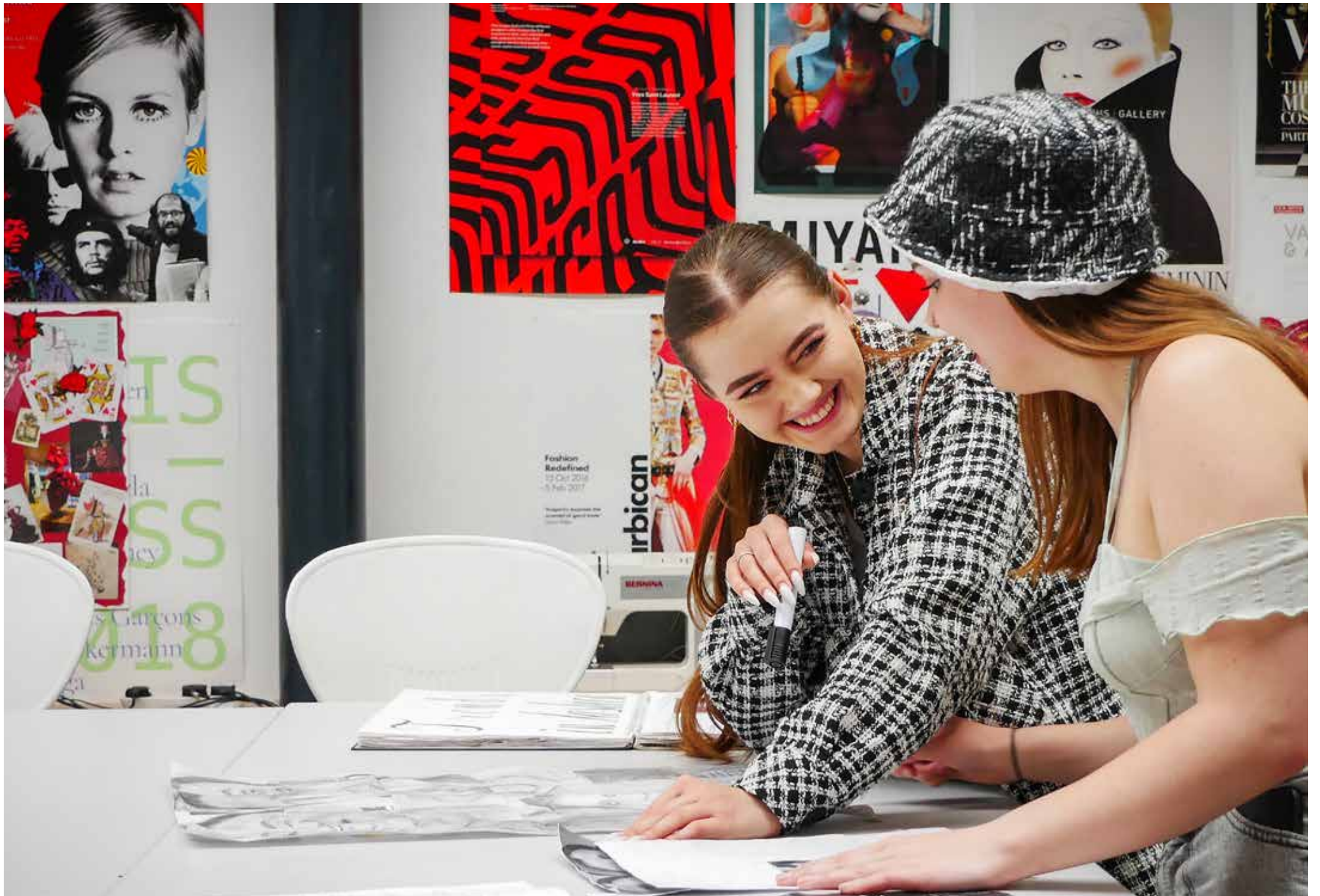




STRATEGIC PLAN

2024 to 2027

Learning to create tomorrow:
Technical and professional excellence at the heart of Barking and Dagenham



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**Natalie Davison**

Principal & Chief Executive

Barking & Dagenham College stands at the heart of a Borough undergoing profound economic and social transformation. Over the past decade, the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham has seen rapid regeneration, with significant investments in infrastructure, housing and local businesses. As the Borough continues to evolve into a hub of growth and opportunity, the need for a skilled, adaptable workforce has never been greater.

At the same time, we know that inequality and social mobility remain pressing issues. For many within our diverse community, further education is key to breaking the cycle of disadvantage and opening doors to a brighter future.

In this context, Barking & Dagenham College plays a vital role in shaping the futures of our students, communities, local businesses and economy, and our Borough as a whole. This strategic plan outlines our vision for the next phase of our journey, focusing on our core purpose: creating pathways to sustainable employment, fostering social mobility, and addressing local and regional skills needs.

Our refreshed approach aligns the College's strategic ambitions with five clear themes: people; portfolio of provision; pedagogy +; performance; and prudence. Key goals include attracting and retaining exceptional staff, driving educational excellence and expanding technical, professional and higher level skills in partnership with businesses. We must maintain a strong financial position too, enabling continued investment in digital transformation and environmental sustainability.

Underpinning all of this is our clear sense of place and purpose, and the understanding that we do our best work through strong and carefully nurtured partnerships. Whilst shaping our priorities for the next three years we have: listened to stakeholders; aligned with the regeneration agenda for Barking and Dagenham and the London Growth Plan; responded to national policy developments; and thought hard about our responsibility to reduce our carbon footprint.

With all of this in mind, I am delighted to present our strategic plan for 2024 to 2027. This new plan draws on thinking about all areas of our work and positions Barking & Dagenham College as a catalyst for inclusive growth and economic prosperity in East London. It reflects the challenges we face and the many opportunities open to us. Most of all, it provides a clear focus and direction for our future.

This new strategy comes at a time when the recently elected government is putting in place a whole new policy framework around the education and skills sector.

Over the next three years we can expect: the creation of a new national coordinating body, Skills England; the transformation of the Apprenticeship Levy into a more flexible Growth and Skills Levy; the devolution of Adult Skills Funds to local and regional authorities; the production of a national post-16 education strategy; and major reforms to further and higher education with an emphasis on greater collaboration and partnership working.

All of these developments will have a direct impact on the work of the College, not only setting the agenda for funding and delivery priorities but also shaping the way in which our effectiveness will be evaluated.

The biggest challenge for the government will be to find the resources to achieve these goals, given the weak state of public finances. The biggest challenge for us will therefore be to keep running a tight financial ship, so that we can make best use of the funding that is available and spot new income opportunities as soon as they arise.

At the same time, we must maintain a high standard of teaching and learning, so that every single student gets the best chance to succeed.

I congratulate the Principal & Chief Executive and her team for producing this comprehensive strategy and thank every member of staff who has contributed to it.

Over the coming years it will provide a guide to help us navigate through the evolving education landscape and develop our annual plans, priorities and targets. It will be our route map to achieving the learning of tomorrow.



Andy Forbes
Chair of Corporate Board

OUR MISSION

**Empowering
futures,
transforming
lives**

OUR VISION

**To be an
exceptional
college**

OUR CULTURE AND VALUES

Barking & Dagenham College is a unique, diverse and *inclusive* environment in which everyone is supported to grow, develop and really flourish.

We treat each student as an individual because we know that everyone is different. Every individual has their own unique talents, circumstances, challenges and aspirations. Every student brings something special and it is this diversity and richness of ideas that makes College life interesting, fun and vibrant. Our culture is such that all students, staff and visitors should feel welcome, *safe* and valued. Guided by our *principles* of honesty, integrity and transparency, we treat each other respectfully and seek to establish trust. By building *resilience* and confidence, we encourage students and staff to rise above challenges with determination and a positive mindset.

Whilst we are rightly proud of our unique internal culture, Barking & Dagenham College is an outward facing organisation that recognises the critical importance of working through *networks and collaboration* to lead change and influence local agendas. By partnering with industry-leading employers and embracing *innovation*, digital technologies and new ways of thinking, we strive to push the boundaries of learning and ensure that our students are ahead of the curve. Our many stakeholder partnerships mean that we have established our place at the heart of our community and as a key partner in the regeneration of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

At Barking & Dagenham College, we are dedicated to inspiring students and staff to embrace challenges and pursue their dreams with confidence. Most of all, we are ambitious and we expect *excellence* – from ourselves and from our students.

INSPIRE

These are the values that guide all of our activities:

Inclusion

Valuing diversity and ensuring equal opportunities for all

Networks and collaboration

Working together and through partnerships to achieve common goals

Safety and wellbeing

Creating an environment where everyone feels safe, supported, respected and valued

Principles

Acting with honesty, integrity and transparency at all times

Innovation

Embracing creative thinking and new technologies

Resilience

Overcoming challenges with perseverance and determination

Excellence

Striving for the highest possible standards in everything we do



London Borough of Barking and Dagenham: Context

Barking and Dagenham is a Borough defined by contrasts. Whilst it faces some of London's most significant socio-economic challenges it is also one of the capital's key areas for growth and opportunity.

As one of London's most disadvantaged Boroughs, Barking and Dagenham faces high levels of income and employment deprivation, underscoring the need for inclusive approaches to social and economic development. The unemployment rate is volatile and higher than the London average. In 2023, around 7,500 people aged 16 and over were unemployed, at a rate of 6.8% compared to 5.0% across London. This marked an increase from 4.9% in Barking and Dagenham the previous year.¹ Alongside economic inactivity, in-work poverty persists, highlighting the need for inclusive solutions that promote resilience and self-sufficiency.

The Borough's rapidly changing demographic profile adds to its complexity. Between the 2011 and 2021 censuses, the population of Barking and Dagenham grew by 17.7%, from approximately 185,900 to 218,900. This is significantly higher than the 7.7% growth for London and 6.6% for England over the same period.²

Barking and Dagenham is one of the youngest Boroughs in the UK, with 26.1% of its population aged under 16 in the 2021 census, the highest proportion in England and Wales.³ While this youthfulness presents great potential, it also drives higher demand for educational and social services, especially with the growing number of children needing support.⁴ The Borough is also one of the most ethnically diverse areas of the UK, enriching its cultural and economic landscape whilst highlighting the importance of inclusive learning opportunities for all.

Barking and Dagenham is central to London's growth agenda. The Council's Inclusive Growth

Strategy aims to tackle systemic inequalities, focusing on priorities such as generating economic opportunities, removing employment barriers and skills development in key sectors like construction, health and social care.⁵ Investment in green industries and infrastructure demonstrates commitment to sustainable development, aligning regeneration plans with broader London and national goals for innovation and growth.⁶

Whilst plans are ambitious, the socio-economic context remains challenging. Inward investment and economic development offer significant opportunities, but their impact will be in the longer-term. Persistent gaps in education, employment and health outcomes highlight the need to align skills provision with local economic priorities, ensuring that regeneration creates lasting change for those most in need. Addressing deprivation and promoting social mobility remain critical to the Council's vision of ensuring that "no one is left behind".³

1. Office for National Statistics, Employment, unemployment and economic inactivity in Barking and Dagenham, (2024). Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/labourmarketlocal/E09000002/#unemployment> [Accessed: 20 October 2024].

2. Office for National Statistics, How the population changed in Barking and Dagenham: Census 2021, (2022). Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censuspopulationchange/E09000002/> [Accessed: 20 October 2024].

3. London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, Barking & Dagenham Corporate Plan, 2023 to 2026, (2023). Available at: <https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-05/LBBD%20Corporate%20Plan%202023-2026.pdf> [Accessed: 18 November 2024].

4. London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, Annual Education Performance Review 2023/24, (2024). Available at: <https://lbbd.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s171459/Education%20Perf%202023-24%20Report.pdf> [Accessed: 15 December 2024].

5. London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, Inclusive Growth Strategy, 2022–2026 (Draft), (2022). Available at: <https://oneboroughvoice.lbbd.gov.uk/inclusive-growth-strategy-2022-26> [Accessed: 15 December 2024].

6. Department for Education, Skills England: Driving growth and widening opportunities, (2024). Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66ff4fce84ae1fd8592ee37/Skills_England_Report.pdf [Accessed: 15 December 2024].

Barking & Dagenham College response to local context and national skills priorities: Curriculum intent

'Curriculum intent' refers to the overarching objectives that we aim to achieve through our curriculum design and delivery models. It provides a vision and framework for the student learning experience at Barking & Dagenham College. It outlines our commitment to students and wider stakeholders in terms of knowledge acquisition, skills development and personal growth.

At Barking & Dagenham College, we understand the Borough's socio-economic contrasts, rapid growth and diversity. We aim to address these challenges and opportunities with innovation and impact, supporting the Council's vision of ensuring that no one is left behind.

Beyond this, though, we must also align our strategy with the local skills improvement plan (LSIP) led by Local London at the sub-regional level, London-wide and national skills priorities, and the broader national policy landscape for the learning and skills sector.

Our curriculum spans most subject sector areas

and ranges from entry level to higher education in specialist areas. Clear progression routes enable students to move on to further study, apprenticeships, higher education and sustainable employment.

The College is adaptive and efficiencies are maintained by choosing to focus on specific technical and professional routes where the quality of education is good, employer links are strong and labour market demand is evident.

Curriculum at the lower levels reflects high demand in areas like adult basic skills, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and high needs. The latter includes supported internships and specialist programmes that provide vital pathways for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

For more advanced learners, the curriculum offer includes T Levels and higher education, providing routes to employment in technical and professional industry sectors. Developed through collaboration with employers and wider stakeholders, our curriculum is responsive to industry needs and transformative in creating life chances for individuals. By integrating industry placements,

co-delivery with employers and skills competitions, we aim to develop the highest technical standards and prepare learners for the workforce of the future.

Areas of particular specialism, that respond to local priorities and skills gaps, include:

- Engineering
- Manufacturing
- Digital media
- Health and social care
- Creative industries including fashion design
- Counselling
- English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)
- High needs

Beyond the vocational curriculum, we actively involve students in shaping their learning experience through student voice activities and ambassador roles, fostering a sense of pride and ownership.

Our interest-led enrichment programme allows students to explore passions, grow creatively, develop professionally and become engaged and active citizens.

With the golden thread of stakeholder engagement running throughout, the Barking & Dagenham College curriculum intent can be summarised as follows:

Inclusive

A curriculum that gives every learner the opportunity to thrive, removing barriers, promoting equity and harnessing partnerships to support community-focused learning.

Industry ready

Preparing learners with real-world experience, practical skills and confidence through employer projects, work placements, skills competitions and the annual BDC Skills Show, all supported by strong stakeholder partnerships to align with economic needs.

Innovative

A forward-thinking, employer-led curriculum, empowering learners for success in current and emerging fields.

Inspirational

Cutting-edge facilities and teaching methods, tailored support and interest-led enrichment inspiring learners to explore, achieve and grow personally and professionally, whilst benefiting from local stakeholder expertise.



With business planning informed by partnerships with employers, Barking and Dagenham Council and wider stakeholders, the College has established itself at the heart of the community and as a key regeneration partner.

By aligning our strategy with broader social and economic development agendas, we ensure a collaborative approach to securing funds and deploying scarce resources effectively and efficiently. Collaboration extends to our work with other colleges, with partnership initiatives such as developing green skills training through the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) and developing training for Thames Freeport through the Community Skills Fund.

Employer engagement is central to our work, and we collaborate with around 250 employers

annually. Our employer base closely mirrors that of Barking and Dagenham and East London, with many micro and small businesses, alongside our links to large employers like bp, Citibank and TFL. As a regeneration partner, our relationships with business and community organisations are crucial to leveraging the benefits of our collective work. Examples include Be First, the regeneration arm of Barking and Dagenham Council, and Eastbrook Studios in Dagenham.

Relationship-building with the College's 13 direct feeder schools is an important aspect of our partnership work. Effective marketing and school liaison activities are critical to establishing clear progression routes for young people and maintaining healthy recruitment to College courses. However, our relationships with schools must extend beyond this. In a Borough characterised by both opportunities and considerable socio-economic

challenges, it is critical that education providers work closely together. Our collective aims must be to provide a broad, coherent and cost-effective post-16 curriculum across the geography, whilst strengthening support for transition at age 16 and minimising the number of young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET).

Barking & Dagenham College plays a central role in our community. Each year students and staff make a real difference to people's lives through curriculum-linked initiatives with many community partners and charities. Moving forward, we will further strengthen our commitment to corporate social responsibility activities, ensuring that our students are effectively prepared to take their place in society and make valuable contributions as active citizens and highly skilled workers.

Examples of our stakeholder relationships are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Examples of stakeholder relationships

STAKEHOLDER CATEGORIES			
CIVIC	EMPLOYERS	COMMUNITY	EDUCATION
<p>Barking and Dagenham Council</p> <p>Be First (Urban regeneration arm of Barking and Dagenham Council)</p> <p>Greater London Authority (GLA)</p> <p>Jobcentre Plus (JCP)</p> <p>LBBB Cultural Education Partnership</p> <p>Local London (Partnership of nine Boroughs in North East and South East London)</p>	<p>Barney Bears Nursery</p> <p>Billingsgate Market</p> <p>bp</p> <p>BusinessLDN (London business network)</p> <p>Care Providers Voice (CPV)</p> <p>Citibank</p> <p>Dagenham & Redbridge Football Club</p> <p>Everyone Active</p> <p>Metropolitan Police</p> <p>Queen's Hospital, Romford (NHS Trust)</p> <p>Wates Group</p> <p>West Ham United Football Club</p>	<p>Adanna Women's Support Group</p> <p>'My Ends' programme (Community violence reduction)</p> <p>The Osborne Partnership (Charity working with adults with learning disabilities)</p> <p>Ultimate Counselling (Community based support services)</p> <p>Victoria & Albert Museum</p>	<p>Coventry University London</p> <p>CyberHub Trust</p> <p>FE colleges including Newham College and Waltham Forest College</p> <p>Hunters Hall Primary School</p> <p>Ravensbourne University</p> <p>Rush Green Primary School</p> <p>WorldSkills UK</p>



Barking & Dagenham College is an ambitious organisation: ambitious for the success and bright futures of our students; ambitious for the prosperity of our local businesses and communities; and with big ambitions for the future development and exceptional performance of all aspects of the College's work.

Our ambitions are articulated through the five strategic priorities that direct all of our work over the period of this strategic plan.

Over the pages that follow, each of our strategic priorities are explained in detail. This includes the actions we will take over the lifespan of this strategic plan in order to achieve our ambitions, and the ways in which we will measure our progress and hold ourselves to account.

People

Barking & Dagenham College must be a brilliant place for everyone to work or study

Portfolio of provision

Courses that promote individual prosperity and local economic growth

Pedagogy +

Excellent standards of teaching, assessment and student support

Performance

Exceptional student outcomes

Prudence

Maintain a thriving, efficient and environmentally conscious business

People: Barking & Dagenham College must be a brilliant place for everyone to work or study

Students, staff and stakeholders are proud of our culture of inclusion, aspiration and excellence, and the transformational impact that the College makes on the lives of individuals and our wider community.

Our first strategic priority is all about people. People are, naturally, at the heart of our College community and it is the behaviours of people that determine our culture. Our aims must be to make Barking & Dagenham College a brilliant place for everyone to work or study and progress, whilst also thinking carefully about our ethics and responsibilities; the ways in which we impact upon the community around us; and what this means reputationally, in terms of perceptions of the College.

People often comment positively on the unique and distinctive cultural characteristics of Barking &

Dagenham College. The welcoming and respectful behaviour of students and staff strikes you as soon as you walk through the door. Students must see our College as somewhere that is caring and inclusive, and where – regardless of their backgrounds, characteristics or the barriers they face – they will be supported to be successful.

Our approaches to providing an exceptional student experience, including support for their wellbeing and broader development, are set out in the connecting section of this plan, under Strategic Priority 3: Pedagogy+ (page 28). Students also have a crucial role to play in influencing decision-making, College activities and quality improvement.

Staff at the College are highly qualified, experienced and passionate. There is an openness to reflection, a determination to drive swift change where needed and a unique culture of innovation embedded in our DNA. We value collaboration, seeking to empower

all staff and recognise their contributions. There must be one ‘Team BDC’ – everyone has a crucial part to play and everyone must feel appreciated.

We want staff to see Barking & Dagenham College as a great place to work, helping us attract new talent and retain a committed team.

But we know we can do more to support our students and staff to grow and thrive. Our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) is central to our culture. We will continue to strengthen support for those who are marginalised, ensuring that everyone benefits from all the College offers.

We also have more to do to become an exceptional employer. This means providing secure employment, and opportunities for professional development and career progression, for talented people across our local communities.



To make Barking & Dagenham College a brilliant place for everyone to work or study, these are the actions we will take:

1. Embed equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in all aspects of our work, viewed as both an enabler and an outcome of effective practice

- Engage a broad cross-section of students, staff, leaders and governors in work to identify and address emerging EDI priorities, learning from exceptional practice in other settings and commissioning external expertise where necessary.
- Ensure that the ethnicity profiles of students, staff, leaders and governors are reflective of the local community, using positive action where necessary to address any issues of underrepresentation.
- Prioritise the promotion and measurement of psychological safety as a key aspect of cultural development and metric for inclusion.

- Routinely monitor the experience and satisfaction of students, staff and other stakeholders, prioritising actions to close satisfaction gaps and improve the overall experience.
- Continue to foster a culture of inclusion, aspiration and excellence. This means welcoming students at all levels, with skilled staff supporting them to overcome significant challenges and barriers if necessary.
- Maintain a relentless focus on closing gaps in achievement and progression between different groups of students, supporting all students into fulfilling careers and bright futures.

2. Engage students, staff, employers and other stakeholders in our development

- Feedback from students, staff, employers, community groups and other stakeholders

will be instrumental in shaping the strategic development of the College and driving improvements in quality, service standards and performance outcomes.

- Student representatives will be influential in shaping College activities and enrichment to meet the needs and interests of the student body.
- Student ambassadors will play a central role in marketing and schools liaison activities.

3. Become an exceptional employer

(a) Recruitment and retention of staff

- Adopt differentiated, multi-channel recruitment strategies to fill staff vacancies including hard to-fill roles. Meet our talent where they are, collaborating with external partners to attract people with diverse backgrounds who are aligned with our values and want to make a difference.
- Reward staff appropriately within available resource, with salaries that reflect specialist skills, knowledge and experience, so that Barking & Dagenham College attracts exceptional talent.
- Build a pipeline of local talent keen to contribute to our mission. Focus on permanent employment to provide security and stability, with selective use of temporary staffing to manage short term gaps or initiatives.
- Seek to maintain a level of staff turnover that facilitates strong performance, balancing the benefits of stability and continuity with those of new talent bringing fresh perspectives.

(b) Professional development and career progression

- Foster a feedback culture that encourages growth and prepares people for success. Professional

development reviews must be valued as tools that help staff to develop their skills and careers.

- Provide opportunities for individuals' growth, progression and career development through continuous professional development (CPD), secondments and special projects.
- Further develop the training and support provided to teachers who are new to Barking & Dagenham College or to the profession, with the aim of creating expert dual professionals. This requires a differentiated model that reflects differing experience levels and the skills of teachers in different subject areas.
- Adopt and encourage the 70:20:10 approach to learning and development. This means: 70% learning through work (stretch opportunities, problem solving, reflection, observations and feedback); 20% learning through others (coaching, mentoring, peer observations and peer support); and 10% through formal learning interventions.
- Continued programme of tailored and responsive leadership and management training and development, reflecting College values, priorities and performance objectives.
- Develop talent-mapping and succession planning for key roles across College.

(c) Employee engagement, wellbeing and positive industrial relations

- Strengthen internal communications with approaches that are timely and effective, reflecting staff preferences and business needs.
- Foster a culture of continuous improvement through staff feedback, inclusive working groups and trade union engagement, empowering people to drive improvements in their areas.
- Engage staff across College and trade unions in developing and implementing initiatives that promote and support staff health and wellbeing.
- Provide a broad and attractive package of staff benefits that reflects the wide-ranging needs and interests of staff.
- Recognise, share and celebrate strong staff contributions and successes at every opportunity.
- The relationship between management and trade unions will be based on dialogue and transparency. We will work together to achieve a brilliant staff experience by building on common ground whilst managing differences constructively and respectfully.

We will measure our performance against the following targets:

1.1 Achieve overall satisfaction rating of at least 90% for all external stakeholder groups (FE students, HE students, employers and parents/carers) and all subjects; no sustained satisfaction gaps >3% pts between groups (e.g. ethnicity, LGBTQIA+, subjects and industry sectors)

1.2 Maintain annual staff retention of at least 88%

1.3 Maintain an average time to hire of six weeks (42 days) or less

1.4 Staff ethnicity profile is reflective of LBBB (2021 census: Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh 25.9%; Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African 21.4%; Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups 4.3%; White 44.9% and Other 3.6%)

1.5 Achieve employee satisfaction rating of at least 90% with no sustained satisfaction gaps >3% pts between groups (e.g. departments, roles, age groups, ethnic groups and LGBTQIA+)

1.6 Staff vacancy rate to be maintained at less than or equal to 5% (average across the year)



Portfolio of provision: Courses that promote individual prosperity and local economic growth

Productive partnerships underpin courses that promote individual prosperity and local economic growth. Business planning accurately reflects demand and ethical recruitment meets targets.

This strategic priority defines the scope of our provision and how we determine which courses to offer and new initiatives to pursue. We know that we must deploy resources effectively to address local priorities and skills gaps with high quality provision.

After defining what we will offer and to whom, we must then monitor our success in those markets. This means meeting recruitment and income targets and ensuring the College operates efficiently and sustainably.

General further education colleges like Barking & Dagenham College serve multiple missions. We respond to the needs of a diverse range of learners, including young people, adults and the unemployed.

We support the economy by addressing skills shortages in technical and professional sectors, promoting social mobility and meeting employers' evolving needs. The BDC curriculum includes the following types of provision:

- Technical and professional education and training for 16-19 year olds, providing pathways to higher education, apprenticeships and employment
- Courses for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), high needs and complex needs, to support progression to independent living and employment
- Re-engagement of young people who are not in employment, education or training ('NEET')
- Adult skills development
- Higher education programmes
- Apprenticeships
- Supporting employers through funded programmes of workforce development and bespoke commercial courses

A distinctive feature of Barking & Dagenham College is the way strong partnerships with Barking and Dagenham Council, employers and wider stakeholders underpin the development of courses that offer bright futures and strengthen our local economy.

This approach drives our curriculum planning, leading to a portfolio of advanced technical excellence provision that reflects our cutting-edge industry base. Exceptional facilities and industry-specialist teachers support technical and professional courses in areas such as engineering, Industry 4.0, construction, health and social care, film production, digital media and fashion design.

But whilst knowing our local economy is important, so too is understanding the distinctive challenges faced by people within our diverse communities. We play a crucial role in facilitating social mobility and helping to address poverty by supporting people into sustainable employment, and that's why adult basic skills, ESOL and digital literacy courses are essential elements of our portfolio too.

Nevertheless, there is always more to do to develop a curriculum that is truly responsive to evolving needs. Our ambitions for targeted growth and development of key sectors are set out in Table 2 (Portfolio of provision: 3-year growth plan strategies and targets), on page 26.

As we move forward, we will continue to enhance our advanced technical excellence provision through collaboration with higher education, industry and college partners. Our aim is to create a tailored curriculum that addresses the current and future skills needs of key industry sectors vital to the local and regional economy.

Broadening our inclusion response is a priority too, as local needs and policies evolve. One focus is expanding our entry-level offer to provide opportunities for all, regardless of starting points or barriers.

An example is our September 2024 entry into the specialist area of complex needs, a development underpinned by our strong relationship with Barking and Dagenham Council.

Work will continue to develop excellent practice and increase capacity in this vital provision.

As a major employer in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham and an outward-facing organisation that recognises the power of symbiotic relationships with community partners, the College is committed to corporate social responsibility.

We understand our ethical responsibilities and the impact we have on the community. That's why we listen closely to stakeholders to ensure that our priorities align with their needs.

We aim to leverage our resources, skills, energy and innovation to influence local agendas and make a positive impact for local people, demonstrated through student and staff involvement in community activities. More broadly, we strive to maximise our impact on public benefit and community cohesion, and nurture our reputation as the College at the heart of Barking and Dagenham.

To further strengthen our portfolio of provision over the current planning period, these are the actions we will take:

1. Productive partnerships are the foundations of our work

- Continue to develop our role as a key partner in the regeneration and economic development of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, through our relationships with Barking and Dagenham Council, Be First, employers, community groups and other stakeholders.
- Maintain productive relationships with local schools, ensuring that pre-entry engagement provides young people with effective careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) and supports successful transition to post-16 learning.
- Continue to work collaboratively with neighbouring colleges in order to: address skills needs effectively across East London; access funding streams that catalyse initiatives in priority sectors; and share resources and exceptional practice.

- The College will redouble its commitment to corporate social responsibility. Each year, students and staff will make a real difference to people's lives through curriculum-linked initiatives with community partners and charities. These may include, for example: sports events with local primary schools; activities for older people; catering and hospitality for community events; construction and decorating projects; supporting retired veterans; hairdressing and beauty treatments for people in residential care; charity fundraising; and supporting food banks.

2. Inclusive curriculum planning that responds to skills needs and promotes social mobility

- Curriculum leaders will be skilled at sourcing and interpreting labour market information (LMI) from employers, sector bodies and the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

- All curriculum teams will involve employers and wider stakeholders in the planning and delivery of courses that address skills needs in East London and beyond.
- Further expand the College's inclusive curriculum by introducing entry level provision and progression routes in more subject areas.
- Clear progression routes must support high internal progression and positive destination rates, ensuring students are well-prepared for the labour market or higher education.
- Develop vocational progression routes and careers guidance for ESOL students, to facilitate their entry to the labour market.
- Continue to champion access to learning and employment for those in areas with high levels of worklessness, deprivation and digital poverty, engaging more hard-to-reach communities and young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs).

3. Further development of advanced technical excellence provision, prioritising growth of higher education

- Further develop collaborative working with education partners and additional key sector employers.
- Work with employers in key sectors to develop microcredentials that combine technical knowledge with workplace skills, supporting workforce development and career progression.
- Broaden the portfolio of technical and professional courses, alongside growing staffing capacity and technical skills. Development will focus on the higher level and high skills demand subject sectors. This includes: digital (e.g. software development and cyber security); engineering; green construction; digital media; and visual effects for the film industry. Targeted growth of higher education will be achieved by: (1) developing a select course portfolio in partnership with a university and employers; and (2) differentiating the offer through the introduction of microcredentials and other flexible delivery models (e.g. online and blended learning).
- Design targeted outreach and support programmes to strengthen participation of underrepresented groups in technical and professional education, including women in STEM and students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Targeted expansion of apprenticeship offer.

In particular, introduce a select portfolio of higher-level apprenticeship offerings where unmet demand exists, employer links are strong and quality is high.

- Invest in green technology training aligned with regional and national sustainability goals and the local skills improvement plan (LSIP) for the Local London sub-region. Build capacity to deliver training in areas such as sustainable construction, renewable energy and environmental management. Success, expected to be modest in the short term, will come through collaboration with employers and partners like Be First, the urban regeneration arm of Barking and Dagenham Council.

4. Establish new curriculum directions in response to local, regional and national priorities and skills needs

Establish new provision in response to skills needs identified by local stakeholders and employers, through the London Growth Plan and through national skills priorities. This will include the following initiatives:

- Refining practice, developing expertise and growing capacity in complex needs. This is a highly specialist area of provision newly introduced in September 2024, designed for young people with complex educational, behavioural or physical needs. Growth, which is contingent upon further development of the physical infrastructure, is

expected to be relatively modest.

- Development of provision at the College's Barking Campus (Technical Skills Academy) in response to emerging growth sectors in Barking.
- Partner with film and TV studios in Barking and Dagenham to explore potential courses addressing skills needs in areas such as set design, sound engineering and visual effects.
- Support creative and cultural sector developments through introduction of music and performing arts courses, complementary to existing theatre and production arts curriculum.
- Extend the portfolio of digital programmes to include coding and advanced IT certifications (e.g. AI and cybersecurity), addressing cross-sector gaps in digital competencies. Targeted growth in the digital sector will be achieved by: developing a select portfolio of courses with employers in response to unmet training demand; creating clear internal progression routes; differentiating the offer with microcredentials and other innovative delivery models; and offering market-rate salaries for exceptional teaching staff with specialist skills.
- Expand training for specialised roles in dementia care, complex healthcare needs and mental health support, addressing workforce gaps in health and social care in the Borough. Growth in these sectors will build on existing strong relationships with employers in health, domiciliary care, care homes, counselling and community groups.

Table 2: Portfolio of provision: Three-year growth plan strategies and targets

Type of provision	Baseline year outturn 2023/24	Strategies for future development and/or growth				Target 2026/27
		Improved outcomes and progression rates	Growth in market or market share for existing courses	New curriculum, developed with employers/stakeholders	New modes of delivery	
16-19 study programmes (Lagged funding methodology)	Income: £18.7m Students: 2,606 LBBB market share: 19%	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital – e.g. coding, AI and cybersecurity Film & TV – e.g. set design, sound engineering and visual effects Music and performing arts 		Income: £22m Students: 2,800 Including increased T Level recruitment LBBB market share: 20%
Adult education (Combined GLA and ESFA contracts and Advanced Learner Loans)	Income: £7.3m			Diversification of offer within reduced funding allocation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESOL vocational progression Green technologies Digital Health & social care 		Income: £6.7m (estimated) (Government reduction in adult funding from 2025/26)
Apprenticeships (All ages)	£1.64m	✓	✓	Limited portfolio of higher level apprenticeships		£2m
High needs (Funding elements 2 & 3)	£4.1m			Complex needs		£4.8m
Higher Education	£96k		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital e.g. coding, AI, cybersecurity Engineering Green construction Digital media Visual effects for the film industry 	Introduction of microcredentials and other flexible (online/ blended) and part-time delivery models	£200k

We will measure our performance against the following targets:

2.1 Meet annual and three-year plan recruitment and income targets (ref. Table 2 above) for all sectors of College provision (16-18, adult, apprenticeships, high needs, full cost recovery and higher education), as agreed through the market-led business planning and budget building process

2.2 Deliver income growth in line with annual and three-year plan targets for the medium to long term strategic development priority of higher education

2.3 Meet performance outcomes and income targets related to the full range of externally funded projects

2.4 Achieve market share of 20% for 16-19 funded learners in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

Pedagogy +: Excellent standards of teaching, assessment and student support

Excellent teaching, assessment and support mean that students make exceptional progress, achieve and move on to bright futures.

Strategic Priority 3, Pedagogy +, is central to everything at Barking & Dagenham College. This priority focuses on teaching, learning and assessment, as well as the wider package of skills development, work experience, enrichment and support. Pedagogy + is about the quality of our service to students in our fundamental core activities.

Cutting-edge, industry-standard teaching facilities in areas as diverse as engineering, digital media, film production, fashion design, and health and social care are exceptional. These facilities enable skilled teachers to deliver innovative, practical lessons that allow students to learn by doing and maximise their progress.

But, of course, great teaching requires more than excellent facilities. Each year, the College invests heavily in continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers, as highlighted in the connecting section of this plan, Strategic Priority 1: People (page 16). Students often tell us about the skills they develop as a result of great teaching, underpinned by strong and productive links with industry practitioners to make sure that our subject specialists remain at the forefront of industry practice. Moving forward, we will further develop our differentiated CPD model, tailored to teachers' experience and subject expertise, supporting teachers to become expert dual professionals.

A distinguishing feature of Barking & Dagenham College is the way that innovation is embedded in our DNA. Leading-edge initiatives include 'BDC Tracks', our research-based communities of practice model for developing exceptional pedagogy tailored to individual teachers' priorities and specialisms.

Our partnership work with an awarding body on using artificial intelligence (AI) in assessment is another example. It's clear that embracing AI in a carefully-managed way can enhance lesson planning, feedback quality, marking efficiency and text synthesis.

By training staff in AI use and creating a culture of critical thinking about its benefits and risks, we will improve teaching effectiveness and the learning experience, whilst helping students to develop essential AI skills for the modern workplace.

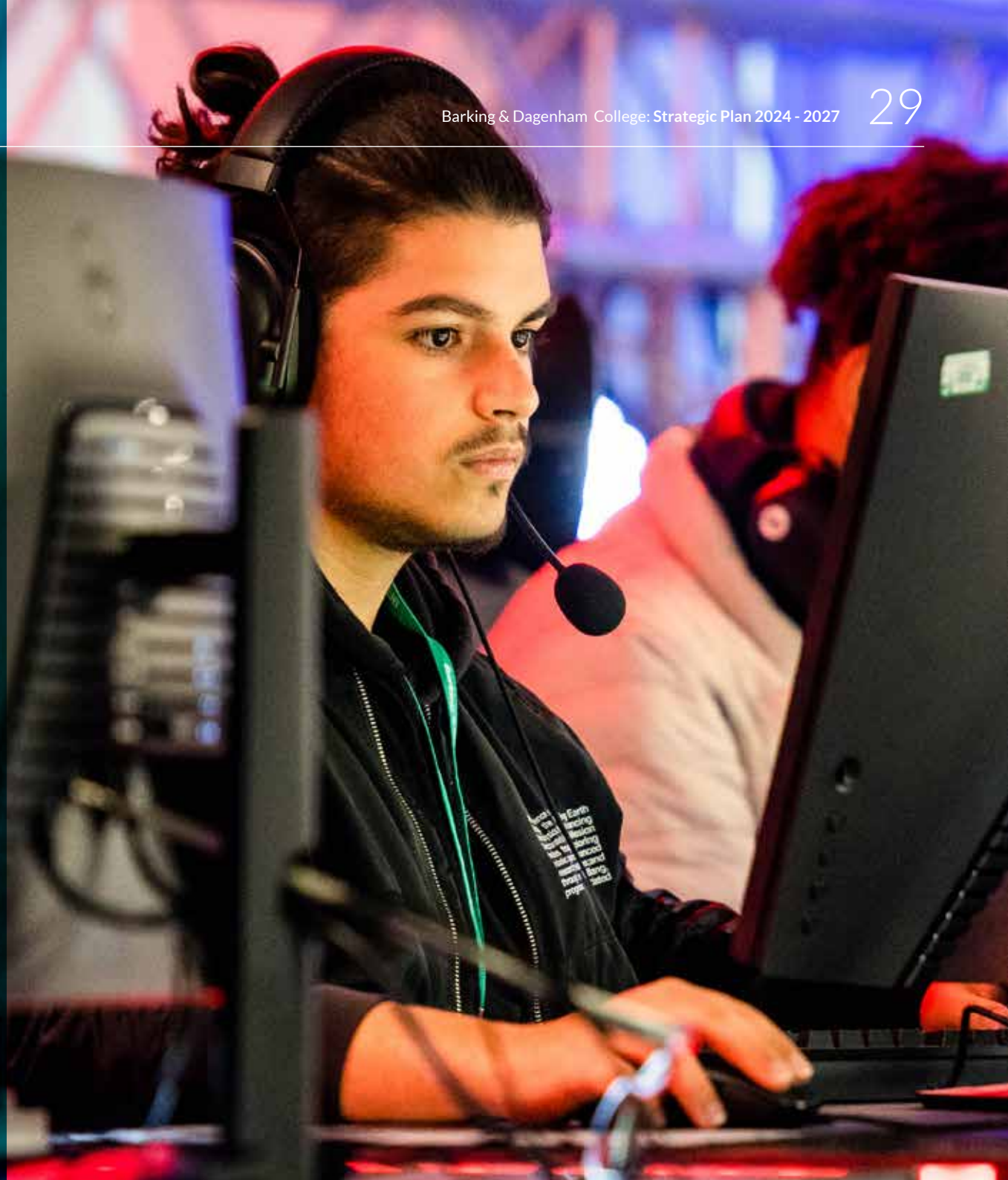
Technical skills development is another area where we stand out. Work experience, educational visits, employer interactions, skills competitions and careers education all come as standard on many courses. Beyond these, the annual 'BDC Skills Show' event, facilitated by employers and other stakeholders, challenges students to develop their skills to exceptional standards through innovative projects, skills competitions and enterprise activities.

In fact, our students excel at competitions, with one BDC alumnus competing in the Industry 4.0 final at WorldSkills Lyon in 2024.

Whilst our primary purpose is to equip students with the skills needed to gain qualifications, achieve career success and enjoy prosperous futures, we also prioritise their wellbeing and development as responsible citizens.

Our enrichment programme and weekly tutorials broaden horizons and support personal growth. With escalating safeguarding and mental health issues, as well as growing awareness of social issues like sexual harassment, we understand the importance of both life skills development and the provision of exceptional pastoral support.

Through this dual approach, we help students to develop their confidence, resilience and independence; to build healthy relationships; and to flourish in their personal and professional lives.



We will achieve excellent standards of teaching, assessment and student support by taking the following actions:

1. Develop the cultural expectation of 'excellence as standard'

- Develop a culture of 'excellence as standard' amongst staff and students. This means always aiming for 'best-in-class' performance, rejecting mediocrity and valuing the richness of ideas that diversity brings. Establishing this culture requires that the passion, skills and creativity of staff at all levels of the organisation are harnessed. Staff must also be trained and supported to model effective behaviours, which includes clear expectation-setting when new staff are inducted to 'Team BDC'.
- Ensure governance is highly effective, meeting or exceeding the requirements of the AoC Code of Good Governance for English Colleges and other relevant standards. Effective governance brings scrutiny, challenge and support – strengthening quality assurance, expediting improvement and ultimately raising standards of teaching, learning and the student experience.

- Set clear and stretching staff performance targets within a fair, supportive and transparent performance management framework that focuses on learning. In this way, staff and leaders at all levels will feel ownership and accountability for standards and outcomes.

2. Relentless focus on creating exceptional pedagogy

- Improve student attendance and punctuality through a structured framework of intervention protocols. This includes regular engagement with parents/carers, effective technology deployment and accountability of staff at all levels.
- Support staff growth through investment in high-quality CPD that develops teachers as dual professionals, experts in both inclusive pedagogy and current industry-specific practices. This includes targeted mentoring, regular industry updating, internal CPD based on current education research and externally-sourced CPD.

Organisations like the Education and Training Foundation (ETF), Association of Colleges (AoC), and other high-performing education settings provide valuable ideas and best practices to benchmark against, adopt or adapt.

- Continue to embed the Barking & Dagenham College teaching, learning and assessment (TLA) framework. This tool promotes excellence in inclusive learning and pedagogic practice, places research at the heart of pedagogy and supports the development of work-ready citizens.
- Support teaching staff to further integrate effective use of AI in teaching, learning and assessment. The aim is to create an AI culture that encourages critical thinking about its benefits and risks, whilst enabling students to develop the AI skills needed to flourish in the modern workplace. Work will include using AI in assessment to improve the quality and timeliness of marking and feedback whilst reducing teacher workloads. We will continue to pioneer this work through collaboration with awarding bodies.

- Further develop effective inclusion practice. This includes quality first teaching (QFT), highly personalised learning support and providing stretching opportunities for students to apply learning to different contexts.
- Create confident independent learners, experienced in their use of digital learning technologies and study skills.
- Adopt well-structured and inclusive assessment strategies, with regular formative assessments and rigorous developmental feedback to help students understand how to improve and to inform the planning of learning.

3. Exceptional support for student wellbeing and citizenship

- Invest in building capacity and expertise within student support teams, ensuring that students receive the support needed to thrive and progress to successful futures. This includes

additional learning support (ALS), pastoral support, safeguarding processes, enrichment activities, work placements, careers guidance and progression planning.

- Further investment in strategies promoting emotional wellbeing and supporting students with mental health challenges. This includes adopting trauma-informed practices, expanding expert capacity for safeguarding and counselling, and raising awareness to help students build coping strategies and emotional resilience. Strong collaboration with external agencies and signposting to community services will facilitate effective support and efficient resource deployment.
- Continued development of the tutorial programme and enrichment activities, equipping students to make informed choices about general health, healthy relationships, consent and sexual health, diet and physical fitness.
- Continue to build the digital resilience of young people – i.e. the social and emotional literacy and

digital competency required to manage online risks, including the risk of radicalisation.

- Empower students to become responsible and active citizens through engagement in a wide range of work experience, enrichment and social action activities.

We will measure our performance against the following targets:

3.1 Quality assurance outcomes demonstrate that teachers provide a consistently high quality of education, with at least 90% of teachers meeting at least core practice standards on the TLA framework

3.2 Curriculum performance reviews (CPRs) demonstrate that curriculum areas are focused on continually improving the quality of education in their areas, with at least 90% of areas judged as low risk

3.3 87% attendance to be achieved across College and for each age group and all subject areas

3.4 95% of students on study programmes complete a purposeful work placement

3.5 Student surveys demonstrate high levels of satisfaction (90%+) with (a) the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and (b) the effectiveness of arrangements for student support and wellbeing



Performance: Exceptional student outcomes

Student performance outcomes, including achievement, progress and positive destination rates, must move towards 'best-in-class' standards.

Here at Barking & Dagenham College, we set the bar high in relation to our expectations of student outcomes. Hence, we benchmark our performance against the very best further education colleges of a similar type nationally, including those viewed as exceptional by Ofsted.

Considering various national datasets of student outcomes, including national achievement rate tables, Department for Education progress measures and 'Alps' value-added scores, our aim remains consistent: to perform at the level of the top quartile (i.e. 25%) of similar colleges nationwide. If we fall short of this benchmark, we are firmly focused on making the necessary improvements to achieve this best-in-class performance.

While achievement rates for many vocational courses are strong, we know that every student must have the opportunity to achieve their ambitions.

We must also improve the development of essential employability skills in maths and English. This is a challenging area of government policy nationally, but especially at Barking & Dagenham College where typically over half of full-time students must resit one or both subjects. Hence, building capacity and expertise in maths and English teaching is a key focus of our planning.

While attainment of qualifications is important, we know that progression into well-paid employment is key to building prosperity for individuals and communities. Our goal is for over 90% of full-time students to make a positive progression step towards employment each year, whether through further study, apprenticeships or directly into work. As a uniquely vocational college, we embrace

students with diverse backgrounds, skills and abilities, including those who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or high needs. However, our unique strategic positioning links to our particularly strong focus on developing students' advanced technical and professional skills for successful careers within East London and beyond.

Considering College operations more broadly, we know that exceptional student outcomes must be underpinned by the cultural expectation of high standards in everything we do.

This includes: our business processes; standards of customer service; use of digital technology and data systems; and ongoing investment in state-of-the-art teaching equipment. Essentially, developing a high-performance culture in all aspects of our work will provide the platform for an excellent student experience and exceptional performance outcomes.



We will achieve best-in-class student outcomes by taking the following actions:

1. Aspire to achieve exceptional standards in everything we do

- Set the cultural expectation that only the best is good enough and that we will all work together, as hard as is necessary, to achieve exceptional standards.
- Investment will be made in digital technologies, process design and staff training, to create efficient and effective business processes that represent 'best-in-class' practice.
- Establish exceptional standards of customer service as a key differentiator and source of competitive advantage. At every touch-point and interaction, we will seek to exceed expectations.

2. Ensure that the planning and management of learning is rigorous, consistent and underpinned by the expectation of exceptional outcomes

- Courses are skillfully planned, structured and sequenced to promote early and regular achievement and accelerate student progress.
- Clear and appropriate course entry criteria, combined with effective pre-entry IAG and

ethical recruitment standards, mean that students are set up for success from the outset.

- Student target grades are underpinned by high expectations of top quartile performance levels. Digital progress tracking and reporting systems provide students, staff and parents/carers with a clear view of individual students' progress.
- The 'teach to the top and scaffold' pedagogic model underpins individual planning for learning that stretches and supports students of all abilities to make excellent progress.
- Early and regular formative assessment informs planning for learning based on use of 'learning loops', hence promoting attainment of the highest grades.
- Rapid intervention with exceptional academic and pastoral support if students are at risk of falling behind.

3. Prepare students for positive progression and future prosperity

- Curriculum teams regularly consult employers and other stakeholders to shape courses that address skills needs in East London and beyond.

- Tailored, high-quality careers education, supported by impactful employer interactions, builds employability skills that help people thrive in the workplace.
- Appropriate use of AI-powered immersive learning, such as the 'Bodyswaps' platform, enables students to rehearse and develop critical soft employability skills.
- High-quality work experience opportunities are provided for all full-time students, as well as adult and higher education students where applicable.
- Internal and inter-college skills competitions drive exceptional standards of technical skills development. Participation in regional and national skills competitions raises aspirations and prepares students for the world-class standards needed for potential entry to WorldSkills.
- Over the three-year planning period, build capacity within the student progression team to proactively broker employment outcomes and other positive destinations for all students, including those who are disadvantaged or have inclusion needs. This means replicating some aspects of the work of employment agencies, recruitment consultants and Jobcentre Plus.

We will measure our performance against the following targets:

4.1	Achievement rate in top quartile nationally for vocational education and training provision (i.e. class-room based) for each age group (16-18 and 19+) by 2026/27. Estimated at 16-18 ~ 85%; 19+ ~ 90%. Expected year-end retention > 90%	4.7	Deliver excellent positive destination rates*: (a) target of 90% for students on full-time programmes (b) 90% of high needs students progress to further study, independent living or sustainable employment (c) 50% positive destinations; 15% job outcomes; and 90% social outcomes for students on substantial programmes for unemployed adults * Data sources: independent survey and internal progression data
4.2	Achieve apprenticeship outcomes in top quartile nationally - estimated at an overall apprenticeship standard achievement rate of > 68% - by 2026/27	4.8	Achieve full-time internal progression rate from level 1 to level 2 of 65% and from level 2 to level 3 of 50%
4.3	Achieve positive Department for Education progress scores for maths and English	4.9	Achieve progression to higher education of 65% of eligible students (i.e. level 3, year 2 and Access courses)
4.4	GCSE maths and English high grade achievement rates for 16-18 year olds to be in line with national rates (DfE measure)	4.10	Achieve rolling 50% response rate to demonstrate positive social and economic outcomes (e.g. wellbeing, positive destinations and pay progression) in London Learner Survey
4.5	Achieve vocational Alps score of 3 (i.e. top quartile) for all in-scope level 3 subject areas		
4.6	No sustained achievement gaps of > 3 percentage points exist between different groups of learners (e.g. based on ethnicity, SEND, disadvantage)		



Prudence: Maintain a thriving, efficient and environmentally conscious business

College finances must be healthy so that we can continue to invest in exceptional staff, leading-edge facilities and environmental sustainability.

The fifth strategic priority is key to supporting the success of the other four priorities. To maintain a thriving and environmentally conscious business requires prudence in the way we deploy scarce resources.

Prudence also requires: strong student recruitment; constant horizon-scanning for new opportunities; innovation to adapt and build capacity; and achieving both excellence and efficiency in business operations.

Strong financial health is essential so we can invest in attracting and retaining exceptional staff, supporting our people to prosper. It also enables investment in initiatives to reduce our carbon footprint, caring for the planet whilst yielding longer-term cost savings.

Whilst the funding and financial climate for all colleges has been challenging since 2010, the underlying financial position for Barking & Dagenham College is healthy. Following various cost-efficiency measures, the outturn for 2023/24 (i.e. the baseline year for this strategic plan) was positive, a trend that is set to continue.

Strong student recruitment, along with robust curriculum planning, budgeting and cost-control, all provide a solid foundation for good financial health.

Naturally, strong student recruitment requires a high profile, great reputation and effective engagement with schools, local communities and employers.

Further education colleges work hard to build their reputations, sometimes overcoming misconceptions about what we do and who we are for.

Whilst marketing and public relations are important, the real imperative is to continually delight our students and stakeholders with standards that

exceed expectations; in this way, they become advocates and the word spreads.

Considering the quality of the estate and learning resources, the College has been ambitious in securing capital funding to create exceptional, industry-standard facilities in subject areas as diverse as engineering, digital media, film production, esports, fashion and hairdressing.

By generating year-on-year surpluses and staying alert to external capital funding opportunities, this investment in leading-edge facilities is set to continue.

During the 2024–2027 planning period, key activities aligned to strategic priority 5 will include: income growth in target sectors; cost-efficiency initiatives; investment in exceptional staffing and infrastructure; and a renewed commitment to reducing the College's carbon footprint.

To maintain a thriving, efficient and environmentally conscious business, these are the actions we will take:

1. Growth and efficiency

- Partner with stakeholders to identify opportunities for diversification and growth that benefit individuals, communities and businesses. The introduction of complex needs provision from 2024/25, a partnership development with Barking and Dagenham Council, is one example.
- Continue to invest in effective stakeholder engagement, business development, marketing and public relations activities, using multiple channels and media targeted to the needs of different market segments.
- Conduct robust and timely budget-building for pay and non-pay expenditure, enabling effective planning across departments. Budgets will be devolved to trained and accountable budget holders and monitored through effective cost-control systems.
- Practice value for money procurement across all aspects of activity.
- Manage curriculum delivery costs fairly and robustly, with efficient staffing and economic class sizes. We will review and benchmark the financial performance of curriculum areas regularly, making adjustments where necessary to ensure value for money and ongoing investment in resources.
- Ensure that planning and timetabling optimise the use of space and learning resources, providing all students with access to the best possible facilities.
- Offer opportunities for individuals and local community groups to access the College's excellent facilities. External use will be properly costed and managed to maximise benefit for all stakeholders.
- Regularly review and benchmark the cost-base of business support services. Revise processes as needed, following best practices and integrating judicious use of AI where appropriate, to ensure value for money and exceptional service standards.
- Ensure that effective decision-making is underpinned by consistent reporting and timely, accurate business intelligence.

2. Investment in exceptional staffing and infrastructure

- Leverage financial strength to invest in competitive staff salaries, ensuring that Barking & Dagenham College attracts and retains exceptional talent.
- Strive to become an exceptional employer by investing in staff wellbeing, professional development and attractive benefits.
- Continue to invest in capital and IT infrastructure, to drive efficiencies whilst maintaining an exceptional learning environment at the forefront of industry standards and innovative technologies.
- Utilise space and learning resources effectively and efficiently, maximising student benefits whilst being responsive to evolving market needs.

3. Carbon footprint reduction

- Build on previous work with a renewed cross-College focus, using the Climate Action Roadmap for Further Education Colleges to guide us towards net-zero emissions.
- Reserve a proportion of capital funds to invest in carbon footprint reduction initiatives.
- Review all aspects of College operations in order to reduce our energy consumption and carbon footprint. Key strands of work will include:
 - Creating a culture of waste reduction, energy efficiency and resource conservation amongst staff and students, through education about sustainable lifestyle choices.
 - Adopting sustainable procurement practices and partnering with specialists, when needed, to help reduce our carbon footprint.
 - Investment in sustainable energy sources including solar PV panels and heat pumps.
 - Replacing lighting and equipment, where possible, with the most energy-efficient available, and servicing them regularly to maintain efficiency.
 - Avoiding disposable items and replacing them with reusables where possible.
 - Offering sustainable transport solutions for staff and students, including electric vehicle charging and a cycle-to-work scheme.

We will measure our performance against the following targets:

5.1	Achieve turnover of £37m in the first year of the strategic plan (2024/25) and £40m by 2026/27	5.6	Remain solvent with a minimum adjusted current ratio of 1.4 (ESFA financial health calculation - adjusted current ratio excludes capital grant release)
5.2	Meet average contribution target of 60% across all sectors of College provision, based on methodology that includes direct delivery costs and non-pay costs	5.7	Borrowing as a percentage of income to be reduced to less than 5% by 2027/28
5.3	Achieve EBITDA (education specific) of 6% by 2025/26	5.8	Maintain over 25 cash days in hand for all months
5.4	Return a minimum of 1% adjusted operating surplus on income, excluding pensions adjustments	5.9	Ensure bank covenants are achieved
5.5	Maintain staffing expenditure (including contract tuition services but excluding restructuring and FRS102 pensions adjustments) at a maximum of 65% of adjusted income (excluding franchised provision income)	5.10	Achieve a year-on-year annual reduction in carbon footprint (i.e. Tonnes of carbon) of at least 5% (based on Scope 1 + Scope 2 emissions only)



The 2024-2027 strategic plan is underpinned by robust budgeting, forecasting and capital planning processes.

Each year, the College prepares a three-year financial plan and a detailed annual budget. A suite of financial key performance indicators aligns with those set by the FE Commissioner, and progress is reviewed regularly at Committee and Board meetings. A key financial objective for Barking & Dagenham College is to generate surpluses for continued investment in staffing and resources. This means being proactive in seeking opportunities to both diversify and grow income, and leverage cost efficiencies.

Naturally, the budgeting and forecasting processes are based on assumptions, especially regarding income and sustainability of funding streams over the coming years. In recent years, further education colleges have faced significant financial challenges due to a real-terms decline in key income streams since 2010, along with inflationary pressures.

Against this backdrop, maintaining good financial health requires prudence and agility; judicious management of risk and decision-making; and effective horizon-scanning and opportunity-spotting. Hence, the College's ambitions and the

timing of strategic developments are kept under review and adapted where necessary.

Implementation and monitoring

The five strategic priorities and their associated key performance indicators form the core of the College's performance management framework, with targets set annually for staff teams and individuals.

Progress against these targets is monitored at various levels:

- Individual staff member performance reviews
- Course-level performance reviews
- Departmental business performance reviews
- Senior leadership team (SLT) meetings
- Corporate Board and Committee meetings

Board assurance and risk management

The College's board assurance framework and risk register are crucial for monitoring and managing risks, ensuring efficient resource deployment and compliance with statutory duties. These tools also enable governors and senior leaders to be proactive; to consider their appetite for risk across all areas

of activity; and to mitigate risks that may threaten achievement of objectives set out in this plan through timely and impactful actions.

Key areas of potential risk include: sustainability of high quality teaching and learning; delivering the planned budget given adverse funding variations; the potential for fraud and financial control failures; failure to maintain compliance with regulatory requirements, including safeguarding and health and safety; and major information and communication technology failures such as cyber attacks.

At an operational level, if it becomes clear that insufficient progress is being made towards a target, then appropriate interventions will be made. This could mean, for example, providing appropriate targeted support, reformulating delivery plans or sourcing advice and models of exceptional practice externally.

Review process

Strategic planning is conducted on a three-year cycle and the next full refresh of the plan will therefore be conducted ahead of the 2027 – 2028 year. In the intervening years, a limited annual review of this plan will be conducted. The purpose of the annual review is to ensure that the plan remains current and relevant, without making substantive changes to the College's priorities and objectives.

Barking & Dagenham College is an exempt charity under the terms of the Charities Act 2011.

The College takes seriously its commitment to deliver a significant, measurable public benefit to the local community. Whilst establishing its vision, mission, values and strategic priorities, the Barking & Dagenham College Corporation has paid due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on reporting this public benefit.

Barking & Dagenham College creates public value by:

- Promoting inclusivity and creating an environment in which everyone is supported to grow and flourish.
- Designing courses and services that enhance the social, economic and physical wellbeing of young people and adults within the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham and beyond.
- Providing a broad range of learning opportunities to maximise the skills and knowledge of students

so they become economically active citizens.

- Engaging with local employers and wider stakeholders to meet the skills needs of businesses and non-commercial partners.
- Displaying and promoting local leadership through our relationships and collaboration with a wide range of community stakeholders and partners.
- Valuing the educational aims of all students equally and seeking to raise the aspirations of students and staff so that everyone makes the maximum contribution to the community.
- Promoting enterprise and entrepreneurship through skills acquisition.
- Promoting and enabling active citizenship and democratic engagement.
- Encouraging and supporting participation in volunteering and social action activities.
- Supporting disadvantaged individuals and communities into learning and/or employment.
- Contributing to the local economy as a major employer, consumer of services and provider of skills training.

- Contributing to environmental sustainability by reducing our carbon footprint.

The value added to the communities served by the College is demonstrated through:

- Annual reports and financial statements
- Inspection reports
- Records of meetings of the College's Corporate Board
- College publications and regular media communications
- Equity, diversity and inclusion reports
- Stakeholder feedback



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