



Department  
for Education

# Opportunity North East Delivery Plan 2019-2022



Improving educational outcomes in the North East of England

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## Our Vision

“No child should be held back because of where they come from so it’s of the utmost importance that we level up aspirations for all children in all parts of the country.

Since we launched Opportunity North East, we have connected with expert school and business leaders in the North East to create more opportunities and offer tailored support so that we can tap into the outstanding talent we know exists in education across the region.

Our task now is to build on the foundations the programme has set down over the last year. This delivery plan sets out how we will drive this forward by strengthening training for teachers, providing bespoke school improvement support and opening up more career pathways for young people.”

***Gavin Williamson, Secretary of State for Education***

# A message from the Chair of the Opportunity North East Strategic Board

Opportunity North East (ONE) is part of our commitment to improve education and boost productivity in the North East of England. Through this programme we are investing up to £24 million over 3 years to make a real change for thousands of young people.

The North East is a unique region. It is geographically large and covers a very diverse school landscape. The region has an interesting mix of urban, coastal, and rural communities which each bring their own unique strengths and challenges.

Through strong collaboration with partners including schools, local authorities, local enterprise partnerships, academy trusts, universities, further education colleges and businesses we can address the big challenges that hold back young people in the region.

This delivery plan sets out those challenges, identifying how Opportunity North East will help young people reach their potential from primary school, through secondary education, and beyond.

By drawing on the expertise of local education and business leaders to develop initiatives that are evidence led and tailored to the particular needs of the North East, we will tap into the talent that so clearly exists in the region, and ensure young people have every chance to go on and succeed.

Creating opportunity is a job for all of us. I am pleased to see such a diverse range of organisations determined to work together to create more opportunities for every young person, regardless of background.

Everyone has a role in the region to work together to truly make a difference and I hope that this is a plan we can all get behind. I am grateful to everyone who has contributed to developing this plan and who will support its implementation. In particular, I would like to thank all the members of my board and the school sub-board, all of whom have made a substantial contribution to the work we are doing.

By working together, we can achieve so much more. We want every young person in the North East to realise their full potential.

**Lord Theodore Agnew**

**Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the School System**



# Why the North East?

Every child has the right to a world-class education, regardless of where they live. While primary school outcomes in the North East are the joint highest of any region outside London, too few children make strong progress at secondary school. This trend continues for young people in the region as fewer young people access higher education or find a pathway to secure a great job than in other regions.

The percentage of all North East children achieving the expected level in reading, writing and maths at the end of key stage 2 has been above the England average since 2015. However, outcomes at key stage 4 are significantly poorer than other regions. On average, pupils in the region make less progress at secondary school compared with all other regions, and the average Progress 8 score is consistently below the national level. Only 58% of North East secondary schools are judged by Ofsted to be 'good' or 'outstanding' (August 2019 Ofsted data). This is well below the England average of 76%.

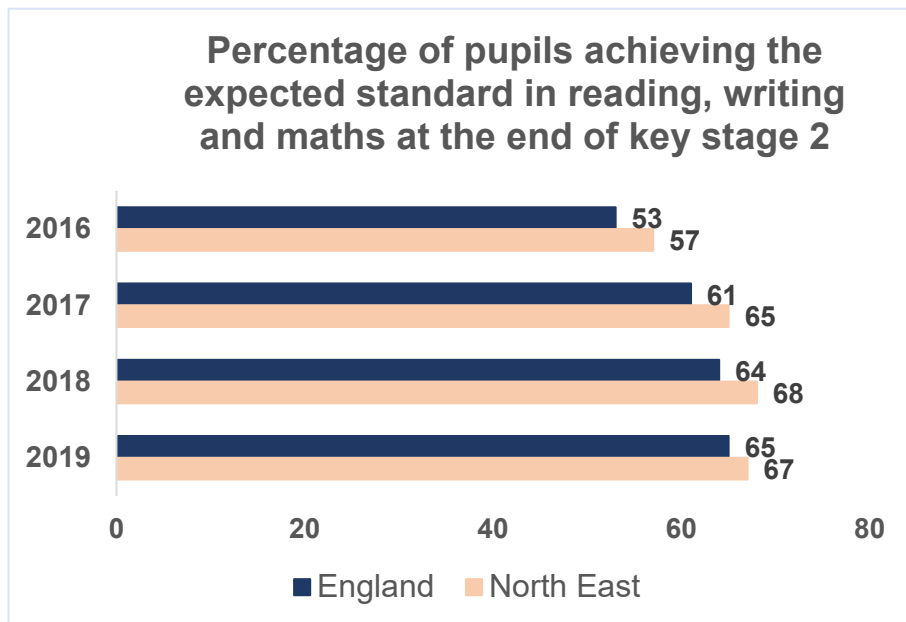


Figure 1 [GOV.UK source: Key Stage 2 statistics](#)

The percentage of pupils eligible for Free School Meals, at both secondary and primary level, is higher in the North East than any other region. The Social Mobility Index sets out the differences between where children grow up and the chances they have of doing well in adult life. Three out of the region's 12 local authorities are in the bottom 2 quintiles of the index, including 1 'cold spot' in Northumberland.

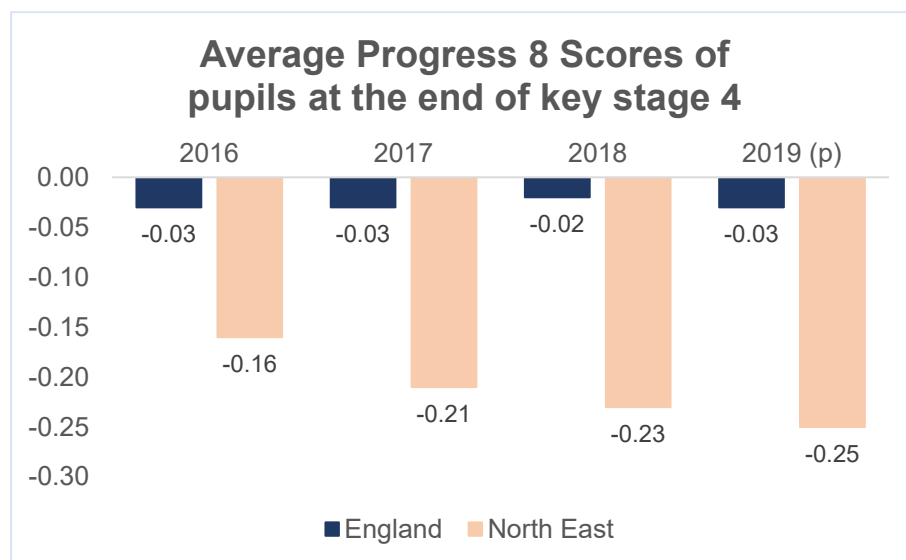


Figure 2 [GOV.UK source: Key stage 4 official statistics](#)

Middlesbrough and Hartlepool are among the 20 local authority districts nationally with the highest proportion of their neighbourhoods in the most deprived 10% and those with the highest proportion of children and older people living in income deprivation. The North East has the highest proportion of young people not in education, employment or training after Y11 and fewer 18-year olds attend the top universities than in any other part of the country.

This is why we are investing in Opportunity North East to boost aspirations and improve the educational and employment outcomes of young people in the region.



**Building on strong foundations**

# Strengths and opportunities

- **Primary provision is strong** with 90% of the region's primary schools judged by Ofsted as 'good' or 'outstanding', 3 percentage points above the England average.
- **13 new schools** have opened in the region since 2010, providing over 4,000 school places that are helping to raise standards for more young people.
- **Early career teachers** in the North East will benefit from the early career framework – a fully funded 2-year entitlement to a package of structured training and support linked to the best available evidence – from September 2020, a year ahead of national roll-out.
- **Mathematics and physics retention incentives** will benefit early career maths and physics teachers in the North East. They will receive two £2,000 incentive payments, within the first five years of their career, as part of a drive to increase rates of retention among teachers of these subjects.
- **Curriculum hub networks** exist to support schools and colleges in England in key subjects. The North East has 2 maths hubs, Great North (Churchill Community College) and Archimedes NE (Carmel College). The region also has 1 modern foreign language hub, led by Cardinal Hume Catholic School, and 3 computing hubs led by Cardinal Hume Catholic School, Carmel College and King's Priory School. There are also 2 English primary hubs who support schools to provide excellent phonics and early language teaching.
- **8 Strategic School Improvement Fund** projects have benefited schools across the region. They include projects focused on raising achievement at key stage 4 by improving literacy; improving outcomes in maths at key stage 4; and, reducing the attainment gap in reading at key stage 2.
- **Building on the careers hub pilots in schools**, 10 North East Further Education (FE) and sixth form colleges are involved in the new careers hubs that will enable schools and colleges to pool local expertise and secure high-quality careers education for students, in line with the Gatsby Benchmarks. The North East is the only region with a dedicated regional College Hub, servicing 9 FE colleges and 1 sixth form college.
- **Significant job growth** with over 73,000 new jobs created since 2014 (driven by an increase in employment in better jobs of almost 74,000), the North East Local Enterprise Partnership is on track to achieve its target of 100,000 new and better jobs by 2024. Separately, the Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan aims to deliver an additional 25,000 jobs by 2026.
- **Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs)** are a new and additional resource to support schools and colleges in promoting good mental health in children and young people. There are currently 13 MHSTs working across 5 Clinical Commissioning Groups in the region. These MHSTs will be delivering support directly into over 300 education settings.

# Bringing people together to drive success

“At the EEF, we know that school improvement is challenging: many ideas that seem initially promising do not stand up to rigorous evaluation.

Therefore, we are excited to support the Opportunity North East programme by supporting school leaders to draw on the best available evidence to inform their plans. Twinned with their professional judgement, this provides the best chance of securing the maximum possible benefit from every pound spent.”

**Education Endowment Foundation**

“With North East schools and students affected by high levels of long-term, high-impact deprivation, we are pleased to be working on the Opportunity North East programme to raise aspirations, increase opportunities for young people in the region, and help close the widening disadvantage gap.”

**Schools North East**

“Opportunity North East has brought together sensible and intelligent school improvement. The ONE Vision schools programme has enabled schools to work with colleagues who have demonstrated sustainable success based on quality first teaching and curriculum designed to meet the needs of all students. The key success being, working in full collaboration with a recognition that all parties have something to offer.

The programme’s support has been equally transparent and I have felt listened to throughout the process to date and the needs of Kenton School learners are being heard. I have absolute confidence that this joined up work will not only benefit Kenton School but the wider North East too”

**Sarah Holmes-Carne, Principal of Kenton School (ONE Vision School)**



# ONE Strategic Board members

The Opportunity North East strategic board brings together senior leaders from schools, colleges, universities, business, and central and local government. They bring expertise, experience, insight and ambition for the North East and its young people. Our board will bring the networks, connections and expertise we will need to succeed in meeting our five challenges.

The board meets regularly to oversee progress, working alongside the Department for Education and other national organisations, such as the Education Endowment Foundation, to ensure the programme is ambitious, coherent, fair, effective, evidence led and represents good value for money.



**Lord Theodore Agnew,**  
**Parliamentary Under Secretary**  
**of State for the School System**  
Chair of the ONE Strategic Board



**Nick Hurn OBE**  
Executive Headteacher, Cardinal  
Hume Catholic School,  
Gateshead



**Paul Booth OBE**  
Chair of Tees Valley Local  
Enterprise Partnership



**Cath McEvoy-Carr**  
Director of Children's Services,  
Northumberland County  
Council



**Professor Suzanne Cholerton**  
Pro Vice-Chancellor, Learning and  
Teaching, Newcastle University



**Martyn Oliver**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Outwood Grange Academies  
Trust



**Professor Rob Coe**  
ProfCoe Limited, ONE evidence and  
evaluation champion



**Sally Robinson**  
Director of Children's and Joint  
Commissioning Services,  
Hartlepool Borough Council



**Jill Colbert**  
Director of Children's Services,  
Together for Children  
(Sunderland)



**Edward Twiddy**  
Chief Innovations Officer and  
Company Secretary, Atom Bank



**Katherine Cowell**  
Interim Regional Schools  
Commissioner (North)



**Dr Lindsey Whiterod CBE**  
Chief Executive Tyne Coast  
College



**Andrew Hodgson OBE**  
Chair of North East Local  
Enterprise Partnership



**Chris Zarraga**  
Director, Schools North East

# ONE School Sub-board members

The Strategic Board is supported by the ONE school sub-board, made up of the ONE evidence and evaluation champion and school leaders in the region with a proven track record of bringing about improvement.

Members of the school sub-board are:

**Professor Rob Coe**

ProfCoe Limited, ONE evidence and evaluation champion

**Mark Hassack**

Regional Executive Principal (North), Outwood Grange Academies Trust

**Nick Hurn OBE**

Executive Headteacher, Cardinal Hume Catholic School, Gateshead

**Lesley Powell CBE**

Executive Principal, The Academy at Shotton Hall, Chief Executive Officer of the North East Learning Trust

**Maura Regan OBE DL**

Chief Executive Officer, Carmel Education Trust

# **Our five challenges**

## Our five challenges

Through conversations with North East stakeholders and a comprehensive data analysis (October 2018), we highlighted five main challenges that exist across the region that we need to address to achieve our ambitions:



**Challenge 1:** too few children continue to make good progress from primary to secondary



**Challenge 2:** to unlock the potential of key secondary schools in the North East



**Challenge 3:** some schools struggle to recruit, retain and develop great teachers



**Challenge 4:** too few young people find a pathway to a good career



**Challenge 5:** too few young people progress to higher education, particularly to the top tier universities.

*“The North East performs well for disadvantaged children early in life, but does worse than other regions in later life stages”*

Social Mobility Commission: State of the Nation 2017



## Challenge 1

### Too few children continue to make good progress from primary to secondary

#### Why this is our focus

- Average outcomes at key stage 2 in the North East are higher than the England average; however, the region has some of the weakest key stage 4 and post-16 outcomes.
- The evidence base on effective transitions is slim. We need to know more about how to support pupils to continue to achieve well as they progress from key stage 2 to key stage 3.

#### How we are tackling this challenge

- ✓ Established an expert panel of regional leaders and the Education Endowment Foundation to identify what we know helps children to transition well, and areas for further exploration.
- ✓ Funding 4 projects (listed in Annex A) that aim to support young people to continue to achieve well from key stage 2 to key stage 3 by focusing on areas including; improving the cross-phase curriculum, developing a more consistent teaching approach and supporting more vulnerable children.
- ✓ We will evaluate the interventions in these 4 projects to better understand what is most and least effective in helping children maintain good progress from primary to secondary school.

#### In 2020/21 our activities will include

- Implementing the 4 projects and closely monitoring them to ensure they deliver as planned and learning is captured along the way.

#### Our targets for 2021/22 are:

- For pupils involved in funded pilot projects to make greater progress during year 7 and 8 than control groups/comparable cohorts.
- To build on project outcomes by developing practical advice for schools in the region that will benefit future cohorts of pupils and contribute to the evidence base.



## Challenge 2

# To unlock the potential of key secondary schools in the North East

### Why this is our focus

- Outcomes at key stage 4 and key stage 5 in the North East are consistently below the England average. The region has the lowest percentage of secondary schools with an Ofsted judgement of 'good' and 'outstanding' in the country.

### How we are tackling this challenge

- ✓ Launched our ONE Vision schools programme, a 3-year offer of targeted improvement support, and identified the 28 schools (listed in Annex B) that will benefit and are committed to making it happen.
- ✓ Completed a comprehensive analysis of need across quality of education, governance and finance for all ONE Vision schools. This identified key priorities that fully funded targeted improvement support will help to address.
- ✓ Offered expert guidance from the Education Endowment Foundation on effective implementation of evidence-based improvement in schools; and provided opportunities for ONE Vision schools to learn from a high performing school in a similar context.

### In 2020/21 our activities will include

- Delivery of improvement activity in all 28 ONE Vision schools and termly progress reviews to monitor the impact and adapt if necessary.

### Our targets for 2021/22 are:

- To move the ONE Vision schools to national average Progress 8 and towards an Ofsted judgement of at least 'good'\*.

\*subject to Ofsted inspection schedule



## Challenge 3

# Some schools struggle to recruit, retain and develop great teachers

### Why this is our focus

- There are no great schools without great teachers. A key barrier to improvement in some North East secondary schools is that they struggle to recruit, retain and develop great teachers. School leaders report that the issues are most acute in rural areas, disadvantaged areas, in schools judged by Ofsted to be 'inadequate' or 'requires improvement', and in specific subject areas.

### How we are tackling this challenge

- ✓ Analysed the recruitment, retention and development issues in the region to identify how best to strengthen, develop and upskill the workforce, and focus our efforts on the issues and areas in greatest need.
- ✓ Prioritising the North East within wider department programmes to support teacher recruitment, retention and development of the workforce.
- ✓ Extending the reach of the Teacher Internship programme so that more schools can benefit, as well as establishing a bespoke programme of support for maths teachers and leaders in up to 30 secondary schools.

### In 2020/21 our activities will include

- Delivering a 2-year package of structured training and support for new teachers at the start of their career, underpinned by the Early Career Framework, from September 2020 a year ahead of national roll out.
- From September 2020, implementing the programme of support for maths teachers and leaders; and helping more schools to participate in the Teacher Internship programme.

### Our targets for 2021/22 are:

- For a high proportion of schools with Newly Qualified Teachers in the North East to opt into and benefit from the Early Career Framework.
- Schools report that funded activity to support them in maths teaching has a positive and measurable impact.



## Challenge 4

### Too few young people find a pathway to a good career

#### Why this is our focus

- The North East is the region with the lowest percentage of young people in a sustained education, employment or training destination after key stage 4 and key stage 5.

#### How we are tackling this challenge

- ✓ Built strong partnerships with key regional stakeholders including the region's two Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) to ensure better pathways to a good career.
- ✓ The LEPs have consulted with all 28 ONE Vision schools to understand what will really make a difference to young people when it comes to securing employment, apprenticeships or moving to further education.
- ✓ Developed a 2-year enhanced offer of personalised advice and guidance for up to 30 young people in each ONE Vision school to help them to make the best of their strengths, interests and aspirations.
- ✓ Building on existing links with businesses to secure more apprenticeships, traineeships and other opportunities for young people.

#### In 2020/21 our activities will include

- Supporting our LEPs to deliver the enhanced offer of careers and business engagement support for ONE Vision schools, and developing plans for monitoring impact.

#### Our targets for 2021/22 are:

- All ONE Vision schools to meet all 8 Gatsby benchmarks.
- Increased percentage of young people from ONE Vision schools in a sustained education, employment or training destination after key stage 4 and key stage 5.





## Challenge 5

Too few young people progress to higher education, particularly to the top tier universities.

### Why this is our focus

- Over the last 5 years, the North East has had the second lowest higher education entry rate in England and is 1 of 3 regions with the lowest percentage of pupils (14%) going to a top tier university.

### How we are tackling this challenge

- ✓ Expanding all aspects of the 2019 to 2021 North East Collaborative Outreach Programme (NECOP) programme to the ONE Vision schools that are not currently eligible to benefit from this programme.
- ✓ Working collaboratively with key partners including universities, colleges and schools to improve access to higher education from the supported schools and to embed the improvements beyond the 3 years of funding.
- ✓ Establishing an approach by the Elephant Group to improve access to the top third universities for non-selective state school students.

### In 2020/21 our activities will include

- Supporting NECOP to deliver their expanded outreach programme to benefit young people from low participation backgrounds and with potential to progress to higher education.
- Encouraging young people to think about higher education by implementing a 'nudge' behavioural science approach. This includes current students writing to young people about their experience in higher education. This approach builds on a successful randomised controlled trial.

### Our targets for 2021/22 are:

- To secure an increase in the rate of North East applications and entry to higher education of at least the national rate of increase.
- Number of additional young people accessing NECOP activities increases as a result of ONE Investment.

## Annex A – Challenge 1: Transition projects

Lead organisation and project summary	Areas with participating schools
<p><b>Churchill Community College</b></p> <p>The project focuses on improving outcomes for disadvantaged students through upskilling teachers to implement a consistent cross-phase pedagogical approach, which exploits purposeful classroom talk in order to deepen and extend learning, and develop students' oral language skills.</p>	<p>Newcastle upon Tyne North Tyneside South Tyneside</p>
<p><b>Hartlepool Borough Council</b></p> <p>This project focuses on emotional health and well-being of pupils. It will equip schools to identify and support vulnerable individuals with more intensive interventions so that they continue to thrive as they progress to key stage 3.</p>	<p>Hartlepool</p>
<p><b>Northern Saints Catholic Education Trust</b></p> <p>This project will focus on bringing about continuation of curriculum and pedagogy between key stage 2 and key stage 3 across EBacc subjects.</p>	<p>Darlington Durham South Tyneside Stockton-on-Tees</p>
<p><b>The Legacy Learning Trust</b></p> <p>The project will implement a consistent approach to teaching reading skills during key stage 2 and key stage 3, using the evidence-based Reciprocal Reading programme as a targeted intervention focused on reading comprehension.</p>	<p>Hartlepool Middlesbrough North Tyneside Northumberland Redcar and Cleveland Stockton-on-Tees Sunderland</p>

## Annex B – Challenge 2: ONE Vision schools

<b>ONE Vision school name</b>	<b>Local Authority</b>
Haughton Academy	Darlington
Polam Hall School	Darlington
St Aidan's Church of England Academy	Darlington
Wyvern Academy	Darlington
Bishop Barrington School, A Sports with Mathematics College	Durham
Greenfield Community College, A Specialist Arts and Science School	Durham
The Durham Federation (Durham Community Business College for Technology and Enterprise and Fyndoune Community College)	Durham
Tanfield School, Specialist College of Science and Engineering	Durham
Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy	Gateshead
Manor Community Academy	Hartlepool
St Hild's Church of England Voluntary Aided School	Hartlepool
Trinity Catholic College	Middlesbrough
Unity City Academy	Middlesbrough
Excelsior Academy	Newcastle upon Tyne
Kenton School	Newcastle upon Tyne
Monkseaton Middle School	North Tyneside
Berwick Academy	Northumberland
James Calvert Spence College	Northumberland
NCEA Duke's Secondary School	Northumberland
The Blyth Academy	Northumberland
Freebrough Academy	Redcar and Cleveland
Laurence Jackson School	Redcar and Cleveland
Rye Hills Academy	Redcar and Cleveland
Thornaby Academy	Stockton-on-Tees
Biddick Academy	Sunderland
Farringdon Community Academy	Sunderland
Hetton School	Sunderland
Monkwearmouth Academy	Sunderland



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## Opportunity North East

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