

**react**  
Raising Expectations  
Action Programme



**betterlives**



**Better lives for young people: 11-19 reform and the 16-19 funding transfer**

# betterlives

## Why is 11-19 provision changing?

The government has ambitious plans to radically transform the ways in which services for young people aged 11-19 are delivered. The purpose of these reforms is to ensure that every young person makes the most of their teenage years and is equipped with the skills they will need to thrive as citizens in the global economy.

The challenge for councils and local services is to provide a wide range of activities and interventions for all young people, whatever their circumstances. We need to increase the participation and achievement of all young people to help them lead happier and more successful lives.

The government reforms centre on three key aspects of young people's lives. The emphasis is on providing for all, particularly the most vulnerable, and coordinating provision and support:

### **Reform of young people's learning**

Through its reform of qualifications and the curriculum, the government aims to ensure that

the right range of courses and qualifications are available so that every young person can learn in a way that engages and motivates them. This involves transforming the curriculum in the early years of secondary school and radical changes in learning for 14-19 year olds. There will be four learning pathways – Apprenticeships, Diplomas, the Foundation Learning Tier and General Qualifications – underpinned by functional skills in English, Maths and ICT, including personal, learning and thinking skills. These will be supplemented by qualifications outside these pathways that meet a clearly defined need not met elsewhere.

### **Integrated support for all young people.**

Every young person needs access to high quality information, advice and guidance about a range of issues, including learning and careers, health, legal and financial matters. Through the development of integrated youth support services, young people – and their parents – should know where to get advice and increased support when they need it. The more

vulnerable young people in England – those in the care of councils, for example – need increased support and want to see better co-ordination of the support available to them. Through each Children and Young People's Trust councils are already responsible for ensuring that young people aged up to 25 with additional needs are supported. The government plans to bring together planning and funding by transferring the funding of learning for young people with additional needs to local councils from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

### Things to do and places to go: positive activities for all

Young people enjoy formal learning, but want to have fun as well. The government has placed a new duty on councils to ensure that there is a wide range of things for young people to do after school or college, at weekends and during holiday periods. Councils now ensure that young people know what is available in their area, identifying gaps and commissioning new provision, especially creating new activities for vulnerable young people.

## A new role for councils

The fragmentation of services for young people which characterised the 1990s, created a wide range of agencies with responsibility for the lives of young people in England. By now placing the responsibility for the outcomes for all aspects of young people's lives with councils, the government has brought together the duties of a number of different agencies in one place, increasing accountability and reducing

duplication. Councils cannot meet this new responsibility on their own, and will succeed when they work in partnership with other public, private and voluntary sector bodies.

Councils will be able to link their planning for education and skills to the economic needs of their sub region and region, and to the needs of employers.

## 16-19 funding

The biggest organisational change taking place for councils in relation to 11-19 year olds is the transfer of responsibility for commissioning 16-19 education from the LSC to local government.

Councils with responsibility for children's services will take on this new role from April 2010. This change is fundamental to delivering for young people because it will allow councils, working with partners, to plan provision for young people until the age of 19 (and later for those with additional needs). This provides an opportunity to ensure continuity, a range of options for young people and closer coordination of provision across the diversity of educational providers.

Councils will be commissioning provision in "sub-regional groups". Some of these are based on

counties; others bring together councils across a wider area or city region. The sub-regional groups have been proposed by councils themselves and supported by the Department for Children, Schools and Families. Staff will be transferring from the LSC to local councils from April 2010 to support this commissioning work.

The sub-regional group will plan what it wants each local authority to commission from schools, FE colleges, sixth form colleges and other organisations to provide courses to meet the needs of young people. It may well need to work with councils outside the sub-group boundary to do this. The commissioning process will have to be "provider neutral", not favouring one type of provision over another. Local authorities will also commission learning for young offenders.

## New organisations involved

### The Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA):

Responsible for:

- Setting the commissioning framework for 16-19 provision
- National budgetary control for 16-19 provision
- Strategic data analysis
- Ensuring the overall coherence of commissioning plans
- Providing funds to councils to meet their commissioning plans.

The YPLA will also commission provision from FE colleges where sub-regional groups are not ready to do this.

### The Skills Funding Agency (SFA)

Responsible for:

- Funding FE colleges for learners aged 19 and over
- The performance management of FE colleges.

### The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)

Housed within the Skills Funding Agency and responsible for securing sufficient apprenticeship places in a range of sectors within each local authority area and sub-regional group.

Local authorities' key responsibility will be to identify local demand in terms of apprenticeship numbers, levels and sectors which NAS will then commission on their behalf.

## Opportunities and challenges

Both the scale of the change coming and the timescale are challenging to councils and all the other organisations involved in the 16-19 transfer. But this is a great opportunity to bring together the way public services respond to the needs of

young people and the way services work together to support the economy. The transfer will place these crucial responsibilities under the leadership of councils at a time when there is an urgent need for joined-up local action.

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