



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

7 June 2005

Report to the City Council

Learning in the 21st Century: 14–19 Education



Further copies of this report can be obtained from:

Scrutiny Support Officer: **Samina A Salahuddin**

☎: **0121 464 6872**

E-mail: samina.a.salahuddin@birmingham.gov.uk.

Reports that have been submitted to Council can also be downloaded from
www.birmingham.gov.uk/scrutiny.



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

Contents

1:	Summary	5
2:	Introduction	6
2.1	Reason for the Review	
2.2	Terms of Reference	
2.4	Methodology	
3:	Background	8
3.1	The National Context	
3.2	The Local Context	
3.3	Development of Funding Arrangements	
3.4	Challenges for Schools and Colleges	
4:	Findings	13
4.1	School and Further Education College Evidence	
4.2	Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council Evidence	
4.3	Business Evidence	
4.4	Directorate of Learning and Culture Evidence	
4.5	Connexions Evidence	
5:	Conclusions	19
6:	Recommendations	21
	Appendix	23
	Example of School Questionnaire	



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

Preface

Councillor Paul Tilsley MBE

Chair of the Education and Lifelong Learning
Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Are we, as the leading Education Authority in Europe, preparing our young people adequately for their futures? This is the question which formed the fundamental impetus for this review, which was undertaken amid concerns of a skills shortage gap, which is expected to rear its head within the next five years.

It is clear that we need to prepare for this now and to start the process of fine tuning which will enable us to adequately take on board changes in the expectations of our young people and how and what they want to learn, in order to prepare them for what lies ahead. Last year, 13,000 pupils left compulsory education and of these 86% moved on to further education or training. It is our responsibility to equip them with the right skills, attitudes and basic competencies required by their future employers. We also need to listen to, and carefully acknowledge, the voice of those employers, who will ultimately be seeking to employ them. Creating a better match between the needs of employers, young people and the school curriculum plays a vital role in what we want to achieve and the use of vocational qualifications, plays just as much of an important function in how we go about achieving this.

The 14 -19 Collegiate Development Plans play an important role, but it is our responsibility to ensure that these are successfully implemented and this is something which cannot be achieved in isolation. Therefore, not only do the recommendations in this report put forward some very good ideas but they also re-iterate the need for us to develop solid and effective working relations with our education partners.

I would personally like to extend my gratitude to those who have contributed towards this review - Councillors Penny Wagg, Susanna McCorry and Sarah-Jayne Plant, together with Mary Edwards, Father Edwin Cownley and Rod Bamford. I would also like to acknowledge the contributions of Tony Kennedy, who undertook the initial foundations for this review. We have however extended the scope of this review to include as many organisations that play a part in the development and support of our young people. As such, I would wish to thank David Cragg, from the Learning and Skills Council, Paul Verity



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

from the Connexions Service Pat Jackson from Advantage West Midlands and Chris Clifford and Mike Beasley from the Confederation of British Industry.

I would also like to acknowledge the support of officers, in particular Lead Officer, Alicia Welsh and Sheila Huckfield-Powell, both from the Education Service and Lorraine Donovan from the Scrutiny Office.

Together, we have come up with what I can only describe as a particularly relevant piece of work, which will act as the catalyst needed to ensure that we equip our young people with the right skills needed for their futures.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Roby'.



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

1: Summary

- 1.1 This review was carried out to examine the development of the 14-19 curriculum and its impact on the provision for students. The Government have initiated a debate about measures to improve flexibility and choice for students, and opportunities for the development of personalised programmes. This debate is likely to lead to changes in legislation.
- 1.2 The Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council is responsible for all post-16 funding, and it is committed to reflecting the 14-19 agenda. The local curriculum strategy is outlined in the Birmingham and Solihull 16-19 Area Wide Inspection Action Plan. This plan responds to a range of concerns raised in the OfSTED Area Wide inspection in 2001. One of the main issues was that provision for students was complicated, expensive, inconsistent and unsustainable.
- 1.3 The findings of the 16-19 Area Wide Inspection Action Plan have informed the development of 14-19 provision. It was recognised at the time that despite the OfSTED Inspection reviewing 16-19 provision, it was sensible to consider 14-19 provision as well.
- 1.4 The intention was to create rationalised 14-19 provision through collaborative working between schools, Further Education (FE) colleges and training providers. To this end, 14-19 colleges became the key strategy in delivering a comprehensive and complementary 14-19 programme. 14-19 Collegiate Development Plans outline the proposed 14-19 programme developments within geographical areas. Most of these plans are still in their infancy and not all are complete.
- 1.5 The challenge is for schools and partner providers to work collaboratively on developing 14-19 programmes. This report outlines the progress to date and any barriers to proposed solutions.



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

2: Introduction

2.1 Reason for the Review

- 2.1.1 Members of the Education and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested this review. It was undertaken in the light of Government's proposals on the development of a 14-19 curriculum, which incorporates both academic and vocational subjects. The review focuses on how these proposals are being implemented in the city, the impact on the institutions involved and the implications for students. Currently 48% of students in Birmingham do not achieve 5 GCSE A-C grades. The 14-19 curriculum proposals aim to widen participation and raise achievement of all students through personalised programmes and a wider choice of subjects.

2.2 Terms of Reference

- 2.2.1 The terms of reference for this 14-19 review was defined into four main categories, the purpose of which was to:
- Audit the current position.
 - Identify the impact of the 16-19 Area Wide Inspection Action Plan on schools and FE colleges.
 - Review the involvement of local industry and commerce.
 - Clarify the role of the Birmingham and Solihull Connexions Partnership in the implementation of the 14-19 strategy.

2.3 Methodology

- 2.3.1 This review was chaired by Councillor Paul Tilsley, Education and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairperson. Other members of the Review Group included: Councillors Penny Wagg, Susanna McCorry, Sarah-Jayne Plant, Father Edwin Cownley from the Catholic Partnership, with Mary Edwards the Diocesan Director of Education for the Church of England Birmingham Diocese and Rod Bamford, Parent Governor Representative.
- 2.3.2 The group heard evidence from The Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council, secondary school headteachers, FE college principle representative, the Directorate of Learning and Culture, Connexions, Advantage West Midlands, Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

local business. All 91 secondary schools and special schools with secondary age pupils were sent a questionnaire for completion. Twenty-one (23%) responses were received.



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

3: Background

3.1 The National Context

3.1.1 In 2001, the government published the White Paper “*Schools Achieving Success*,” starting the debate on developing a coherent 14-19 phase. Three components were identified:

- Development of a 14-19 curriculum that kept a strong focus on basics, whilst enabling students to pursue their areas of interest.
- Making available to all students high quality vocational options that are recognised at a level for entry to higher education.
- Development of an overarching award that recognised achievement in both academic and vocational subjects.

3.1.2 In 2002, the government published the Green Paper *14-19: Extending Opportunities, Raising Standards*, to build on the proposals in the White Paper. In 2002, ‘*Success for All*’ set out proposals for reforming the post-16 learning and skills sector, including sixth forms. It outlined the principles for meeting students’ needs and improving choice by improving the quality of provision in each area to meet the needs of learners, employers and the community.

3.1.3 In 2003, the policy document *14-19: Opportunity and Excellence* outlined the government’s proposals to transform the 14-19 stage. The steps to achieving this vision included:

- Putting students at the centre of 14-19 provision and enabling them to progress at a pace consistent with their abilities and interests.
- Providing greater flexibility at Key Stage 4 by reducing the statutory requirements to a minimum essential for future and personal development.
- A much higher level of collaboration and partnership between schools, FE colleges and work-based training providers to offer students the widest possible range of opportunities. Funding 14-19 pathfinder projects to try out new ideas.
- Making work-related learning a statutory requirement for all 14-16 students from September 2004 and enterprise education a statutory requirement for the same age group from September 2005.



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

- Provision of high quality vocational opportunities with clear progression routes to further and higher education.
 - Development of apprenticeships which provide alternative pathways, and also increased and improved employer involvement.
 - Provide students with the chance to mix different types of learning (e.g. the Increased Flexibility for 14-16 Year Olds Programmes).
 - Ensuring provision of high-quality information, advice and guidance to help students make choices from a wider range of options from age 14.
- 3.1.4 Members of a working group for long-term 14-19 reform, chaired by Mike Tomlinson in September 2003, were asked to make proposals for reforms to achieve:
- A greater coherence in learning programmes for 14-19 students.
 - An appropriate range of assessment arrangements.
 - A unified framework of qualifications.
- 3.1.5. In February 2004, the working party outlined interim proposals for the long-term reform of 14-19 provision. They proposed a diploma framework, which would provide:
- Coherent programmes of learning, which provide a flexible ladder of progression and where all routes are valued.
 - A compulsory core of learning i.e. communication, mathematical and ICT skills.
 - A wide range of high focus vocational programmes within a specific number of recognised and valued routes.
 - A range of diploma qualifications to deliver choice, breadth, depth and challenge.
 - A reduction in burdensome assessment and more information about learners' achievement and their development of knowledge, skills and attributes as a basis for differentiation and selection.
- 3.1.6 The final report was published in October 2004. This proposed that the existing 14-19 qualification system should be replaced by a system of diplomas at entry, foundation, intermediate and advanced levels. Successful completion of a programme at a given level should lead to the award of a diploma recognising achievement across the whole programme. The new diploma, which would be taken at the students' own pace between the ages of 14 and 19, would be set at four levels: entry (equivalent to pre-GCSEs), foundation (GCSEs at grade D to G),



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

intermediate (GCSE A-star to C) and advanced (A-level).

In addition, it proposed that all 14-19 programmes should be made up of core and main learning. Core learning would ensure:

- Achievement in functional mathematics, functional literacy and communication, and ICT.
- Completion of an extended project appropriate to the level of the diploma.
- Development of a range of common knowledge, skills and attributes, such as personal awareness, problem-solving, creativity, team-working, and moral and ethical awareness.
- An entitlement to wider activities.
- Support for learners in planning and reviewing their learning, and guidance in making choices about further learning and careers.

Main learning would be designed to ensure achievement and progression within recognised academic and vocational disciplines that provide a basis for progression within the diploma framework and access to employment, work-based training and Higher Education. Main learning defines the type of programme and may be chosen to reflect learners' strengths, interests and aspirations.

3.1.7 The White Paper *14-19 Education and Skills* was published in February 2005. The proposals in the White Paper do not fully implement those of the Working Group on 14-19 Reform. Instead, it proposes a range of other initiatives:

- To keep GCSE and A levels, although there will also be new specialised diplomas. These will include vocational material, GCSEs and A levels where appropriate and cover all the major sectors of the economy, as covered by Sector Skills Councils. They will be available at three levels: 1 (foundation), 2 (GCSE), and 3 (advanced). The diplomas will be a national entitlement by 2015, with four diplomas available by 2008, another four by 2010, and a further six later. At the beginning, the diplomas will, for the most part, comprise existing qualifications although new ones may be commissioned.

At GCSE level, to:

- Change English and mathematics examinations so students cannot get grade C or above if they cannot use functional English and mathematics.
- Review coursework to ease the burden of assessment.
- Work to reform mathematics as suggested in "Making



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

Mathematics Count.”

- Promote science and the expectation that young people should do two science GCSEs.

At A level, to:

- Introduce optional harder questions in separate sections at the end of A level examination papers.
- Introduce an extended project as part of A level examinations.
- Make sure universities have information about grades in individual modules, as well as individual marks if they want them, so they can make more informed decisions about candidates.
- Reduce the number of assessments in an A level from six to four, without changing their standard or content.

3.2 The Local Context

- 3.2.1 Councils are responsible for the provision of education in primary, secondary and special schools, for early years education and for a range of services related to this provision. In terms of 14-19 provision, Learning and Skills Councils are also a major player. Their responsibilities include planning and funding post-16 education and training, work based learning and adult learning, encouraging participation from learners and employers. They fund LEAs to provide school sixth forms and adult learning and assist in securing work experience. They also facilitate information, advice and guidance on learning opportunities. Delivery of provision lies elsewhere, with schools, colleges and other providers.
- 3.2.2 The Learning and Skills Council is responsible for all post-16 recurrent funding and is committed to reflecting the objectives of the 14-19 agenda in its funding arrangements. The Learning and Skills Council's existing post-16 funding systems contain flexibility with weighted funding to reflect the actual costs of different types of learning, and funding tailored to reflect flexible patterns and different forms of learning. To support 14-19, funding decisions will need to take account of existing good practice, and evidence from evaluation of the national 14-19 pathfinders and Increased Flexibility Programme. The government does not propose to change the current arrangements for funding 14-16 provision through LEAs.
- 3.2.3 The Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council has outlined its strategy for developing 14-19 education from the action plan drawn up in response to the 16-19 Area Wide Inspection of Birmingham and Solihull.



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

- 3.2.4 The action plan identified the establishment of a 14-19 Policy Forum for joint working arrangements between the key players. The action plan states that its remit will be to inform and shape the future strategy and planning processes of the Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council and the respective Local Education Authorities for 14-19 education and training.

3.3 Development of Funding Arrangements

- 3.3.1 Responses to the Green Paper consultation contained mixed views on funding mechanisms, particularly on how funding should be channelled to support collaborative programmes.
- 3.3.2 Some National 14-19 pathfinders are testing alternative ways of funding 14-19 provision, such as channelling funding through schools, or separately funding both the school and FE college. The government will use evaluation of the 14-19 pathfinders to determine the scale and nature of additional costs that may arise from new patterns of 14-19 provision, and how those are best funded.

3.4 Challenges for Schools and Colleges

- 3.4.1 The Government has supported the introduction of a number of initiatives that have encouraged greater flexibility as the debate develops, for example work based learning, and Increased Flexibility Programme which funds activity between schools and other providers.
- 3.4.2 Currently schools have responsibility for students up to 16. Post 16 young people have a choice of FE colleges, school sixth form or work based training providers. The challenge for schools and their partners is to work in partnership to produce a planned, efficient set of route ways with a wider range of individual choices for young people. Part of the challenge is to manage the inequities of the differential funding.



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

4: Findings

4.1 School and Further Education College Evidence

- 4.1.1 All the schools that provided evidence expect the 14-19 curriculum to provide greater flexibility of choice and provision in the range of subjects on offer and an increase of diverse pathways. They want the provision to be a combination of a broadening of partner institutions yet maintaining current partnerships supported by the extension of the range of provisions within their schools.
- 4.1.2 All school evidence acknowledged the need to provide more varied vocational opportunities, either through developing 'in-house' provision or greater collaboration with other providers. They see the development of stronger links between schools and not just with FE colleges. They identify the possibility of co-hosting minority courses with local schools, particularly at post-16 level, to enhance the economies of scale.
- 4.1.3 The evidence confirms that most schools are working in well-established collaborations with other institutions. Many of these collaborations are based on shared principles of school improvement and a shared responsibility for the best provision for all the students between all the collaborating institutions.
- 4.1.4 A quarter of the responses to the school questionnaire stated the need for the rationalisation of partnerships between Excellence in Cities (EiC), Leadership Incentive Grant (LIG) and 14-19, as there is much common ground between issues and agendas.
- 4.1.5 A small number of schools, particularly those with a sixth form, recognise the needs for rationalisation of provision; however, they are concerned that this might threaten their future viability.
- 4.1.6 The evidence suggests that the scale of development of working partnerships is being limited by the challenges of geographical location, transportation of students, pastoral support and cost. All schools raised concerns over the transportation and mobility of students and the accompanying costs if this is to be organised and covered. This will be particularly significant in the organisation of provision for 14-16 students and where the responsibility lies for transporting pupils between venues and who picks up the costs. Concerns were raised over who had responsibility for students when they were away from their base institution. For 14-16 students the 'loco parentis' issues have not been addressed for students who move



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

between institutions. For many schools the preferred option is for a specified vocational course, offered by a local school with surrounding schools using the facilities. The perceived obstacle is the investment needed in set-up costs, after which the costs could be recouped through the school's charging policy. This has been overcome in one area by creating a vocational training centre.

4.1.7 All evidence from schools sited inadequate funding as a constraint to extending provision. All want additional funding to meet the set up costs of new provision and raised building and accommodation constraints when trying to develop vocational resources and specific vocational areas. They also identify increased delivery costs, even when sharing with partners. Most schools raised the following concerns:

- The increased cost of pupil transportation and inset/training costs.
- Simpler funding streams for 14-19 provision, earlier notification and release of funding and the removal of constraints on use of funding, particularly on delivery.
- More equitable distribution of funding between schools and FE colleges especially in capital.

4.1.8 Many schools raised concerns over the lack of suitable spaces and equipment to develop vocational areas within their schools. Even schools with recent rebuilds, stated that the buildings, rooms and teaching spaces reflect the delivery of the 'old' rather than the 'new 14-19 curriculum'. One school felt that video conferencing equipment would enable them to work more closely with other centres. However, the evidence of schools using the conferencing equipment they have been supplied with is limited.

4.1.9 The differing ethos between schools and FE colleges could impose constraints on the development of their working relationship. Schools cited the differing approaches to teaching and learning as a concern. Issues and concerns over the supervision of students were also raised. The nurturing environment of many schools support potentially disaffected students from becoming disengaged. Schools feel that many of these students would not cope well with the instability of being educated at dual institutions or with the differing teaching and learning styles and approaches to behaviour management. Therefore, students who would benefit most from vocational provision may be denied access.

4.10 Most schools raised a range of implementation issues that needed resolving in order to foster collaborative arrangements. A major concern was timetabling arrangements between institutions and the need for joint timetabling. Several schools expressed a desire to develop team teaching with partner institutions and wanted to be able to build in planning time. Schools also cited additional time and



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

funding required for additional staff training needs, opportunities for meetings with partner institutions and additional administration. Several schools sited the need to develop flexible student assessment arrangements with partner institutions.

4.2 Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council Evidence

- 4.2.1 The Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council evidence stated that the OfSTED area inspection in 2001 found significant over capacity, and provision that was complicated and duplicated. The situation was untenable. In response the Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council 14-19 Area Wide Inspection Action Plan was based on the outcomes of the review and the following key emerging principles:
- A balance of academic and vocational provision.
 - No single institution can deliver the whole breadth of provision.
 - Development of partnerships between schools and FE colleges based in EiC areas.
 - New funding arrangements to underpin the 16 -19 Action Plan.
- 4.2.2 A review of the 16-19 Action Plan was undertaken in July 2004. The review praised the strategic direction provided and endorsed the key principles in the 16-19 Action Plan. Some concerns were highlighted regarding the practical implementation of the 16 -19 Action Plan and the need for quality assurance systems.
- 4.2.3 The Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council acknowledges that schools and FE colleges are being expected to work in new ways and appreciated that for some institutions this is a difficult concept to accept, as it would result in huge organisational changes.
- 4.2.4 In response to concerns raised, by schools in particular, it has reflected on its consultation processes and management arrangements. Consequently, it has disbanded its Policy Forum. The headteacher and principal representatives had become the route to receive views and feedback from schools and FE colleges on the 16-19 Action Plan. The Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council decided to reposition its management policy by splitting Birmingham and Solihull in recognition of the differences in the policies of both authorities. Both management groups meet termly with secondary school and FE college representatives from the networks. The first meeting for Birmingham was March 2005.
- 4.2.5 The Birmingham Learning and Skills Council have noted schools' concerns over the limited funds to develop vocational provision in the



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

14-19 phase. Current funding limitations have prevented the funding of provision across a wide range of vocational options. However, changes in funding should enable such projects to be supported from 2006. These projects need to be included in the 14-19 Collegiate Development Plans.

- 4.2.6 Birmingham has ten 14-19 Collegiate Networks involving 85 – 90% of the secondary schools. So far, seven of the networks have finalised their 14-19 Collegiate Development Plans. These collegiate plans outline how the breadth of provision is going to be delivered between the schools and FE colleges. The expectation is that vocational provision is delivered mainly by the FE colleges, as schools do not have the facilities.
- 4.2.7 The 14-19 Collegiate Networks are currently working with their allocated network co-ordinators to resolve the day-to-day operational concerns that have been raised by schools, in trying to implement their Collegiate Development Plans. It is too early to judge how effectively schools and FE colleges are working together to provide personalised learning for students.

4.3 Business Evidence

- 4.3.1 Concerns were raised over the perceived lack of liaison and consultation by the Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council with local industry and business over the development and provision of vocational provision.
- 4.3.2 Advantage West Midlands raised concerns of how secondary schools and FE colleges were going to engage the 48% of students, who do not achieve the 5 A-C at GCSE. A skills gap has been identified, within the West Midlands, over the next five years. There is a growing need for students with higher-level skills and a need for training in areas, with developing skills shortages. There needs to be a better match between what skills employers require and those taught through the school curriculum. Many employers and universities are trying to establish links with schools. However, this is variable and dependent on how successful the school is. There is a need for employers to target schools with high levels of underachievement in order to engage these students into education and fill the skills gap.
- 4.3.3 The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) gave a guarded endorsement to the Tomlinson Report and the emphasis on vocational provision. However, concerns were raised over how this was to be developed and sustained. It is not clear how industry and commerce fit into the 14-19 infrastructure and what quality assurance measures were going to be introduced to ensure effective provision. The CBI feel there is a need for better connectivity between FE colleges, secondary schools and industry. They asked for clarification on where apprenticeship opportunities fit into the 14-19 development plans.



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

The perception that academic routes are superior to vocational courses was raised as a concern. The CBI stated that there is inconsistency in the quality of provision between FE colleges. This has been echoed by headteachers.

- 4.3.4 Some students are leaving school with inadequate literacy and numeracy skills. In response some employers have created learning centres to develop employee's basic skills. The CBI, representing the views of employers, stated that employers should not be funding the development of basic skills in young people. In addition, students do not always have the personal skills and attitudes towards employment that employers require. The CBI stated that schools and FE colleges do not always adequately develop these skills in some students.
- 4.3.5 Concerns were raised over careers provision. The CBI, Advantage West Midlands and secondary schools have questioned the effectiveness of Connexions. The CBI believe that teachers in schools are not trained or experienced enough to solely provide careers advice.

4.4 Directorate of Learning and Culture Evidence

- 4.4.1 The Directorate of Learning and Culture is working closely with the Birmingham Learning and Skills Council to develop the 14-19 strategy for the city. This will enable the development of an integrated approach linking key strategies together. LEA officers work closely with headteacher representatives from 11-16 and 11-18 schools from each area network as a Development and Advisory Group. Therefore, the 14-19 strategy will dovetail with Building Schools for The Future and regeneration funding. The 14-19 Management Forum with representation from Learning and Culture, Birmingham Learning and Skills Council, schools and FE colleges will work together to implement the 14-19 Collegiate Development Plans. Learning and Culture have drawn up draft principles for collaboration for consideration by these key stakeholders. These principles will support the resolution of the range of operational concerns that secondary schools have raised in developing shared provision with FE colleges.

4.5 Connexions Evidence

- 4.5.1 Connexions intend to work closely with 14-19 Collegiate Networks to support the implementation of their development plans. It sees itself as a vital link between institutions in supporting students in their individual learning pathways. This will become an increasingly complex situation with some students studying in several institutions. Secondary schools and FE colleges are recognised as key customers, but Connexions admit that due to insufficient resources its delivery is inconsistent. Connexions intend to undertake a major review of the



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

work of mentors and personal advisers. It intends to audit its current provision in secondary schools and FE colleges. Schools have raised issues regarding the high turnover of mentors and the impact on the students they were supporting. Connexions believe that a peripatetic

team of mentors may ease the situation by providing some continued support for students.

- 4.5.2 Connexions admit that the database of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), which contains details of student future destinations, is significantly under-populated. While much progress had been made since November 2004 in increasing the number of students on the system from 45% to 85%, this still means that approximately 6,000 students are not registered on the system. However, the NEET database is capable of producing ward data, which can be used to determine the allocation of funding to support, disengaged young people back into education.
- 4.5.3 While Connexions do consult with industry on the skills and attitudes that employers require young people to have, they admit that this needs to be formalised. They are aware that there are skill shortages in a number of local industries and more needs to be done in directing students towards related courses. The Quinzone project at Four Dwellings secondary school was highlighted as good practice in the November 2004 OfSTED 14-19 survey.



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

5: Conclusions

- 5.1 The city's 14-19 strategy aims to deliver the Government's personalised learning programme for students. OfSTED praised the strategy during their 14-19 survey visit to the Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council in November 2004. Secondary schools and FE colleges also recognise the need to extend their provision to enable students to undertake options from both academic and vocational subjects. The strategy aims to encourage wider student participation and specifically targets those students who are unlikely to achieve 5 GCSE A-C.
- 5.2 Close working relationships between the key stakeholders: secondary schools, FE colleges, Learning and Culture and the Birmingham Learning and Skills Council need to be fostered if the strategy is to be successfully implemented. Forums have been established to facilitate this and are working on one production of protocols to strengthen partnership arrangements. The 14-19 strategy is a component of the LEA secondary strategy and, as such, there are clear links to complementary funding, such as Building Schools for the Future and regeneration programmes.
- 5.3 The 16-19 Action Plan identifies collegiate networks as the main vehicle to develop the infrastructure for the 14-19 curriculum. These networks require secondary schools, FE colleges and work based training providers to work together in new ways to deliver the breadth of academic and vocational provision. There is still much to be done to facilitate the implementation of the Collegiate Development Plans. While there is general acceptance of the principles for working together, there are wide ranging concerns over the operational aspects. The allocation of funding for the development of vocational provision is a major concern for secondary schools. There are concerns regarding responsibility for students who move between institutions. The differing structures and ways of working between secondary schools and FE colleges mean that any collaborative arrangements require compromises and detailed planning.
- 5.4 Connexions may have a crucial role in mentoring and advising students in the future. Secondary schools have criticised the support and Connexions concur that it has provided an inconsistent service with no clear overview. These views were confirmed by the OfSTED inspection report published in February 2005. For Connexions to deliver an effective service, they need to be interwoven into the 14-19 Collegiate Development Plans with a clear remit.
- 5.5 Industry and commerce endorse the emphasis on vocational provision. They are keen to foster good relationships with schools and work with



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

them on delivering the curriculum. However, they are unclear on how they fit into the infrastructure of the 14-19 curriculum and what quality assurance measures will be employed to evaluate their input. Apprenticeship opportunities build on vocational provision, but it is not clear how these will be linked. Concerns were raised that some young people do not always have the personal skills, attitudes, basic skills that are required by employers. A growing skills gap has been identified in a number of areas. There needs to be a better match between the requirements of employers and curriculum options.

- 5.6 At this point in time, it is too early to evaluate the City's 14-19 strategy. Much of the success hinges on the implementation of the Collegiate Development Plans and the broadening of curriculum opportunities for students. Ultimately success will be judged by a greater involvement of young people and significant increases in students achieving 5 GCSE A-C. The White Paper on 14-19 will also provide further steer for the strategy.



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

6: Recommendations

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R1	That existing relationships be strengthened between the City Council, the Learning Skills Council (LSC) and schools/FE colleges for implementation of the 14-19 Collegiate Development Plans. Progress on joint working to be reviewed in the form of an annual report.	The Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning	September 2005 then annually thereafter
R2	That the implementation of the 14-19 Collegiate Development Plans be reviewed in order to evaluate whether there has been improved participation of pupils 14-19, particularly on vocational courses. Progress on this will be included in the annual report.	The Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning	September 2005 then annually thereafter
R3	That the City Council and Connexions improve the mentoring support for students by establishing a pilot programme whereby a group of mentors are allocated to a 14-19 collegiate network.	The Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning	December 2005
R4	That joint working with the LSC takes place to develop the Quality Assurance Framework, established by the City Council in February 2005, for the provision identified in the 14-19 Collegiate Development Plans.	The Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning	December 2005
R5	That the development of this Quality Assurance Framework with the LSC includes work-based training provision for young people.	The Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning	December 2005
R6	That the City Council, Connexions and Business Enterprise Council extend enterprise schemes between schools and industry and that progress be reported on an annual basis.	The Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning	July 2006 then annually thereafter



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

R7	That pupil identification numbers remain with individuals throughout their education.	The Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning	September 2005
R8	That this review be shared with the Young People's Parliament for consideration.	The Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning	December 2005
R9	Progress towards the achievement of these recommendations should be reported to the Education and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee by December 2005. The Committee will schedule subsequent progress reports thereafter, until all recommendations have been implemented.	The Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning	December 2005



Appendix

Example of Questionnaire

The 14–19 Strategy Questionnaire

As part of this important review we are consulting with Headteachers and other interested parties on:

- the current 14-19 strategy and
- how you would like the 14–19 curriculum to develop, so as to best meet the needs of the pupils in your school.

Your views are important to us and this is an opportunity for you to contribute to the discussion on the current and future 14-19 strategy.

The Review Panel are asking all Headteachers of Birmingham secondary schools for their views however; we are working to a tight deadline and would therefore appreciate your returns as soon as possible, or at the latest by Wednesday 9th June 2004.

The source of information within this questionnaire will be treated in the strictest confidence.

[illegible]

2.	With regard to question 1, are there any challenges or constraints in implementing your vision for 14-19 curriculum? If so, what do you see as possible solution or ways forward?
---	---

3.	Which partnerships are you involved in? e.g. Collegiate; Federation; EAZ; EiC; other providers etc. Please provide brief details. How do you see existing and future partnerships delivering the 14-19 curriculum? Do you want to maintain existing partnerships? What support/infrastructure would help you as you develop, to deliver the 14-19 curriculum in your school / partnership?
-----------	--

4.	What funding issues need to be addressed in order to best implement the 14-19 strategy? What other structural issues need to be addressed to assist you with your development of 14-19 timetable facilities etc?
----	---



Learning in the 21st Century: 14-19 Education

5.	Have you any further comments about existing 14-19 strategies or future developments?
Name	
School Name	