

## Achieving Economic Well-being

This section looks ahead to the point where children and young people move on and out into the world. We want them to be happy, confident individuals, with the skills they need to cope with the challenges of the modern world. In fact the seeds of future employability are sown in our Children's Centres and primary schools – through the self-confidence and spirit of enterprise we hope to instil from the earliest age, long before we need to start providing careers education and advice. This is particularly so for those who come from less well-off backgrounds. We want everyone to reach their full potential, and we recognise that sometimes the employability skills of the parents are as important as those of the child.

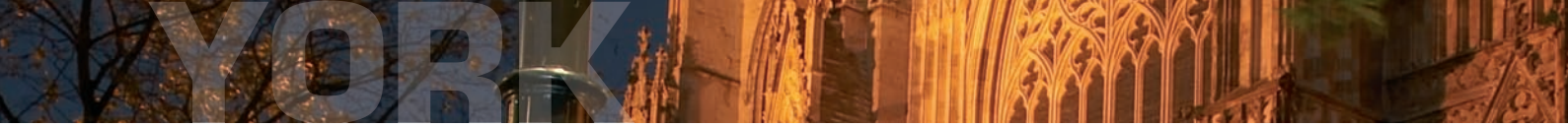


### Where are we now?

York continues to have high levels of participation by our young people in post-16 education, employment and training. Putting it the other way round, the number of young people aged 16 to 18 who are not in education, employment or training continues to be well below the national average at just over 4% (January 2009), a significant improvement on the previous year (5.9%). Whilst the economic downturn saw this figure at one stage increase to 7% (November 2008), the services and arrangements in place have proved effective in finding alternative education and training to offset job losses in the local economy.

However, we can still do more. The Local Authority will take over responsibility from the Learning and Skills Council in 2010 for ensuring the right type of provision for 16-19 year olds is





available. This means the right type of provision for our young people, for local employers and for the city. Key local partnerships involving schools, colleges, employers and work-based learning providers are working well together to ensure that the needs of young learners take precedence over the ambitions of individual organisations. In addition, we are working on a regional and sub-regional basis to ensure that wider opportunities for our learners and institutions are not missed.



We have made excellent progress in introducing the new diploma qualifications, with eight new courses available from 2009. As the choices get more complicated, it is even more important that we provide young people with high quality and impartial advice and guidance. We have developed a new website, [www.futures4meyork.com](http://www.futures4meyork.com), to assist with this. However, we also know that the best advice is provided by people face-to-face and we need to do more to help vulnerable young people, particularly those who are disabled, care leavers, or who have been in the past excluded from mainstream education, to find a path that is right for them. This will include working with colleges and other providers to make sure the right range of courses is available for students at all levels.

In 2008, York had 14% of its children and young people under 16 living in low income households against the national position of 20%. However, behind that overall figure are five wards where the figure is in excess of the national average. Our recent work to tackle child poverty in York has focused on our new Children's Centres which have deliberately been sited in the areas of greatest disadvantage, so that families can benefit from, for example, targeted benefit take-up and awareness campaigns. In addition, City of York Council is a Pathfinder authority for developing childcare provision for vulnerable 2 year olds and for the enhanced free childcare offer for 3 and 4 year olds. Both projects are on course to meet challenging targets and are making particularly good progress in providing for the most vulnerable children.

We recognise as well that to break generational patterns of poverty we need to provide more integrated and intensive support to those 16/17 year olds who find themselves homeless. The level of homeless 16/17 year olds in York is very low by national standards, but for the individuals concerned it can have a devastating impact.



As a result our priorities are:

## **18. Increase the quality and range of opportunities for young people to realise their dreams and ambitions by:**

- ▶ implementing our new plans for developing 14-19 education in the city, drawn up with the support of all York's secondary Headteachers, College Principals and work-based learning providers;
- ▶ making the most of the new opportunities that will be open to us when the Local Authority becomes responsible for commissioning all post-16 education in the city, in preparation for the rise in the participation age<sup>6</sup>;
- ▶ providing high quality resources for the delivery of the new diplomas, ensuring that employers and work-based learning providers are fully engaged and offering improved work-related learning opportunities and apprenticeships;
- ▶ focusing especially on progression opportunities for vulnerable groups and using our position as major employers to offer tailored work placements;
- ▶ developing new programmes to encourage young people to develop enterprise and employability skills from primary school onwards, in partnership with the North Yorkshire Business and Education Partnership (NYBEP) and with local employers.



## **19. Support children and young people through key transitions in their lives by:**

- ▶ introducing innovative ways to support young people through the major transitions in their educational journey, including when they start in nursery or equivalent classes, when they move on to primary school, secondary school, post-16 education, and then on into the adult world;
- ▶ providing targeted, multi-agency support for more vulnerable students, especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and disabled young people moving on into adulthood;
- ▶ ensuring that other transitions we manage are properly supported, especially when young people 'step down' from intensive support programmes or are transferred to the care of colleagues working within Adult Services;
- ▶ ensuring that comprehensive, impartial information, advice and guidance is available to children, young people, parents and carers, and that careers education is embedded in the school, college and training provider curriculum.

<sup>6</sup> The 'participation age', ie the age when young people will be required to be in full time education or training, will rise to 17 from 2013 and to 18 from 2015.

## 20. Further reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training by:

“Encourage entrepreneurship.”

- ▶ improving our ability to identify, track and support those young people who are at risk of falling into this category;
- ▶ providing individual support packages that meet both the learning and emotional needs of this group of learners, recognising that they are all individuals;
- ▶ developing innovative, multi-agency programmes that will appeal to all young people who find it difficult to enter education, employment or training;
- ▶ ensuring employers are engaged in helping to design and support the delivery of innovative programmes that offer supportive employment opportunities for vulnerable young people.

## 21. Reduce child poverty and homelessness by:

- ▶ developing a range of initiatives to address child poverty that reflect Government policy and are consistent with York’s overarching anti-poverty work;
- ▶ working with the Economic Development Board and the partnerships concerned with the range of York’s housing stock to ensure the needs of children and young people are recognised;
- ▶ targeting support through the ‘Making Safe’ scheme that recognises the link between domestic abuse and homelessness;
- ▶ making the most of the resources and opportunities at our Children’s Centres, ensuring that York’s most vulnerable families have regular contact from them;
- ▶ running targeted benefit take-up and awareness campaigns in partnership with Jobcentre Plus;
- ▶ supporting schools in developing family learning;
- ▶ improving the quality and range of childcare provision and after school activities, especially for young parents, and ensuring that it is affordable and accessible;
- ▶ preventing long term youth homelessness, especially amongst care leavers or those who have suffered or witnessed domestic abuse, through innovative, joint working with colleagues in Adult Services and the voluntary sector.

## How will we know we are making a difference?

The YorOK partnership collects a wide range of information about the extent to which children and young people achieve economic well-being. As we make progress against the priorities set out above, we would expect to see improvements in:

- ▶ narrowing the gap between children in areas of disadvantage and their peers at age 19,
- ▶ 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training,
- ▶ children living in poverty,
- ▶ young people going into higher education,
- ▶ young people who are homeless.

All quotations with a yellow border are from children and young people across the City