

About us

Forster Community College was established 35 years ago. It is a successful social enterprise providing vocational education and training across the Leeds City Region. Our mission is to “*inspire learning and support communities to prosper*” and our values are summarised by the words: “*Heart, Honesty and Enjoyment*”.

Our Mission

Inspiring Learning and Supporting Communities to Prosper

Heart

We believe passionately in our work and in the people we support, with learners at the centre of all that we do.

Honesty

We are open and honest in our service delivery and act with pride and integrity at all times.

Enjoyment

We put fun into learning and celebrate achievement and success.

The College offers Further Education and Community Learning to individuals aged 16 and over at its main site on Captain Street, second site on City Park and at Community locations across the City; as well as training, support and assessment in workplaces across the City Region.

We focus on targeting provision to meet the learning needs of deprived communities, disadvantaged groups, individuals and local businesses. Our strong customer centred ethos provides a welcoming, friendly and supportive learning environment. This is underpinned by an enthusiastic and committed workforce.

Bradford District Metropolitan Council identifies that:

*“An important strand of Bradford’s economic regeneration focuses on skills development to maximise employment opportunities. To support this objective post-16 education needs to offer learning and training that is fully aligned to, and shaped by, the needs of local employers and growth sectors in the local economy.”**

The College works with a range of Employers in specifically targeted sectors in the region, establishing accessible pathways to employment for the customer group. The College is successful in sustaining strategic relationships with post 16 educators and partners to support the College’s strategic objectives and vision.

Funding for learning comes from the Skills Funding Agency, student loans, schools, private business, other contracts and fees.

Did you know we are a charity?

The charitable objectives can be summarised as the relief of poverty by the provision of training and education and the advancement of education.

Our Charitable Objects

(i) the **relief of poverty**, in particular by the provision of training and education to the community, industry and commerce.

(ii) the **advancement of education/training** and the provision, in the interests of social welfare, of facilities for recreation and other leisure time occupation with the object of improving the conditions of life.

The curriculum covers subject areas intended to aid the relief of poverty by providing accessible pathways to employment and future careers in which Learners can be proud and develop as active members of society. The pathways include courses for schools, traineeships, apprenticeships and classroom provision all tailored to the needs of Learners. 73% of Learners during the 2015-16 academic year were unemployed at the start of their programme, and 75% lived in areas of deprivation. 43.8% of provision was preparation for life & work. Half of the provision was below level 2.

The College is driving the advancement of education with its Real Work Training model; taking learning out of the classroom and into real working environments while maintaining the support and security which Learners at lower confidence and skill level often rely upon to make good progress. Up to January 2016 Forster's Bistro and Forster's Rebel in the City Centre provided such environments for two key sectors of local employment opportunity. The College is currently delivering programmes for Schools, in line with the "*Bradford Pathways Approach*", which exposes young people at risk of becoming NEET to future employment opportunities and work environments, in the aim to inspire them to progress on to further education, employment, technical and/or apprenticeship pathways.

A bit about where we work

Bradford District is the fourth largest Metropolitan District (in terms of population) in England, after Birmingham, Sheffield and Leeds, with an estimated population of 531,200. The make-up of Learners attending the College is reflective of the population of Bradford District. The district is the second most deprived Local Authority in the Yorkshire and Humber Region. The College is situated in the City Ward surrounded by Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) which fall within the 10% most deprived in England. Around one

third of the population live within these neighbourhoods. The most deprived areas in the district are concentrated in the inner city areas from which the College focuses its recruitment. 75% of Learners who accessed learning at Forster's during 2015-16 academic year lived in disadvantaged areas, most of whom present with low skills levels. A large proportion of the population of Bradford has poor literacy, numeracy and language skills. 15% of Learners studied Maths and/or English during 2015-16 which remains a priority for the College.

The population of Bradford is ethnically diverse. The largest proportion of the district's population (63.9%) identifies themselves as White British. The district has the largest proportion of people of Pakistani ethnic origin (20.3%) in England. During 2015-16 academic year just under half of Forster's Learners identified themselves as White British and 40% of Pakistani ethnic origin.

** Extract from the Post-16 education and training in Bradford and the need for change*