thepivotacademy

Our Charter 2030

A Time to Reflect

Every journey has a middle.
A moment where you stop and look around, and realise how far you have come.
That is where Pivot stands today.

This document is a reflection on our journey so far, and a statement of belief about the future we are building together.

What began as one simple idea, that children deserve better, has grown into a family of schools, teams and people who live that purpose every day. Across our sites, young people arrive with many different stories. Some have been out of education for months or years. Some are rebuilding confidence after trauma or loss. All are looking for a place where they belong.
Every classroom looks different, but the feeling is the same.
Calm. Safe. Connected.

You see it when a learner laughs with a member of staff, or when a parent lingers for a quiet word at the door. You feel it in the moments when a young person sits down, opens a book, and tries again.
Pivot is carried by teachers, mentors, and leaders who notice what others might miss.
Here, people are not part of the work.
They are the work.



Our Goal

Pivot did not begin with buildings or timetables.
It began with children who had been told they did not fit, families who had run out of options, and staff who still believed something better was possible.

My own experience of school shaped this. I struggled to find where I belonged, to understand why the system worked for some and not for others. That feeling has never left me.

> **It is why I believe education only works when every child feels they belong.**

Pivot grew from that belief. At first it was small. A few rooms, a handful of learners, a few people willing to try something different. We put relationships before routines and watched young people begin to trust and learn again.

This Charter is not a business plan.
It is a statement of belief.
That belief is simple.

Children deserve better.

Not as a policy or a slogan, but as a daily practice.
One decision, one conversation, one act of belief at a time.
When a young person says,
"I felt I was in the right place." We know we are still doing what we were meant to do.

Michael Smith
CEO, Pivot Group







Understanding the now



Every plan for the future begins with where we are today. In recent years, Pivot has grown faster than anyone expected. Referrals continue to rise, telling a story not only of pressure, but of trust. Families and local authorities believe in our approach because they see it working. That growth is carried by our people.

In 2020, Pivot had 49 staff. Today we have more than 170 teachers and support staff working with one shared purpose. Colleagues continue to grow too, through promotion, funded qualifications and dedicated development time.

When we look at outcomes, we see more than numbers. We see learners who once had low or no attendance now turning up every day. We see young people moving on to college, training and work. Behind every measure is a story of confidence rebuilt.

As we grow, we are learning to balance ambition with care, protecting what makes Pivot different while preparing for the next chapter.



Why We Exist



Every child deserves to belong.

Learning does not begin with targets or tests. It begins when a young person feels seen, heard and valued.
The children who come to Pivot carry different stories, but they share one truth: they deserve belief. Belief that they are more than their past, more than a report, more than a label.

Our role is not to fix children, but to understand them.
We give time, consistency and space to rebuild trust, because when trust grows, learning follows.

That is why Pivot exists.

What We Do
We create futures through belonging.

We help young people re-engage with learning, rebuild confidence and prepare for what comes next.

How We Do It
We build trust before we build timetables.

We listen first, adapt to each learner, and create calm, consistent spaces where growth feels possible.

Why We Do It
Because children deserve better.



Every child's journey begins with trust.

For most young people at Pivot, that trust starts with a conversation with a local authority at a moment of uncertainty. We know how much it takes for families, schools and councils to place a child's future in someone else's hands. We work to earn that trust every day.

Shared Purpose

We work closely with partners across the Yorkshire and Humber regions and surrounding areas to build pathways that work for children and the systems around them.

Our shared goals are simple:

- Attendance — helping learners re-engage and stabilise
- Progression — moving every young person towards meaningful post-16 destinations
- Inclusion — keeping learners connected to education
- Value — making every pound of public spend work harder through outcomes-led commissioning

We recognise that sustainable SEND reform depends on strong local systems. Pivot works as part of that wider system, contributing specialist expertise that strengthens inclusive practice across communities. When a child succeeds, everyone benefits



Partnership is

How We Work Together

- **Open and transparent**

We share outcomes and insight so partners can see impact clearly.

- **Commissioning for continuity**

Predictable, multi-year commissioning gives children stability and helps councils plan sustainably.

- **Using public assets wisely**

We are deliberate about where and how we operate. Our sites are located within communities with the highest levels of need, improving access for families and local authorities. Where possible, we secure long-term lease arrangements to minimise property costs. Every decision is made with one aim: directing public funding toward young people, not excess overhead. We will continue to demonstrate transparent cost structures and measurable outcomes, ensuring commissioners can clearly see the long-term value of early and therapeutic intervention.

- **Supporting early help**

Our central team assesses learners on entry, keeping EHCPs current and reducing pressure on statutory and specialist services.

- **Advisory outreach**

We support schools with early intervention and inclusion practice, helping pupils remain in education wherever possible.

not paperwork



Outcomes That Build Trust

• 82% of EHCP targets met or exceeded

• 100% of learners have a confirmed destination when leaving Pivot

• EBSA attendance recovery from 0% to around 90%

• Per-place costs below the national benchmark

Looking Ahead

Our new hub model. **Pivot Outreach Programme**, in Wakefield and Bradford will reduce travel, expand local capacity and give councils greater flexibility

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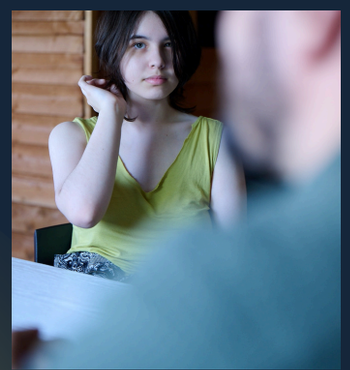
We succeed when children succeed.

Partnership is not paperwork. It is trust.

Stories that shape us.

*"I found the **right place** for me"*





Reggie's Story
A Current Learner

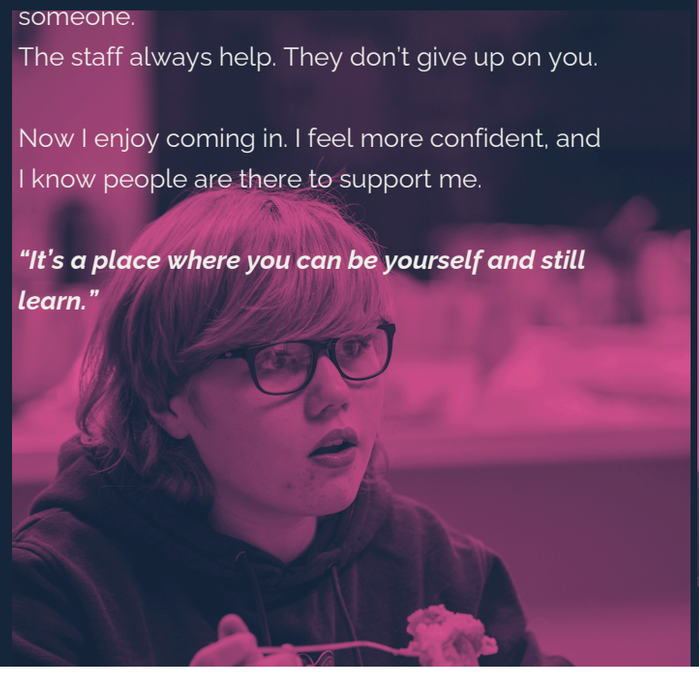
When I first started at Pivot, I didn't go in full time. I found school difficult and wasn't used to being there every day.
The staff understood that straight away. They didn't push too much, they just supported me and helped me build up slowly.
Over time, things changed.
I've been in different classes, but with help from staff and meetings where they listened to what I needed,

I found the right place for me.

There's always something to do here. Lessons are different, and there are activities that help you feel comfortable. If you're struggling, you can take a break, go for a walk, or talk to someone.
The staff always help. They don't give up on you.

Now I enjoy coming in. I feel more confident, and I know people are there to support me.

"It's a place where you can be yourself and still learn."



Dawn's Story
A Parent's View

When Pivot was first mentioned to us, we were unsure. It wasn't what we expected, and we didn't know what it would be like for our child. But when we visited, everything changed.
I remember crying. I couldn't believe a place like this existed. It felt calm, thoughtful, and completely focused on the children. For the first time, it felt like somewhere that truly understood what my child needed.

Before Pivot, my child had struggled for years. Attendance was low, anxiety was high, and there were large gaps in learning. School had become something to fear, not something to look forward to.

At Pivot, everything is different. Her wellbeing comes first. The staff listen, they respond, and they genuinely care.
Even during very difficult times, including serious illness, the support didn't stop. Staff stayed in touch, visited us, and supported us as a family.

Now, she attends full time. She is happy. She wants to be there.
The impact on our family has been incredible.

"For the first time, it feels like everything is going to be okay."

Millie's Story

An Alumni Learner

I didn't like my mainstream school. I didn't feel listened to, and I didn't think things were going to get any better.
When I first came to Pivot, I didn't expect much. It felt small, and I wasn't sure it would be any different.
But after a couple of weeks, everything changed.
The lessons were engaging, the staff listened, and for the first time I felt like I could be myself.
They understood me and helped me with both my learning and how I was feeling.
I **started to enjoy school again.**
Now I'm at college studying animal care, something I love.
I'm planning to continue and build a future working with animals.
I still go back to visit Pivot sometimes
.***"It's the place that helped me believe in myself again."***



Abby's Story

A Staff Perspective

Before joining Pivot, I wasn't sure what direction my career would take.
I had experience working with children, but I hadn't found the right path.
That changed when I joined Pivot.
I started as a Learning and Behaviour Mentor, working closely with learners in the classroom.
Over time, I was given opportunities to take on more responsibility, from leading small groups to delivering lessons.
It was through those experiences that I realised I wanted to become a teacher.
With support from the leadership team, I've been able to begin that journey through an apprenticeship.
That level of encouragement and belief has made a huge difference.
Working at Pivot is challenging, but it's equally supportive.
There is a strong sense that everyone is working together, and that development is part of the culture.
I can see a long-term future here, and I'm proud to be part of it.

"It's a place where you're supported to grow, not just do the job."





Understanding the challenges

Every plan for the future begins with an honest look at the patterns we see. In recent years, Pivot has experienced growth few predicted. More young people are being referred, more families are seeking support, and more local authorities are asking for places.
That growth speaks of trust. It shows that our approach works. But it also brings pressure.

Referrals now exceed capacity in some areas. For some learners, travel times are considerable. Our staff continue to show resilience, yet the strain on space, resources and wellbeing is real. These challenges are the reason the next steps matter.







The truths behind our journey

Increased range of external qualifications
7 GCSE subjects
Functional skills level 1,2,3
Entry level 1,2,3

96% GCSE English

Most referrals now aged 5–15

49%

+49% EHCP growth in key commissioning areas

Travel times for some learners can be substantial

EBSA attendance recovery: 0% → ~90%

100% of learners have a confirmed destination when leaving Pivot

90% GCSE Maths

49 → 180 staff since 2020

Behind every statistic is a young person finding their way back to learning.
The figures on this page show where demand is rising, where pressure is building, and where belonging is restoring futures.

They are not targets.
They are signals.
They tell us where to act next.

Working together for every child

Pivot works alongside local authorities to help meet rising demand for specialist education while keeping children safe, supported and close to home.
We understand the pressures facing commissioning teams — limited capacity, complex need, stretched budgets and long waiting lists. Our role is not to replace maintained provision, but to strengthen the wider system.

How We Align

We design our provision to reflect local and national priorities, including:

- Improving attendance and engagement
- Reducing crisis intervention and escalation
- Supporting smooth transitions into post-16 education, training and work
- Promoting inclusion and early intervention
- Contribute to the development of local Specialist Provision Packages through collaborative design and evidence-led practice.

Practical Collaboration

Integrated support
Our in-house teaching, wellbeing and assessment teams reduce pressure on external services.
Clear communication
We share attendance, progress and outcomes so impact is visible and understood.
Flexible provision
We respond quickly to emerging need, opening provision where demand is rising.

Looking Ahead

Through our local hub model in areas such as Wakefield and Bradford, we aim to:

- Reduce travel distances
- Increase local capacity
- Offer councils greater flexibility in meeting complex need

By working together, we can ensure more young people receive the right support, at the right time, in the right place.



Our Vision for 2030





By 2030, Pivot will continue to be a place where young people thrive.
Because children deserve better is not a slogan for us

It is how we work, every day, in every classroom.
We see a future where education is done with young people, not to them.
Where trust replaces fear, belonging replaces absence, and progress is measured not only in grades, but in confidence, resilience and self-belief.

Our schools will feel calm, purposeful and alive.
Our staff will feel supported and proud of the difference they make.
Families will no longer feel shut out, but part of something that works.

Again and again we hear the same words:
“I felt I was in the right place.”

By 2030, we will reach more young people, closer to home, through strong partnerships and thoughtful growth. Not to expand for the sake of it, but to deepen our impact.
This vision is built on belief.

That education, when shaped with care and understanding, can change a life forever.

By 2030, Pivot will be known not only for what we teach, but for what we stand for, for compassion, for possibility, and for every child.

Building for the Future

Every learner's story points to one truth: the right environment, the right people and the right support can change a life.
Our focus from now to 2030 is simple, to take what works and make it accessible to every young person who needs it.
The next five years are about stability, access and trust. Building capacity. Deepening partnerships.
And proving that inclusive education can be both compassionate and sustainable.
We are building not just schools, but futures.

Expanding Our Reach

Demand for specialist provision continues to outpace supply.
Many learners still travel long distances to access support.
Our response is to bring Pivot closer to them.
New learning hubs in Wakefield and Bradford mark the beginning of a wider regional network. Each hub will reflect the calm, relationship-centred approach of every Pivot school, rooted in its local community.
2030 ambition: every learner within ten miles of a Pivot space that feels like home.

Innovating in Learning

We will keep evolving how we teach and support progress.
Our stage-not-age curriculum will blend academic, vocational and life skills pathways, supported by therapeutic and digital tools that help learners understand their own growth.

Sustainability and Value

We will continue to run transparent, efficient models that protect quality while delivering value for commissioners. As national reform places greater emphasis on sustainability and accountability, we will evidence the long-term impact of early intervention, reducing crisis escalation, improving post-16 outcomes and strengthening local systems.

Investing in People

Growth only works when people grow with it.
We will continue to:

- Fund professional qualifications and leadership development
- Expand coaching and wellbeing support
- Create new roles in therapy, mentoring and inclusion
- Build clear progression routes for long-term careers

Protecting Wellbeing

This work carries emotional weight.
We are strengthening wellbeing structures for staff and learners through supervision, access to mental health support and protected time for reflection.

Looking after our people ensures they can keep looking after others.

Growth with Purpose

thepivotcharter

Our collective commitment

A message from Michael Smith, CEO

Pivot has always been more than a school.
It is a belief that education begins with belonging, and that children deserve better is not a phrase from the past but a promise for the future.

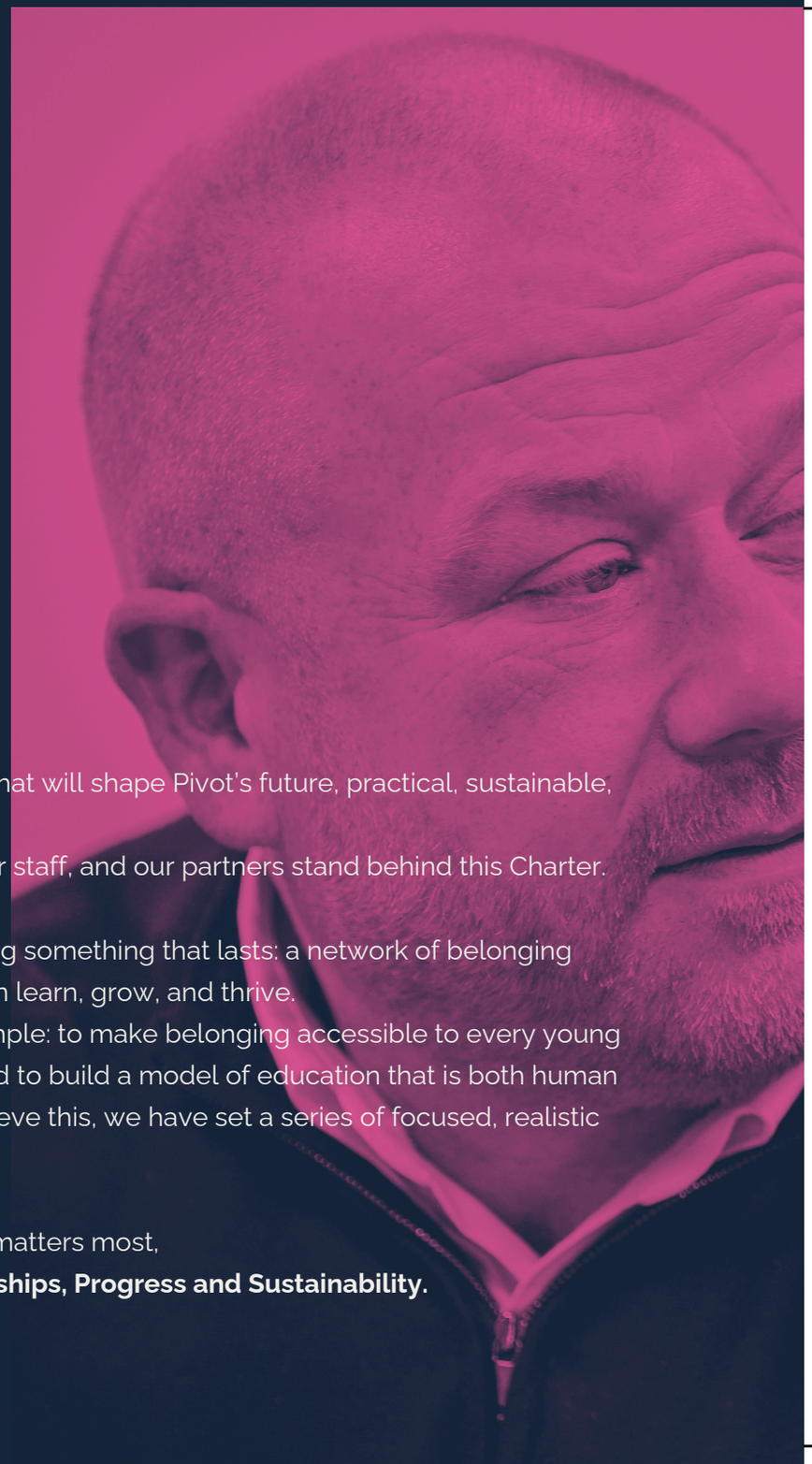
As we look ahead to 2030, we know the challenges facing young people, families and educators are growing. But we also know what works: compassion, consistency and the courage to do things differently.

This Charter is our public commitment to keep those values at the heart of everything we do.

It sets out the priorities that will shape Pivot's future, practical, sustainable, and grounded in care.
Our leadership team, our staff, and our partners stand behind this Charter.

Together, we are building something that lasts: a network of belonging where young people can learn, grow, and thrive.
Our vision for 2030 is simple: to make belonging accessible to every young person who needs it, and to build a model of education that is both human and sustainable. To achieve this, we have set a series of focused, realistic goals.

Each one reflects what matters most,
P**eople, Places, Partnerships, Progress and Sustainability.**



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1. People

Strengthening our workforce

Build a clear leadership pipeline across teaching, support and management

- Embed the Pivot Wellbeing Charter for all staff
- Expand trauma-informed and relational practice training
- Maintain staff retention above 90%
- Grow mentoring and peer-support programmes

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2. Places

Expanding local access

- Establish a regional hub network, including Bradford and Wakefield
- Ensure no learner travels more than 10 miles by 2030
- Keep hubs small, sustainable and community-connected



3

3. Progress

Delivering meaningful outcomes

- Improve attendance, wellbeing and engagement year on year
- Support 100% of learners into education, training or employment
- Track long-term progress through alumni and family engagement
- Expand vocational pathways aligned to regional skills needs

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4. Partnerships

Working hand in hand

- Co-design provision with Leeds, Kirklees, Bradford and Calderdale
- Build reintegration routes with mainstream schools and colleges
- Create work-based learning opportunities with local employers
- Share insight nationally to shape a more inclusive system

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5. Sustainability

Building for the long term

- Maintain financial stability through efficient planning
- Embed environmental responsibility across all sites
- Ensure the Pivot model remains scalable and replicable
- Demonstrate measurable social and economic impact through transparent reporting.

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Our 2030 Aim

By 2030, Pivot will:

- Support 1,000 learners each year across a connected hub network
- Be recognised regionally and nationally for relational education
- Continue to prove that when belonging comes first, everything else follows
- Because children deserve better. Every year. Every place.

Our Promise

Because Children Deserve Better

This is more than a phrase.
It is the reason Pivot exists.
I have seen what happens when a young person who has lost trust begins to believe again.
When they walk through our doors and feel safe.
When they start to imagine a future that once felt impossible.
These moments stay with you.
They are the quiet proof that what we do matters.

As we look towards 2030, my promise, our promise, is simple.

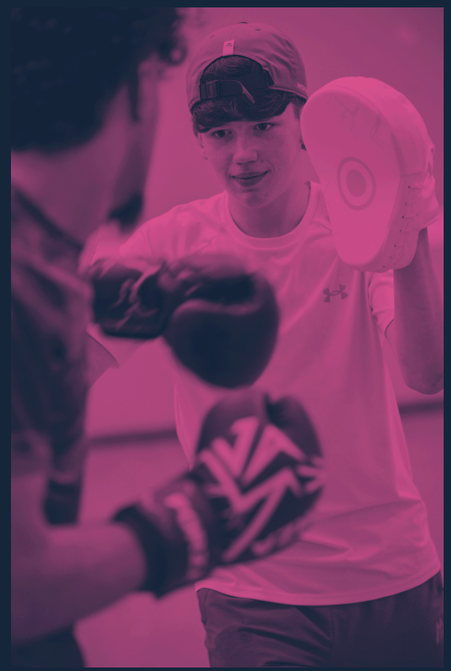
- We will keep believing in every child who comes to us.
- We will keep building places where they belong.
- We will keep standing with families who have been told it cannot be done.
- And we will keep supporting the staff who make this work possible every day.

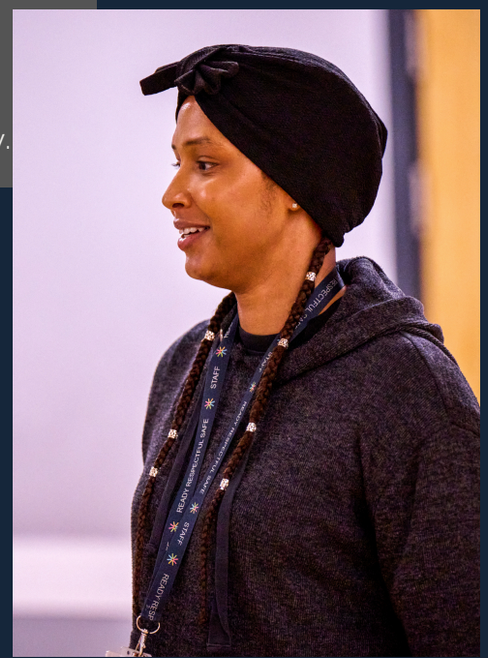
By 2030, we will help change one thousand futures each year,
not through slogans or numbers, but through connection, belief and care.
Because children deserve better.
Always have. Always will.

Michael Smith











Our schools













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