

Derby City Council Further Education Inclusion Strategy 2025–2030

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Version	1
Review requirements	Every 5 years with annual monitoring
Date of next review	October 2030
Approval Body	S Hancox/SBuckby
Publication	October 2025



Derby City Council



Derby Adult Learning Service

Learning Opportunities for Adults

Vision

Derby City Council is committed to an inclusive, ambitious and responsive Further Education and Skills system. Our aim is that every resident—regardless of background, circumstance or need—can access high-quality learning, develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for life and work, and progress towards sustained employment, independence and economic prosperity.

The Derby City Inclusion Charter underpins this strategy. All FE provision within the Council commits to its core elements:

Inclusive Relationships

Belonging — learners feel welcomed, accepted and safe

Kindness — unconditional positive regard

Person-centred practice — empathy, trust and respect

Collaboration — FE, families, communities and services working together

Culture — inclusion is everyone's business

Inclusive Provision

Curriculum — ambitious and accessible for all

Teaching — high-quality teaching supporting diverse learners

Support — graduated approach embedded across provision

Environment — safe, accessible and supportive

Policies — flexible, with clear expectations and boundaries

Across Derby Adult Education, Employment and Skills, Transition2, the Derby SEND Skills Centre and services supporting young people who are NEET, we champion social mobility, reduce inequalities and remove barriers to participation and progression.

Our ambition is that all learners—particularly those facing complex disadvantage—experience provision that is inclusive by design, aspirational in practice and transformative in outcome.



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Derby Adult Learning Service

Learning Opportunities for Adults

Strategic Principles

1. Inclusive Access and Participation

We will ensure that all residents can access education, training and skills opportunities that meet their needs.

We will:

Provide right support at the right time

Build strong collaborative partnerships

Remove practical, financial, digital, cultural and attitudinal barriers

Prioritise engagement with underrepresented groups

Develop flexible pathways for adults, young people, carers, those in work and those furthest from the labour market

Ensure impartial, accessible and responsive IAG

Promote equality of opportunity and celebrate diversity

Impact: increased participation, retention and engagement across priority groups.

2. Ambitious Outcomes for Learners with SEND

Transition2 and the Derby SEND Skills Centre coordinate inclusive pathways for children, young people and adults with SEND.

We will:

Ensure access to high-quality, ambitious and personalised provision

Strengthen transition planning into adulthood

Build strong partnerships with employers, health and social care

Support independence, communication, confidence and employability

Increase access to supported internships, supported employment, apprenticeships and vocational learning

Impact: high expectations, strong progression and effective preparation for next steps.



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Derby Adult Learning Service

Learning Opportunities for Adults

3. Supporting NEET Young People into Positive Destinations

We recognise the complex barriers faced by young people who are NEET.

We will:

Deliver targeted outreach and engagement

Provide holistic, trauma-informed support

Strengthen pathways into learning, apprenticeships and employment

Use robust tracking to identify risk early

Work collaboratively with schools, colleges, employers and community partners

Impact: increased sustained participation and positive destinations.

4. Adult Learning as a Driver of Social Mobility

Adult Education will reduce inequality and improve life chances.

We will:

Target provision to communities with low skills and high disadvantage

Improve essential skills (English, maths, digital, ESOL)

Create progression pathways into accredited learning and employment

Develop learning that builds confidence, wellbeing and resilience

Support adults experiencing long-term unemployment or economic inactivity

Impact: improved life chances and increased participation in the local economy.

5. Employment and Skills for Inclusive Economic Growth

We will ensure that economic opportunity is accessible to all residents.

We will:

Align provision with labour market demand

Work with employers to create inclusive recruitment and progression

Provide tailored employability programmes

Increase access to apprenticeships, traineeships, work experience and Sector Based Work Academies



Derby City Council



Derby Adult Learning Service

Learning Opportunities for Adults

Promote progression into sustainable employment

Impact: reduced inequalities and stronger employer engagement.

6. Removing Barriers for Learners with Complex Needs

We recognise that many learners experience multiple barriers including SEND, mental health challenges, poverty, homelessness, domestic abuse, substance misuse, criminal justice involvement, digital exclusion, language barriers and long-term health conditions.

We will:

Deliver early intervention and preventative support

Utilise strong multi-agency working

Embed trauma-informed and restorative approaches

Provide wraparound support to enable engagement and progression

Ensure appropriate referrals to specialist services

Impact: improved engagement, wellbeing and progression for learners with complex needs.

Quality of Education and Learner Experience

In line with The Education Inspection Toolkit expectations, we will ensure that:

Curriculum planning is ambitious and inclusive

Programmes are sequenced to support progression

Teaching, learning and assessment enable learners to know more, remember more and do more

Learners develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed for future success

Personal development is embedded throughout

Learners feel safe, respected and supported

Learner voice will shape continuous improvement.

Partnership and Collaboration

We will work collaboratively with:

Schools and academies



Derby City Council



Derby Adult Learning Service

Learning Opportunities for Adults

FE colleges

Independent training providers

Universities

Employers

Health and social care partners

Voluntary and community organisations

Regional and national skills bodies

Welfare and housing services

Impact: coherent pathways that support participation, achievement and progression.

Measuring Impact

We will measure success through:

Increased participation among disadvantaged groups

Improved retention and achievement

Reduced NEET figures

Strong progression into learning, apprenticeships and employment

Positive destinations for learners with SEND

Improved outcomes for adults with low prior attainment

Narrowing gaps between learner groups

Increased confidence, wellbeing and independence

Strong employer engagement and employment outcomes

Regular evaluation and quality improvement will ensure inclusion remains central to delivery.

Governance, Roles and Responsibilities

Derby City Council ensures clear accountability for inclusion across all FE and Skills provision.



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Derby Adult Learning Service

Learning Opportunities for Adults

Senior Responsible Officer - The Senior Responsible Officer for this strategy is the Director for Learning, Inclusion and Skills. This role provides strategic oversight, ensures statutory compliance and reports to governance.

Curriculum Leaders — design and deliver ambitious, inclusive curricula and monitor learner progress.

SEND and High Needs Leadership

The strategic lead for SEND and High Needs is the Head of Service for Transition 2, who oversees statutory responsibilities, strategic planning and quality across all SEND and High Needs provision.

Operational SEND support across curriculum areas is coordinated by the Learning Support Coordinator, who leads on assessing learner needs, planning support, reasonable adjustments and the graduated approach.

The Curriculum Manager for LLDD provides operational leadership for the distinct LLDD provision, ensuring high-quality teaching, learning and support within that specialist area.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) ensures safeguarding, Prevent and early help pathways are embedded in all provision.

Tutors and Support Staff implement inclusive teaching, monitor learner needs and contribute to Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycles.

The Governance board monitors performance and the impact of inclusion strategies.

Safeguarding, Prevent and Wellbeing

Inclusion is delivered within a strong safeguarding culture aligned to ‘Keeping Children Safe In Education’, the Prevent Duty, and Derby City Council safeguarding procedures.

We ensure:

- Early identification of risk
- Trauma-informed and restorative practice
- Safe recruitment and staff vetting
- Clear referral pathways to early help and specialist services
- Safeguarding support for adult learners, including those at risk of exploitation, homelessness or abuse

Equality, Diversity and the Public Sector Equality Duty

We fulfil our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty by:



Derby City Council



Derby Adult Learning Service

Learning Opportunities for Adults

- Eliminating discrimination
- Advancing equality of opportunity
- Fostering good relations
- Publishing and monitoring equality objectives

Equality, Diversity and the Public Sector Equality Duty

We work within Derby City Council's corporate equality framework and follow the council's equality objectives and guidance.

Reasonable Adjustments and Exam Access Arrangements

We ensure that learners with SEND/LLDD or additional needs receive timely and appropriate adjustments, including:

- Differentiated teaching
- Assistive technology
- Adapted resources
- Exam access arrangements
- Specialist support and referrals

All adjustments follow the Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycle.

Staff Training and Professional Development

Staff receive training in:

- Inclusive teaching and learning
- SEND/LDD awareness
- Trauma-informed practice
- Recognising and supporting needs
- Safeguarding and Prevent

CPD is reviewed annually and aligned to learner need.

Learner Voice and Co-Production



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Derby Adult Learning Service

Learning Opportunities for Adults

We use structured mechanisms to gather and act on learner feedback, for example learner surveys, focus groups

Feedback informs curriculum design, support planning and quality improvement.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability

We monitor inclusion through:

- Participation, retention and achievement data
- Progression and destination tracking
- High Needs learner outcomes
- Equality gap analysis
- Quality reviews and deep dives
- Learner voice

Findings inform continuous improvement and are reported to governance.

Learner Voice

Learner voice is central to our approach and is embedded across Transition2. Learners elect representatives who provide a formal route for influencing decision-making and shaping curriculum, enrichment and personal development themes. Learner views are gathered through surveys, review meetings, wellbeing sessions and ongoing dialogue with staff. Learners co-produce their individual learning programmes and targets, ensuring alignment with their aspirations, EHCP outcomes and Preparing for Adulthood goals.

Feedback from learners informs continuous improvement and helps learners develop confidence, self-advocacy and an understanding that their views matter.

Staff working with High Needs learners undertake specialist CPD, including Autism, SEMH, sensory processing, Positive Behaviour Support, communication strategies, trauma-informed practice, safeguarding, Supported Employment and Preparing for Adulthood. This enables staff to provide highly personalised support and remove barriers to learning, participation and progression.

Complaints and Escalation

Learners can raise concerns about access, support or adjustments through the Council's complaints procedure. Appeals regarding reasonable adjustments or SEND support are reviewed by the SEND Lead and Senior Responsible Officer.



Derby City Council



Derby Adult Learning Service

Learning Opportunities for Adults

Policy Links

This strategy should be read alongside:

Safeguarding and Prevent Policy

Additional Learning Support Allocation Strategy

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Curriculum Strategy

Learner Behaviour Policy

Staff Code of Conduct Policy

Learner Admission Policy

Thrive Position Statement

Curriculum Intent Policy

'CEIAG' Policy

External Support Worker Guide

Derby City Council is committed to a skills and learning system that promotes equity, aspiration and opportunity. Through inclusive practice, high expectations and strong partnership working, we will ensure that all residents—particularly those facing complex barriers—can access high-quality education, develop meaningful skills and achieve sustainable, positive outcomes that enhance life chances and contribute to Derby's prosperity.