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**REPORT ON PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING UP TO 18 YEARS**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on full participation in education and training up to age 18, in line with the requirements of the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA), to look at the impact locally and to detail the work being undertaken to meet the local authority's responsibilities.

**Summary**

2. This report outlines the requirements of RPA, the current position regarding participation and the actions being undertaken to ensure that the local authority meets its requirements.
3. The Education and Skills Act (2008) placed a duty on all young people to participate in education and training until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
4. The act also places a duty on local authorities to 'promote the effective participation in education and training of all 16 and 17 year olds resident in their area'.
5. Participation in Darlington is increasing and is above the national average, however, NEETs figures remain relatively high but have reduced over the last few years.

**Recommendation**

6. It is recommended that Children and Young People Scrutiny:-
  - (a) note the content of the report and the actions being undertaken.
  - (b) consider ceasing this annual report now that RPA is embedded. Participation in education and training and NEET data will continue to be reported as part of the normal Children's Services performance indicators.

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**Director of Children and Adult Services**

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S17 Crime and Disorder	Increased engagement in education and training could have a positive impact on crime and disorder.
Health and Well Being	Increased engagement in education and training could have a positive impact on health and well-being.
Carbon Impact	There are no issues this report needs to address.
Diversity	There are no issues this report needs to address.
Wards Affected	This report does not impact on a particular ward, but Darlington as a whole.
Groups Affected	16 and 17 years olds and any employers of those young people.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	Relevant to the education and skills outcomes of the sustainable community strategy.
Efficiency	This report does not identify any efficiency savings.

## MAIN REPORT

### Background

7. From summer 2013, young people were required to continue in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turned 17 and from 2015 until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. This doesn't necessarily mean staying on in school. Young people are able to choose how they participate post 16, which could be through:-
  - (a) Full-time education such as school, college, other training provider or home-education (a minimum of 540 hours per year).
  - (b) An Apprenticeship.
  - (c) Part-time education or training if they are employed, self-employed or volunteering for 20 hours or more a week.
8. The Education and Skills Act places duties on local authorities, in relation to RPA, who are required to:-
  - (a) promote the effective participation in education or training of all 16 and 17 year olds resident in their area; and
  - (b) make arrangements to identify young people resident in their area who are not participating.
9. These complement the existing duties to:-
  - (a) Secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all 16-19 year olds.
  - (b) Encourage, enable and assist young people to participate.
  - (c) Put processes in place to deliver the 'September Guarantee' and to track young people's participation. Local authorities are supported by a duty on learning providers to notify them when a young person leaves learning.

### Participation Data

10. The Department for Education publishes details of local authority participation levels for March, June and December each year. The latest national data (June 2016) shows that in Darlington:-
  - (a) 94.6% (88.6% - *June 2013*) of 16 year olds participated in education or training, above the North East average of 94.0% and the national average of 94.2%. Provisional January 2017 data shows an increase to 95.5%.

(b) 91.2% (81.2% - June 2013) of 17 year olds participated in education or training, above the North East average of 89.5% and the national average of 87.9%. Provisional January 2017 data shows a slight drop down to 90.1%. This may be due to a recent delay in receiving starter/leaver information that has now been resolved.

11. This means that 2,267 (92.9%) Darlington resident 16 and 17 year olds continued to participate in education and training out of a cohort of 2,440 (June 2016 data), up 2.7% against the June 2015 figure. Provisional January 2017 data has the Darlington figure slightly down at 92.7%.
12. Provisional data for January 2017 shows that 95.5% of 16 year olds and 90.1% of 17 year olds were participating. The data is broken down as follows:

<b>RPA Participation: Jan 17 (Nat. Ave. in Brackets)</b>	<b>16 year olds</b>	<b>17 year olds</b>
Cohort	1,137	1,215
Participating	95.5% (95.3%)	90.1% (89.2%)
Working Towards Participation	0.4% (0.2%)	0.4% (0.2%)
Temporary Break from Learning	0.6% (0.3%)	0.8% (0.7%)
Not Known to be participating or taking a temporary break from learning	3.6% (3.8%)	6.8% (8.7%)
Percentage Adjusted NEET	3.7% (2.0%)	4.9% (3.5%)
Number of Young People NEET	42	59

13. There are a number of issues that impact on full participation. These include:-
- (a) There has been no actual change to the statutory school age
  - (b) The local authority has no enforcement rights where young people fail to participate
  - (c) The local authority has no enforcement rights where employers fail to ensure that young people they employ are participating in part-time education or training
  - (d) The fact that some young people go into employment without training
  - (e) A reduction in the number of training providers and the training offer for the most hard to reach young people
  - (f) The high youth unemployment rate
14. In addition there is a small percentage of young people who may have a 'reasonable reason' for non-participation. This category could include those medically ill, in final stages of pregnancy, in custody etc.
15. To support schools in increasing participation the DFE now publishes annual destination data for all school leavers. The latest data published in January 2017, for 2013/14 KS4 leavers, shows that in 2014/15 93% of all Darlington school leavers went into a sustained education, employment or training placement (national average 94%). However this varies across schools:

<b>School</b>	<b>Sustained Destination (2014/15)</b>
Carmel	96%
Hummersknott	95%
Longfield	95%
Hurworth	93%
St Aidan's	93%
Beaumont Hill Academy	91%
Wyvern Academy (DSMS)	87%
Haughton	84%
<b>Darlington overall</b>	<b>93%</b>
<b>England overall</b>	<b>94%</b>

## Responsibilities

16. This promotion of RPA sits alongside existing work to increase participation (and skills levels) that is being undertaken by the local authority, schools, post 16 providers and other partners. This includes the work of:-
- (a) The Council's 11-19 Learning and Skills Team who lead on RPA and the statutory duty to ensure there is sufficient high quality education and training available, as well as acting as the link between the local authority, the 11-19 Partnership and post 16 providers.
  - (b) The Early Intervention Teams who have responsibility for engaging those at risk of becoming NEET, those young people who are not participating and for co-ordinating the September guarantee (ensuring the offer of a place in education or training for 16 and 17 years olds).
  - (c) The Economic Regeneration Team and their work around the skills and employment agenda, particularly through Foundation for Jobs.
  - (d) Providers to facilitate early identification of young people at risk of disengaging and quicker reporting of those who drop out of provision.
  - (e) Schools to promote participation in education and training post 16 and provide good quality appropriate careers guidance.
17. Those listed above work closely with other teams and external partners to encourage young people to participate in education and training and develop their understanding of local skills needs.
18. A Full Participation Strategy is produced bi-annually along with an Action Plan in conjunction with the 11-19 Partnership (The last update was in 2016). The action plan details the strategy outcomes, actions and evidences impact. These actions include:
- Encouraging improvements in careers education and better use of labour market information

- Fully utilising the Foundation for Jobs offer
- Promoting STEM opportunities
- Securing external funding to support the most hard to reach into education and training
- Promoting apprenticeship opportunities

## NEET Analysis

19. From September 2016 the DFE relaxed the requirements on the tracking of young people by local authorities. Previously the requirement has been for local authorities to track young people up to their 20<sup>th</sup> birthday, however, this replicated some of the work undertaken by Job Centre Plus. The new requirement only requires local authorities to monitor young people up to the end of the academic year in which they have their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
20. The first set of data under the new methodology is not due until May 2017. However provisional data shows the three month average NEET percentage in Darlington as 4.2%, up slightly from 4.0% in 2015/16. This equates to roughly five young people. The England average remained static at 2.7%, whilst the North East average went up from 3.9% to 4.0%.
21. Darlington's 'not known' average went up slightly from 0.2% to 0.4%, again around five young people. However, it is still below the North East average of 1.4% and well below the England average of 4%.
22. Darlington has a relatively high percentage of young people going into employment without training – 2.0% in Darlington compared with a North East average of 1.6% and a national average of 1.5%. These young people are not counted in the participation figures under the definition of RPA.
23. In January 2017 the Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimant rate (previous years data in brackets) for 18-24 year olds in Darlington was 6.4% (5.2%) or 500 young people, over double the GB average of 2.6 (2.7%) and much higher than the Darlington claimant rate of 3.5% (3.0%) for 16-64 year olds.
24. YEI Paragraph – The Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) was launched in in the middle of 2016 and runs until the end of July 2018. YEI supports 16-29 year olds living in Tees Valley into education, employment and training. The project has about 25 delivery partners across the Tees Valley and is managed by the five local authorities, with Hartlepool as the lead. Since the start of the project the YEI has supported 220 young people in Darlington to improve their employability skills.

## Conclusion

25. Participation of 16 and 17 year olds is rising and is above the England average. NEET remain figures are relatively high compared with the England average but has decreased overall in the last few years.
26. There remains a core of young people, often with complex social needs and a history of poor engagement in education, who continue not to participate in further education or training despite the potential economic benefits. To continue to increase levels of engagement is becoming more difficult due to the levels of support required and the absence of any sanctions on young people to engage.
27. The requirement to participate in education or training up to age 18 is now fully embedded with the majority of young people meeting the duty.