

Lancashire

County
Council



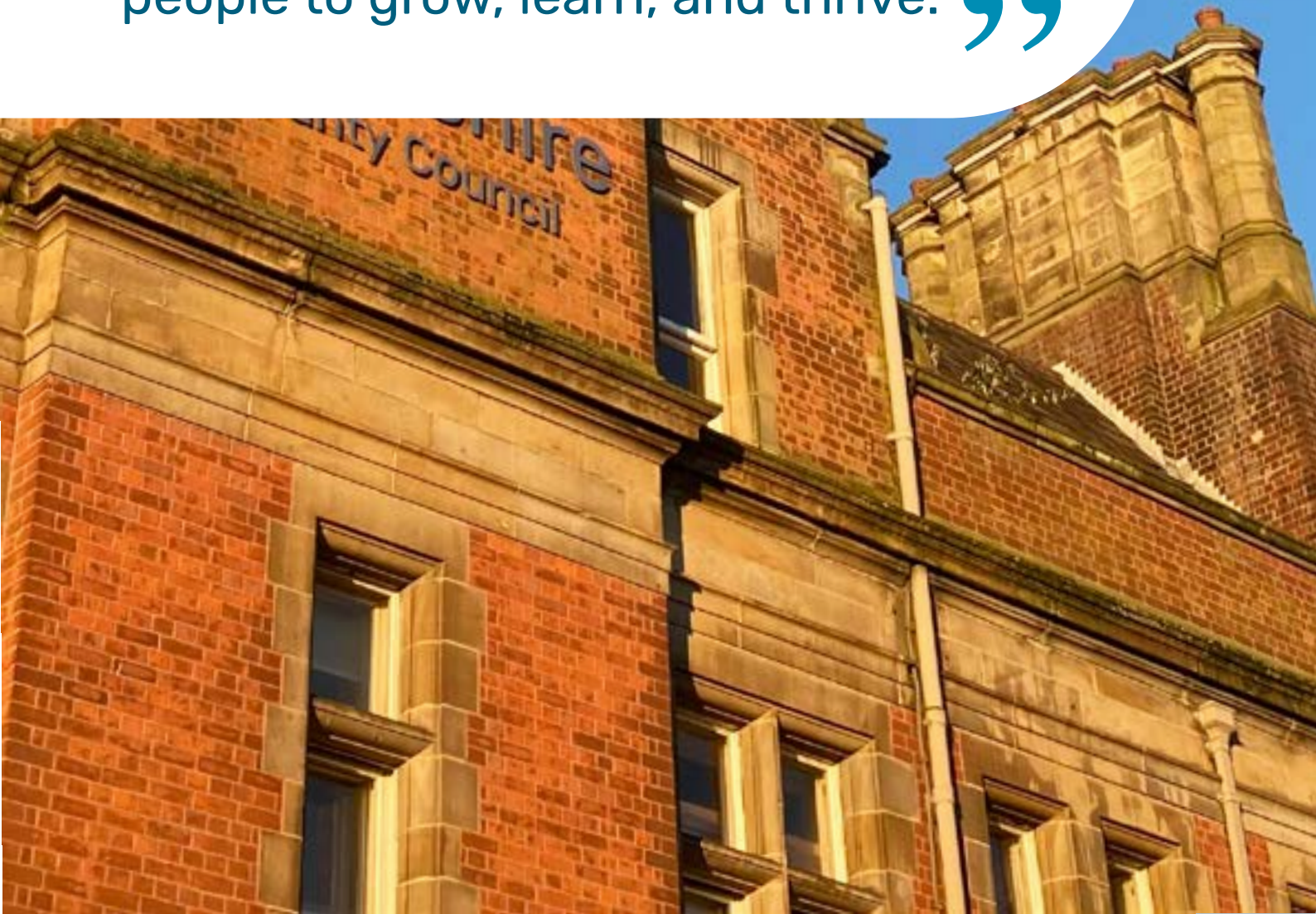
The Lancashire Way Education Strategy 2026–2028



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At the heart of “The Lancashire Way” Education Strategy

Lancashire stands at a pivotal moment in its journey to become the very best place in the UK for children and young people to grow, learn, and thrive. ”





The “Lancashire Way” Education Strategy 2026–2028 is our collective response to the challenges and opportunities facing our communities today. We know that too many children’s life chances are still held back by their circumstances, but we are determined to ensure that every child, regardless of background, can achieve, belong, and thrive.

This builds on the strong foundations of the Lancashire Children and Young People’s Plan, which set out a bold vision for inclusion, aspiration, and support for all families.

Our ambition is clear: to make school unmissable, to nurture every child’s strengths, and to ensure that Lancashire is a place where all children feel welcome, happy, and able to succeed.

We are immensely proud to be part of Lancashire—a county with a rich heritage, vibrant communities, and a deep commitment to education. The “Lancashire Way” draws inspiration from proven, evidence-based practices such as the Greater Manchester Challenge and London Challenge programmes, which demonstrate that ambitious, system-wide improvement is possible when there is a clear moral vision, a relentless focus on staff development, and a commitment to collaborative working. The “Lancashire Way” learns lessons from success in other parts of the country, but it is uniquely rooted in our local context and values. We are committed to creating inclusive environments where every child’s differences and successes are celebrated and where children live in loving and nurturing families. Our schools and settings will be dynamic, inclusive, and forward-thinking, embracing change where it is grounded in evidence and always striving for excellence. We believe in relational practice and support first approaches that celebrate the strengths of individual children, overcome barriers to learning, and ensure everyone feels welcome, happy and can succeed at school and achieve throughout their lives. We will invest in children and young people to help build increasingly prosperous and successful communities by improving outcomes and providing young people with the skills for life, as well as opportunities for play and having fun. And we are ambitious not only for the children and young people of Lancashire but also for those who work in education, making our county a beacon for talented individuals who want to make a difference.

Crucially, this strategy has been shaped by the voices of young people themselves. From the outset, we have worked in partnership with children, families, school staff, and community partners to co-produce a vision that truly reflects the aspirations and needs of those we serve. The priorities and actions set out in this strategy are informed by robust data and by the lived experiences of Lancashire's children and young people, whose insights have guided our approach at every stage. By building on the vision of the Lancashire Children and Young People's Plan and placing young people's voices at the heart of our work, we are confident that "The Lancashire Way" will deliver real and lasting change for every child in our county. Ensuring they become economically active citizens ready for employment.

We are committed to developing a culture where every member of our community: children, young people, teachers, pastoral staff, teaching assistants, wider school staff and our multi-agency partners, feel valued, inspired, and empowered to achieve their best. By delivering an exciting and forward-thinking vision, we aim to encourage talented individuals to choose careers in Lancashire's schools and settings, whether as teachers, support staff, or leaders.

Central to our approach is the recruitment, development, and retention of great teachers, pastoral staff, and teaching assistants, recognising that excellent staff are the foundation of excellent schools. We prioritise early intervention and expert support for schools, ensuring that challenges are addressed swiftly and effectively. At the same time, our strategy is deeply embedded in shared practice and locally driven change, with schools and partners working together in locality groups to co-produce solutions that are tailored to their communities. This combination of moral purpose, evidence-based innovation, and local empowerment is at the heart of "The Lancashire Way".



Cllr Matthew Salter

Cabinet Member for Education, Culture and Skills



Jacqui Old CBE

Executive Director of Education & Children's Services.

Our Key Priorities



Best Start in Life

All families should have the support they need to navigate parental challenges and ensure their child's success. All children will access high quality local provision where early intervention strategies address educational gaps and support children who are behind in their development and improve the quality of the reception year in schools to ensure we meet the 73.8% target for GLD set by the Department for Education.

Attendance

Improving attendance across Lancashire particularly for those children who are most vulnerable by working with families and supporting those children's needs by making school unmissable.

Increasing EET (Education, Employment, Training)

Increasing EET rates for 16–18-year-olds to above 95%, through locality-based EET plans, exceptional careers advice and support from schools, and strong links with employers and colleges.

Improving Transition

Supporting children at key transition points -nursery to reception, primary to secondary, and Year 11 to college -with enhanced guidance, timely identification of support, taster days, and peer support.

Improved Outcomes for all

Closing the attainment gap for disadvantaged, EAL, white working class boys and SEND pupils, reducing exclusions, and ensuring that all children feel safe, included, and able to thrive. This can only be achieved through exceptional multi-agency work, an inclusive, engaging curriculum and best practice sharing leading to fantastic teaching and learning.

Inclusive Practice

Embedding trauma-informed approaches, ensuring children can attend their local school in an environment which values them as individuals. Identifying needs and addressing barriers to learning through early identification, and supporting schools to celebrate all students and share their perspectives.

1000+

Private and
Voluntary early
years settings

29

Maintained
special
schools

24

Maintained
nursery
schools

543

primary
schools

84

secondary schools

10

further education colleges

Our Vision



Lancashire schools and settings

Lancashire schools and settings are welcoming, exciting and inclusive. They are committed to providing safe, nurturing, and inspiring environments where every child's differences and successes are recognised and celebrated. Settings know their children well and build positive relationships with students and their families through relational practice. Settings are research led, share best practice with each other and partners, deliver excellent teaching and learning and ensure supportive transitions across all phases. Lancashire settings are responsive to individual needs and prepare children to be happy and successful adults.

Lancashire students

Lancashire students are kind, curious, and confident. They enjoy learning and feel heard, valued, and nurtured. They are resilient, motivated, and prepared for adulthood, proud of who they are and celebrate their unique strengths. Our students are respectful, engaged, and active participants in school life, making the most of their opportunities and supporting one another. Students are ready to take risks, make mistakes and grow. Families are a supportive partner and encourage their children to attend well, take chances and work hard.



Delivering The “Lancashire Way”

The “Lancashire Way” Education Strategy is designed to deliver a step change in outcomes for all children and young people by embedding a place-based, partnership approach. We will divide Lancashire into five locality areas, each with a termly Education and Inclusion Partnership Group that brings together schools, health, social care, family wellbeing, police, and the voluntary sector and at least two or more districts.

Currently, these groups bring together local partners- schools, health, social care, family wellbeing, police, and the voluntary sector - to set and deliver on three local priorities each term, informed by robust data on attendance, exclusions, attainment, and local context. Each group is supported by a local education partnership officer and school improvement adviser, ensuring that action plans are tailored, responsive, and impactful. We will develop this further to become a focal point for school improvement priorities.

The locality groups will retain the ability to focus on other priorities, but each locality must focus on a local teaching and learning priority in each area. An annual conference attended by partners and school leaders will decide on these priorities together, embracing cross sector working and focusing on the six priorities above.

This approach ensures that improvement is not imposed from the centre but co-produced with those who know their communities best. Locality groups are empowered to address both county-wide priorities and local challenges, with a strong focus on teaching and learning, inclusion, and safeguarding. Local networks, whether already established or newly created, such as Inclusion Hubs, DSLs, SENCOs, attendance, behaviour, PHIL, LASSH, LSSHTA, Federations and PVLs are embedded within each locality to ensure that expertise and support are readily accessible, best practice is consistently shared, and emerging themes are communicated back to the locality group. The progress and evaluation of each of these initiatives will be reported to the locality group and subsequently fed into the Lancashire Education Partnership Board, ensuring robust oversight and approval of progress.

The Education Improvement service, in partnership with Lancashire Education Board, will also co-produce robust delivery plans for each strategic priority. Each plan is tailored to local needs, informed by data, and governed by the Lancashire Education Board (LEB) and the SEND Improvement Board, ensuring accountability and continuous improvement.

Improving outcomes at Place

The strategy places a strong emphasis on understanding the contexts and communities in which schools operate, with a focus on collaborative, area-based working. Through peer-to-peer support across local partnerships, schools will work together to drive sustained improvement. In line with the SEND reforms' ambition to support children within their local communities, this place-based approach will also support the development of shared specialist provision, including specialist bases and inclusive settings, tailored to meet the specific needs of each community.



This strategy aligns with the Department for Education's vision for education and ensures we are delivering on the alternative provision three tier model and the upcoming SEND reforms.

Alternative Provision Three Tier Model

Tier 1: Targeted support and early interventions in mainstream schools to help at-risk pupils remain in mainstream education.

Tier 2: Short-term placements in alternative provision (AP) schools to assess and address needs, with the aim of returning pupils to mainstream schools.

Tier 3: Transitional placements in AP schools for pupils who need support to move on to a new mainstream school or post-16 destination.

Principles for SEND Reform

Early: Provide support as soon as possible to prevent needs from escalating.

Local: Enable children with SEND to learn near home, with special schools supporting complex needs.

Fair: Ensure schools can meet needs without parents having to fight for support, with clear legal safeguards.

Effective: Base reforms on evidence and share best practices for strong long-term outcomes.

Shared: Foster partnership across education, health, care, families, and local bodies for better outcomes.

Our Partnership

Lancashire Education Board

The Lancashire Education Board brings together partners representing every aspect of the education landscape, including:

Department for Education (DfE)
Academy trusts
LASSH (secondary headteacher forum)
PHIL (primary headteacher forum)
LSSHTA (special school headteacher forum)
Pupil referral units
Early years PVI sector
Schools forum
Governing bodies
Maintained nursery headteachers
SEND units/resource provisions

Further education colleges
Health and SEND services
CSAP (Children safeguarding partnership education sub group)
LECG (Lancashire Education Consultative Group which raises operational issues in schools)
Executive Director of Children's Services,
Director of Education, Culture and Skills,
Head of Education Improvement,
Head of SEND and Inclusion
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

The Board plays a critical role in linking the council to the education sector, ensuring a platform for voices across the sector, and embedding peer challenge and thorough dialogue in our relationship with the sector, ensuring that all voices across the sector are heard, and that peer challenge is embedded within our processes. It will also oversee the work of local inclusion and education partnerships, ensuring they are accountable for their impact. This strong culture of collaboration, alongside the work of the Schools Forum, Ofsted, and the North West Association of Directors of Children's Services (NWADCS), ensures that data and outcomes are shared transparently and that barriers to success are systematically addressed and removed.

Support for schools is delivered through a blend of high-quality traded and core services, including the Lancashire Professional Development Service (LPDS) and the School Improvement and Support Group (SISG) advisory service, which provide training, curriculum support, and expert advice. In addition, the Strategic Support Partnership (SSP) early intervention team offers targeted support for schools requiring focused intervention, working in partnership with school leaders and governors to address challenges and broker effective solutions. This integrated support offer ensures that all schools, regardless of context, have access to the expertise and resources they need to improve, with clear processes for identifying need, brokering support, and monitoring impact, as set out in the Strategic Support Partnership Handbook.

Progress will be monitored and governed by the Lancashire Education Partnership Board and the SEND Partnership Board, with regular reporting and opportunities for challenge and reflection.

Conclusion

The “Lancashire Way” Education Strategy sets out a bold, place-based vision for education in Lancashire, grounded in partnership, closing the gap and high expectations for all. By building on past successes, focusing on key priorities, and providing robust, integrated support to schools, we will ensure that every child in Lancashire has the best possible start in life and the opportunity to thrive.





This strategy is based on the input from the following pupils from Lancashire schools and headteachers across the county, we want to share our huge thanks in shaping The Lancashire Way.

Pendle Community High School
Aughton St Michaels Primary School
St Bedes High School Ormskirk
Adlington Primary School
Coal Clough Academy
Millfield High School
Our Lady's High School Preston
Pendle Vale High School
Kelbrook Primary School



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