



# **Education and Skills Strategy**

**A partnership framework for  
Staffordshire**



# Education and Skills Strategy: a partnership framework for Staffordshire

## Foreword

*Every day, 23 babies are born to families across Staffordshire.*

*A new born baby is a precious thing. That baby, as it takes its first few breaths, has its whole life ahead of it. Families are full of joy, hope and aspiration. As this little person grows to become a toddler and pre-schooler, their heads are full of creativity and ambition.*

*Whatever their background, they crave new experiences and soak up information like sponges. Whether they live in a remote village in the Moorlands or a busy estate in one of our towns, it's our job to embrace this enthusiasm whilst they are young, help them to learn and give them the best possible start.*

*When they're at school or college, they will continue to grow and learn. It's our responsibility to support them and guide them in the choices they make. It's up to us to create opportunities for them to get the knowledge and skills they need for a great job, a rewarding career and the best shot at life.*

*As they become parents themselves, our children will have ambition and aspiration for their families and communities, making Staffordshire a great place to live for everyone.*

*This is what we want for our children, this is what we want for all children and young people and we're determined to work together to make it happen.*





## 1. Introduction

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- 1.1. This is a partnership framework for education and skills providers, partners and stakeholders across Staffordshire.
- 1.2. It reflects our shared ambition to improve the life chances and opportunities for Staffordshire's children and young people.
- 1.3. This framework will steer our combined efforts and resources. Through working together, we know that we can make a real difference to the life chances of children and young people and to Staffordshire's future economy, providing we collectively aspire to help everyone to succeed in their education and ensure that no one is left behind.
- 1.4. This framework is based on education and skills providers working together as partners and leaders of the education landscape.
- 1.5. Within a complex and continually-changing education and skills landscape, there is a need for a shared vision with an agreed set of partnership principles and priorities.
- 1.6. This partnership framework seeks to:
  - *establish a Staffordshire-wide education culture based on a clear moral purpose where the conditions are such that providers are prepared to challenge and support each other*
  - *enable decisions to be made in partnership that are in the collective interest of every learner in Staffordshire.*
- 1.7. Each partner plays a part in providing the opportunities for children and young people to get the best start in life, to acquire the knowledge and skills they need for a great job, a rewarding career and to be happy and healthy.

- 1.8. This is an overarching framework for Staffordshire under which other education and skill-based strategies and approaches are developed and implemented.
- 1.9. In the current economic climate, where partners and providers are under increasing financial pressure, working together within the resources available will be a more efficient and effective way to achieve our shared vision.

## 2. Current Context

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- 2.1. In a county as big as Staffordshire, we have a flourishing and diverse population of children and young people. There are around 170,000 children: almost 12,000 have an ethnic minority background and around 150 languages are spoken. Over 80% of the county is classified as rural but just under 1 in 4 of the population live in rural areas. Some parts of the county are in the top 20% of most affluent areas in the UK whilst others are in the 20% most deprived, but almost all consider Staffordshire as a safe place to live.
- 2.2. The education landscape is changing nationally and locally. In Staffordshire there is a diverse mix and sizes of institutions providing opportunities from early years through to adulthood, from individual childminders who may be caring for just a few children to universities with 15,000 students.
- 2.3. Existing networks are being remodelled, new partnerships are evolving, and roles and responsibilities are changing. Clearly setting out how we will all work together will enable us to keep a clear focus on providing the very best outcomes for Staffordshire's learners, in an outcomes-focused and highly inclusive environment.
- 2.4. This aspiration can only be delivered through a shared sense of moral purpose and responsibility across the education landscape in Staffordshire. Therefore, the ability to articulate our shared moral purpose and the need for effective system-wide collaboration to improve outcomes and realise our vision will be key.





### 3. Vision and Principles

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- 3.1. This vision and underpinning principles describe our collective ambition and aspirations for education and skills in Staffordshire. We believe that the county of Staffordshire is a great place to grow up and live. Our children and young people deserve the best possible education to prepare them for their futures lives. Our shared aspiration is that Staffordshire should be one of the best places in England to access education and skills.

#### Vision for Education and Skills for Staffordshire

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- 3.2. The vision encompasses education and skills from birth to leaving formal education and entering adulthood and will require leaders across the sector to work collectively to achieve it.

- 3.3. The vision is that:

***Every Staffordshire child receives the best possible education and is equipped with the learning, skills, aspirations and opportunities they need to continue lifelong learning and forge a successful career, with fulfilled healthy lives, as responsible adults.***

#### Principles for Education and Skills for Staffordshire

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- 3.4. There are three principles that underpin how we can achieve our Vision and these are:

***Principle 1: A sustainable education and skills landscape with leadership that is built on morals, ethics and trust, is underpinned by transparency and is accountable for the outcomes for all Staffordshire learners***

***Principle 2: All children get the best start in life from birth, helping children build strong foundations so they can continue to grow, learn, enjoy and succeed in education.***

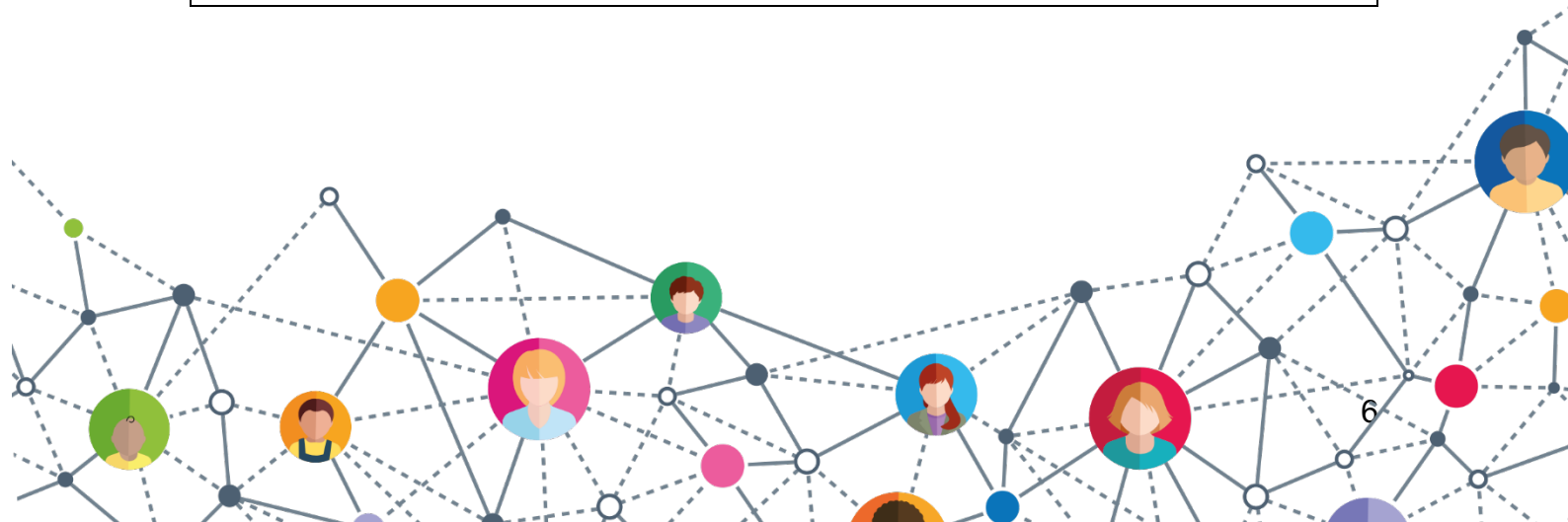
***Principle 3: Every child and young person has an equal opportunity to achieve and is equipped with the values, skills and knowledge necessary to progress into adulthood with a fulfilled life, to build their rewarding career and to continue their learning journey.***

***Principle 1: A sustainable education and skills landscape with leadership that is built on morals, ethics and trust, is underpinned by transparency and is accountable for the outcomes for all Staffordshire learners***

- 3.5. We need system leaders to engage and provide positive leadership whilst being accountable for institutional outcomes and holding others to account.
- 3.6. Through partnerships, alliances and networks we will avoid working in isolation and continue to build new, collaborative ways of working effectively together to deliver our shared vision. The system will be self-supporting, sustainable and self-improving and will learn from the best people, institutions and evidence.
- 3.7. Through partnership working to deliver this vision, we will strive to improve life chances and opportunities for learners in Staffordshire.

***Principle 2: All children get the best start in life from birth, helping children build strong foundations so they can continue to grow, learn and succeed in education.***

- 3.8. The relationship between parents, their children and providers is critical for children to grow, learn and succeed. They share a responsibility to ensure a positive and productive relationship.
- 3.9. We know that what happens at home is a major influence on a child's development. We want to better support parents and carers to encourage early years learning by providing them with the right information and tools, through formal and informal learning.
- 3.10. Early education plays an essential role in childhood development, both socially and academically. We want to ensure that children from all backgrounds can access high quality early years education that will put them in the best position to thrive and learn when reaching school age.





***Principle 3: Every child and young person has an equal opportunity to achieve and is equipped with the values, skills and knowledge necessary to progress into adulthood with a fulfilled life, to build their rewarding career and to continue their learning journey.***

- 3.11. Staffordshire's education and skills system will be the passport to opportunity for our children and young people. We want to ensure that all our children and young people are able participate in this system and take advantage of the opportunities education can offer them.
- 3.12. Access to great teaching and learning is key to ensuring that all children have an equal chance of success based on talent and potential, regardless of their background, disadvantage or vulnerability.
- 3.13. Our children's core literacy and numerical skills, which provide the foundation for successful adulthood and a rewarding career, will be enriched by a creative, vibrant and appropriate curriculum. This will ensure that every child has the opportunity to develop their skills in a number of areas.
- 3.14. Parents and carers are fundamental in helping to guide a child's talents and ambition in building a career. Parents need the right information, advice and guidance to help them support their child to choose their best route, whether technical, academic or an apprenticeship. This also means ensuring that young people are equipped with the right attitudes, behaviours and skills necessary for the world of work.
- 3.15. We recognise the importance of learning and development at home, through education and within the workplace because people who have a propensity to learn make good role models, become successful employees and employers, and make a positive contribution to Staffordshire.
- 3.16. Staffordshire is a locality that prides itself on a culture of lifelong learning and healthy living, which is not only good for our children and young people it also makes economic sense, as it is good for productivity and the Staffordshire economy.



## 4. Governance and Structures

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The current educational landscape is characterised by multiple networks, alliances and overlapping partnerships, with their own internal governance and accountabilities. Within this context we recognise the importance of bringing leaders together to connect best practice and facilitate partnerships. This will enable all of us in Staffordshire to work towards shared strategic principles to improve outcomes and children's and young people's life chances.

### Individual Providers

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- 4.1. We need and expect all those who are part of the education and skills system to understand their responsibility and accountability to achieve the outcomes and vision as set out within this partnership framework.

Individual provider



- 4.2. We want individual providers to achieve the best outcomes possible for their learners. These local institutions have their roots in local communities and are best placed to help inspire parents to have high aspiration for their children. Local institutions can encourage parents to help their child achieve the best outcomes inspire them to build a rewarding career, have the right attitude for the world of work and be active citizens within the community with a love of learning.

### Locality or sector clusters

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- 4.3. We recognise that there are existing and developing locality structures, relationships and networks in place. These include early years providers, training providers, employers, mainstream schools, Further Education providers, special education specialists and Pupil Referral Units. We rely on these to continue to address the needs of individuals, local settings and providers, whilst reflecting Staffordshire's ambition, vision and principles.

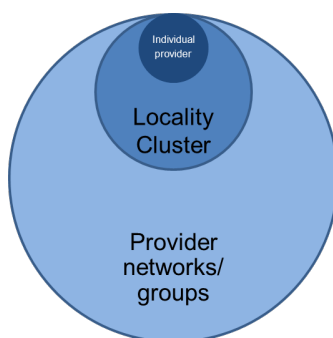




## Provider networks and local groups

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- 4.4. These networks and groups are necessary to provide the co-ordination of the partnership framework across a local area and the link with existing district, local and county wide groups. The established groups and networks include Early Years providers, training providers, employers, mainstream schools, FE, special schools and PRUs as well as district councils and providers of social care. These networks are continuing to develop and implement projects and strategies that improve the education, SEND support and health and wellbeing across Staffordshire.



## Education and Skills Strategic Group for Staffordshire

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- 4.5. The Education and Skills Strategic Group for Staffordshire (see Appendix 1) will be responsible for the Education and Skills partnership framework, as an overarching strategy.

