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# Manual of Good Practice from 14-19 Pathfinders

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# About this Manual

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- 1.1** 14-19 Pathfinders were set up to test different models of delivering 14-19 education and training. Twenty-five Phase One Pathfinders began in January 2003, with a further 14 Phase Two Pathfinders supported since September 2003. This Manual explores different aspects of Pathfinder delivery, and outlines aims, approaches, good practice examples, what works, and barriers and solutions. It will be of interest to individuals working with young people aged 14-19, whether strategic planners, members of local partnerships, those managing and delivering provision, or those involved in supporting young people.
- 1.2** This Manual provides information on the development of 14-19 provision from different perspectives. Guidance and good practice is explored in relation to the work of:
- Schools
  - Colleges
  - Work-Based Learning (WBL) training providers
  - Employers
  - Connexions
  - Local Education Authorities (LEAs)
  - Higher Education Institutions

The Manual aims to familiarise readers with the good practice material available on the DfES website to support the implementation of the 14-19 reforms [www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19). It is envisaged that the website will be updated as additional material becomes available rather than issuing revised copies of the Manual. Readers are advised to refer to the corresponding parts of the website to access the latest material. In particular, readers who wish to follow-up on the case studies featured in the Manual should refer to the website for the most up-to-date contact details.

- 1.3** The Department commissioned ECOTEC Research and Consulting Ltd to research and develop this Manual of Good Practice. A wide range of material has been used, including

regular Pathfinders' reports, the findings of three national evaluations (years one<sup>1</sup> and two<sup>2</sup> and equality issues<sup>3</sup>), and primary research carried out for the Manual itself. This involved interviews with regional Pathfinder co-ordinators, local Pathfinder co-ordinators, and practitioners. Over 90 interviews were conducted from across 21 14-19 Pathfinders, and included representatives from schools, colleges, employers, WBL training providers, LEAs, Connexions, Education Business Partnerships (EBPs) and universities.

- 1.4 The Manual focuses on *how* providers developed good practice, *what* barriers arose and *how* these were overcome. It identifies what the practical components of good practice are and *why* they have worked.

## Frequently asked questions

- 1.5 This Manual will help you with the following questions:

- How can partnerships best be developed?  
Successful collaboration is developed through careful planning, clear management arrangements and sharing roles and responsibilities. Approaches include **building on existing partnerships and activities** to incorporate existing good practice; and developing **strategic management** and **operational management** systems to ensure projects are based on strong leadership and clear direction.
- Why should employers get involved in 14-19 provision?  
Employer led activities can help to: address local skills gaps; encourage colleges and training providers to support the needs of local industry; and inform young people about local employment opportunities. Approaches include **involving employers in curriculum design** to broaden the curriculum; improving work-related learning by **addressing skills gaps**; and delivering **skills roadshows** to inform young people's subject and career choices.
- How have providers supported 14-19 year olds to explore learning opportunities, and remain committed to their studies?  
Activities have ranged from **e-learning** to the use of **local skills centres and mobile learning facilities** which increase access to local provision and enable young people to test different vocational options. **Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) and Personalised Learning** approaches have prompted students to be more pro-active in their subject choice, encouraging young people to take ownership of their career pathway. Personalised Learning supports young people to develop Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) which map their progress towards personal objectives and goals.
- How have providers broadened the curriculum that they are able to offer 14-19 learners?  
Providers have supported Gifted and Talented pupils through **accelerated learning; master classes**; and **fast tracking to early exam entry**. Learners with Special Educational Needs (SEN), under-achievers and those at risk of exclusion have benefited from **supported work experience; learning at a slower pace at Key Stage 4** and **e-learning** to support entry level qualifications.

1 Higham, J., Haynes, G., Wragg, C., and Yeomans, D. (2004) *14-19 Pathfinders: An Evaluation of the First Year. Research Report RR504*, London, DfES.

2 Higham, J., and Yeomans, D. (2005) *Collaborative Approaches to 14-19 Provision: A report on the second year of the 14-19 Pathfinders Initiative*, London, DfES.

3 Haynes, G., Wragg, C., and Mason, K. (2005) *Equality and Pathfinders Project Final Report*, London, DfES.

- What measures should be put in place early on to help sustain partnerships?  
**Sustainability** has been achieved through establishing clear partnership commitments, common working practices and funding staff to develop work-related learning systems, common timetabling, and mainstream systems for e-learning and ILPs.

## Policy Context

- 1.6** The commitment to develop a programme of Pathfinders, as part of the Government's plans for education and training reform, was first given in the Green Paper *14-19: extending opportunities, raising standards* (February 2002). The Government's commitment to strengthening 14-19 provision builds on previous vocational education programmes dating back to the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative in 1982. The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) jointly funded the programme, over the period 2002/03 to 2004/05, investing a total of £46m. The Pathfinder programme was strongly linked to related initiatives such as the Increased Flexibility for 14-16 Year Olds Programme (IFP). Good practice from 14-19 Pathfinders will inform provision to be developed in response to the White Paper *14-19 Education and Skills* (February 2005). At the start of each chapter, the Manual highlights how Pathfinder findings can support this process.

## Policy Into Practice

- 1.7** Pathfinders operated in a diverse range of socio-economic and geographical circumstances: the inner cities, and deprived, urban, and rural areas. The programme supported the development of locally focused provision. Activities and resources were tailored to particular target groups, local circumstances, and local socio-economic needs by addressing skills gaps and working with growth sectors.
- 1.8** In rural areas with sparse populations, Pathfinders addressed transport issues. Planning was essential to use institutions for full days to justify additional costs and longer travelling time. In contrast, Pathfinders in urban areas had more planning flexibility as institutions tended to be closer together, with better transport connections. Urban Pathfinders, working in high population density areas, often tailored activity to specific target groups of young people, including those of different ethnic backgrounds and those with learning needs. We give examples throughout the Manual of how Pathfinder activities were tailored to local operating contexts.

## The 14-19 Pathfinder Programme's Key Themes

- 1.9** During the three year programme, a number of key themes evolved, as the national evaluation reports for years one and two have documented. For example, in year one, themes included developing collaborative working and broadening curriculum provision; whilst year two emphasised engaging employers, innovative approaches to designing and delivering vocational courses, and addressing key skills gaps in specific professions. (These reports can be accessed on the good practice section of the 14-19 web site [www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19).)
- 1.10** Many of the programme themes interlink, so to make full use of practical case studies showing how good practice has been developed, implemented and supported, we have grouped them into six main over-arching themes (Table 1).

**Table 1. Content of over-arching themes**

<b>Over-arching themes</b>	<b>Core themes included</b>
<b>Collaboration</b>	Partnership development, implementation and management
<b>Enriching the curriculum</b>	Broadening the curriculum provision; and involving employers in curriculum design
<b>Meeting students' needs</b>	Varying the pace of learning: accelerated learning for gifted and talented pupils; and learning at a slower pace for those with SEN, under-achievers, and young people at risk of exclusion
<b>Education and work</b>	Engaging employers; work-related learning and work-based learning; and addressing labour market skills gaps
<b>Inclusive provision</b>	Innovation in programme design and delivery; Information, Advice and Guidance and Personalised Learning; provision to overcome transport difficulties; and promoting equality
<b>Sustainability</b>	Mainstreaming successful activity

## Manual Structure

**1.11** These over-arching themes form the main chapters of the Manual as follows:

- **Chapter Two – Collaboration:** this section explores the significance of collaboration as an underpinning principle of the programme;
- **Chapter Three – Enriching the curriculum:** this section tracks the development of broader curriculum provision;
- **Chapter Four – Meeting students' needs:** this section discusses the development of approaches to vary the pace of learning;
- **Chapter Five – Education and work:** this section covers the development of work-related and work-based learning approaches, such as: vocational learning experiences in the workplace; Apprenticeships; and work-related IAG;
- **Chapter Six – Inclusive provision:** this section explores activities that promote the inclusion of all learners aged 14-19, such as innovative programme design; IAG and Personalised Learning; improving access to learning opportunities; and promoting equality; and
- **Chapter Seven – Sustainability:** this section explores how Pathfinders have so far mainstreamed activity.

**1.12** Each chapter includes 'what works' information boxes and a selection of case studies to illustrate good practice. Annex B includes the detailed case studies.

# Collaboration

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## Aim

2.1 The 14-19 White Paper describes the importance of collaborative working:

**We want institutions in each locality to work together to decide how best to deliver the 14-19 offer, with each institution able to play to its strengths. To support them we will provide a range of examples, drawing on the experience of the 14-19 pathfinders and IFP that show how this can be done well. We will provide advice to help institutions that want to contract provision from each other or to enter into shared staffing or governance arrangements. We will legislate to increase the scope for joint governance arrangements between schools and FE colleges to strengthen collaborative activity.**

*14-19 Education and Skills (February 2005, paragraph 11.32).*

2.2 The 14-19 Pathfinders generated increased collaboration and were characterised by locally tailored delivery models. Generic lessons for successful collaboration emerged from individual Pathfinder experiences. The type and availability of potential partner organisations was a key element in partnership development. Alignment with local employment concerns and addressing local skills gaps also underpinned fruitful collaboration.

2.3 This chapter looks at:

- Establishing successful collaboration: guidance on partnership development
- Managing successful partnerships: guidance on partnership implementation
- 'What works' boxes: checklists on successful delivery
- Overcoming barriers: issues and solutions
- Good practice case studies from individual Pathfinders on collaboration are in Annex B



## Establishing Successful Collaboration

- 2.4 Successful collaboration was established by:
- building on existing partnerships;
  - building on existing provision; and
  - identifying appropriate and relevant partners.

### Building on existing partnerships

- 2.5 Pathfinders built on existing partnership arrangements to support professional development, reduce administrative burdens, and support different paces of learning. Existing partnerships also supported the work of teachers, through collaboration with agencies like Connexions. In many cases, partnerships built on arrangements already in place through the IFP, or strong links with Excellence in Cities and Aim Higher<sup>4</sup>, as the Shropshire case study (p111) demonstrates. Collaboration was easiest to promote where a core management group was established and partners had worked together previously. See Cumbria's case study (p49) for information.

#### What works: Building on existing partnerships

- Linking with existing initiatives to support and diversify local developments
- Linking with other partnerships to build on existing good practice and promote continuity in local delivery
- Networking with local support services, such as Connexions, to ensure a co-ordinated approach
- Learning from the management arrangements of previous partnerships
- Encouraging established partnerships to support new activity

### Building on existing provision

- 2.6 Pathfinders were encouraged to diversify, or build upon, existing successful activity. This provided an established platform or springboard from which to develop new approaches and materials. Learning from previous initiatives, rather than 'reinventing the wheel', reduced the lead-in time needed to establish new partnerships and working practices and the partnerships needed to deliver them. Using previous partnerships outputs as the Pathfinder starting point also reduced potential duplication with other initiatives, and secured longer-term support for co-ordinating local 14-19 service delivery. See Cumbria's case study (p49) for information.
- 2.7 An initial developmental phase was essential, regardless of the level of existing activity. Pathfinders ran local conferences, fora, seminars and networking events to identify potential partners and priorities for delivery. The events promoted rapport, sharing of ideas and existing good practice. See Sheffield's case study (p59) for information.

4 Higham, J. et al (2004) 14-19 Pathfinders: An Evaluation of the First Year

**What works: Building on existing provision**

- Conferences, seminars and networking activities initially to establish collaboration and identify existing good practice
- Ensuring the commitment of key local players such as the LEA, LSC, Further Education (FE) college(s) and Local Learning Partnership
- Linking with other initiatives, such as the IFP and the Aim Higher Programme
- Using the outputs of previous partnership work as the starting point for Pathfinder work
- Identifying outputs and actions

**Identifying appropriate and relevant partners**

- 2.8** Having researched existing local partnerships and activity, it was critical for Pathfinders to ensure that they had engaged with all necessary partners. Partnerships included the LEA, local LSC, Connexions, EBP, FE colleges, secondary and special schools, Higher Education Institutions, employers/employer groups, WBL providers and Local Learning Partnerships. However, the structure and size of individual partnerships varied.
- 2.9** Schools and colleges were extensively involved in most Pathfinders from the outset, as were employers and training providers. The scale of employer engagement varied with most employers involved in course design and delivery. However, the Tower Hamlets (Deloitte) case study illustrates an employer-led delivery model. Pathfinders found it more difficult to involve Higher Education Institutions, special schools and independent schools, but some did succeed. See the Wolverhampton (p66), Lewisham (p55) and City of Nottingham (p71) case studies for information.
- 2.10** The geographical scale of the Pathfinders varied greatly. Some covered a number of whole LEA areas (such as the Black Country model), whilst others concentrated on specific areas (such as the Hampshire model).

**What works: Identifying appropriate and relevant partners**

- Consulting a variety of sources to identify relevant partners
- Developing provisional aims and objectives that support existing local priorities
- Approaching key local players and fund holders (such as the LEA and EBP) and 'selling' the value of activity
- Gaining buy-in from a cross section of local providers, including schools, colleges and training providers
- Securing employer interest to help develop the activity focus and finalise aims and objectives

**Managing Successful Partnerships**

- 2.11** Managing successful partnerships was achieved by:
- agreeing the 'right' management structure;
  - strategic management; and
  - operational management.

## Agreeing the 'right' management structure

- 2.12** 14-19 Pathfinders developed a range of management structures. Some were more formal than others, ranging from formal Federations to working groups. Some partnerships were 'inclusive' and involved a wide range of providers; others were more tightly focused, with members representing a range of local interest groups. Levels of collaboration varied, reflecting the responsibilities and contributions of different partners. Collaboration ranged from local strategy development to co-ordinated delivery. Collaboration included joint institutional planning, and the development of common curriculum materials. Management arrangements were often determined by the scale and scope of the partnership; the number of institutions, staff and students involved, and the geographical area covered.

### What works: Agreeing the 'right' management structure

- Deciding the scope and size of the partnership. (See the year two national evaluation report for detailed information on management structures. This can be accessed on the good practice section of the 14-19 web site at [www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19).)
  - Determining if working groups should be established within larger partnerships to share responsibility
  - Confirming the capacity and interest of each partner to help manage the project
  - Agreeing how formal management arrangements should be
  - Securing the commitment of local key players to partnership activity
- 2.13** Management arrangements commonly worked at two levels: strategic and operational. The guidance below provides 'pick and mix' options to adapt to local delivery models.

## Strategic management

- 2.14** Strategic management was frequently provided by a steering group. Strong local leadership, and clear ownership of responsibility for developing specific activities, were critical to success. Models which embraced changing styles of leadership to reflect partnership developments worked well. Agreeing partnership expectations, standards and working practices was also important.
- 2.15** Strong **local leadership** helped "retain a sense of the big picture", by integrating other initiatives and funding streams. A charismatic or inspirational leader helped encourage potential partner organisations to become involved. Leadership also directed activity development by operational managers. For example, the City of Nottingham Pathfinder (p47) employed four full time Enterprise Partnership Managers to facilitate change on the ground. The Wolverhampton (p66) and Sheffield (p57) case studies provide further examples.
- 2.16** Successful Pathfinders embraced **change management approaches**, adopting different management styles at different stages of the project cycle. While strong leadership remained important, to safeguard continuity and awareness, sound operational management became essential at the delivery stage. Successful partnerships shifted from initial charismatic leadership to a more democratic management model with **devolved responsibilities** to guide implementation. See the South Gloucestershire (Kingswood Partnership) (p149) and Southwark (p61) case studies for information.
- 2.17** **Partnership standards and working practices** were essential to quality assure delivery. Strategic management helped develop and endorse partnership protocols, such as on health and safety issues. The City of Nottingham Pathfinder developed health and

safety protocols to safeguard learning outside the school environment. Here, participating schools and sports clubs collaborated to devise health and safety guidelines. This enabled students to complete the Personal Exercise Programme component of their Physical Education GCSE at a local sports club (Nottingham Forest Football Club or Nottingham Rugby Club). See the City of Nottingham case study (p47) for information.

### **2.18 Young people have also represented their peers in strategic management fora.**

For example, young people are represented on Lewisham's 14-19 strategy group (p77) which meets termly, and student representatives participated in Durham's Pathfinder (p124) steering group.

#### **What works: Strategic management**

- Commitment from senior individuals from all partner organisations
- Strong local leadership, particularly at the outset to encourage project development
- Agreeing a common 'vision' and purpose for the project
- Identifying outputs and actions
- Allowing sufficient time to develop processes and practice
- Meetings at key milestones
- Establishing health and safety protocols to safeguard learning outside the school environment
- Embracing change management and devolving responsibility to delivery agents as the partnership matures
- Ensuring young people are represented in strategic management decisions

#### **Operational management**

- 2.19** Effective operational management and implementation often involved devolving responsibility to providers. For example, the Knowsley Pathfinder (p75) established five task groups on the following themes: curriculum, vocational skills, e-learning, student entitlement, and employer liaison. An individual with thematic expertise led each task group, and the commitment of participants and regular meetings resulted in the model working very successfully. An umbrella management group supported the task groups.
- 2.20** The Lewisham Pathfinder (p55) devolved responsibility for relevant curriculum areas to independent schools to improve local curriculum pathways. South Gloucestershire (Kingswood Partnership) Pathfinder developed a checklist outlining the practical issues organisations must agree on, including communications, recruitment and student support. See the South Gloucestershire (Kingswood Partnership) case study (p149) for information.
- 2.21** Young people also made a positive contribution to operational management. Some Pathfinders included young people in designing, testing and evaluating activities. For example, Derby City's Pathfinder (p118) ran a student competition to test the strengths and weaknesses of a CD Rom produced by the partnership.

### What works: Operational management

- Regular meetings and consistent attendance
- Clear checklists and agreement on responsibilities
- A central co-ordinating role: Pathfinder co-ordinators have been critical as enablers of, and catalysts for, change
- Staff development time
- Identifying outputs and actions
- Capitalising on different organisations' strengths
- Establishing a common curriculum
- Developing transferable materials for use across the Pathfinder to ensure learning quality
- Consulting young people to help design, trial and evaluate activities

### Overcoming Barriers

**2.22** So far the Manual has identified generic good practice principles underpinning successful partnership development. But issues and barriers did threaten collaboration. This section highlights solutions to potential pitfalls.

Barrier	Solution
Difficulties in agreeing common timetabling across providers emerged in some areas.	Investing considerable staff development time and resources to agree common timetables. The Sheffield (p57) and South Gloucestershire (Kingswood Partnership) (p90) case studies demonstrate successful approaches.
Varied perceptions between teaching staff and management around the teaching quality, discipline and pastoral care offered by local providers.	Activities such as staff development, establishing a common curriculum, and developing new curriculum materials for use across the Pathfinder were implemented. Management arrangements included signing a contracting agreement or standard, including quality assurance and monitoring mechanisms. The South Gloucestershire (Kingswood Partnership) case study (p149) demonstrates a successful approach.
Demarcating responsibilities between school careers staff and Connexions proved challenging in some areas.	Careers staff from schools and Connexions collaborated to provide consistent careers information, and develop links with local employers to improve careers advice and promote vocational skills to meet local skills gaps. The Islington case study (p73) demonstrates successful approaches.

<p>Strong senior management leadership both helped and hindered collaboration. Local hierarchies were initially evident in some Pathfinders, with individuals dominating the decision-making process. This limited democratic consensus could lead to some partners being suspicious of individuals' motives.</p>	<p>Management structures evolved at different partnership stages. Whilst strong leadership was often essential in the early stages of collaboration and partnership building, democratic management structures were subsequently introduced which devolved operational management responsibilities to curriculum managers. The Wolverhampton (p66) and Sheffield (p57) case studies demonstrate successful approaches.</p>
<p>Local governance issues affected some urban Pathfinders, with students transferring to provision in neighbouring boroughs. This was a particular issue for Years 7 and 12, increasing competition and reducing collaboration.</p>	<p>Local providers shared working practices and collaborated to establish complementary provision. The Gateshead case study (p53) demonstrates a successful approach.</p>
<p>Collaboration in rural Pathfinders was often hindered by transport problems.</p>	<p>Electronic communications methods were established by disparate partnerships, including video-conferencing, and email correspondence. However, an initial phase of face-to-face meetings was important in forging initial trust and commitment to a common agenda. Pathfinders also took vocational facilities into remote areas to improve access. The Hampshire case study (p130) demonstrates the use of local skills centres and mobile units. The Cumbrian case studies on e-learning (p80) and peripatetic (p51) delivery also demonstrate successful approaches.</p>

# Enriching the Curriculum

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## Aim

- 3.1 The 14-19 White Paper pledges to enrich the curriculum by introducing:
- greater choice of what and where to study and make it easier to combine academic and vocational learning... introduce new specialised Diplomas, including vocational material and GCSEs and A levels where appropriate and covering each occupational sector of the economy. The Diplomas will be available at levels 1 (foundation), 2 (GCSE) and 3 (advanced); retain GCSEs and A levels as cornerstones of the new system; put employers and Higher Education in the lead in designing specialised Diplomas through Sector Skills Councils which provide the right grounding for work and further study, supported by QCA.**

*14-19 Education and Skills (February 2005, Chapter 6 Summary).*

- 3.2 Pathfinders enriched the curriculum on offer to 14-19 year olds by increasing access to training, encouraging collaboration between local providers, and involving employers in curriculum design. These activities increased access to work-related learning, improved the quality and range of curriculum options, and offered young people opportunities to achieve in areas that reflected their strengths and interests. Many Pathfinders focused on enriching provision for 14-16 year olds, and designed an offer for the whole cohort. Some Pathfinders developed tailored curricula for small groups of Gifted and Talented students and learners who needed additional support. Activity often included increasing the number and range of vocational qualifications, such as vocational GCSEs and AVCEs. In some areas, the curriculum was broadened to help meet skills gaps in the local economy. Colleges and training providers delivered a large range of Level 1 and 2 courses (NVQs, BTECs and OCN modules), with specialised timetabling to allow attendance in school hours.

- 3.3** Activities to support learners across the ability range feature in Chapter Four; employer engagement and links with Enterprise Pathfinders feature in Chapter Five.
- 3.4** This chapter looks at:
- Successful enrichment activities: guidance on broadening the curriculum
  - ‘What works’ boxes: checklists on successful delivery
  - Overcoming barriers: issues and solutions
  - Good practice case studies from individual Pathfinders on enrichment activities are in Annex B.

## Successful Enrichment Activities

- 3.5** Successful curriculum enrichment activities included:
- accessing off-site training;
  - collaborating between schools and colleges; and
  - involving employers in curriculum design.

### Accessing off-site training

- 3.6** Off-site training provided activities to complement the school curriculum, and to increase pupils’ employability. For example, the City of Nottingham Pathfinder (p93) supported students to complete three Open College Network Units at Level 2 in office skills, telephone skills and working as part of a team in an office environment. The Units formed part of the GCSE health and social care curriculum. Students’ feedback emphasised the value of experiencing first hand “how the health centre works and runs”. Mixing with practitioners increased students’ interest in health-related careers, and they enjoyed being “treated as an adult”.
- 3.7** Off-site training also helped pupils considered at risk of disaffection to become more interested in their school work. For example, the Knowsley Pathfinder (p86) developed an ‘out-of-school programme’ which provided an alternative curriculum supported by IAG from Connexions. A mix of placements with colleges, training providers and employers combined vocational work with Key Skills. A Vocational Skills Centre, which received £2.5m capital funding from external sources, supported vocational learning. Learners could choose from over 35 optional courses outlined in an LEA-wide prospectus, including GCSEs and vocational subjects. Delivery agents included an FE college, WBL providers and local employers, including Jaguar. By September 2003, 1000 Key Stage 4 students had accessed at least one day a week off-site training. Collaboration between providers was essential to broaden the curriculum, and the Pathfinder built on the existing Knowsley 14-19 Collegiate.
- 3.8** More examples of increasing access to local provision are described in Chapter Six. These include e-learning, and peripatetic staff delivery models for rural areas. Information, Advice and Guidance is also explored in Chapter Six.



### What works: Accessing off-site training

- Development time to agree and develop the content of off-site provision with providers
- Mixing qualifications with vocational, practical and academic elements
- Providing staff time and resources to deliver out-of-school activity
- Helping pupils make connections between their school work and work-related skills
- Working with support agencies such as Connexions to provide IAG to support and prepare students for out-of-school activity

## Collaborating between schools and colleges

**3.9** In inner city and urban areas, collaboration between schools, colleges and training providers enabled students to access a range of institutions, and more young people benefited from high quality specialist facilities. Collaboration between schools and colleges broadened the curriculum on offer to students. The Gateshead Pathfinder (p53) developed a virtual sixth form college with local schools to deliver a wider range of AS/A2 and AVCE courses to post-16 students. Early evidence found improvements in retention and achievement.

**3.10** Some partnerships developed common curricula, and shared specialist staff skills to deliver a more varied curriculum. Specialist schools helped support this process. The Wolverhampton case study (p66) demonstrates how collaboration between schools and colleges can provide a city-wide curriculum, and increase access to specialist provision. The Harrow case study (p84) demonstrates further collaboration between education providers. The City of Nottingham Pathfinder (p71) provided an opportunity for independent and state schools to collaborate and design an enterprise course focused on the development of an e-gaming programme.

### What works: Collaborating between schools and colleges

- Development time required to agree and develop complementary timetables between providers
- Enabling students to access provision through different providers
- Sharing specialist staff expertise across partner organisations
- Exchanging skills and expertise in different subject areas between providers
- E-communication to increase accessibility to curriculum materials

## Involving employers in curriculum design

**3.11** Involving employers in the development of curriculum materials ensured the provision of up-to-date, commercial and industry relevant materials. This represented the first step in work-related learning delivery for some Pathfinders. Employer-led curricula broadened students' knowledge and awareness, helping them to make informed choices about work-based learning options (explored in Chapter Five). The Knowsley Pathfinder (p75) designed a new Engineering and Manufacturing GCSE and model of work experience in collaboration with Jaguar and the Sector Skills Council, and the City of Westminster Pathfinder (p95) worked in partnership with employers and Sector Skills Councils to develop industry relevant curriculum materials. The Sheffield (p109) and Coventry (p97) Pathfinders also worked in partnership with employers to develop curriculum materials.

The involvement of employers in curriculum design helped support equal opportunities. This is explored in Chapter Six and the Derby City case study (p118). Training providers played an important role in curriculum development in response to employer demands. See the Black Country case study (p69) for details.

#### What works: Involving employers in curriculum design

- Securing sufficient development time to agree and develop curriculum content with employers that promotes local industry
- Targeting local skills gaps
- Ensuring curriculum development with employers also supports the national qualifications framework
- Providing staff training in the use of curriculum materials
- Using these materials to introduce work-related learning concepts to students

## Overcoming Barriers

**3.12** The chapter identified generic good practice principles designed to broaden the curriculum. But issues and barriers did threaten these approaches. This section highlights solutions to potential pitfalls.

Barrier	Solution
Developing a broader curriculum was more difficult when providers did not have the appropriate qualifications and skills for some vocational sectors.	Pathfinders included elements of continuing professional development for teaching staff, particularly around updating and extending vocational skills, implementing employability programmes, and working with industry partners. The Tower Hamlets (Deloitte) case study (p63) demonstrates a successful approach.
Staffing issues emerged in some Pathfinders around the increased work with 14-16 year olds and need for more teaching staff.	Pathfinders invested in staff development, training and curriculum development to support providers implementing 14-19 vocational education. The Sheffield case study (p109) demonstrates how 'sector intermediaries' were employed to support education providers and improve industry links.
Work-related learning sometimes encountered capacity issues, as this required specialised facilities, such as hairdressing salons.	Pathfinders broadened the choice of vocational options on offer, and combined hands-on experience with conceptual work-related learning, through the use of industry-based interactive CD Roms. The Derby City case study (p118) demonstrates a successful approach.

<p>Implementing common timetabling proved challenging in some areas.</p>	<p>Collaboration between providers was essential to balance broadening the curriculum with ensuring students completed the core curriculum. Several Pathfinders developed ICT materials for students to catch up with learning missed whilst out on placements. The South Gloucestershire (Kingswood Partnership) case study (p137) demonstrates a successful approach.</p>
<p>Parents and students sometimes held vocational courses in low esteem. Some young people were reluctant to take up vocational options, and some schools restricted learners' involvement.</p>	<p>Pathfinders undertook promotional activities and developed IAG materials to demonstrate the value of vocational education for young people across the ability range. The Doncaster (p122) and Islington (p73) case studies demonstrate successful approaches.</p>
<p>Pathfinders commonly viewed the cost of vocational provision as a challenge to sustainability.</p>	<p>Whilst follow-on funding continues to be an issue, Pathfinders invested significantly in developments that will be self-sustaining in the medium term, after Pathfinder funding ends. Good practice in this area included investment in staff training, and curriculum and product development. South Gloucestershire (Kingswood Partnership) case study (p149) demonstrates a successful approach.</p>

# Meeting Students' Needs

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## Aim

4.1 The 14-19 White Paper meets students' needs by giving:

**young people more choice, both of what to study and where to study... We seek to ensure that all young people are stretched to achieve – whether by accelerating to higher levels of learning, increasing the breadth of their studies or by pursuing greater depth in the subjects they are learning – so that all are learning and doing their best. And we will increase our drive to re-engage those who are currently switched off by school.**

*14-19 Education and Skills (February 2005, Chapter 3 Summary).*

4.2 The 14-19 Pathfinder programme enabled young people to learn at a pace that suited them, by tailoring specialist provision for individuals and small target groups. Many Pathfinders directed most attention at under-achieving learners, but interventions also related to gender, ethnicity, disability, looked after young people and Gifted and Talented students.

4.3 The scale of Pathfinder activity ranged from that covering individual schools to whole areas. Schools collaborated with colleges and Higher Education Institutions, and also linked with training providers and voluntary organisations. The focus of activity tended to reflect the local population and socio-economic context. Several Pathfinders in inner city and urban areas focused on addressing inequalities, in particular in relation to the higher concentration of black and minority ethnic learners. Socio-economic circumstances informed priorities in deprived areas, where encouraging progression to Higher Education was often a priority. In contrast, other urban areas targeted high achievers by offering master classes delivered in partnership with Higher Education Institutions, and developed links with the Excellence in Cities and Aim Higher programmes to offer accelerated provision.

**4.4** This chapter looks at:

- Learners with SEN, under-achievers and those at risk of exclusion: guidance on learning at a slower pace, and additional support
- Gifted and Talented groups: guidance on accelerated learning approaches
- 'What works' boxes: checklists on successful delivery
- Overcoming barriers: issues and solutions
- Good practice case studies from individual Pathfinders meeting students' needs are in Annex B

## **Learners with Special Educational Needs, Under-Achievers and those at Risk of Exclusion**

**4.5** Successful approaches designed to help learners with SEN, under-achievers and those at risk of exclusion included:

- e-learning for entry level qualifications;
- supported work experience;
- learning at a slower pace at Key Stage 4; and
- dedicated provision for under-achievers, excluded pupils and those at risk of disaffection.

### **E-learning for entry level qualifications**

**4.6** Specialist schools developed e-learning for students with severe learning difficulties and physical disabilities to increase access to entry-level qualifications. Specialist schools in the South Gloucestershire (Kingswood Partnership) Pathfinder (p90) developed ILPs to support this process. Teachers built an extranet, compatible across all schools in the LEA. The extranet provided unified guidance and a learner information portfolio to support learners in managing their own learning. These tools were tailored for SEN users and supported specialist courses for this learner group.

#### **What works: E-learning for entry level qualifications**

- Introducing learners to ICT through personal development approaches
- Ring-fencing support staff time to guide learners through materials initially, and to provide continuing support in the longer term
- Interactive tools and quizzes to engage learners and show learning can be fun
- Developing a consistent approach amongst local schools and colleges to help learners access provision from different providers and ease transition through the Key Stages
- Tailoring IAG and Personalised Learning to help develop the listening and communication skills required for entry level qualifications

### **Supported work experience**

**4.7** Several Pathfinders developed supported work experience approaches to help learners achieve at Levels 1 and 2. The Wakefield Pathfinder established links with local employers to offer supported work experience and tasters. The local Fire Service provided work experience one day a week for learners working towards Level 1 and 2 qualifications. Providing supported work experience required close collaboration between

organisations to confirm commitment and give practical support. A common risk assessment process was implemented to support off-site learning and identify where learners needed additional support during their placements. The Durham Pathfinder (p100) also supported students with SEN on work placements in the construction industry.

#### What works: Supported work experience

- Developing supported work experience to help learners at Levels 1 and 2
- Engaging employers to ensure that work experience meets the needs of employers and learners
- Supporting work experience with comprehensive risk assessments for off-site training
- Providing additional support for learners during work experience
- Encouraging learners to get the most out of work experience by involving young people in developing and monitoring their ILPs

### Learning at a slower pace at Key Stage 4

- 4.8 The East Manchester Pathfinder (p82) worked with two special schools and the Prince's Trust to provide learning at a slower pace, to enable students to complete Key Stage 4 over three years. The Prince's Trust delivered the Young Enterprise element, which cut across the curriculum and helped learners prepare for life after school. The East Manchester Pathfinder (p126) provided IAG support for all learners to find appropriate post-16 learning pathways. A comprehensive web-based ILP was developed for each participant, and participating schools used the ILP to inform learner choices. The system was accessible to all staff and learners, and students were encouraged to manage their ILP on-line.

#### What works: Learning at a slower pace at Key Stage 4

- Collaboration with specialist agencies such as the Prince's Trust to support learning
- Encouraging learners to connect learning to other areas of life
- Ensuring students with learning difficulties have a longer time scale to achieve
- Tailoring IAG approaches to help learners develop realistic and positive aspirations
- E-based Personalised Learning to increase independence and ownership of the learning process

### Dedicated provision for under-achievers, excluded pupils and those at risk of disaffection

- 4.9 As an introduction to work-related learning, tailored provision was offered to students falling behind in their education. Activities concentrated on identifying students' interests and linking these to employability skills. The Southwark Pathfinder (p140) developed a dedicated sixth form Level 1 offer, providing a taster of the adult world whilst retaining the security of school. The Knowsley Pathfinder (p86) developed a programme of re-engaging 14-16 year olds at risk, which provided substantial off-site vocational provision. Importantly, all provision for these groups retained some academic element, such as access to GCSEs.

### **What works: Dedicated provision for under-achievers, excluded pupils and those at risk**

- Demonstrating the relevance of learning to future working life
- Encouraging participants to achieve qualifications, such as GCSEs
- Providing links between schools and training providers to reduce drop out over the summer holidays
- Developing links between schools and colleges to help those at risk progress their learning after compulsory schooling
- Developing practical and interactive IAG tools, such as DVDs, to demonstrate the skills used in working life

**4.10** Further guidance and good practice examples of e-learning, Personalised Learning and IAG are provided in Chapter Six.

## **Gifted and Talented Groups**

**4.11** Successful approaches developed to help Gifted and Talented groups included:

- accelerated learning on-line;
- master classes;
- fast tracking to early exam entry; and
- encouraging out-of-school learning.

**4.12** Gifted and Talented learners completed Student Apprenticeships for fast track progression to mainstream Apprenticeships, combined vocational and academic courses or pursued academic studies at a higher level to take exams early. Each method could be delivered in isolation or as a package of activities. Providers have also developed materials to support broader skills development within the Apprenticeship framework. See the Black Country case study (p69) for details of languages materials designed to support fast tracking through vocational programmes.

### **Accelerated learning on-line**

**4.13** Virtual learning environments (VLEs) created a forum for learners to progress independently. For example, the Lewisham Pathfinder (p72) developed an on-line system for students to submit work, and teachers to provide marks and feedback. Gifted and Talented students used 'Guardian Learn Premium' Key Stage 3 and 4 materials at Levels 1 and 2. Learners accessed video clips, and tested themselves on-line. On-line ILPs, which identified personal targets, also supported learners. Schools monitored these to support progression. The Lewisham Pathfinder encouraged Headteachers to allocate staff time to establish the system. External consultants with ICT expertise were an important ingredient in the successful development of the VLE.

**What works: Accelerated learning on-line**

- Hiring ICT experts to develop VLEs
- Using existing packages e.g. Guardian Learning Premium
- Ensuring software compatibility across the partnership
- Allocating staff time to manage on-line curriculum information
- Training staff to use VLE, ensuring the system is accessible to learners and supports effective learning

**Master classes**

**4.14** While most commonly provided on the school site, master classes were also delivered in the college and university environment. Colleges and training providers delivered such classes outside core learning hours, increasing access to external learning support. For example, the Harrow Pathfinder (p84) supported students to attend critical thinking classes at Middlesex University.

**4.15** The Coventry Pathfinder (p97) supplemented master classes for French GCSE with a residential trip to France to improve learners' spoken French. On-line revision programmes helped reinforce this learning. The live learning system contained archived and recorded banks of lessons. Collaboration organised on a Federation area basis supported successful delivery. Although collaboration and access to ICT resources proved challenging, close working between local schools to share staff time and resources minimised this difficulty. The Norfolk Pathfinder (p106) also provided master classes for Gifted and Talented students to develop students' vocational skills in construction, horticulture, engineering, leisure and tourism, health and social care, business and ICT.

**What works: Master classes**

- Providing opportunities for students to learn in colleges and universities, introducing Gifted and Talented pupils to Higher Education
- Extending learning hours at the start and end of the school day by using training providers and colleges
- Pooling staff time between schools and colleges to maximise learning opportunities
- Reinforcing learning through extra-curricular activities which apply learning to real-life situations
- Encouraging self-directed study to review and consolidate learning through e-learning

**Fast tracking to early exam entry**

**4.16** Fast track routes to exam entry supported Gifted and Talented students to accelerate their learning. The Harrow Pathfinder (p84) developed several fast track options. Some schools gave learners at Key Stages 3 and 4 the opportunity to start AS modules early, while others offered parallel AS/GCSE/GNVQ qualifications tailored to individual needs. Although largely delivered in school at breakfast, twilight or on Saturdays, some vocational options were delivered at college. Collaboration enabled specialist tutors to teach in different schools, and block timetabling at college increased learners' attendance. Harrow also focused on those subject areas directly related to the school's specialist status. This ensured staff time and resources were used efficiently and effectively to support learners



taking exams early. The East Manchester Pathfinder (p82) also enabled some young people to take GCSEs a year early, freeing up time in Year 11 for them to develop their enterprise abilities and team work skills through Duke of Edinburgh awards activities.

#### **What works: Fast tracking to early exam entry**

- Extending the school day to offer additional learning time at the beginning and end
- Allocating additional teacher time to deliver provision in school
- Collaboration between schools and colleges to develop common timetabling, enabling more learners to benefit from college provision
- Supporting learning with on-line materials and tests
- Informing fast track subject choice through IAG and Personalised Learning, encouraging students to develop their own career pathways

### **Encouraging out-of-school learning**

- 4.17** Some Pathfinders encouraged learners to demonstrate additional competencies outside the exam framework. Evidence-based portfolios were used to showcase extra-curricular work. Learners were credited for achievements gained outside of school through schemes such as the Duke of Edinburgh awards and Millennium Volunteers, as demonstrated by the Lewisham case study (p88). E-learning tools were also developed to support independent study (see the Cumbria case study (p80) for example).

#### **What works: Encouraging out-of-school learning**

- Incorporating out-of-school learning opportunities into IAG support for learners
- Introducing outside speakers to promote out-of-school learning
- Working in partnership to gain agreement for accreditation of out-of-school learning across all education providers
- Involving learners in recording and demonstrating achievement on ILPs
- Informing policy development around including out-of-school learning competencies in progression routes to Further and Higher Education

### **Overcoming Barriers**

- 4.18** The chapter has identified generic good practice principles on varying the pace of learning to meet students' needs. But issues and barriers did threaten these approaches. This section highlights solutions to potential pitfalls.

<b>Barrier</b>	<b>Solution</b>
Difficulties incorporating timetabling into core hours for either accelerated or slower pace learning emerged in some Pathfinders.	Providers offered learning in twilight hours, though this raised questions about sustainability given the staff time and resources needed to maintain provision. Other Pathfinders achieved common timetabling through negotiation between schools and colleges. In Harrow, school age learners attended college courses in core hours and college tutors taught in school during core hours.
Early accelerated learning opportunities led to concerns about progression pathways for students having completed Key Stage 4 a year early in some areas.	Medium term planning was crucial as, on early completion of Key Stage 4, learners must be able to progress onto alternative programmes. The Harrow Pathfinder (p84) worked in close collaboration with Higher Education Institutions to promote longer term progression routes.
Lack of information on progression routes post-16 hindered efforts to accelerate learning in some areas.	A number of Pathfinders produced common IAG detailing all options available to learners locally. This was presented in their prospectus or web site to increase learners' awareness of possible progression routes. Support from Connexions and careers support in house also helped young people to make informed choices. The East Manchester case study (p126) demonstrates a successful approach.
Concerns over the reliability of labour market information used to develop progression routes. Consequently, routes may not meet labour market needs, and learners may not be able to fulfil their long-term careers aspirations.	Pathfinders developed links with local employers to meet the needs of both learners and employers. In Sheffield (p109), a strong partnership was established with the NHS to offer skills roadshows providing hands-on experience to encourage learners to consider a career in the health service and explore progression routes. In East Manchester (p126) strong links were developed between education providers and partners involved in local economic regeneration. Collaboration was designed to help young people develop the skills needed for employment in growth sectors.

# Education and Work

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## Aim

5.1 The 14-19 White Paper emphasises the importance of linking education and work:

**We made work-related learning a statutory requirement in the curriculum from September 2004, and are investing an extra £180 million in enterprise education from September 2005, because we are determined that pupils of all abilities and talents will develop their employability skills and attitudes and their enterprise capability, and do so with employer input to their learning and in the environment of work**

*14-19 Education and Skills (February 2005, paragraph 5.25).*

**We will continue to improve the quality and broaden the reach of employment-based training through Apprenticeships, which will come within the Diploma framework**

*14-19 Education and Skills (February 2005, Chapter 7 Summary).*

**Specialist Schools Trust ... and Specialist Schools in vocational education ... will work with other expert bodies and draw on the experience of schools that already make high quality vocational provision including through involvement with the Increased Flexibility Programme or 14-19 pathfinders**

*14-19 Education and Skills (February 2005, paragraph 11.16).*

5.2 The 14-19 Pathfinder programme supported learners at Key Stage 4 to develop links between education and work. This increased young people's motivation and achievement by showing the relevance of studying to life after school. Activities were also designed to address skills gaps and meet employers' needs.

- 5.3** For many Pathfinders the 14-16 age group were the main focus of work-based learning provision. Pathfinders collaborated with several programmes to increase work-based learning opportunities from the age of 14<sup>5</sup>, such as Student Apprenticeships, Young Apprenticeships and Enterprise Education. The Coventry case study (p97) explores the development of enterprise education in collaboration with a local University. Pathfinders also worked with the Entry to Employment programme to help learners gain entry level qualifications. Learners aged 16-19 were supported to achieve Level 2 literacy, numeracy and ICT, to help their employability. Employers, including small and medium sized enterprises, were essential in developing successful approaches to promote the link between education and work.
- 5.4** This chapter looks at:
- Successful activities linking education and work: guidance on delivery and support
  - 'What works' boxes: checklists on successful delivery
  - Overcoming barriers: issues and solutions
  - Good practice case studies from individual Pathfinders on linking education and work are in Annex B

## Successful Activities Linking Education and Work

- 5.5** Successful approaches designed to help learners make the connection between education and work included:
- addressing skills gaps;
  - vocational learning experiences in the workplace;
  - exploring links with Young Apprenticeships;
  - work-related Information, Advice and Guidance; and
  - skills roadshows.

### Addressing skills gaps

- 5.6** Work-related activities were designed to address local skills gaps and promote growth employment sectors. Some Pathfinders undertook and commissioned research to inform curriculum development in this area. For example, the City of Westminster Pathfinder (p95) undertook development and networking activities with employers to ensure the future planning of 14-19 provision addressed local skills gaps. Engaging employers and training providers early helped develop work-based learning to address local skills gaps, as demonstrated by Durham's Pathfinder (p100) based on the construction industry. Some 14-19 Pathfinders linked with Enterprise Pathfinders to engage employers, whilst other Pathfinders engaged employers through 14-19 strategic groups. See the Coventry case study (p97) for information.
- 5.7** The Tower Hamlets (Deloitte) Pathfinder (p63) helped young people from disadvantaged London boroughs develop their employability skills. The Pathfinder met employers' needs and local skills gaps by focusing initially on the retail sector. 16 to 18 year olds with fewer than three A-C GCSEs formed the core target group. Employers supported learners to improve their employability skills such as listening, communicating, attitude and behaviour at work, through work placements for trainees. A common assessment

5 Work-related learning was made a statutory requirement at Key Stage 4 from September 2004. Work-related learning is defined as any planned activity that uses work as a context for learning; work-based learning is any learning or training in vocational, occupational or general areas by people employed or based at a workplace.

framework, and the SHL aptitude test, supported delivery. The Black Country Pathfinder (p69) developed a range of language materials in response to employer demands for improved language skills, and linked this to the Apprenticeship framework.

#### **What works: Addressing skills gaps**

- Encouraging employers on to the strategic management board to ensure labour market needs are met
- Conducting research into skills gaps to inform the development of provision
- Engaging employers in curriculum development
- Using a common assessment framework to support achievement
- Building on existing links with related programmes such as the IFP and Enterprise Pathfinders to maximise resources and promote continuity

### **Vocational learning experiences in the work place**

- 5.8** Employer engagement was essential to provide work placements for learners to support their vocational learning. The City of Nottingham Pathfinder (p93) developed a work experience model with the local Primary Care Trust, three local Health Centres and the NHSU Open Road project. The model supported students studying health and social care GCSE. Three students from one school were placed in health centres for a day a week over an eight week period. The placement enabled students to practise work-related GCSE elements, such as answering the phone, booking appointments and helping the health visitor. Participants completed three Open College Network units at Level 2. The inclusion of OCN units helped the students take responsibility for their own learning by completing work when staff were busy.

#### **What works: Vocational learning experiences in the workplace**

- Employer engagement to ensure placements are designed to help young people achieve qualifications
- Flexible timetabling to allow learners to undertake work-related learning
- Securing commitment from senior staff to facilitate the process
- Promoting open dialogue between all partners to ensure shared expectations are met and any problems arising are dealt with effectively
- Encouraging young people to take responsibility for their own learning when staff are busy

### **Exploring links with Young Apprenticeships**

- 5.9** A few Pathfinders linked with the IFP to explore how the Young Apprenticeship initiative could support young people to connect education and work. The Young Apprenticeship programme enables students to undertake extended work experience and vocational qualifications outside school for two days a week, while continuing with core curriculum studies during Key Stage 4. The Cumbria Pathfinder researched alternative options to enhance their Apprenticeship provision in line with these developments in the longer term. This occurred as a result of timetabling difficulties within their current Apprenticeship provision which had resulted in work placements being scheduled for half terms, work experience weeks and summer holidays. The Pathfinder was concerned that this placed too much pressure on learners, and also created capacity issues for employers and training providers. Improvement options included introducing a double

time Level 2 option; offering a vocationally-related qualification; and ensuring the relevant expertise of FE colleges and WBL providers. Pathfinders were keen to ringfence student time to participate in work-related learning for several days a week in the longer term, in line with Young Apprenticeship policy.

#### **What works: Exploring links with Young Apprenticeships**

- Developing links with related programmes such as the IFP
- Ringfencing specific days in a week for students to participate in work-related learning
- Ensuring work placements enable students to develop competencies and work towards accredited units
- Supporting participants by offering related vocational qualifications on site
- Working in partnership with employers and training providers to ensure that initiatives address local skills gaps

### **Work-related Information, Advice and Guidance**

- 5.10** Information, Advice and Guidance providers, such as Connexions, supported work-related learning by providing IAG on available options. Information, Advice and Guidance providers also helped young people develop CV writing, confidence building, and communication skills. The Southwark Pathfinder (p61) worked with Connexions to develop a directory that mapped existing provision and progression routes. Connexions mailed it to all Year 9, 10 and 11 students, and produced leaflets for parents and guardians. The directory was distributed to libraries and all Local Authority officers. A video called 'Taking Control' was produced, explaining 'learn and earn' options in the borough. The video was disseminated to Pupil Referral Units and agencies dealing with excluded students. Connexions provided an independent view on IAG, promoting collaboration between local schools and colleges. The 'not in education, employment or training' (NEET) cohort across Southwark borough reduced by over 500 students during the Pathfinder's lifetime. The Norfolk Pathfinder (p106) developed links with Connexions and employers to improve the quality of vocational IAG available to students.

#### **What works: Work-related Information, Advice and Guidance**

- Connexions input, providing independent IAG
- IAG providers helping young people develop work-related skills such as communication and listening
- Incorporating work-related learning opportunities in generic IAG materials
- Illustrating progression opportunities with real life examples from employers, to help learners make links between option choices and employment
- Collaboration between IAG providers and schools and colleges to help reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)

- 5.11** Information, Advice and Guidance good practice can also be found in Chapter Six.

### **Skills roadshows**

- 5.12** Some Pathfinders developed skills roadshows in key sectors to enhance work-related learning. Schools, training providers and employers ran school-based skills roadshows and taster sessions to give learners hands-on experience. Skills roadshows differed from traditional careers fair approaches by providing tasters and interactive opportunities for

young people to learn and test their vocational skills as well as gain IAG. In some areas, skills roadshows took place at universities and employers' premises. The Doncaster Pathfinder (p98) delivered skills roadshows through training providers visiting local schools. The approach overcame problems transporting learners to and from external sites. Similar roadshows and taster sessions were delivered at colleges, universities and in the work place. The 'hands-on' sessions focused on employment sectors with skills gaps (health); job opportunities (construction); and learner interest (hair and beauty).

**What works: Skills roadshows**

- Training providers delivering roadshows in schools to test suitability before schools release learners for off-site activities
- Focusing on sectors that reflect job opportunities and learner interests to engage employers and training providers
- Delivering 'hands-on' practical demonstrations to give learners a real understanding of the skills and tasks involved
- Communicating to enhance education providers' understanding of different sectors
- Being flexible to meet learners' needs
- Using non-traditional role models to challenge gender stereotypes

**Overcoming Barriers**

**5.13** The chapter has identified good practice approaches to work-related learning, including work-based learning. But issues and barriers did threaten these approaches. This section highlights solutions to potential pitfalls.

<b>Barrier</b>	<b>Solution</b>
Setting up placements was time consuming and difficult in some areas because time off-site needed to coincide with school timetables.	Early planning and lead-in time was crucial to develop relationships with local training providers and employers. Pathfinders also worked with local agencies such as Connexions and EBP to identify placement opportunities. The Shropshire case study (p111) demonstrates a successful approach.
Business pressures prevented some employers from taking on additional learners and responsibilities in some areas.	Some Pathfinders employed staff to liaise between employers and schools, colleges and training providers. This focused employer time on targeted intervention. The Sheffield Pathfinder (p109) employed sector intermediaries to liaise with employers and establish work placements. Similarly, the City of Nottingham Pathfinder (p71) employed Enterprise Partnership Managers with responsibility for specific sectors.

<p>Limited or uneven availability of work placements through local employers and training providers affected some Pathfinders.</p>	<p>Pathfinders often targeted employers to address local skills gaps. Employer involvement in strategic management enabled them to influence the delivery focus. This supported local workforce development in line with employer need (see the Islington Pathfinder (p104)). An e-mentoring scheme was developed by the Norfolk Pathfinder (p106) to reduce reliance on traditional work placement approaches.</p>
<p>Students missing core curriculum lessons to attend work-related and work-based learning caused concern in some areas.</p>	<p>On-line curriculum materials were developed to support individual learning. The Durham Pathfinder (p100) developed an area on the project website which enable learners to access coursework.</p>
<p>Making links with Enterprise Advisors proved difficult in some areas.</p>	<p>The City of Nottingham Pathfinder (p71) built on an existing partnership to develop links with Enterprise Advisors. Collaborating with the local Enterprise Pathfinder, Djanogly Academy and EBP helped develop activities such as social enterprise Apprenticeships.</p>



# Inclusive Provision

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## Aim

- 6.1 The 14-19 White Paper emphasises the importance of cross cutting support issues such as IAG; and promoting equality as:

**crucial for young people to have high-quality and impartial information and guidance to get the most out of their learning, to enable successful progression from one stage to another and to inform the important choices that young people make between different options. If young people are to get the most out of that choice, then we must be sure that:**

- **every young person understands the options open to them and their potential implications;**
- **the direct influences on young people, including parents, teachers and the peer group, support them to make decisions which work well for them in the long term; and**
- **young people develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to make good choices, determined by their aptitudes and the needs of employers, rather than stereotypes about their gender or background.**

*14-19 Education and Skills (February 2005, paragraph 5.26).*

Good practice emerged from the 14-19 Pathfinder programme on inclusive provision including: innovation in programme design and delivery; IAG, and Personalised Learning; alternative provision to address transport issues; and equal opportunities.

- 6.2 This chapter looks at:

- Innovations in 14-19 Pathfinder programme design and delivery: guidance on programme development
- Information, Advice and Guidance and Personalised Learning: guidance on supporting learning

- Alternative provision to address transport issues: guidance on increasing access to provision through community transport schemes
- Alternative provision to reduce student travel: guidance on e-learning, and developing community and mobile learning facilities
- Equal opportunities: guidance on promoting equality
- 'What works' boxes: checklists on successful delivery
- Overcoming barriers: issues and solutions
- Good practice case studies from individual Pathfinders on cross-cutting issues are in Annex B

## Innovation in 14-19 Pathfinder Programme Design and Delivery

- 6.3** Innovative approaches to programme design and delivery included:
- involving young people in the design process; and
  - developing credit-based systems to reward achievement and facilitate progression.

### Involving young people in the design process

- 6.4** Most Pathfinders obtained student feedback on their experiences and views of the programme. Some Pathfinders formalised this process by engaging students in the design team for both the programme and curriculum materials. One approach involved a student consultative group to find out whether curriculum materials were user-friendly. The East Manchester Pathfinder (p126) asked students at the local University, UMIST, to help develop e-learning tools with input from young people. The Durham Pathfinder (p124) requested student feedback through evaluating course materials and keeping diaries to record their views on the programme.

#### What works: Involving young people in the design process

- Involving young people in discussions with curriculum developers from education and industry
- Learning from the client group about how to present and package education
- Providing development time to explore feasibility and cost issues associated with design
- Staff and students sharing their ICT knowledge to design the curriculum
- Asking a small user group to test draft materials and evaluate their use
- Gaining wider student feedback through piloting materials with a class or year group

### Developing credit-based systems to reward achievement and facilitate progression

- 6.5** Learner centred approaches were developed through credit-based systems that rewarded achievements and facilitated progression. For example, the City of Nottingham Pathfinder (p93) developed a tariff-based curriculum, linked to Personalised Learning. The model attached credit ratings to a range of alternative qualifications to enable different assessment options.
- 6.6** The Wolverhampton Pathfinder (p142) created individual learner pathways to demonstrate vocational options and opportunities. The city-wide Curriculum Framework

incorporated eighteen 11-18 schools and a large FE college. Learners were offered a 'Choose A Real Deal' card (CARD) that included a 14+ promise of guaranteed places at 18+ in Higher Education, Further Education, or a work-based learning placement.

- 6.7 Several Pathfinders adapted successful approaches for the Key Stage 4 cohort. This encouraged students to reflect on primary education and Key Stage 3 learning in developing their learner pathway. The South Gloucestershire (Kingswood Partnership) Pathfinder (p137) explored this approach.

#### **What works: Developing credit-based systems to reward achievement and facilitate progression**

- Informing student choice through mapping qualification routes and enrichment activities against career entry requirements
- Signposting next steps to students to demonstrate how their current qualification and scheme of work relate to their ultimate goals
- Providing teacher staff time and resources to link with IAG and Personalised Learning approaches
- Collaborating with local providers to agree learner pathways
- Encouraging student ownership of credit-based systems

### **Information, Advice and Guidance and Personalised Learning**

- 6.8 Information, Advice and Guidance and Personalised Learning approaches included:

- collaboration between providers; and
- exploring ICT capacity

- 6.9 Comprehensive and accessible IAG was critical to support and sustain activity, and enable young people to progress. Individual Learning Plans formed an integral aspect of IAG approaches, which the 14-19 Pathfinders developed as a way of helping young people plan and monitor their own learning activities.

#### **Collaboration between providers**

- 6.10 Pathfinders developed IAG systems to improve post-16 retention rates. Provider collaboration was essential to ensure students received consistent IAG, to facilitate their progression amongst local providers, and reduce drop out. For example, the Southwark Pathfinder (p61) collaborated with local schools, FE colleges, training providers, Connexions, and employers to map local provision. Findings resulted in the 'Southwark Guarantee pathfinder directory' ([www.southwarkguarantee.com](http://www.southwarkguarantee.com)) being produced, which formed the basis of IAG Connexions provided to local learners. The Wolverhampton Pathfinder worked with partners from Further and Higher Education to develop a series of IAG and Personalised Learning tools to support student progression. Several Pathfinders collaborated with employers and Connexions to provide additional IAG to meet students' needs, as the Islington (p73) and Durham (p124) case studies demonstrate. More details on support for learners with SEN are in Chapter Four.
- 6.11 Most IAG activity encouraged young people to take ownership of their learner pathway by developing ILPs. Individual Learning Plans systems recorded data and achievements gained from a range of delivery agencies. Collaboration between providers enabled consistent ILP systems to be developed. In the North West for example, the Cumbria (p80) and East Manchester (p145) Pathfinders collaborated to share learning and develop a common electronic ILP that could be transferred and accessed across the partnership.

This approach increased the value and durability of individuals' ILPs, supporting student mobility and progression. The Derbyshire (p120) case study demonstrates an ILP approach designed to promote student ownership of their learner pathway, and the South Gloucestershire (Kingswood Partnership) Pathfinder (p137) demonstrates how this approach can help focus and enhance student motivation to achieve and progress.

#### What works: Collaboration between providers

- Recognising different recording and monitoring systems currently operating across the partnership
- Encouraging local providers to develop a common IAG system to reduce drop out and increase 16+ retention
- Securing the agreement of local providers to sign up to a new common approach to facilitate consistency and progression
- Transferring successful models to new contexts and providers
- Introducing learners to ILPs once rapport has been established through general IAG

### Exploring ICT capacity

- 6.12** Pathfinders approaches to Personalised Learning often involved developing on-line ILPs. The ILP stores information on each student, accessible by the young person and teaching staff, to monitor progress against agreed targets. The web-based nature of ILP systems improved access to IAG in rural areas, as the Cumbria (p80), Shropshire (p135) and Derbyshire (p120) case studies demonstrate. Exploring ICT capacity at the project outset was essential to address potential compatibility and access issues. The Shropshire pathfinder trained a group of e-champions to promote successful approaches to other schools and providers to promote consistency in longer term provision. The South Gloucestershire (Kingswood Partnership) Pathfinder (p137) invested in ICT infrastructure to launch an Extranet providing e-learning and personalised learning support to young people to reduce the need for travel between partner institutions.

#### What works: Exploring ICT capacity

- Exploring ICT capacity before project design
- Confirming PC access across partner organisations
- Ensuring compatible software development across the partnership
- Testing ICT provision to ensure user-friendly formats
- Promoting systems to other local providers for longer term consistency

### Overcoming Barriers

- 6.13** The section has identified good practice approaches to IAG, and Personalised Learning. But issues and barriers did threaten these approaches. This section highlights guidance and solutions to potential pitfalls.

Barrier	Solution
Local technical ICT issues caused difficulties in some areas.	Pathfinders built in additional development time to explore access issues and undertake feasibility assessments.
Lack of consensus about the purpose, process and production of ILPs caused difficulties in some areas.	Pathfinders collaborated at a local and regional level. For example, in the North West region, the Cumbria (p80) and East Manchester (p145) Pathfinders shared learning and developed a common electronic ILP, transferable and accessible across the partnership. Derbyshire (p120) and Derby City (p118) Pathfinders also shared good practice and developed county-wide approaches, sharing learning around the development and transferability of electronic ILPs.

## Alternative Provision to Address Transport Issues

- 6.14** Alternative provision designed to alleviate transport centred around community transport schemes.

### Community transport schemes

- 6.15** Transport barriers mainly affected Pathfinders operating in rural areas with a dispersed student population. Fewer local providers also reduced opportunities for joint delivery in rural areas. Some Pathfinders developed practical transport options to increase learner access. For example, Knowsley’s Pathfinder (p133) developed low cost non-profit community transport. Volunteer drivers, managed by a volunteer co-ordinator, reduced operating costs. However, logistical difficulties emerged. Students often arrived late at learning institutions owing to the many school pick-ups en route. The Pathfinder combined this scheme with commercial operators to reduce student travel time but it proved too expensive to be sustainable. Knowsley LEA therefore bought vehicles using the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and outsourced the management services to Community Transport. The resulting system was low cost and provided a reliable service, enabling the Pathfinder to transport 1700 pre-16s a week. The Gateshead Pathfinder (p128) developed a student transport service and combined this with common timetabling across the Partnership to help students access dispersed provision. Gateshead also developed a virtual sixth form approach to reduce the need for student travel.

**What works: Community transport schemes**

- Developing links with the local voluntary and community sector
- Encouraging local community participation as volunteer drivers or co-ordinators
- Ensuring all volunteers are Criminal Record Bureau checked
- Developing realistic timetables, taking into account variations in seasonal traffic on rural routes
- Combining community and commercial operators to provide a reliable service
- Gaining support from other transport initiatives, such as those funded through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, Local Authorities and the Countryside Agency

**Alternative Provision to Reduce Student Travel**

**6.16** Alternative provision designed to reduce the need for student travel included e-learning, local skills centres, and mobile learning units.

**E-learning, local skills centres, and mobile learning facilities**

**6.17** Pathfinders used e-learning and small scale local skills centres for vocational learning to circumvent transport difficulties. These approaches reduced student travel time, enabling young people to use their time more productively and study locally.

**6.18** Most alternative options included e-learning. E-learning materials were made available through VLEs established on project websites. Materials included comprehensive curriculum frameworks, subject content, assessment processes and monitoring data, and management information. Some Pathfinders also used video-conferencing to support the management of e-learning systems. The Shropshire (p135), Lewisham (p77), and Cumbria (p114) case studies demonstrate successful e-learning approaches. For example, Shropshire's Pathfinder used e-learning to tackle rural isolation and local providers examined how urban models could be adapted to rural areas. The model used 'Digital Brain' to build on the experiences of London Grid for Learning and City Learning Centres. The system provided a broadband internet connection and platform through which schools shared resources. This enabled e-learning and teaching to take place within a secure environment. The Norfolk Pathfinder developed an e-mentoring scheme to raise student aspirations in a rural area.

**6.19** Small local skills centres were developed, particularly in rural areas, to increase local access and reduce student travel time. Some Pathfinders also funded mobile learning units. The Hampshire and Lincolnshire (Boston College) Pathfinders used such units to promote the concept of learning being taken to the learner. This model increased efficiency through staff, rather than student, travel. The Hampshire case study (p130) describes the development of mobile learning units, and the Cumbria case study (p114) explores the peripatetic delivery of vocational training.

### What works: E-learning, local skills centres, and mobile learning facilities

- Peripatetic delivery to small groups using mobile vocational units
- Developing systems that require staff, rather than student, travel
- Combining direct delivery with e-learning
- Adapting urban models to the rural context through e-learning
- Ensuring support for e-learning through IAG

## Overcoming Barriers

**6.20** The section has identified good practice approaches to providing alternative provision to reduce transport difficulties. But issues and barriers did threaten these approaches. This section highlights solutions to potential pitfalls.

Barrier	Solution
Rural transport schemes are expensive to deliver. Some local bus companies were reluctant to collaborate, especially where this involved twilight provision.	Rural Pathfinders conducted research to determine the scale of local transport issues, and explore alternative access models, as the Cumbria case study (p116) demonstrates. Contracting with a range of community and commercial operators helped alleviate this problem to some extent, but proved expensive. Some Pathfinders used alternative funding streams to support transport schemes as demonstrated by the Knowsley case study (p133).
Difficulty in arranging supervision for students whilst travelling long distances emerged in some areas.	Rural Pathfinders developed solutions to reduce the need for student travel through e-learning and mobile delivery. The Shropshire (p135) and Hampshire (p130) case studies demonstrate useful approaches.

## Equal Opportunities

**6.21** Pathfinder approaches which promoted equality included:

- promoting non-traditional subject choice; and
- non-traditional role models.

### Promoting non-traditional subject choice

**6.22** A few Pathfinders promoted equality by encouraging students to pursue non-traditional subject choices. Girls were encouraged to study engineering, construction, motor vehicle maintenance, whilst boys were offered fashion, catering and childcare courses. The Doncaster Pathfinder (p98) widened subject choices and encouraged boys and girls into non-traditional subjects through initiatives such as the 'Women into the Built Environment Programme'. The Derby City Pathfinder (p118) developed interactive and touch screen CD Roms, in collaboration with local employers, to promote diversity in

student subject choice. The CD Roms promoted careers in the bricklaying, house building, mechanical and electrical engineering, joinery, structural steelwork and painting and decorating sectors to a cross section of young people interested in pursuing careers in local industry. The East Manchester Pathfinder (p126) promoted non-traditional subject choice through personalised learning approaches.

#### What works: Promoting non-traditional subject choice

- Demonstrating the range of careers on offer irrespective of gender
- Demonstrating the breadth of careers available within a given sector
- Demonstrating progression routes within local industry
- Engaging employers in developing promotional materials
- Developing interactive materials with video clips from the workplace

### Non-traditional role models

- 6.23** Non-traditional role models delivered activities such as the 'Developing Dads Programme' and the 'Skills Road Show' in Doncaster (p98). Delivery was supported by preparatory work in schools. A 'Developing Dads' trainer helped young fathers become more actively involved in their children's lives. The trainer encouraged learners to consider non-traditional choices before attending skills roadshows. Traditional subject choice persisted in the first year, with most girls opting for hair and beauty and most boys for construction. However, students were less conventional in their subject choice in the second year.

#### What works: Non-traditional role models

- Guest speakers from industries where there is a gender imbalance amongst employees
- Positive role models visiting local schools
- Positive promotional materials featuring industry examples
- IAG sessions and information to support students considering non-traditional career choices
- E-learning and interactive materials featuring 'real life' non-traditional role models.

Further information on activities undertaken by 14-19 Pathfinders to promote equality can be accessed at [www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19).

## Overcoming Barriers

- 6.24** The section has identified good practice approaches to promote equality in student subject choices. But issues and barriers did threaten these approaches. This section highlights solutions to potential pitfalls.



**Barrier**

Stereotypical views and limited awareness of non-traditional career opportunities held by young people and their parents challenged some Pathfinders initiatives.

**Solution**

Several Pathfinders employed non-traditional role models to challenge views and demonstrate atypical success. The Doncaster case study (p98) demonstrates a successful approach.

# Sustainability

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**7.1** 14-19 Pathfinders were encouraged to consider how they could sustain their work beyond the life of the three year programme. Some have developed mechanisms to mainstream good practice. As year three of the national programme evaluation which will be completed in Spring 2006 will focus on sustainability, this chapter simply highlights good practice that has emerged so far from the 14-19 Pathfinders on sustainability.

**7.2** This chapter looks at:

- Developing sustainable provision: guidance on mainstreaming good practice
- 'What works' box: checklist on successful delivery
- Good practice case studies from individual Pathfinders on sustainability are in Annex B

## Developing Sustainable Provision

**7.3** Some Pathfinders have adopted successful approaches to help mainstream good practice. These are explored in the following case studies:

- South Gloucestershire (Kingswood Partnership) 14-19 Pathfinder: sustaining improved professional practice through staff development (p149)
- Gateshead 14-19 Pathfinder: Embedding Systems for Sustainability in an Urban Area (p147)
- East Manchester 14-19 Pathfinder: Development of Web-Based Individual Learning Plans in an Inner City Area (p145)

### **What works: Sustainable provision**

- Securing longer term partnership commitments by agreeing mainstreaming policy and procedures during the project's lifetime
- Investing in systems-related activities such as electronic ILPs which have limited running costs
- Developing common working practices that can be mainstreamed within and between institutions
- Designing curriculum material that can support other programmes in the medium term
- Funding staff development to ensure skills and good practice can be adapted to future provision

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# Leadership and Delivery in an Inner City Area

## *City of Nottingham 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder wanted to develop a structured leadership and delivery model to build on previous activity and to deploy its resources effectively.

### **What were the barriers?**

Providers working with the 14-16 age group for the first time through the Pathfinder encountered barriers in recruiting and selecting young people to take part in the project. This arose because providers were legally required to implement child protection regulations before offering work placements to Key Stage 4 students.

### **What was the solution?**

The Pathfinder developed an effective leadership model to lead the strategic direction of the project.

A charismatic and inspirational leader helped encourage potential partner organisations to become involved. Initial project leadership promoted the Pathfinder concept to local providers, and increased the capacity of the Pathfinder by integrating other initiatives and funding streams into the delivery model. For example, the Pathfinder built upon the infrastructure developed through the Increased Flexibility Programme and the Area Wide Action Plan, and developed strategic links with the Transforming Secondary Education initiative. The Pathfinder viewed the resources spent on leadership as essential to facilitate these developments. The Pathfinder Co-ordinator summarised the significance of strong local leadership as essential in helping the Pathfinder “retain a sense of the big picture”.

Strong project leadership produced a clear delivery model to implement activities on the ground. The project leaders identified clear lines of responsibility for developing and delivering specific activities, which were devolved to operational managers. This resulted in a changing leadership style over the course of the project, with operational managers taking increasing responsibility for the project. Four full-time Enterprise Partnership Managers were appointed to play this crucial role, and promote and facilitate change on the ground. They used their occupational knowledge to liaise between employers and schools, colleges and training providers to inform programme development. An Enterprise Partnership Manager summarised the importance of this role as having “bodies on the ground who could move things forward”.

The partnership developed a series of standards and working practices to quality assure delivery which participating organisations provided. The project leadership led the development of partnership protocols on health and safety issues, and increased partners’ awareness of their importance to safeguard learning for students outside the school environment. The project leadership collaborated with participating schools and sports clubs to devise the health and safety guidelines. This helped ensure the project protocols were “fit for purpose” and fully endorsed across delivery organisations. The delivery benefits were clear, for example by enabling students to complete the Personal Exercise Programme component of their Physical



Education GCSE at a local sports club (either at Nottingham Forest Football Club or Nottingham Rugby Club).

The development of a clear management and delivery structure enabled the Pathfinder to develop effective working arrangements focused on enhancing the curriculum as described in the Pathfinder case studies on *Addressing Key Skills Shortages in the Inner City* and *Working with Employers to Improve Vocational Options in the Inner City*.

### **What was the outcome?**

Pathfinder activity raised awareness amongst local employers about the health and safety guidelines that needed to be in place before delivering work-related learning to Key Stage 4 students. This was viewed as an opportunity and positive challenge by most employers, owing to increased recognition about the importance of engaging young people at an early age to support industry and company recruitment policies, and promote career pathways to improve retention in local firms. Pathfinder activities informed the planning framework which the local 14-19 Area Strategy Groups developed. Links were established across the county, to inform the development of future delivery models, with the North Nottinghamshire Pathfinder, the Education Business Partnership and other local, regional and national initiatives including Aim Higher, the LSC and the Connexions Service.

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# Building on Existing Collaboration in a Rural Area

## *Cumbria 14-19 Pathfinder*

### What was the issue?

Cumbria is the second biggest county in the country so the Pathfinder needed to develop an effective partnership system to improve the standard of 14-19 learning provision available over a dispersed rural area. The Pathfinder recognised that building on existing arrangements established through the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) was the best way to achieve this. The TVEI was established in 1985 by central Government as part of the then Manpower Services Commission. It was a five year pilot scheme which aimed to promote the provision of technical and vocational training for 14-18 year olds in education.

### What were the barriers?

Competition between providers remained an issue in some areas, even amongst high performing institutions.

### What was the solution?

Building on existing arrangements reduced demands on staff time by minimising the need for new groups and meetings. The LEA-led model involved close partnership working with Cumbria LSC, Connexions, and the Business and Education Consortia. The Pathfinder devolved arrangements to five area strategic management groups. Area Development Managers were appointed in each area to work with providers to develop collaborative working arrangements and reduce competition. The Pathfinder Co-ordinator viewed the role performed by the Area Development Managers as essential in supporting collaboration between local providers: *"In order to oil the wheels for collaboration there has to be someone independent on the ground ... to offer support and guidance."* Local area co-ordination also reduced transport difficulties, and email and video conferencing were used to provide support between face-to-face meetings.

Each of the five areas reported to a Cumbria-wide Pathfinder Steering Group. This arrangement enabled the partnership to include 43 secondary schools, four general FE colleges, one sixth form college, two Higher Education Institutions (both with significant FE provision), and around 40 Work Based Learning providers.

Two development seminars were held to promote cultural change and establish collaboration, supported by Manchester University Centre for Educational Leadership. A Costings Working Party was established to identify the costs required to sustain collaborative practice across Cumbria, and develop strategies to transfer successful working arrangements into other initiatives to promote coherence in the development of 14-19 provision, and to identify future funding opportunities. Each of the five Pathfinder areas signed an Area Concordat. This is a policy statement encouraging the pooling of information, expertise and resources, designed to minimise duplication in county-wide provision. The Pathfinder management arrangements have been formalised into a Model for Area Based Strategic Planning of 14-19 Provision, and the Pathfinder has established joint working groups with Aim Higher, Connexions, SETPOINT, Learning and Skills Development Agency, CBEC, LEA and the local LSC to share good practice.

The Area Development Manager role and the Model for Area Based Strategic Planning of 14-19 provision were viewed as key tools for the longer term maintenance of high levels of collaboration.

### **What was the outcome?**

The effective partnership delivery model, organised around five area working groups provides a sound foundation for collaborative 14-19 provision across Cumbria in the longer term, with Vocational Programme Area Network Groups being extended in each area to support this process. Cumbria County Council, the LEA and Cumbria LSC have adopted the Model for Area Based Strategic Planning, representing their commitment to a joint policy on planning 14-19 provision. The Model is also producing guidance on self-evaluation for providers to share performance data to inform forward planning and future delivery. There are five fully operational strategic management groups comprising of partners drawn from schools, colleges and work based learning providers in the five travel to learn zones in Cumbria. All partners, including the LEA, LSC, Connexions and local providers have signed up to a Concordat for Collaborative provision in each zone. Area based planning commences in September 2005 with the intention that the Cumbria 14-19 Learning Entitlement is fully delivered by September 2006. Each area has made appropriate arrangements for curriculum development and in service training networks to support planned provision.

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# Collaboration to Improve the Quality and Range of Learning Provision in a Rural Area

## *Cumbria 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

Cumbria is the second biggest county in England and has huge diversity of need. The Cumbria Pathfinder was challenged by rural issues including low population densities, limited access to local provision, and recruiting staff with high level vocational experience and skills. There was general acceptance that no single provider could meet all local learning needs coupled with a long history of limited collaboration particularly in the urban areas. In addition, there were concerns about the quality of some local provision.

### **What were the barriers?**

Making improvements to learning provision in a rural area involved overcoming practical and developmental barriers. Practical barriers included transport difficulties and developing alternative ways to access learning. Developmental barriers included building confidence between local providers. For example, some Headteachers were unduly sceptical about the quality of vocational education offered at FE colleges.

### **What was the solution?**

The county was divided into five area strategic management groups or learning zones, based on traditional travel to work and learn areas to enable flexible approaches to meet specific local priorities. The Pathfinder included all 43 secondary schools; four general FE colleges; one sixth form college; two Higher Education Institutions (both with significant FE provision); and around 40 Work Based Learning providers.

A county-wide online 14-19 database of learning opportunities and progression routes was constructed to help plan provision. The database also provided information, advice and guidance for learners and their parents, and is accessible online at [www.futures4me.co.uk](http://www.futures4me.co.uk) and [www.14-19pathways.co.uk](http://www.14-19pathways.co.uk). A paper-based common area prospectus is to be produced based on the database applicable to all five areas in the county.

An Area Strategic Planning Model and Concordat was devised and implemented to promote and guide the collaborative activity. In order to address resistance to the changes proposed, a programme of development seminars were designed to promote cultural change and successful collaboration. These seminars have been set up in partnership with Manchester University Centre for Educational Leadership.

Partnership working encouraged local schools to broaden their vocational education options. This was achieved by building on existing specialisms and implementing new schemes to increase access to high quality vocational learning opportunities. For example, in one area the Pathfinder supported the employment of a peripatetic chef to address key skills shortages in the hospitality and catering industry, a major employment sector in Cumbria. The model was developed with Kendal College, a Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) in hospitality and

catering in the South Lakes Learning Zone. The peripatetic chef was well qualified and worked with young people in schools, reducing the need for student travel. As part of the school-based work promoting the catering industry, the peripatetic chef established a Junior Chef after-school Club. Students were kitted out with aprons, hats and catering knives and taught catering skills.

### **What was the outcome?**

Cumbria's Pathfinder achieved outcomes both in terms of strategic management processes and improved vocational education. The collaborative working arrangements were formalised into the Cumbria Model for Area Based Strategic Planning of 14-19 provision, which has been adopted by Cumbria County Council and constitutes the LEA's and local LSC's joint plan on 14-19 provision. The successful delivery of the peripatetic chef model demonstrated the value of collaboration to local providers. The model convinced Headteachers to work with local colleagues to improve vocational education. Following the success of the peripatetic chef, a peripatetic travel and tourism lecturer was appointed to provide high quality vocational education in Cumbrian schools. The Junior Chef club was over subscribed, leading to an additional two clubs being set up and the model as a whole was expanded to operate across all five areas of the county.

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# Collaboration Designed to Increase Post-16 Access and Progression in an Urban Area

## *Gateshead 14-19 Pathfinder*

### What was the issue?

The Gateshead Pathfinder wanted to increase participation post-16 in the Central Gateshead area by providing the fullest possible range of progression opportunities without the necessity to travel outside of the immediate area. While some young people had accessed provision by travelling outside of Central Gateshead it was considered that participation rates would improve overall if a broader range of options was made available within the three post-11 schools in the area and Gateshead College.

### What were the barriers?

The partnership approach overcame a number of barriers by agreeing a clear, common purpose through negotiation and communication. Barriers included limited option choice post-16 at a young person's host school, and limited opportunities to access provision at other institutions.

### What was the solution?

Providers in Gateshead formed a partnership and created a virtual Sixth Form, known as cg:6 (Central Gateshead Sixth Form). The partnership brought together Gateshead College, three secondary schools and Gateshead LEA. At a strategic level, the new Director of the cg:6 worked with Heads from the partnership schools, college and LEA to develop curriculum and admissions policy. Deputy and faculty heads developed a common framework which joined up timetables, transport, and subject offers across the partnership. Teachers worked at a practical level to plan delivery and common assessment processes. Post-16 opportunities were offered in two 11-16 schools to enable progression for students who wanted to remain in a familiar environment.

The co-ordinated approach improved the quality, variety and access to local post-16 provision. The Pathfinder Co-ordinator viewed the cg:6 Director's role essential, as this provided *"... a real face ... the person behind it has given the partnership a real entity"*. Staff reservations were reduced by involving Heads from all partner organisations in the planning process. Schools viewed this as an improvement to previous planning arrangements.

### What was the outcome?

Post-16 provision became available in all Gateshead secondary schools. The cg:6 increased subject choice, from entry level to Level 3, offering more than 20 new AS and A level courses, and more work-related learning opportunities. Staying-on rates increased across the partnership. A Connexions survey, produced in November 2004, demonstrated the impact of cg:6, and whilst the overall Gateshead staying-on rate in full-time post-16 provision remained unchanged at around 67%, within cg:6 this increased from 45% to 60%. 169 enrolments were recorded in September 2004, compared to 130 in 2003/04, and one school doubling its staying on rate.

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Student feedback emphasised the importance of local provision in encouraging them to stay-on post-16.

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# Collaborating with Independent Schools in an Inner City Area

## *Lewisham 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

Generally 14-19 Pathfinders found it difficult to engage schools in the independent sector. The Lewisham Pathfinder worked with two schools in the independent sector to improve the quality of learning provision and progression routes across the borough.

### **What were the barriers?**

As the second largest inner London borough, the Lewisham Pathfinder served a highly diverse student population, more than half drawn from minority ethnic groups, particularly African or Afro-Caribbean backgrounds. Including students from the refugee and asylum-seeker community, the Pathfinder covered over 100 different language communities. Lewisham also contained several wards amongst the 10% most deprived nationally. These factors made it difficult for the Pathfinder to develop an inclusive curriculum accessible by all local students. Links with the private sector in the area also needed to be developed, both in the independent education and employment sectors.

### **What was the solution?**

The Lewisham Pathfinder built on existing strong collaborative links between local post-16 education and training providers, and extended these to provision for the 14-16 age group. The Local Authority provided strong leadership and schools were well networked with the local FE college through initiatives such as the Increased Flexibility Programme and Excellence in Cities. For example, federations of schools in the north and south of the borough had established joint sixth forms.

Two independent schools joined the Pathfinder to inform curriculum development for the Key Stage 4 Entitlement. This Entitlement was designed to provide four curriculum pathways – an academic pathway focused on GCSEs and Accelerated AS levels; an applied pathway focused on GCSE/GNVQ/BTEC; a work-related pathway focused on NVQs and other vocational qualifications; and a pre-vocational pathway to re-engage disaffected students.

An independent school partner led the Pathfinder's ICT course development. The ICT course was to be implemented through the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) in the academic year 2005/06. In September 2005 half of Lewisham's schools introduced the BTEC Intermediate ICT as a direct result of the collaboration with an independent schools. The independent school mentored the Pathfinder schools and assisted with the roll out. See the Lewisham case study on *Increasing Access to Curriculum Options through E-learning in the Inner City* for further details on the VLE approaches which this Pathfinder developed.

### **What was the outcome?**

Collaboration resulted in the development of robust learning systems such as the Key Stage 4 Entitlement. The curriculum development mechanisms, which the partnership developed, were disseminated to other Pathfinders and LEAs. The Key Stage 4 Entitlement will be implemented



with the 2005/06 cohort. All local students will have access to the four curriculum pathways through the federation of schools in 2005/06 – rather than being confined to their host school's provision.

Two federated City Academies with a single Chief Executive, governing body and sixth form were also developed and will be operational for the 2005/06 cohort.

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# Collaboration between Operational Managers across an Inner City Area

## *Sheffield 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

Sheffield, the fourth largest city in England with a population of over half a million, has received significant investment in regeneration. The Sheffield Pathfinder wanted to combine Pathfinder resources with other funding streams supporting 14-19 education and training developments across the City, to co-ordinate efforts to improve the local skills base and address skills shortages.

### **What were the barriers?**

Agreeing common timetabling was a major barrier as schools planned their timetables earlier than colleges, resulting in colleges being asked to confirm timetables before completing their business planning processes.

### **What was the solution?**

Funding streams including the 14-19 Pathfinder programme, Objective 1, AW Action Plan funding, and the Increased Flexibility Programme were combined to develop the 'Learning for Life' (L4L) project, providing a strategic approach to 14-19 developments across the City. Linking with the City's regeneration agenda helped to promote collaboration between employers and training providers. From the outset, the Pathfinder worked with local Regional Development Agency planners to gather demand-led labour market analyses, and ensure the Pathfinder engaged with growth employment sectors to target skills shortages.

The L4L project developed a multi-agency partnership, recruiting an experienced management team from Sheffield College, the LEA, South Yorkshire LSC, Sheffield Futures (Connexions), the Local Learning Partnership, Business Education South Yorkshire and a representative for work-based learning providers. A co-production team consisting of one Headteacher and three Curriculum Deputies were seconded one day per week to the project to develop a robust and collaborative leadership approach. For example, collaboration resulted in schools and colleges merging their planning cycles to overcome the initial timetabling difficulties between institutions.

At an operational level, 27 school Curriculum Managers met half termly to plan for the future. The Curriculum Managers consulted young people to ensure provision met their needs. A series of workshops were held for Curriculum Managers from schools and Sheffield College, covering issues such as timetabling, professional development, and curriculum planning. Curriculum Managers valued sharing information and good practice with other providers, and gave presentations on key aspects of the 14-19 curriculum, such as personalised learning.

## What was the outcome?

Devolving operational management to Curriculum Managers created a common vision between local providers, ensuring all partners viewed Pathfinder activity as a priority. The Pathfinder explored opportunities to extend the partnership model to include providers from Doncaster and Barnsley LEA areas. The partnership hoped that the common planning cycle model developed between schools and colleges in the partnership would be maintained in the longer term.

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# External Networking to Transfer and Maintain Pathfinder Outcomes in an Inner City Area

## *Sheffield 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Sheffield Pathfinder wanted to network with external organisations to promote project outcomes and share good practice. This activity was viewed as essential to transfer lessons learned to current or future provision.

### **What were the barriers?**

Uncertainty around the priorities of future 14-19 initiatives and core commitments relating to mainstream funding reduced the extent to which providers were confident that they would be able to maintain Pathfinder practices at the same levels.

### **What was the solution?**

The Pathfinder worked with a wide range of external organisations to embed good practice into operational systems and practices. The Pathfinder shared good practice developments with local employers, WBL providers, colleges, Connexions, the local LSC, the Specialist Schools Trust Expert Panel and Aim Higher. The Pathfinder also collaborated with the Health and Social Care Sector Skills Council, the National LSC and an awarding body to share learning around appropriate vocational qualifications, including technical certificates and diplomas for the 14-16 cohort.

Networking events were held to encourage employer involvement. Employer breakfasts were held with the local MP to raise the profile of the Learning for Life (L4L) project, and were well attended. This resulted in industry and commerce representatives acting as visiting speakers in schools and colleges, and led to the NHS delivering skills roadshows which provided hands-on experience to encourage learners to consider a career in the health service.

The Pathfinder also worked to embed good practice into mainstream provision. Pathfinder funding was gradually reduced and schools encouraged to pay for provision from their mainstream budgets. Although some schools were able to adopt this approach, most reported that it would not be possible if funding was reduced. The Sheffield Pathfinder calculated a unit cost of £30 for each student placement in 2004/05. Schools contributed £7.50 for each student, rising to £14 in the second year of the programme. This sustainability plan included a three year implementation strategy but required common timetabling, a shift of existing resources to support vocational learning, and increased efficiency in the use of off-site provision, to be incorporated into mainstream budgets.

### **What was the outcome?**

Collaborative activities with external agencies were essential to sustain the good practice funded through the Pathfinder programme, in particular to inform the development of future qualifications and curriculum priorities. Several curriculum modules which the Pathfinder developed have been accredited, and meetings held with the Sector Skills Council, an awarding

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body, and the National LSC to inform the planning and development of qualifications to support the 14-16 agenda, particularly in relation to technical certificates and diplomas.

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# Establishing Collaboration between Local Providers in a Deprived Inner City Area

## *Southwark 14- 19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Southwark Pathfinder wanted to improve partnership working in order to challenge strategic organisation and planning issues locally that were impeding the development of joined-up provision. A key difficulty was establishing provision across the 14-19 age range, as some initiatives and funding arrangements limited provider activity to the 14-16 or the 16-19 age groups.

### **What were the barriers?**

Some local planning arrangements previously focused on secondary school provision for the 11-16 age range, reducing opportunities to develop progression and transition routes for post-16 learners.

### **What was the solution?**

The Pathfinder established collaborative working arrangements and developed a delivery partnership between local education providers including 11-16 schools, 11-18 schools, a FE college, two City Academies and a City Technology College. The partnership increased access to local provision and implemented a Continuing Professional Development programme to attract and retain support and teaching staff.

The local LSC played a key leadership role in the Pathfinder, helping to increase collaboration between providers. The Pathfinder developed the Southwark Guarantee to co-ordinate local 14-19 provision between the Pathfinder, the Area Wide Inspection Action Plan and the Increased Flexibility Programme. Activities were supported by LSC Local Intervention Development Fund, European Social Fund, Basic Skills funding, regeneration funding, Connexions, Aim Higher and widening participation resources. The Guarantee provided a forum for schools, colleges, training providers and other partners to collaborate. The Southwark Guarantee Forum and Managers group generated policies, ideas and shared good practice. Collaborative activities were facilitated by monthly meetings between Southwark Guarantee Managers based in local schools and colleges. The Southwark Guarantee Managers Group assessed the 2004/05 curriculum and produced curriculum planning recommendations for 2005/06. Collaboration helped the Southwark Guarantee Managers Group identify Continuing Professional Development needs, resulting in the development of basic skills resource materials to help support, and teaching staff accurately assess, the literacy and numeracy skills of English for Speakers of Other Languages and new Key Stage 4 students. Staff development days were held to share learning and raise awareness of progression routes available through collaboration between schools and training providers.

The Guarantee increased access for all local 14-19 year olds to high quality provision which institutions provided across Southwark. The Pathfinder conducted in-depth auditing of vocational areas to identify career pathways across academic, vocational and work-based routes for students at

all levels. The audit resulted in clear mapping advice for students and parents about opportunities, qualifications and progression paths. This information helped and supported young people to make well-informed education, training and employment choices up to the age of 19. See the *Improving Work-Related Information, Advice and Guidance for Learners in a Deprived Inner City Area* case study for further information on the content of the Guarantee. The collaborative delivery arrangements enabled students to move between providers rather than disengaging from the education system.

### **What was the outcome?**

Designed to inform longer term strategic planning processes in the area, the collaborative working arrangements ensured lessons from Pathfinder activities would outlive short-term funding streams, and promote sustained joined-up provision between 14-19 providers, through the Area Wide Inspection Plan and the local 14-19 Forum. Collaboration culminated in a joint LEA and Southwark Guarantee Strategy and actions for the Area Wide Inspection Action Plan. The Southwark Guarantee Managers Group recommendations were agreed by Southwark 14-19 Forum executive, and steered curriculum priorities for 2005/06. The Southwark Guarantee will be delivered through local centres of excellence during 2005/06.

The successful partnership model was disseminated to colleagues in Waltham Forest and Camden. The Continuing Professional Development resource materials were well received and led to the Pathfinder developing a new programme for Southwark LEA. The Continuing Professional Development programme has been diversified to audit future needs in priority sectors such as hospitality, travel tourism and leisure, science health and social care, and the public sector. The Southwark Guarantee website received recognition from the Learning and Skills Development Fund. A Southwark Guarantee Student Council was established towards the end of the project to ensure longer term planning met student needs. Information on Southwark Guarantee can be accessed at [www.southwarkguarantee.com](http://www.southwarkguarantee.com).

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# Private Sector-led 14-19 Developments in an Inner City Area

## *Tower Hamlets (Deloitte) 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

There were a large number of young people, especially those who lived in the most disadvantaged postcode areas, who had underperformed at school and lacked the appropriate employability skills to realise their employment potential. There was a need to provide these young people with the opportunity and appropriate vocational pathways to develop their employability skills, and help them to build successful careers.

At the same time retail employers continued to find it difficult to recruit high quality employees with the necessary skills, attitudes and behaviours to succeed in the retail sector.

### **What were the barriers?**

For these young people who left school with low attainment and were contemplating entering employment, there were a number of issues:

- a lack of role models to prepare them for employment;
- low self-esteem;
- low aspirations;
- difficulty with traditional classroom environment;
- unavailability of explicit employability skills training within further education; and
- inexperience of the workplace environment.

To create an employability programme to tackle these issues also led to a number of further barriers, in particular:

- lack of resource and experience within colleges to engage employers and manage partnerships; and
- lack of personal development/trainer skills to deliver innovative employability skills courses.

### **What was the solution?**

Led by Deloitte, the Pathfinder extended the work of the original Skills4Industry IT employability initiative model in Tower Hamlets to address local key skills shortages and employer needs in the retail sector. The Pathfinder targeted students from disadvantaged areas who had underperformed at school (typically fewer than 3 A\*-C at GCSE) but who demonstrated an above average aptitude for employment in the retail sector (the Pathfinder led to the development of similar models in the administration and hospitality sectors).

The Pathfinder Manager was a Deloitte employee, who with the help of the retail Sector Skills Council, Skillsmart Retail, targeted employers on the company and skills council databases, inviting them to join the Pathfinder. Having a dedicated resource to engage and liaise with employers was essential in getting the partnership up and running and developing links with



other sectors, as the Pathfinder Co-ordinator described: *“Most of the initial leg work was done by Deloitte to get providers to collaborate.”* The Deloitte-based Project Manager also provided an independent steer for the partnership, and was able to negotiate with local colleges to release teaching staff. Deloitte developed terms of reference for the partnership, outlining roles and responsibilities. The partnership included Lewisham College, Tower Hamlets College, the London College of Communication, Business in the Community, and a range of employers from the retail sector including the John Lewis Partnership, Dixons, Selfridges, The Link, and Tesco.

The programme developed was a model which included up-front technical training, leading to a Level 2 certificate in retail operations, and key skills teaching in literacy and numeracy which were delivered in college alongside a newly designed employability skills programme. After completion of the college course, students entered an extended six month job placement with participating employers.

The employability programme was designed to help young people develop the skills, attitudes and behaviours which retail employers valued. Two pilot cohorts ran in 2004/05. The first wave helped 50 young people develop their employability skills, with 98% of the cohort drawn from the not in education, employment or training group. Enhancing skills such as communication, team working and personal effectiveness was seen as essential personal development for young people alongside demonstrating their technical knowledge, numeracy and literacy skills to prospective employers. The programme helped young people understand the importance of positive attitudes and behaviours such as motivation, enthusiasm, commitment, willingness to learn, and giving and receiving feedback in the context of individual and group work. The employability programme contextualised these skills with practical workplace examples to help young people make the connection between education and work. For example, students learnt about team work and the appropriate use of formal and informal communication channels in the context of workplace culture, the roles and responsibilities of managers and employees, and customer service. Simulated work experience activities included role playing in different workplace contexts. These personal development activities were designed to increase participants' self-esteem, confidence and self-awareness to enable them to make a sustained transition into work. Twenty-eight participants applied their employability skills, as well as their technical skills, through six-month job placements with local employers in the retail sector.

College staff were trained as 'employability skills trainers' by a personal development consultant from Training with Purpose to deliver the employability programme and gave students the skills and competences to make sustained transitions into employment. This provided staff development opportunities, with the employability skills trainers encouraged to explore their own strengths and weaknesses, such as their personal motivation, communication and leadership qualities.

SHL, an independent specialist company, designed aptitude tests for young people joining the programme, which used competency-based situational questions to explore participants' motivations and aptitude for the retail sector before enrolment on to the course.

### **What was the outcome?**

Having completed the employability programme during 2004/05, 10 trainees were offered permanent jobs with their host companies, and a further 10 participants found full-time jobs with other local employers. Six trainees chose to progress within full-time education and training. The second cohort supported 28 trainees, with 75% progressing into six-month job placements during 2005.

The employability programme was designed as a sustainable model, and has been built into the National Qualifications Framework accredited as a Level 2 BTEC qualification called Skills for Industry. This qualification enables participants to present evidence of their employability skills to employers. The qualification provides measurable outcomes enabling colleges to deliver the

programme in the future alongside technical training in any range of sectors, with the support of local LSC funding for mainstream FE and work based learning provision. The course will be run in up to 12 colleges during 2005/06. Activities have been extended to the administration and hospitality sectors for 16-18 year olds for 2005/06, and the Pathfinder is exploring opportunities to adapt the employability course to support a much wider range of learners wishing to enhance their employability skills, potentially including adult learners.

The Pathfinder also implemented a quality assurance process through selection and quality visits to provider colleges. The visits explored provider capacity and ability to deliver Skills4industry courses effectively in the longer term. Quality assurance was supported by recruitment materials for employability skills trainers, a training programme for colleges co-ordinating the employability programme, and a draft quality and reporting standards framework to monitor college delivery. The training the trainer model was designed to promote cultural change within the participating colleges. A training package was developed to enable colleges to cascade the delivery model to staff throughout their organisation in the longer term. Information on the employability programme and professional development opportunities which the Pathfinder developed, is available on the skills4industry website: [www.skills4industry.org](http://www.skills4industry.org).

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# Collaboration with Universities and Specialist Schools to Broaden the Curriculum in an Inner City Area

## *Wolverhampton 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder recognised the need to involve universities and specialist schools to increase the range of provision on offer to 14-19 students.

### **What were the barriers?**

The range of funding streams supporting different types of learning provision challenged the development of a city-wide curriculum. This was because some providers were inflexible over funding. The Pathfinder developed examples to demonstrate to providers how savings in one area could be used to enhance provision elsewhere. For example, by transferring resources saved by cancelling an unpopular course to pay for transporting learners to other sessions.

### **What was the solution?**

The Pathfinder was led by the City Learning Partnership, an umbrella organisation representing all the key stakeholder organisations. The partnership engaged a cross-section of providers to enhance and expand the curriculum available to learners in the area. Partners included specialist schools, colleges, training providers, and universities. An Executive Group was set up to ensure the strategic development of Pathfinder activities. Operational Working Groups were formed to manage the delivery process. The primary Operational Working Group was known as DepNet. Originally staffed by Deputy Heads, DepNet was extended to include a range of practitioners responsible for delivery. These operational management groups were essential to promote cultural change and facilitate stakeholder collaboration across the Pathfinder. Membership of the group was by elective participation, ensuring that motivated staff drove the agenda. Individual staff fed lessons from collective activity back into their own institutional policies.

The diverse partnership enabled the Pathfinder to develop a city-wide curriculum and enrichment programme in sports, arts and citizenship, and raise attainment levels. Specialist schools in the Partnership hosted a Language Day for Year 11 learners to promote A level and University opportunities. The Partnership constructed a curriculum framework and curriculum models that could be implemented across a range of stakeholder organisations, but also provided flexibility for adaptation to local circumstances.

### **What was the outcome?**

The Pathfinder successfully delivered a city-wide curriculum by working towards a longer planning cycle. Planning for the September 2006 curriculum offer began in May 2005. The Post-16 City-wide Enrichment programme was developed to include over 200 city-wide activities, in addition to 100 activities which partner organisations provided in-house. Over 1,000 students

successfully progressed through the accredited programme from Level 2 to Level 3. The Pathfinder also established a series of work placements with renowned organisations such as the Law Society, the Royal Ballet, and the University of Nottingham.

The collaborative model received interest from across the country. Within the West Midlands region, all 14 LEAs in the Government Office West Midlands region, six LSCs, the Government Office West Midlands, Learning and Skills Development Agency and Networks for Excellence explored how they could develop collaborative working arrangements more effectively in the future. The model was also disseminated nationally at training events for 14-19 providers from Sussex, Essex, Staffordshire, Lincolnshire, Newcastle and Peterborough.

Enrichment activities tied to Gifted and Talented, 'Choose A Real Deal' (CARD) and Aim Higher were closely linked to the development of personalised learning approaches.

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## Chapter 3 – Enriching the Curriculum

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# Meeting Employers Demands for Foreign Languages in Urban Areas

## *The Black Country 14-19 Pathfinder*

### What was the issue?

The Black Country Pathfinder worked across several LEAs and with over 50 schools to improve the quality of modern foreign languages curriculum and tools, in response to employer demands for improved language skills in the workplace.

### What were the barriers?

The partnership initially found it difficult to gain “buy-in” from some vocational teaching departments to develop programmes which incorporated foreign languages into generic provision.

### What was the solution?

The Pathfinder developed 14-19 ‘Networks for Excellence’ to foster collaboration, particularly at local, regional and national levels. The partnership included the Education Business Partnership (EBP); Employer Groups; four LEAs; 46 schools; two universities; four FE colleges; the Specialist Schools Trust; and the sub-regional Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) network. The partnership produced a series of curriculum tools in modern foreign and community languages, and trained staff in delivery. Training providers and employers helped develop the vocational language courses, in response to growing demands for employees to speak several languages. The EBP network proved successful in securing language champions from industry to promote the relevance of language skills to business.

The Pathfinder developed an area-wide curriculum, encouraging providers to offer complementary aspects of a flexible curriculum, to support personalised learning. The Pathfinder created a range of language modules, tools and materials and incorporated these into vocational programmes, including vocational GCSEs, Apprenticeships and WEXP programmes. Apprentices studying towards qualifications in travel and tourism, early years, health and social care were given language training. For example, Punjabi and British Sign Language learning were linked to the AVCE in health and social care through a combination of work experience, vocational learning and tailored language provision. The materials were designed to promote the relevance of language skills to students’ future career aspirations. Employees and modern apprentices in local businesses featured in a ‘Language skills for work’ DVD and video explaining how they use language in the workplace. The four EBPs in the Black Country also hosted a workshop at the International EBP Conference to promote the importance of language skills for business.

The language tools also helped students to work at their own pace. For example, the Certificate in Business Language Competence (CBLC) supported individual learning in one school by offering an entry level qualification which provided an intensive, fast-track programme. Other schools applied CBLC over a longer timescale to a broader range of mixed ability students, and linked the course to Apprenticeship programmes to develop language skills post-16. Language lessons took place on Wednesday afternoons at college when school timetables were cleared to enable additional study. Students enjoyed the link the language courses made between

different areas of learning and their career aspirations, and welcomed the opportunity to do something different.

The Pathfinder supported continuing professional development activities for staff, including training 48 teachers across the Black Country as vocational language examiners. The teachers took CBLC exams including peer assessment. Over 20 teachers fed back positively on a one-day workshop held at the Spanish Embassy on delivering Spanish ICT resources. Teachers also received training in using interactive whiteboards in language training.

### **What was the outcome?**

The Pathfinder explored accreditation options, and registered as a regional centre for vocational OCR examinations. Over 7,107 students, 242 teachers, 224 schools and 16 organisations participated in Pathfinder activities, including visits from local employers, Higher Education and FE providers to promote take-up of the programme. The CBLC resources received national interest, with orders placed by 53 schools outside the Black Country. The materials are being developed further at entry level, and Levels 2 and 3, in languages such as Spanish, German, French, Italian and Japanese. The 'Language skills for work' DVD and video generated considerable interest, with over 135 copies disseminated. The Pathfinder informed the development of a Special Schools Network to share good practice, and a Language Academy which will offer academic and vocational qualifications to post-14 learners across the Black Country. The University of Wolverhampton has also set up a British Sign Language Tutor Support Network to maintain this aspect of the Pathfinder programme.

Staff awareness activities, such as FE providers publicising the Punjabi and Care course at New Cross Hospital, raised interest in Pathfinder activity. To ensure high levels of support were given to students, teachers received training to 'bring them up to speed' as part of Continuous Professional Development. For instance, teachers were shown how they could use interactive whiteboards to their full potential in language lessons.

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# Addressing Key Skills Shortages in an Inner City Area

## *City of Nottingham 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder wanted to work with employers and professionals in the local sports and enterprise sectors to develop the vocational curriculum to address local skills shortages and raise students' awareness of local employment opportunities.

### **What were the barriers?**

Business pressures limited the level of responsibility employers could take for organising activities.

### **What was the solution?**

The Pathfinder developed innovative vocational courses in the sports and enterprise sectors to address local skills shortages. The Pathfinder was committed to developing an inclusive curriculum, offering activities to students across the ability range. The sports sector was targeted as disaffected learners showed interest in this sector. The Pathfinder created a Sport and Education Partnership consisting of Nottingham Forest Football Club, Notts County Football Club, Nottingham Rugby Club, and four schools to identify how professional sports clubs could help local schools improve the vocational curriculum and promote careers in local sport-related industries. Local professional sports clubs welcomed the opportunity to develop a more sustained approach to sport-related activities with secondary schools, helping to raise students' awareness of the diversity of jobs available in the sports industry. Participants ranged from students at risk of dropping out of mainstream education to young people studying for applied Leisure and Tourism GCSEs.

Work placements were arranged for both disaffected and achieving students, with guidance provided by professional sports players and coaches. Disaffected 14-16 year old pupils participated in work placements at Notts County Football Club for one day a week over an eight week period, completing an OCN-accredited Healthy Living module. Pupils experienced working in different departments within the football club. Students studying GCSE PE with the potential to achieve an A\*-C grade undertook work placements at Nottingham Forest Football Club and Nottingham Rugby Club for one day a week over an eight week period. These students worked through an enhanced learning programme with professional sports players and coaches, developing a Personal Exercise Plan to count towards their final GCSE PE grade. Students also gained accredited Vocational Sport Experiences, learning more about the business aspects of the sport industry, such as community development, publicity and marketing, and media training. The course was accredited through the OCN and encouraged students to explore progression routes into the wider sport-related industry through Student Apprenticeships, social enterprises and other vocational pathways. Timetabling difficulties in the sports sector were overcome through a series of meetings between the Development Manager at the lead school and the sports clubs.

The Pathfinder also developed activities in the enterprise sector. Four full time Enterprise Partnership Managers were employed to facilitate change on the ground, working under the



leadership of the LEA 14-19 Co-ordinator. The Enterprise Partnership Managers were employed to increase staffing capacity and enable employers to participate in the project by reducing demands on their time to organise activities. The Enterprise Partnership Managers used their occupational knowledge to liaise between employers and schools, colleges and training providers to develop study programmes and arrange placements. This enabled employer time to be targeted on delivery. The Enterprise Partnership Managers developed over 50 projects and collaborated with the local Enterprise Pathfinder, Djanogly Academy and the Education Business Partnership to develop links with Enterprise Advisors. This collaboration resulted in a Social Enterprise Apprenticeship project, which supported young people to set up and run their own business. Students worked with a local company and activities were linked to a GCSE project assessing the feasibility of a wind turbine on their school site.

The Enterprise Partnership Managers developed strategic links with Integrated Children's Services, contributing to an inclusion strategy to re-engage young people in care. The Enterprise Partnership Managers also organised a series of practical inclusion activities, such as an Industry Day at a special school with fifteen employers and colleges. The Industry Day provided taster activities in motor vehicle maintenance, bricklaying, pizza making and digital design. Connexions demonstrated an interactive on-line job search facility at the event. Students and staff from other special schools attended, and feedback confirmed the event was a great success. Enterprise learning was also used to develop financial literacy materials, in partnership with local financial institutions and training companies including No Limits and the Djanogly Academy. Five schools trialled the materials and the findings were incorporated into a new GCSE programme launched during the Summer term 2004/05.

Enterprise activities provided a mechanism for developing links with the independent school sector to develop an e-games programme. An e-games league was established, and a team of state and independent school students held an e-games conference as part of the Young Enterprise programme, exploring employment opportunities and networking with companies from the gaming industry.

### **What was the outcome?**

Successful Pathfinder activity has been embedded in Nottingham's 14-19 strategy, and informed the planning framework which the 14-19 Area Strategy Groups developed. Links were established with the North Nottinghamshire Pathfinder, the Education Business Partnership and other local, regional and national initiatives including Aim Higher, Nottingham LSC and the Connexions Service. Stakeholder evaluation responses from pupils, sports clubs and schools highlighted the success of activities. Over twenty Year 10 students achieved Level 2 Open College Network credits. The sports clubs and schools were committed to working in partnership to run additional courses for other local schools.

The successful enterprise approach was diversified to design a new Enterprise Apprenticeship in Ceramics at Level 2, creating a new pathway to Level 3 provision. An IT Enterprise Apprenticeship was also developed in collaboration with ELUSE Applegate that enabled Business Studies students to set up a school 'shop' to sell reconditioned computers.

In addition to the sports and enterprise sectors, the Pathfinder also supported activities in the health and social care and leisure and tourism sectors, resulting in over 200 students gaining work experience in local companies experiencing skill shortages.

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# Developing and Promoting Innovative Career Pathways into Healthcare in an Inner City Area

## *Islington 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

A mutual need exists within healthcare and education: the NHS and social services need to recruit more young people to a range of healthcare and non-clinical careers and schools need to find more real educational experiences to bring vocational and work related learning to life.

### **What were the barriers?**

The NHS was concerned that young people had unrealistic perceptions about career opportunities in the health and social care sector and wanted to challenge the 'Holby City/Casualty syndrome' which limited student perceptions of NHS careers to jobs as doctors, nurses and paramedics. School careers staff and Connexions had tended to perpetuate this myth in the past, and an employer-informed model was needed to update Information Advice and Guidance materials and to work co-operatively with educationists to provide experiences which demonstrate the wide range of careers available in the local healthcare and social services, including non-clinical occupations such as electricians, plumbers and joiners.

### **What was the solution?**

The Pathfinder brought together nine secondary schools, City and Islington College, three universities, the Strategic Health Authority, the Primary Care Trust, Islington and Camden Mental Health Trusts and Connexions, covering a small inner city area ranked the tenth most deprived borough in England. Through a series of joint workshops, co-sponsored by the NHSU, health and education practitioners agreed a set of seven generic skills and qualities needed to work successfully in healthcare. These progression-readiness skills and qualities (PRSQs) then informed learning programmes developed in health sciences, medicine, estates and facilities, and health and social care. Each learning programme included a careers event; a talk/presentation; a learning experience within a workplace; an opportunity to think about personal skills, qualities and career development; an opportunity to plan and develop career pathways; and access to an e-Folio within which to locate, develop, rework and present learning and achievement in a variety of forms, for a variety of purposes and for a variety of audiences.

The Pathfinder team has mapped careers education and guidance provision in Islington schools to identify areas in need of improvement. Careers staff from schools and Connexions collaborated with local employers to improve information on local careers and vocational skills development opportunities in the health and social care sector. A year-long career development project was conducted aimed at helping 14-19 providers improve their careers work.

The Pathfinder team has worked with two software companies and with Southwark Pathfinder to develop an e-Folio for 14-19 year olds, allowing them to start planning their careers and get help making key decisions through interactive versions of the career pathway maps. As a whole,

the e-Folio provides an interactive home for career planning and decision-making tools and resources; a place to store evidence of achievement in a variety of formats and a package of exciting learning strategies using OpenMind software. This software was also being used to accredit and deliver ASDAN's Career Planning qualification.

Staff development activities were held for school careers and Connexions staff to raise awareness of career opportunities in the NHS, and self-review and developmental materials were developed for schools to strengthen their careers guidance in the long term. Links with Higher Education were developed in the fields of medical education, radiography, health sciences, nursing and midwifery to widen participation.

### **What was the outcome?**

Preparations were under way for the Islington e-Folio pilot to be rolled out across all Islington secondary schools and within four of the college centres.

Extensive work-related learning programmes were developed and successfully piloted in the occupational areas of estates and facilities and medicine; individual learning activities have been successfully piloted in nursing, midwifery, radiography and health sciences.

Islington social services developed a pilot work experience project based on the Pathfinder model of work-related learning organised around PRSQ indicators. Islington social services collaborated with Camden social services, Camden and Islington PCT and the Camden and Islington Mental Health and Social Care Trust to provide two-week work experience placements for Year 10 students from four schools. CEA@Islington investigated the costs required to mainstream curriculum and career development materials and approaches developed by the Pathfinder. The Islington case study on Addressing Skills Shortages in Healthcare provides further details on the work experience options developed by this Pathfinder.

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# Involving Employers in Curriculum Design in a Deprived Inner City Area

## *Knowsley 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder was keen to develop a new GCSE programme and model of work experience with employer representatives to demonstrate career opportunities and encourage young people to progress onto Key Stage 5.

### **What were the barriers?**

The Pathfinder was concerned that a delivery model involving employers and college provision would not be sustainable in the longer term.

### **What was the solution?**

Jaguar approached the partnership as it wanted to invest in skills development to support local area regeneration. Jaguar viewed this as part of its social corporate responsibility role and was in the process of developing educational centres at all its plants. The Pathfinder welcomed the opportunity to secure an employer's contribution to strategic management issues. Jaguar became a member of Knowsley Collegiate's Governance Forum, which directed strategic planning for the Pathfinder. A senior company manager from Jaguar also sat on the Executive Group, a key decision-making and implementation body for the Pathfinder.

Operational management was devolved to five task groups: curriculum, vocational skills, e-learning, student entitlement, and employer liaison. An individual with thematic expertise led each task group. Jaguar and the Engineering Sector Skills Council played a crucial role in the operational development of the project by informing the design of a new Engineering and Manufacturing GCSE and work experience model. Jaguar seconded a member of staff to the Pathfinder to lead the development of the Engineering and Manufacturing GCSE course, in collaboration with college staff. The GCSE was designed to demonstrate the relevance of Key Stage 4 to participants, and encourage progression to Key Stage 5 as the next step in reaching their career aspirations. Jaguar and college staff jointly delivered the GCSE through sessions at the college and the company training centre. Jaguar also provided work experience placements and conducted factory visits. Young people of all abilities also participated in a week long young managers programme.

### **What was the outcome?**

A member of Knowsley Education Authority was seconded to Jaguar to set up an education centre, funded through the Excellence in Cities programme. The 14-19 Pathfinder funded an Educational Liaison officer to work within Jaguar's education centre further to promote the Pathfinder programme.

The Pathfinder worked to develop a sustainable model to embed activities in mainstream provision. A Transitional Strategy was designed to facilitate this process from 2005/06. A finance

sub group was implemented to explore funding sustainability issues. The Pathfinder piloted alternative funding mechanisms in an attempt gradually to reduce reliance on Pathfinder funding and the subsidisation of college training places. Schools were encouraged to pay for provision from their mainstream budgets. Although some were willing, most schools reported that it would not be possible to maintain current levels of provision or pay the full cost of college provision. However, the college and schools agreed costs to sustain some provision during the transitional stage.

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# Increasing Access to Curriculum Options through E-learning in an Inner City Area

## *Lewisham 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Lewisham Pathfinder designed a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) to promote e-learning and ensure accessibility to the Key Stage 4 Entitlement, and identified curriculum pathways to all local students. The Pathfinder also wanted to reduce student travel between institutions.

### **What were the barriers?**

Based in the second largest inner London borough, the Lewisham Pathfinder served a highly diverse student population, with over half drawn from minority ethnic groups, representing over 100 language communities. Technical challenges were a further barrier, requiring the Pathfinder to ensure software compatibility and integrate different ICT systems. The ICT infrastructure in some schools had to be upgraded to accommodate the VLE. An ICT development plan was produced to audit LEA infrastructure. The diverse student base and technical issues meant the Pathfinder required considerable development time to produce an inclusive VLE curriculum accessible to all local students.

### **What was the solution?**

The 14-19 Strategy Group comprised all 12 secondary schools, Lewisham College, the LELSC, Christ the King Sixth Form College, Prospects Connexions partnership, two independent schools, the Education Business Partnerships, and Government Office for London. The Pathfinder also worked with special schools and the Pupil Referral Unit, with schools grouped into four federations. The Pathfinder worked with Headteachers to allocate sufficient staff development time to establish the Virtual Campus.

A consultant was commissioned to survey the level of ICT provision across Lewisham schools, and helped develop the technical aspects of the VLE. The VLE provided a Virtual Campus to maximise students' use of the Key Stage 4 Entitlement. This provided four curriculum pathways – an academic pathway focused on GCSEs and accelerated AS levels; an applied pathway focused on GCSE/GNVQ/BTEC; a work-related pathway focused on NVQs and other vocational qualifications; and a pre-vocational pathway to re-engage disaffected students. The VLE also includes 'Guardian Learn Premium' Key Stage 3 and 4 materials for gifted and talented pupils at Levels 1 and 2. The VLE broadened curriculum options by giving all local students access to these pathways, irrespective of their host school. It helped deliver a blended curriculum through a combination of on-line and face-to-face teaching, and also provided discrete distance learning on-line courses.

The VLE helped students learn more independently and explore their learning choices. It represented a holistic ICT environment integrating curriculum and assessment materials, assessment data, management information systems, video-conferencing and website hosting, Advice and Guidance materials and Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), and progress files. The system supported learning by providing a tracking mechanism for students, their teachers and

parents. The VLE enabled students to access curriculum materials from any learning site and from home; retrieve their own work; use interactive whiteboards, video clips; and test themselves on-line. Students also submitted work and received marks and feedback from teachers through the VLE. Teachers could access and enter information about individual students, and upload curriculum materials, assessment tasks and formative assessment feedback.

Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) and electronic ILPs were integrated into school careers education programmes and Connexions work, to improve the quality of local careers information. *Fast Tomato* Advice and Guidance software was used (a commercially available Advice and Guidance software package), adapted to reflect the local employment context. Linking the VLE to on-line ILPs was designed to promote self-directed learning through personal target setting.

The Pathfinder was committed to including young people in decision making, through activities such as collaboration with the local Young Mayor and young people from the 14-19 strategy group. The Young People's Forum, which represented local schools and colleges, was directly consulted on VLE developments. This informed discussion on curriculum and choice, new technologies, partnerships and IAG. The VLE included a student on-line discussion forum and email system for teacher contact.

### What was the outcome?

The VLE pilot reported success in increasing local access for students through e-learning, whilst reducing the costs associated with purchasing books. The Forum endorsed the VLE as helping to meet the Key Stage 4 Entitlement. The on-line Advice and Guidance materials also received positive feedback from piloting during 2004/05. The VLE approach to supporting the Key Stage 4 Entitlement was promoted to students through the Options booklets which each institution produced, and also through the *14+ Your Choice in Lewisham* booklet circulated to all Year 9 pupils.

The Pathfinder Co-ordinator described the central co-ordination role as a "facilitator, enabler and catalyst for change". Investments in partnership co-ordination and staff development time resulted in one Headteacher remarking (in Spring 2005) that "the work we are doing with the VLE will revolutionise Teaching and Learning in the next 12 months".

VLE materials should ensure all students can access the full Key Stage 4 Entitlement through their federation of schools in 2005/06 – rather than being confined to their host school. It is envisaged that the VLE will support accelerated progression to AS courses in Year 11. The on-line Advice and Guidance materials will be rolled out to more local schools in 2005/06. *Fast Tomato* has been used to distribute electronic ILPs across the Partnership to over 3000 pupils in Year 9 and Year 11.

The VLE was used to develop the London 14-19 Pathfinder Dissemination Website to showcase reports and good practice from the seven London-based Pathfinders. The website can be accessed at [www.14219.org](http://www.14219.org)

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# Chapter 4 – Meeting Students' Needs

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# Helping Young People to Learn at Their Own Pace in a Rural Area with Moodle

## *Cumbria 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Cumbria Pathfinder introduced e-learning tools to improve support for young people wishing to learn at their own pace. Learners worked in small tutorial style groups to test approaches. The Moodle is a free open course management system for on-line learning. It was developed by the Moodle Partners, a group of service companies responsible for optional commercial services, including Moodle hosting, and remote support contracts. Moodle enabled teachers to focus attention on students most in need of support, without delaying other learners, as it supported those able to work independently at their own pace. For more information on Moodle see <http://moodle.org/>

### **What were the barriers?**

Previous e-learning tools were only available on CD Rom, such as the Hot Potato programme which enabled learners to take multiple choice tests. The Pathfinder wanted to develop an on-line package that could be available '24/7' – to enable learners to fit training around other commitments such as shift work, and to complete work at their own pace.

### **What was the solution?**

Moodle is a course management system which provided a Virtual Learning Environment co-ordinating on-line courses. Learners taking City and Guilds in Process Plant Operations used Moodle to take classes on-line. The work-based learning provider GEN II employed a training consultant to develop the on-line materials.

Moodle was designed to be an easy to use, intuitive learner-centred system. The modules were detailed to ensure they provided a stand-alone tool that did not require teacher explanation or support. However, ideally Moodle was combined with some face-to-face contact and tutorial support. Moodle included communication tools to allow remote communication and support. Sub-sections of each module were followed by an exercise and short test, with a test at the end of each module, in the form of practical multiple choice assessments. Learners appreciated the instant feedback as this enabled them to gain confidence before completing the assessed tests. Moodle tracked and recorded learner performance and answers for each test, providing detailed feedback and analysis on progress. Learners requested an expansion in the range of on-line learning materials further to support learning at their own pace. Iggesund Paperboard, a manufacturer of virgin fibre paperboard for use in the packaging and graphics sectors, offered employment to learners completing their courses early as an additional incentive.

Employer involvement was crucial to the development of Moodle. Iggesund Paperboard used its own on-site learning centre for the delivery of City and Guilds training to its work placement students on the Process Plant Operations course. The centre was equipped with eight computers, providing access for each trainee, each with broadband connection. Learners were encouraged to use the Company intranet, to access Company statistics and diagrams to

supplement their coursework and understanding. Young people were involved in the review of Moodle and had some control over improvements.

### **What was the outcome?**

All students completed the course ahead of schedule. The progress of the whole group was three weeks quicker than normal, with one student completing the Process Plant Operations course six weeks ahead of schedule. However, trials would need to be conducted with a larger group to determine whether outcomes could be systematically reproduced. Students' IT skills improved through Moodle, the Pathfinder Co-ordinator referring to participants as 'great thieves of information', skilled at finding up-to-date, relevant information to inform their learning. This approach improved the ability of learners to work independently and direct their own learning. These skills gave learners the confidence to benefit from Individual Learning Plan (ILP) approaches rather than traditional Information, Advice and Guidance system. The Cumbria and East Manchester Pathfinders have shared learning to inform the development of a common electronic ILP, which will be transferable and accessible across their partnerships.

Moodle was developed as a tool to be hosted on school websites in the longer term. Hosting costs between £100-£200 a year. Although initial time commitments are required to install and maintain Moodle in schools, this will decrease once the system becomes established

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# Managing Accelerated and Decelerated Learning at Key Stage 4 in an Inner City Area

## *East Manchester 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder wanted to increase flexibility at Key Stage 4 by enabling students to vary their pace of learning according to their ability level and support needs.

### **What were the barriers?**

Local providers were used to competing for student numbers. The Pathfinder also encountered practical difficulties in trying to establish “joined-up” provision, such as timetabling differences between organisations, initially reducing opportunities for joint activities during the school day.

### **What was the solution?**

The Pathfinder offered both accelerated and decelerated learning opportunities at Key Stage 4. The partnership included mainstream high schools, City Learning Centres, UMIST, Connexions, schools, colleges, training providers, employer representatives, Complementary Education, which provides appropriate education away from school, and special schools. Project activities were overseen by the 14-19 Strategy Manager. The Pathfinder Co-ordinator role provided an impartial voice, essential to reduce competition and increase collaboration between local providers. The Co-ordinator was skilled in change management approaches and able to facilitate organisational change, such as encouraging partnership organisations to dovetail timetables to increase opportunities for collaboration. Development time was therefore essential to address partnership challenges through regular meetings. A key concern for the Pathfinder was to raise awareness of young people’s differing needs. The Pathfinder developed opportunities for young people to play an active role in partnership developments to inform this process, and ensure activities were well informed by the target group. See the case study on *Piloting e-ILPs with Young People in the Inner City* for further information on how the Pathfinder involved young people in the design and delivery of the programme.

Key Stage 4 was offered over three years to all students in Years 9-11 to suit individual learners’ needs, and enable students to be entered for GCSE examinations either at the end of Year 10 or Year 11. Accelerated provision enabled some young people to take GCSEs a year early. The partnership agreed a Year 11 curriculum for students completing GCSEs in Year 10. These students participated in curriculum extension activities in Year 11, such as developing enterprise abilities and team work skills through Duke of Edinburgh activities. Extended learning opportunities will be available for these students in 2005/06, such as an AS level course in critical thinking.

Decelerated provision enabled learners at two special schools to start Key Stage 4 a year later. Partnership collaboration enabled this cohort to study towards appropriate qualifications such as GNVQs, BTECs and applied GCSEs, and offered subjects of interest to young people such as Horticulture. Level 1 BTEC Certificates and Diplomas were being developed for delivery in 2005/06 to offer a more individualised and differentiated curriculum. Decelerated learning

approaches also helped prepare students for life in the outside world. For example, the Pathfinder worked in partnership with two special schools and identified cohorts in mainstream schools; and The Prince's Trust's Excel Club and Young Enterprise to deliver enterprise activities, supporting students completing Key Stage 4 over three years. The Prince's Trust and Young Enterprise elements, which cut across the curriculum, helped learners prepare for life after school.

Varying the pace of learning at Key Stage 4 was designed to improve post-16 progression routes by helping young people make appropriate choices. Information, Advice and Guidance provided essential support to help learners identify post-16 learner pathways. The Pathfinder promoted personalised learning approaches to encourage young people to take ownership of this process. A comprehensive web-based Individual Learning Plan (ILP) system was developed and made accessible to all staff and students. Each participant was supported to develop and manage their ILP on-line. Participating schools used ILP information to support the planning and management of learning systems that could be tailored to students' needs. See the case study on *Piloting e-ILPs with Young People in the Inner City* for further information.

### What was the outcome?

All young people in Years 9-11 were offered the opportunity to participate in accelerated or decelerated activities at Key Stage 4. Although it was too early for comprehensive evidence of the impact of these approaches to be gauged, some outcomes, for example student attendance and exclusions, are clear. Schools reported increased engagement and motivation across Key Stage 4, particularly in Year 9. School Managers were confident that the increased flexibility and vocational curriculum would result in improved retention and achievement rates in the long term. Early indications of improved progression were provided by the cohort of 27 Year 11 students participating in Complementary Education through the Pathfinder. Three quarters of the 2004/05 cohort had secured progression routes into Further Education, Apprenticeships or full time employment.

A number of new qualifications and extra curricula activities were developed through the Pathfinder for delivery in 2005/06. For example, one school has developed a Level 1 BTEC for delivery alongside Level 2, to provide differentiated, personalised learning in a number of subjects. An enterprise work experience project was developed with Manchester City Football Club, Aria Technology, The Manufacturing Institute and ASDA supermarket chain to give students an insight into the recycling industry.

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# Supporting Accelerated Learning in an Urban Area

## *Harrow 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder wished to improve progression opportunities for learners completing Key Stage 4 early, to reduce the proportion of higher attaining learners accessing education options outside the borough post-16. The Pathfinder designed a collaborative model incorporating schools, colleges and Higher Education providers to develop higher level curricula materials and promote local post-16 progression routes.

### **What were the barriers?**

The Pathfinder required considerable staff development time to bring together schools and colleges to agree a mutually beneficial model.

### **What was the solution?**

The Pathfinder developed an accelerated learning model, which schools, in partnership with colleges, led. The partnership included six schools and three colleges. Several fast tracking options to promote accelerated learning were developed. Some schools gave learners at Key Stages 3 and 4 the opportunity to start AS modules early, whilst others offered parallel AS/GCSE/GNVQ qualifications tailored to individual needs. Initially accelerated AS courses were offered in Maths, Religious Studies, Physics, and Music. AS courses were subsequently offered in ICT, Chemistry and Business Studies.

The accelerated AS courses were delivered largely in schools through breakfast or twilight sessions or on Saturdays. However, some vocational options were delivered at college. The Pathfinder focused on those subject areas directly related to each school's specialist status, and colleges led on their respective specialisms. This enabled specialist tutors to teach in different schools, ensuring staff time and resources were used efficiently and effectively to support learners taking exams early.

The partnership was supported by management structures which promoted joint governance, safeguarded by clear roles and responsibilities. For example, common timetabling was achieved through provider collaboration. Block timetabling at college increased learners' attendance during core hours and freed up college tutors to teach in schools at other times. Schools and colleges jointly developed timetables to ensure that higher achievers did not miss school lessons to attend college. College staff delivered AS lessons in schools to prepare students for progression to college and equip them with the reasoning and analytical skills required to achieve higher grades.

Accelerated learning was viewed as a key personal development tool for young people, rather than a narrow preparation for external examinations. The Pathfinder created a number of personal development opportunities for participants to apply their higher level thinking and reasoning skills. For example, students were encouraged to take ownership of their Individual Learning Plans to plan their career development. Participants were also consulted on curriculum design, leading to the development of accelerated learning in non-traditional subjects. Pathfinder schools and colleges agreed not to push students to complete the full AS in one

year, preferring to encourage high achieving students to develop breadth as well as depth in their knowledge. For example, Maths AS was supplemented with topics not developed to the same extent at GCSE, such as Algebra. Similarly, the AS ICT course was designed to develop generic skills to improve students' performance across the curriculum.

### **What was the outcome?**

Over 150 students benefited from accelerated provision. The Pathfinder Co-ordinator described the model as a "win win situation for both schools and colleges". The accelerated programme was extended to develop new Level 5 courses in Critical Thinking, Maths and Theatre Studies in conjunction with Middlesex University and St Mary's College. A conference was held to promote the new Accelerated AS Business Studies course to other local schools, and share good practice. The Pathfinder worked with providers interested in mainstreaming the AS accelerated programme, and helped develop an e-learning package by Imperial College to support AS accelerated learners.

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# Re-engaging Disaffected Students in a Deprived Inner City Area

## *Knowsley 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Knowsley Pathfinder developed a programme to re-engage 14-16 year olds at risk of disaffection. The programme combined substantial off-site vocational provision with educational elements, such as access to GCSEs.

### **What were the barriers?**

Although all schools agreed to ringfence Wednesday afternoon for vocational provision, additional common timetabling was needed by most courses, such as NVQs which required two half-days or one whole day. This resulted in some piecemeal timetabling arrangements between the college and individual schools. The Pathfinder set up a group to explore how common timetabling arrangements could be improved.

A referral process was developed with schools and the Youth Offending Team to ensure the Pathfinder was '*not seen as a dumping ground*'. However, the Pathfinder was unable to provide placements for all referrals and therefore a Pathways board was set up to assess students before a placement offer was made. The Pathways board included representatives from schools, the college and training provider network.

### **What was the solution?**

The Knowsley Collegiate was established to co-ordinate the work of all local 14-19 providers in developing and supporting learners on various curriculum pathways. The Collegiate included: the LEA; the Community College; 11 secondary schools and five special schools; Merseyside Connexions; Greater Merseyside LSC; Knowsley Training Provider Network; and Jaguar.

The LEA-led model provided effective leadership. Senior teachers were seconded to the Pathfinder to set up an 'out of school' programme for excluded students, those at risk of disaffection, or those for whom school was not an appropriate learning environment. A Vocational Skills Centre, which received £2.5m capital funding from external sources, was built to enhance vocational learning provision. Learners could choose from over 35 optional courses outlined in an LEA-wide prospectus, including GCSEs and vocational subjects. Learning on the 'out of school' programme was provided in small groups. Students combined vocational skills development with key skills study. Vocational areas included hairdressing, motor vehicle maintenance, construction, and game keeping.

The FE college, training providers and local employers, such as Jaguar delivered the provision. Students were supported by Information, Advice and Guidance from Connexions and a basic skills tutor. Young people received off-site vocational provision for between three and five days a week. Three schools also established an 'inter-school' offer allowing students to study GCSE Media at a city centre provider.

These activities were designed to increase retention and achievement amongst disaffected groups in vocational learning. Student feedback demonstrated that off-site training increased interest in their school work. Staff also reported that the programme retained a significant number of students who would otherwise have disappeared from the schooling system, with some achieving national qualifications at 16 and progressing to FE or training post-16.

### **What was the outcome?**

Ofsted praised the work-based learning programme at the last LEA inspection, both for the quality of provision and level of student engagement. A number of other colleges were interested in adopting the Vocational Skills Centre model to increase the capacity of their vocational programmes. Over 1000 Key Stage 4 students had accessed at least one day a week off-site training in the Pathfinder's first year.

In the academic year 2003/04, the Knowsley Collegiate enabled an additional 500 14-16 year olds to learn for part of the week at institutions other than their home school. Students chose from a wide variety of vocational courses promoted in an authority-wide prospectus. Combined with the 250 students at risk of disaffection on the 'out of school' programme, around 33% of the 2003/04 Year 10 cohort had received some training away from their home school. The majority of this provision was provided at the College's Vocational Skills Centre, although some training providers offered placements and a small number of students attended courses at other schools.

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# Targeted Provision for Under-achievers and Gifted and Talented Learners in an Inner City Area

## *Lewisham 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

Lewisham Pathfinder identified the need to provide targeted provision for certain groups, to maximise learning opportunities and maintain their interest in learning.

### **What were the barriers?**

Some under-achieving students came from backgrounds where there was no interest in Higher Education, and intervention was needed to support and help them increase their motivation for learning. Conversely, gifted and talented students often had high aspirations and requested additional learning to achieve their goals.

### **What was the solution?**

A research project was commissioned to explore the best ways of taking targeted activities forward. The role of the co-ordinator was pivotal in driving this forward by developing a partnership with Aim Higher and Global Graduates (a non-profit making private company). The partnership developed programmes called *Making the Grade* and *Young Graduates*.

*Making the Grade* was targeted at under-achieving black and minority ethnic learners, whom tutors identified as needing support and direction from positive role models. Independent mentors from Global Graduates helped learners to develop coping strategies and study skills, and increase their confidence and motivation to achieve self advocacy. Using independent mentors from an experienced company to work with learners was very successful.

Having successfully completed *Making the Grade*, learners progressed onto the *Young Graduates* programme. *Young Graduates* enabled students to get the most out of their formal education. Information, Advice and Guidance was provided to help students make informed choices and secure the best progression route into Higher Education, to support their career aspirations.

The Pathfinder also developed the *Lewisham Plus* scheme in collaboration with other initiatives to accredit all out of school learning, for example through Millennium Volunteers, and the Duke of Edinburgh programme. *Lewisham Plus* was designed to enable young people to gain credit for additional work completed at a pace suitable for them.

### **What was the outcome?**

Approximately 120 learners completed the programme during 2004/05. The success of these projects has been widely disseminated to other Pathfinders and LEAs. Over 100 delegates, including Headteachers, principals, and representatives from Connexions, Education Business Partnerships, LEAs, local LSCs attended the Pathfinder's dissemination conference. Lewisham

College used Pathfinder approaches to inform the LSC Sector Pilot on developing new progression routes in the Public Sector.

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# Supporting Learners with Special Education Needs in an Urban Area

## *South Gloucestershire (Kingswood Partnership)*

### *14-19 Pathfinder*

#### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder wanted to develop an inclusive 14-19 curriculum framework to engage and support all young people across the ability range. There was a need specifically to improve provision for Special Education Needs (SEN) learners to support this process.

#### **What were the barriers?**

The Pathfinder wanted to challenge the lack of synergy in school timetables which, in the past, had resulted in specialised provision being planned on an individual school basis. The benefits of sharing information and resources could also be exploited through the Pathfinder. Schools were protective of their budgets, and managers needed to be encouraged to pool resources to develop opportunities for “joining-up” local provision.

#### **What was the solution?**

The Pathfinder was led by the Kingswood Partnership, which had encouraged collaboration between local providers for the past 15 years. The Kingswood Partnership had helped providers share post-16 courses to some extent, given the LEA requirement for all local secondary schools to have sixth forms. However, significant collaboration had only been achieved in recent years by introducing blocked timetables, ringfencing common time for activities across provider institutions. A great deal of development work still needed to take place to create a fully collaborative delivery model across the Kingswood partnership. The Pathfinder therefore pooled resources, such as staff release time for fortnightly half-day joint meetings, to develop effective communication channels, common objectives, and working practices between the six participating schools, FE college and Connexions. The Pathfinder Co-ordinator viewed the resulting collaborative model as a ‘bottom up reform process’, with some participating schools subsequently using these approaches to influence their individual school management systems.

Pathfinder activity focused on staff and curriculum development, and a key aspect of this work was to improve the targeting of special needs provision and e-learning to support SEN learners. Teacher Learner Groups (TLGs) were established to take forward curriculum developments. A teacher representative from each school was involved in each TLG and the Pathfinder funded supply cover to enable them to meet fortnightly. The group leaders, known as Development Managers, received training from the International Learning and Research Centre to enable them to chair and direct the activities of their TLG. The TLGs provided a catalyst for tangible collaboration and generated attitudinal change amongst teachers. They demonstrated the greater opportunities for curriculum improvement derived from pooling teacher development time, and resources, to design comprehensive and transferable materials, and establish a common curriculum.

The purpose of the SEN TLG was to adapt and transfer improvements made to the quality of wider 14-19 education to SEN provision. In some cases, participating schools identified a

common dedicated timetable slot to provide college-link courses. The SEN TLG enabled SEN developments to be piloted and implemented across the Pathfinder. This was a significant development as local schools had previously purchased SEN provision on an individual basis from the City of Bristol College. SEN provision was improved to increase student access to a broader, more flexible curriculum.

The SEN TLG developed e-learning tools to help SEN learners develop the skills and aptitudes required to access entry level qualifications. Representatives from a specialist school in the TLG informed the development of e-learning tools for students with severe learning difficulties and physical disabilities in specialist subjects. The Pathfinder was committed to enabling all students to use personalised learning tools. The e-learning materials were accessed on the Pathfinder Extranet, built by teachers to be compatible across all LEA schools. The Extranet also provided unified guidance and a learner information portfolio to support learners to manage their own learning. The SEN TLG tailored these tools for SEN users. An information booklet was also produced to promote SEN provision to learners and parents.

### What was the outcome?

The Pathfinder was committed to developing a sustainable curriculum structure. The collaborative working practices developed through the TLGs increased local staff capacity and willingness to develop common curricula in the longer term. Staff feedback consistently reported the value teachers placed on the TLGs as providing a forum for teachers to contribute to the process of change and improve 14-19 curricula through informed debate and consensus. All the Pathfinder's delivery centres were committed to sustaining, and where possible, enhancing delivery. For example, the inclusive Curriculum Framework development for the local area will be continued through a series of activities, including the development of specialist Diplomas with the City of Bristol College, continuing skills development work with specialist schools, and producing a three year planning cycle to extend advice and guidance support for local progression routes. Refer to the case study on *Sustaining Improved Professional Practice through Staff Development in an Urban Area* for further information.

The Pathfinder's collaborative working arrangements extended the cluster model for 14-19 education and training established by the original Kingswood Partnership. Pathfinder findings have informed the local 14-19 Strategic Planning Group and the development of the local action plan in response to the 2004/05 Area Wide Inspection.

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# Working with Employers to Improve Vocational Options in an Inner City Area

## *City of Nottingham 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder wanted to engage employers to address local skills shortages and promote vocational learning options.

### **What were the barriers?**

Business pressures limited the level of responsibility employers could take for organising activities.

### **What was the solution?**

The Pathfinder built on previous LSC capacity building projects to develop a partnership with employers, Sector Skills Councils and schools to improve vocational options in leisure and tourism, sport and recreation, health and social care, construction and automotive skills. The City Academy helped develop collaborative working arrangements, and provided construction and hairdressing facilities for students from other schools.

The Pathfinder worked with mainstream schools to organise and develop a series of vocational curriculum days, offering taster workshops to raise young people's aspirations and support informed decision-making for their KS4 curriculum at their Year 9 options sessions. Speakers from the community, employers, training providers and their peers gave presentations on career pathways. The programme has been integrated into schools' annual options events. The Pathfinder organised a series of vocational taster workshops for employers to deliver to Special Education Needs (SEN) students at special schools. Employers and mentors in the workplace provided direct Information, Advice and Guidance to young people. For example, collaboration with the Nottingham City Hospital Patient Pathway enabled over 60 young people to discuss how individual health care staff developed their own career pathways.

The Pathfinder worked with NHS Health Centre Managers, employers and schools to create structured work placements for Health and Social Care GCSE students through the Open Road programme, the local Primary Care Trust, and three local Health Centres. Participants completed three Open College Network units at Level 2. The OCN units helped students take responsibility for their own learning and develop their employability skills. Students practised work-related skills to complement their school curriculum such as answering the phone, booking appointments and helping the health visitor. Student feedback emphasised the value of experiencing first hand "how the health centre works and runs" and that they enjoyed being "treated as an adult". Health and social care occupational ambassadors were also recruited from the NHS Workforce Development Corporation and the wider health and social care sector to promote careers to school pupils, especially in non-clinical areas and clinical support services.

Student Apprenticeships were developed in catering and hospitality, health and social care, horticulture and motor vehicle maintenance, combining school-based study in the core subjects

and basic skills, college-based vocational study and work placements. The Pathfinder wanted to increase post-16 participation in motor vehicle maintenance Apprenticeships, as this sector demonstrated considerable skills gaps especially at master technician level. The initial pilot scheme gave 78 students aged 14-16 years from six Nottinghamshire schools the opportunity to experience provision developed by EMTEC, Toyota UK, Nottinghamshire LSC, Djanogly City Academy and the Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI). Students attended work placements for three hours a week over a two year period and gained theoretical and practical experience, working towards technical certificates in Light Vehicle Maintenance to complement their GCSE studies. Post-16 progression routes were guaranteed for all those completing Student Apprenticeships, the course leading to a national pre-Apprenticeship qualification and providing a 'fast track' to a full Apprenticeship programme with EMTEC, or a local dealership. Toyota sponsored the vehicles and learning materials, and the IMI, the motor industry's awarding body, was responsible for external verification and certification. The Pathfinder also worked with Nottinghamshire Construction Forum, supporting the development of a Construction Training Academy by helping local firms recruit directly to fill their CITB training vacancies. Over 100 students graduated from this provision at 16 and were offered progression through CITB accredited Apprenticeships, having completed a broad based construction qualification at Levels 1 or 2.

The Pathfinder also developed a BTEC First in Media, giving students the opportunity to produce a Pathfinder magazine and run an internet radio station. A professional magazine journalist, training provider, and school staff provided tutoring.

### What was the outcome?

The career pathways developed by the Pathfinder informed the work of four Sector Skills Councils at a national level. For example, People 1st mapped the GCSE Leisure and Tourism against the Apprenticeship occupational standards to identify progression routes.

Regionally, Pathfinder activity in the health sector informed the work of the Aim Higher Health Care Forum, constructing a regional approach to health and social care Pathways. Findings also informed Nottinghamshire's Strategic Area Review (StAR) process for leisure, tourism, culture and hospitality, informing skills development across the sector. Outcomes were also disseminated through the NHSU Open Roads Project and its network of health-related projects across the country, and linked to the leisure, tourism, culture and hospitality sector Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) network. Findings have also been disseminated through the City Council's Building Schools for the Future initiative and Creative Partnerships. Employer partnerships in health and social care and leisure and tourism will be sustained at a regional level. Some direct delivery will continue and a new post has been established in the City Council to promote work-related learning opportunities.

School feedback indicated the importance of vocational courses in increasing student attendance, motivation and achievement. Many of the work-based learning participants were offered jobs with further training or Apprenticeships following their training. All students completing the Automotive Skills Level 2 programme were offered Apprenticeships across 16 different car dealerships. Support for SEN students would be managed by the SEN co-ordinator funded through Nottinghamshire Education Business Partnership in the future.

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# Engaging Employers and Sector Skills Councils in an Inner City Area

## *City of Westminster 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder wanted to encourage local young people to raise their aspirations and awareness of local employment opportunities.

### **What were the barriers?**

Disaffection limited some students' interest in the programme initially, with the local area reporting high levels of students not in education, employment or training. This resulted in a corresponding high level of post-16 students failing to achieve A\* to G grades at GCSE.

### **What was the solution?**

The Pathfinder recognised the importance of undertaking partnership work with local employers and Sector Skills Councils to improve the longer term employment prospects of local young people. The Pathfinder developed an Education Business Consortium model to encourage employers and Sector Skills Councils to work towards the common objective of developing industry relevant curriculum materials to raise local aspirations and attainment levels. Activities were focused around priority employment sectors demonstrating local skills gaps, to develop curriculum pathways into local employment opportunities. Priority sectors were health care, construction, hospitality, leisure and tourism, financial services and new media technology. This case study explores developments in two sectors: financial services and hospitality, to demonstrate the cross section of development and delivery work designed with employers and Sector Skills Councils.

A Financial Services Steering Group was set up, including Westminster Business School (University of Westminster). The Steering Group used research which the Corporation of London conducted into non-graduate recruitment, to inform its work with large companies, such as the development of 18+ leaver schemes with Price Waterhouse Coopers and Abbey. This approach also helped the Pathfinder secure paid summer work placements for Year 13 leavers through Brokerage Citylink in the finance sectors in the City of London and Westminster. The Financial Services Sector Skills Council invited the Pathfinder to take part in a London Network of Financial Services planning meeting, providing a link to employers in the South East. The Financial Services Authority gave a presentation to staff at the Pathfinder's Curriculum Development Day in 2004/05, which led to a working group being established, including the Personal Finance Education Group, Price Waterhouse Coopers and the Chartered Institute of Insurance. As a result an 'entitlement to financial literacy' programme was designed for both Key Stage 4 and post-16 cohorts, to be delivered in 2005/06, to develop and assess students' employability skills.

The Pathfinder also undertook development and delivery work in the hospitality sector. The Pathfinder worked closely with PeopleFirst, the Hospitality Sector Skills Council to ensure future curriculum development produces industry relevant qualifications, and supports the process of streamlining qualifications in the sector. The Pathfinder facilitated partnership development between the Hilton Hotel and a local school funded through the Hilton Foundation to deliver



the Catering GCSE. Industry days were held for students at the Hilton, with the Hilton developing the education content of the day and committing to future curriculum development. Chefs employed by the Hilton also gave school demonstrations to encourage students to explore opportunities in catering. A two week Summer School work experience programme was delivered for Year 11 students, in catering, leisure, and travel and tourism, and extended work experience placements were being developed, to support students working towards Apprenticeships in the industry.

### **What was the outcome?**

Development and networking activities with employers were targeted to ensure the future planning of local 14-19 provision addressed skills gaps, and supported priorities, which Westminster's Economic Development Strategy and Local Employability Network identified. The Financial Services model was presented to the Thames Gateway Financial Services Academy as part of the Pathfinder exit strategy to encourage long term support for the approaches developed by the Financial Services Steering Group. Westminster Business School (University of Westminster) led a joint planning meeting for Heads of Business Studies Departments in local secondary schools and FE colleges to explore future teaching and learning development needs in the locality, and pledged its commitment to supporting this network in the longer term. The Financial Services group developed the *ifs* Level 2 Certificate in Finance for piloting in 2005/06. The career pathways which the Pathfinder developed will be promoted on the *Westminster Pathways* Information Advice and Guidance website, a joint initiative with Connexions and Aim Higher to be launched in 2005/06. The model had also been disseminated to other Excellence in Cities areas.

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# Developing Enterprise Education with a University in an Inner City Area

## *Coventry 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder wanted to promote vocational education across the ability range. The Pathfinder initially sought expertise from other local providers on how to promote to high achievers the link between education and work.

### **What were the barriers?**

Practical issues delayed the start of activities, such as CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) checks on staff from partnership organisations before they could work directly with pre-16s. Some teachers did not have experience of developing enterprise and partnership approaches. Entrepreneurs also had to be compensated for their time.

### **What was the solution?**

Initially, gifted and talented young people were targeted for a two week module in enterprise education. This was delivered in partnership between the University of Coventry and local schools, and built on earlier small scale enterprise activities. The Pathfinder developed a personalised approach to work experience by linking with the Business School at the University to develop an enterprise education delivery model. The enterprise course focused on skills development such as: marketing; business planning; communication and presentation skills. Coventry University's Business School provided facilities and staff to help young people develop their enterprise ideas. Students developed a business plan for a unit available in the local sports stadium. Learning in a higher education environment also helped raise students' aspirations by demonstrating the progression routes available from vocational education.

### **What was the outcome?**

The success of the initial project, which focused on high achievers, was adapted for use with less able young people. The under-achievers enterprise education model is located at newly developed Partnership Centres, and includes involvement from large local employers in addition to Coventry City Football Club. A menu of enterprise opportunities for learners has been developed, which includes support to work with local businesses to develop their entrepreneurial skills. Local school enterprise funding has helped sustain and expand the project. The Pathfinder recorded an increase in pupil numbers taking vocational courses (mainly vocational GCSEs): in 2004/05 54% of the Year 10 cohort took at least one vocational course, compared to 45% of the Year 11 cohort.

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# Skills Roadshows to Counter Gender Stereotypes in Subject and Employment Choices in an Urban Area

## *Doncaster 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder wanted to challenge gender stereotyping in the subject and employment choices which young people made.

### **What were the barriers?**

It was noted that learners demonstrated persistently traditional views on subject choices. The Pathfinder wanted to engage learners, challenge their attitudes and raise awareness of non-traditional employment opportunities.

### **What was the solution?**

Led by Lifetime, the partnership included eleven schools, two colleges, training providers, Connexions, the LEA, Business Education – South Yorkshire, and the Doncaster Education City project. The Pathfinder works alongside the local 'Pathways to Success' project (an Objective 1 programme) and the 'Increased Flexibility Programme'. The Pathfinder developed a programme over two years with practical activities including workshops, tasters and simulated vocational 'Skills Roadshows' which were provided by colleges, training providers and industry representatives, to encourage young people to take-up non-traditional gender options. Activities were focused on employment sectors with skills gaps (health and engineering); job opportunities (construction, motor vehicle and catering); and learner interest (hair and beauty). The Pathfinder also collaborated with the Joint Interventions (JIVE) led by Sheffield Hallam University, to encourage more women to gain qualifications and employment in traditionally male sectors such as science, engineering, technology and construction.

An experienced trainer ran workshops exploring issues such as gender stereotyping in the workplace and the effects of the media on young people's perceptions, and raised awareness of employment opportunities in the target sectors. A male "playworker" working in a childcare setting attended one session as an example of a positive male role model working in a non-traditional occupation. Additionally a male trainer/care worker delivered sessions in school (involving 134 students), designed to encourage boys as well as girls to consider a career in care work.

Training providers, colleges and employers delivered Skills Roadshows in schools to help orientate young people to the world of work. This approach also overcame difficulties associated with transporting learners to and from external sites. The Skills Roadshows provided taster sessions for Key Stage 3 and 4 learners, to consider non-traditional options through discussions with positive role models such as employers and work-based learning providers. The Skills Roadshows were extended during the second year to enable learners from all eleven

schools to participate in a half-day event, sampling 'hands-on' activities and practical demonstrations, and gaining information on progression routes in up to nine vocational areas (hair and beauty, motor vehicle, construction, catering and hospitality, engineering, childcare, joinery, travel and tourism, and sport and recreation).

Participants' feedback was very positive. Participants commented on their heightened awareness of curriculum choices and career pathways to achieve their longer-term employment aspirations. Participants appreciated being treated like adults in the Skills Roadshow taster sessions, as one young person explained "[they] don't do it all for you. It's like you're actually working there", and "[People] talked to you like a normal person, not like [they were] teaching you." Girls also valued undertaking tasters within a female-only group, as this increased their confidence in non-traditional occupational sectors.

Longer-term support was provided through sustained Information Advice and Guidance and personalised learning, which helped young people maintain their motivation and confidence in working towards non-traditional employment options. See the *Supporting Equal Opportunities with IAG and ILPs in an Urban Area* case study for information.

### What was the outcome?

The Skills Roadshow delivery model proved very successful. The model joined up institutional and curriculum planning and developed a common approach to training and delivery. Collaboration between schools and local training providers improved, and special schools became more involved in local partnership work. This represented a time and cost-efficient delivery model, whilst maintaining sufficient flexibility to accommodate variations in organisations' planning cycles. The Pathfinder evaluation conducted by GHK Evaluation Consultants viewed the level of collaborative working achieved through the Pathfinder as a 'step change', especially in relation to non-mainstream school providers.

In the majority of schools between 100 and 150 students took part, with 1,367 young people having participated in Skills Roadshows by the end of the Pathfinder's second year. The Pathfinder was exploring opportunities to diversify successful approaches.

The Pathfinder highlighted the longer-lead in time required for softer outcomes to be achieved, such as changes in young people's attitudes and confidence. For example, traditional subject choice persisted during the first year of the programme, with most girls opting for Hair and Beauty and the majority of boys choosing Construction. However, students were less conventional in their subject choice in the second year. The Skills Roadshows supported wider equality work by providing targeted advice to groups such as young people with disabilities. Participants with disabilities felt their increased confidence would enable them to apply for, and access, a broader range of employment opportunities in the future.

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# Work-Related Learning Leading to Employment in an Urban Area

## *Durham 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder wanted to develop work-related learning in conjunction with local employers and colleges to improve and expand progression routes into local employment.

### **What were the barriers?**

The Pathfinder developed a new area on the project website for learners to access core curriculum lessons missed by attending work-related learning. However, competing demands during the training weeks led to school work being viewed as a low priority, and some students did not have internet access at home. Training demands also limited the time that students were able to spend on key skills work, and suggested the need for additional follow up activities at school.

### **What was the solution?**

The project built on previous collaboration between a large local employer and a school seeking specialist status to address skills shortages, and was extended to include five local schools, an FE college and training provider. The lead partner was the Esh Group, the largest indigenous construction business company in the North East. A Steering Group and Implementation Group managed the project. A member of the FE college's construction department provided specialist input to the development of the training programme, in collaboration with the training provider, schools, and local employer. Representatives from all partners attended training sessions.

The training programme consisted of three phases. One hundred and twenty students from Years 10 and 11 participated in phase one, which provided a one week training programme in general employability skills. Sixty students progressed onto phase two, a one week course on the construction industry. Phase three provided an opportunity for 30 students to gain work experience on a construction site. The project also provided a high level of support to four students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) enabling them to be integrated with mainstream students in phase two. These students were supported to complete basic skills tests.

The project developed a transition route for students from school to college, for those going on to combine employment with Apprenticeship training at the college. The project prepared students for this transition by providing training and support in the completion of Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) tests, which will form part of Apprenticeship entry criteria in the future.

Information, Advice and Guidance formed an integral aspect of this programme and is described in the Durham case study *Developing Young People's Decision Making Abilities in an Urban Setting*.

## What was the outcome?

Following course completion, the construction company offered 20 students from Year 11 Apprenticeship jobs. Students viewed the course as enjoyable and worthwhile, helping to inform their career development. The Pathfinder worked to develop sustainable transitions for students with SEN by exploring support arrangements with the Welfare to Work organisation and employer in the longer term.

The Pathfinder explored opportunities to roll out the programme to other local schools and remained committed to this process. A training provider from the Esh Group volunteered as a school governor, informing the school's business planning process and action plan to engage local employers. The Pathfinder also shared good practice and transferred lessons to other providers through its membership of a group which County Durham Business and Learning Partnership managed and which the Single Programme funded.

The project received recognition from the School Effectiveness Team for Telford and the Wrekin, and gained an award for excellence in construction at the Constructing Excellence in the North East awards ceremony. The Pathfinder model is to be replicated by providers in North Tyneside. A project website was being developed to promote the project to students and providers.

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# Working with Education Business Links to Improve the Vocational Offer in an Urban Area

## *Gateshead 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder wanted to develop a Vocational Pathways strand to improve vocational learning and promote vocational career options to Key Stage 4 students throughout the region, particularly in local employment sectors such as health and social care, tourism, engineering and culture. It organised events to market opportunities to young people.

### **What were the barriers?**

There were difficulties in securing staff involvement and employers were initially reluctant to attend.

### **What was the solution?**

The Pathfinder built on established links with the Education Business Links Service (EBLS) as a vehicle to drive forward improvements in vocational options. A freelance consultant was commissioned to manage and co-ordinate this strand with the EBLS, Connexions, the LEA's 14-19 Manager, employers, schools, Gateshead College, and Northumbria University. Staff were encouraged to attend by tailoring events to curriculum subject areas. The events offered curriculum development opportunities. Teacher networks were established to ensure collaborative development. Area Wide Inspection funding paid for secondments from a school, the College and the work-based learning sector, to promote and facilitate vocational learning opportunities in schools.

Employers were engaged by shorter events that did not require much time away from work. The EBLS helped secure employers' involvement, developed a coherent Vocational Pathways strand, and made links with Pathfinder activity to other EBLS initiatives throughout the borough. It forged links with Connexions to improve personal advisors' understanding of vocational pathways to help with careers guidance. The EBLS reduced the administrative burden for participating schools.

Vocational Pathways events were delivered on the arts, media, health, engineering and tourism sectors, to promote local career opportunities including job diversity in the NHS. Over 330 Year 10-13 students, 30 teachers and 40 employers attended. Attendance encouraged students to develop their generic employability and enterprise skills. Employers played an active role in the Vocational Pathways events, with 32 employers giving talks and running workshops to help students develop vocational and career development skills, and increase their understanding of local employment opportunities.

Industry days were also held to develop students' employability skills in the health and leisure and tourism sectors. For instance, employers from two local hotels delivered workshops

demonstrating customer service skills to twenty Year 10 students. Teachers attended to ensure the experience could be reinforced in class in the future.

### **What was the outcome?**

The Partnership integrated vocational pathways into the mainstream and longer-term initiatives. It established links with the EBLs, LEA, local college and Connexions to facilitate this process. For example, the EBLs is maintaining the employer pool for schools to tap into after the programme. The capacity of the Vocational Pathways Co-ordinator was essential for mainstreaming activities such as linking with the local Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) and a range of FE and Work-Based Learning providers. Discussions with the Gateshead 14-19 Action Plan Manager and the Aim Higher Co-ordinator developed an exit strategy for the vocational strand by linking in with future funding plans. For example, the 14-19 Action Plan Manager helped transfer funding from the Single Programme to sustain activities.

These continuation activities also supported activities designed to raise the progression aspirations of young people. The selection of the Pathfinder to lead a Young Apprenticeship programme also generated interest in the Vocational Pathways strand, and learning has also been shared with the Stockton Pathfinder.

The Vocational Pathways events were evaluated and positive feedback was consistently gained from students, teachers and employers. Students felt more informed and confident in their career choices, and some had extended their career aspirations as a result of participation. Teachers echoed this view. Employers valued the opportunity to meet young people and help stimulate their career aspirations. All the Vocational Pathways events were oversubscribed. The EBLs will continue Pathfinder approaches in the long term by tailoring the design of activities to meet the vocational needs of individual schools.

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# Addressing Skills Shortages in the Health Sector in an Inner City Area

## *Islington 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Islington Pathfinder was based on the premise of mutual need between the healthcare and education sectors locally. The NHS and social care services suffered from skills shortages and workforce instability across a wide range of occupations. At the same time in local schools and colleges there were large numbers of 14-19 year olds across the ability spectrum who needed to be taken seriously as potential employees in order to improve their achievement and progression opportunities, and become more motivated about their individual career development.

### **What were the barriers?**

Since there was little tradition of joint work between local education providers and NHS and social service organisations, the process of establishing collaboration was initially slow and challenging. Significant changes in culture and work practice were required on both sides. Both sectors were already dealing with heavy change-agendas and were under pressure to meet performance targets. Whilst enthusiasm was strong at practitioner levels, it proved very difficult to engage senior staff to provide strategic direction, despite the support of the NHSU and the Workforce Development Directorate. A big obstacle was the lack of a shared approach to recruitment between the various acute Trusts and Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) operating in the area. Recruitment strategy in the healthcare sector locally was too preoccupied with meeting immediate needs to find space for longer term policies aimed at “home-growing” through working with education and local communities.

### **What was the solution?**

A series of workshops were held which brought together school and college teachers, Higher Education staff and career-advisers with health and social care professionals. Occupational and curriculum working groups (ie science teachers working with NHS science practitioners and so on) identified the priority areas for collaboration and the essential skills and qualities around which the development of learning programmes for 14-19 year olds should be structured. Four curriculum and occupational clusters were established for planning in the following priority areas: facilities & premises, ICT, human resources and business support; health sciences & medicine; social care, community, mental care; and nursing & midwifery, allied health care. Each group contained between 15-18 members drawn from schools and colleges, NHS and social services practitioners, and Higher Education and was led by a product champion from the Pathfinder or the NHSU. The groups promoted partnership working and curriculum development. For example, new career pathways into established disciplines were explored, such as medicine and radiography, and pioneering work-related learning programmes in such areas as the applied sciences and estates and facilities.

One-day experiential learning programmes exploring NHS career opportunities were delivered at BARTS and the London Medical Simulation Centre. The Simulation Centre gave school leavers an insight into working in the NHS in a safe and comfortable environment. Students participated in a simulated patient scenario, learning the importance of team working and communication skills in the context of infection control, surgical scrub techniques and the administration of drugs. A programme about the BARTS and Pathfinder provision was shown on Teachers TV. A model of experiential work-related learning was developed around the notion of progression-readiness; skills and qualities, and career development e-Folio software was produced and piloted, including interactive career progression maps related to specific occupations in the NHS. Careers health days, learning programmes and taster activities were organised across a range of health specialities, linking schools with acute Trusts and PCTs.

Some of the most innovative provision took place in partnership with local universities. Workshops were held at South Bank University's Skills Centre and also at City University for Year 10 and Year 12 students in nursing and midwifery and radiography. A "Medics Pathway" was developed with University College London (UCL) medical school, through which Year 11 learners took part in components of the undergraduate medical programme, and later participated in a pioneering week-long summer school delivered by UCL in conjunction with The Whittington and Royal Free Hospitals.

### **What was the outcome?**

Through the Pathfinder, sustainable links and networks were established between local organisations across the two sectors. Models of successful practice in collaborative work-related provision and employer-engagement were developed. Approximately 350 14-19 year olds participated in the project. The roll-out of the career-development e-Folio package in all nine participating Secondary Schools, and at City and Islington College was built into the 14-19 Partnership action plan for the following year. A number of key health employers joined the 'Schools and FE Project' which the Pathfinder funded, including Islington and Camden Social Services, Camden and Islington PCTs, Islington Mental Health and Social Care Trust, and are committed to long term collaboration with local schools and colleges. The North Central London Strategic Health Authority fully endorsed the outcomes of this project and conducted a scoping exercise to explore the feasibility of the Strategic Health Authority mainstreaming Pathfinder activities. Strong ties were established with similar projects in other Central London boroughs (Southwark, Tower Hamlets and Westminster), thereby providing a broader base for future developments.

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# Raising Aspirations and Employer Involvement through E-mentoring in a Rural Area

## *Norfolk 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder wanted to develop effective education and business links in a rural area to raise students' aspirations.

### **What were the barriers?**

The Pathfinder targeted one of the most rural areas within West Norfolk, with few large local employers. This limited the availability of work placements with local employers and training providers. Transport problems also limited student mobility, with many students spending more than 90 minutes travelling to school or college a day. Local LEA research found that Year 9 students had limited aspirations, focusing on the type of jobs available locally, which were often unskilled or semi-skilled jobs in agriculture, food processing and tourism. Consequently, students often viewed the school curriculum as having limited relevance to their future aspirations.

### **What was the solution?**

The LEA wanted to improve 14-19 achievement levels, and raise training participation and employment aspirations post-16. The Pathfinder was led by the LEA, local LSC and Local Learning Partnership, and included four schools (two 11-18 schools, a 12-18 school and an 11-16 school), three colleges, (including the College of the Countryside), the local Education Business Partnership (EBP), Connexions, a local university, the Chamber of Commerce, an industry training board and local employers. The four schools worked closely together. For example, the Headteachers met fortnightly at 7.30 am to maintain collaboration. Two Business Links Co-ordinators were appointed from the private sector to recruit and work with employers on the strategic and operational management of the Pathfinder. Employers helped design activities demonstrating the relevance of the curriculum to the world of work to enhance students' employability skills. Activities included mentoring programmes, master classes, enhancing Information, Advice and Guidance, and Student Apprenticeships.

An e-mentoring programme called CommunEcate was created to support students, raise their aspirations and encourage progression into post-16 education, training or employment. The scheme was suited to the rural context as it reduced reliance on traditional work placement approaches, and the need for student travel. Mentoring activities were trialed with students at risk of disaffection, and also Gifted and Talented young people, linked to the Aim Higher Widening Participation Programme. Students were expected to demonstrate their commitment when they applied to the CommunEcate programme.

Business in the Community (BITC) approached employers and worked with the LEA and schools to develop the CommunEcate programme, and agreed an agenda of subjects to be discussed in weekly mentoring sessions. Two large financial and legal companies (Norwich Union and Eversheds) provided e-mentors for students on post-16 Business Studies courses in three schools. The volunteer mentors were carefully selected and ranged from junior staff to senior

managers. A full class of 16 AVCE Business Studies students from one school were matched with 'e-buddies' from Norwich Union (the largest employer in Norfolk). BITC and school and business representatives worked together to match students to mentors according to their individual interests. All business mentors received a Criminal Record Bureau check and risk assessment before being matched with students.

An initial face-to-face meeting was held to enable students and their e-buddies to get to know each other and identify common objectives. Email contact was then established on a weekly basis for fourteen weeks. At the end of the second week, students and mentors met at either the school or employer premises to share information through presentations and seminars. The college tutor and Norwich Union co-ordinator viewed the mentoring emails to ensure common issues raised in the e-discussions were related back to the curriculum in class discussions. Norwich Union also attended a lesson to ensure mentor advice was tailored to the education context. For example, Norwich Union mentors related discussion topics directly to the Introduction to Management module of the AVCE examined during the Spring term. Topics included leadership styles, communication, motivation and problem solving. Mentors asked questions, shared ideas and discussed skills, attitudes and behaviours with students, exploring how skills learnt at school were applied in the workplace. The mentors gave students an external perspective on behaviour such as team work and showing respect. At the end of the CommunEcate programme, students spent a day on-site at the employer premises, gaining practical work experience directly linked to their vocational learning. In another project, mentors and students followed a 10 week course structured around a European Union module, culminating in a student visit to the company.

The College and Co-ordinator from Norwich Union reviewed and evaluated progress on a weekly basis. Positive feedback was received from students, staff and employees, who cited a number of personal development benefits from participation. These included improved presentation, communication, management and organisational skills, and increased confidence. Norwich Union explained the programme as: "a two way effort – a two way learning process linked with personal development plans". Students also referred to their raised aspirations, attainment, and awareness of the world of work. As one student reflected: "It gave me the confidence to decide that I could cope with university [and] look for opportunities".

Staff also benefited for mentoring. For example, two Headteachers were mentored through a BITC *Partners in Leadership* scheme. This helped provide direction for teachers, employers and Connexions staff to work together effectively to increase students' aspirations, and increased teachers understanding of local business and its links to the vocational curriculum. Activities were focused on GCSE and post-16 learning in business, engineering, ICT and health and social care.

The Business Link Co-ordinators also interviewed students in participating schools to determine career aspirations to inform the planning of suitable support programmes. The Business Links Co-ordinators worked with dedicated Connexions Personal Advisors, the LEA Adviser for Pupil Support, Guidance and Personal Development, and school-based Personal Advisors to improve the quality of vocational Information, Advice and Guidance. Connexions led the development of Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), and worked with Norfolk Children's Services to develop 'My Personal Profile', which was trialed in the participating schools. Connexions PAs supported individual students in school to develop their ILPs.

## What was the outcome?

Go-East (the Government Office for the East of England) promoted the CommunEcate programme as good practice across the region. Many local, regional and national organisations expressed interest in the CommunEcate model and students gave presentations at a number of events including the Norfolk 14-19 Connexions Conference. The e-mentoring programme will

continue in 2005/06. For example, the University of East Anglia will continue activities through the Aim Higher Widening Participation Programme, helping to raising students' aspirations to work towards gaining a place in Further or Higher Education.

The Pathfinder directly informed the development of the Norfolk 14-19 Strategy and Curriculum Entitlement, and Norfolk's development plans in response to *Every Child Matters*. The Pathfinder also made an important contribution to the West Norfolk Area Inspection which took place in Summer 2005. At a practical level, the Pathfinder shared lessons with Norfolk Children's Services, the local LSC, the Local Learning Partnership, the North Norfolk Federation and schools and colleges, to strengthen collaborative working to realise the 14-19 agenda locally, in response to the *14-19 Education and Skills* White Paper and the local StAR.

The Pathfinder is taking lessons forward through its close alignment with the Increased Flexibility Programme, (IFP), as the Pathfinder Co-ordinator chairs the College of West Anglia IFP Steering Group. The Pathfinder Co-ordinator is also a member of the Norfolk Aim Higher Steering Group, helping to maintain close links with Norfolk Aim Higher. A new 14-19 Learning Pathways Manager post was created for 2005/06 which the four schools are funding. The post is a secondment from a Pathfinder school for the next two academic years. The 14-19 Learning Pathways Manager will take forward Pathfinder lessons to extend 14-19 opportunities, and improve achievement and aspirations in West Norfolk.

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# Engaging Employers by Using Sector Intermediaries in an Inner City Area

## *Sheffield 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder funded sector intermediaries to engage local employers in partnership activities. Sector intermediaries were asked to improve the match between the curriculum and employer requirements, and develop curriculum materials to improve retention and achievement rates in work-based learning.

### **What were the barriers?**

Limited staff capacity to develop links between local schools and employers had reduced opportunities to develop the vocational curriculum.

### **What was the solution?**

Sector intermediaries were introduced to address local skills gaps in support of the broader regeneration agenda in Sheffield. They developed links in growth employment sectors by liaising with employers and establishing work placements. Sector intermediaries were appointed in a range of employment sectors, including: retail, engineering, manufacturing and metal fabrication, creative and digital industries, and construction. Their primary role was to liaise and broker contacts and agreements between schools and occupational sectors, and facilitate partnership working with employers to develop curriculum materials and progression routes. Employment sectors adopted different approaches to implementing the sector intermediary role. In some sectors an individual performed this role, whilst other sectors appointed an organisation, the Education Business Partnership (EBP) or local college. For example, the intermediary functions for the business and finance, health and social care, hospitality and catering, and leisure and tourism sectors were adopted as a joint venture by Sheffield College, the local EBP and the Employers' Forum, and organised around a series of sector specific events for employers.

The development of curriculum materials with local employers was an important aspect of the sector intermediaries' role, to ensure industry relevance. For example, sector intermediaries brokered the development of an accelerated Apprenticeship course. Sector intermediaries used their knowledge of employment sectors and skills shortages to gain the buy-in, of employers and educational institutions, to the joint development of curriculum planning, provision and implementation. A wide range of vocational courses was developed, including vocational GCSEs in nine subjects and GNVQs in engineering, manufacturing and health & social care. NVQs were also being developed in customer care, retail, languages for business, electrical installations, horticulture, construction, engineering and office administration. A series of NVQs in retail, brickwork, computer maintenance, hair and beauty and catering were also developed to promote growth employment sectors to young people and support the regeneration process.

Sector intermediaries were supported by on-line learning materials developed with the support of local employers and LEA advisory teachers. The on-line materials illustrated real life examples from local businesses to make the curriculum more relevant to young people. However, teachers would have benefited from training in using the on-line materials to their best advantage, and workshops to explore how best to embed these materials within subject lessons. Sector Intermediaries also designed a 'qualification pathways' chart to demonstrate progression routes to students, and similar information was distributed to Connexions personal advisors.

### **What was the outcome?**

The sector intermediaries provided a single contact point for employers and schools, and helped secure work placements and early entry to Apprenticeship programmes at Key Stage 4 for some young people. Students studied Apprenticeship units alongside their GCSEs to facilitate progression to an Apprenticeship post-16. This initiative was linked to two Learning and Skills Development Agency funded development projects and generated interest in combining GCSE study with accelerated Apprenticeship training. Students and providers were very enthusiastic about the course. The on-line case studies generated considerable interest, with the engineering units recording a hit rate in excess of 500 during 2004. Sector intermediaries were also instrumental in establishing Sector Strategy Groups which brought together a wide range of education and industry initiatives for 14-19 year olds. Pathfinder information can be accessed at [www.be-sy.co.uk](http://www.be-sy.co.uk)

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# Work-Based Training for Disaffected Learners in a Rural Area

## *Shropshire 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Shropshire Pathfinder wanted to broaden vocational options to re-engage disaffected learners, and recognised the need to improve collaboration with Connexions and the local Education Business Partnership (EBP) to facilitate this process.

### **What were the barriers?**

The Pathfinder encountered challenges in securing sufficient work placements owing to the low number of local large training providers, and found the process of arranging placements with employers very time-consuming.

### **What was the solution?**

The partnership included secondary schools, a special school, an FE college, Connexions, the local EBP and Shropshire training providers. Connexions helped the Pathfinder by providing the staffing capacity to develop a partnership with one of the larger training providers and other employers. During 2004/05, a Work-Related Learning Network was established to formalise the partnership, and help support and develop these activities further. The Pathfinder found early planning and lead-in time essential in order to develop relationships with local training providers and employers, with Connexions and the EBPs playing a key role in identifying and arranging work placements.

The project built on the success of the Increased Flexibility Programme and increased the number of schools across Shropshire offering NVQ provision. Some subject groups were developed to improve resources and delivery of NVQs in hospitality, hairdressing, distribution and warehouse, business administration and childcare, in addition to other qualification types. Over 60 students undertook work placements at County Training, and made good progress towards completing their NVQ portfolios.

The Pathfinder funded a Connexions Extended Work Placement Officer to support learners taking up work-based learning opportunities. They help students identify their learning needs and supported them as they worked towards their NVQ. The Pathfinder developed a programme of extended work experience placements to equip students with a broad range of vocational skills. A range of short courses were delivered on a rolling basis including first aid training, health and safety at work and food hygiene.

### **What was the outcome?**

The work-based learning activities which the Pathfinder developed, complemented the local Increased Flexibility Programme, and a strong working relationship was established between the two initiatives. This relationship provided an essential mechanism for managing the expansion in vocational learning across the county. A team of people including the Pathfinder and



Increased Flexibility Programme Co-ordinators developed a common set of protocols and procedures to co-ordinate future off-site learning across Shropshire. The Pathfinder designed a 14-19 Dissemination Conference to showcase the delivery model to local and national providers, and inform local 14-19 provision from 2005/06 onwards.

Work placement providers reported high levels of motivation and attendance amongst participants. The short courses in First Aid, Health and Safety at Work and Food Hygiene proved particularly popular with learners, and over 215 students obtained the Food Hygiene Certificate in 2004/05. The combined programme enabled students to access at least half a day of off-site provision per week. This increased to one day a week over a two year period.

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# On-line Revision Support for Learners of All Abilities in a Rural Area

## *Cumbria 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

Accessing support while revising can be more difficult for learners in rural areas because of the longer travel times to school and college and the higher costs involved. The Cumbria Pathfinder therefore explored e-learning approaches to improve 14-19 learning, and increase flexibility and access to support.

### **What were the barriers?**

Some learners were less motivated by traditional paper-based revision methods, particularly in their own time. E-learning was therefore explored to increase student motivation and engagement with revision topics.

### **What was the solution?**

A consultant was employed to identify Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) packages which could increase access to learning materials. As a result, Cumbrian schools bought a Software Asset Management (SAM) licence to make revision materials more accessible for learners in a rural area, and provide software protection. The SAM licence is used by schools nationwide and was part funded by the Pathfinder programme in Cumbria. The SAM licence provides an interactive GCSE revision package covering many subjects.

Schools in Cumbria used the SAM on-line GCSE revision service with students in Years 10 and 11 to improve achievement. Young people were introduced to SAM initially by ICT teaching staff who gave presentations in Year group assemblies. The Pathfinder integrated SAM into school lessons. For example, teachers programmed SAM to display a message to pupils in their class when they logged in, giving instructions on a homework task, such as 'Mrs Jones would like you to look at the questions from such and such an exam paper for your history revision'.

Support from parents was important as students were encouraged to use the on-line revision package at home. Parents received a letter introducing SAM as a tool to aid revision, and a SAM stall promoted the service at parents' evenings. Each student was given a unique user name and password. Student use was logged and schools periodically reviewed information on use and achievement. Teachers were pleased to find student use was much higher than expected. For example, one headteacher discovered that an excluded student had spent much of the two days at home working through SAM packages. The SAM tracking data enabled schools to recognise learners who could prove they were putting time and effort into their revision.

### **What was the outcome?**

Student feedback on SAM was collected as part of the Annual Survey conducted by the Pathfinder's E-learning Co-ordinator. The Survey provided students with the opportunity to comment on what they liked and disliked about the e-learning resources on offer, and a booklet

was produced to showcase results. The SAM tracking data provided statistics and patterns on use, demonstrating that the package was mostly used outside school hours. Research undertaken by SAM and Cumbria's E-learning Co-ordinator highlighted a correlation between student hours spent on SAM and improved GCSE performance, although data were not available to support this.

With respect to the use of video conferencing to support e-learning management systems all schools were kitted out with relevant equipment and the schools that are involved in developing the Moodle VLE are making limited use of video conferencing to run meetings (see Cumbria case study – p80). In addition, some one to one tutorial support has been provided for individual students through video conferencing.

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# Managing Transport Problems in a Rural Area

## *Cumbria 14-19 Pathfinder*

### What was the issue?

Transport issues challenged efforts to improve the quality and range of learning provision across Cumbria. The Pathfinder covered the whole local authority area, a diverse region which includes the towns of Carlisle and Barrow-in-Furness, and rural areas around Eden Valley and the South Lakes. The level of resources required to transport students between institutions threatened collaboration between learning providers. Hazardous travel conditions also hindered student mobility. For example, the A66 in Cumbria is a notoriously busy and dangerous route, especially in poor weather.

### What were the barriers?

The limited availability of public transport led the Pathfinder initially to explore investment in additional transport services to improve access to 14-19 provision. However, transport schemes covered such dispersed geographical areas they were costly and often inefficient, resulting in students spending considerable time travelling between institutions. Students were reliant on school minibus services to transport them between institutions, as the costs of commercial operators were prohibitive and it was difficult to maintain a reliable and efficient service in rural areas. These capacity issues led the Pathfinder to consider alternative approaches to determine the best way to organise 14-19 provision to reduce the need for student travel. A key barrier emerged around identifying the optimum size of local learning provision, particularly in rural areas with small schools and sixth forms, and limited FE and work-based learning opportunities.

### What was the solution?

The Pathfinder conducted an audit to examine transport across the county. The results identified travel costs and time as key issues limiting access to 14-19 provision. The Pathfinder explored various transport schemes and became increasingly interested in alternative ways to tackle rural isolation, which reduced the need for student travel. Alternative approaches included e-learning and video-conferencing (see the Moodle – p80, and **On-line Revision Support for Learners of All Abilities in a Rural Area** case studies – p114), and the peripatetic chef model (see case study – p51), which took training in the hospitality and catering industry to the learner in a range of local communities.

### What was the outcome?

Increasing access to learning provision through e-learning and peripatetic delivery were found to be more efficient models of delivery across a diverse rural area. These alternative approaches represented better value for money, and reduced difficulties between providers in agreeing a payment model for student transport between institutions. The collaborative working arrangements established through the alternative learning models helped the Pathfinder agree a single co-ordinating plan for student travel that remained necessary between institutions. This was driven by the county Transport (Education) Forum, and established a common plan for delivering the remaining student transport requirements across the five Pathfinder areas.

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# Promoting Diversity through Employer Materials in an Inner City Area

## *Derby City 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

How to develop, with employers, curriculum tools designed to promote diversity in subject choice and engage young people in local career opportunities.

### **What were the barriers?**

Work-related learning opportunities could be limited by capacity issues, such as limited places for work experience in specialised facilities, such as construction, engineering and the NHS.

### **What was the solution?**

The Pathfinder developed several ICT-based tools with employers to increase opportunities for virtual work-related learning. The tools could be used on the school site, helping to reduce capacity issues related to work-based provision and specialised facilities. The partnership included local employers, the Education Business Partnership, and a software company, Creative Media Matrix. The local employers involved were Bowmar and Kirkland, Rolls-Royce and the Derbyshire Children's Hospital. These employers worked in collaboration to design several CD Roms to promote diversity in student subject choice. The CD Roms promoted careers in the bricklaying, house building, mechanical and electrical engineering, joinery, structural steelwork, painting and decorating, and health and social care sectors, demonstrating opportunities in local industry. The initiative supported equal opportunities by containing testimonials from practitioners explaining their job role, some acting as non-traditional role models. Students were able to explore job profiles through interactive options, developing their understanding of what each job entailed and the skills required for each role.

Several resources and activities have taken place to support the health and social care curriculum. Teacher information days took place during 2004/05, electronic teacher notes were designed to generate discussion with health and social care students, video resources and the interactive CD Rom mentioned above. The Pathfinder recognised that conceptual work-related learning could help prepare students for hands-on work experience. The industry-based resources were therefore designed to increase awareness of vocational options and prepare students to get the most out of practical work-related learning opportunities, such as the NHS World of Work week which would be delivered in Autumn 2005, in collaboration with four local LEAs and two Aim Higher partnerships.

Developing ICT resources with employers demonstrated the value of collaboration in increasing curriculum pathways and learner engagement at Key Stage 4. This led to the Pathfinder purchasing Airways pneumatics and PIC-Logicator software to help deliver Applied GCSE Engineering in 2004/05. These materials engaged some students' attention more effectively than textbooks, and were used by supply cover staff to ensure curriculum progress was unaffected by staff sickness. The Pathfinder informed ICT activity development with Acorn to promote Paper Free Learning to Not in Educational Employment or Training (NEET) students.

These activities increased the ICT skills of both students and teaching staff, and increased the motivation of under-achieving students to engage with the vocational curriculum.

The Pathfinder encouraged young people to be actively involved in designing, testing and evaluating curriculum materials. For example, a student competition was held to test the strengths and weaknesses of the job profile CD Roms. This provided students with an opportunity to gain an insight into operational management and curriculum development.

However, the Pathfinder recognised the importance of providing a range of practical vocational learning opportunities to maintain student interest across the ability range. Activities offered, in collaboration with local employers included cycle maintenance for the Police, allotment ownership with students given the responsibility for their own plot, and construction activities.

A series of ICT tools were also developed to enhance Information, Advice and Guidance. Students were encouraged to use their ICT skills to record their career interests and work-related learning experiences in Individual Learning Plans (ILPs). The Pathfinder produced a good practice dissemination folder called *Developing ILPs in Schools to Encourage Effective Transitions*, which was distributed to schools across the City and county more widely. This highlighted the effectiveness of electronic ILPs in supporting the development of students' decision-making abilities. Each student's e-ILP was password protected. The Pathfinder and the local Performing Arts College also used e-ILPs as a transition tool between primary and secondary school. Students were encouraged to inform e-ILP design, with a competition to create the best e-ILP held during 2004/05.

### What was the outcome?

The Pathfinder provided significant development opportunities for both staff and students to improve their ICT understanding, skills and confidence. This enabled the participating institutions to work more effectively with local employers and adopt industry-standard practices. This collaboration produced several ICT tools which have been recognised as good practice by other providers and initiatives. For example, the Pathfinder supported the local ICT in Society project, helping create stronger links between schools and local industries. A dissemination DVD was produced to showcase good practice in e-learning solutions and software developments, demonstrating different software applications in real time. The Pathfinder hopes to distribute the DVD to all secondary schools in the UK. The Pathfinder Co-ordinator was shortlisted for the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (BECTA) ICT in Practice Award: Advice and Support during 2004/05.

The electronic resources received very positive student feedback, appealing to young people across the ability range.

Successful approaches in working with employers to develop ICT solutions to support alternative curriculum projects were shared with City of Nottingham and North Nottinghamshire Pathfinder colleagues. Findings from the Pathfinder have informed Aim Higher and the Learning and Skills Development Agency projects. Pathfinder activities have also supported the 14-19 Derby City Post-Area Action Plan and the Derbyshire LSC StAR process.

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# Improving Information, Advice and Guidance with Fast Tomato ILPs in a Rural Area

## *Derbyshire 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Derbyshire Pathfinder wanted to develop an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) approach to promote student ownership of their learner pathway. This was supported by Information, Advice and Guidance which personal advisors from Derbyshire Connexions Service provided.

### **What were the barriers?**

The activity was designed to overcome communication difficulties in a rural area and reduce travel time for Connexions personal advisors which limited the resources available to provide Information, Advice and Guidance for large numbers of students.

### **What was the solution?**

To help young people make decisions at age 14, the High Peak and Derbyshire Dales Consortium developed a psychometric testing toolkit to feed into a proprietary ILP called Fast Tomato. The Consortium comprised representatives from Connexions, the LEA, local LSC, Training Network, schools and colleges, and the Education Business Partnerships. The High Peaks and Derbyshire Dales Consortium is one of three area consortia in the Derbyshire Pathfinder, each involving between 11 and 20 schools.

The psychometric testing toolkit identified areas of student interest, and individual strengths and weaknesses. Learners answered questions designed to help them reflect on their individual learning style. Findings were fed into their ILP to inform student decision-making about how best to achieve their aspirations at Key Stage 4 and beyond. The ILP stored exam results, achievements, targets and reports, and acted as a bank of professional contacts for tutors. All 11 schools in the High Peak and Derbyshire Dales consortium implemented the Fast Tomato model.

The County ILP Steering Group produced guidance for schools, colleges and training providers interested in introducing ILPs across Derbyshire. The guidance was launched at the Annual 14-19 Partnership Conference. The Fast Tomato ILP is one of three piloted across Derbyshire, and is similar to the e-ILP tool which Derby City Pathfinder developed.

### **What was the outcome?**

The ILP model reduced the need for Connexions personal advisors to travel, increasing efficiencies and enabling staff to work with more young people through an e-based information system, resulting in the initial target group being expanded across Years 7-11. The model also encouraged learners to become more autonomous and increasingly guide their own decision-making process, helping young people to manage their learning aims effectively following their transition from primary school. The Fast Tomato ILP informed the development of a similar tool, which 10 schools in the Chesterfield, Bolsover and North East area of Derbyshire trialled. The

Pathfinder worked with the Derby City Pathfinder to share good practice and develop county-wide activity. This provided an opportunity to pool learning around the development and transferability of electronic ILPs.

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# Supporting Equal Opportunities with Information, Advice and Guidance and ILPs in an Urban Area

## *Doncaster 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder wanted to develop a standard Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) system to inform and support young people exploring employment opportunities in non-traditional sectors in the local area. Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) were viewed as a means of encouraging young people to design their own career pathways in these sectors.

### **What were the barriers?**

The Pathfinder wanted to establish common IAG practices across eleven local schools and recognised the challenges associated with achieving this.

### **What was the solution?**

The Pathfinder was led by Lifetime, and included eleven schools, two colleges, training providers, Connexions, the LEA, Business Education – South Yorkshire, and the Doncaster Education City project. The partnership collaborated to develop IAG and personalised learning approaches to promote equal opportunities and challenge gender stereotypes, and encourage young people to broaden their curriculum choices to include non-traditional subjects. Development time was essential to establish effective and common partnership working practices. The Pathfinder forum provided an opportunity for facilitated discussions on curriculum options and information sharing between local providers. Getting the support of local schools was essential to ensuring students from across the ability range could participate.

Enhancing IAG provision was viewed as the foundation of informed career planning, providing a mechanism for exploring learners' needs and aspirations. IAG was targeted to increase learner awareness of career pathways, helping young people make informed subject choices. This activity was designed to improve learner engagement and ultimately impact on retention, achievement and progression rates. The Pathfinder seconded two full time (equivalent) Personal Advisers from Lifetime to work as Careers Advisers with young people aged 14-19 from the Pathfinder's eleven participating schools. This significantly increased mainstream IAG capacity, with the Careers Advisers able to provide 'face to face' IAG to a far wider range of young people. This complemented the work of Personal Advisers (Connexions) whose school-based activities were focused on supporting a smaller number of learners. The partnership produced a common IAG guide called 'A Guide To Options At 14' which was distributed to all Year 9 learners during the second and third years of the Pathfinder, to explain options available at Key Stage 4. The guide highlighted the range of locally available courses at Key Stage 4 and provided listings of courses available through colleges and training providers.

Staff development time was essential to engage the commitment of the eleven Pathfinder schools to a common ILP format and standard implementation guidelines for staff delivering the Individual Review and ILP process. All school-based ILP Co-ordinators and delivery staff (frequently, but not exclusively, form tutors) participated in staff training. Standardising the guidance for implementation helped to quality assure project delivery. This resulted in a robust IAG system which supported young people successfully to develop and use ILP to direct their own learning by planning and monitoring their individual learning activities, and identify their own support needs. The ILP format was piloted with Year 9 during 2003/04 and revised in line with learner and staff feedback. The Individual Review process and ILP was subsequently rolled out to all Year 11 students throughout the eleven Pathfinder schools during 2004/05, covering both Year 9 (1,542 students) and Year 11 (1,542 students) in 2004-05.

All Year 9 and Year 11 students from participating schools were able to access the 'Plan-It' electronic ILP at [www.planit.s-cool.co.uk](http://www.planit.s-cool.co.uk). A paper-based ILP was also developed to ensure full access.

IAG activities were directly linked to equal opportunities initiatives supported by the Pathfinder. For example, targeted IAG in two participating schools encouraged young girls to participate in the *Women into the Built Environment (WITBE)* programme. The WITBE course encouraged female students to consider career opportunities in the Construction industry, through collaboration with Sheffield Hallam University's Joint Interventions (JIVE) initiative. This gave girls the opportunity to learn about practical construction work by undertaking activities such as house surveying, design modifications and visiting a construction site. For further information on Pathfinder activities designed to promote equal opportunities, see the *Skills Roadshows to Counter Gender Stereotypes in Subject and Employment Choices in an Urban Area* case study for information (p98).

## What was the outcome?

The number of learners benefiting from professional careers advice increased significantly through the Pathfinder, with 3,009 young people receiving IAG during 2004/05.

All IAG provided through the Pathfinder was quality assured by standardising the Individual Review and ILP process across the partnership and implementing a common staff training programme. 153 staff were trained to deliver the Individual Review and ILP process across the eleven partnership schools. A total of 3,103 students in Years 9 and 11 completed an ILP and had an Individual Review.

The Pathfinder worked with the Doncaster Education City (DEC) project to devise a good practice dissemination strategy for 2005/06. This increased the information sharing network for Pathfinder lessons. For example, staff training in implementing the Individual Review and ILP process was rolled out to non-Pathfinder schools through the DEC project.

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# Developing Young People's Decision Making Abilities in an Urban Setting

## *Durham 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder recognised the importance of developing sector specific Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) materials to help students make informed decisions about their future career path. This was seen as the first stage in developing a student's decision-making processes and encouraging them to assume ownership of their career pathway.

### **What were the barriers?**

Staff time and resources were limited and a lack of industry awareness amongst teaching staff could have had a negative impact on the project.

### **What was the solution?**

The Pathfinder developed an IAG system to support students across the ability range taking part in an employability programme designed to address local skills shortages. The partnership included five local schools, Connexions, an FE college and training provider. The lead partner was the Esh Group, the largest indigenous construction business company in the North East. The training programme consisted of three phases. One hundred and twenty students from Years 10 and 11 participated in phase one, which provided a one week training programme in general employability skills. Sixty students progressed onto phase two, a one week course on the construction industry. Phase three provided an opportunity for 30 students to gain work experience on a construction site.

A comprehensive guidance system was developed which recognised the vital part all partners played in helping young people develop their decision-making abilities. The role of Connexions in the project was important as this provided additional capacity and enabled teaching staff to focus on classroom activities. Students received IAG from a full time dedicated Connexions advisor, who was trained to provide specialist advice on the construction industry. All students participating in the programme received a minimum of two careers interviews. Connexions ran group sessions to encourage young people to access careers information on the project website in their own time.

The Project Co-ordinator acted as a link worker between each school and Connexions. This confirmed the need for direct employer involvement to promote the project and resulted in joint employer and training provider presentations in schools to encourage participation. For example, group sessions were held with Year 10 students to promote career opportunities available in the construction industry through the project. Students received IAG to help them decide whether to progress through the project phases. A trainer from the Esh Group provided specialised advice on an individual basis to students at school, to explore whether transition to phase 2 would support their career plans. Employees from the construction company were involved in careers and option choice meetings with students, and their parents and teachers. Employers also led awareness raising activities with students at Key Stage 3 to help inform their subject choices for Key Stage 4.

Employers also worked closely with school teaching staff to ensure young people received consistent information and support in working towards their goals.

The Pathfinder developed an ethos of student collaboration on all aspects of the project. Student representatives participated in the steering group, and provided feedback on the programme by keeping diaries to record their views. Students also evaluated course materials. Senior staff from the construction company attended on-site training sessions to receive student presentations and give feedback from an industry perspective. These activities were designed to help students develop essential communication and organisational skills to promote independent thought and learning. See Durham's case study on *Work-Related Learning Leading to Employment in an Urban Area* for more information on the content of the programme (p100).

### **What was the outcome?**

Information, Advice and Guidance was also provided to help students progress onto the next learning stage or into employment. Activities included help with applications, CVs and letter writing for FE and employment. Connexions worked with support agencies to promote sustainable transition routes for students with Special Educational Needs, such as the Welfare to Work organisation and employers. The Pathfinder shared lessons with primary and secondary schools and community groups at a conference at the University of Teesside. The Pathfinder also collaborated with other local schools to develop electronic Individual Learning Plans to promote student ownership of their career pathways in the long term.

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# Piloting e-Individual Learning Plans with Young People in an Inner City Area

## *East Manchester 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder wanted to identify support required and improve the support available to help young people make informed choices at Key Stage 4 and post-16 progression routes, and make the most of opportunities offered through increased curriculum flexibility.

### **What were the barriers?**

Limited information on post-16 progression routes had reduced the impetus for some students to accelerate their learning or broaden their subject choice.

### **What was the solution?**

Increased access to Independent Advice and Guidance (IAG) was needed to illustrate progression routes to students, to raise awareness of accelerated learning and non-traditional subject choices. The Pathfinder provided IAG support for all learners to identify appropriate post-16 learning pathways. Connexions personal advisors provided IAG sessions for Key Stage 4 students, and this was subsequently extended to Year 8 students making subject choices to begin Key Stage 4 in Year 9. However, the Pathfinder viewed personalised learning approaches as the most appropriate form of tailored support to help students take ownership and responsibility for their own learning.

The Pathfinder initially developed web-based Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) to help students taking part in accelerated and decelerated learning make informed choices, such as Key Stage 4 students taking GCSE options a year early. The electronic ILP also provided targeted support for learners in Year 8 and Complementary Education (appropriate education provided away from school), opting for decelerated learning options. The partnership included City Learning Centres, students at UMIST, the 14-19 Senior Managers Group, and young people.

The ILP was seen as a motivational tool, enabling young people to chart distance travelled along their career pathway. Developing the e-ILP in a user-friendly format was therefore essential to ensure take-up. The Pathfinder commissioned students from UMIST to develop the ILP and young people helped design the tool. Schools, Connexions and Jobcentre Plus also collaborated on the ILP development, providing information to help young people examine their longer term options. Consultative groups were held with between 600-700 Year 8 students at three local schools to pilot the e-ILPs and gain feedback before the live launch. Each participant was supported by their school to develop a comprehensive ILP to inform their personal choices. The web-based ILP system was accessible to all staff and learners, and students were encouraged to manage their ILP on-line.

A key objective of the ILP process was to help young people make informed choices and enhance their employment prospects. The ILP process promoted equal opportunities by raising awareness of opportunities in non-traditional subjects and local growth employment sectors.

Activities included 95 students attending a Careers into Health day. A mentoring project was developed with the Joint Mental Health Team called Boys into Health. Girls were encouraged to participate in a Young Women into Management programme, which provided an opportunity to discuss career options with women role models working as a Director of Marketing, a Chairperson of a concrete firm, and a CEO from the Manufacturing Institute. Twelve female students from Year 10 participated in this programme. Heather Small (from the band M People) helped promote the event and acted as a strong positive role model. The ILP process also provided an opportunity to increase awareness of Level 4 opportunities, to help raise aspirations and progression rates. Activities included University Summer Schools and University undergraduate mentoring projects, such as a mentoring scheme to support girls into science, engineering and construction. These activities also supported local economic regeneration priorities by encouraging skills development in target employment sectors.

### What was the outcome?

The e-ILP was subsequently adapted for use by Years 9, 10 and 11, and post-16 learners. The e-ILP was rolled out to all Key Stage 4 learners in East Manchester. The e-ILP was continually updated and adapted according to user feedback. Staff training to help deliver ILPs to post-16 learners was provided. A city wide training event took place at the end of the second year of the Pathfinder to ensure all staff were skilled in ILP-delivery prior to the roll out of ILPs across Manchester in 2005/06. Two Pathfinder schools established staffed Independent Learning Centres, with extended opening hours, to promote self-directed learning and the use of e-ILPs.

The success of the e-ILP approach in raising awareness of post-16 progression routes has been widely disseminated. The Pathfinder developed links with a number of Level 4 initiatives to aid progression. For example, the Pathfinder supported the development of an initiative, which New East Manchester Ltd designed to provide bursaries for post-16 students not in education employment or training to overcome financial barriers to continue their education and training. The Pathfinder also developed progression routes with the local Social Employment Agency, and was negotiating more than 100 Construction Apprenticeships.

The e-ILP approach has also been adapted for use by adults participating in a Family Learning project in Wythenshawe, to help students and parents make informed training and employment choices.

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# Reducing Transport Issues by Adopting Alternative Delivery Mechanisms in an Urban Area

## *Gateshead 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder wanted to reduce students' travel difficulties to increase post-16 participation and retention. A student transport system was developed to help young people access provision at different institutions. The Pathfinder also developed alternative delivery mechanisms to join up local provision and reduce the need for student travel.

### **What were the barriers?**

Several schools agreed common timetabling approaches to improve student access to provision. A transport scheme was initiated to help students move between institutions. However, developing the scheme proved expensive, and students spent their lunch hour in transit between institutions. Barriers also included limited option choice post-16 within host schools, and limited opportunities to access provision at other providers.

### **What was the solution?**

The partnership brought together Gateshead College, three secondary schools and Gateshead LEA. At a strategic level, the partnership Director worked with Heads from the partnership schools, college and LEA to develop curriculum and admissions policy. Deputy and faculty heads developed a common framework which joined up timetables, transport, and subject offers across the partnership. Teachers worked at a practical level to plan delivery and common assessment processes. Post-16 opportunities were offered in two 11-16 schools to enable progression for students who wanted to remain in a familiar environment.

A student transport system and common timetabling approach were developed between institutions to help students access provision at a range of providers. The scheme enabled students to access provision at several different schools. Students were transported during their lunchtime break. The partner organisations negotiated a standardised break and common timetabling between several institutions, which increased the option choices available to these students. Two schools successfully modified their Year 12 timetables to provide vocational options in this way.

However, common timetabling remained a continuing challenge. The Pathfinder therefore developed a virtual sixth form approach – the cg:6 model – to reduce the need for student travel. This is a curriculum-based partnership for all learners in Gateshead. The model was designed to increase attendance and attainment by enabling students to take up e-learning options.

The multi-faceted approach improved the quality, variety and access to local post-16 provision. The Pathfinder Co-ordinator viewed the cg:6 Director's role essential, as this provided *"... a real face ... the person behind it has given the partnership a real entity"*. Involving Heads from all partner

organisations in the planning process reduced staff cynicism. Schools viewed this as an improvement to previous planning arrangements.

### **What was the outcome?**

Although the transport scheme was costly it increased student access to provision. The Pathfinder viewed this approach as an opportunity cost, as increased student in-take and progression generated a corresponding increase in mainstream funds. The transport scheme helped the Pathfinder double its intake for academic year 2005/06; staying-on rates also increased across the partnership. In November 2004, a Connexions survey demonstrated the impact of cg:6: whilst overall staying-on rates in full-time post-16 provision remained at around 67%, within cg:6 this increased from 45% to 60%. In September 2004, 169 post-16 enrolments were recorded compared to 130 in 2003/04, with one school doubling its staying-on rate. Student feedback emphasised the importance of accessing local provision in encouraging them to stay on post-16.

Common timetabling arrangements were extended during 2004/05 throughout Key Stage 4, including provision through the third school in the partnership. This helped increase both student choice and access to a broader curriculum.

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# Mobile Delivery and Increasing Access to Vocational Skills in a Rural Area

## *Hampshire 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder wanted to increase student choice and access to local vocational learning opportunities.

### **What were the barriers?**

Limited public transport increased travel time and costs for students living in rural areas. Vocational and work-based learning opportunities for post-16 learners at entry level, Level 1 and Level 2 were also limited owing to the lack of training providers in the local area, and problems establishing viable teaching groups in small schools.

### **What was the solution?**

Local 14-19 providers collaborated to develop appropriate vocational provision. Led by the local LSC, the Pathfinder operated through two federations. Partnership Co-ordinators were appointed in each area and directed by the overall Pathfinder Manager and steering group. The Pathfinder Co-ordinator for East Hampshire was based in the local Education Business Partnerships and brought together Deputy Heads from schools, senior college managers, and training providers to agree common objectives and priorities. The partnership developed a vocational curriculum at entry level and Level 1, and agreed a common timetable to help re-engage a small group of disaffected learners. Two key approaches were developed by the East Hampshire Pathfinder: Mobile Vocational Units and Local Skills Centres designed to increase local access and reduce the need for student travel.

The Pathfinder worked with a private training company, Look 2 Training Ltd, to set up two Mobile Vocational Units. The first Unit was established in 2003/04 to deliver courses in building and construction, including brickwork, carpentry and plumbing. In 2003/04, the Construction Unit was piloted over two terms with ten Year 11 students, drawn from three schools. Participants gained vocational skills in construction, leading to OCN accreditation. Additional Mobile Units were opened in 2004/05 to provide access to motor vehicle maintenance and hairdressing courses for over 50 students from six partnership schools. The mobile hairdressing salon included ten work stations, two backwash units, a small reception area, and was equipped with its own water supply and generator. The motor vehicle maintenance course led to OCN units, whilst the hairdressing course was accredited at NVQ Level 1. Each Mobile Vocational Unit provided capacity for ten students to develop their vocational skills at any one time. The Units were staffed by qualified tutors.

The Mobile Vocational Units moved around the schools to minimise student travel to other sites. During 2004/05, all three Units offered two half-day sessions on a Wednesday, switching locations between schools at mid-day. Students used either public transport or were transported in a school mini-bus to the nearest Unit offering their chosen course. Participating schools were asked to provide access to classroom space and some supervisory support (usually

a learning support assistant). The Deputy Head of a Pathfinder school and Chair of the East Hampshire Pathfinder group viewed the Mobile Units as: *“a really exciting opportunity to re-engage and re-motivate youngsters who were previously at risk of exclusion”*. For example, during 2004 the Pathfinder provided a small group of ‘looked after children’ not in mainstream education access to the Construction Mobile Unit.

Local Skills Centres were also established as a partnership resource. These Centres were located within schools and colleges, and enabled students from different schools to be taught in one group. This provided learners with access to a broader curriculum without having to travel large distances to other institutions. For example, a Chef Training Centre was established in a converted home economics room at one school. The LEA worked closely with the Pathfinder to ensure specialist catering equipment was installed in the Centre. A Hairdressing Skills Centre was developed in another partnership school during 2005, offering courses to Year 9 students from across the partnership.

The Pathfinder also developed e-learning links to reduce the need for student travel. The Pathfinder accessed Learning and Skills Development Agency funding for staff development to support students in gaining e-learning skills. The Pathfinder increased the server capacity of an existing Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) based in a local college to provide partnership schools with access. This complemented face-to-face learning in vocational subjects by giving students access to on-line National Learning Network materials. Students also used their e-learning skills to maintain individual electronic Individual Learning Plans designed to support and inform their vocational choices. One school housed the electronic ILPs in an on-line system called S-Cool AP4L. The e-ILPs were combined with face-to-face Information, Advice and Guidance, PSHE, Citizenship Education and subject-based reviews. A CD Rom called ‘Search Me’ was also designed as a careers guidance resource material for use by the teacher in the classroom with students.

### What was the outcome?

Student feedback on the Mobile Vocational Units was very positive. One participant described how: *“I liked everything about the course; I like it instead of lessons as it is more appropriate for me.”* Staff highlighted the positive effect on students taking part, and the interest expressed by younger students. One Deputy Head remarked: *“pupils further down the school are seeing what the Mobile Units are providing and are already talking about when it’s ‘their turn’.”*

The Pathfinder held a dissemination conference at Intech Technology Centre in Summer 2005, with keynote speeches from SEMTA (the Sector Skills Council for Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies) and the British Chambers of Commerce. The County Council and Hampshire and Isle of Wight Learning and Skills Council jointly presented how the Pathfinder had informed the development of the Hampshire 14-19 strategy. The dissemination event was attended by 140 delegates from schools, colleges, LEAs, local LSCs, and work-based training providers. Delegates participated in workshops exploring Pathfinder lessons on the following themes: collaborative vocational programmes, Skills Centres and Mobile Vocational Units, e-learning (including collaborative VLEs), college-based vocational provision and a diagnostic approach to guidance. Young people also displayed their work at the event.

The Pathfinder informed the development of a local Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) for e-learning which FE colleges were taking forward, and fed lessons on developing appropriate rural provision into local LSC area review reports. The local Sixth Form College will co-ordinate the Pathfinder in the longer term. The College aims to develop an integrated 14-19 strategy ensuring learning from the Pathfinder informs the local Increased Flexibility partnership. A Unit Manager has been appointed to manage the Chef Training Centre on a two day a week contract for 2005/06 to increase the use of the facility and deliver catering courses.

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# Managing Transport Problems in a Deprived Inner City Area

## *Knowsley 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder developed a comprehensive network of vocational provision across Knowsley and the Pathfinder wanted to provide transport to enable students to access learning at a range of institutions. (See the *Re-engaging Disaffected Students in a Deprived Inner City Area* case study for details – p86). This was viewed as an important support measure for students at risk of disaffection, to improve retention.

### **What were the barriers?**

Young people needed help to travel between different learning sites, particularly students disengaged from learning. The Pathfinder originally contracted a private hire company to transport student between institutions but the service proved unreliable and expensive.

### **What was the solution?**

The Knowsley Pathfinder needed to transport students between the Vocational Skills Centre based at the local College, 11 secondary schools and five special schools, as well as training providers and employers offering work placements.

The Pathfinder researched a range of alternative transport options and funding sources, and implemented several models to try and establish a reliable and cost-efficient transport service. Owing to the expense of using private hire companies, the Pathfinder developed a low cost non-profit community transport scheme. Operating costs were reduced through the scheme being staffed by volunteer drivers, and managed by a volunteer co-ordinator. However, logistical difficulties emerged. Students often arrived late at learning institutions owing to the many school pick-ups en route. Conversely, some students were asked to leave lessons early for the buses to start their return journey. The Pathfinder therefore combined the volunteer scheme with commercial operators, to reduce student travel time. However, this second system proved too expensive. As a third option, Knowsley LEA bought vehicles using the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and outsourced the management services to Community Transport, a service which the local council provided. The resulting system was low cost and reliable enabling the Pathfinder to transport 1700 pre-16s a week. However, the Pathfinder continued to use commercial operators on occasions when community transport reached full capacity.

Support staff accompanied students on all journeys between providers to ensure duty of care. Although this was resource intensive, the support staff used the time effectively to build rapport and communication with the young people.

### **What was the outcome?**

The Collegiate transport system developed the capacity to escort 1700 pre-16s a week to learning provision across Knowsley, but occasionally needed to be supplemented with commercial operators to meet increasing demand for the service.

Manual of Good Practice from 14-19 Pathfinders

Support staff proved instrumental in improving the transport system by mapping routes, developing timetables, constructing passenger lists, and reporting back to schools on student attendance.

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# E-learning using Personal Digital Assistants and Video Conferencing in a Rural Area

## *Shropshire 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

Shropshire's Pathfinder served a large geographical area and wanted to tackle rural isolation and reduce the need for student travel by developing e-learning provision.

### **What were the barriers?**

The Pathfinder found it difficult to arrange sufficient supervision for students travelling long distances in rural areas to access education and training provision.

### **What was the solution?**

The Pathfinder developed an e-learning system to reduce the need for student travel, and increase access to learning materials and support across a large rural area.

Initial activities focused on exploring ICT capacity amongst local providers to address potential compatibility and access issues. The Pathfinder designed an e-learning model using 'Digital Brain', building on the experiences of London Grid for Learning and City Learning Centres. The system provided a broadband internet connection and platform through which schools shared resources. This enabled e-learning and teaching to take place within a secure environment. Several partner organisations were appointed as e-champions to help promote successful ICT approaches to other providers and encourage consistency in the development of longer term provision. In their role as e-champions, the LEA and Shrewsbury Sixth Form College provided advice and support to other schools, with the Sixth Form College providing a support service in the implementation of the 'Digital Brain' model. Subject groups were established to develop 'Digital Brain' resources. A resource database was up-loaded onto 'Digital Brain', and meetings and events were held to demonstrate its functions to staff.

Having strengthened the local ICT infrastructure, the Pathfinder was able to improve e-learning opportunities for local students. A central feature of the project was to explore how Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) and laptops could help pupils improve their organisational skills, and enable them to work towards a broader range of options at their own pace. Ten schools implemented the PDA scheme across different types of institutions and target groups to explore how best to support students' needs. Ofsted praised the flexibility of the PDA approach in supporting students across the ability range, particularly at a local special school. The PDA included subject specific word and picture banks which could be tailored to the comprehension levels of different student cohorts. The picture banks were designed to 'bring alive' the subject matter and engage students. School and college staff created the PDA content in-house, enabling materials to be tailored around the ability level of each group.

In addition to learning materials, the PDA also contained Information, Advice and Guidance for students, focused on personalised learning and the use of Individual Learning Plans (ILPs). Two ILPs models were developed for pre and post-16s. Pre-16 ILPs were linked to Progress Files and



the local record of achievement systems, and were available to all schools. Post-16 ILPs were prioritised to support the Year 11/12 transition process, and were supported by good practice guidance on effective ILP use.

Video-conferencing was used as an e-learning tool to support the learning of foreign languages such as Spanish and German, and help students prepare for GCSE and AS examinations. Video-conferencing was also provided for music students in percussion and to facilitate meetings between local schools councils.

Staff development activities took place to support the longer term development of local e-learning provision, and to help sustain activities which the Pathfinder funded. Headteachers took an active role in monitoring the progress of e-learning developments, providing strategic support and direction for teaching staff, and ensuring teaching resources were in place to support students. IT technicians and teaching assistants received training to lead on resource creation and support e-learning implementation, enabling teaching staff to focus on developing the content of e-learning materials. Teachers in North East Shropshire also received tutor training in delivering e-learning.

### **What was the outcome?**

The e-learning and on-line support approaches which the Pathfinder developed helped meet actions identified in the Area Wide Inspection Plan. The Pathfinder shared lessons across a wide geographical area, including with providers and Pathfinder colleagues in South Wales, the West Midlands and Coventry. Dissemination activities included e-learning workshops to disseminate the 'Digital Brain' approach, and the ability of the video-conferencing model to support learning in subjects involving sound, such as pronunciation in foreign languages and pitch in music. During 2005/06, participating schools were hoping to extend their video-conferencing activities to support learners on A2 Level German courses. The e-learning approaches will be sustained to some extent through the staff development and training activities supported by the Pathfinder, which have increased local ICT capacity and know-how in the design of on-line programmes. The local Connexions 14-19 team, LEA, Youth Service and Education Business Partnerships are all committed to promoting these approaches in the longer term. The e-learning champion model proved very successful and will be sustained through future LEA and Sixth Form College objectives. Other organisations have expressed interest in implementing the Digital Brain approach, such as the Youth Service.

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# Personalised Learning in an Urban Area

## *South Gloucestershire (Kingswood Partnership) 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder wanted to help students make informed choices and develop their own learning pathways through personalised learning.

### **What were the barriers?**

Initially, cultural barriers challenged young people's engagement with activities designed to help develop career pathways and Further and Higher Education plans. Only a small proportion of parents had experienced Higher Education, and many participants did not want to travel outside the local area to access Further or Higher Education.

### **What was the solution?**

The Pathfinder developed personalised learning approaches to raise students' aspirations and motivation. Activities were developed by Teacher Learner Groups, including representatives from across the partnership. See the *Sustaining Improved Professional Practice through Staff Development in an Urban Area* case study (p149) for more information on the Teacher Learner Groups approach. The three Teacher Learner Groups leading personalised learning developments were the Unified Guidance Group (UGG), the Personal Challenge Group, and the E-learning Group. The UGG designed career guidance materials and Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), informed through consultation with around a 1000 students. Student researchers were also trained to research the effectiveness of the guidance with Year 9 students.

The Personal Challenge Group designed activities to promote student autonomy and inform their decision making. The Personal Challenge provided a three-year planning framework to help students develop the skills and motivation to manage their own learning, and plan how best to work towards their chosen progression routes. The personal action plan was included in the students', on-line ILP. The work on the Personal Challenge programme took place alongside the introduction of PLANIT – an online guidance resource designed to help learners enhance their personal learning skills. Students undertook quizzes to identify their aptitudes and aspirations to inform the development of their personal action plan.

Participating schools timetabled 'core' provision in two linked blocks to enable 16 students to take part in the Personal Challenge pilot designed to improve access to learning opportunities. The Personal Challenge pilot at Key Stage 4 included statutory learning elements from the 14-16 curriculum, such as Religious Studies, Physical Education, Citizenship, and at post-16, Key Skills. The Personal Challenge also included accelerated learning for very able students and a personal research study. It also encouraged Key Stage 4 students to reflect on their Key Stage 3 and primary education experiences, and develop their individual learner pathway. In addition, the Personal Challenge programme was extended to Key Stage 5. Approximately 800 students undertook the Personal Challenge programme at Key Stage 4 in 2004/05 and over 300 at Key Stage 5. Students reported the Personal Challenge to be a positive and motivating experience.

A Global Adventure Challenge was also launched for Year 10 students in all participating schools in 2004/05, and this was very popular. The Adventure Challenge will culminate in an expedition to Botswana in 2006 when students will take part in community-based activities, as well as travelling around the country. Approximately 20 students will be involved.

The e-learning Group constructed an Extranet for students to access the personalised learning package, interactive e-teaching and learning materials. Students were also able to access, via the Extranet, individualised careers guidance and their on-line ILP, a resource library, and a common post-16 course prospectus. The Extranet therefore increased student access to a broad range of provision, and reduced the need for student travel. It was housed on a Partnership server and was supported by LEA technical staff. A high capacity link was made between each school and the central server. The Extranet could be accessed at all participating centres, and also provided information and teaching materials for parents and support staff, such as an on-line database to promote work placements and business links. Video conferencing was also made available in all participating centres to enhance partnership communication.

### **What was the outcome?**

The enhanced guidance system helped young people make informed decisions about college link courses, leading to increased motivation amongst participants. Soft outcomes were also evident in terms of students' self-knowledge and skills development, recorded in their learner profiles and pupil learning logs. Schools reported that Year 9 students were making informed option choices for Year 10. As a result some traditional subjects became less popular in favour of business, health and care, media and ICT courses. The personalised learning activities helped improved attendance figures, with participating schools reporting improved overall attendance in Years 10 and 11 (although this was a gradual improvement and related to a range of initiatives). Personalised learning approaches were adapted for younger students by the Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 Continuity and Progression teams to ensure continuity from Key Stage 2 through to Key Stage 4 and beyond. These tools would be piloted with Key Stage 3 learners in 2005/06 to help develop autonomy and self-assessment skills at an earlier age.

The Personal Challenge was adapted for Year 6 students at Key Stage 2, and 60 students participated in a 12 week programme for two hours a week to encourage the development of independent learning skills and interests beyond the core curriculum. Personal Challenge activities at Key Stage 2 and 3 were also developed in collaboration with ASDAN to promote skills development in Internationalism and Citizenship. These tools would be further piloted in 2005/06.

The Pathfinder produced sustainable outcomes including increased staff capacity through training and collaborative work. Sixty staff were trained as Extranet 'advocates' to support the longer term maintenance and use of the on-line materials. ICT infrastructure investments safeguarded longer term access to the curriculum and support materials on the Extranet. The Extranet was presented at the 2005 British Educational Technology Trade (BETT) Show in collaboration with the awarding body ASDAN, the International Learning and Research Centre and Etechgroup, an Australian educational software company. Findings were also disseminated at LEA networking meetings to inform the development of the local Action Plan in response to

the Area Wide Inspection. The work of the Pathfinder was also disseminated to the local LSC, Connexions, colleges and school representatives, and to Pathfinder colleagues and other providers from the South West and the South East. See the *Sustaining Improved Professional Practice through Staff Development in an Urban Area* case study (p149) for further information on developing sustainable collaborative working practices between local institutions.

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# Improving Work-related Information, Advice and Guidance for Learners in a Deprived Inner City Area

## *Southwark 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder wanted to improve local Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) tools to increase post-16 participation rates by 16 and 17 year olds, and support their transition to college or training providers post-16.

### **What were the barriers?**

A previous lack of IAG on post-16 progression and transition routes had limited young people's awareness of local opportunities.

### **What was the solution?**

An IAG tool and guidance materials were produced to promote occupational and learning pathways, improve option choices and increase retention and achievement across local 14-19 provision.

Provider collaboration was essential to ensure students received consistent IAG, to facilitate their progression amongst local providers, and reduce drop out. The Southwark Pathfinder collaborated with local schools, FE colleges, training providers, Connexions, and employers to map local provision. Connexions provided an independent view on IAG, helping to promote collaboration between local schools and colleges. See the *Establishing Collaboration between Local Providers in a Deprived Inner City Area* case study (p61) for further information on the development of collaborative activities.

The partnership produced the Southwark Guarantee Pathfinder Directory ([www.southwarkguarantee.com](http://www.southwarkguarantee.com)). This tool formed the basis of Connexions IAG given to local learners, and became a local resource for teachers, learners and parents. To promote inclusion, the Directory gave equal weighting to work-based and full-time education routes. The Directory addressed needs identified in the Area Wide Inspection by including information on Level 1 entry to FE, Level 2, and Entry to Employment provision. Connexions worked with a local careers company, Inside Knowledge, to introduce the Southwark Guarantee to Year 9 and Year 10 pupils. Connexions mailed the Directory to all Year 9, Year 10 and Year 11 students, and produced leaflets for parents and guardians. The Directory was distributed to libraries and all Local Authority officers. Participating schools were able to develop additional guidance based on the Directory. A video entitled Taking Control was also produced to provide IAG. The video was disseminated to Pupil Referral Units and agencies supporting excluded students.

The Pathfinder also introduced provision to help learners from across the ability range to progress at 16. A one-year basic and vocational skills course was introduced for Year 12 pupils in four 11-16 schools to help them progress, particularly at Level 1, and addressed concerns in the

Area Wide Inspection about provision for this ability group. School-based activities were also introduced around the ASDAN scheme, to promote vocational pathways for local 14-16 year olds. These included vocational visits and short work placements. Some schools adopted a personalised timetable to help learners build up accreditation through ASDAN. Information, Advice and Guidance providers also helped young people develop CV writing, confidence building, and communication skills. An increased emphasis on work-based learning and other vocational provision for the 16-19 age range supported continuity and progression.

The IAG tool and materials were designed to address local skills gaps, and a staff Continuing Professional Development programme was introduced to ensure the quality of this provision, in recognition of the informal advice subject teachers often provide for students. Seminars were held at a local university on science-based occupations in sport, catering, tourism, leisure and the manufacturing sector to raise staff awareness of progression routes which local Further and Higher Education and training providers offered. A staff appointment was made to support the continued implementation of the Southwark Guarantee, and maintain links between schools, colleges and training providers. Students also designed a Student Newsletter for Connexions to distribute to Year 9 students at home and to Key Stage 4 and 5 pupils in schools.

### **What was the outcome?**

During 2004/05, all students received a Connexions one-to-one advice and progression session. The four schools in the Pathfinder also introduced Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) to monitor student progression and to increase staff knowledge about factors helping learners achieve and stay motivated. This helped target Connexions resources at those pupils failing to progress into full time education, training or employment at 16, and helped re-engage young people at risk of disaffection.

The Southwark Guarantee website was upgraded to enable students to access their ILPs on-line and to provide a management tool for staff. This can be accessed at [www.southwarkguarantee.com](http://www.southwarkguarantee.com). Southwark College has guaranteed a progression place to every student attaining the entry criteria in 2005/06. The Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) cohort across Southwark was reduced by over 500 students during the Pathfinder's lifetime, and a special event was held in Peckham Square to encourage 1,200 young people on the Connexions NEET list to participate in local learning opportunities in 2005/06. On-going development work with teachers and Connexions during 2005/06 will help increase the use of the IAG tool and materials in the long term.

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# Developing Partnerships with Higher Education to Support Progression in an Inner City Area

## *Wolverhampton 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder wanted to develop an Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) system which promoted Personalised Learning approaches and progression routes to give young people the confidence and motivation to improve their own performance and aspirations.

### **What were the barriers?**

Initial capacity issues across the Pathfinder challenged the development of Personalised Learning activities. The governance agenda for education weakened the capacity of the LEA to take the lead. This demonstrated the need for strong management structures to organise developments across a large partnership. The Pathfinder took the lead in brokering provision with partners.

### **What was the solution?**

The Wolverhampton Pathfinder created individual learner pathways to promote network growth across the whole range of academic and vocational learning opportunities. The City-wide curriculum framework incorporated eighteen 11-18 schools and a large FE college. Information, Advice and Guidance, focused on personalised learning approaches, played a crucial role in supporting students to make informed choices about the increased options available through the City-wide curriculum. A series of IAG tools were developed to support young people to identify their most appropriate learner pathway to achieve their individual aspirations. The tools included *My-iPlan* and a 14+CARD. The 'Choose A Real Deal' (CARD) included a 14+ promise of a guaranteed place at 18+ in Higher Education, FE, or a work-based learning placement. The Pathfinder developed links with Aim Higher to secure the support of local universities to deliver the CARD promise. All learners were encouraged to participate in CARD enrichment activities to increase their awareness of opportunities in Higher Education and raise their enthusiasm and aspirations to progress to University. Key Stage 3 results were used to determine whether learners were suitable for a provisional Higher Education place, known as the 'HE promise'.

The CARD process supported learners to explore their Higher Education and career aspirations through a series of activities. A number of City-wide CARD days were held for providers and employers to give young people the opportunity to trial different careers. Over 250 opportunities were made available to Year 10 learners through CARD days, which were also advertised on the internet. Students were encouraged to record their experiences in their own *My i-Plan*. *My i-Plan* was a web-based Individual Learning Plan which Nord Anglia E-learning and the Wolverhampton 14-19 Pathfinder team produced. It helped learners to consider where they wanted to go and how they could get there, and included a CV builder. This tool was piloted with schools, training providers, FE colleges and parents. *My i-Plan* proved an important tool in

increasing parental involvement, for example one school held a successful Whole Year Review which used *My i-Plan* to facilitate discussions between students, parents and teachers.

These innovative personalised learning tools were supported by more traditional IAG support which Connexions personal advisors provided to support learners with particular career interests or special needs.

### **What was the outcome?**

All local universities signed a commitment to promise learners at Key Stage 4 a place in Higher Education to encourage progression. The 14+ CARD provided tangible proof of this promise. The regional Aim Higher evaluation recognised the contribution of the CARD in promoting cultural change. BECTA is interested in accrediting the *My i-Plan* process, which is being rolled out to all 14-19 learners in the City in the academic year 2005/06.

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# Chapter 7 – Sustainability

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# Development of Web-based Individual Learning Plans in an Inner City Area

## *East Manchester 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The Pathfinder wanted to mainstream delivery approaches, particularly web-based personalised learning developments, to enhance “joined-up” delivery between providers to support student progression in the longer term.

### **What were the barriers?**

The initial lack of consensus amongst local providers about the purpose, process and production of Individual Learning Plans caused difficulties.

### **What was the solution?**

The Pathfinder acted as a pilot for initiatives to be tested and subsequently rolled out across the City. Activities were adapted and delivery tools amended according to participant and provider feedback, ensuring high quality provision was implemented more widely. The Pathfinder acted as a conduit for local 14-19 activity, preventing duplication between providers and promoting “joined-up” delivery. The Pathfinder promoted economies of scale by acting on behalf of partners, for example by organising training on a cluster basis, helping to standardise and quality assure 14-19 delivery.

A key output from the Pathfinder was a web-based ILP system and staff training materials for use with students from Year 8 through to post-16 and adult learners. Web-based personalised learning represented a sustainable approach to supporting curriculum delivery and take-up. Capital investment from the Pathfinder programme enabled systems to be developed and established which could subsequently be implemented within mainstream budgets at a relatively low cost to support larger numbers of students.

Towards the end of the second year, an action plan was designed for 2005/06 to transfer lessons from the Pathfinder and to support the wider development of local economic and employment priorities. This was facilitated by the Pathfinder Co-ordinator working closely with the Manchester 14-19+ Strategy Manager. A major planning event was held for 14-19 stakeholders from across the City to ensure the collaborative working arrangements established through the 14-19 Pathfinder would be maintained. Schools and colleges were committed to ensuring that provision would be dovetailed in the longer term to ensure appropriate progression routes between providers.

The North West Regional Dissemination Manager played an important role in maximising opportunities to mainstream Pathfinder outcomes, through a series of targeted activities. More than 30 meetings were held with Local Education Authorities (LEAs), FE Colleges, High Schools, Work-Based Learning Providers and Employers, to explore mainstreaming opportunities and identify potential barriers to replicating Pathfinder activities. Pathfinder outcomes have also informed the work of 14-19 development groups, Learning and Skills Development Agency

14-16 developments, and providers in Blackburn, Trafford and Plymouth. Findings have been disseminated at the Blackpool 14-19 Conference, and to the TUC in Liverpool, Bury LEA, Oldham's 14-19 Network group, Blackburn's 14-19 Development Team, and the University of Wolverhampton.

A mail-shot showcasing Pathfinder lessons was distributed to 14-19 education providers including LEA advisers, 36 colleges, 141 High Schools, four training providers and employers.

### **What was the outcome?**

Collaboration between providers in the North West enabled the Pathfinder's ILP systems to inform developments in other areas such as Cumbria, developing a common electronic ILP that could be transferred and accessed across the partnership at a local and regional level. This approach increased the value and durability of individuals' ILPs, supporting student mobility and progression. E-Personalised Learning approaches could be adapted and sustained to support a wide range of audiences and purposes, from Year 8 students to adult learners. The LEA was exploring ways to manage the central running of the e-ILP system by using a central server to host the system efficiently in the longer term. Post-Inspection Action Plan funding had been identified to help fund developments in the future.

Pathfinder lessons will achieve a lasting impact by having informed developments within Manchester Aim Higher, Greater Manchester Aim Higher, Manchester Metropolitan University's Urban Education project, and The Manufacturing Institute's 'Agenda for Change'. Pathfinder findings have also been incorporated into the New East Manchester's Regeneration Strategy and the East Manchester Education Action Zone's strategy. At an organisational level, the Pathfinder informed programme delivery by organisations such as The Prince's Trust, Connexions, and Manchester Youth College.

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# Embedding Systems for Sustainability in an Urban Area

## *Gateshead 14-19 Pathfinder*

### What was the issue?

The Pathfinder developed a project framework to maximise the potential sustainability of activities funded through the Pathfinder, and to inform the development and quality of local 14-19 provision in the long term.

### What were the barriers?

A number of barriers affected the longer term mainstreaming and potential sustainability of the project within partner organisations. Barriers included: transport between centres; sustaining a common timetable between institutions; and developing a fees and registration structure which reflected the contributions of different institutions. Agreeing suitable arrangements for exam entries also proved difficult as some students in the same teaching groups were registered at different centres, making it difficult for institutions to take credit for students' achievements on post-16 courses.

### What was the solution?

A key aspect of the cg:6 Director's role in the Operations Group was to steer the development of procedures and protocols designed to underpin sustainable activity. A Co-ordinator was appointed to manage the cg:6 partnership and contribute to the sustainability strategy. A staff handbook and digital dashboard (a portal of customised web components) were developed to allow teachers to monitor students' attendance across partner institutions, and to improve management information systems. These systems will be sustained using core funds. The salary of the cg:6 Co-ordinator will be funded in the long term through schools and colleges using the increased mainstream funds generated as a result of increased student numbers. For example, a Connexions survey produced in November 2004 demonstrated that staying-on rates in cg:6 had increased from 45.6% to 60.2%. In one partnership sixth form, student intake doubled in two years as a result of increased access to provision at Level 3. It is hoped that the mainstreaming of the Co-ordinator post will ensure longer term collaboration and finalise agreements for examination entries between institutions.

The development of common timetabling and the virtual sixth form approach enhanced opportunities for sustaining increased access to post-16 provision across the partnership's 11-16 schools in the longer term. Teaching quality also improved as teachers welcomed the professional development which increased opportunities to teach on post-16 courses provided.

The Pathfinder also undertook a range of marketing activities to promote the sustainability of the cg:6 model. This model was marketed as a 'brand'; the college marketing department led on this activity. The cg:6 name and logo generated considerable local interest, and a prospectus and publicity material promoted the brand to a wide audience. Launch events took place annually. A cg:6 bus shelter and shopping centre advertising campaign also took place. The increase in staying-on rates demonstrated early indications that the marketing strategy strengthened the sustainability of the cg:6 model by providing evidence to reinforce the value of this provision to

future grant holders. The marketing manager at the college was awarded a prize from a marketing professional association for the collaborative marketing of cg:6.

### What was the outcome?

The structures and systems established during the lifetime of the Pathfinder, and particularly since the appointment of the cg:6 Director, provide a secure base on which the partnership can build for the future. Student numbers and participation rates have increased and support the case for the extra costs associated with collaborative working. These will be met in the longer term from the additional fee income generated by increased student numbers. The students themselves benefit from a wider choice of progression routes made available in their own localities. Students also received enhanced guidance and counselling through an agreed entitlement delivered to a consistent standard across the partnership. The progression opportunities included a wider choice of A/AS and vocational options delivered both in partner schools and at Gateshead College. Vocational choices will continue to be supported by the programmes provided for Year 10-Year 13 students through the Vocational Strand of the Pathfinder which will be supported in the future through the local Education Business Link Service (EBLS).

Following the end of the programme, work-related learning provision will be sustained through the EBLS employer network described in the case study *Working with Education Business Links to Improve the Vocational Offer*. In addition, the North East Regional Development Agency Single Pot co-funded the Co-ordinator responsible for work-related learning. This will help to steer and facilitate further developments in the future. The involvement of the local 14-19 Action Plan Manager helped transfer lessons to activities funded under the Area Wide Inspection budget and the Single Programme. The LEA is also committed to providing continuing support to help transfer learning from the Pathfinder to future initiatives. The University of Sunderland has pledged support to help sustain the ICT materials which participating schools have developed.

The steering group, which included Headteachers and senior college staff, agreed to adopt a principle of fair sharing future LSC income across the partnership schools and college. The partnership is also committed to mainstreaming the common timetabling approach in participating schools.

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# Sustaining Improved Professional Practice through Staff Development in an Urban Area

## *South Gloucestershire (Kingswood Partnership) 14-19 Pathfinder*

### **What was the issue?**

The South Gloucestershire (Kingswood Partnership) Pathfinder wanted to develop a sustainable model of professional practice by using Pathfinder funding to invest in staff development and embed collaborative approaches in local partnership structures.

### **What were the barriers?**

Initial barriers included recognising the need to extend partnership involvement of a wider group of staff across seven schools and a college, to formalise partnership arrangements, and agree common working practices in order for systems to be sustainable in the long term.

### **What was the solution?**

A collaborative management model with devolved roles and responsibilities to teachers/curriculum managers was developed. A key component of the model was establishing Teacher Learner Groups to improve the professional practice of staff across the eight participating institutions. The Teacher Learner Groups shared expertise on the following issues: work-related learning; personal challenge; unified guidance; curriculum framework; special needs; and e-learning. A designated Development Manager led each Teacher Learner Group. These responsibilities were devolved across the Partnership to ensure all participating centres had a stake in systems development, and would be committed to the ownership and maintenance of these approaches in their institutions in the future.

The main partners were seven schools, an FE college and Connexions. The Partnership developed a Collaboration Checklist which guided the partnership's decision making process and discussions. The Collaborative Checklist focused on quality assurance systems; joint development planning; individual costs and centralised funds; common timetabling; and monitoring through a common data set. The checklist also covered practical issues which organisations should agree on. These included: communication; applications and recruitment; INSET days; assessment; documentation; exam entries; student support; and transport and vocational collaboration.

### **What was the outcome?**

The management and partnership systems are sustainable as they have been embedded in everyday practice. The skills shared and developed between staff also have a life after the programme funding expires, helping to shape future 14-19 provision. The school led delivery process maintained high levels of collaboration which secured the development of a common curriculum framework and unified guidance which will remain in place after the programme

ends, helping broaden students' curriculum choice across the Kingswood Partnership in the long term, and develop a quality assurance framework.

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# Glossary

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

The following acronyms are used in the Manual and case studies demonstrating good practice from the 14-19 Pathfinders programme:

**BECTA:** British Educational Communications and Technology Agency

**CARD:** Choose A Real Deal

**CBEC:** Cumbria Business Education Consortium

**CITB:** Construction Industry Training Board

**CoVE:** Centre of Vocational Excellence

**CPD:** Continuing Professional Development

**DfES:** Department for Education and Skills

**EAL:** English as an Additional Language

**EBLS:** Education Business Links Service

**EBP:** Education Business Partnership

**EMTEC:** National Training Provider for the Motor Vehicle Industry

**ESF:** European Social Fund

**ESOL:** English for Speakers of Other Languages

**E2E:** Entry to Employment

**GOWM:** Government Office West Midlands

**HMI:** Her Majesty's Inspectorate

**IAG:** Information, Advice and Guidance

**ILP:** Individual Learning Plan

**L4L:** Learning for Life

**LEA:** Local Education Authority



**LIDF:** Local Intervention and Development Fund

**LSC:** Learning and Skills Council

**LSDA:** Learning and Skills Development Agency

**MLE:** Mobile Learning Environment

**NEET:** Not in Education, Employment or Training

**OCN:** Open College Network

**PCT:** Primary Care Trust

**PDA:** Personal Digital Assistants

**People 1st:** Sector Skills Council for Hospitality, Leisure, Travel and Tourism

**PRSQ:** Progression-Readiness Skills and Qualities

**PSHE:** Personal, Social and Health Education

**SEMTA:** Sector Skills Council for Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies

**SEN:** Special Educational Needs

**StAR:** Strategic Area Review

**TUC:** Trade Union Congress

**UCL:** University College London

**UMIST:** University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology

**VLE:** Virtual Learning Environment

**WBL:** Work-based learning

