



*Raising Aspirations and Fulfilling Potential*  
**Our Education Pathway Vision**

Stockport County Education Pathway





## Foreword

Fundamentally, Stockport County Football Club is a community asset, and it is incumbent upon the owners to root its core philosophies and strategies into the very fabric of the Stockport community for the benefit of its residents.

That obligation has been wholly embraced by Mark Stott since his acquisition of the club in January 2020, who declared at the outset that his vision “is to create a local football club for the modern era and to ensure that Stockport County Football Club is at the heart of the town acting as a community anchor and an engine of growth for Stockport.”

The vision of an evolving Education Pathway is a cornerstone of that philosophy. It is bold and ambitious in that it seeks to positively impact thousands of young people across the borough on their journey through primary and secondary school, then onto further and higher education, and ultimately into

employment. It leverages off the unique platform that the football club provides to engage with young people, especially those located in the most deprived locations, and is essentially aimed at improving their life chances, to raise aspirations and support them to fulfil their potential.

In September 2023, we launched the first phase of Stockport County’s Education Pathway with our new primary and secondary school programmes that are being delivered in partnership with club sponsor, Together Finance. During the 2023/24 academic year, this will deliver a rich programme of free educational workshops and sport in over 48 Primary schools and six Secondary schools across Stockport. In its first year, the schools programme will reach over 2,000 young people throughout the borough and deliver high-quality educational enrichment and fun, interactive sport sessions at no cost to them or their schools.

In the months ahead we will be developing the detail for the next phases of the programme at both FE and HE levels, throughout which we are very keen to engage with local employers and other key stakeholders to set out how they can support the programme for their own benefit and to add value to the prospects of thousands of young people across the borough each year.

This is a trailblazing initiative which the club is proud to have developed, and we wish to invite local employers and stakeholders to actively engage with us as we develop the next phases of the Stockport County Education Pathway in the months and years ahead.

**Ken Knott**  
Non-Executive Chairman  
*Stockport County Football Club*







# Introduction

## *Education Pathway*

As a community club, Stockport County FC places huge value on having a positive effect on the lives of people in the local area, and particularly in creating and facilitating opportunities for young people that enhance their education and future prospects. In recent years, the club has established a Category-3 EFL Academy for elite players and an expanding 16-19 Football Education college provision for 200 local students each year. In addition, the County Community Trust have been providing a range of school initiatives for a number of years and have just launched their new primary and secondary school education and sport programmes that are being offered free to all schools based in Stockport during the 23/24 academic year, supported by club partner, Together.

The club's ambition over the next five years is to build on our existing education offer to create an all-encompassing 'Stockport County Education Pathway' that provides extensive opportunities for young people of all ages across Stockport to engage in high-quality education programmes. This is primarily aimed at helping to raise the attainment and achievement of children in the local area and to encourage them to aspire towards career-focused further education and training courses with Stockport County and its wider network of stakeholders to enhance their employment prospects.





# Our Mission

Create a wide-reaching **Education Pathway** for all young people in Stockport providing unique educational programmes, enrichment activities and career pathways to increase opportunities and raise aspirations.

# Our Aim

Underpinning the aspiration to develop an extensive education pathway is our desire and commitment to become an integral part of the local education infrastructure in Stockport. We wish to develop inspiring provision that spans all age groups and enables Stockport County to become a dynamic and trusted presence in a diverse range of educational contexts. The club recognises the unique platform it has through positive association and reputational status in Stockport and is motivated to assume responsibility for providing thousands of local people with positive educational experiences and pathways.

We aim to:

- Use the vehicle of football and the club's significance in Stockport to positively impact education for local people.
- Establish a substantial presence and engage with all schools in Stockport.
- Create a wide range of education programmes that cater for young people from all backgrounds.
- Improve the prospects and employability of local people.





Let's Thrive  
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together. from 13<sup>th</sup> September 2023 via Community  
Pay: *Stockport County Community Trust,*  
*One hundred & twenty five* £125,000  
*thousand pounds.*  
Signed: *Together*

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# Mapping Out the Pathway

The Stockport County Education Pathway will span all stages of education to provide positive experiences and extensive opportunities for young people in Stockport of all ages.



# Primary

Our new six-week Education and Sport Programmes are being delivered to Year 5 and Year 6 classes in at least 48 primary schools during the 2023/24 academic year, and in all primary schools in the borough of Stockport during the 2024/25 academic year.



The six-week programmes will combine curriculum-themed classroom workshops with fun and engaging sport sessions. In 2023/24, schools will be able to select a programme that is best suited to their wider objectives and specific pupils' needs from the following topics:

- Numeracy & Finance
- Mental Health & Wellbeing
- E-Safety & Social Media

An additional three primary programmes will be introduced during the 2024/25 academic year based on the following curriculum themes:

- Literacy
- History
- Sport Science



In future years, the primary school provision will widen to include programmes for younger age groups.

Alongside these programmes there will be a wide range of primary school competitions, tournaments and events throughout each academic year to engage primary school children across Stockport in regular physical activity and enrichment activities across the Stockport County network.

The established Stockport County Primary School Assembly has been updated and redesigned for the start of the 2023/24 academic year, ahead of being delivered in up to 20 primary schools around Stockport

each year. The assembly will promote positive messages and values related to the football club and the heritage and history of Stockport, alongside positive role models that will help to raise aspirations of what the children can achieve and strive towards.

Finally, primary school pupils from the most deprived backgrounds in Stockport will be offered places on free school holiday camps that will be hosted by the Education and Sports Coaches that will have worked with them at their school during the six-week education programmes.



CONFIDEN C E

GR O WTH

COMM U NICATION

RESILIE N CE

TOGE T HERNESS

POSITIVIT Y

# Secondary

Our new 12-week Education and Sport Programme for high school students will focus on personal development, confidence, resilience and leadership.

The COUNTY Award will be delivered across a full school term to Year 8 and 9 students. The programme will target pupils who are most at-risk of underachieving, those who face challenges in accessing mainstream lessons, and young people who will benefit from building confidence and self-esteem through alternative education and enrichment activities that aim to empower them and raise their personal aspirations.

As part of The COUNTY Award, students will undertake a sports leadership programme which involves designing and delivering their own sport session to a group of primary school pupils. The final part of the award will

require them to work positively with other students on a social action project and present their work to a panel of senior staff from Stockport County at Edgeley Park.

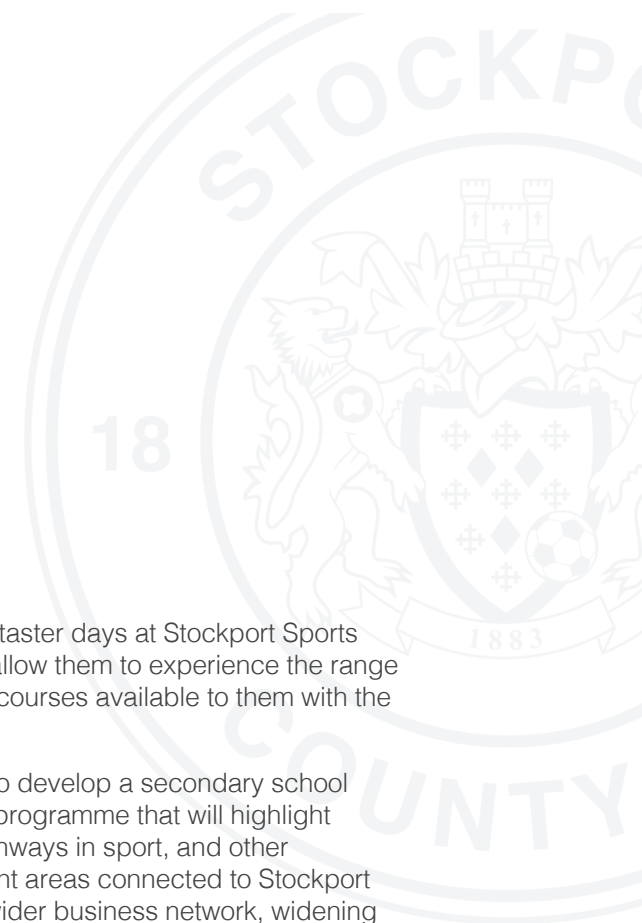
A range of secondary school competitions and events will be developed to engage a wider reach of high school students across Stockport in enrichment activities and opportunities to add value to their educational experiences with Stockport County. This will include taking part in sport-based tournaments and festivals at Stockport Sports Village and curriculum-themed competitions across different areas of the club with the winners attending unique experiences on match days.

We will work with all secondary schools across Stockport to invite groups of Year 10 and 11 students to regular Football

Education taster days at Stockport Sports Village to allow them to experience the range of college courses available to them with the club.

We will also develop a secondary school assembly programme that will highlight career pathways in sport, and other employment areas connected to Stockport County's wider business network, widening their career options, and the value in raising their aspirations and hopes for the future.

A secondary sport and careers programme for girls will be developed to promote females in sport and related career pathways in order to increase representation and inspire, engage, and empower girls to be involved in all areas of the game.





# Further Education

Our established Stockport County Football Education courses, in partnership with Stockport College, have been delivered by the club for over two years at Stockport Sports Village. Learners complete a Level 3 Extended Diploma in Sports Coaching and Development alongside an academy football style programme of enrichment, which involves daily training, gym and rehab sessions, competitive fixtures and a range of work experience activities.

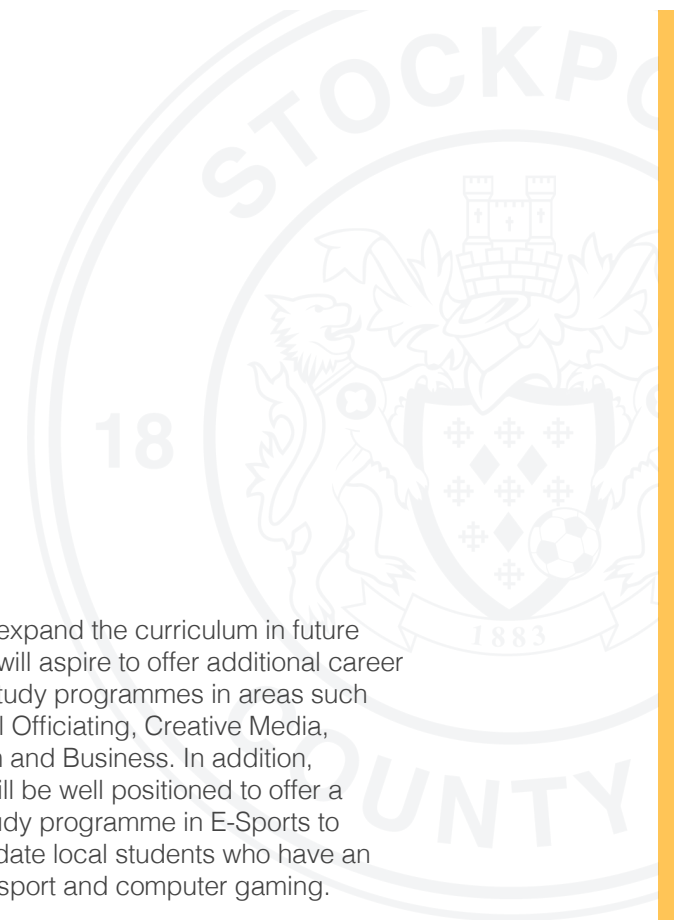
At the start of the 2023/24 academic year, to increase our curriculum offer, we have started delivering a Level 2 Diploma in Sports Industry Skills to accommodate students who do not meet the entry requirements for our Level 3 courses. This provides a one-

year access route to study with Stockport County whilst providing an opportunity to resit their English & Maths GCSEs where necessary, with successful learners being able to progress to our two-year Level 3 programmes thereafter.

An exciting addition to our curriculum offer in 2023/24 is the new and pioneering 'Sports Career Pathway' programme that is designed for learners aspiring to pursue a career in a specific field of sport. During the first year of the programme, students will be guided through extensive enrichment activities and work-based learning across the football club in one of four career pathway routes: Sports Coaching, Sports Rehabilitation, Sports Analysis and Strength & Conditioning.

To further expand the curriculum in future years, we will aspire to offer additional career pathway study programmes in areas such as Football Officiating, Creative Media, Journalism and Business. In addition, the club will be well positioned to offer a Level 3 study programme in E-Sports to accommodate local students who have an interest in sport and computer gaming.

To help meet the aspirations of an expanding curriculum offer, it will be essential to invest in new facilities for Stockport County, including the creation of a Stockport County E-Sports Arena, to deliver the study programmes effectively and inspire learners on the courses.







# Higher Education

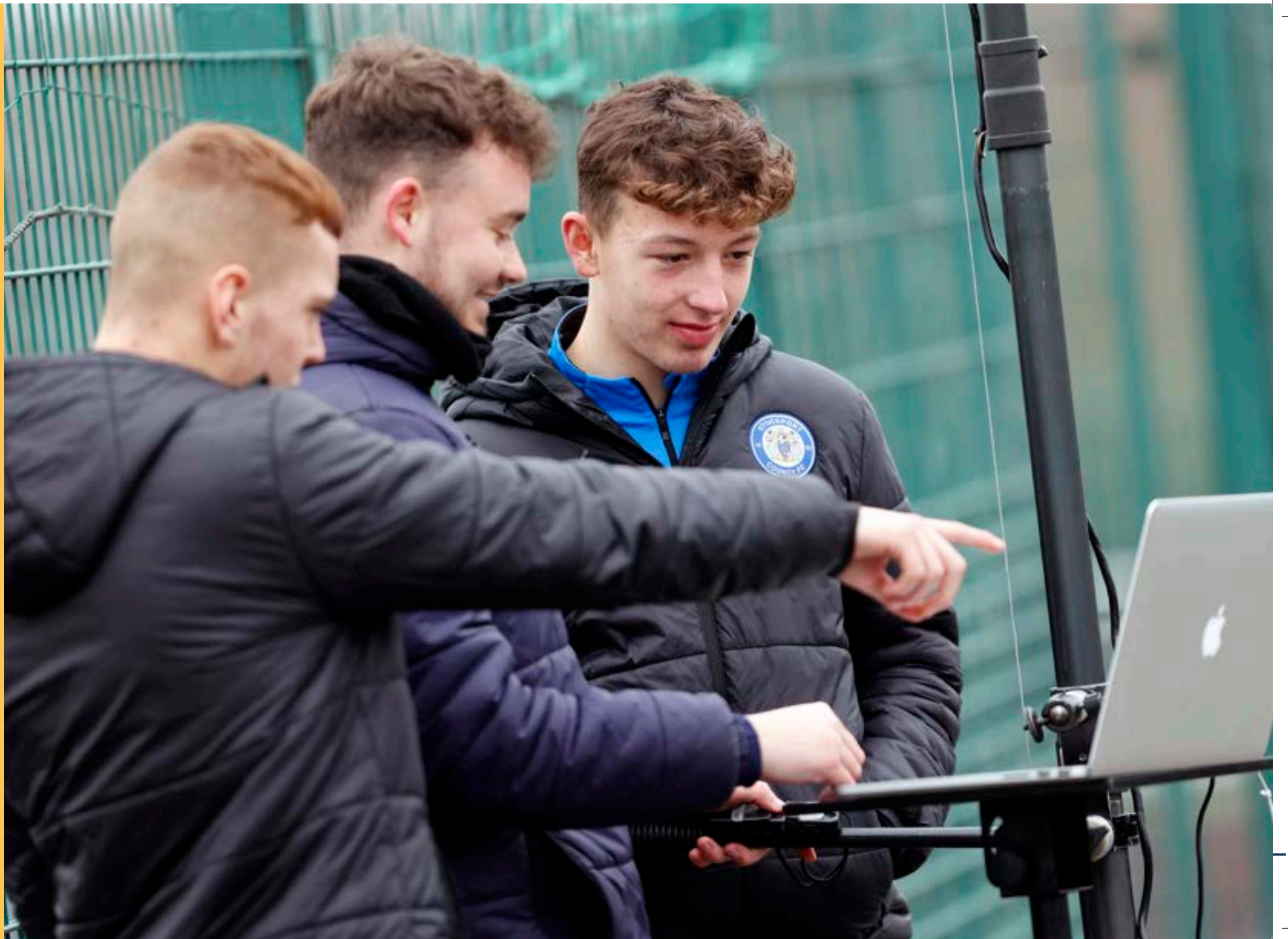
To help deliver our aim to offer innovative and career-based education programmes, a university level course in sport will be curated and delivered in future years to offer our successful Football Education students a unique HE opportunity to study at the highest level with Stockport County. This will help our students benefit from continuing their studies in a familiar environment with extended opportunities to enable them to train and

play with the club and take advantage of extensive career-focused work experience.

The implementation of the HE offer will consider the needs of our existing college learners to ensure that a significant number of students can progress to a university course with the club that is both desirable and aligned with their future aspirations. The qualifications that are likely

to fulfil these requirements will be in areas including Football Coaching, Sport and Exercise Science, and Sports Business and Management. A suitable university partner will be established to help shape and design the courses that will be available. The university partner will act as the awarding body and will fulfil all quality assurance processes.







# Careers

Stockport County aims to play a pivotal role in supporting young people's transition from education to employment by presenting them with robust work experience opportunities during their studies with the club and equipping them with a range of career-specific and other transferrable employability skills.

As Stockport County progresses and expands, a major aim of the Education

Pathway will be to nurture "homegrown talent" into its expanding workforce by creating direct employment opportunities across the club's network. Successful students will be perfectly positioned to take up roles as coaches, physios, analysts, strength and conditioning coaches, nutritionists, scouts, community officers, media officers, marketing executives, finance officers, customer service assistants, and in hospitality.

Business partnerships are essential to the Education Pathway and Stockport County will be seeking local employers to offer support in a number of ways. Most notably, it will be crucial for them to provide multidimensional opportunities for work-based learning, work experience placements, traineeships, apprenticeships, and direct career routes for those progressing through the pathway.

# Building Blocks *to Success*

In order to meet the aims of the Stockport County Education Pathway vision, it will be important for the club to ensure that it considers the essential building blocks that are required to achieve success.

These include:



**Staff**



**Funding**



**Partners  
& Stakeholders**



**Communication  
& Media**



**Reviewing  
Impact**



## Staff

The success of the Education Pathway will be largely determined by the quality of the staff we employ to deliver the wide range of programmes. We are committed to employing highly skilled and dynamic education practitioners and will take responsibility for supporting them through further training and qualifications as part of their continued professional development. There is a designated Professional Development Mentor who will work across the club to support all education staff with a performance review process and a diverse range of development needs.



## Funding & Sponsorship

As part of our ambition to inspire young people in the Stockport area and contribute to local schools effectively, we will require the support of sponsors to help fund the delivery of our programmes. Businesses based in the local area can fulfil their 'Corporate Social Responsibility' agendas by working with Stockport County and benefit from the club's high profile in the community and proven track record to deliver effective programmes for local people. We are committed to adding value to local schools and believe that delivering our programmes free of charge is hugely significant, however this can only be achieved through the support of Stockport businesses.





## Partners & Stakeholders

Working closely with partner organisations and key stakeholders is essential for us to understand the needs of young people in the area, to design effective programmes and to offer a range of work-based opportunities in order to maximise the impact our programmes will have. Collaborating with schools, colleges, universities, third sector organisations and business partners will allow us to guide learners through different stages of their education and give them the best chance of progressing to further education, training and career opportunities successfully.



## Communication & Media

It is essential that local people are aware of Stockport County's ambition to make a significant contribution to education in the area and provide opportunities for students to study on unique courses that are rich in work-based learning which provide further enrichment programmes. The club's media channels will be utilised to share details of all programmes across the Education Pathway to raise awareness, celebrate success, acknowledge the support of sponsors and promote the different opportunities that learners can take advantage of.



# Reviewing Impact

We are fully committed to ensuring the Stockport County Education Pathway is comprised of high-quality study and enrichment programmes that add value and raise aspirations in the local area. Therefore, it is very important that we review and evaluate our provision regularly to fulfil quality assurance processes and uphold the high standards we expect to deliver.

Working collaboratively with our education and employment partners and seeking in-depth feedback from schools will be essential to review all aspects of our provision and enhance everything we deliver in the local community.





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