



YLP

Yorkshire Learning Providers



YLP RESPONSE TO THE NEET CRISIS

Yorkshire Learning Partnership (YLP) is committed to advancing social value and promoting social mobility across the region. Central to this mission is a focused and responsible approach to addressing the challenges faced by young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), as well as those at risk of disengagement. These issues continue to shape the economic and social landscape of Yorkshire, and YLP recognises the need for coordinated, evidence-led action.

To meet this need, YLP has established a series of targeted workstreams designed to support our members and the wider network of youth engagement and NEET stakeholders.

These workstreams aim to strengthen collaboration, improve outcomes, and ensure that young people across Yorkshire have access to meaningful pathways into learning and work.

Through convening partners, sharing best practice, celebrating success, and advocating for system-level change, YLP has become a valued and influential voice in the regional effort to prevent and reduce NEET levels. Our role spans strategic leadership, partnership development, and on-the-ground engagement with organisations committed to improving opportunities for young people.

Working alongside schools, local authorities, voluntary and community organisations, employers, providers, and other key stakeholders, YLP plays a central role in shaping a coherent and impactful response to youth engagement challenges across Yorkshire.

This white paper outlines our current workstreams, reaffirms our commitments, and sets out the areas where we believe further improvement and collective action are required. It provides a framework for strengthening collaboration, enhancing provision, and ensuring that every young person in Yorkshire can access the skills, support, and opportunities they need to thrive.

LEEDS SPECIFIC RESPONSE TO NEET CRISIS

MANY WILL BE AWARE THAT LEEDS, HAS SEEN A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING

- With their figures being significant tat extra funding has been issued across the City to address the crisis. Only 2 areas of the country were provided this additional funding, Leeds and Greater Manchester.
- When reviewing the NEET data across the core cities and towns in Yorkshire & Humber, there are NEET rates that are higher than Leeds, but their population figures are considerably less, which the DfE therefore does not consider a suitable intervention issue.



FOR THE PAST YEAR WE'VE BEEN SUPPORTING LOCAL AREAS AND MEMBERS TO ADDRESS NEET CHALLENGES, AND WORKING HARD WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND KEY STAKEHOLDERS TO SUPPORT THE NEET CRISIS IN LEEDS, AND AWARENESS ACROSS THE WIDER Y&H REGIONS.

Leeds Post-16 Search Directory

In September 2025, we launched our Leeds 16-18 provision directory, which brings together the offer for young people across the city, specifically focusing on study programme providers. We have referenced all post-16 options and signposted the apprenticeship offer to our Yorkshire Apprenticeship service platform but wanted to develop a dedicated resource just for study programmes and alternative provision, as this is the provision that is under-recognised or known and that is doing fantastic work to address NEET challenges. This resource includes an online search function and a directory book and has been shared far and wide, including with local authorities, WY police, Youth Justice, Young lives Leeds, voluntary action Leeds, NHS trusts and partners. We hope this directory and search function will bring more awareness to the offer and the providers who can support young people across the city.

Leeds Post-16 Directory

Provider Name	Course Type	Sector			
All	All	All			
Search					
Provider Name	Email Contact	Address	Website	Course Type	Sector
Ashham Bryan College	enquiries@ashham-bryan.ac.uk	Ashham Bryan, York, YO23 3PE	Website	Alternative Provision	Agriculture
Barca Leeds	communications@barca-leeds.org	Manor House, 259 Upper Town Street, Bramley, Leeds, LS13 3JT	Website	Other Vocational Training	Work Readiness
CVS Vocational Training	info@cvsvoc.co.uk	CVS Vocational Training Limited 28 Station Rd, Batley, West Yorkshire WF17 5SU	Website	Apprenticeship	Business

Leeds Post-16 Directory

We have developed a Leeds 16-18 directory, that is shared with all schools, colleges, local authorities' colleagues, partners, WY policy, Youth Justice and voluntary sector, to bring together all the 16-18 provision offer across the city, a single place to search provides, provision or information on different options. This includes apprenticeships, study programmes, alternative & specialist provision, supported internships and T-levels. There is an online search function and a digital flipbook to run alongside. [Leeds Directory - The Yorkshire Apprenticeship Service](#) - we are starting to gather case studies and lived experience examples to support the directory, on what our different 16-18 provision and providers make to young peoples lives and the reality of what our young people and provider face on a daily basis. These will be evolving into 2026 and we welcome any provider who have a 16-18 offer to share with us your stories.

LEEDS 16-18 PROVISION 2025/26

 www.wylp.org.uk

 info@wylp.org.uk



Leeds Post-16 Directory

We have our NEET & 16-19 forum and we have dedicated workshops and roundtables to those providers who support young people - to come together and explore options, share approaches and discuss opportunities - Book on to these events [here](#).

Plus we hold an annual 16-18 showcase - to celebrate our members commitment to supporting young people and addressing NEET. 2025 was held at Yorkshire Sculpture Park, and brought together providers, VCS, local authorities, awarding bodies and stakeholders and our 2026 showcase it set to be even bigger!

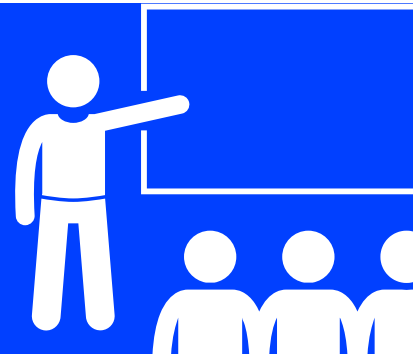


PAN-YORKSHIRE NEET AND 16-19 DEVELOPMENTS

IN LATE 2024, WE SET UP THE NEET AND 16-18 FORUM, BRINGING TOGETHER A RANGE OF MEMBERS AND PARTNERS TO EXPLORE, DISCUSS AND SHARE

We held our first 16-19 Showcase in 2025,

To highlight the specific actions of members in addressing NEET young people, and some lessons learnt and shared practice. We intend to hold an annual celebration event for this theme, which concentrates on showcasing the great work of our members and local areas, instead of focussing on the negative needs, we turn it on its head and celebrate what's working well



We have joined a wide range of stakeholder meetings, boards and committees to ensure all post-16 providers have a voice at the table, and importantly the offer is known and understood with key partners. We have worked with a range of schools, referral agents, WY Police, Youth Justice, Voluntary sector organisations, local authorities' careers networks, safeguarding boards and youth offending institutions to bring the offer more to light.



Supporting ITP development – focussed response on ITP's being more involved in study programmes to address a range of issues relating to NEET. A paper has been produced to showcase the challenges and opportunities, and how more value and funding needs to be placed on ITPs. Utilising ITP's to address place-based improvement to NEET challenges, has multifaceted benefits, including –

- More diversity and equitable access to provision
- Supports hyperlocal offer, outside of core town / city and large campuses
- Supports college waitlist and lack of space
- Agile and responsive provision to meet local &/or learner need
- You can access this paper using the following link – [ITP Challenges & Opportunities](#)

YOU CAN ACCESS THIS PAPER USING THE FOLLOWING LINK – [ITP CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES - JULY 2025](#)



YLPs are a member of the WY violence reduction partnership and serious violence executive group - who are raising awareness of the links between NEET and violence in hyper local places and how youth and community outreach and engagement is VITAL to addressing the crisis. Also working closely with the YNY violence reduction partnership, particularly focussing on keeping women & girls safe.

PAN-YORKSHIRE NEET AND 16-19 DEVELOPMENTS

To ensure strategic alignment to this important agenda, and to ensure ALL provider types have a voice on 14-19 policy and NEET challenges, YLP sit on a range of groups and boards to represent our members - These include -

- Leeds Study programme provider network
- Leeds 14-19 strategic group
- Leeds post-16 Working Group
- Leeds Safeguarding forum
- Leeds Careers Network
- Leeds Children & Families scrutiny board
- Young lives Leeds group
- Bradford Skills House board
- Bradford young live partnership
- Calderdale Employment & skills board
- Wakefield Step-up programme
- Wakefield pathfinder action group
- YNY Careers Hub
- WY Careers hub
- WY violence reduction partnership and serious violence executive board
- HEY skills network

We have launched a series of Workshops & roundtables, open to study programme and NEET support organisations, and we are committed to hosting a series throughout 2026 as part of our provider development and support service. We bring together providers, colleges, specialist and alternative providers, local authorities and key partners together to discuss, share and support each other across a range of themes. We have also recognised the need to hold these dedicated to 16-18 apprenticeship providers also, as the proposition and support provided is different and nuanced. The themes we have / are addressing include -

- Youth Justice and WY Police
- Supporting young people with SEND
- Referrals and Support
- Safeguarding, wellbeing & PSHE - We have a Study Programme Roundtable - Safeguarding, Well-being & PSHE.
- Trauma Informed and restorative practice workshop.
- English & maths
- WEX & experiences of the work place opportunities
- Successful transitions - school to FE and 19 plus
- Developing proactive partnerships
- Local authorities exploration roundtable in 2026, with colleagues from Leeds, Bradford, Hull, Wakefield, Barnsley, York and Kirklees to share practice, uses of the RONI tool, what works well, and local opportunities.
- Quality, Wellbeing & Inclusion Conference
- NEET & 16-19 Forum events.

Events can be found [here.](#)

STRATEGIC PARTNER

It is with great pride, we have a committed Strategic partner, Gateway Qualifications, who are sponsoring some of the work we are undertaking to address NEET challenges across our regions, and they have kindly funded the development of our directory and support is with our forums and showcases. Gateway Qualifications are a committed awarding organisation to the challenges the FE sector faces and have taken great strides themselves to showcase and support providers in this area. Gateway Qualifications have produced 2 papers on how ITP's and colleges can support NEET learners – see below links:

[How ITPs can support NEET Learners - Gateway Qualifications](#)

[How FE Colleges can Support NEET learners - Gateway Qualifications](#)

Supporting ITP development – focused response on ITP's being more involved in study programmes to address a range of issues relating to NEET. A paper has been produced to showcase the challenges and opportunities, and how more value and funding needs to be placed on ITPs. Utilising ITP's to address place-based improvement to NEET challenges, has multifaceted benefits, including –

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PAN-NORTHERN APPROACH

Since YLPs produced the 16-19 policy review paper in July 2024, the NEET situation has risen and worsened across the North. However, it has also got a heightened focus by many parts of the North that were not addressing this in 2024.

The reasons behind this rise are varied - ranging from economic challenges, mental health struggles, and lack of access to quality education or job opportunities. Being NEET can also have an impact on unhealthy behaviors and involvement in crime.

This refresh paper will look at the northern regions data and showcase some of the regional responses from combined authorities and provider networks.

Northern Data - 16-17-year-olds (2024)

NORTH EAST -

COHORT - 59020
NEET & N/K - 5.8
NEET - 5.1

NORTH WEST -

COHORT - 175770
NEET N/K - 5.6
NEET - 4.1

Y&H -

COHORT - 128370
NEET N/K - 5.8
NEET - 3.8

The updated pan-northern refresh paper, due to be launched in December 2025, will focus on the regional / local initiatives and developments that are seeing success, and how we can & should learn from each other's approaches and practices to address this issue.

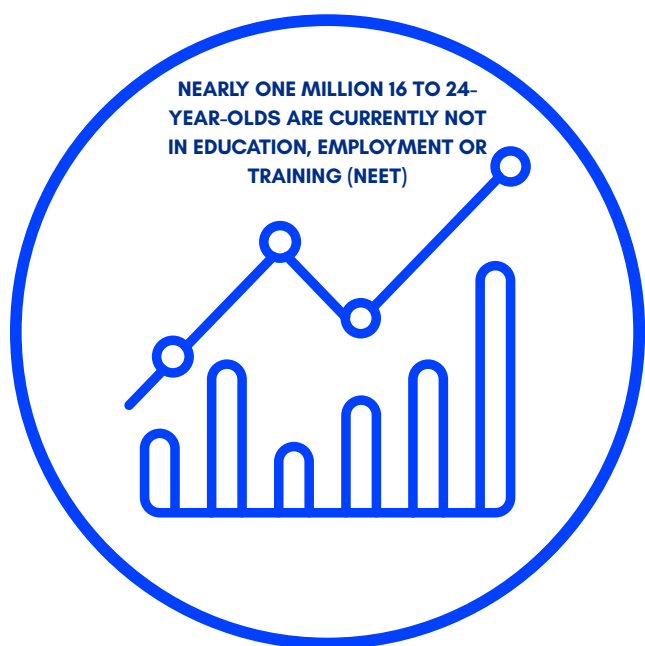
The post-16 White Paper, launched in November 2025, strongly focussed on the NEET crisis nationally, but went nowhere near far enough to highlight or even attempt to identify how this will be resolved, and we await further details to address this!



POST-16 WHITE PAPER SUMMARY

The post-16 White paper was launched in November 2025, and sets out some of the challenges and issues our country faces, and areas of priority and workstreams. Whilst many feel the white paper doesn't go anywhere far enough to provide solution and action orientated information, it is a useful document to provide insight and map individual and collective action against.

Within the white paper, 'NEET' is referenced 41 times.



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Stating, Too many young people are being left behind. Nearly one million 16 to 24-year-olds are currently not in education, employment or training (NEET), which we know has a considerable impact on their future life chances, wellbeing, and economic prospects.

Addressing NEET is one of the white paper core objectives, as detailed below

Supports young people to thrive, with a clear focus on re-engaging those who are NEET and identifying those who are at risk of becoming NEET earlier and supporting them to remain in education and training, setting them on a course to thrive in life and work. To support learners, we will place duties on schools to support young people who are transitioning into post-16 study, with an automatic backstop of a place in college. We will provide clearer information and guidance on outcomes from different education and training pathways, and provide practical experience that supports learners as they progress through education and training. We will also improve the support available to learners with SEND, with access to tools and advice which support learners to experience the benefits that skills education and training can bring.



The paper makes reference to apprenticeships and the changes to the skills & growth levy, being an aid in addressing the NEET crisis, but no detail on how! And we see more detail on the long anticipated 'Youth Guarantee', the paper describing, DfE will go further in supporting young people to secure apprenticeships, in particular those who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET, through tailored support as part of the Youth Guarantee. As announced in the Get Britain Working white paper, the Youth Guarantee will guarantee young people access to education, training and/or help to get into work. The introduction of foundation apprenticeships is an important first step, and these are now available in Industrial Strategy and priority areas including construction and the built environment, engineering and manufacturing, health and adult social care, and digital. **Employers will receive a payment of up to £3,000 per apprentice to contribute to the extra costs of supporting someone at the beginning of their career. We expect this to enable up to 30,000 young people to start a foundation apprenticeship over this Parliament.**



They even go as far to reference a response developed in 2014, as being a useful tool in addressing NEET - but again, we ask the question - how will solutions be funded? Impetus (2014), Make NEETs history in 2014. Make NEETs history in 2014

POST-16 WHITE PAPER SUMMARY

The paper goes on to reference some changes that Government will make, including –

The change we will make We will transform our approach to supporting young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET. We will do this by:



Reforming how young people who are not participating or are at risk of not doing so are identified, tracked and supported.



Delivering on our plans for a new Youth Guarantee as set out in the Get Britain Working white paper.



Strengthening local level oversight and accountability for young people who are NEET.



Delivering enhanced support for 16 and 17-year-olds to take up education and training, and stay engaged/



Offering a guaranteed job to young people on Universal Credit who are unemployed for over 18 months.



Enhancing support for learners with mental health needs and SEND, and simplifying careers advice and guidance.

These interventions will be underpinned by clear progression pathways for both 16–19 students and adults seeking to upskill and retrain. These pathways will be guided by the Curriculum and Assessment Review, and reforms to the adult skills system, which are detailed elsewhere in this white paper.

The fact remains, we need a more diverse provider market, better access and suitable provision and a system that allows and encourages partnerships and not one that puts up arbitrary barriers when institutions are trying to make connections with each other for the good of the local areas.

AREAS OF FOCUS: IMPROVEMENTS / RECOMMENDATIONS

The focus for improvements & recommendations can be categorised into -

Sufficiency -

Resources, provider market, level

Accessibility -

Inclusion, local & hyper local, funding

Suitability -

Aligning to need, pathways and destinations

AREAS OF FOCUS: IMPROVEMENTS / RECOMMENDATIONS

There remains a lack of choice for young people, where mainstream education of GFE is not suitable and they would not thrive in these settings, and therefore a lack of diversity in the provider market. This must be better addressed and supported by DfE nationally and have a refocused approach to funding the areas that need it the most!

Local Pathways and opportunities are not well known or understood by young people, schools, parents and carers and we have lost local outreach and engagement, with very limited resource currently being undertaken - this needs to be addressed at local & combined authority level.

Lack of employer take up for programmes that support young people - it needs a committed employer engagement and outreach campaign to bring more awareness and showcase the benefits of offering local young people opportunities for WEX, placements, apprenticeships and employment. Employers need to be clearer about their needs and barriers to employment and retention of young people and work with the FE & skills sector to develop the core & soft skills that frequently state are lacking and resulting in low recruitment patterns. This is not solely the responsibility of the FE sector to address, but for employers to co-create, fund and engage with these programmes.

SEND increase and lack of dedicated support and resources. We know the rise in SEND and high needs students are causing some challenges for FE and with the rise in NEET, comes the rise in young people who need the support the most being disengaged or supported. The long-awaited SEND reform, will hopefully bring some light on how we can address this and work better together, but the fact remains the support, CPD & resource for SEND young people is lacking and needs addressing - we are committed to bringing SEND awareness sessions

There needs to be collective understanding of the issues, at local, regional & national level. How we can work smarter to address, find innovative and collaborative approaches and utilise more of our local & regional assets to reduce the crisis.

AREAS OF FOCUS: IMPROVEMENTS / RECOMMENDATIONS

Local authorities need to have more powers and leverage on the funding and execution of funding, to meet their legal duty and the local area. They also need to have clearer approaches to partnership, pathways and promotion. There are long discussions on integrating single application processes, or better data sharing protocols across local areas - whilst these would be great, they have been historically tried and tested and do not have longevity. The introduction of 'My Education App' would aid in sharing some of the data of students, such as free school meals, EHCP or attendance, but this has not been formally rolled out by the DfE and seems to have fallen flat - we collectively need to be pushing and lobbying DfE for this nationally.

We need more localised, longevity funding solutions for young people to access and a range of providers to offer, we need more collaboration and partnership building, and we need honesty, transparency, and trust by the funders that the post-16 sector can do the job to address NEET and youth engagement.

This is a core priority and focus for Yorkshire Learning Providers throughout 2026, we will continue to fight for our members, to champion provision locally & regionally and positively disrupt and challenge where we feel policy funding and practice is not adhering to what it said it should or could be!

If any members of key stakeholders want to get more involved in our NEET work stream it have an offer to support roundtables and workshops please reach out by emailing us at: info@wylp.org.uk.