

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
1 July 2019

LEARNING & SKILLS ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members with an update on the performance of the Learning & Skills Service for academic year 2017/18.

Summary

2. The Learning & Skills service continues to perform well with a 'Good' Ofsted grade whilst supporting some of the most vulnerable adults, young people and families in Darlington.
3. The shift of provision to better align with local priorities has impacted on the performance of the service due to the change in demographic of the learners. The service has recognised this and is putting in place further checks and controls to ensure that the service continues to perform at a high level.
4. There will be some challenges in 2019/20 as we move to the devolution of the Adult Education Budget and the ongoing challenges of apprenticeship funding.

Recommendation

5. It is recommended that Members note the contents of the report

Reasons

6. To give Scrutiny Members oversight and knowledge of this externally funded service.

Suzanne Joyner
Director of Children and Adult Services

Background papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Paul Richardson, Head of Skills and Employability - Extension 6015

S17 Crime and Disorder	This report supports the Council's Crime and Disorder responsibilities, young people engaged in learning are less likely to engage in anti-social behaviour
Health and Well Being	This report supports performance improvement relating to improving the health and wellbeing of residents
Sustainability	This report supports the Council's sustainability responsibilities
Diversity	This report supports the promotion of diversity
Wards Affected	This report supports performance improvement across all Wards
Groups Affected	This report supports performance improvement which benefits all groups
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	This report contributes to the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) by involving Members in the scrutiny of performance relating to the delivery of key outcomes
Efficiency	Scrutiny of performance is integral to optimising outcomes.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report may have an impact on their education and future employment.

MAIN REPORT

The Learning & Skills Service

The Learning & Skills Service is the external training arm of the Council and is funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to provide learning and skills provision for the local community. The service has been an Ofsted 'Good' provider since 2004.

The service provides a range of training from Pre-Entry Level to Level 5, including:

- 16-18 study programme and diploma courses
- Adult education, including Functional Skills such as English, maths and ICT
- Community Learning
- Family Learning and Intensive Support
- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
- Apprenticeships
- Access to HE
- 14-16 alternative education

Learning & Skills supports some of the most disadvantaged young people and adults in Darlington and contributes to the priorities of both the Children and Young People's Plan and the sustainable community strategy; One Darlington: Perfectly Placed. Often the provision delivered provides a stepping stone to those taking their first steps back into learning and a number of past learners have moved on to higher level learning at Darlington College or other providers.

Teaching takes places across three main sites; the Coleridge Centre, Tubwell Row and the units at Lingfield Way, as well as in a number of school and community settings.

Apprenticeship provision includes Health and Social Care, Business Administration, Motor Vehicle, Site Joinery and Leadership and Management.

Learner Numbers - In 2017/18 the service supported 1,268 learners across a wide range of programmes, including:

- 39 16-18 year olds
- 1,143 people on adult and community learning
- 61 apprentices
- 25 14-16 year olds on alternative provision

Funding - The overall funding allocation from the ESFA for the Learning & Skills Service in 2017 - 18 was £907,345. This was split as follows:

- 16-18 Study Programme: £260,480
- ASB Classroom: £182,626
- 19+ Apprenticeships: £40,359
- 16 – 18 Apprenticeships: £149,525
- Community Learning £273,637
- ALL Bursary £718

In addition the service drew down funding for delivering apprenticeships through the levy. In 2017/18 this amounted to £122,723.

Adult Education Devolution – From the start of academic year 2019/20 the Adult Education Budget will be devolved to the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA), this funding is to support the adult learning provision for Tees Valley residents. The service’s allocation for 2019/20 is similar to what it received previously from the ESFA, the service has also received a small allocation from the ESFA to support non Tees Valley learners.

Apprenticeship Levy – The Learning & Skills service supports the Council to deliver the apprenticeship levy and offers a range of apprenticeship provision to meet the training needs of Council staff and other large employers.

Non-Levy Apprenticeship provision – The service also delivers apprenticeship training to SMEs who are not subject to the apprenticeship levy. This is delivered through a sub-contract on behalf of Middlesbrough Council who are the prime provider. The service aims to bid for it’s own non-levy allocation at the next opportunity.

Qualification Levels in Darlington - It should be noted that national data from NOMIS shows that whilst Darlington residents are better qualified than the North East average, Darlington remains below the national average at almost every level. In particular the percentage of residents with no qualifications (9.0%) is 1.2% above the national average (7.8%). This means that the first steps and basic skills provision provided by the service is as equally important as the higher level skills.

Qualifications (Jan 2018-Dec 2018)

	Darlington	North East	Great Britain
	(%)	(%)	(%)
NVQ4 And Above	33.0	31.1	39.3
NVQ3 And Above	55.9	51.9	57.8
NVQ2 And Above	73.7	73.0	74.9
NVQ1 And Above	83.9	84.7	85.4
Other Qualifications	7.1	5.8	6.8
No Qualifications	9.0	9.5	7.8

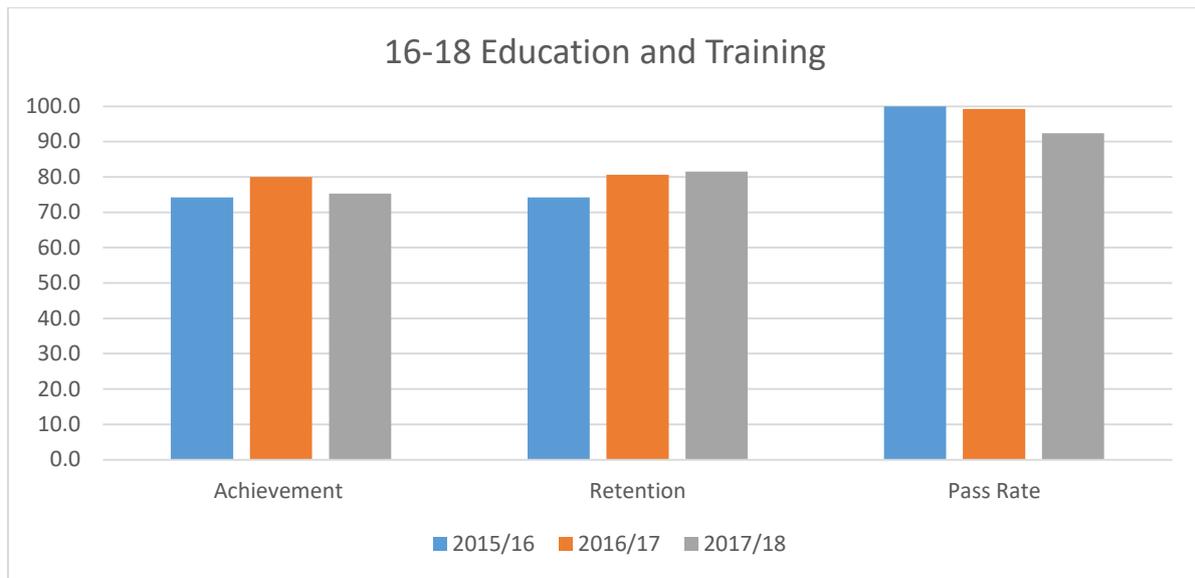
Performance

2017/18 Achievement Rates - The table below shows the 2017/18 achievement rate by provision type compared with the national benchmark. A further breakdown is given in the tables below.

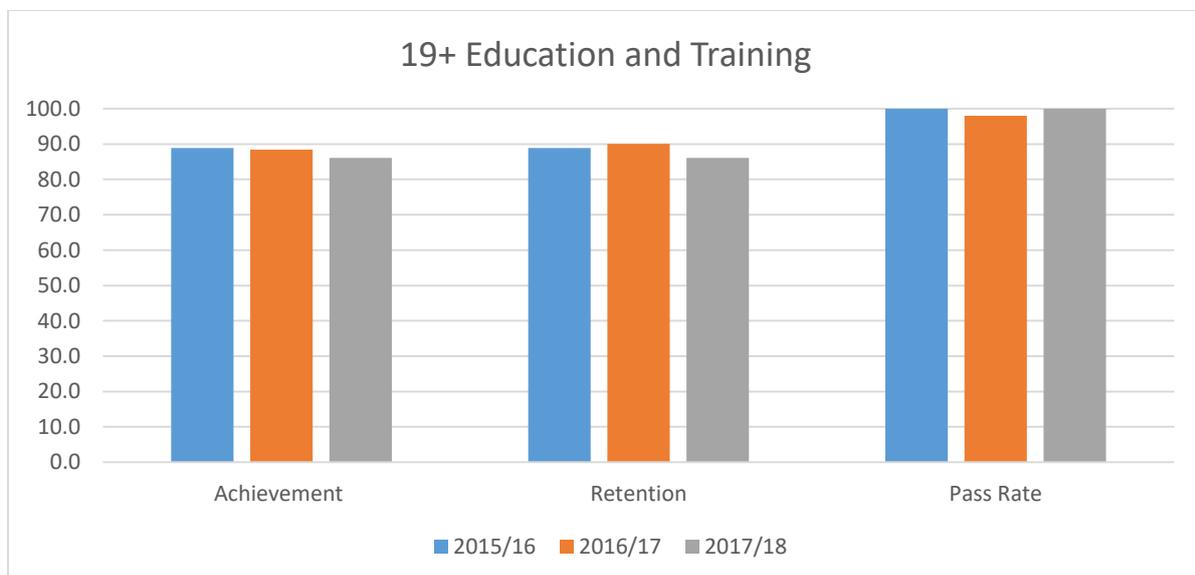
Provision Type	Learning & Skills Overall Achievement Rate	National Provider Type Overall Achievement Rate
16-18	75.3%	82.0%
Adult Education	86.1%	86.2%
Community Learning	97.8%	No comparator
Apprenticeships	82.4%	75.5%

The achievement rate percentage is calculated by multiplying the retention rate (the percentage of learners who completed their course) by the pass rate (the percentage of learners who completed the course and passed).

The 16-18 achievement rate dropped between 2016/17 and 2017/18 this was due to a continued push on retaining the most vulnerable young people to prevent them going NEET (not in education, employment or training), unfortunately this resulted in a drop in the pass rates for that group. Please note that due to the decline in the number of providers in Darlington supporting the vulnerable 16-18 year olds there are now only two main providers Darlington Borough Council and Darlington College. The service often enrolls young people who have left Darlington College, for whatever reason, or do not feel able to cope in a large college setting.



The pass rate for 19+ education and training continues to remain high, however as the service increases delivery of Functional Skills provision (English, maths and ICT) and ESOL in line with TVCA priorities this is having an impact on retention, as this cohort often have other social issues they are dealing with, however where the service does retain these learners they are very good at getting the learners through the qualification with a 100% pass rate in 2017/18.



Apprenticeship achievement rates at 82.4% remain well above the national average of 75.5% and the service continues to have a good reputation with employers.

Learner Satisfaction - All learners are encouraged to complete a learner satisfaction and in 2017/18 91.62% rated the service as 'Good' or above

Learner Progression - Learners are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment and have attained relevant qualifications. A high proportion of learners progress to further/higher education, employment or training at a level suitable to meet appropriate career plans. In 2017/18:

- 73% of Apprenticeship leavers progressed to FE, employment, Advanced Apprenticeships or university
- 74% of Study Programme learners progressed to FE, Apprenticeships or employment
- 77% of Adult Learners sampled progressed to further learning or employment

Overall, the Service delivers considerable added value to both individual learners, the Council and other agencies. The diagram below demonstrates the additional benefits the service brings.

Impact of Learning & Skills

 Improved adult skills, literacy & numeracy	 Greater community engagement	 Enhanced workforce development inc. CPD, bespoke training and Apprenticeships	 Better parenting skills, resilience and independence	 Increased participation of young people and adults	 More volunteering, peer support and community integration
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Learning & Skills Provision							
14-16 Alternative Education	16-18 Education & Training	Apprenticeships	Adult Learning	Community Learning	Family Learning	Intensive Support	Access to HE

 Fewer skills gaps	 Less isolation of vulnerable groups. e.g. refugees, elderly residents and those with learning difficulties & disabilities	 Lower cost of staff development at a high quality and bespoke to DBC	 Less dependency on services. e.g. domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse and homelessness	 Fewer number of young people and adults who are not economically active. Reduced cost of NEETs. Less anti-social behaviour.
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Future Challenges

The Adult Education makes up a significant percentage of the service's income and devolution of that funding to TVCA will present a new challenge. In the first year (2019/20) we expect to see little change but beyond that the expectation is that the provision will be more aligned with the skills needs of the Tees Valley, this includes first steps provision. The service is already moving in this direction with a shift from leisure type courses to more basic skills provision and will continue to ensure it is responding to TVCA priorities whilst continuing to meet the needs of Darlington residents. This may mean moving some of the learning for leisure type provision to full cost or supporting the establishment of learning groups, as has already happened with what was previously a watercolours class.

The introduction of the Apprenticeship levy has presented some challenges with the money moving from training providers to employers and nationally apprenticeship numbers has fallen as large employers had attempted to manage their levy spend. However, the service continues to work with employers to encourage apprenticeship take up and is looking to further grow the provision.