

14-19 RAISING THE PARTICIPATION AGE (RPA) PLAN

The Education and Skills Act 2008 legislated to raise the age of compulsory participation in education or training to the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 from 2013 and to at least their 18th birthday from 2015, in response to the UK need to develop a more highly skilled workforce to compete internationally in a fast changing global economy. In addition there is the desire to create a fairer and more equal society by dealing with the consequences of leaving education to training at the age of only 16, recognising the strong correlation between being NEET and engaging in risky behaviour, having poor health and low income.

The RPA Strategy clearly indicates that Local Authorities *are the strategic lead* in delivering RPA, since they are best placed to bring in the contribution of a range of partners. It suggest that LAs will need to work through the 14-19 Partnership (Wirral Social and Economic Wellbeing Strategy Group) to deliver a more integrated response and tailored offer to all young people.

The government subsequently made clear its commitment to RPA in the 2012 Spending Review announcement, the White Paper 'The Importance of Teaching' and Departments for Education, Work and Pensions, and Business, Innovation and Skills strategy

Building Engagement, Building Futures: Our Strategy to Maximise the Participation of 16-24 year olds in Education, Training and Work

We are raising the participation age (RPA)..... Young people will have a number of participation options including full-time education in a school or college, an Apprenticeship, or other full-time work alongside part-time education or training. We want young people to participate actively and voluntarily and so we will ensure that the education system has in place attractive options and the necessary support to make young people enthusiastic about learning..... young people will be under a duty to participate, but it puts the onus on the system to offer young people the tailored education and training programmes and targeted support they need to engage (para 3.3, 3.4)

The strategy sits alongside the new duty on schools to provide independent and impartial careers guidance for Years 9-11 (2012), the introduction of a new KS4 Destination Measure integrated into school performance tables, transforming vocational education following the Wolf Review, the review of the National Curriculum (2014), a new scheme to support colleges in testing out dedicated work experience schemes for 16-19 year old NEETs, the Youth Contract (April 2012) and further support for those most in need through the Work Programme, Job Centre Plus and ultimately the Universal Credit system

Following the publication of 'Lessons from the RPA Trials' involving 16 local areas, the attached plan sets out how we, in Wirral Council, may meet our obligations to ensure that RPA is successful. It is intended as a living document which is used to guide both major strategic decisions and operational day to day decision making. We owe the young people of Wirral the very best support on their journey from school or college into the world work, so that they may continue to make a positive contribution to society and economy.

Priority: 1	Understanding the cohort Through greater understanding of future cohorts of young people Wirral CYPD is better placed to signal demand for learning provision in the borough.	Key Lead(s):	
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How We Will Deliver (Objectives)	How We Will Be Judged (Performance Indicators)	Milestones (Actions and Targets)	By When	Lead	Done
IDENTIFY AND PROJECT THE COHORTS OF 16 AND 17 YEAR OLDS					
To ascertain cohort and project scale of participation in 2013 and 2015	Standardised and robust data sources indicate number of 16 and 17 year olds in each year, and where the 16 year olds in 2013 and 17 year olds in 2015 are now in the system	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review data sources (including GIS) available to the LA (as per the Strategic Overview) in liaison with key stakeholders and internal LA officers 2. Agree data sources and data collection cycle to enable a robust assessment of the 16 and 17 year old cohort 3. Work with the LA Data team to interrogate the SIMS database to identify pupil numbers aged 16 & 17 cohort over the next 3 to 5 years 4. Analyse and present quantitative information with regards to population change 2013-2015 to RPA Planning team 			
To identify key groups / number of vulnerable young peoples	Clear understanding of numbers of vulnerable young people coming through the education system by cohort group.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyse data on numbers of young people in the vulnerable groups that will be aged 16 and 17 over the next 3 to 5 years (LLDD, LAC, teenage parents and young offenders) 2. Work directly with schools and LA officers (Attendance / SEN team / FSM / YOS) to capture further evidence. 3. Agree targets / ambition for stretch in participation rate for vulnerable young people 			
To gain improved understanding of risk factors associated with non-participation	Clear understanding of factors associated with non-participation at age 16 and 17, the inter-relationship between risks and relative importance and the relationship between present risk factors and Post -16 outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and collate information available on previous cohorts 2. Review pre and post 16 risk of NEET indicators which have been used to target existing interventions 3. Analyse risks to non-participation and agree local indicators 4. Analyse and evaluate measurable impact of interventions on participation 5. Agree levels of intervention and range of strategies to best meet the needs of the cohort 			
To understand current performance	Clear identification of issues affecting local participation, distribution of 'at risk' pupils and areas to be targeted and issues to inform planning of provision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To identify and collate information available with regards to reasons given by young people in relation to why 16 years olds do not participate, why 17 years olds drop out in the first year and how 16 and 17 year olds feel about the availability and quality of IAG and Provision (Learner voice interviews, Exit interviews, Provider Leaver forms) 2. To analyse how 'at risk' pupils are distributed across secondary schools 3. To use available NEET data to analyse how well secondary schools and 			

		<p>Learning Community areas perform against a Post 16 progression and destination measure?</p> <p>4. To analyse dropout rates at age 17 by provider</p> <p>5. To analyse trends in take-up of provision (by subject and level) by provider and identify areas of oversupply or demand in order to inform planning of provision</p>			
To develop and implement a learner voice strategy for Wirral and improve planning by responding to learners perceptions of the education system through learner voice survey(s)	<p>Detailed Learner Voice Plan.</p> <p>Agreed protocol for collection and co-ordination of data</p> <p>Summary reports used to inform planning of provision</p>	<p>1. Identify target cohorts, information needs and mechanism for collecting views (eg what young people want to study, where they want to go, barriers to participation)</p> <p>2. Liaise with providers, schools and colleges to collate and improve understanding of what learner satisfaction information is collected and how it is used to influence developments</p> <p>3. Develop a long term plan for collecting learner voice information and how this will inform planning (focus on why leavers leave).</p>			
To learn from, and build upon, best practice in order to inform RPA planning	Best practice integrated into future planning	<p>1. Complete consultation with WLPN, schools / academies and other partners on why some cohorts of young people do not participate in education</p> <p>2. Benchmark Wirral cohort against other (similar) LA areas willing to share best practice</p> <p>3. Review current research and identify best practice models (nationally and locally)</p> <p>4. Complete research into lessons learnt from RPA Trials eg East Sussex</p> <p>5. Identify different ways of tackling the issues to inform future planning.</p>			

Priority: 2	Set system level priorities and challenges	Key Lead(s):	
	<p>Corporate Plan Reference: xxxxxxxx</p> <p>10% more young people aged 17 participating in learning.</p>		

How We Will Deliver (Objectives)	How We Will Be Judged (Performance Indicators)	Milestones (Actions and Targets)	By When	Lead	Done
IDENTIFY THE KEY BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION AND THE SCALE OF THE PROBLEMS					
To identify gaps in planning for RPA. To prioritise actions to inform planning of RPA strategy	Progress monitored against the national indicators.	Complete the National DfE RPA self evaluation tool / RPA Readiness Tool Discuss and agree on strengths and areas for targeted areas for development in RPA planning			
	Clear strategy, identified on	1. Analyse data (priority 1) and agree common issues which have the			

	the basis of impact and which targets priorities for young people by geographical area.	<p>greatest impact on participation in Wirral</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Complete priorities / impact matrix and identify interventions or actions that will have a significant impact. 3. Take the completed impact / priorities matrix out for wider consultation with key stakeholders to ensure buy-in 4. Agree priorities for increasing participation rate 5. Identify actions which have the greatest impact on priorities (ease of implementation and with resource allocation). Identify and agree actions which may cease in order to channel resources more effectively 6. Produce action plan, agreed and shared by partners 			
To plan trajectory and monitor progress	<p>Clear vision of what full participation means and how many young people may have a reasonable excuse at any one time</p> <p>Clear trajectory between the current level of participation and full participation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Refine action plan with timescale and impact measures 2. Identify the shape of the trajectory based on when impact is expected over time 3. Discuss and agree on what constitutes 'reasonable excuse' and identify anticipated numbers as anticipated 4. Plan interim data points for the purpose of monitoring progress against the trajectory 5. Consult and agree with stakeholders to ensure buy-in 6. Monitor, analyse and evaluate achievement of interim milestones 			
To establish a Governance and Leadership model for monitoring the implementation of RPA	<p>Clear roles and responsibilities for RPA.</p> <p>RPA progress and performance is monitored effectively through Governance structure.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify all stakeholders / partners to be involved in partnership delivery of RPA Plan 2. Discuss and draft governance to ensure clear roles and responsibilities at both LA level and amongst a full range of partners from all sectors (partners to include schools, colleges, providers, Connexions, WLPN, VCS, Leaving Care Team,) 3. Consult all partners on draft governance model and amend as necessary 4. Seek approval from SEWB Strategy Group 			

Priority: 3	Managing Transitions and Tracking NI 117 Reduce the percentage of 16-18 year olds not in education employment or training (NEET) Increase participation of 16-18 year olds in learning by 2% to 89%	Key Lead(s):	
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How We Will Deliver (Objectives)	How We Will Be Judged (Performance Indicators)	Milestones (Actions and Targets)	By When	Lead	Done
To review effectiveness of early intervention at KS3 and transition arrangements at various key stages	A plan for co-ordinated and effective support for young people at each transition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Working with providers, identify and collate information in order to map existing interventions and strategies for young people at each transition stage (mid year, KS3->4, KS4->Post16, Post 16) 			

	stage	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Identify any overlaps and/or gaps in existing practice. Identify additional support needed to support all young people 3. Identify additional support needed to support specific groups (or rationalise existing resources to re-focus target groups?) 4. Identify actions to support first cohort of RPA 5. Working with stakeholders, discuss and develop a Post 16 Transition Protocol for Foundation Learning, adopted by FLOG 			
To develop IAG protocols and strategies which ensure Wirral young people receive Impartial Information, Advice and Guidance	<p>Improved feedback from learners.</p> <p>Increased participation rates</p> <p>Delivery of September Guarantee</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyse feedback from Learner Voice interviews/surveys, with regards to perceptions about quality of IAG at aged 16 and 17 2. Implement the education resource aggregation system – Wirral Interactive Portal 3. Ensure all stakeholders are clear about roles and responsibilities between schools and LA 4. Support schools in planning for the introduction of the new duty to secure access to independent careers guidance from September 2012 and improve quality of IAG 5. Provision of resources (U Explore) through EQ as a traded service. 6. Commission targeted Careers Education and IAG for vulnerable groups and young people at risk of becoming NEET 7. Analyse LA performance on September Guarantee process - matching places against demand in order to inform planning of provision 			
Increase participation of vulnerable groups of young people, with specific barriers	<p>Improvement in school destinations measures</p> <p>Delivery of From Care to Work Plan</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Using data (priority 1), identify a small number of groups with specific barriers (eg LLDD, LAC/Care leavers, under-aspirations in learners from disadvantaged backgrounds, FL) 2. Discuss and identify differentiated strategies and approaches which are needed to address the particular needs of the above identified groups 3. Research and identify best practice in terms of using Pupil Premium funding to support the most vulnerable young people at risk of NEET. 4. Work with a number of targeted schools to explore ways in which Pupil Premium can be used to support vulnerable KS4 learners 5. Deliver targeted intervention to identified care leavers including 1:1 mentoring, work tasters and development of employability skills. Continue to monitor, track and report on the progress of the care leaver population. 6. Support foster carer taskforce group and designated teachers in schools building their capacity in terms of understanding the education landscape and support arrangements for young vulnerable people. 7. Establish a LAC Employability Team that will refresh and implement actions in the From Care to Work Plan. 8. Further develop the Education Equality 14-19 progression to Higher Education 			

		service offer, targeting under aspirations.			
		9. Review and evaluate the effectiveness of joined-up LA strategies and interventions for all vulnerable groups (incl. those with mental health issues)			

Priority: 4	Establishing Support Mechanisms	Key Lead(s):	
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How We Will Deliver (Objectives)	How We Will Be Judged (Performance Indicators)	Milestones (Actions and Targets)	By When	Lead	Done
Identifying and supporting those young people most at risk of disengaging including: identification of at-risk young people, how support can be provided through the following:-					
To identify young people at risk of NEET	Reduction of NEET 16-18 Reduction in drop out and disengagement from age 14. School developing internal mechanisms for identifying at risk learners based on hierarchy and RONI information	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collect data to identify the main reasons for drop out/disengagement in schools and Post 16, by geographical area (focus on top 5 schools with highest drop out rate) 2. Analyse reasons behind dropout from schools and gather information on the worst effected wards. 3. Develop a RONI based the principal reasons behind drop out and which wards are affected the most (maybe to include diagnostic assessment – covering individual learning, social, behavioural and study skills needed). Explore possibility of linking RONI into the SIMs operating system in schools. 4. Test and Trial the RONI with the 5 sample schools identified in the research for the most vulnerable groups. 5. Monitor over two terms at school, tracking the learner focusing on their future plans, levels of participation, progression and achievement. 6. Evaluate the use and value of the RONI. 7. Gain individual success cases and feedback from schools on the use of the RONI and its impact as an early intervention tool. 8. If positive, role trial out to all schools in the borough to go live in September 2013. 			
To provide targeted support for those young people who are high risk of NEET post-16 through a multi-agency approach.		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and clarify arrangements for all providers to notify the LA if a young person is disengaged or drops out of learning 2. Establish criteria to be used to determine if a young person has a reasonable excuse which has been shared and discussed with partners (priority 2). 3. Establish systems and processes to determine when reasonable excuse should, and should no longer, apply to young people. Share and discuss with partners to ensure consistency 4. Ensure all providers utilise CAF to ensure the needs of young people are met through a multi-agency approach and inform the work of the Support Panel (NAG) 5. Continue the work of NAG in order to support NEET young people with multiple needs or who no longer fit the criteria of reasonable excuse and need support to re-engage in education/training 			

Priority: 5	Identifying and Meeting Provision Needs	Key Lead(s):	Sue Elliott and Rhonda Jacques
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How We Will Deliver (Objectives)	How We Will Be Judged (Performance Indicators)	Milestones (Actions and Targets)	By When	Lead	Done
IDENTIFY AND MEETING PROVISION NEEDS FOR RPA					
To map and identify provision gaps	Accurate and detailed analysis of provision, updated regularly. Clear progression opportunities. Gaps identified	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Complete provision mapping exercise to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capture current offer by academic level, entry and access points (including apprenticeship opportunities) (LLDD, FL – Entry and level I, Level II, Level III, Level IV) Identify Entry points / RORO (roll-on, roll-off) Analyse take up / recruitment and identify over demand and under subscription Analyse data/information from Learner Voice interviews (priority 1) with regards to reasons for non-participation and drop out, in particular issues related to quality of provision and/or learning provision, lack of suitable provision and/or gaps in provision (ability, interests, aspirations, poor progression routes opportunities, barriers eg transport) Identify to what extent current provision meets current interests and aspirations of learners and those in 2013/2015? Identify unmet learner demands and map to LMI data Discuss and agree identified gaps / over provision and produce local statement of need Develop online prospectus linked to interactive portal Develop Alternative Provision catalogue in response to identified needs. Ensure providers and advisers know about the full range of re-engagement provision available 			
	Summary report on intended destinations used to inform planning of provision	Undertake the September and January Guarantee process to ensure every young person in the borough has an offer of an appropriate place in learning post-16.			
	Identify the needs and demands of employers in response to trends in the employment market locally and regionally	Analyse Labour Market demand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current JWT Current Analyse shifts in demand (eg for apprenticeships) future 			

	Summary report to inform planning	<p>Complete mapping of progression opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse existing progression routes Consider entry requirements for each Analyse young peoples' needs, interests and aspirations Identify gaps in progression routes / unmet needs Consider need for Employability skills development Consider suitability of progression opportunities <p>In order to inform annual commissioning process YPLA/EFA 2012?</p>			
<p>To convert jobs without training to Apprenticeships</p> <p>(Corporate Plan Reference – improving the Local Economy)</p>	<p>A clear local strategy for increasing number and range of apprenticeships</p> <p>All potential JWT converted to apprenticeship</p> <p>Progress of young people in JWT closely tracked</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Work with local employers to identify the JWT cohorts Work with employers to increase Apprenticeships Continue to track and support young people in JWT to move into an Apprenticeship place 			
<p>To develop new innovative provision which better meets the needs of learners</p>	<p>Local statement of need</p> <p>LA/Providers plan to establish new provision to meet unmet needs</p> <p>A joined up plan for full participation</p> <p>Online prospectus which is accessible to all (families/parents, Connexions, Providers, Employers)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the gaps and provision needs and share with existing providers / WLPN Working collaboratively with existing partners /providers, CVS, new entrants to the market and employers, plan creatively and imaginatively how to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure changes in existing provision Establish new provision. 			

Additional ideas from RPA Trials

Creative curriculum design to meet identified needs

Apprenticeship Pathway programme to lead to Level III Apprenticeship (Y12 students) (work with NAS?)

Develop new innovative provision

- Hub and spoke models from youth centre
- Young people employed by school and attending college
- Flexible starts in January through links with
 - Voluntary Sector (WCVS)
 - Academies
 - Free schools
 - UTC?
 - Studio schools?

Priority: 6		Communicating the message			Key Lead(s):	
How We Will Deliver (Objectives)	How We Will Be Judged (Performance Indicators)	Milestones (Actions and Targets)	By When	Lead	Done	
To prioritise audiences and key messages	Clear communication strategy in place, which has prioritised audiences and identified key messages for each	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify all groups and stakeholders / audiences who need to understand RPA 2. Contact Benefits Agency to clarify possible effects RPA will have on family allowance or benefits 3. Research best practice in Trial LAs to enable speedy development and production of a Myth buster / 'What will the choices be for young people' leaflet and include impact on family allowances 4. Analyse Learner voice feedback to establish current level of awareness and any misunderstanding regarding RPA 5. Develop a Key messages document for use by all stakeholders - families/parents, schools, Connexions, providers..... (appropriate, short and to the point, consistent message) 6. Develop a core script for LA staff and partner organisations 				
	Accurate and consistent message communicated to all stakeholders, which allays fears regarding RPA and implications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify priority groups for information (eg first 2 cohorts affected; parents/carers of these cohorts) 2. Consider additional requirements for LLDD and BME learners/families 3. Communicate message via RPA letter in schools 4. Invite parents/carers to form a small focus group? Use feedback to refine activity plan, messages and /or method of dissemination 				
To communicate message to partners and all stakeholders	<p>All LA staff able to communicate basic RPA messages</p> <p>All opportunities for disseminating RPA message are used to the full and at minimal cost</p> <p>Partners understand local approach</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify opportunities for LA staff briefing 2. Identify all existing communication channels / naturally occurring opportunities to disseminate the message more widely and on a regular basis 3. Plan a schedule of meetings, training opportunities and other media (eg letters to parents) that may be used to get message across 4. Plan and deliver development session with WRL co-ordinators and other WRL school staff 5. Include information in work experience booklets 6. Identify RPA Champion at each One Stop Shop (to lead and be the main source of information around RPA) 				

	Employers engage with and understand obligations around RPA and employment 2013	7. Disseminate RPA Plan to stakeholders eg WLPN..... 8. Include message on Invest Wirral's Business Forum			
To produce materials and resources	Materials and resources available to support RPA message and within budget limitations	1. Identify available budget for publications? 2. Review and ensure all existing resources have RPA messages inserted in them and / or produce leaflets for distribution and inclusion in existing documents 3. Ensure all IAG professionals and tutors receive appropriate communication(s) 4. Include a countdown clock on Council website and VLE 5. Update Teen Wirral website			

Notes:

Ideas for using naturally occurring opportunities:-

- Parent's evenings
- General letters to parents
- Include in IAG section of quality framework
- One Council magazine
- 'Opportunities' board – Connexions
- Ben – Aim Higher Discussions etc
- Year 7 induction pack / Prospectus
- Training and other events held at LA
- FLOG, WLPN, WASH, WISPA, NAG, LLDD Meetings
- Work experience booklets (for employers)
- VP and SD prospectus activity in schools.

Ideas for 'other' communication opportunities:-

- Leaflets in GP surgeries
- U-explore
- Social media sites
- Vintage radio

Wider Groups:-

- Pathways team
- Youth hubs
- Sports centres
- Elected members
- Third sector providers
- General public