

14-19

Aspiring to Excellence

Transforming Learning, Attainment and Achievement across the Wakefield District

# Working Together

A Vision for High Quality 14 to 19 Education and Training Provision



# Introduction

The Government has set a challenging agenda for all those with a responsibility to influence and shape the future education of 14 to 19 year olds.

It is a challenge that, for the partners in the Wakefield district, is both welcome and timely. A willingness to work together to meet the needs of young people is well established amongst the key players. The Government's document '14 to 19: opportunity and excellence' and 'The Skills Strategy' outline a vision which Wakefield welcomes and supports. The task now is to develop a pattern of provision which offers a natural progression from 14+; offers parity of provision across academic, vocational and work-based routes; is seen to be relevant to emerging local employment and economic trends; is locally accessible and capable of flexible delivery; and which is underpinned by ongoing support.

The aims, objectives, leadership, management and operational structures outlined in this 14 to 19 Strategy set the future direction for the district. The Strategy will ensure that, working together, schools, colleges, training providers and employers provide a clear, comprehensive and coherent 21<sup>st</sup> Century curriculum which meets the needs of all learners and supports the economic regeneration and well being of the Wakefield District.



## Our Aim

Our aim is to ensure that young people and adults have the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable them to shape their future confidently and contribute to the economic and social regeneration of the district. Learning is at the heart of everything that we need to achieve.

This 14 to 19 Strategy is the result of collaboration amongst schools, colleges and training providers across the Wakefield district, in partnership with the Learning and Skills Council West Yorkshire, Wakefield Metropolitan District Council, Connexions West Yorkshire and the Wakefield District Learning Partnership. It represents a commitment to working together to encourage, raise and meet the aspirations of young people in achieving success and fulfilling their potential.

Fast Forward, the Community Strategy for the Wakefield District, in conjunction with the Learning and Skills Council West Yorkshire and Connexions West Yorkshire strategic plans, sets a clear direction for the future. It is both realistic and ambitious. It takes account of the changes that the next 25 years will bring; population, local economy, greater leisure opportunities and the impact of advances in information and communications technology.

The partners in Wakefield aspire to excellence. We have high expectations for all young people and acknowledge the importance of high levels of participation, attainment, achievement and progression to further learning. We believe that young people can and should make progress in line with and beyond their peers nationally.

Our success will be judged by our capacity to:

- **Raise standards of attainment.**
- **Improve the quality of teaching and learning and the scope of the curriculum offered across the district.**
- **Increase the numbers of young people participating in education and training beyond the age of 16.**
- **Increase the numbers of young people progressing to Higher Education.**
- **Increase the numbers of young people undertaking work with training.**
- **Increase the proportion of employers providing young people with appropriate training.**
- **Reduce the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET).**
- **Make the best use of resources to achieve the desired outcomes.**

# 14-19

# Background

In 2001, Wakefield LEA, with support from the Learning and Skills Council West Yorkshire and its 16 to 19 partners and major stakeholders, initiated a review of the current structure and organisation of 16 to 19 education and training across the district, with the aim of establishing:

- How well the current configuration of provision meets the needs of all young people and encourages them to remain in learning beyond the statutory age of 16.
- What should be changed in order to better meet the needs of all young people, raise aspirations and attainment and increase participation in education and training, 16 to 19.



It became clear during the course of the review that it would be more appropriate to look at the continuum of 14 to 19 provision to take account of the Government's thinking in this area.

During the review:

Extensive research was commissioned, conducted by geresearch, to provide a reliable evidence base from which to make judgements about the strengths and weaknesses of current provision.

The findings of the research encouraged the establishment of three 'Learning Communities', geographically-based groups of education and training providers who commit to planning and working in partnership to ensure the successful management and implementation of high quality, flexible, effective and efficient 14 to 19 provision.

Feasibility Studies were commissioned to consider ambitious plans for the future configuration of provision within the Learning Communities. The research conducted supports the continuation of a diverse framework of 16 to 19 provision, demonstrating the value placed by parents and young people on access to different types of provision.

It is clear from the research and from Ofsted inspection reports that there is much good quality 14 to 19 provision across the Wakefield District and that attainment and achievement is improving. The research also indicates that in some parts of the district access to the wider range of 16 to 19 provision is less good and that the current curriculum offer has some weaknesses and merits review. Value-added data indicates variability and inconsistency amongst schools and colleges across the LEA. There is a recognition that standards can be raised by sharing and disseminating the good practice which currently exists within individual institutions.

Within Work Based Learning, quality of provision is improving from a low baseline and must continue to show significant improvement. Targeted support is needed that will focus particularly on activities that increase and sustain retention and completion rates, improve leadership and management and develop the work based learning network to enable them to better engage with other providers of learning.

A 14 to 19 Area Inspection was carried out during late 2003. The Area Inspection Report highlighted many of the issues identified within the review, endorsed the strategic direction taken and encouraged partners to increase the rate of progress in implementing this Strategy.

The recommendations arising from the review will outline strategic options for the development of 14 to 19 provision in each of the Learning Communities. These recommendations, together with those made in the Area Inspection Report, will be addressed in the operational plan which will accompany this Strategy.



14-19

# What does the Strategy aim to achieve?

## The Key Principles

### **The needs of the learner at the centre of all planning and decision-making.**

The needs and aspirations of young people, their parents and carers and the needs of local employers will be the starting point for all 14 to 19 provision. Through this, partners will deliver 'Personalised Learning' for 14 to 19 year olds in the district.

### **High expectations, aspirations and standards of attainment and achievement.**

Building on the successful Key Stage 3 Strategy, the partners will ensure that all young people achieve the best possible outcomes and make progress in line with their potential and their aspirations.

### **High levels of participation in 16 to 19 education and training and progression to Higher Education.**

The partners are committed to ensuring that rates of participation and progression increase.

### **Strategic direction**

The key partners will establish a strategic leadership and management structure that will ensure that all 14 to 19 planning takes account of the needs of young people and that provision is coherent, of high quality and cost effective. With providers, they will develop a 14 to 19 phase of education and training in which young people have the opportunity to build a portfolio of qualifications which meets their needs and enables them to make progress.

### **Partnership and collaboration as the cornerstone of all planning and decision-making**

Providers, with the support of the Learning and Skills Council West Yorkshire, Connexions West Yorkshire, Wakefield Metropolitan District Council and Wakefield District Learning Partnership will plan and work together in three Learning Communities to ensure that, collectively, they meet the needs and aspirations of young people, their parents or carers and employers, providing the district with high quality, cost-effective education and training.

**A high quality 14 to 19 curriculum which is appropriate and engaging**

Working collaboratively within and across the Learning Communities, the partners will develop Curriculum and Learner Entitlements that meet the needs of all young people, especially those in danger of disengaging with education and training or of under-achieving. At the age of 14, all learners will become part of one of three Learning Communities, gaining access to the full range of provision available within and through the Learning Community. Learners will have access to a flexible curriculum which incorporates the development of key skills and opportunities to learn on more than one site. The curriculum will include access to work related learning from the age of 14, foundation studies from the age of 16 and parity of esteem amongst academic, vocational and occupational routes. From the age of 14, young people will be able to choose from a number of curriculum pathways with established progression routes through to the age of 19 and beyond.

**The provision of high quality learning, training and teaching**

All providers will work to improve the quality of teaching, training and learning through sharing and disseminating good practice, by a commitment to continuous professional development and through effective monitoring, review and evaluation.

**Access for all to high quality information, advice and guidance, especially at points of transition**

The Connexions Strategy will be developed within the Learning Communities, ensuring that learners' needs and aspirations come first and that they have appropriate support, information and impartial guidance when making choices from a range of routes and pathways.

**Highly effective leadership and management at all levels**

Increased collaboration and partnership will support all partners in developing leadership and management at all levels but especially in those areas where assessment and review indicate a need for improved performance.

**Best possible use of all available resources**

Within and across the Learning Communities, the partners will ensure that all resources are managed effectively and efficiently. Curriculum pathways and routes will be planned and agreed in each Learning Community to ensure that provision represents good value for money.



14-19

# How will the Strategy be led and managed?

## Strategic Leadership and Management

The strategic leadership and management of the 14 to 19 Strategy will be undertaken through a three tier structure:

- A Strategy Group
- A 14 to 19 Learning Communities Board
- Three Learning Community Forums

This structure is complemented by the well established Wakefield District Learning Partnership Board and 14-19 Young People's Group. It will be appropriate for some functions of the three tier structure to be carried out in collaboration with these groups, as noted below.

### A Strategy Group

with the responsibility to direct and coordinate 14 to 19 provision across the Wakefield District.

This group will comprise:

Executive Director,  
Learning and Skills Council West Yorkshire.

Corporate Director (Education),  
Wakefield Metropolitan District Council.

Chief Executive, Connexions West Yorkshire.

Co-opted members drawn from the 14 to 19 Learning Communities Board, as agreed.

Co-options will not normally include representatives of providers of 14 to 19 education and training but may, for example, include the Chair of the 14 to 19 Learning Communities Board.

The Strategy Group will be serviced by the 14 to 19 Strategy Manager.

The Strategy Group will:

- Agree the configuration of 16 to 19 education and training provision across the Wakefield District, following consultation with the key partners.
- Agree a strategy for 14 to 19 education and vocational learning in Wakefield which meets young people's and employers' needs and takes account of the outcomes of the Strategic Area Review of Wakefield.
- Review and revise the strategy as necessary to achieve high quality education and training for all.
- Review the strategic leadership and management structure annually, making revisions as necessary.
- Agree an operational plan which:
  - addresses the recommendations made in the 14 to 19 Area Inspection report.
  - takes account of efficient and effective use of resources.
  - supports, and is consistent with, other related plans.
  - is updated annually.
- Work with partners to ensure the strategy is implemented (including the identification of resources, the location and funding of provision, monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategy).
- Liaise with relevant external partners as required (including DfES, Ofsted, ALI).
- Ensure all stakeholders are well-informed about 14 to 19 plans and activities and are consulted on any proposals for change.

## A 14 to 19 Learning Communities Board

with the responsibility to advise the Strategy Group on the direction and coordination of 14 to 19 provision across the Wakefield District.

This group will comprise:  
14 to 19 Strategy Manager.

All Headteachers/Principals of 11 to 18 Schools/  
Colleges.

Representation from 11 to 16 Schools and Special  
Schools.

Principals of Sixth Form and General FE Colleges.

Representative of Wakefield Metropolitan District  
Council Cabinet.

Representation from Guidance Services.

Manager of Wakefield District Learning Partnership.

Chair of Wakefield District Learning Partnership.

Representation from Wakefield Education Action Zone.

Representation from Wakefield Association of Training  
Providers.

Representation from Connexions West Yorkshire.

Representation from the Learning and Skills Council  
West Yorkshire.

Representation from I.

Representation from the Adult and Community  
Education Service.

Representation from the Dioceses of Wakefield and  
Leeds.

Chairs of the three Learning Community Forums.

Representation from the Young People's Service.

Representation from Higher Education Institutions.

Representation from Governing Bodies.

The 14 to 19 Learning Communities Board will:

- Work with all partners, including Governing Bodies, to agree recommendations for and advise the Strategy Group on the future configuration of 16 to 19 education and training across the Wakefield District.
- Consult widely on the recommendations and respond to emerging issues.
- Support providers within the three Learning Communities in implementing the Strategy, ensuring that targets and timelines are met.
- Establish planning and task groups as required.
- Report on progress of all 14 to 19 developments as required.
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of Learning Community action plans and intervene as appropriate to ensure effective provision for young people.

And, in conjunction with Wakefield District Learning Partnership Board, will:

- Disseminate information and ensure effective communication across the district.
- Encourage and support the involvement of all major stakeholders.
- Commission research and requests for information, as necessary.
- Develop mechanisms for consulting with young people, the Teachers' Panel and other specialist groups.



# 14-19

## Three Learning Community Forums

for the North East Learning Community, the South East Learning Community and the Central Learning Community.

These groups will comprise:  
14 to 19 Strategy Manager.

All Headteachers of High Schools / Special Schools within the Learning Community.

Representatives from the Sixth Form College and the General FE College.

Local Training Provider Representation.

Local Employer Representation.

Connexions West Yorkshire.

Representation from Wakefield Local Education Authority.

Representation from the Learning and Skills Council West Yorkshire.

Representation from the Teachers' Panel.

Representation from the Adult and Community Education Service.

Higher Education Institution Representation.

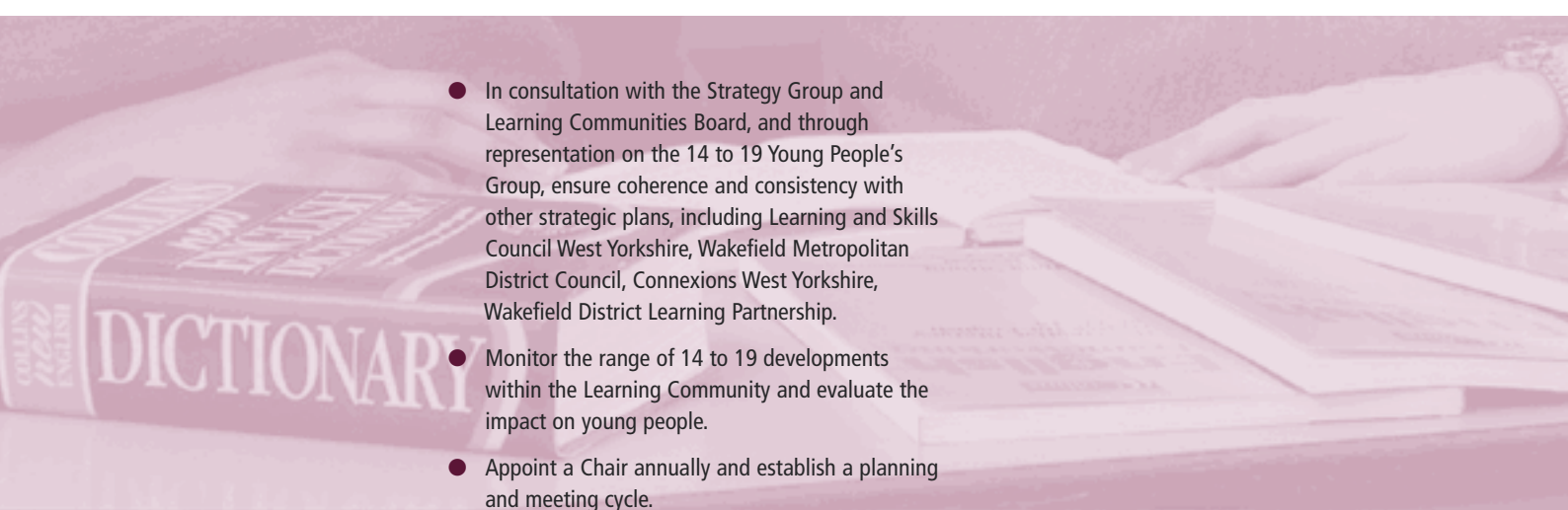
Governing Body Representation.

Each Learning Community Forum will:

- Manage the implementation of the 14 to 19 Strategy within the Learning Communities, under the direction of the Strategy Group and advised by the 14 to 19 Learning Communities Board.
- Promote the 'vision' of the Learning Community.
- Support the development of high quality teaching, learning and training, appropriate access to a flexible curriculum and choice and diversity of setting for young people and parents.
- Encourage and enhance partnership and collaboration as a means of promoting a flexible and innovative curriculum.
- Monitor and review the development of the agreed Curriculum and Learner Entitlements.



- Develop a Learning Community Action Plan with clear outcomes, timescales and targets.
- Through ensuring representation on the 14 to 19 Young People's Group, support cross-district partnership, collaboration and the sharing of good practice in the implementation of the 14 to 19 Strategy.

- 
- In consultation with the Strategy Group and Learning Communities Board, and through representation on the 14 to 19 Young People's Group, ensure coherence and consistency with other strategic plans, including Learning and Skills Council West Yorkshire, Wakefield Metropolitan District Council, Connexions West Yorkshire, Wakefield District Learning Partnership.
  - Monitor the range of 14 to 19 developments within the Learning Community and evaluate the impact on young people.
  - Appoint a Chair annually and establish a planning and meeting cycle.
  - Assess potential funding and resource needs.
  - Ensure that curriculum provision is regularly reviewed and provides good value for money.



14-19

Education and Cultural Services  
Wakefield Metropolitan District Council  
County Hall  
Wakefield WF1 2QL



Learning and Skills Council West Yorkshire  
Mercury House  
4 Manchester Road  
Bradford BD5 0QL



Connexions West Yorkshire  
Parkview House  
Woodvale Office Park  
Woodvale Road  
Brighouse HD6 4AB



Wakefield District Learning Partnership  
c/o Wakefield College  
Margaret Street  
Wakefield WF1 2DH



For further information please contact:  
Senior Adviser, Transforming Secondary Education  
Wakefield Metropolitan District Council  
Room 234, County Hall, Wakefield WF1 2QL  
e-mail: [johnedwards@wakefield.gov.uk](mailto:johnedwards@wakefield.gov.uk)

© Wakefield Metropolitan District Council 2004

A large, stylized speech bubble with a yellow outline and a dark purple fill. Inside the bubble, the text '14-19' is written in a large, white, sans-serif font. The bubble has a tail pointing towards the bottom left.

Ref 53114  
Designed by WMDC Design & Print Services  
Telephone 01924 305776