

Draft Manchester Education Strategy 2024–2034



Context

This strategy supports UNICEF Article 28 Right to Education and Article 29 Goals of Education where it is stated that education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.

The strategy also supports the vision set out in Our Manchester, Our Children: Manchester's Children and Young People's Plan, that all children and young people should be safe, happy, healthy and successful and that disabled children can be independent and have choices.

The overall aim of the strategy is to meet the ambition set out in Our Manchester Strategy for a highly skilled city where all children have the best start in life, are given the opportunity to go to excellent settings and schools, colleges and universities that will prepare them for the future job market.



Introduction

Our children and young people told us that education is extremely important to them and that they want schools, settings and colleges which:

- Listen and respond to what they have to say and ensure children and young people know their rights and are influential
- Are inclusive, promote equality and challenge discrimination
- Are places where all children and young people feel safe and that they belong
- Support their mental and physical wellbeing and self esteem
- Provide trips, residential and provide or promote low cost clubs and activities
- Provide them with skills for life
- Support them with transitions at all phases
- Promote awareness of climate change and take steps to reduce their carbon footprint
- Provide a digital offer which relates to the future world
- Provide good quality careers advice including access to employment activities and work experience
- They can travel safely and independently to access
- Enable them to live satisfying lives and get a good job including, for some, the opportunity to access the most competitive career pathways.

These asks from our children and young people form a golden thread throughout the strategy. In response to these, a key part of our strategy is the development of an offer to all children and young people who are educated in Manchester which will form part of their educational experience and support their future success. This offer is based on existing practice across many of our educational establishments. Our strategy will ensure that these opportunities are consistent and made available to all of our children and young people regardless of which setting or school they attend and family income.

The strategy includes early education in our early years settings, our school system and alternative provision, and our 6th form colleges and providers located in Manchester.

Our offer to children and young people educated in Manchester

Throughout their education in our settings, schools and colleges, every child and young person will have the opportunity to:

- Develop Skills for Life: communication; creativity and problem solving; self-management; self-belief; team-building
- Perform and/or experience a performance
- Attend a live sporting event
- Visit Manchester City Centre
- Visit a library, museum and an art gallery
- Experience swimming
- Visit a place of natural beauty
- Visit different places of worship
- Receive a book as part of a transition read and meet an author
- Enter a competition
- Make a contribution to the local community/environment and engage in social action
- Participate in physical and outdoor adventure activities
- Learn how to achieve good physical and mental health including healthy eating
- Learn about how to stay safe and have positive relationships
- Experience travelling independently
- Participate in a democratic process
- Have the opportunity to think critically/debate an issue
- Use advanced technology to develop and use digital skills
- Visit an FE college and/or university
- Meet inspiring role models
- Access work experience/work placement
- Have the opportunity to volunteer
- Develop enterprise skills for example by raising money for a charity
- Access a mentor if needed.

Our shared values and collective ambition

From across the sectors, we have agreed that our shared principles are:

- Aspirational and ambitious for our children and young people
- Strive for educational excellence and promotion of lifelong learning
- Inclusive to all learners
- Promote resilience, health and wellbeing
- Collaborative and connected
- Inspirational and creative
- Professionally curious
- Promote fairness and equity to reduce impact of any disadvantage
- Responsive and accountable to our families and local community
- A shared sense of place locally, nationally and internationally.

Our collective ambition as an education system is that through education our children and young people will:

- Form and shape future opportunities in our city
- Have high aspirations and choices as they progress into the world of work
- Have well developed skills for life (self belief; self management; team working; communication; creativity and problem solving)
- Be proud of their identity, feel safe and have a sense of belonging and pride in Manchester.
- Understand their rights and have opportunities to influence decisions about themselves and their communities
- Be intellectually curious, creative and socially and morally responsible.
- Be articulate, numerate and have a love of books and reading
- Achieve outcomes in line or better than their peers nationally
- Have good mental and physical wellbeing
- Have the digital skills to benefit from and shape the future
- Be informed and empowered to influence sustainability and the green economy.

How we will achieve our collective ambition

Ensuring all children access excellent early years education

This will be achieved by continuing to work in partnership with our early years sector to:

- Ensure Manchester's early years providers are fully aware of national and local developments and are at the forefront of practice
- Increase uptake of nursery places and support more flexible early years education where needed
- Ensure sufficiency of high quality sustainable daycare and respond to the extension of the free entitlement offer
- Provide start up advice, support and courses to grow early years education and childcare sector where it is most needed
- Address the impact of the pandemic on our most disadvantaged children through determined and targeted action including investment in additional speech and language programmes and family support
- Promote what should ordinarily be available for children with additional needs
- Champion and lead inclusive practice through roll out of evidenced based programmes, our quality assurance process, special educational needs and disabilities training and specialist outreach services
- Facilitate the implementation of the Manchester Early Years Quality Assurance Framework
- Support providers to successfully transition children to school.

Ensuring all children access excellent schools

This will be achieved by continuing to work with our school leaders and multi-academy trusts to:

- Ensure the City offers a continuum of provision comprising highly inclusive mainstream schools with clarity about what is ordinarily available for children with additional needs and a comprehensive graduated response, resourced provision, specialist and alternative provision to meet needs of all learners
- Encourage all schools and settings to obtain the Rights Respecting Schools Award or adopt a similar approach
- Implement the Inclusion Strategy and use our Inclusion Toolkit and other evidenced based programmes to reduce exclusion and support early identification and intervention at all phases
- Implement a multi-agency approach to ensure regular school attendance
- Ensure children access a curriculum and resources which they can relate to and where they can see themselves
- Address the impact of the pandemic on our most disadvantaged learners through determined and targeted action including provision of speech and language programmes and strengthen links to Family Hubs
- Ensure children and young people have access to books and literature through continued support for Read Manchester working with the National Literacy Trust
- Provide children and young people with an enhanced and aspirational digital offer informed by industry and other partners
- Ensure children and young people access high quality music, physical education and arts teaching including opportunities to perform to an audience and compete
- Provide children and young people with opportunities to experience outdoor education through our Outdoor Education Plan
- Provide a robust healthy schools offer including an inclusive approach to RSE and PSHE where confident educators are the key resource
- Develop an agreed approach to transition into and between schools which ensures that this is a positive experience for children and young people
- Share tools and resources to enable schools to be 'poverty proof'.

Ensuring young people are equipped for adult lives, know the opportunities available to them and have access to an excellent post-16 education offer

This will be achieved by working with our settings to:

- Promote and embed Manchester's Skills for Life: communication; team working; creativity and problem solving; self belief and self management
- Ensure young people access high quality Careers Information Advice and Guidance and are aware of post 16 pathways and skills gaps in the City
- Promote, with equal value, technical and academic pathways across all levels
- Work with Government and across Greater Manchester to ensure sufficient academic, technical and apprenticeship pathways are in place to meet needs and aspirations of young people and the local economy
- Ensure young people continue to have opportunities to achieve qualifications in English and Maths post 16
- Commission a range of evidenced based interventions to prevent young people from becoming NEET and identify young people at risk early
- Increase the number of supported internships available for young people with additional needs
- Work with employers to provide sustained and meaningful opportunities for young people including volunteering, work experience and industry placements and using social value commitments to support this
- Celebrate success and recognise the achievements of our children and young people
- Draw on the expertise and contributions of our Universities to support education settings and inspire our learners
- Support young people to overcome barriers to achieving ambitions through promotion of schemes such as the Rising Star Award.

Ensuring all children and young people are taught in high-quality suitable and sustainable learning environments by a highly skilled and committed workforce.

We will achieve this by working with our settings to:

- Ensure Manchester is regarded as a great place to work for education professionals and working with our partners to support the recruitment and development of a high quality and diverse education workforce
- Support schools and settings to be good employers for all staff by ensuring they access career pathways and development, are well supported, paid the living wage and work collaboratively with trade unions
- Invest in educators to ensure they are skilled and confident in meeting the needs of our child population and equipped to respond to learners with additional needs, demographic changes and emerging needs
- Promote evidence-based approaches; research and evaluate what works best in our City
- Support and facilitate collaboration and improvement through our quality assurance arrangements, networks, brokered support, communication and the development of an education website for Manchester
- Support well informed and effective school governance and the recruitment of talented governors from diverse backgrounds and with different skill sets
- Secure and invest capital funding in early years and school buildings to ensure children learn in high quality modern environments which are low carbon
- Implement our Education Carbon Reduction Plan across schools and settings
- Ensure Manchester is influencing national policy and benefiting from opportunities for external investment and funding
- Ensure Manchester is recognised as a great place for children and young people to grow up and learn by celebrating our successes and promoting the work we do
- Have a clear set of expectations for all providers of education working in Manchester.

Our expectations

We already have positive relationship with our education providers and Multi Academy Trusts that operate in the City and we expect all of our local providers to meet our ambition for children and young people and our schools/settings. This includes:

- Listening to and understanding our children and young people and their parents/ carers, learning from their experiences and working in co-production with them
- Embracing our vision and priorities for inclusion and equity as set out in our Inclusion Strategy to ensure every child has a sense of belonging, feels respected and is valued for who they are
- Being ambitious and ensuring that all children and young people have access to high quality learning and have the opportunity to develop skills, knowledge, confidence, resilience and the social and cultural capital to support their success
- Taking determined action to reduce disadvantage and achieve outcomes in line with national
- Celebrating the diversity and talent of Manchester's children and young people and valuing their range of backgrounds, heritage, and experiences
- Ensuring that all children and young people are prepared for adult life as active citizens and ready for employment.
- Taking collective ownership for ensuring that all settings/schools in the City are excellent and all our children and young people achieve
- Working collaboratively across all phases of education to support successful and seamless transition of our children and young people through education and into employment
- Developing trusting and supportive partnerships with the Council, local services and other local schools and settings so that together we can make the best use of our combined resources and expertise to effectively support our children and young people
- Being proud and passionate about Manchester- being an active partner in the City, informing and implementing our local priorities and working collaboratively to develop solutions to our challenges.
- Being community focused and viewed as a vital part of the local community.

In practice, as part of these expectations, we require our education providers based in the City to:

- Commit to work with Manchester City Council and partners to deliver the City's ambitions and priorities for children and young people including our ambition to become a UNICEF Child friendly City.
- Support our priorities for inclusive education by:
 - » Recognising all types of achievement
 - » Promoting equality and diversity
 - » Welcoming children from a diverse range of backgrounds, SEND and abilities and engaging with local admissions arrangements
 - » Promoting good attendance
 - » Identifying needs early and responding to support and protect vulnerable children and young people
 - » Providing a graduated response to need, working in partnership with local services and engaging with our processes to support vulnerable children
 - » Using exclusion as a last resort
 - » Ensuring that schools and settings are 'poverty proof'
- Share data with local authority and other schools/settings where appropriate
- Participate in local forums and other networks
- Co-operate with Manchester Safeguarding partnership
- Engage with our local quality assurance arrangements and campaigns
- Share expertise and learning with other schools/settings
- Work with the local authority to ensure we have the right number of places in the right areas of the City
- Commit to high standards of environmental sustainability and promote active travel
- Be a good employer for all staff by ensuring they access career pathways and development, are well supported, paid the living wage and by funding TU facility time
- Commit to community engagement and enabling the community to use your buildings and facilities where possible
- Commit to local governance or committee arrangements which include parents/ carers and local community.

The Role of Manchester Local Authority

Manchester Local Authority is in a unique position as a place leader to narrate, coordinate and ensure coherence across the local education system to ensure all children and young people receive an excellent education and families are treated fairly and equitably. This includes:

- Listening and responding to what children, young people and parents/carers tell us about their educational aspirations and ensure that this is at heart of all our decision making
- Representing and promoting interests and rights of Manchester children and young people locally and nationally
- Championing the education of all children and young people and acting as a corporate parent to our children and young people who we look after
- Quality assuring our schools, settings and elective home educators to provide an overview of education in the City and identify common strengths, challenges and risks
- Ensuring that there is coherence, consistency and equity across education settings and that agreed values and expectations are met
- Holding MAT leaders, schools and settings to account in a fair and consistent way and addressing concerns in a timely and decisive way to minimise impact on learners
- Working with partners to support children and young people's wellbeing and ensure they are safe wherever they are educated and that education is represented in Manchester Safeguarding Partnership
- Working to reduce the impact of poverty and disadvantage on children and young people's educational opportunities through galvanising the City's collective resources and partnerships and championing investment nationally
- Connecting schools and settings to opportunities available in the City and linking schools and settings with employers and businesses
- Delivering our statutory duties effectively and efficiently, within the resources available and in collaboration with our partners and coproduced with parents/carers and young people when appropriate.

To facilitate this we will:

- Provide a single point of contact for all of our settings and schools to maintain links with the Council and wider partnerships
- Provide clear and transparent communication to and from schools/settings and promote local priorities
- Convene and facilitate local partnerships to share practice and develop solutions to local or emerging challenges
- Convene multi agency teams and partners around schools to provide support, help and guidance when appropriate
- Develop and promote best practice using research and evidence
- Facilitate and coordinate common arrangements for transition through all education phases
- Apply for and implement grant funding when it benefits Manchester children and young people.

The Role of Partners

Alongside the Local authority, there are a number of organisations which impact on enabling schools, setting and colleges to improve outcomes for children and young people. These include: 3 local Dioceses, Manchester Schools Alliance (MSA); One Education, our designated Teaching School Hub and Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA). We work in partnership with these organisations and education leaders to ensure training, development and support is available when key themes and gaps are identified and that our approach is joined together.

MSA is partnership led and funded directly by schools and colleges with the Local Authority as a partner. Its aims are to facilitate collaboration, networks, innovation and practice sharing across the system and respond to identified priorities and themes.

One Education is a company wholly owned by the Council which provides a range of traded pupil and business-related services and support to schools and trusts across Manchester.

Manchester works as part of Greater Manchester Combined Authority. Working as part of a combined authority adds value and consistency to the education offer across GM, tackling regional inequalities and through the GM skills devolution deal will align technical education and the needs of the local economy.

Governance of this strategy

This strategy will be governed through our Strategic Education Partnership. This partnership includes representatives from Early Years, a range of schools across phases (academies, maintained, voluntary aided and voluntary controlled), post 16 sector, Universities as well as senior officers from Public Health, Work and Skills and Neighbourhoods. It is chaired by the Executive member for Education and Children's services. Twice a year the Partnership has a joint meeting with the Work and Skills Board to ensure work is aligned.

