

# Newcastle City Learning Accountability Agreement

2023-24



Newcastle City Learning

## **Mission/Purpose:**

Providing opportunities in Newcastle for all to learn, improve and grow.

## **Vision**

Enabling Newcastle city residents to grow and thrive by providing high-quality, relevant development opportunities, making a difference to the employment chances and lives of all our learners.

### **Key Objectives 2022-2023**

- To provide a relevant curriculum offer to meet the needs of adults, young people and employers' training needs to support residents from the city of Newcastle Upon Tyne and beyond.
- To offer high-quality educational experiences and support to allow the residents, both young and old, to improve their knowledge, skills and confidence to realise better life chances moving forward. To provide development opportunities to the most vulnerable residents and those furthest away from the job's market.
- To sustain our continued positive financial position in challenging circumstances to ensure the sustainability of the service within the city.
- To raise our profile and reputation within the Council and the city as the number one provider of educational opportunities at foundation levels, helping people to become lifelong learners.
- To play our part in the city's levelling up and skills development agenda.

### **Our Core values**

Respect  
Teamwork  
Integrity  
Nurturing  
Compassion

The service seeks to embed these values and behaviours in all that we do.

Newcastle City Learning sits within the Children, Education and Skills Directorate of Newcastle City Council. It provides courses at two main sites Westgate College and The Heaton Centre as well as provision based in various smaller venues throughout the city.

Newcastle City Learning provides a curriculum offer within the three main strands of adult education, including vocational, foundation learning and community learning.

In addition, the service has diversified in recent years to provide curriculum for young learners (aged 16-19), young people and adults with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those with High Needs funding. In addition, the service has a small apprenticeship provision.

## **Newcastle City Council- values and behaviours**

### **Proud**

- We take pride in and celebrate each other's achievements
- We have a positive, optimistic, can-do attitude
- We do our very best to meet and exceed the expectations of our colleagues, customers, partners and residents
- We help and support others to make a positive difference
- We make sure that we celebrate and praise each other's good work

### **Fair**

- We are honest and treat people equal to their needs
- We respect and value every person as an individual
- We listen to other opinions and points of view and embrace difference
- We are decent, fair and compassionate
- We act with integrity in everything we do
- We are accountable for our actions and our performance

### **Ambitious**

- We are passionate, determined, enthusiastic and want to succeed
- We believe in making the most of opportunities to help us succeed
- We achieve more when we work together
- We are enthusiastic about change
- We encourage others to be their best
- We have the courage to change things for the better and make a difference
- We are passionate about making Newcastle a great city

Much of our work is focused around supporting our residents to get back into work, and to find the confidence to once again, play a significant role within their local communities and families. The delivery of foundation learning and vocational programmes serves to provide a bridge for those learners who may progress to an offer that enables learners to progress in national priority areas, and thus seek sustainable employment opportunities.

The Children, Education and Skill Directorate has the following ten priorities: -

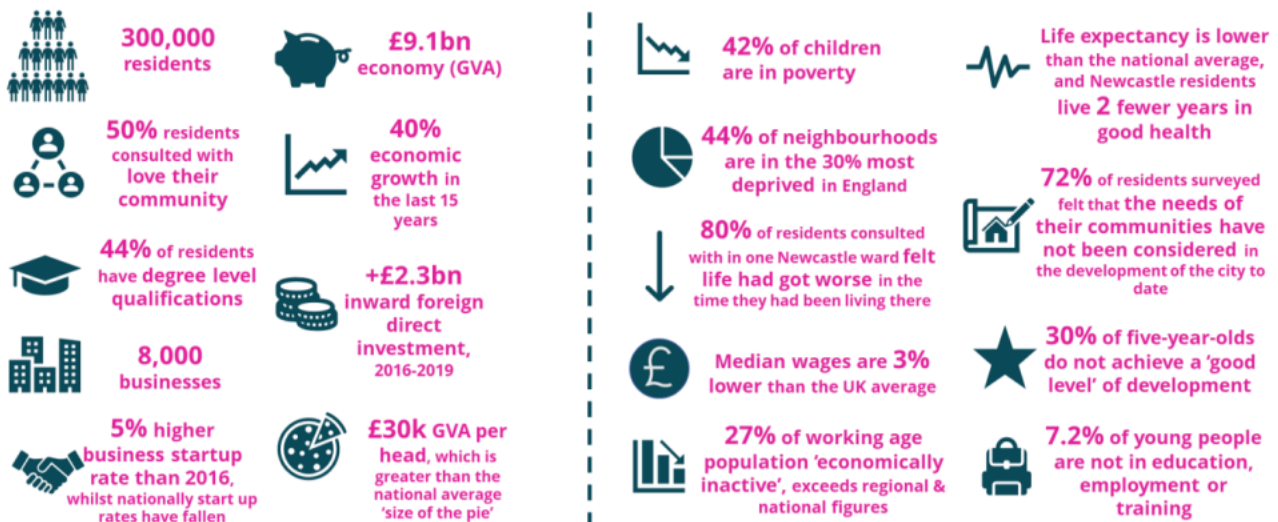
1. Support families to stay safely together
2. Support babies and young children to have the best start in life
3. Improve attendance and participation in learning
4. Improve educational progress for all, and support vulnerable pupils, including those with SEND, to achieve
5. Safely reduce the number of children and young people in our care
6. For children and young people who are in our care, increase the number who stay in Newcastle
7. Improve children and young people's social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing
8. Help all young people into adulthood, to develop life skills and be ready for work
9. Ensure opportunities for lifelong learning
10. Reduce the number of children and young people living in poverty

Newcastle City Learning contributes directly to priorities 3,4,7,8 and 9.

## Context and place – The City of Newcastle Upon Tyne

Forty-four per cent (44%) of Newcastle residents have a degree level qualification and are doing very well economically. However, we still have a very large proportion of residents who need specific, additional support and training to ensure that all our residents have an equal opportunity and access to high quality, sustainable employment.

### A tale of two cities



The picture is very mixed within the city of Newcastle upon Tyne. Whilst there is much to be proud of within the city, there are clearly some less favourable statistics here. Many of our residents do need lots of support to ensure that we do have an inclusive economy and that all are able to access good quality employment opportunities within the city.

The foundational economy, which creates and distributes goods and service that we rely on for everyday life, accounts for around 40% of Newcastle's jobs with our hospitals alone providing 9% of our city's employment. Other examples of the foundational economy are: care and health services and food. Our foundational economy spans public, private and community sectors to provide valuable goods and services that are essential for our daily lives.

The city also supports a very vibrant night-time economy with many opportunities within the hospitality and leisure industries.

To combat some of the divide detailed above Newcastle City Council have developed the Newcastle Inclusive Economic Strategy; Wealth that flows to all (published in March 2023) – Newcastle Upon Tyne. This strategy document states that: -

*‘This economic strategy has been designed to ensure access for all to opportunities to improve their economic position as an individual or business, through education and development. The strategy includes provision for the most disadvantaged learners ensuring that all Newcastle residents have an opportunity to improve their life chances through securing good quality employment.*

*We are a hardworking and resilient city, with real economic success stories to tell, and with communities that unite to support each other in hard times. But figures of 42% child poverty rates and a 13-year difference in life expectancy for adults between our most and least deprived wards, tell us something is structurally wrong with the way that wealth and wellbeing flows in Newcastle.*

*We can all see the great potential in Newcastle. We need a shift in mindset so that we can all seize it and maximise it for the benefit of every person, no matter where they live in our city. It starts here, with setting out what we want to achieve then doing everything in our power to achieve it.*

*Our challenge is to make sure that people who live here are part of our success at every level. This is what will drive Newcastle’s economic transformation and reduce the inequalities that hold our city and our people back. We need to think long term and we need to think local. We know we are well-placed to make the right decisions about our lives at a local level because we understand our needs and strengths best, and our communities help us to shape our plans.*

*The potential creation of a Northeast Mayoral Combined Authority, with Newcastle at its heart, offers us more scope for taking decisions locally, and more funding to invest over longer-term timeframes, improving our transport links, education and skills pipelines, supply of housing, innovation funding, all of which we will maximise for the benefit of all residents.*

*We need to think inclusively about our diverse communities that all play a part in our welcome, our vibrancy, our city of sanctuary. About the businesses and industries that make up our great city, with a focus that balances innovation and high growth sectors with foundations that provide good health and wellbeing for the most people’.*

Newcastle City Learning seeks to support many of our hard-to-reach residents from within the city, providing alternative education and training programmes, at foundation level to provide a bridge to more advanced studies, into apprenticeships or into full-time employment.

Our curriculum looks to build confidence and develop social and emotional skills as well as offering more traditional qualifications for both our adults and young people from within the city.

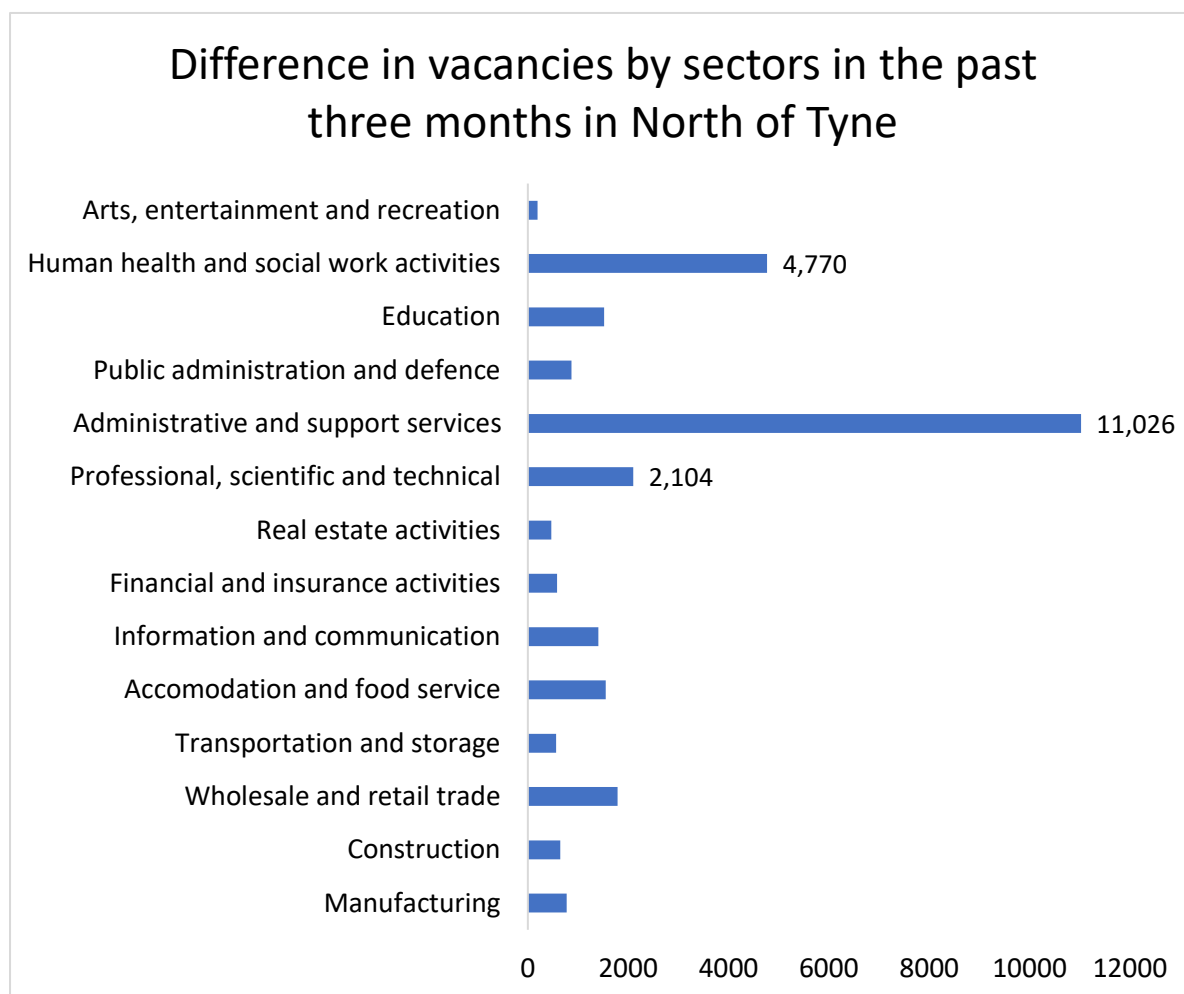
Newcastle City Learning seeks to play a role in the levelling up agenda in supporting those most disadvantaged currently and to make a significant contribution to improve the economic positions of more of our residents.

## Our vocational curriculum

The following data shows the number of vacancies in the North of Tyne region in 2023.

This clearly shows that our vocational curriculum offer needs to focus on health and social work, administrative and support services where most current vacancies sit within the city and immediate outer regions.

From North of Tyne Presentation dated February 2023.



Whilst the delivery of adult education is not a statutory requirement, it is an essential service to support the further training and development of knowledge, skills and behaviours to enable our residents to move closer to the jobs market. To develop further their current qualifications and employability skills, and to take an active part in our communities. Adult education also makes a huge contribution to the health and well-being of our residents. In all our programmes we seek to develop human capital, social capital, cultural capital and symbolic capital, ensuring that we develop the whole person.

Newcastle City Learning, through its diverse and supportive curriculum looks to offer development opportunities to all our residents, developing their confidence, social and emotional skills, and offering training and support to move those residents, able to do so, closer to the jobs market.

## **Our approach to developing the annual Accountability Statement**

In developing our curriculum offer the senior leadership team have taken into consideration the following documents:

Newcastle City Learning Mission, Vision and Strategic Priorities for 2022-2023.

Newcastle City Council, Children, Education and Skills Directorate Plan for 2020-2023.

Newcastle Council Plan for 2022 – 2025.

Newcastle Inclusive Economic Strategy, Wealth that flows to all (published in March 2023) – Newcastle Upon Tyne.

Opportunity for all: North of Tyne Strategic Skills Plan 2021-2023

North of Tyne Combined Authority, Employment Plan, Strengthening our Labour Market.  
Northeast LEP, The North East Strategic Economic Plan Creating more and better jobs. Executive summary dated January 2022.

Local statistical data - STRATEGIC EMPLOYABILITY GROUP – LABOUR MARKET INTELLIGENCE – February 2023 – Author – Alex Black.

Newcastle upon Tyne, Local Skills Plan.

DFE Accountability Agreements for 2023 to 2024 Guidance (April 2023)

This document has been signed off by the Newcastle City Learning Advisory Board on  
A full copy of this document can be located on our website at [www. Welcome to Newcastle City Learning | newcastlecitylearning](http://www.welcome-to-newcastle-city-learning-newcastlecitylearning)



Local priorities	<p>We will improve <b>digital</b> inclusion in Newcastle by the provision of free digital skills training programmes for adults. Ninety-two per cent of businesses say that having a basic level of digital skills is important for their employees. These skills are also becoming essential for many day-to-day activities such as booking appointments with the doctor, keeping in touch with friends and family.</p> <p>We will improve <b>numeracy for adults</b> by the provision of Multiply courses as an introduction to numeracy, followed by progression to our foundation English and maths courses up to level 2.</p> <p>We will improve <b>literacy for adults</b> by the provision of a range of foundation English classes which seek to develop both reading, writing and communications skills. We also offer courses in creative writing and academic writing skills, to enable adults to progress and further develop their literacy skills beyond level 2.</p> <p>There is a strong demand in the city of Newcastle upon Tyne for <b>English as a Second Language (ESOL)</b> courses. This is our largest area of provision within Newcastle City Learning and we continue to extend our offer to meet the growing need within the city. We offer progression from beginner to advanced courses.</p> <p>We continue to support adult learners who have a learning difficulty or disability (LLDD) to develop their <b>independent living skills and to become an independent traveller</b>. Where appropriate, adults with learning difficulties and disabilities may also develop employability skills through our internship programmes, seeking to support adults to move into suitable and sustainable employment.</p> <p>We will support those looking to get onto the first step of progression towards employment with a range of <b>pre-employability</b> courses, including the unique Dream, Discover, Do programme and our Health and Social Care Academy provision which seeks to introduce adults to this very high in demand route back into employment. Our local hospitals employing a very high proportion of staff within the region.</p> <p>Our <b>Community Learning</b> programmes seek to build confidence so that our adult learners can play a greater part in their communities and build their social, cultural and symbolic capital to be able to enjoy more fulfilling lives within the city.</p>
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	<p>We offer a small range of <b>vocational qualifications</b> in Counselling, Beauty, Business, and Accountancy in small, supportive groups to allow those looking to move into employment to build their confidence and develop new knowledge and skills to move into higher level vocational training programmes, apprenticeship training or employment. We offer apprenticeships in health and social care, early years practice, business administration and customer service, leadership and management.</p> <p>We offer a bespoke programme of training and support to get ready for a career in the <b>care sector</b> within the city and beyond through our Care Academy. There is much demand for new people to enter the health and social care sector, and a constant demand to fill new vacancies within the north-east region.</p> <p>We similarly support and offer a range of opportunities to adult residents to better prepare themselves for the world of work or higher-level study and meet the Council's skills agenda. We work in partnership with Staff Power to provide the skills necessary to move residents into immediate job vacancies within the city and wider region.</p>
Local priorities	<p>Through our <b>Community Learning</b> offer, we provide a wide range of courses to support the well-being of our residents. We also offer a range of full-cost courses in art, craft and design, modern foreign languages and leisure activities such as creative writing, dressmaking and photography. These courses support the health and well-being of residents who are lifelong learners and who attend classes to extend their social networks and to have fun in their learning.</p>
Local priorities – support for the hard to reach 16 – 19-year-olds.	<p>We currently offer 100 places on our <b>Programme for Young People (PYP)</b> which seeks to offer alternative post-16 education for those young people who need a smaller, more supportive environment on leaving school to make the successful transition into adulthood.</p> <p>Young people progressing into our Programmes for Young People (PYP) at age 16 have often not realised their full potential at school and require an interim programme of learning to help them to make the important transition into higher-level vocational programmes and/or employment.</p> <p>They need to fill the gaps left by an erratic attendance and performance at school to secure their foundation qualifications and consolidate their learning before moving to more demanding vocational programmes of learning.</p>

	<p>Newcastle City Learning strives to provide a bridge for those young people to firm up their foundation learning and qualifications, develop their social and emotional skills, including access to work experience, to become successful in adulthood in securing sustainable employment.</p>
Local and Regional priorities	<p>All our courses are available to both Newcastle residents and those both in the North of Tyne post code area, and beyond through ESFA funding.</p> <p>In addition, our employer responsive department is set up to directly meet the needs of both local and regional employers. This includes the delivery of <b>apprenticeships</b> in a small number of subject areas and a range of health and safety and first aid training packages.</p>
National priorities	<p>The delivery of <b>foundation learning and vocational programmes</b> serves to provide a bridge for those learners who may progress to an offer that enables learners to progress in national priority areas, and thus seek sustainable employment opportunities and improve their life chances.</p> <p>We offer introductory courses in digital and technology, health and social care and <b>mathematics</b>.</p> <p>Our young learners also have access to introductory courses in <b>construction and warehousing</b>.</p> <p>We also offer a range of on-line courses to meet a wider need from those people outside our local funding partner area post-codes in a range of <b>health and social care subjects</b>.</p> <p>We offer an online package of qualifications through our partnership with the Skills Network.</p>