

Appendix B: Arriving at the Priorities (Evidence Base)

1. Overall Skills Levels: Improve the overall skills levels of Coventry residents

Table 1: Overall Qualification Level Comparisons as of December 2021 (latest data available)¹

Measure	Coventry Score	UK Average	Comparison	WMCA Average	Comparison
No Qualifications	7.6%	6.6%	-1%	7.7%	+0.1%
NVQ1 and Above	84.9%	87.9%	-3%	84.9%	Same
NVQ2 and Above	76.5%	78.2%	-1.7%	75.2%	+1.3%
NVQ3 and Above	58.7%	61.5%	-2.8%	57.2%	+1.5%
NVQ4 and Above	40.4%	43.5%	-3.1%	38.8%	+1.6%

Table 1 shows that Coventry is performing well on overall skills levels compared to regional averages but there is a challenge to catch up with National Averages particularly around higher-level skills. This is significant considering employment demand trends; Working Futures estimates that (55.2%) of all jobs will require L4+ skills by 2027.²

To improve overall skills levels of Coventry residents we need to consider skills attainment through all stages of education - Primary, Secondary, Further and Adult Education:

Primary Performance

Table 2: Coventry Primary Performance Data³

Measure	Coventry Score	England Average	Comparison	WMCA Average	Comparison
% Pupils Meeting Expected Standard	62%	65%	-3%	62%	Same
% Achieving Higher than Expected Standard	7%	11%	-4%	9.28	-2.28
Reading Progress Score	-0.3	0	-0.3	-0.2	-0.1
Writing Progress Score	-0.4	0	-0.4	0	-0.4
Maths Progress Score	+0.1	0	+0.1	0	+0.1

¹ [Office for National Statistic - Nomis: Coventry Labour Market Profile](#)

² [Working Futures 2017-2027: Long-run labour market and skills projections Headline Report](#)

³ [Data from Gov.uk – 2019 data \(latest available\)](#)

Overall Coventry's primary schools perform well. 92.4% are rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted, which is the highest in the WMCA region. The number of pupils which met the expected levels is in line with the WMCA average and for Maths exceeds both WMCA and National averages. However, Coventry trails national averages for meeting expected levels and performs worse than both WMCA and National averages for reading and writing.

Secondary Performance

Table 3: Coventry Secondary Performance Data⁴

Measure	Coventry Score	England Average	Comparison	WMCA Average	Comparison
Educational Progress (KS2-KS4)	-0.12	-0.03	-0.09 ▼	-0.10	-0.02 ▼
Staying in Education or Employment (2017 leavers)	93%	94%	-1% ▼	93%	Same ◀
Grade 5 or above in Maths and English	38%	40%	-2% ▼	39%	-1% ▼
Achieving at least 1 qualification	97%	96%	+1% ▲	97.5%	-0.5% ▼

86.4% of Coventry secondary schools are rated good or outstanding which rates as second best in the WMCA region. Coventry is slightly below WMCA and National averages for educational progress and achieving Grade 5 (C) or above for Maths and English.

Coventry's overall good Ofsted performance suggests there are other factors to consider rather than just looking at quality of teaching or overall quality of primary and secondary schools themselves. Children from poorer families are less likely to meet or exceed expected educational levels. Analysis by Teach First found that; in 2019, 44.9% of disadvantaged pupils achieved a standard pass in GCSE English and maths, compared with 72.1% of non-disadvantaged pupils - an attainment gap of 27.2%⁵. For the West Midlands this is slightly lower at 25.8%.

A Joseph Rowntree Foundation report from March 2010 looked at the main factors that affect educational attainment for children from poorer backgrounds.⁶ For primary education these include home learning environment, parenting styles and rules, family interactions (i.e mother-child closeness) and the health and well-being of the child. Also, key are the aspirations of parents, and how far parents and children believe their own actions can affect their lives. For secondary education there is also; what parents can devote to material resources towards education - including private tuition, computer and internet access, time spent sharing family meals and outings; and that parents quarrel with their child relatively infrequently.















⁴ [Data from Gov.uk – 2019 data \(latest available\)](#)

⁵ [Teach First: 'Building a Better Future - Tackling the Attainment Gap in GCSE English and Maths'. August 2020'](#)

⁶ [Joseph Rowntree Foundation: 'Poorer Children's Educational Attainment, How Important are Parental Attitudes'. March 2010.](#)

Further Education Performance

Table 4: Further Education Performance⁷

Measure	Coventry Score	England Average	Comparison	WMCA Average	Comparison
Average Result	C	C+	- (+) 	C	Same 
Students Completing Main Study Programme	93.5%	91.3%	+ 2.2% 	92%	+1.5% 
Achieving AAB or higher, including at least 2 facilitating subjects	9.9%	14.1%	-4.2% 	11%	-1% 
Grade and points for a student's best 3 A levels	C+ 31.88	C+ 32.89	-1.01 	C+ 31.52	+ 0.36 
Students Progressing in to education or employment	81%	81%	Same 	80%	+1% 
Students Entering Apprenticeships	11%	10%	+1% 	10%	+1% 
Disadvantaged Students* Entering Apprenticeship	12%	10%	+2% 	10.5%	+1.5% 

Coventry has higher numbers than both WMCA and National averages for students completing main study programme with an average grade of 'C' - in line with the WMCA average, although trails the national average of 'C+'.

As with primary and secondary education to improve educational attainment in further education we need to look at wider issues than just quality of teaching within

Adult Education Performance

Adult Education data for the previous academic year (2020-21) shows high numbers of learners entering with either no qualifications or at entry level:

- 4500 learners (39%) enter with either no qualifications or only Entry Level qualifications.
- A further 1477 at Level 1 (13%)

In terms of learner enrolment:

- 1900 enrolled on LV1 courses (17%)
- 4300 enrolled on LV2 courses (38%)

This shows the vital role our Adult Education providers are playing in improving educational levels for adults in the City. However, as of December 2021 (latest data available) there were 19,100 adults in Coventry without any qualifications, an increase of 1500 on the previous year.

⁷ [Data from Gov.uk – 2019 data \(latest available\)](#)

21,100 Coventry residents were only qualified to LV1, this has decreased by 4000 on the previous year showing considerable success in residents gaining LV2 or above qualifications.⁸

Higher Education Performance

Coventry has 2 world class higher education institutions with over 55,000 students combined. Despite this Coventry trails National averages for residents qualified to NVQ4 and above. This can be attributed in part to higher skilled Coventry workers choosing to live outside the City in less urban areas, and commuting in. However, there is also an issue with graduate retention. A Centre for Cities study shows that Coventry retained 15 per cent of graduates in the 2014-2015 period, the fourth lowest among UK cities⁹. However almost a third of students in Coventry – 31 per cent – came from outside the UK and this should be factored in. Furthermore 42% of Coventry residents that progressed to university chose to study in Coventry which is 18th highest amongst UK Cities.

2. **Aspiration: An aspirational skills system that inspires residents to achieve through from primary school to lifelong learning**

Primary Aspiration

The Joseph Roundtree Foundation report highlights the key role parental aspirations have.¹⁰ The Skills Strategy highlights key actions, working in a One Coventry way to support parental aspirations for their children.

Secondary/Further Aspiration

Coventry secondary schools are making good progress in embedding the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks, with the number of schools meeting them increasing year on year. The 8 Gatsby

30 out of 33 of Coventry's schools and colleges (including special schools) are engaged with the Coventry and Warwickshire Careers Hub (CW Careers Hub). This is funded by the Careers and Enterprise Company working in partnership with Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) and Think Higher. The CW Careers Hub supports school's 'Careers Leaders' to create a high-quality careers plan that will increase employer engagement, embed careers into the curriculum and inform students and parents of their options.

There is also the ESF funded Coventry and Warwickshire; 'Collaborate to Train' project, a partnership between WCG (formerly Warwickshire College Group), Coventry City Council Job Shop, Coventry College, Coventry University and Solihull College & University Centre. The project helps small and medium enterprises (SMEs) access the right training to support the future of their businesses including; accessing apprenticeships, work experience placements, supported internships and advising on effective school engagement. The project has now entered its second phase after the first phase supported over 400 SME's.

Coventry University have advised that they are currently revising their 'Access and Participation' plan. This will lead to increased engagement with schools which will support with building aspiration amongst pupils and their parents.

⁸ [Office for National Statistic - Nomis: Coventry Labour Market Profile](#)

⁹ [Centre for Cities: 'The great British brain drain: an analysis of migration to and from Coventry'. October 2017.](#)

¹⁰ [Joseph Rowntree Foundation: 'Poorer Children's Educational Attainment, How Important are Parental Attitudes'. March 2010.](#)

Adult Education

Adults out of work can be supported by Coventry Job Shop working with public sector and community partners to promote skills offers that lead to good quality employment. This includes Sector Work Academy Programmes (SWAPs), which are continuing to increase in the City. These are short 2-8 week courses co-designed with employers, providing learners with the skills required by the host employer(s) as well as work experience and a guaranteed interview at the end of the course. Also, of great importance are apprenticeships, which are now funded for all ages. Apprenticeship data from 2019/20 shows 52% of apprenticeship starts in Coventry were for those over the age of 25.

For adults in work, in addition to supporting Skills Providers to offer flexible provision that can fit around work commitments, there is also ESF funded programmes: Skills Support for the Workforce (SSW) and Skills 4 Growth (S4G). Serco have the contract for SSW in Coventry providing a range of skills courses targeted at individuals in low paid work. Since 2016 it has provided over 2200 in work skills courses, the majority (1900) at Level 2. S4G is led by Coventry City Council and provides targeted skills funding for SME businesses across Coventry and Warwickshire with 50% funding for any level of accredited course. This enables upskilling of workforces which provides more entry level opportunities as existing employee's progress. Finally, Apprenticeship Levy can be used to upskill workforces of larger employers. Coventry City Council is leading in this, with over 450 employed apprentices undertaking over 65 different types of apprenticeship. This has been supported by workforce planning sessions mapping career pathways, utilising apprenticeships to address current and future predicted skills shortages.

3. Progression Pathways: Clearly built in throughout Coventry's skills system

As our largest provider of both FE and Adult Education - Coventry College acknowledge in their 2021-24 Strategic Development Plan that traditionally, too many learners exiting the college at LV1 and 2 didn't progress to higher levels. Their Strategic Development plan looks to address this. In addition, they plan to increase numbers progressing from Coventry College to higher education. Currently 7.2% of Coventry College provision is 'Access to Higher Education' and the strategy plans to increase this by 2024.

4. Community: A skills system which meets the needs of all residents and is widely accessed by all Coventry communities

Data from last academic year (2020/21) suggests Adult Education delivery in Coventry is doing reasonably well in serving Coventry's communities. Wards with higher levels of deprivation have higher volumes of learners such as St Michaels (12%) and Foleshill (12%). However, there could still be community groups and areas of the City that are under-represented and we need to continue to ensure our Skills Providers have good reach across the City.

5. Inclusion: A skills system which is fully inclusive and representative of our diverse City

Coventry continues to welcome large proportions of refugees. Between 2019 and 2020 Coventry saw the second highest number of international arrivals after Birmingham. This contributed to Coventry in 2020 (latest data available) having the highest percentage of foreign-born residents in the region – 25.9%.¹¹ Currently, Coventry has around 1500 asylum seekers. This is three times the number of asylum seekers Coventry had at end of 2019/ beginning of 2020.

¹¹ [ONS Local Migration Indicators 2017](#)

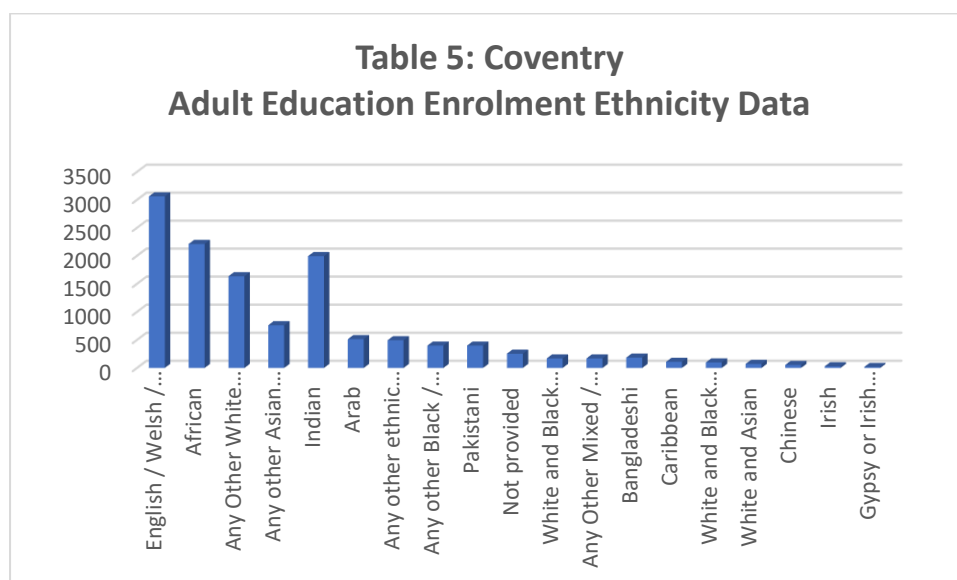
Secondary/Further Education

For 2019-2020 GCSE results, Black young people in Coventry scored lower than the overall average on the attainment 8 (average of 8 GCSE results) score – with a score of 47.1. The gap between this score and the average is only 0.9% and is equal to the national average gap. However, compared to the previous year, the gap has widened by 0.3% in Coventry whereas nationally it has decreased by 0.4%. Coventry performs better for mixed raced young people with scores 0.7% higher than the average. This is a large improvement from the last academic year in which scores were 2.3% below average. Asian students performed well above the average.

Comparative data is not available for further education at Local Authority level but national data suggest that far few students from black backgrounds go on to achieve 3 A Levels.¹²

Adult Education

Data from the academic year (2020/21) suggests Adult Education delivery in Coventry is doing reasonably well in serving Coventry's ethnic minorities. 21% of learners described themselves as from African, Caribbean, or other Black backgrounds. 16% as from Asian backgrounds. This is shown below in table 5:



However, we need to consider learner experiences particularly how different ethnic groups progress and achieve.

6. Highest Needs: A skills system which supports those most in need, supports people out of poverty and helps create a more equal City.

Disability

There are many adults in Coventry with learning disabilities and other disabilities who are not in employment, for all adults with disabilities the ONS estimates around 53.6% are in employment but for those with learning disabilities only between 19-34%.¹³ However, for those

¹² [Gov.UK: Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, Independent Report](#)

¹³ [ONS: Outcomes for disabled people in the UK - 2020](#)

with learning disabilities who receive a service from Adult Social Care this decreases to around 5.6%, with the West Midlands having the lowest rates at 3.2%.¹⁴

Poverty

Coventry had very low levels of unemployment with 3% of 16-64 year olds claiming out of work benefits in February 2020. This increased significantly due to the pandemic but is decreasing month on month and is now at 4.7%. Despite this there are still significant areas of economic deprivation the City. The 2019 IMD report showed Coventry still ranks as the 64 most deprived out of 317 Local Authority areas. This suggests that there are issues with in-work poverty, which is also something local support agencies - Coventry Citizens Advice and Coventry Independent Advice Service are reporting. December 2021 data for DWP Mercia District (Coventry and Warwickshire) shows the highest proportion of in work Universal Credit claimants in the region at 41% compared to a regional average of 39%. There is a larger gender gap between female and male pay in the City than most of the UK. The gap in gross weekly pay is £172 compared to the national average of £97 and the West Midlands average of £102.

Other Barriers

Alcohol/Substance misuse: Coventry has the highest levels of alcohol hospital admissions in the WMCA with 2976 per 100,000 compared to a WMCA average of 1999 per 100,000. Coventry also has high rates of Alcohol dependency with 18.8 residents per 1000 struggling with alcohol dependency compared to a UK average of 13.7 per 1000. Coventry also has high rates of 15-24 substance misuse hospital admissions which are the 2nd highest in WMCA at 199 per 100,000 compared to the WMCA average of 190 per 100,000.¹⁵

Victims of domestic violence: Domestic violence crime rates are only reported regionally, but the West Midlands has a comparatively high rate with 37.27 per 1000 crimes which is higher than Greater Manchester at 34.25 and London at 35.14. In 2019 15% of the 350 families supported by Coventry City Council for homelessness were victims of domestic violence, with the actual number likely to be higher as women who are victims of domestic violence often stay with wider family before seeking support from statutory services.¹⁶

Homelessness- Coventry City Council supported 340 families who had been made homeless in 2019 compared to 40 in 2015. Rising rents and increased bills from the current cost of living crisis are likely to see this rise continue. ¹⁷

Ex Offenders- Coventry has slightly lower crime rates than the WMCA average and lower rates for youth offending with 16.79. 17 year olds per 1000 entering the youth justice system compared to a WMCA average of 17.67.¹⁸

7. Skills for business: A skills system which provides the skills required by Coventry's businesses, both current and future and contributes to economic growth and the prosperity of the City

The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) 'Small Business Confidence Survey' from December 2021 reports 39% of SME's in the West Midlands believe access to the right staff is holding them back and close to a quarter state challenges finding individuals with the right

¹⁴ [BASE: Employment Rates Rates for People with Disabilities 2020-21](#)

¹⁵ [CCC Citywide Intelligence](#)

¹⁶ [CCC Citywide Intelligence](#)

¹⁷ [CCC Citywide Intelligence](#)

¹⁸ [CCC Citywide Intelligence](#)

skills in their area. A similar proportion say hiring is a struggle because they require individuals with niche skill sets.¹⁹

8. **Social Value and Sustainability: A skills system which is well positioned to maximise increased commitment to social value and Coventry's commitment to tackling climate change**

The Government's Net Zero Strategy, October 2021 formalises plans to ensure the UK is fully carbon neutral by 2050 with plans to create up to 440,000 jobs. A proportion of these will involve re-skilling existing workers from carbon intensive industries but there will also be a need to train new people.

The areas of opportunity for Coventry are set out below with actions to both re-skill existing workers and train new people to benefit from new 'green' jobs.

-Heat and Buildings (Heat Pumps and Retro-fitting): All new heating appliances installed in homes by 2035 to be either electric heat pumps or hydrogen boilers. This in combination with continued plans to better insulate homes, will create 100,000 jobs in the middle of the 2020s and up to 175,000 by 2030.

Traditional gas boiler engineers will steadily see their skills become obsolete, therefore a large proportion of the 100,000 jobs will involve retraining. There will also be a requirement for FE colleges and other skills providers to reshape their curriculum away from training traditional gas boiler engineers and into training heat pump or hydrogen boiler engineers.

Transport (EV vehicle production and maintenance): The Government's 'zero emission vehicle mandate' bans the sale of new petrol or diesel cars by 2030. In addition, there is £620 million of funding for zero emission grants and electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure and a £1 billion Automotive Transformation Fund. Combined these measures plan to create 22,000 jobs by 2024 and 74,000 by 2030.

Coventry is uniquely positioned to benefit from jobs growth in 'green' transportation. Coventry already has the largest number of electric vehicle (EV) charging points outside of London²⁰ and has the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre (UKBIC), which employs over 100 people in high skilled roles. There are plans to build a Battery Gigafactory which will put Coventry at the heart of the UK's EV industry and create over 4000 jobs locally.

¹⁹ [FSB: West Midlands SBI 2021 Q2 Report](#)

²⁰ [Guardian Article- August 2021](#)