educational standards which will enable every young person in Bradford to achieve more, regardless of their background or where they live. To this end, part of the solution is to make changes to the existing school sixth form organisation, moving to fewer and larger sixth form providers. This can be achieved in a number of ways that this may come about whether individual schools decide to close their sixth forms, groups of schools may decide to collaborate and consolidate their sixth forms through a multi academy trust, or a new schools sixth form centre or college may be developed. Whilst we recognise the autonomy of individual providers, we believe that outcomes can be better improved and more sustainable with mediating arrangements which offer both accountability and co-ordination. In other words, any proposals for new provision needs to be undertaken in a considered and planned way to understand and ensure that it adds value both individually and collectively to our current pattern of post-16 provision.

In the time available for the review it was not possible to address in detail every aspect of the question of how to make a step change in the improvement of post-16 education standards. Consequently, we have focused on those areas that were felt to be most important to create a culture and infrastructure for collaboration in Bradford, which has the power to transform post-16 education and ensure that every young person achieves to their full potential. We are clear on our starting point, and this is an important first step on a journey to build a high quality and sustainable post-16 system.



1.3 Our vision for post-16 education – working together to deliver quality and choice

Vision

A sustainable, responsive and co-ordinated post-16 education system that provides a high quality and broad range of pathways, that evolves based on evidence and best practice, which achieves successful outcomes for our young people, employers, and local community.

Our mission

To liberate the talents and ingenuity of all of our young people.



Principles

Our underlying principles are:

- **Common Purpose.** Our collaboration is founded on a compelling common purpose: To ensure our young people achieve all that they are capable of throughout their education, career, and life.
- **Rigour.** Effective collaborative working must involve evaluation and challenge. We will strive collectively to deliver this.
- **Transformative.** Our overall approach to collaboration must be transformative for every young person, for every school, college and private training provider, and across the whole post-16 education and training system.
- **Sustainable.** The collaborative approach must seek sustainable solutions for the District that optimise current and planned estates, facilities and investment.
- **Evidence-driven.** We must focus on excellence through continuous improvement, innovation and risk management with on-going monitoring, measuring, evaluation and public reporting with clear lines of accountability
- **Outcome-based.** Outcomes and performance must deliver our common purpose.

Objectives

We will work together to:

- **Deliver the right opportunities and experiences for every young person.**
Ensure all young people access pathways that offer them the right opportunities and experiences for personal fulfilment. Support young people with transition between settings to enable a continuous high quality education experience and drive up post-16 education standards.
- **Create a shared culture of professional development, innovation and transformation.**
Sharing know-how and excellent practice to create opportunities for professional learning. Transform education settings into dynamic, exciting places to work and study.
- **Build an environment of trust for effective challenge and support.**
Support reciprocal collaboration with the aim of supporting improvements to young people's education and training. Honesty and openness underpin this approach.
- **Put the right skills in the right place.**
Respect the professional skills of staff and leaders of those staff to make sure the best people transform the learning experience and outcomes for young people.



2.1 A sector-led improvement approach

We believe every post-16 education and training provider in Bradford should be an active member of the post-16 education improvement collaboration.

An effective collaborative approach to post-16 education improvement may take many forms. It is important that there is a coordinated approach. More organic collaborations through local school to school support or Multi Academy Trusts are powerful but not every provider across the system enjoys the benefits of being part of an effective collaboration. We need to put in place a partnership that empowers alliances to grow stronger and transform performance.

We believe that there must be a more formal mechanism to connect intelligence and insights gathered from different improvement activities with strategic decision making at a District level. To achieve this we will develop a sector-led post-16 education partnership which brings together local leaders of education and business.

This partnership will be a catalyst for change and ensure the principle of a sector-led approach is applied to the whole system, locating the post-16 education agenda within wider partnership arrangements. Critically it will build coherence into the collective approach to education improvement, post-16 organisation and sustainability.

It is not intended that the partnership become a separate legal entity or a Council committee, it would instead be an autonomous organisation accountable to the whole education and business communities of Bradford. As such the partnership is the natural body to inherit the work of the review and implement this plan. It will continue to champion a spirit of collaboration and keep alive our collective moral purpose.

The potential functions of the partnership include:

- Building capacity in the system for innovation in post-16 education, embracing and generating opportunities for peer support
- Monitoring progress in achieving our collective ambitions for our young people and our common purpose
- Approval of strategic plans for post-16 education improvement

It is important to stress that this model is the starting

point only. The partnership must be dynamic and as concepts of collaboration mature, develop, and become more sophisticated roles within the system must change.

2.2 Bradford Pathways: local pathways to global opportunity

Overall, we want to equip our young people to compete with the best across the UK and beyond. We want to set their ambition as global citizens of the future, confident and with skills they need to look beyond Bradford to seize opportunity wherever that may be.

We need to offer our young people a range of high quality pathways through post-16 education including apprenticeship, academic and technical routes. Young people need to make informed decisions on how their learning choices connect to lifelong learning, the world of work and their career ambitions, and they need to have access to personalised programmes of study that support them to realise their ambitions.



It is our belief that the post-16 education system would be greatly strengthened if pathways to all major occupations are clearly outlined from the beginning of Key Stage 4 so young people and their families are able to clearly see how their decisions on their learning options and other extended learning experiences that would best position them for entry for their chosen field. Young people would not be locked into one career at an early age rather Bradford Pathways would expand their horizons and the knowledge of the range of opportunities available to them. Furthermore, it will better engage and support young people to achieve much more in their education, careers, and lives.

Bradford Pathways will be the new system-wide framework that aligns education and training with specific progression opportunities for a broad range of major occupations and work. Through all partners working together to re-orient their provision to enabling lifelong education and career progression young people will better prepared to make successful transition into adult life. This effort will include re-imagining sector-focused bridge programmes, skills training, job-relevant curricula, and work-based learning opportunities and credentials. (See Appendix A Shipley College Centre of Excellence case study.)

2.3 An expanded role for employers

Our effort to provide a more effective network of pathways for our young people will require an expanded role of business and other employers. Local business leaders certainly understand the need to improve our post-16 education and have worked with us to this end over the past few years. But the pathways model we envision will require them to become deeply engaged in multiple ways at an earlier stage. In helping to set standards and design programmes, in advising young people, and most importantly providing greatly expanded opportunities



for work-related learning. Employers are full partners in our common purpose to prepare young people to achieve.

Our goal is from the beginning of secondary school all students have access to this system of employer involvement and assistance. This will include career counselling, job shadowing and opportunities to work on projects or problems designed by industry. From Key Stage 4 it will include programmes of study designed in collaboration with business leaders in our priority economic sectors through Industrial Centres of Excellence, see case study above. The ICEs are active collaborations between business and education that specify and give the knowledge and experience that young people need to work in that sector. We envisage that Bradford Pathways create a much tighter link between a student's programme of study and their career ambitions. It enlists the employer as a partner in both training students, and encouraging them to succeed and progress in their studies.

2.4 A new social compact for our young people

Developing a system that provides every young person with high quality pathways will require that we all take a collective moral purpose we assume for the education and training of our young people. Whilst educators will still obviously play a central role, to meet our common purpose will also require major contributions from parents, employers, the Council, and young people themselves.

To this end the Education Covenant (see Appendix B) articulates our new social compact with Bradford's young people. This clearly spells out what the Council, educators, employers, parents, communities, and government will do to provide pathways, and how they will support young people as they navigate them. And it clarifies what we expect from young people.

In broad terms, the Education Covenant's overarching goal is that by the time they reach adulthood, every young person will be equipped with the education and experience he or she needs to lead a successful life as an adult.

The challenge to meet our common purpose will require an enormous expansion of our existing efforts. We must rethink and reform the roles that employers and the public sector play in youth development, and we must create a new collaborative culture that works together to encourage and enables young people to achieve. It may seem daunting. Yet few other efforts have more potential to help Bradford realise its true promise in the 21st century.

Section 3

The road map for improvement

To achieve our vision and objectives for the post-16 education system the table below sets out the immediate next steps and areas of activity to put in place the foundations we need to make a step change in post-16 education standards and attainment.

Aspect	Description	Comments
Strand 1: Completion of post-16 review process	<p>Further work needs to be completed as part of the review process –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Post-16 mapping ii. Data analysis iii. Learner consultation 	<p>Strong message from stakeholders that mapping of post 16 provision needs to be implemented (and findings shared) in order to provide a district wide perspective on opportunities for young people (mapping should include current thinking on future plans for post-16 provision and strengths/weaknesses of the existing offer). Mapping should be initiated as part of the review process but be delivered in collaboration with providers. Mapping should draw on pre-existing centrally held information so as to minimise the burden on individual providers. Mapping of provision should be assessed to establish how effectively it meets the needs of the local economy.</p> <p>Further work on data analysis is also recommended (see 4.2), although the review group should identify priority lines of enquiry . There is suggestion that consultation with learners (and possibly parents) should form part of the review. Both qualitative and quantitative work with learners through individual providers and/or Prospects could be considered.</p>
Strand 2: Development of post-16 strategic and operational action plan to improve standards	<p>Once further work undertaken a post-16 strategic action and operational plan with a focus on improving post-16 standards should be developed in collaboration with stakeholders.</p>	<p>Strategic action and operational plan with clear measurements, timescales and lines of accountability needs to be in place to drive change forward and to assist in monitoring of progress. There needs to be agreement as to how stakeholders are engaged in this process. A vision for post-16 provision should be developed to underpin the agreed action plan. The vision should build upon the New Deal for Bradford but provide a clear direction of travel. Needs absolute focus on education improvement particularly on Level 3 outcomes.</p>
Strand 3: Development of structures for post-16 partnership working and sharing of effective practices	<p>3.1 Recreate, extend or adapt the Bradford Partnership and sector-led education improvement model to work across the post-16 sector.</p>	<p>The partnership should be inclusive and should ensure representation from the voluntary and community sector, charitable and commercial providers, FE, school, IAG contractor (s), work based learning providers. Particular thought should be given to the engagement of the MATs. A key role of the partnership is to support the implementation of the post-16 strategic action plan. Other opportunities exist for the partnership to focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Development of post-16 education improvement plan(s) ● Sharing of specialist post-16 teaching resource

Continued on next page

Aspect	Description	Comments
	3.2 Develop an effective KS4-KS5 transition process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaborative IAG provision, (including further development of Bradford Pathways) ● Sharing of specialist teaching facilities ● Sharing of good practice on collaborative provision across the District ● Joint work on English and maths Level 2 attainment ● Further developing partnerships between schools, FE and HE to engage learners in HE outreach/aspiration-raising activities ● Developing an effective transition process (detailed below) <p>There is demand from stakeholders for an improved transition process, particularly (but not exclusively) to support sharing of information in relation to English and maths skills/attainment. Suggestion that an electronic system is already in place and this should be reviewed/reinstated. Clear plan needs to be in place to inform providers of its use and purpose.</p>
Strand 4: Ensuring capacity to deliver improvements and financial viability/sustainability	<p>4.1 Develop a financial modelling tool to enable sixth forms to stress test their provision.</p> <p>4.2 Use of financial modelling to inform decisions on sustainability of provision.</p> <p>4.3 Assess the scope and viability of collaborative delivery and models and disseminate learning to stakeholders.</p> <p>4.4 Full audit of sixth form and colleges future plans for post-16 provision disseminated to stakeholders across Bradford.</p> <p>4.5 Negotiate changes in post-16 provision for academic year 2017-18.</p>	<p>Building on work already started to model financial viability and to ensure the tool and any associated guidance are disseminated to all sixth form heads and governing bodies.</p> <p>Providers should be encouraged to stress test their provision prior to the post-16 mapping process (detailed in strand 1). Any decisions/ current thinking as a result of financial modelling to feed into mapping process.</p> <p>To support providers to develop collaborative delivery arrangements work should take place to examine the effectiveness of local, regional and national models. Examples of transferable practice to be shared. Examples to be considered include ICEs, Truro College, Ruth Gorse Academy Trust and Trafford College.</p> <p>We anticipate that clarifying the future plans of all providers will be an on-going process, kick started with the initial dissemination of the financial modelling tool and the mapping of provision. We suggest a full audit should be in place and extensively disseminated before the end of the academic year at the latest.</p> <p>The local authority needs continued communication with providers where change in post-16 provision is recommended or anticipated. In particular, detailed dialogue should take place between the local authority and school sixth forms where quality is low and there where sustainability issues have been identified. A clear understanding of likely provision in 2017-18 needs to be in place by the start of next academic year.</p>

Continued on next page

Aspect	Description	Comments
Strand 5: Gathering and sharing of intelligence	Develop central intelligence business cycle, sets and products.	<p>Improved data analysis is crucial for taking a more evidence driven approach to planning of post-16 provision both at institutional and district wide level. There is clear demand from stakeholders for improved access to data analysis and for opportunities to discuss data and agree the implications for the post-16 sector. The local authority have identified the following issues for consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Monthly, quarterly and annual cycle of reports and communication ● Quality ● Demographic ● Labour market information ● Destinations ● Participation <p>We would strongly recommend including data on apprenticeship vacancies and trends in unfilled opportunities.</p>
Strand 6: Increasing effectiveness of CEIAG in supporting post-16 choices	<p>6.1 Develop post-16 provision directory in collaboration with Prospects</p> <p>6.2 Central procurement of effective IAG provision</p> <p>6.3 Maximising potential of Bradford Pathways approach by identifying opportunities for implementation in the post-16 sector</p> <p>6.4 Establish district wide 'think tank' to identify practical steps to improve the take up of Apprenticeship opportunities in Bradford.</p>	<p>Clear message from providers that reinstating/ updating existing database of provision would be of value to ensuring access to information about breadth of opportunities on offer. Consideration needs to be given to the process for updating, maintaining and promoting the database.</p> <p>Need to agree the scope of provision to be commissioned for September 2016 onwards. The re-commissioned service must reflect findings from the post-16 review.</p> <p>Bradford Pathways is currently an untested model but one which has generated a good deal of support since the initial launch in November 2015. Review of the five year implementation plan to identify opportunities for further alignment to needs of post-16 learners would appear appropriate.</p> <p>Work of Apprenticeship Hub and individual providers acknowledged but more work to be done to ensure apprenticeships are a viable opportunity for the young people of Bradford. A chance now exists to examine the current state of play in Bradford and ensure a post-16 strategic action plan is adequately focused on the work based learning sector.</p>
Strand 7: Monitoring of progress	Ensure milestones and outputs identified in the strategic action plan are met.	The local authority should retain oversight of the post-16 strategic plan. A clear process and timetable for how progress is reviewed needs to be agreed. Thought should be given to how progress can be communicated and celebrated and how poor performance can be challenged.

Centre of Excellence for Business case study

Former Creative Media student Nicola, explains how Shipley College was the perfect fit for her journey towards university...

“Sixth form wasn’t for me, I didn’t feel independent, and I didn’t feel like I was taken seriously. I was really unsure as to what I wanted to do when I left. I looked into just getting a full time job straight away or getting an apprenticeship but I knew deep down that it wasn’t what I wanted to do. The posters and billboards dotted around my area really caught my eye, they were advertising Shipley College. I looked into all of the courses that were available and my first impressions of the College were that it was a small, inviting environment offering lots of exciting opportunities. I wasn’t wrong!

When I first started my course I realised immediately how approachable and encouraging all of the staff and students were. I was also treated like an adult, which I loved. Creative Media Level 3 was the course I had enrolled on and straight after my induction to the course, I knew it was the course for me. I really enjoyed learning about all the different software that was available and just being part of the College in general.

There were many opportunities I was encouraged to take part in at College. I had the chance to write for the College newspaper, have my picture in the full-time course guide, be involved in different projects with the College’s Centre of Excellence for Business and do a presentation in front of over one hundred people in a single day! These opportunities really helped to improve my confidence and have given me a wide range of skills and experience, which are great for my CV.

I would recommend Shipley College to anyone who wants to take part in an exciting, opportunity-packed, educational experience, but also because it is the smallest (General FE) college in the country – you are really made to feel part of a community.

I’ll be starting my degree in Journalism at Leeds Beckett University next week and it’s thanks to Shipley College that I’ve reached my goal. I can honestly say I am going to miss College a lot. Sounds silly, but I’m actually glad things didn’t work out for me at sixth form because otherwise I wouldn’t have discovered such an amazing College to study at. As I’m sure you can probably tell, I’ll never forget the time I’ve had here.”



Proud student Nicola passes her course with flying colours

Appendix B

A good school and a great start for all our children: The Bradford Education Covenant

We believe that every child in the Bradford District should have the chance to realise their full potential and that working together with determination, purpose and ambition we can achieve this.

Improving educational achievement and making sure all children can go to a good school are among the biggest and most important challenges we all face in the Bradford District. Providing young people with the right skills and knowledge within an excellent school system is crucial to their future success and wellbeing and that of the district.

In the past, improvement in education hasn't gone far enough, fast enough. We know we've got to do better, there are no excuses. We need urgent and sustained action to drive up education results.

Things have to change and together we all have to take responsibility to improve educational achievement in our district and give all our children a great start in life. The changes we need can't happen unless we all, public services, schools, parents, business and communities, work together.

We have to make sure that children are ready for school and ready to learn, to accelerate the rate of improvement in achievement and to ensure that young people leave school ready for work and life.

Achieving those outcomes is a joint responsibility with everyone involved having their part to play.

So we are setting out what the Council can offer but we are also asking families, schools, business and employers, the Government and young people themselves to work together with us to do all they can to create the best chance of success for all our children and young people.

The proposed Bradford Education Covenant will outline the action the Council will take along with what it is asking of others to ensure our young people get the best possible start in life.



The Bradford Education Covenant

What the Council will offer

Keeping schools and education as a top priority
Improving schools and educational attainment, so that all our children are able to achieve their potential, will stay at the top of our priorities. We will support all Councillors to be effective champions of children, parents and learning and work with schools and parents to develop a vision for education as we pursue our ambition of making all our schools good by 2018.

Driving school improvement

The Council will work to put schools themselves at the heart of driving improvement. We will challenge schools and governing bodies and hold them to account for their performance, taking rapid and robust action where there are issues that may be preventing a school from making progress, whatever type of school it may be.

Promoting learning from the very best

We already have some outstanding school leaders and teachers. We will work even harder with schools to identify, celebrate, promote and share best practice and support them to assist each other to accelerate improvement.

Attracting, retaining and developing the best school leaders and teachers

We will invest resources in attracting, retaining and developing the best school leaders, teachers and classroom assistants. We've already set aside £660,000 to do this. Part of this commitment will involve promoting Bradford District as an attractive career choice for the best teachers and school leaders. Government policy is to increase the numbers of Academies so we will be proactive in seeking out high quality academy sponsors to attract to the district.

Providing school places by working together with government

The Council will work with the Government to ensure the district gets the money it needs to provide enough school places and keep schools well equipped. We've invested £700,000 to match the Government's money for extra school places but we need more money and more places.

Helping to make sure children are ready for school

Support will be there for families and children through the 'early years' helping to make sure children are ready for school and can do their very best at school from day one.

Supporting children and young people to be ready for work and life

Working closely with the business community, the University and colleges, the Council will provide real opportunities for skill development and jobs when young people leave school. We'll continue, in partnership, to deliver the innovative Industrial Centres of Excellence, each covering a different economic sector, linking schools to employers' needs and we'll support business to get the right young person, with the right skills through our Apprenticeships Hub.

Raising aspirations through cultural opportunities

Providing chances for students to benefit from enriched cultural learning by maximising the District's unique local learning opportunities and facilities - for example, with the National Media Museum and City of Film. This will provide inspiration to our young people and stimulate creativity.



Bradford Council's Education Ask

Parents

- Access a nursery place – 15 hours a week is free and it can make a big difference to your child's development
- Involve yourself in your child's education, encourage and celebrate their learning
- Make learning fun at home, read, count and play every day with your young child
- Make sure your child is at school on time, attends regularly and doesn't take unauthorised absence
- Support your child to get their homework in on time
- Support your child to get involved in out of school activities

Parents need to do this because their involvement in children's education from an early age has a significant effect on educational achievement, and continues to do so into adolescence and adulthood.

Children and young people

- Make the most of opportunities for learning at school and at home
- Take responsibility for your own education, build your skills, ask questions, take notes in class and get your work in on time, discover your talents – it's your life, your future, your choice

Children and young people need to do this because motivated and responsible pupils have a better chance of achieving success.

Schools

- Put yourselves at the heart of driving school improvement, working together in partnership, recognising that all types of school are part of a wider education system and need to share solutions and ideas to raise education attainment
- Be active in the district's networks of schools, assist each other each other to challenge and address failure and support the lowest performing schools to learn from the highest performers
- Share resources and expertise to invest in teaching, learning and facilities
- Take timely and robust action to deal with performance, governance, attendance and any other issues in your school to provide the very best education experience and outcomes for your pupils

- Support students to identify future careers opportunities

All our schools need to do this to help us achieve our shared ambition of making sure every school is 'Good' by 2018.

Business and employers

- Support and become involved with an Industrial Centre of Excellence or Bradford Pathways
- Encourage your employees to volunteer for the reading in schools project and to offer mentoring for young people at school
- Provide meaningful work placements to your local schools and be an active partner in educating young people about potential careers
- Provide apprenticeships for local young people

Businesses need to do this because good education and good skills mean greater growth. In engineering alone the UK needs 1.82 million workers with relevant skills by 2022.

Communities

- Everyone in every community and neighbourhood to play their part in making a positive contribution to the growth, development and wellbeing of young people
- Get involved, for example as a volunteer reader

We need our communities to do this because everyone shares in the social and economic benefits of improving education and everyone can play a part in helping to achieve it.

Government

- Provide the funding for the district to have enough places for all our children
- Provide funding and support to help increase education achievement in the district, for example invest in a local programme to drive rapid and sustainable improvements
- Support us to attract outstanding teachers, leaders and, in line with Government policy, Academy chains to the district
- Trust local education partners and devolve more powers to local authorities to tackle failing schools and hold academies to account

We need the government to do this because we have one of the fastest growing populations of young people in the country and will need extra places equivalent to two new secondary schools by 2018.

The wording in this publication can be made available in other formats such as large print and Braille. Please call 01274 433582.