



## **Raising the Participation Age (RPA)**

At the present time attendance at school is compulsory until the end of Year 11 for all young people in England. Although post-16 options in training and education are open to them, there is no compulsory element to this and young people can choose to participate or not. Under the Raising Participation legislation this is changing. From the summer of 2015 onwards it will be compulsory for all young people to remain in schooling until the end of Year 11 (as at present) and, following on from that, participate in education or training, until at least their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

This means that the current Year 9 and all of those pupils who are younger will have to participate in learning until they are 18. There is a staged element to the implementation of Raising Participation: young people who are currently in (the 2011/12) Year 10 will have to participate in learning (not necessarily in school) into their year 12.

Under RPA the post 16 learning options include the following:

- Full-time education in school or FE college
- Work-based learning, for example an apprenticeship or a job with full training
- Part-time education/training alongside employment, self-employed or volunteering of more than 20 hours a week.

We have already had great success in Bradford in encouraging and enabling young people completing Year 11 to participate in learning: 92.5% of our ex-Year 11 students were in some form of learning at November 2011 whilst in 2004 it was only 77.7%. It is important that we maintain momentum on this through to 2015 and beyond. We must encourage all our young people to make early, aspirational yet realistic plans for how they will progress beyond compulsory schooling into compulsory participation. We must provide them with high quality education, support, information, advice and guidance so that they are able to achieve their goals and make the most of the 16-19 education and training provision they are entitled to. This, in turn, will drive up educational attainment and employability and allow young people to take full advantage of opportunities in higher education, in employment, in self-employment and in business start-up to the benefit of the District and its economy.

It is important that everyone involved in educating and supporting students at Key Stage 4 understands the RPA legislation and the post-year 11 learning options and encourages young people to create and maintain personal plans with progression routes.

To help young people understand the various options open to them and how different routes, levels of achievement and qualifications knit together, we are, with local partners, creating a Bradford Learning Offer. This will be a framework of provision and opportunity that facilitates choice and encourages aspiration and personal development.