



Herefordshire Council

NEET Tracking Improvement Action Plan

July 2026 – January 2027

Overall Objective

To reduce the proportion of young people whose participation status is recorded as "Not Known", improve the completeness and timeliness of participation tracking, strengthen early intervention arrangements for young people at risk of becoming NEET, and ensure Herefordshire Council's performance moves out of the lowest-performing local authority cohort within six months.

Assessment of Current Performance and Key Challenges

- 321 young people are currently recorded as "Not Known" (July 2026)
- Strong relationships are in place with post 16 providers, Local authority teams and external providers for data sharing
- Performance has been adversely affected by team capacity issues, the authority experienced a six-month vacancy during the previous year. Since May 2026 there has been no dedicated tracking officer due to maternity leave.
- The current tracking role has historically operated with only 18.5 hours per week capacity.
- Difficulties contacting some young people through traditional communication methods have limited the speed at which destination information can be updated.

Senior Accountability

Senior Responsible Officer: Liz Farr, Director of Education, Skills and Learning

Responsibilities:

- Overall accountability for delivery of the improvement plan.
- Direct communication and reporting to the Department for Education.

- Oversight of capacity review and resource requirements.
- Chairing performance review meetings.

Operational Leads: Alexia Heath, Senior Adviser Post-16 Learning and Skills/ Louise Tanner Head of Learning and Achievement/ Ian Sockett Business Intelligence Manager

Responsibilities:

- Day-to-day implementation of the action plan.
- Management of tracking processes.
- Improvement of data quality and reporting.
- Oversight of partnership engagement and development of digital solutions.

Action Plan to Improve Tracking Completeness and Reduce "Not Known" Status (to include timescales and milestones)

Action	Lead	Timescale	Success Measure
Complete a comprehensive review of all 321 young people currently recorded as "Not Known"	Senior Adviser Post-16 Learning & Skills and Youth Hub Coordinator	31 July 2026	An accurate and current picture of those yp who are not known (projected significant decrease)
Sign off DfE recovery plan	Director of Education	14 August 2026	Plan submitted to DfE by 14 August 2026
Recruit and appoint maternity cover for participation tracking function	Director of Education	31 August 2026	Dedicated tracking resource in place
Introduce structured handover and training programme for new postholder	Senior Adviser Post-16 Learning & Skills and Youth Hub Coordinator	August–September 2026	New staff member independently managing tracking activities
Review of current capacity is being conducted indicating that we can bolster this area by 0.5	Director of Education	31 August 2026	Additional dedicated tracking resource in place Autumn term

Action	Lead	Timescale	Success Measure
FTE, recruitment planned in the Autumn following financial sign off process			
Establish weekly tracking review process during autumn term	Post 16 Tracking Officer	31 September 2026 onwards	Increased frequency of status updates to SLT
Develop and launch online self-update facility and webpage for young people	Senior Adviser Post-16 Learning & Skills	31 September 2026	Alternative digital route for young people to update status
Improve use of destination, provider and participation data to support validation activities	Post 16 Participation Team	Ongoing	Increased proportion of destinations confirmed within expected timescales
First formal performance review completed October 2026	SLT	1 st October 2026	Significant reduction (50%) of yp recorded not known compared to September 2025 data
Mid-point evaluation against DfE targets November 2026	SLT	1 st November 2026	Significant reduction (50%) of yp recorded not known compared to October 2025 data
Six-month impact review and report to DfE January 2027	Senior Adviser Post-16 Learning & Skills and Youth Hub Coordinator. Director of Education	January 2026	Not known numbers in line with statistical neighbours

Monitoring Progress and Reviewing Impact

Monitoring Activity	Frequency
Review of total number of "Not Known" young people	Bi-monthly (SLT)
Review of destination confirmation rates	Bi-monthly (SLT)
Tracking team performance review meeting	Bi-monthly (SLT)

Monitoring Activity	Frequency
Directorate performance review chaired by Director(SLT)	Bi-monthly
Progress report against DfE action plan	September/ October/ January
Formal review of staffing capacity and sustainability	Autumn 2026

Key Performance Indicators

1. Reduction in the number and percentage of young people recorded as "Not Known".
2. Improved timeliness of destination confirmation.
3. Increased engagement with young people through digital reporting methods.
4. Sustainable staffing arrangements for participation tracking.