

**Lancashire Education Strategy**  
**2022-2025**

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## Foreword



**Cabinet Member for Education and Skills – County Councillor Jayne Rear**

### **Education Strategy Mission Statement**

*In Lancashire, we have high aspirations for all our children and young people, whatever their starting point. Access to a quality learning pathway from childhood through to adulthood enabling them to thrive and develop the life skills that will support them into a productive and happy adulthood is at the root of our council ambition to ensure that children of all abilities do well in our schools and colleges gaining important skills and expertise for life*

**Our  
vision**

**Children, young people and their families are safe, healthy and achieve their full potential.**

*Lancashire Children, Young People and Families Partnership Vision*

## Introduction

Lancashire has much to celebrate in terms of educational outcomes. Year on year at all age phases Lancashire performs in line with national comparators. This means that most children do well academically in our Lancashire schools and settings. By settings we mean nursery education, specialist colleges etc.

Our aspiration is high for all children and young people, regardless of their starting point and, as a large and diverse county, we know that some children do much better than others and from different starting points. This differential of experience underpins the purpose of this Education Strategy and it is also articulated clearly within the Children and Young People's Strategic Board vision where the emphasis is on '**All children achieving their full potential**'.

The ambition of the Education Strategy is to support integration across services so that barriers to learning can be overcome, particularly for those vulnerable groups including those eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), Children In Need (CiN), children with a Care Plan (CP), and Children Looked After (CLA), as well as those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) support and those with an Education Health and Care plan (EHCP). This will be realised through the implementation of the Team around the School and Settings model that will facilitate a partnership response to persistent issues that are preventing children and young people from achieving their full potential.

The vision of the County Council is that we are helping to make Lancashire the best place to live, work, visit and prosper.

## Context

Since the Academy Act in 2010, the educational landscape has significantly altered, creating a mixed market economy of schools with different status and different levels of autonomy. The ambition of the current Government remains that all schools will become academies by the end of the current parliamentary term.

With a growing number of schools either converting to academy status or converting because of an inspection that has judged them to have serious weaknesses or to require special measures, the role of the Local Authority has therefore changed. Despite these changes, there are still statutory duties set out within the Education Act that the Local Authority must do, and these are explained more fully further in 'why we need a strategy' section.

It is important to note, that out of the 152 Local Authorities in England, Lancashire retains the highest number of Local Authority maintained schools. Therefore, in Lancashire, the need for a coherent vision that reaches out to all schools for education is even more important as more of our schools convert to academy status by joining or becoming Multi Academy Trusts (MATs). It is therefore important that the Local Authority works together with Chief Executives of MATs to deliver this strategy.

In October 2021, there are 175,701 pupils at 628 schools. 56 of these schools are academies and 572 are maintained by Lancashire County Council. In addition, there are a further 2386 children attending nursery schools. The breakdown of the 175,701 is set out below:

- 3,210 (69%) two year olds benefitted from funded early education with 98% in good or outstanding provision.
- 27,153 (98%) three and four year olds benefitted from some funded early education with 96% in good or outstanding provision.
- 101,399 children attended primary schools.
- 67,694 children attended secondary schools.
- 3,069 attended special schools.
- 906 pupils attended pupil referral units.
- 6,230 (3.4%) of children and young people had Education Health and Care Plans and 19,078 (10.3%) Special Educational Needs (SEN) Support.
- 26,338 young people aged 16-19 from Lancashire are engaged in Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) funded post-16 education and training across 393 post-16 providers (8 colleges, 2 Foundation Learning providers, 6 maintained school sixth forms and 10 academies with sixth forms).
- 13.7% of children attending primary school and 9% of children attending secondary school have English as a second language.
- 79% of school-age pupils are White British, 7.7% of Pakistani Heritage, 2.2% Indian, 0.9% of Bangladeshi Heritage, with a large majority of ethnic minority pupils attending schools in Pendle, Preston, Hyndburn and Burnley.

- 37,367 children and young people were identified as disadvantaged (21.3%), from 11.9% in the Ribble Valley to 31.2% in Burnley.

Education outcome data is only available for 2018/19 due to the pandemic. Implementation plans will demonstrate the starting position and targets for improvement for all outcome measures. These will be reviewed as part of the annual report.

There are significant variations in needs and outcomes for children and young people across Lancashire. The 2019 indices of multiple deprivation by District Council area provide an illustration of the diversity of Lancashire. We therefore need to take a differentiated approach in delivering the Education Strategy across Lancashire.

Local Authority District name (2019)	IMD - Rank of average rank out of 317	Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Decile (where 1 is most deprived 10% of LSOAs)
Burnley	11	1
Chorley	192	7
Fylde	198	7
Hyndburn	18	1
Lancaster	112	4
Pendle	36	2
Preston	46	2
Ribble Valley	282	9
Rosendale	91	3
South Ribble	210	7
West Lancashire	178	6
Wyre	147	5

The impact of the pandemic has exacerbated this divide, with a 15% increase in the referrals for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) over the last 12 months and a national surge in mental health issues. For this reason, the Education Strategy is even more important to ensure that there is a collaborative, partnership response to enable all children and young people to access an educational pathway that meets their needs.

The Education Improvement service delivers across all key phases, also providing Early Years support, traded Continuing Professional Development and leadership development, and services to Governors. The Education Improvement service also includes the headteacher for the virtual school, pupil access, attendance, elective home education and children missing education support.

Through 2020 the focus of the service shifted from a Lancashire focussed approach to a more targeted approach based on need and this will be reflected in the delivery plan. Consultation with all schools and school governors to support this new way of

working took place in March 2020 but the implementation was delayed during the Covid pandemic. Despite this, services including: Designated Clinical Officers, Primary Mental Health workers and school nursing as well as the internal leads from the Inclusion Service and Children and Family Wellbeing service have been identified for each of the 5 Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) footprints so that there has been a more coordinated response to meeting need during the pandemic. We use the integrated care partnership footprint as a viable and understandable unit of partnership.

This work across partners contributed to a higher proportion of vulnerable children remaining in school during lockdown. A specialist 'Monitoring and Intervention Team' is working with schools causing concern to drive improvements in performance, leadership and management, and support those in financial difficulties as defined by the Department for Education's Schools Causing Concern guidance.

## Our Purpose

There are key elements that the Local Authority **has to do** with regard to education and these are set out within The Education Act. In summary, the statutory duties can be summarised under three key headings:

**Access** – this relates to our 'sufficiency duty' where all children of statutory school age are entitled to education. This duty relates not only to schools but also to the universal early years entitlements offer for all 3- and 4-year olds and our duty to have sufficient places for disadvantaged 2-year-olds and the 3 and 4-year-old extended 15 hours for working parents. What this means is, the Local Authority must ensure that there are sufficient childcare and school places for all children meeting these criteria. This duty also relates to special school places and access to alternative provision for children who either for medical or behavioural reasons are unable to access full-time education at times.

**Quality** – the Local Authority has a duty to drive school improvement so that every school is a 'good' school. In this way, the Local Authority is referred to as the 'champion of the learner'. The Local Authority also has a statutory duty to intervene where maintained schools are not performing, this means providing support to schools that are judged by Ofsted to be in 'special measures' or have 'serious weaknesses'. In Lancashire, there is a mixed economy of schools with academies, Multi Academy Trusts as well as maintained schools and faith schools. This strategy adopts a 'status neutral' approach no matter what category of school the children are in and drives educational excellence across all Lancashire schools and settings, regardless of the 'type' or 'status'.

**Outcomes** – within its capacity as 'champion of children' the Local Authority has a duty to support the best possible outcomes for all children and young people in Lancashire. This strategy aims to bring together services, schools and settings to work together to address any barriers to learning. Through the intelligent application of data, feedback, Quality Assurance/audit processes, analysis of complaints, a needs-led approach will drive improvement by tailoring support to local priorities.

This approach is called 'warranted variation' where different needs and different communities are recognised so that support is tailored in response to that need.

There are seven pillars (shown in Annex A) which make clear the interdependencies across parallel pieces of work that will help to drive a joined-up approach to education in Lancashire. These seven pillars underpin the Education Strategy and have their own aims and objectives to support the delivery of this strategy. The seven pillars are: Alternative Provision; Multi-Agency Early Help; Early Years; SEND Improvement; School Effectiveness; School Place Planning; Preparation for Adulthood. Annex A shows how these pillars interrelate and support this strategy.

## Our improvement priorities

The staff who work on education improvement are committed to ensuring that collaborative school improvement delivers high quality provision in all areas. There is recognition of the need to ensure that all Lancashire schools maintain an inclusive approach to education that meets the needs of all learners, particularly within the context of the pandemic, and learning from that experience so that;

- Outcomes for children and young people are good or better across all stages.
- Inequalities and inequities are addressed and improve outcomes so that all children and young people achieve well, with particular focus on those in priority groups.
- There are sufficient quality places for our youngest children in early years, that deliver good outcomes for all and plan effectively to meet future demand.
- Deliver high quality primary provision based on a rich, connected curriculum that deepens learning and equips pupils for the demands of secondary school.
- Provide a rich, inclusive and engaging secondary curriculum that enables all learners to achieve at least expected progress and prepares them for post 16/18.

We will continue to focus on addressing the inequity of experience across the County by adopting a warranted variation locality approach. Using data intelligently, working with schools and settings, support will be targeted to ensure that there is a partnership approach to delivering 5 key priorities aligned to the 4 corporate priorities.

### Priority 1 Improved outcomes in early years

#### Delivering better services

- Developing pathways that enable all children and young people to engage with the curriculum.
- Supporting and engaging with families.
- Identifying local priorities informed by local intelligence.
- Ensuring effective transition from the early years into statutory education.



## **Priority 2 Further reduce exclusions, both permanent and suspensions<sup>1</sup>**

### **Caring for the Vulnerable**

- Ensuring full time suitable education for all children and young people.
- Reducing exclusions, suspensions.
- Tackling Persistent Absence.
- Improving attendance of children from vulnerable groups.

## **Priority 3 Address risks associated with rising numbers of Elective Home Education (EHE) where this is not in the best interests of the child**

### **Caring for the Vulnerable**

- Reducing Elective Home Education where this is not in the best interests of the child.
- Reduce percentage of children with EHCP in Elective Home Education.

## **Priority 4 Improve outcomes for vulnerable groups including those eligible for Free School Meals, Children In Need, children with a Care Plan, and Children Looked After, as well as those with SEN support and those with an EHCP**

### **Caring for the vulnerable**

- Championing the most vulnerable in our communities by further developing an inclusion agenda supported by all services, agencies, and wider stakeholders.
- Aligning resources to need (warranted variation).
- Robust Early Help Assessment processes.
- Ensuring timely early help to unblock barriers to learning.
- Building trust and improving communication across all the key stakeholders with a responsibility for supporting positive outcomes for children and young people.
- Providing continuity at key transition points.
- Effective tracking and monitoring of progress by vulnerable group.

## **Priority 5 Increase the number of children and young people in Education, Employment or Training (EET)**

### **Supporting Economic growth Delivering better services**

- Supporting all young people to develop the skills to progress in to training and work opportunities.
- Working with employers to ensure opportunities for work and employment are in place including apprenticeships.

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<sup>1</sup> Terminology for fixed term exclusions changed to suspensions from 2021

- Preparing young people for adulthood.
- Meeting our high expectations for all children and young people, whatever their background or circumstances.

### **We will also prioritise**

#### **Protecting our environment**

- Supporting schools and settings in their education of young people regarding environmental issues
- Developing more sustainable and energy efficient practices and buildings.

### **How will the Education Strategy deliver improvement?**

A collaboration between the services within the Council combined with the services and partners within the Team around the Schools and Settings Locality Boards will deliver the aspirations articulated within this strategy and realise the shared ambition for all children and young people set out within the vision statement.

The Education Strategy sets out the aspirations for education in Lancashire but the context in which the strategy is delivered will shift year on year. For this reason, the Education Strategy will be supported by an annual delivery plan. The priorities within the annual delivery plan will be informed by data and local intelligence and they will be agreed with sector representatives across early years, primary, secondary, post 16 and special schools at the Lancashire Education Partnership Group.

The Education Scrutiny Committee will receive a copy of the annual delivery plan to scrutinise and challenge performance against the targets agreed at the Lancashire Education Partnership Group.

The Education Strategy itself will be reviewed on a three yearly basis and so the term of this strategy is from 2022 to 2025.

### **What will success look like?**

- Locality gaps and underperformance will be addressed through strengthening local area prioritisation and planning in relation to school improvement and outcomes.
- Improved family engagement in learning will be achieved through Team around the School and Setting approach to support early years uptake and learning.
- Parents are confident that local mainstream schools are identifying and meeting their children's needs through the early identification of SEND and ensuring timely access to relevant support and intervention.
- Governors are confident that Education Improvement and Governor Services are supported and have effective development opportunities to ensure strong and robust leadership and accountability across schools and settings.

- Commercial services to schools provide a coherent traded offer which reflects the changing needs of schools and reflect increased academisation.
- The number of pupils who are suspended or excluded will reduce through the review and development of inclusion hubs and specialist support/Alternative Provision outreach.
- The prevalence of pupils from vulnerable groups suspended or excluded will be reduced.
- Families new to Lancashire report that they are supported in making a positive start to their life here to gain a sense of belonging and the opportunity to settle.

## Background papers

This strategy has been informed by and supports the message and ambitions of the following key documents:

- Annex A: Pillars of the Strategy
- Our Vision for Lancashire, Lancashire County Council, 2019
- [Equality Objectives](#) , Lancashire County Council, April 2020
- Education Act: [Education Act 2011 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Academies Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Schools causing concern guidance 2020 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)