

camden
steam

science technology engineering arts mathematics



Strategic Priorities 2026-2027



Through Camden's pioneering STEAM programme, we are shaping how growth delivers for our young people by building strong partnerships between schools and employers to prepare them for jobs now and in the future. This work is central to our ambition for inclusive growth: directing innovation towards opportunity, fairness and real economic security, so businesses access the skills they need and every young person in Camden can thrive.

Councillor Richard Olszewski, Leader of Camden Council

Camden STEAM is not just a programme – it is a catalyst for systemic change.

The Camden STEAM Partnership connects schools, employers and communities across the borough to build a future where young people, regardless of background, are inspired by STEAM opportunities and prepared for the world of work in Camden's industries. It supports STEAM employers to access a diverse local talent pipeline that supports innovation and inclusive growth.

As work and industries evolve rapidly, Camden STEAM plays a critical role in linking education to employer-led skills needs, widening access to education and work, and ensuring future skills are developed inclusively and locally.

This Strategy Priorities Paper sets out how Camden STEAM will deepen its impact in 2026–27, sharpening focus across our partnership-based system.

What Camden STEAM is currently achieving

- Over 13,000 students engaged in a single academic year.
- Near universal coverage of schools in Camden including over 50 primary, secondary and special schools and a specialist FE college
- 75 STEAM organisations and 200+ active STEAM Ambassadors mobilised

- 440+ high-quality work experience placements delivered in 2025
- Flagship initiatives including the London AI Campus and the rollout of T Levels
- National policy influence, evidencing interdisciplinary learning, creativity and emerging skills

Our strategic priorities for 2026–2027

- Build on the success of our school partnerships
- Embed inclusion by design, strengthening diversity and access
- Strengthen employer partnerships and progression pathways
- Strengthen the positioning of Camden STEAM
- Understanding our impact, from reach to depth

What success will look like

- Every Camden student can access high-quality STEAM experiences
- More young people progress into STEAM study, apprenticeships and jobs
- Employers can recruit skilled diverse local talent
- Camden STEAM helps shape policy and practice locally, regionally and nationally

STEAM stands for **Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics**.

The inclusion of the Arts reflects the strength of Camden's creative industries, its cultural and arts institutions and the importance of creativity alongside technical knowledge in many of the borough's key sectors, supporting innovation, problem-solving and real-world application. This aligns with Camden's ambition for a curriculum that is inclusive, inspiring, creative and horizon-broadening.

The Camden STEAM Journey

Since 2017, the Camden STEAM Partnership has grown from a pilot into a borough-wide programme connecting **schools, employers, and communities** to prepare young people for careers in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM).

Camden STEAM plays a pivotal role in delivering Camden Council's and Camden Learning's 2030 Education Strategy, providing a unique, coherent and collaborative system that links education, skills and economic development. This role is critical in a borough where many young people face disadvantage, including high levels of child poverty, uneven access to professional networks and persistent skills gaps across key growth sectors.

As the world of work evolves rapidly, Camden STEAM has evolved to support increasingly interdisciplinary careers, particularly across digital, creative and scientific sectors. Employers are increasingly seeking skills that combine technical expertise, creativity and adaptability. Young people need opportunities to develop these skills, which prepare them to navigate careers in an era of rapid technological change and increasing uncertainty about future roles and pathways.

STEAM provides a clear framework for connecting education, industry and opportunity in Camden.

Camden's anchor institutions include leading employers, universities, cultural organisations and research bodies, particularly within the Knowledge Quarter, which operates at the forefront of high-skill, high-growth sectors such as life sciences, digital and the creative industries. As system leaders, these institutions help shape a future-ready workforce and support inclusive access to emerging industries.

As the Partnership reached the end of our 2022–2025 Strategy, we reflected on progress and engaged widely with young people, schools, pledge partners and Camden STEAM Partnership Board members for their views and feedback.

Our strategic vision and long-term impact measures remain unchanged. This Strategy Priorities Paper sets out how we will focus on delivery in 2026–2027, sharpening priorities and deepening impact through to December 2027.



Join Camden STEAM in 2026–2027 as we strengthen partnerships between schools and employers to prepare all young people for the world of work, deepen impact, and turn learning into opportunity across Camden.

Baroness Caine of Kentish Town, Chair of Camden STEAM Board

Our Vision

We will work together building a future where Camden is a beacon of inclusive opportunity and innovation.

Young people, regardless of background, will be inspired by STEAM opportunities and they will be ready for the world of work in Camden's STEAM industries. STEAM employers will have access to a local diverse talent pipeline to meet their recruitment needs and help them to innovate and flourish.

Our strategic objectives

1

Building STEAM-readiness

Build young people's awareness of STEAM industries, and support them to develop the skills, knowledge and attributes STEAM employers need.

2

Creating pathways

Provide pathways and opportunities for young people to enter and succeed in STEAM careers.

3

Driving inclusion

Engage young people from underrepresented backgrounds in STEAM and support a diverse talent pipeline.

4

Strengthening the ecosystem

Create an innovative and inclusive STEAM community and economy for Camden that influences policy and supports growth.

What success will look like in the long-term

- Each year, every young person attending school in Camden is involved in a STEAM activity.
- Camden's STEAM industries are increasingly able to recruit skilled, diverse talent locally.
- New policies and funding positively impact Camden's young people and employers in STEAM.
- More young people (including from diverse backgrounds) enrol and complete STEAM related courses, apprenticeships, and degrees in Camden.

Our Achievements as the Camden STEAM Partnership

Together, Camden STEAM and its partners have delivered significant borough-wide impact creating a strong foundation for the next phase of the partnership.

Key achievements:

- **13,000+ students** engaged in a single academic year (2024 to 2025).
- **Broad engagement** across Camden, including all 10 secondary schools, 36 of 38 primary schools, five special schools and a college
- **75 organisations** mobilised through the **Camden STEAM Pledge** and over 200 active STEAM Ambassadors volunteering their time and expertise.
- **440+ high-quality work experience placements** delivered in 2025.
- **Post-16 pathways expanded** through T Levels with five schools.
- **Flagship initiatives established** including the London AI Campus, delivering inclusive and future-focused AI and digital skills learning.
- **Growing national recognition** through policy engagement, thought leadership and contributions to sector-wide discussions and national policy reviews.

What we have learned

As Camden STEAM has matured, strong growth is evident; the next phase must focus on outcomes, progression and long-term impact.

Young people

- Strong reach and inclusion demonstrate clear value for young people and schools, with evidence strengthened by improved data-sharing by employer partners.
- Inclusion has become increasingly embedded across Camden STEAM activities, through targeted initiatives for young people from underrepresented backgrounds.
- Early evidence of positive impact on confidence, aspiration and career readiness.

Schools

- Engagement with schools has deepened and become more structured, particularly through curriculum-aligned delivery at primary level.

- Successful models, such as Year 5 workplace visits, the Primary Careers Day and STEAM Work Experience provide a clear blueprint for future activity.

Employers

- A large and committed employer network supporting future skills, local talent pipelines and inclusive growth, while delivering social value and workforce readiness.

Community and System

- Camden STEAM's influence is growing locally and nationally, strengthened by policy engagement and flagship initiatives such as the London AI Campus.

Strategic Priorities

Looking Ahead – Our Focus for 2026–2027

The 2026–2027 period presents a pivotal opportunity to build on momentum, deepen impact and align our collective action with major local, regional and national policy developments shaping education, skills and the future workforce.

The **National Curriculum and Assessment Review** presents a critical moment to work with schools and employers to embed change ahead of implementation from September 2028. Its direction of travel provides a timely and unique platform, with its emphasis on strengthening connections across subject disciplines, revitalising the arts and embedding key skills such as critical thinking, creative thinking and problem-solving across the curriculum. These priorities closely align with the principles underpinning Camden STEAM's approach.

Camden STEAM supports the ambitions of the **Modern Industrial Strategy**, **London Growth Plan** and **Inclusive Talent Strategy** by strengthening local talent pipelines for priority growth sectors, including digital, science and creative industries. This work also contributes to the **Camden's Building Back Stronger** strategy, supporting an inclusive, creative and horizon-broadening curriculum that expands access to education, work and opportunity.

Within this context, Camden STEAM has identified a set of strategic priorities for 2026–27. These build on the long-term commitments of the Camden STEAM 2022–2025 Strategy and are designed to sharpen focus, deepen impact and strengthen the system connecting schools, employers and inclusive opportunity.

Priority 1 Build on the success of our school partnerships

Preparing for curriculum reform and future qualifications

As schools prepare for reforms arising from the National Curriculum and Assessment Review, including the introduction of V Levels, a revitalised arts curriculum provision, growth in AI and digital learning and a greater emphasis on media literacy, Camden STEAM will support schools to align curriculum, enrichment and real-world application through its established schools–employer engagement model.

Careers Education

- Promote Camden STEAM as a clear, borough-wide enrichment and careers offer, aligned to national curriculum, careers education expectations, inspection frameworks and wider

reforms, including the Enrichment Pledge, embedding STEAM within schools' careers, enrichment and personal development offer.

- Work in partnership with existing careers services, employers and schools to strengthen coordination, improve consistency and provide clearer information to support school planning and alignment with local opportunities.
- We will continue to strengthen the five core activities underpinning the **Camden STEAM Pledge**, enabling employer engagement, curriculum-linked learning, work experience and pathways. This will be delivered through the following practical pathways and opportunities.

Work Experience

- Expand the Year 12 offer, to increase access for all Year 12 students who wish to access a placement, with a target of 650 placements.
- Explore an age-appropriate offer for younger year groups (particularly for Year 10), which would support schools' alignment with the Gatsby Benchmarks.

T Levels and Apprenticeships

- Broker high-quality industry placements to strengthen the T Level offer across STEAM sectors
- Increase the number of students progressing into STEAM apprenticeships, by equipping schools to build student awareness and readiness through student workshops, high-quality resources, staff continuous professional development (CPD), and clearer mapping and promotion of local apprenticeship routes.

Primary careers and early engagement

- Extend recent growth in primary engagement by supporting employers to design age-appropriate and

curriculum-aligned activities, that stimulate engagement, particularly among students from disadvantaged backgrounds and ensure widespread uptake in Camden schools.

- Scale up Camden's Primary Careers Day to increase student participation, using it as anchor to pilot a wraparound week of in-school activities that raise awareness of STEAM careers, opportunities and pathways.

London AI Campus

- Strengthen the London AI Campus as a community asset for Camden and an emerging national centre of excellence by sustaining high-quality enrichment learning through its core student offer, including AI Connect and the Opportunity Centre, drawing on Camden STEAM partner expertise and increasing student participation in partnership with schools.
- Support schools to implement AI approaches effectively by acting as a hub for professional development, teacher networks and school-employer partnerships.

Priority 2 Embed inclusion by design, strengthening diversity and access

- Embed inclusion by design across activities, amplifying youth voice, strengthening outcomes and improving data or young people from underrepresented backgrounds, including working with partners to support young people who are at risk of becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- Take a proactive approach to supporting students from **Camden's Youth Mission cohorts** to access meaningful and appropriate work experience, including care-experienced young people, young people in the Youth Justice System, students with an Educational Health Care Plan, school non-attenders and disabled young people. This will be strengthened through close working with our Special Schools and the Virtual School.

Priority 3 Strengthen employer partnerships and pathways

Employer partners, particularly Camden's anchor institutions, will help shape pathways that reflect the changing nature of work across high-skill growth sectors, ensuring that future jobs and the skills needed to access them are visible, understood and inclusive for Camden's young people.

- Grow and diversify our employer base by increasing the number of **STEAM Pledge** partners, including those within Camden's Knowledge Quarter to strengthen school-employer connections.
- Work with employers to develop high-quality enrichment-learning spaces, building on the London AI Campus model and prioritising learning and

progression within the creative industries and life sciences.

- Clarify expectations of and strengthen support for employers, making engagement simpler and more meaningful including expanding SME participation through consortia models and building sustainable partnerships aligned to workforce needs.
- Increase progression into STEAM apprenticeships by developing and piloting clear routes from Year 12 into higher and degree apprenticeships, connecting existing pathways, including STEAM Work Experience Week, Camden T Levels and the London AI Campus.

Priority 4 Strengthen the positioning of Camden STEAM

- Build on Camden STEAM's growing profile and evidence base to shape policy and share learning on employer engagement, curriculum alignment and the enabling role of schools in delivering high-quality careers and enrichment provision, strengthening a more joined-up system that connects education, employers and progression into STEAM pathways and jobs.
- Leverage flagship initiatives, such as the London AI Campus and large-scale work experience, to attract partners and resource, influence policy and position Camden STEAM as a scalable model for inclusive STEAM education.

Priority 5 Understanding our impact: From reach to depth

In 2026-27 Camden STEAM will continue to report improvement against the core measures established in the 2022-2025 strategy, while strengthening our understanding of quality, progression and long-term outcomes.

- Refresh the impact framework to strengthen monitoring and evaluation and improve evidence of real-world outcomes. Develop stronger longitudinal monitoring

and partner feedback systems to better understand the balance between cost, reach and long-term impact.

- Create a coherent borough-wide picture of impact by bringing together partner data and school insights and improving understanding of the relative impact of different pathways such as T Levels, apprenticeships and work experience.