

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

Title of EIA		Transforming Futures: A Strategic Approach to Tackling NEET
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	Position	Head of Skills, Employment and Adult Education
	Date of completion	02.02.2026
Director	Name	Clare Boden-Hatton
	Position	Director of Planning & Performance
Cabinet Member	Name	Cllr Kindy Sandhu
	Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Education and 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?

We propose a strategic, joined-up approach to tackling NEET by identifying and supporting young people early, guiding them through bespoke 14–16 curriculum pathways into 16–18 Study Programmes, and onward to 18+ training and employment. Our aim is to ensure every learner can progress into adulthood with the skills, confidence and access to aspirational career pathways.

The £400K proposal sets out a clear, system-led approach to preventing and reducing the number of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) in Coventry. It focuses on early identification, tailored curriculum pathways, and strong transition routes from compulsory education into post-16 provision.

The proposal responds directly to a recognised gap in current provision by offering an alternative post-16 pathway for young people without sixth form offers, particularly those who struggle to engage in mainstream college environments. By widening the breadth of post-16 options, it ensures vulnerable young people are not left without appropriate, supportive or aspirational routes at this critical transition point.

The project develops new Post-16 Study Programme options for learners aged 16–18, creating seamless progression from 14–16 provision into post-16 learning. Strengthening continuity

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across phases will reduce NEET risk, improve engagement, and secure sustained positive outcomes.

The Study Programmes will combine vocational learning, functional skills and employability development, with clear progression routes into apprenticeships, employment or further education. This integrated approach will support sustained engagement throughout the critical 16–18 phase and reduce the likelihood of young people becoming NEET.

Progression into post-18 destinations will be intentionally planned and built directly from the 16–18 Study Programmes. Pathways will be developed in partnership with employers, training providers and apprenticeship organisations, with a strong emphasis on apprenticeships as a positive and sustained destination. Vocational skills, qualifications and employability competencies gained through the Study Programme will directly align with entry requirements and labour market needs.

For learners progressing into further education, clear pathways into Level 2 and Level 3 programmes will be identified, ensuring appropriate preparation and support. Throughout this transition, young people will receive structured support, careers guidance and destination planning to enable informed choices and sustained participation bey

There will be 2 cohorts (a maximum of 14 learners per group) of 16-18-year-old learners per academic year.

We propose to offer career pathways through the following sectors:

- * Outdoor Learning: Environmental studies, land-based skills, and outdoor leadership.
- * Sports: Coaching, fitness training, and sports science.
- * Music / TV & Media: Creative production, broadcasting, and performing arts.
- * Design: Graphic design, product design, and creative technologies.
- * Hospitality: Catering, food service, and event management.
- * Retail: Customer service, merchandising, and business operations.
- * Childcare: Early years education and child development.
- * Construction Trades: Carpentry, plumbing, electrical installation, and multi-skills.

Eliminating discrimination and ensuring equitable access

The EIA highlights the positive impacts of the programme, and we have strengthened the approach by explicitly addressing how we will prevent discrimination and reduce barriers at every stage. Admissions processes will be transparent, consistent and designed to avoid bias, ensuring all eligible learners - including those with SEND, those at risk of exclusion, and those from disadvantaged backgrounds - can access provision fairly. This will include building on our direct partnerships with all Coventry SEND schools and CCC's SEND Team. SEND support will be standardised across delivery partners, supported by shared processes, agreed quality standards and joint training to ensure consistency of experience. Regular monitoring of admissions, participation, retention and achievement data will enable us to identify disparities early and take corrective action. This proactive approach ensures compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and provides best practice in accordance with Special Educational Needs under the SEND Code of Practice (January 2015) and aligns with statutory OFSTED expectations for inclusive practice.

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Transforming Futures aims to remove barriers for this cohort, including learners with SEND and those at risk of exclusion. The programme promotes equality by ensuring fair admissions, consistent SEND provision, and a unified quality framework across all delivery partners. Learner data on participation, retention and achievement is monitored to identify and address any disparities. This will meet statutory OFSTED guidelines for inclusivity and equality and support the needs of learners in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Workforce Recruitment and Training

In line with the SEND Code of Practice (January 2015), high-quality provision will be provided to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND. Given the programme's direct engagement with vulnerable young people, the new roles created will be recruited through inclusive, transparent processes. All recruitment will follow the statutory requirements of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025*, including safer recruitment principles such as robust pre-employment checks, suitability screening and maintaining a safeguarding-focused culture throughout the recruitment process. Staff will receive appropriate training in safeguarding, inclusive practice, SEND awareness and discrimination prevention. Consistent expectations across providers will ensure appropriate data recording, shared standards and alignment with the programme's equality objectives.

In line with the Children and Families Act 2014 we will follow the Local Authority duty to ensure that high-quality teaching - often described as 'high-quality teaching for SEND' - is the first and universal offer for all learners, delivering inclusive, well-differentiated classroom practice that meets the diverse needs of children and young people before any additional or specialist support is considered.

Digital exclusion

Digital access is a known barrier for many young people at risk of becoming NEET. To address this, the programme will provide access to on-site digital facilities, structured digital skills development, and support with connectivity. We will utilise Coventry Connects to support with re-conditioned laptops, and free internet access so that learners can participate fully in both on-site and blended learning activities, and benefit from wider digital access.

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

Coventry's NEET children
CCC Prospects (Part of Shaw Trust)
Coventry Alternative Provision Framework Providers
All Coventry Secondary Education and Post 16 Education Schools/Colleges

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

Kim Mawby – Head of Skills, Employment and Adult Education

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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.

Coventry's population profile shows a growing and increasingly diverse youth demographic. In 2023, 22.3% of residents were aged under 18, 63.6% were working age and 14.1% were aged 65 or over. Population growth has been strongest among younger adults, influenced by the city's two universities and the expansion of higher-paid employment sectors. Children are significantly more diverse than the adult population and this diversity continues to increase. By January 2023, 58% of school-aged children were from an ethnic minority background, compared with 39.7% in 2012.

Although youth outcomes are improving, with more young people progressing into education, employment or training in 2023, challenges persist. An estimated 300 to 400 young people each year require targeted support. NEET and Not Known rates are highest in Henley, Foleshill, Longford, Westwood and Radford, which are also areas with high levels of deprivation. Vulnerable groups continue to experience greater disadvantage. Approximately 8.5% of young people with an EHCP and 6.5% of those receiving SEN Support are NEET or Not Known, although these levels remain below both the West Midlands and England averages.

Coventry's education and skills system provide a wide range of pathways for young people, supported by colleges, specialist providers and the Adult Education Service. The Adult Education study programme has grown rapidly since 2017 and now supports learners with diverse needs, including those referred by the Council's Specialist Education team. Colleges across the city offer thousands of places each year and provide academic, vocational and

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specialist options. Increasing demand for SEND provision continues to shape local planning and reinforces the importance of tailored, flexible learning routes. Overall, Coventry's demographic trends and area-based inequalities highlight the need for continued investment in responsive education, skills and employment programmes. Ensuring that young people from all communities can progress successfully remains central to strengthening long-term outcomes across the city.

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	<p>The proposal directly targets young people aged 14–18 and supports progression into 18+ education, training, and employment.</p> <p>The creation of bespoke post16 Study Programmes, particularly for learners without sixth form offers or who struggle in mainstream college environments, offers young people a supportive and aspirational alternative route.</p> <p>Structured progression planning, embedded careers guidance, and clear pathways into apprenticeships, employment, or further education support sustained engagement beyond age 18.</p>
Age 19-64	NI	
Age 65+	NI	

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Disability	P	Young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are disproportionately represented among those at risk of becoming NEET, with around 8.5% of those with an EHCP and 6.5% of those with SEN needs becoming NEET at 16. Bespoke curricula, flexible learning environments, and continuity from 14–16 into 16–18 Study Programmes will better support individual needs, sustained engagement and stronger progression pathways – as detailed in Summary 1.2.
Gender reassignment	NI	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	NI	
Pregnancy and maternity	P	Flexible, tailored pathways and structured transition support can help young parents remain engaged in education or training and reduce the risk of becoming NEET e.g. Flexible timetabling around health needs or parental responsibilities to support the continued participation of young parents or people who are pregnant. Clear links to childcare support e.g. early years provision and Family Hubs to provide learners with increased support. Enhanced safeguarding planning such as risk assessments and tailored support plans to promote continued engagement.
Race (Including: colour, nationality, citizenship ethnic or national origins)	P	Some ethnic minority groups experience higher NEET rates and barriers to post-16 progression. By widening access to supportive post-16 provision and clearer progression routes, the proposal may help reduce disparities in achievement and progression outcomes.
Religion and belief	NI	
Sex	P	The availability of vocational and alternative pathways may help address different patterns of disengagement experienced by young men and women. Offering varied routes into employment, apprenticeships, and training supports participation across genders and sectors
Sexual orientation	NI	

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	Around a third of Care Experienced Young People are NEET at age 16. The creation of bespoke post16 Study Programmes, particularly for learners without sixth form offers or who struggle in mainstream college environments, offers care experienced young people a supportive and aspirational alternative route. Structured progression planning, embedded careers guidance, and clear pathways into apprenticeships, employment, or further education support sustained engagement beyond age 18.

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		Partnership working with employers, training providers, and apprenticeship organisations will help ensure that vocational skills, qualifications, and employability competencies gained through the programmes align with labour market needs. This is especially important for care experienced young people, who may lack informal networks that typically support access to opportunities
Armed Forces	NI	
Social Economic Groups (low income, poverty, education, unemployment, community safety and social support)	P	<p>A positive impact on young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds by reducing the risk of becoming NEET through early identification, tailored learning pathways, and clear progression routes into education, training, or employment.</p> <p>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.</p>

SECTION 4 –Next steps

Planned Action	Owner	Timescale
Arrange meetings with pre-determined services to plan delivery model and implementation timeline	LL/FP	Jan 2026 – Apr 2026
Finalise recruitment process including shared roles and responsibilities, Matrix Management etc.	LL/AD	By Apr 2026
Extend existing Adult Education BI Dashboards to enable effective data and monitoring processes to measure programme impact	LL/AG	May 2026 – Aug 2026
Liaise with CCC Communications for engagement strategy and directly build on partnership with Coventry Alternative Pathways Framework, schools, CCC SEND Team, Prospects (16-18 NEET Tracking) and other partners.	HC/FP	Mar – Aug 2026
Ensure standard procedures followed for DBS enhanced recruitment and mandatory educational training.	HC	By Apr 2026
Strengthen partnership working with Family Hubs, early years providers, health partners and Job Shop to ensure wraparound support	HC/AD	Ongoing
Update CCC SLT on delivery plans, timelines and expected impact and accordance with normal governance processes.	KM	Ongoing

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 holding focus groups to gather qualitative insights.

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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

Recruitment to:

- 2 x Tutor (G5 0.5FTE)
- 2 x Learning Support Assistant (G3 0.5FTE)
- 2 x Job Coach (G4 0.5FTE)

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 ☐
- 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: Kim Mawby	Date approved by Head of Service: 02.02.26
Name of Director: Clare Boden-Hatton	Date sent to Director: 04.02.26