

CHAPTER 03.

OBJECTIVE 01

ADVISING AND PREPARING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR WORK



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Key Facts:

- In Bury, 61.5% of young people achieve a level 3 qualification by age 19 in 2022 - above the national and regional averages of 60.7% and 58.1%, respectively.
- 3.9% of 16-17-year-olds are not in education, employment or training (NEET) or Not Known – below the national and regional averages of 5.6% and 5.3% respectively. However, Bury has high NEET figures for its vulnerable young people.
- 4.5% of 16-17-year-olds are currently in apprenticeships (April 24) - this is below the regional average of 6.5% and is slightly below the national average of 4.6%
- 19% of 16-24-year-olds in Bury are currently (October 2024) claiming out of work benefits – this is above Greater Manchester 18%), Northwest (18%) and United Kingdom (17%).
- 45.2% of young people progress to higher education. 34.9% of young people who are disadvantaged progress to HE – this is above the Northwest average of 26.1% and England average of 29.0%

A key objective within the LET's do it! strategy is to ensure that our children and young people have a better start in life, with access to improved education and broader horizons. Most young people in Bury successfully participate in education and training, making a positive transition into further learning or employment.

However, data indicates that not all young people in Bury have an equal chance to succeed, with some groups facing more barriers than others. As a borough, we will continue to tackle inequality in our learning and skills system, particularly for care leavers and young people with disabilities.

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Youth unemployment in Bury accounts for 19% of the working age population. Youth unemployment and economic inactivity is rising in Bury and outcomes for care leavers are below the outcomes of other young people. There are multiple causes of youth unemployment, but the long-term impact can reduce life chances, motivation and quality of life. As a system, it is crucial that young people are informed and inspired much earlier in their educational journey.

A key priority for Bury Council and partners will be to embed work and skills conversation as the norm in interaction with young people, throughout their education. It is crucial that young people understand the breadth of opportunity available to them as they navigate their early aspirations.

Early interaction with inspirational business leaders and their organisations will be an offer that enhances a fundamental understanding that school and college education and further learning is a pathway to employment. Schools have a vital role in ensuring the delivery a high-quality careers education programme.

The Gatsby Benchmarks provide a framework for best practice, emphasising the importance of embedding careers education across the curriculum. By integrating careers into subject teaching, schools can help students see the relevance of their learning, raise aspirations, and improve engagement. A whole-school approach ensures that all staff contribute to preparing students for further education, training, and employment, supporting social mobility and strengthening the future workforce.

The local system will work with schools to identify those most at risk of disengaging. As a system, we will collaborate with partners to develop re-engagement programmes for young people who are NEET, utilising UK Shared Prosperity Fund and other external funding to support our offer.

Bury will put transition support front and central post 16-18, supporting young people to make informed choices to minimise the number of NEET and further stem the pipeline of migration to claiming out-of-work benefits. Through practical information, advice, and guidance Bury will support the navigation and understanding of the pathways and skills required to progress in work.

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Priority Actions:

- Inspire our young people to understand the world of work by planned interaction at key stages throughout their primary and secondary education.
- Support Bury schools and colleges to work collaboratively with GMCA, national organisations and businesses to strengthen their careers guidance.
- Support Bury schools and colleges to deliver good quality careers provision against the Gatsby Benchmarks supported by businesses.
- Support and deliver Government initiatives designed to increase and maintain youth employment rates at a local level.
- Promote and support GMACS (Greater Manchester Apprenticeship and Careers Service).
- Reduce the number of young people at risk of being NEET by planned early intervention.
- Reduce numbers of NEET young people (including EHCP and Care Leavers), utilising funding for engagement and provision.
- Supporting schools and colleges to promote and inspire young people to pursue higher level qualifications.
- Promote parity of pathways for young people between academic and technical careers i.e. increased take up of technical pathways in Bury.
- Youth voice feeds into careers delivery within education.

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What does success look like?

- The education, employment and skills system are responsive to the needs of the local and national economy.
- Young people are job ready. They understand the labour market and the expectations of employers.
- Young people with SEND (Special Education Needs and Disability) and Care Leavers are supported to achieve their potential.
- The system has strong, mutually supportive relationships with businesses who collaborate with Further Education Colleges, Schools, Adult Education and Welfare to Work Providers.
- An increase in the numbers of young people starting and completing an apprenticeship.
- More high-quality apprenticeships and T Levels as a route into key employment sectors.
- Reduction in the proportion of young people aged 16-17 who are NEET.