



partnerships for schools
building schools for the future

This case study looks at how the Local Education Partnership (LEP) in Newcastle is supporting schools to change educational delivery through a range of packages focusing on transformational learning practices and vocational education.

Newcastle LEP was shortlisted for the 'Best Operational LEP' category in the *Excellence in BSF Awards 2008*.

Key project information

Local authority: Newcastle City Council

LEP: Aura

Type of schools: Secondary schools and work outside BSF projects

No. of pupils: 14,500

Project cost: £250m

Other information: LEP established in 2007

The Newcastle LEP: supporting transformation

Project description

The Newcastle LEP was set up, in the first instance, to deliver 16 new build, refurbished or remodelled schools over two phases. The partnership with the local authority, LEP and the Partnering Service Providers (PSPs) has been very successful with six BSF schools completed and operational, two non-BSF schools in construction and a further eight BSF schools in design development. Alongside the build programme, the LEP has supported the schools in changing educational delivery through a range of packages focusing on transformational learning practices and vocational education.

Working with the educational stakeholders across the city, the LEP has produced new schools facilities, high tech environments and methodologies in teaching practice to create personalised learning. For example, the change in the ICT service for each of the schools is significant, giving students the ability to choose how, where and what to access as part of their personalised

learning programme. Parents, teachers and students can access school resources through a secure web portal, allowing students to submit and retrieve work online from home or any location they choose.

Similarly, to support the delivery of the curriculum, the LEP has worked with each of the secondary schools to develop a range of innovative transformational programmes including mentoring and life skills courses, to support Key Stage 2 learning. These activities help build trust and friendship between the students and the teaching staff.

Over 11 different transformational plans have been developed with the secondary schools which will be delivered over a two year period (which began in September 2008). Each plan will be measured to ascertain the impact on learning and will also become part of the annual review of school improvement. The plans showing the greatest impact will then be incorporated into the educational resource of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) for all secondary schools to use in the future.

The Newcastle LEP: supporting transformation

The LEP has recently received approval on its first annual report. A large number of standards were measured, including value for money, where the LEP showed a £2m saving on the second phase of project works. Costs on all services were lower than the benchmark requirements and rapid project delivery has been demonstrated with the first non-BSF project being in construction only a year after inception of the LEP.

The management of the continuous improvement plans has demonstrated increased design focus on developing schools which are approaching 80 per cent energy efficient and building practices which allow recycling of over 90 per cent of the materials on demolitions.

The LEP and the local authority are currently working on a second phase of BSF schools. As the process has developed the efficiency of the partnership has increased. This is demonstrated most recently in the inclusion of a new build school in the second phase. Working with the school, the new build design has been incorporated into the second phase and will see works commencing on site only 13 months from the first design principles.

The LEP has been operational for one year and in that year it has transformed the school experience for over 7,000 pupils, 800 teaching staff and a generation of parents and relationship

Top Tips

Recognise the importance of transforming education across all the schools in the estate:

Newcastle has done this and the LEP is already delivering some of the transformational packages included in the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) service to primary and secondary schools outside the BSF programme. The LEP has put together a business plan to demonstrate its wider strategic targets and how the plans can be delivered in accordance with the local authority's strategic requirements.

Push the limits: The Newcastle LEP has the ability to manage a significant level of capacity; the LEP currently manages 18 schools at different

stages of development from design to operation. The future business plan is to use the demonstrated capacity of the LEP and translate this into broader service delivery including primary schools, youth projects, city regeneration and social care.

Work together: One of the key concerns in the first year of the LEP was to build the partnership with all stakeholders and ensure that mechanisms were in place to ensure that the momentum of the business was collaborative and progressive. Partnership workshops have been held with all parties including the PSPs, LEP, LA and PfS to develop an understanding of the value each party brings to the process and discuss ways of working together.

Key contact

Kirsty Thirlwell, Chief Executive, Aura Newcastle Ltd. Local Education Partnership, Amber Court, William Armstrong Drive, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE4 7YQ
Email: Marisa.nethercott@aura-lc.com

Further information

For more details about Newcastle's BSF programme see: www.newcastle.gov.uk/core.nsf/a/bsf_pfi or the Aura website at: www.auranewcastle.co.uk/