

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

Title of EIA		Connected Futures: Bridging the GAP from Education to Employment: Focus on 14-16 (this is linked to proposal for 16-18: Transforming Futures: A Strategic Approach to Tackling NEET)
EIA Author	Name	Faye Parklen
	Position	Head of Education Entitlement & Engagement
	Date of completion	28/01/26
Director	Name	Sukriti Sen
	Position	Director of Childrens and Education
Cabinet Member	Name	Cllr Sandhu
	Portfolio	Education & Skills

PLEASE REFER TO [EIA GUIDANCE](#) FOR ADVICE ON COMPLETING THIS FORM

SECTION 1 – Context & Background

1.1 Please tick one of the following options:

This EIA is being carried out on:

- ☐ New policy / strategy
☐ New service
☐ Review of policy / strategy
☒ Review of service
☐ Commissioning
☐ Other project (*please give details*)

1.2 In summary, what is the background to this EIA?

Connected Futures sets out a joined up, citywide approach to preventing and reducing the number of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) in Coventry. By identifying young people at risk at an early stage and supporting them through tailored 14–16 pathways, aligned 16–18 study programmes, and onward progression into employment or training, the programme focuses on creating clear, supported transitions from education into adulthood. This work directly links to, and complements, the *Connecting Pathways, Creating Futures* proposal.

The overarching ambition is to support every learner to become a healthy, thriving adult with access to aspirational career opportunities. Together, these proposals set out a strategic, system led approach to reducing NEET levels in Coventry and improving transition outcomes beyond age 18, particularly for vulnerable young people.

The initiative places strong emphasis on early identification of need, bespoke curriculum pathways, and clearly defined transition routes from statutory education (14–16) into post-16 provision. A linked proposal focuses on developing strengthened course options for learners aged 16–18, creating seamless progression routes from 14–16 into post-16 education and training. This integrated approach is designed to reduce NEET risk, improve engagement, and secure sustained positive outcomes.

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The programme builds on the established Coventry Alternative Provision (CAP) Graduated Model of Support, a mature and fully embedded framework used by all secondary schools across the city. Within this model, the Tier 1 pathway provides Coventry's early intervention offer for young people beginning to disengage from education.

Tier 1 supports early identification of learners presenting known NEET risk factors, including special educational needs, persistent or emerging absence, fixed term exclusions or suspensions, low or declining attainment, and low parental engagement. Identified learners access a bespoke, flexible curriculum alongside mainstream schooling, designed to reengage them with learning.

Through vocational learning, functional skills development, and aspiration building experiences delivered by quality assured providers, young people are supported to achieve recognised qualifications and successfully complete their secondary education.

The CAP framework provides access to approximately 75 approved providers, offering a broad range of vocational pathways, core functional skills in English and maths, and qualifications from Entry Level through Levels 1, 2 and 3. This breadth enables provision to be tailored to individual needs, with a strong focus on relevance, engagement, and employability.

By strengthening Tier 1 early intervention, aligning 14–16 provision with a newly developed post-16 study programme, and establishing clear routes to post-18 destinations, Connected Futures aims to reduce NEET risk, increase participation, and deliver sustained positive outcomes for young people across the city.

Investment

- Year 1: £300,000: This funding will be allocated to subsidise CAP Tier 1 provision for schools, ensuring targeted access for young people who are at risk of disengagement from compulsory education.
- Year 2: £250,000 (phased reduction) : See description for year 1. We will continue to seek funding from other sources in the longer term to support schools with the cost of the courses.
- Year 3: £200,000 (phased reduction): See description for year 1. We will continue to seek funding from other sources in the longer term to support schools with the cost of the courses.

1.3 List organisations and people who are involved in this area of work

Statutory school age children and young people accessing the service
 CCC
 Schools and Education Partners
 Coventry Alternative Provision framework providers
 Supporting organisations

1.4 Who will be responsible for implementing the findings of this EIA?

Faye Parklen – Head of Education Entitlement & Enrichment
 Rachael Sugars – Strategic Lead Education and SEND

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SECTION 2 – Consideration of Impact

Refer to guidance note for more detailed advice on completing this section.

In order to ensure that we do not discriminate in the way our activities are designed, developed and delivered, we must look at our duty to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conflict that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between two persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

To find out more about local data, please visit the below links:

[Facts about Coventry](#)

[Census 2021](#)

[Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](#)

2.1 Baseline data and information to include data on Protected Characteristics, Health Inequalities and Digital Inclusion

Please include a summary of data analysis below, using both your own service level management information and also drawing comparisons with local data where necessary. Where possible, compare your data to local data using: Facts about Coventry; Census 2021; JSNA.

CAP service-level picture (2024/25)

Analysis of the Coventry Alternative Provision (CAP) activity during 2024/25 demonstrates that the service continues to engage a high needs cohort of learners who present known risk factors for disengagement and potential NEET outcomes. A total of 313 secondary age pupils accessed 410 CAP Tier 1–3 provisions (aimed at providing vocational qualifications and personal development), with referred learners showing high rates of vulnerability: 60% eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), 25% with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP), 49% Special Educational Needs (SEN) Support, 62% male, and 79% White British. This profile highlights a disproportionate representation of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND when compared with citywide averages.

Secondary phase permanent exclusion (PEX) patterns mirror national trends, with the highest concentration in Year 10 (35%), followed by Year 9 (30%) and Year 11 (14%). The PEX cohort demonstrates similar vulnerability indicators, including 65% FSM, 8% EHCP, and 37% SEN Support, reinforcing the link between disadvantage, SEND and exclusion.

Early intervention data indicates that of 137 Section 19 referrals, 87 (63.5%) were recommended to commence a vocational or alternative provision pathway through CAP Tier 1 as a preventative measure, and to support engagement with education.

Notably, 85% of pupils permanently excluded during 2024/25 had not accessed CAP Tier 1 earlier in the year, signalling a substantial missed opportunity for early intervention and suggesting that increasing the reach and timeliness of Tier 1 provision, whilst reducing the cost could reduce escalation to exclusion.

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Patterns across protected and vulnerable groups reveal overrepresentation among pupils eligible for FSM, those with SEND, and boys, consistent with both local service data and national trends. Ethnic representation also indicates that White British pupils are overrepresented in CAP relative to the wider school age population, based on Census comparators, indicating potential disparities in engagement and referral pathways.

Taken together, the evidence highlights the importance of early identification and timely access to Tier 1 pathways in reducing risk, supporting engagement, and preventing escalation to exclusion. Additional data on current CAP participants, including suspension levels, exclusion trajectories, EHCP representation and continued Section 19 activity, will further strengthen the assessment of impact and inform future service planning. Disengagement with statutory school age education has a high risk of future NEET status.

2.2 Please highlight which Marmot Principles does this EIA Support.

1. **Give every child the best start in life**
2. **Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives**
3. Ensure a healthy standard of living for all
4. Create fair employment and good work for all
5. Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities
6. Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention
7. **Tackle racism, discrimination and their outcomes**
8. Pursue environmental sustainability and health equity

SECTION 3 – Protected Groups

3.1 On the basis of evidence, complete the table below to show what the potential impact is for each of the protected groups.

- Positive impact (P),
- Negative impact (N)
- Both positive and negative impacts (PN)
- No impact (NI)

Protected Characteristic	Impact type P, N, PN, NI	Nature of impact and any mitigations required
Age 0-18	P	The programme is specifically designed for young people aged 14–16 and focuses on early identification, tailored support, and smoother transition through education, training, and employment. This targeted approach supports improved outcomes for young people at risk of becoming NEET. There is a linked proposal covering 16-18.
Age 19-64	NI	NA
Age 65+	NI	NA

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Disability	P	<p>Young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are disproportionately represented among those at risk of disengagement and becoming NEET. Pupils with an EHCP and on SEN support are over-represented in the exclusion and CAP data</p> <p>The use of bespoke curriculum pathways, flexible provision, and early intervention ensures support can be adapted to meet individual needs and promote inclusion.</p>
Gender reassignment	NI	NA
Marriage and Civil Partnership	NI	NA
Pregnancy and maternity	NI	NA
Race (Including: colour, nationality, citizenship ethnic or national origins)	P	<p>Young people from some backgrounds are statistically more likely to face barriers to progression pre and post-16. Early identification, tailored support, and clear progression pathways can help reduce disparities in participation, achievement, and progression into education, employment, or training. White British pupils are over-represented within PEX and CAP relative to the school-age population.</p>
Religion and belief	NI	NA
Sex	P	<p>Both young males and females face different risks of disengagement from education such as exclusion. The programme's personalised and vocational pathways help address gendered patterns of disengagement and encourage participation across a wide range of sectors and learning routes. Male pupils are over-represented within PEX and CAP relative to the school-age population.</p>
Sexual orientation	NI	NA

3.2 On the basis of evidence, complete the table below to show any impact on the following characteristics which are not specified as protected characteristics but should be considered.

Group	Impact type P, N, PN, NI	Nature of impact and any mitigations required
Care Experienced	P	<p>The proposal will positively impact care-experienced pupils. This group are more likely to face barriers to progression pre and post-16.</p> <p>Early identification, tailored support, and clear progression pathways can help reduce disparities in participation, achievement, and progression into education, employment, or training.</p>
Armed Forces	NI	NA
Social Economic Groups (low income,	P	<p>Connected Futures is expected to have a positive impact on young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds by reducing the risk</p>

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poverty, education, unemployment, community safety and social support)		of becoming NEET through early identification, tailored learning pathways, and clear progression routes into education, training, or employment. Pupils entitled to FSMs are over-represented within PEX and CAP relative to the school-age population. By addressing barriers linked to disadvantage and improving engagement and transitions, the programme supports improved life chances and contributes to reducing inequality across the city.
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SECTION 4 –Next steps

Planned Action	Owner	Timescale

4.2 How will you monitor and evaluate the effect of this work?

The impact of this proposal will be monitored through feedback received during the consultation process and after implementation, if the proposal is adopted.

Monitoring will include reviewing complaints and comments, conducting surveys with children, and through the CAP Multi-Agency Panel and wider Education Partnership.

In addition, education data (including achievement and destinations) will be monitored to ensure that the changes have a positive effect on children and young people's outcomes. Case Study work will also be captured and shared through the CAP Multi-Agency Panel and wider Education Partnership.

Routinely, reports are taken to Scrutiny Board 2 in this area, and wider education performance is taken on an annual basis.

SECTION 5 – Impact on Council Staff

5.1 Will this area of work potentially have an impact on Council staff? Yes/No

If yes

Nature of impact and any mitigation required

N/A

SECTION 6 – Completion Statement

As the appropriate Head of Service for this area, I confirm that the potential equality impact is as follows:

- No impact has been identified for one or more protected groups ☐
- Positive impact has been identified for one or more protected groups ☒
- Negative impact has been identified for one or more protected groups ☐

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Both positive and negative impact has been identified for one or more protected groups ☐
 The potential impact of this proposal on protected groups is not yet known ☐

Before you submit this form - please save your progress and forward the email you receive with any questions to equality@coventry.gov.uk. The team will review your Equality Impact Assessment and provide you with feedback.

Only click submit if the Equality Impact Assessment has been reviewed and you have been advised to by the equality team.

7.0 Approval

Name of Head of Service: Rachael Sugars	Date approved by Head of Service: 28/01/26
Name of Director: Sukriti Sen	Date sent to Director: 28/01/26