

SOUTH YORKSHIRE FUTURES



Introduction

from the South Yorkshire Futures team

South Yorkshire Futures was launched in 2017 by Sheffield Hallam University in partnership with local authorities and schools. The programme had a clear aim: to drive long term improvements in the educational health of the region by working with partners to improve attainment and aspiration from early years through to further and higher education.

We recognise there is an attainment gap in a northern region with relatively high levels of deprivation — a legacy of deindustrialisation in the 1980s and later austerity. The data shows that young people in South Yorkshire are less likely to achieve good GCSEs and progress to higher education than peers in south-east England. But even before school, attainment gaps are apparent between children of different backgrounds. On average, disadvantaged children are four months behind on language development than their more privileged peers at age five. The gap grows wider as they get older and this has been attributed to a lack of learning opportunities and encouragement at home. We believe that a good education is the essential foundation children need to build their life on.

For young people higher education may be a path to prosperity, but many South Yorkshire school children feel that this is not an option for them. We want to enable every young person growing up in South Yorkshire to become the best version of themselves by having access to high quality teaching, strong careers advice, excellent work experience and the ability to develop social capital. We believe that where you grow up should not define your future.

The aim of the programme is to raise attainment and aspiration — and we have identified the building blocks that will help to achieve this. In the following pages you will find examples of how the programme is giving young people in South Yorkshire a fighting chance of achieving their true potential, regardless of their background.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all the many partners we have worked with during the last few years. The very essence of South Yorkshire Futures is collaboration and we could not have led and supported the many projects in this brochure without them.



Foreword

from Mayor Dan Jarvis MP MBE

It is not a coincidence that some of my most important manifesto commitments related to education, young people, and skills. It was always clear to me how critical those concerns were to driving social mobility, boosting our economy, and working to ensure that every young person got the best start in life. For a stronger and fairer South Yorkshire, this was where we needed to focus effort and make a big difference.

I'm grateful that not long into my role I was introduced to the South Yorkshire Futures team at Sheffield Hallam University. I realised they not only shared the same goals but could do much to help us achieve them.

South Yorkshire Futures is incredibly committed to the cause. They see it as their mission to raise aspirations and improve educational attainment across the region, especially for those young people who need our support the most.

In true Yorkshire style, they are relentless in their pursuit of 'getting things done'. They have shown that through their inspiring work on early years development, the Children's University, teacher recruitment, and trauma informed schools, to name just a few.



Where you grow up shouldn't determine where you end up. But far too often, it does."



It should not be a matter of political debate that our children and young people need to be safe, healthy and emotionally secure. That every child and young person must have the opportunities, pathways and support to learn, prosper and fulfil their aspirations.

It is so important that all children and young people, regardless of their backgrounds, have an equal chance to learn, make new friends and widen their range of experiences. Where you grow up shouldn't determine where you end up. But far too often, it does.

That is why South Yorkshire Futures' mission to help the young people of our region is also my mission as Mayor.

And as we strive to recover from the deep and painful effects of a pandemic which has hit South Yorkshire especially hard, this work is more important than ever.

I'm proud to support this important scheme which is making a real difference in our communities. Together, we will continue working to demolish the barriers holding back our young people.

Our Story: Our Vision

PARTNERSHIPS FOR ATTAINMENT LAUNCHED

ONE-YEAR-ON EVENT

At our one-year-on event we convened with over 250 of our partners and stakeholders to celebrate our first year of progress. Mayor Dan Jarvis pledged his support of the programme and outlined partnership funding for key projects. We also unveiled our Regional Vision for Early Years.



SOUTH YORKSHIRE CHILDREN'S UNIVERSITY FUNDING

PARENTCHILD+

We supported the national charity Family Lives to bid for funding for and to launch a new project aiming to prepare disadvantaged preschool children for school. ParentChild+ aims to improve the home-learning environment through home visits, encouraging rich and meaningful parent-child interaction to promote positive behaviour and literacy skills in preparation for school.



RECEIVED EARLY YEARS COMMUNITY RESEARCH CENTRE FUNDING

COVID-19 RESOURCES

During the Covid-19 UK-wide lockdown, we worked with long-standing partner Trauma Informed Schools UK and Nifty Fox Creative to put together a suite of resources for those looking after children, to support them in explaining the situation and supporting mental health.

2017

July Aug Sept Oct Nov Dec

PROGRAMME LAUNCHED

SUTTON TRUST RESEARCH PUBLISHED

The Sutton Trust Mobility Map ranks constituencies in the UK on levels of social mobility. In July 2017, the map showed that of the 14 South Yorkshire constituencies, 10 have very low or low social mobility. South Yorkshire Futures launched later that year with the aim of improving educational attainment and raising aspirations for young people in the region.

2018

Jan Feb Mar Apr June July Aug Sept Oct Nov Dec

FIRST GET INTO TEACHING EVENT



EARLY OUTCOMES PROJECT FUNDING

2019

Jan Feb Mar Apr June July Aug Sept Oct Nov Dec

SOUTH YORKSHIRE TALENT BANK LAUNCHED

SCHOOL GOVERNOR CHAMPION PLEDGE



2020

Jan Feb Mar Apr June

GROW MENTORING PROGRAMME LAUNCHED

We're working with the Northern Powerhouse Partnership to recruit and train Sheffield Hallam University graduates as mentors, who will be deployed in schools across the region to support returning pupils. The initial pilot phase saw incoming year 11 pupils in the region provided with a personal mentor, with a focus on disadvantaged pupils who are in danger of falling behind. Due to its success, the programme is being rolled out more widely across the region.

Our work continues



Sally Pearse

Strategic Lead for Early Years,
South Yorkshire Futures

STUDIES HAVE PROVIDED clear evidence of the long-term impact of high-quality early years provision and supportive services for young families. However, funding and policy decisions do not necessarily reflect its significance. South Yorkshire Futures understands the importance of early years provision and is determined to work with partners to provide a firm foundation for children's later life and learning.

Our aim is to ensure that children and families in South Yorkshire are supported in the early years by skilled professionals, who have a good understanding of child development and the crucial role of parent partnership and the home learning environment. To achieve this end our initial focus with partners has been to develop a regional vision for quality early years services, to improve support for communication and language in the early years and to explore how the home learning environment can be supported to improve outcomes.

Since 2017 we have built strong partnerships with our colleagues in local authorities and within the diverse early years sector in our region and created a clear, shared vision. This vision has underpinned the range of work we have undertaken and has also brought an additional £2.2million in funding for Early Years services in South Yorkshire. This work will continue and develop in response to the new challenges which we now face as a sector and a region.

Early Years Community Research Centre



Towards the end of 2018 there was an opportunity to bid for funding from the Department for Education's Schools and Nurseries Capital Fund. We came together with the Watercliffe Meadow School, Sheffield City Council and Save the Children UK to submit a bid and the school were awarded £345,000 in 2019 to refurbish part of a community centre adjacent to the school. The nursery at the Early Years Community Research Centre will be part of the Hallam University nursery, working in collaboration with Watercliffe Meadow School. Training, research and evaluation will also be provided by Sheffield Hallam University, and the extensive programme of early years support and systems change expertise will be provided by Save the Children UK. Sheffield Hallam University students will have an opportunity to complete work-based learning at the centre, supporting the University's civic ambitions and providing additional capacity for the centre to deliver its ambitions. Save the Children UK will integrate support and training for parental engagement in learning and building positive home learning environments to complement the offer of the centre. The Covid-19 pandemic paused the project progress in March 2020, just before the construction phase was due to start. However, we are anticipating that the Early Years Community Research Centre will open its doors in 2021.



We have worked closely with South Yorkshire Futures over the past 18 months to develop an 'Early Excellence Hub'. This will be a new early year's provision to cater for families from our community. I can honestly say that the project would not have progressed to the stage we're at without the ongoing support and wider expertise that South Yorkshire Futures has brought. The team has been able to draw on expertise and learning from several departments within Sheffield Hallam and other networks across the region. They are true research-based innovators and it has been a pleasure to work in partnership with them."

Ian Read

Head Teacher, Watercliffe Meadow Primary School, Sheffield

Early Outcomes Project

In South Yorkshire, too many children are falling behind with critical speech, language and communication skills, from an early age. Almost 30 per cent of children do not achieve the expected level of development in communication, language and literacy in South Yorkshire. That's over 4,500 children every year, who are at risk of not achieving their potential.

Speech, language and communication skills are critical to a child's development. Being able to speak clearly, process sounds, understand others, think critically and express their ideas are fundamental building blocks to overall development, and educational outcomes later in their lives.

The South Yorkshire Early Outcomes Project brought together experts in early education, to develop an evidence-led skills strategy. Over 800 professionals from across the region contributed to the evidence base on which the strategy was developed. Through this strategy each local authority has developed an action plan to support professional development opportunities.

The project also kick-started the development of a strategy to ensure that pathways for children and families through our local services promote a strong focus on speech, language and communication skills development. All interactions that local authorities and their partners have with young children will, through this strategy, be able to identify, assess and where appropriate address speech, language and communication needs.



It was immediately felt that through the strong partnership with South Yorkshire futures, our best hope would be a joint funding bid. The South Yorkshire Futures team were pivotal to the success of the bid and gave each local authority support, direction and advice. After the bid was successful, colleagues from South Yorkshire Futures immediately made arrangements to drive the work forward and have been instrumental to all the success the project has had so far."

Paula Williams

Service Leader for Early Years and Childcare Quality, Inclusion and Workforce Development, Rotherham Metropolitan Council

"There have been some great advantages to collaborative working across the region with South Yorkshire Futures. The knowledge, skills and expertise within the Sheffield Hallam team has brought with it a new dynamic to the project and enabled progress to be maintained throughout. There has been real value added to operational meetings and workshops, with the University as an impartial body providing a more holistic perspective, a clear focus and a strong steer to meet our intended aims and objectives."

Alison Leeming

Early Years Inclusion Officer, Doncaster Council



Sue O'Brien

Strategic Lead for Performance and Partnerships for Attainment, South Yorkshire Futures

WE KNOW THAT HIGH QUALITY teachers are key to driving improvements in attainment in our schools. Retaining teachers to the schools that need them the most enables schools to build success.

Across our region there are vibrant schools, with high quality teachers, who build successful, nurturing relationships with their children and young people, to enable them to thrive. However, this experience is not consistent for all - some children and young people in our region are missing out. Where excellence happens in schools, teachers and leaders who are supported, developed and valued thrive, in meeting the needs of their pupils.

This strand of work aims to support, develop and celebrate the teaching profession and demonstrate the rewards of training and teaching in our region.

We aim to ensure that our teacher workforce represents the communities they serve and meets the needs of those communities. We are relentless in our drive to ensure that our schools have the teachers they need, in the subjects they need and that these teachers get the support and development they need.

We want our new teachers to know that they are entering a supportive, valued profession, where their well-being and development matters and that, in South Yorkshire, they will continue to be supported, throughout their career.

Get Into Teaching



All initial teacher training providers in South Yorkshire, and their school direct partners, are working together to improve the attraction, recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers in our region. This collaborative approach is called Partnerships for Attainment, with partners including: Sheffield Hallam University, University of Sheffield and Teach First.

With a marketplace full of noise and each provider running their own recruitment events, there is little space left for raising up the profession and empowering prospective

teachers. With Partnerships for Attainment, we're transforming recruitment activity. We began by rebranding and redesigning the University's traditional teacher training recruitment events, so they can be used as a gathering for all teacher training providers in South Yorkshire.

Our aims and objectives, based on extensive research, were clear – work with our partners to provide events that: inspire entry into the teaching profession, give impartial advice, are neutrally branded, stop the decline in bookings and attendance at teaching training recruitment events.



I want a change in career, this event has had all the information I need in one place which has saved me a lot of time. I like that all providers are here, it feels like a celebration of teaching rather than a recruitment event."

"I am dead set on teaching. I know I want to stay local but not sure what path to take. This event has been a one-stop-shop for teaching in the region and it means that we only need to attend one event rather than multiple."

Get Into Teaching event attendees

Trauma Informed Schools

Building on the innovative and collaborative programme of teaching in the Sheffield Institute of Education at Sheffield Hallam University, South Yorkshire Futures is pioneering a strategy to support a trauma informed school workforce across the region. The aim of the strategy is to provide every trainee teacher, regardless of route or subject, access to trauma informed practice training, through collaboration with Trauma Informed Schools (TIS) UK.

To date this multi-faceted strategy has been able to:

- Support TIS UK to provide a comprehensive 10-day diploma to teachers and related professionals across South Yorkshire
- Work with South Yorkshire Police Violence Reduction Unit to bring together key regional stakeholders to begin the conversation about a county wide strategy
- Team up with TISUK and Nifty Fox Creative at the start of the Covid-19 lockdown to produce resources to support parents in helping children understand and deal with the sudden unprecedented situation. The resource also included advice and guidance for schools and settings to enable them to support staff working in schools during lockdown
- Host a virtual conference to support organisations working with vulnerable children and young people across South Yorkshire during the Covid-19 crisis. Experts in education and leaders from children's charities and support organisations shared ideas and expertise on how the most vulnerable people in the region can be supported through education practice



We've been privileged to work in partnership with South Yorkshire Futures, supporting their vision to raise aspiration for children and young people in the region. From supporting initial teacher education, ensuring that the next generation of teachers enter the classroom able to remove the barriers to learning that adversity and trauma can present, to creating school communities that are mentally healthy cultures for all, we are extremely proud to share our knowledge and evidence-based models."

Julie Harmieson
Co-Director Trauma Informed Schools UK





Carol Castle & Cathy Sinclair
Joint Strategic Leads for Pathways and Progression,
South Yorkshire Futures

WE ARE PASSIONATE BELIEVERS that all young people deserve to achieve their potential, and the power of education and skills in transforming lives. Our ambition is to support young people to identify and achieve their aspirations, whether that be progression to higher level skills, higher education or employment. It is about giving young people the opportunities and experiences to be inspired, the resources to cope, develop skills and make informed choices so they can reach their potential in education, work and most importantly in life.

South Yorkshire Futures provides a unique opportunity to turn this ambition into a reality. It provides a strategic framework through which we coordinate a range of initiatives, working with partners from across the region – making our work more than the sum of its parts.

We're proud of the collective progress on raising aspirations we've made in South Yorkshire so far, but the challenge is far from over. As we look forwards, we'll build on these foundations, continuing to identify gaps and share best practice and most importantly, drive positive change for young people in the region.

Children's University

We believe that every child in South Yorkshire should be able to become the very best they can be. Our vision is to develop a South Yorkshire Children's University (CU) based on our successful Sheffield CU model, to ensure that every school-age child in South Yorkshire, especially those from disadvantaged areas, can access high quality extra-curricular learning activities that are tracked, rewarded and celebrated.

Underpinned by extensive local and national research, the CU learning adventure, which culminates in an inspirational graduation ceremony, gives children and young people the opportunity to enrich their childhoods, nurture a lifelong love of learning, unlock their skills and talents and develop their aspirations and confidence regardless of their backgrounds.

Supported by Sheffield City Region, our success to date has focussed on the development of key partnerships across South Yorkshire, including establishing a brand-new CU in Rotherham, led by the School Improvement Service. We have also engaged a key partner organisation to lead the development of a new CU in Barnsley.

Together with existing CU centres in Doncaster and Sheffield, we have now formed a South Yorkshire CU strategic partnership which aims to share good practice and develop collaborative projects for the benefit of all children, young people and families in our region. Consolidating best practice and demonstrating the impact of CU across our region, whilst keeping children and families at the centre of our work is our focus moving forward.



I believe it's so important that young people from all backgrounds get the opportunity to benefit from this fantastic project. I'm delighted to confirm this Mayoral Capacity Fund money, to expand the Children's University and give children from across South Yorkshire the range of opportunities that they so deserve."

Dan Jarvis MBE MP
Sheffield City Region Mayor

"You just don't realise that you are learning something at the same time. Most people just take part in the clubs to have a laugh, maybe get some exercise if it's a sports club. Then you get to go to one of the award ceremonies and that's another level. That's when you look at yourself and your friends in a cap and gown and actually realise what you've done, what you've achieved."

Kyle
Year 11 Firth Park Academy student and Sheffield Children's University pupil

South Yorkshire Talent Bank



South Yorkshire Futures is committed to ensuring all young people in our region have access to the best careers education to drive their motivation and ambition, and clear guidance on the pathways to turn that potential into reality. We're firm believers that "you can't be what you can't see" and that is why, in 2019, we launched the 'South Yorkshire Talent Bank' – a platform to bring together our incredibly skilled and varied regional workforce to inspire and inform young people on their career options and opportunities through a range of initiatives.

In 2020, we supported the Social Mobility Business Partnership, to set-up a work experience week in South Yorkshire for Year 12 students from low income or low higher education progression rate backgrounds. Working with employers across the region, students gained an insight into four different sector organisations, breaking down stereotypes and psychological barriers around 'fitting in,' as well as receiving practical tips on applications and recruitment.

But we also recognise that schools are at the heart of the challenge to improve attainment in our region. To drive school improvement and maximise student outcomes, schools and colleges need to be able to recruit a diverse board of governors with a wide range of professional

skills. To make this possible, we have partnered with Inspiring Governance, an online platform connecting volunteers to schools and colleges seeking to fill governor and trustee vacancies. Acting as champions in the region, we encourage local employers to take part, as well as taking the lead ourselves - Sheffield Hallam is the first University in the UK to sign the School Governor Champion charter, pledging to encourage and support staff to be governors in schools and colleges across the region.



Our aim is to encourage as many employers as possible to become School Governor Champions, because we see employers supporting their staff to become school governors as a win-win situation. We hope that Sheffield Hallam University signing this charter will encourage others across South Yorkshire and the higher education sector, to do the same."

Richard Ellam
Inspiring Governance
Regional Manager

South Yorkshire Futures Covid-19 Response

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on children and young people across the world. In the UK, millions of pupils were no longer able to attend nurseries, pre-schools, primary and secondary schools, or further education colleges due to the nationwide 'lockdown'.

At South Yorkshire Futures, we immediately began to communicate with our partners to assess what action we could take that would provide additional support to education and care providers, and children and young people in our region. Below are just some examples of resources and projects we worked with our partners to develop and share in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.



GROW Programme

The GROW programme was launched as a pilot scheme in July 2020, designed to address some of the challenges facing year 10 and year 11 pupils at this very particular time in their lives. It also offers graduates entering employment the opportunity to develop important skills in mentoring and coaching others, and to be accredited for this work.

The scheme matches eight recent Sheffield Hallam graduates with 40 year 10 pupils, from four schools across the region. Graduate mentors used virtual learning and communication tools to work with the pupils for two hours per week to help them prepare for their return to the classroom.

The programme is part of a collaborative effort with teams and departments across the University, as well as school partners from across the region and the Northern Powerhouse Partnership. Due to the programme's success, the GROW mentoring scheme is now being rolled out across the region and the Northern Powerhouse Partnership.

Abigail Wensley, a Sheffield Hallam psychology graduate was a mentor in the pilot. She said: "After an intensive week of training, I have not only left with new skills and knowledge, but new experiences with children to help me with my future. The GROW programme benefits everyone involved – I inspired them, while they inspired me. A two-way door, I was not expecting."

In July 2020, Universities Minister, Michelle Donelan, participated in an interactive Zoom session with the graduate mentors and students from Firth Park Academy in Sheffield and Wales High School in Rotherham.

"I know this is a difficult time for young people, but I am pleased universities like Sheffield Hallam are stepping up, supporting their communities, and contributing

to the national recovery effort. It was great to hear from graduate mentors from the GROW programme about their invaluable work helping pupils as they prepare to return to school. This experience will help graduates build their skills, gain experience and bolster their CVs as they prepare to start their careers."



Children and Covid-19 Resources

The national lockdown in response to the Covid-19 pandemic happened so quickly that many families found themselves in incredibly challenging situations. South Yorkshire Futures immediately utilised our long-established relationship with Trauma Informed Schools UK, to collaboratively produce a suite of resources to support families and young people.

The resources are free and available to anyone via the South Yorkshire Futures website. We produced resources to support families to communicate with their children about Covid-19 and to encourage taking part in learning activities at home. We also produced resources to support schools and education settings to ensure the mental health and wellbeing of the children's workforce.

Virtual Conference

In April 2020, we hosted a virtual conference, to share ideas on how organisations can support vulnerable children and young people during the Covid-19 crisis. The conference was planned and delivered in under 2 weeks, to meet the urgent need for support and guidance.

The conference was attended by over 300 participants, with speakers including Trauma Informed Schools and Save the Children UK. We covered a broad range of topics and issues, including poverty and bereavement.

Julie Harmieson, Co-Director of Trauma Informed Schools UK, said: "It was a great privilege to be involved, and so heart-warming to hear such a commitment to getting it right, for both children and the workforce – well done South Yorkshire."

Children and Covid-19

Advice and support for parents, carers and those working with children



2021 Vision and Key Deliverables

As a university, we want to ensure that civic engagement is hardwired into the fabric of our institutional culture and outlook. We are proudly a university of place, and our vision is to help make this ambition a reality – embedding civic aspirations at an institutional level, as well as working with government and strategic partners to ensure that the university's role and responsibility is used more effectively as an agent to drive improvement in life chances for young people across the region. This is particularly important given the economic and social challenges presented by Covid -19.

In 2020/2021, through the South Yorkshire Futures programme we will continue to pursue the vision that all young people in South Yorkshire will achieve their potential. We will drive long term improvements in the educational health of the region by working with partners to improve attainment and aspiration from early years through to further and higher education.

We will:

- Strengthen our leadership role in the region by developing successful relationships with partners to enhance the attractiveness of the University and region for teaching, research and innovation
- Work imaginatively with others who share our commitment to enriching the social, economic and cultural life of the city and the wider region
- Actively explore and create opportunities for wider strategic impact in the region, recognising our role as a purchaser, partner and wider contributor of skills, knowledge and profile

Early Years Community Research Centre

The Early Years Community Research Centre will bring together multiple and diverse stakeholders; including the community, children and families, service providers, and local business leaders to work with a range of academic researchers to co-produce new interventions and services that will improve health and education outcomes in this key sensitive period of child development. The EYCRC will act as a 'living laboratory' to explore what works in terms of interventions to support early childhood development, learning and health.

South Yorkshire Children's University

The continued expansion of the South Yorkshire Children's University will help all young people to access out of school activities. We recognise that access to extra-curricular activities is key to helping young people develop their social capital. For young people to achieve their potential, we believe that they must have access to opportunities beyond the classroom. The Children's University is key to enabling all young people to reach their potential.

South Yorkshire Talent Bank

The further development of the Talent Bank will build essential links between the world of work and young people. Through these links, we will continue to support young people to access the opportunities that are available in the city region and to help them navigate the path to achieving their desired career by helping them to identify the steps they have to take, including gaining qualifications and appropriate work experience.

Social Mobility Business Partnership

Working in partnership with the Social Mobility Business Partnership will enable young people to gain work experience in professional areas that they might not have previously seen there being opportunities for them. By giving young people access to these opportunities, we hope that they will consider a wider range of career options than they might not have previously thought of.

Trauma Informed Practice

We will continue to work with a wide range of partners across different sectors to embed trauma-informed practice across the region. We believe that this approach will transform the life chances of many young people. When practitioners use this approach, the transformation in outcomes for those young people can be huge. We will work to ensure that people working with young people are equipped with the required skills.



A special thank you to our partners:

Doncaster Council

Sheffield City Council

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Northern Powerhouse Partnership

Children's University

TISUK

Watercliffe Meadow

Education and Employers

Save the Children


Mayor Dan Jarvis MBE MP

Sheffield City Region Local Enterprise Partnership

Sheffield City Region Mayoral Combined Authority

Social Mobility Business Partnership

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