

ROYAL BOROUGH OF KINGSTON UPON THAMES

16-19 PARTICIPATION STRATEGY: September 2011 to March 2013



CONTENTS

Section	Page
Introduction	3
Kingston Quality Commitment	3
The Strategy	4
Overall outcome	4
Success measures	4
Objective 1	5
Objective 2	7
Objective 3	8



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Introduction

The Royal Borough of Kingston has developed this participation strategy in the light of **Raising the Participation Age** (RPA) being implemented from September 2013 but also in the context of a number of factors and ongoing policy developments that will impact on our resident young people and their families over the coming years. These are (although not exhaustive):

- The demise of a Connexions service in the borough has resulted in closer inter-team working across the borough to prevent young people becoming NEET and to offer universal and targeted support services to all those who require it
- The increased focus on the progression of our SEN/LLDD cohort within the context of the SEN Green Paper and changes to post 16 funding for LLDD learners aged 16-25 has led us to address the need for more in borough learning provision
- The number of young people whose destinations are Not Known is unacceptable to us and in line with a national government drive to tackle this, we need to reduce our Not Knowns and support those within this cohort who may now be longer term NEET
- With a stagnant economy and shrinking opportunities for young people in a tight jobs market we need to engage more local employers into offering jobs with training, apprenticeships and work experience to more young people to get them on the first rung of the employment ladder.

Our strategy is supported by the borough's established, tightly knit 14-19 Partnership group, on which there are representatives from our ten secondary schools and academies, our FE Colleges and private learning providers, our Youth Service, Jobcentre Plus, the Chamber of Commerce and a small but effective 14-19 team. Kingston's learning 'offer' already hosts post-16 opportunities for many of our Year 11 learners across the range of our learning providers – and we are keen to widen opportunities for even more young people in the advent of RPA implementation from 2013.

To meet the challenge of Raising the Participation Age, through our RPA sub-Group¹, we are developing RPA protocols and procedures within the Partnership and will evaluate, refine and embed these over the next two years.

We have also developed a post-16 **Kingston Quality Commitment** (KQC). An evidence-based approach supported by a range of data sources, this Commitment has resulted in our 14-19 Partnership group signing up to a number of aims: increasing participation in learning or employment to 100% in line with RPA; reducing dropout from learning programmes; increasing the number of young people who achieve full Level 2 (FL2) and full Level 3 (FL3); and supporting those in Year 11 who do not have a planned positive destination, to achieve this by September.

The KQC statement is as follows:

The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames, its schools and post 16 providers have made a public quality commitment to all the young people post 16 who enrol on a Full Level 2 or Full Level 3 programme in 2011/12 and going forwards. It has been agreed that all those young people will, as a minimum, be supported to achieve these key educational milestones which have been demonstrated to have a substantial impact on young people's future employability, prospects and life chances. As part of this commitment, the providers, with the support of the local authority, will ensure that any young person who decides to leave a learning programme early, is offered an appropriate alternative placement in Kingston.

¹ Reports to the 14-19 Partnership and leads on the implementation of the borough's RPA Strategy

Kingston has a 16-18 learner cohort of just under 6,000. Of these, around 60% are non-residents and the complex travel to learn pattern has resulted in our adopting a provider based RPA approach covering all our learners, not just residents. We are confident that this model can be replicated elsewhere in a cost effective way and as the lead borough for 14-19 in the south west London cluster, we will share our experience and good practice with Croydon, Richmond, Sutton, Merton and Wandsworth through our South West London School Effectiveness Partnership (SWLSEP). We will also ensure wider dissemination as our 14-19 lead is the south west cluster representative on London Councils' Young People Education and Skills' Operational Sub-Group and through our membership of London Councils' Improving Choices for Young People Group. Developing protocols and disseminating best practice will also be essential to support our residents who travel to learn in other local authority areas. We will achieve this through an ongoing working group with Surrey and neighbouring London boroughs.

The Strategy

Our Strategy includes **preventative actions** and **interventions** to support those that have become NEET. While the preventative work (ie the KQC work that is undertaken with young people in Years 10 and 11 in our schools) is a separate strand from the interventionist work, the two are linked, as the procedures and practices we embed within the KQC this year will result in a reduction of NEET and Not Known young people in future years.

We will continue to track, signpost and support our current NEET population as a key area of work. The lead team for the Strategy is the 14-19 team within Learning and Children's Services (LCS). The team works closely with a number of other teams within LCS, namely our Youth Service, Looked After Children and Care Leavers' teams, Children's Centres, Youth Offending as well as number of other key colleagues who are involved in the provision of specialist help and support.

The **overall outcome** that we will arrive at through our strategy is as follows:

By March 2013 we will have made significant progress towards embedding our participation strategy for young people aged 16-19 with the objective of increasing overall participation for all young people who are able to participate. We will therefore reduce our NEETs to a small group of young people who for whatever reason cannot easily engage into EET and similarly reduce our Not Known young people to a small minority with whom contact cannot be made.

Our **success measures** will be:

- By March 2013, to reduce our overall 16-19 NEET to 2.9% of the overall resident cohort
- By March 2013, reduce our Not Known cohort to a minimum of 1% (45 learners who are Not Known to us) from current baseline of 4,509 young people in 16-19 resident cohort (March 2012)
- By March 2013 to increase participation of 16 year olds leaving Year 11 in 2011/12 from the current level of 88.2%, to 90% en route to 100% participation by December 2013.
- In 2012/13, to support 60% of 17 year olds who dropped out and became NEET, into an alternative positive destination within 3 months.

NB: In April 2013 we will review progress against the above success measures, as we have committed to reach these milestones by March 2013 as part of our RPA trial, supported by DfE. We will if necessary refresh the targets in the light of progress.

We have identified 3 key objectives to take forward our Strategy. At the end of the following sections that describe each objective, we have listed the success measures against which we will assess our progress. Most of the success measures identified are a reflection of, or link in to Outcome 5 in our Children's and Young People's Plan: **All young people will be able to make a successful transition to adult life, continuing education and employment.**

Each objective is supported by a mini action plan against we are working to fulfil quantitative targets (see Appendix 1). The following section sets out the background to and rationale for each objective:

1. **Tackling NEET and Not Known:** Kingston is a high performing borough, with GCSE results (A*-C) in Kingston schools 7% above the national average in 2011 – rising to 12% including English and Maths. Historically, resident participation in post-16 learning has been over 95% year on year but like all London boroughs Kingston has a percentage of young people who do not participate – 3.3% NEET, which equates to 139 people (adjusted). The borough's success in general often means that those who do disengage are more difficult to re-engage and retain on programme and are more likely to become NEET. In 2008/09, overall 'dropout' from FL2/3 post 16 programmes in schools was 13.1%². NEET data also show a level of 'churn' within Foundation Learning.

Our NEET cohort is not an homogenous group – we understand its make-up and through the locally led delivery project will develop further our intelligence of its characteristics. This will aid early identification of individuals and supporting their transition into EET, using all channels available to us both within and outside RBK. We will utilise the ESF NEET provision that is available pan-London and will work closely with ESF delivery partners to ensure they target their resource to the learners who most need it – in particular to the 14% of our NEET who are in vulnerable group categories (VGC) - around 60% of those in the VGC are teenage parents and around 5% are LDD.

The borough of Kingston has a large post-16 cohort (5,905) and high travel to learn patterns but covers a small geographical area. We currently have approximately 450 Not Known against a NEET cohort of 100-150. Our intention is to establish contact with and track all our Not Known cohort, allowing us to better understand and identify the reasons that led to them being 'lost' in the system. We will then review the factors that prevent participation and lead to young people becoming Not Known and ensure we put into place a set of robust **Risk of NEET Indicators (RONIs)** that incorporate these factors in succeeding years. The RoNIs we used to 'pilot' the KQC in 2010/11 and for the predicted cohort for 2011/12 will form the basis of our RoNIs for the future, which are likely to comprise the following:

- Poor attainment at KS3
- Looked After Child
- Eligible for FSM
- Resident in area of high deprivation
- Below 85% attendance
- SEN/LLDD
- Behavioural issues
- Multiple exclusions
- Permanent exclusion
- Attendance at PRU
- Pregnant or teenage parents
- Supervised by YOT
- One or more previous period NEET
- Chronic illness
- Adverse family circumstances

² Based on 2008/09 figures, this is the percentage of learners who left school before completing their learning programme and who did not enter a positive learning destination.

The outputs of this research will help us to address this issue at a systemic and individual level and develop procedures to support those young people in the future who are currently at risk of NEET and also of being Not Known, ie. in current Years 10 and 11. We will then be able to share best practice for our partners locally via SWLSEP, in London via the YPES and nationally, as we believe Not Known is a bigger threat to the implementation of the RPA than NEET.

In addition to the important work set out above to lay the foundations for reducing NEET in the coming years, we are working both with young people to signpost them to sources of support. We are tracking our NEET young people and where appropriate referring them to our Youth Service for face to face IAG and sign up to its Take Control project. Take Control provides employability skills and help into employment. We are also working (also with Youth Support) to refer young people to one of the pan-London ESF NEET projects currently operational in the borough, including our own ESF pre-Apprenticeship programme. Specifically, we are working with the Care Leavers' team and Children's Centres and health professionals to ensure that our care leavers and teenage parents can benefit from the ESF NEET Vulnerable Groups project run by Prospects. On an ongoing basis we share our NEET 'list' with other teams to identify where young people are already being worked with and to share resources accordingly.

This really important area of work will be covered within **Objective 1: By March 2013, to have identified our Not Known to the point where our EET/NEET figures represent 99% of our resident 16-19 cohort and increase participation in EET of our 16-19 cohort so that all young people participating are in learning, a job with training or an Apprenticeship that provides appropriate progression in line with their aspirations and capabilities**

Objective 1: Success measures

- Participation into EET of 16 year old resident young people increased from 89% of total 16 year old resident cohort to 97% by March 2013³ (current baseline: 975 learners participating out of total resident cohort of 1095)
- Participation of 17 year old resident young people EET increased from 89.6%⁴ of total 16-19 cohort to 92% by March 2013, en route to the Children and Young People's Plan target of 94% by September 2013
- By March 2013, 99% of our 16-19 resident cohort will have been identified as EET or NEET, with 1% (45 learners) as Not Known (current Not Known baseline: 10% of total cohort or 454 learners)

Impact and outcomes from Objective 1

- The majority of our young people will either be in a destination that helps them progress into or in employment or have the opportunity of support into a positive destination if they are NEET
 - The borough's providers will be better able to shape their provision offer to engage those who are NEET and to meet the needs of those who are in learning
 - We will be able to track young people more effectively in the future, with the aim of eventually 'eradicating' young people who are Not Known to us
2. **Vulnerable groups and those at risk of NEET:** We know there is a causal link between low prior attainment – specifically, non achievement of a full Level 2 at KS4 - and becoming NEET⁵. In 2008/09, our data shows that of a cohort of 223 NEET, only 6% achieved a FL2 in Year 11. And in 2011, 160 learners left Year 11 without a FL2 – with a similar level projected for 2012. We

³ Source: CCIS data on Year 11 residency cohort

⁴ Source for baseline: Kingston Activity Survey of 2011/12 resident Year 12 learners. Total cohort = 1496.

⁵ Just 65% of Londoners with below Level 2 qualifications are in employment and 45% of those with no qualifications are in employment.

recognise the impact on future employability and progression for the minority who may not achieve FL2/FL3 by age 19⁶ - and to address this we intend to capture *all* those identified by our schools as being unable or unlikely to achieve a FL2 at 16 (ie not just our residents) *regardless of background or circumstances*.

We will of course collect data on these learners against weighted RoNIs (see section 1. Above) that will enable us to refer them into appropriate provision according to their needs. We already know that many of the 'non FL2' cohort identified in 2010/11 and those projected for 2011/12 fall into more than one RoNI and we will prioritise those learners with high weightings. These are likely to be the small minority of Looked After Children that we have in Year 11, as well as those who have had multiple exclusions, low attainment at KS3 and poor attendance.

Our challenge is **early identification of groups of 'at risk' learners** and **firm embedding of the Kingston Quality Commitment** (KQC) by the start of the 2012/13 academic year.

The whole process of identifying 'at risk' learners through both quantitative data and qualitative supporting information and providing appropriate support to ensure they go into EET will be covered under **Objective 2: By March 2012, increase participation at age 16 and 17 including by vulnerable groups by ensuring there is appropriate in borough post 16 provision in place (and up to 25 for LLDD)**. We will build on the successful work we have done to date in implementing the Kingston Quality Commitment and by developing **referral protocol** for those learners in Year 12 who leave their learning early (see KQC above). We are also concerned about our residents in the 'at risk' category in schools in other London boroughs and Surrey and will **widen our approach to data collection** on this cohort by developing data sharing protocols with these local authorities. We can then work to extending the information, signposting and support that we offer to our residents learning in Kingston to those in learning out of borough.

Lack of in borough provision for SEN and LLDD resident learners in our schools has become a chronic need for those learners and families that would prefer in borough provision to be available. Through our multi agency Transition Board we will work with Kingston College and other partners **to support the development of bespoke provision** for this group. that will be funded within its main YPLA-funded Foundation Learning contract. The College envisages a potential pilot of this provision from September 2012) with rollout planned from September 2013.

Objective 2: Success measures

- Of the 2011/12 year 11 learners (delivery) in Kingston schools who are projected to be at risk of NEET due to failure to achieve a full Level 2 at 16, **90%** will be in EET by March 2013 (currently baseline = 83% of non FL2 which equates to 133 learners)
- **85%** of Year 11 resident pupils (60 learners) with a Statement of Educational Need (SEN) leaving Kingston schools in summer 2012 to be in positive destinations by March 2013 (baseline for 2011 learners: 77% of SEN learners = 35 learners)
- **30%** of resident teenage parents who are now registered as NEET as at March 2012 to be in EET by March 2013 (current baseline: 21 learners on NEET list)
- **50%** of the current resident teenage parent cohort engaged in activities supporting progression into employment (current baseline: 21 learners on NEET list)
- **10 out of 10 Kingston secondary schools/academies** signed up to Kingston Quality Commitment and offering targeted interventions to Years 10 and 11 learners at risk of NEET/not achieving FL2, as appropriate (current baseline: 8)

Impact and outcomes from Objective 2

- Within the Kingston Quality Commitment, we have included the likelihood of learners achieving a full Level 2 in Year 11 as a Risk of NEET Indicator (RoNI). Through the Kingston Quality Commitment, *all* young people who are learning in Kingston who are at risk of NEET when they leave Year 11, will be supported into a positive destination, regardless of which RoNI category they are included in, or academic ability, or which borough they live in. The KQC is learner focused, not residency based and presents an inclusive approach to all Kingston's Year 11 learners.
 - All Kingston resident, including those who are in learning outside Kingston will eventually be covered by the KQC, once we have developed datasharing protocols with other local authorities, particularly Surrey and developed partnership working with other boroughs to support these learners
 - The borough's Destination Measures in 2013 and going forward will include a high proportion of young people entering learning or employment, thereby instilling confidence by learners and parents/carers in our providers and the IAG and provision they offer
3. Implementing a **Youth Employment Strategy** forms the third part of our work towards RPA. While this will include the whole spectrum of employment and employment-related learning for young people, there will be a significant emphasis on creating and broadening Apprenticeship opportunities – and therefore resident starts – within the borough.

The collapse in the unemployment opportunities for 16 – 18 year olds, alongside the need for higher skill levels to compete in the knowledge economy and recent government announcements in relation to both policy and funding, now effectively means there are now only two main routes available to young people post 16. One route is the well understood through GCSEs to A Levels and university and the other is now Apprenticeships. The increase in higher education (HE) fees and the cuts in support for non STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and maths) in HE allied to the ever increasing funding available for Apprenticeships has increasingly meant that young people are actively looking at Apprenticeships as a route they can follow – including those young people who have traditionally gone into employment at 16 and accessed Apprenticeships at the lower skills levels. However, with the changes in HE policy and the increasing availability of Level 3 Apprenticeships for those high attaining academic students at 16 or 19, increasingly apprenticeships are appealing to a new cohort, Kingston with its outstanding academic results at level 2 and level 3 is well placed to adapt to this Apprenticeship changing environment.

We recognise the need for **a clear borough wide strategy** for this route. With the support of our key stakeholders in this area, we need to do more to ensure that Apprenticeship opportunities are available, especially for those young people who have been educated in Kingston schools and academies. We need to begin to promote and embed Apprenticeships across the local authority in **RBK's own procurement and supply chain strategies** and crucially **with the borough's employers**, to support young people into Apprenticeships as a means of tackling NEET and youth unemployment, but also supporting the increasing numbers of young people who no longer feel that higher education is the default destination for them. In doing so, we also intend to set out clear targets for increasing Apprenticeship participation by 16-19 year olds with our key stakeholders establishing a clearly understood set of roles and responsibilities aligning with the Governments stated priorities as set out in their participation strategy. We will be tackling this area of work under **Objective 3: By March 2013, to implement a Youth Employment Strategy for 16-19 year olds with a particular focus on vulnerable groups, by creating and identifying employment opportunities including Apprenticeships, Jobs With Training, work experience and work-related learning with local employers.**

We will also develop a borough strategy **for identifying those employers who offer Jobs With Training** and 'matching' young people to employers offering Jobs With Training and

Apprenticeships. We will also pilot work pairing (along the lines of the successful East Sussex model). We intend to focus on vulnerable groups in particular and to this end have earmarked £80k of RBK funds to channel to employers to allow young people from these groups to participate in employment related activities in line with the Youth Contract approach. To support these areas of work, we will draw on our strong employer engagement through the work of our Schools' Vocational Development Service and our Chamber of Commerce, which is represented on RBK's Local Strategic Partnership, Children's and Young People's Trust and 14-19 Partnership. Our ESF pre-Apprenticeship provision will also provide a key route into Apprenticeship for 16-18 year olds who can work at Level 2.

The action plan that we have developed to take forward our Strategy follows as Appendix 1, showing the areas of activity under each Objective that we are currently taking forward, on a termly basis.

Objective 3: Success measures

- By March 2013, 30 'new' local employers will be offering Apprenticeship and Jobs with Training opportunities to young people
- By March 2013, 12 more 16-19 Kingston NEET learners will have completed a pre-Apprenticeship (baseline 8 as of March 2012)
- By March 2013, increase the 16-18 residents undertaking an Apprenticeship by 20% (22 learners – current baseline 112)
- By March 2013, 15 NEET young people from vulnerable groups paired with employers for work experience with a view to progression on to permanent employment ('work pairing')

Impact and outcomes from Objective 3

- More employers will become engaged with young people and in contributing to their progression in the workplace
- Psychological, physical and economic wellbeing of those young people (and in some cases their families) will increase as more young people go into and progress in the workplace
- Kingston's economy will benefit from more young people in work

