



**WIRRAL  
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# **JSNA: Post 16 Participation in Employment, Education, Training & Skills Development**

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**Wirral Intelligence Service  
and Wirral Children and  
Young People's Department**

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**August 2019**

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## JSNA: Post 16 Participation in Employment, Education, Training & Skills Development

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### Background to JSNA – Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

#### **What is a JSNA?**

A Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, better known as a JSNA, is intended to be a systematic review of the health and wellbeing needs of the local population, informing local priorities, policies and strategies that in turn informs local commissioning priorities that will improve health and wellbeing outcomes and reduce inequalities throughout the Borough.

#### **Who is involved?**

Information from Council, NHS and other partners is collected and collated to inform the JSNA and this reflects the important role that all organisations and sectors have (statutory, voluntary, community and faith) in improving the health and wellbeing of Wirral's residents.

#### **About this document**

This JSNA section looks to contain the most relevant information on the topic and provides an overview of those related key aspects

#### **How can you help?**

If you have ideas or any suggestions about these issues or topics then please email us at [wirralintelligenceservice@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:wirralintelligenceservice@wirral.gov.uk) or go to <https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/>

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1.0	November 2017	G. Jones, P. Smith, J. Highton, S. Dodd, H. Carney
2.0	August 2019	G. Jones, P. Smith, A. Castree, J. Highton,

## Content overview

<p><b>Abstract</b></p>	<p>This is a review of the current performance, activity, guidance and service provision relating to Post-16 participation in employment, education, training and skills development in Wirral.</p> <p>Evidence suggests that there are a variety of options for young Wirral people to take in terms of their education, employment and training and Wirral performs well in a number of aspects and achievements.</p> <p>However, there are issues for certain groups of young people such as Care Leavers, those with special education needs and children looked after those require additional support and help.</p> <p>Future changes and needs to funding and availability of provision and providers could be an issue if work to mitigate impacts is not taken sooner rather than later and this is now part of the LCR agenda.</p>
<p><b>Intended or potential audience</b></p>	<p><b>Internal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and Young People’s Department Senior Leadership Team</li> <li>• Children’s Joint Commissioning Group</li> </ul> <p><b>External</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wirral Partnership</li> <li>• Partners across multiple sectors</li> </ul>
<p><b>Links with other topic areas</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Alcohol</a>, <a href="#">Autism</a>, <a href="#">Black, Asian &amp; Minority Ethnic Groups</a>, <a href="#">Breastfeeding</a>, <a href="#">Cancer</a>, <a href="#">Childhood Obesity</a>, <a href="#">Child and Family Poverty</a>, <a href="#">Child Health Profile</a>, <a href="#">Child Protection and Looked After Children</a>, <a href="#">Child Exploitation</a>, <a href="#">Children's Dental Health</a>, <a href="#">Communicable Disease including vaccinations</a>, <a href="#">Domestic Abuse and Domestic Violence</a>, <a href="#">Drug Misuse</a>, <a href="#">Early Years</a>, <a href="#">Eye Health</a>, <a href="#">Health Care Associated Infections and Antimicrobial stewardship</a>, <a href="#">Housing</a>, <a href="#">Learning Disabilities</a>, <a href="#">Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual &amp; Transgender</a>, <a href="#">Life Expectancy</a>, <a href="#">Loneliness</a>, <a href="#">Long Term Conditions</a>, <a href="#">Maternity and Pregnancy</a>, <a href="#">Mental Health</a>, <a href="#">Screening</a>, <a href="#">Special Educational Needs and Disabilities</a>, <a href="#">Physical Activity</a> and other content in <a href="#">Children and Young People: JSNA 2018 section</a></li> </ul>

## Key findings

- Wirral has good overall participation rates but there remains a 'significant cohort' of young people Not in Education Employment or Training that increases in size between the ages of 16 and 18 (circa 243 young people).
- Wirral has a number of small (<200 pupils), underperforming school 6th forms where the curriculum offer is limited, and outcomes and/or learner progress is below national expected levels.
- The level 2 inequality gap has narrowed over the last 3 years and is in line with national benchmarks. The level 3 attainment inequality gap at key stage 4 and at age 19 is amongst the highest of any local authority area nationally, this gap continues to increase.
- Over the last three years the number of young people accessing recognised Apprenticeships has reduced even given the Governments strong focus on raising skills and supporting employers. Success rates for Wirral resident Apprentices' on all programme levels are in line with national averages.
- Travel to learn patterns are complex and there exists variation in attainment dependent on whether, as a Wirral resident, you are post-16 educated inside or outside of the borough. This will require further investigation as further detailed on page 25.
- The quality of schools-based careers information, advice and guidance programmes requires continued support and challenge.
- Vulnerable groups such as Care Leavers and those with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities need more support into employment opportunities.
- Programmes which have been funded through the European Social Fund (ESF) will end due to the UK's decision to leave the European Union. This will leave a gap in initiatives and bespoke programmes to support some of those most vulnerable groups.

# Wirral JSNA: Participation in Employment, Education, Training and Skills Development

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## What do we know?

### Why is this important?

Wirral has a complex post 16 education and learning landscape. Wirral young people making the transition at age 16 into further education and training have several options and pathways including, school sixth form, further education (including study programme provision) and Apprenticeships.

Post 16 opportunities are accessible locally however young people may choose to travel for specialist learning to a neighboring local authority or beyond.

Analyses of local post 16 education and training provision shows young people's participation rates in the borough, 92% (16 and 17-year olds as at April 2018) are at or above the national and regional rates of 92% and 91% respectively. This can be broken down into the following areas: Full Time Education 83.2%, Apprenticeships 6.6% and Other Education or Training 2.3%.

Wirral has good overall participation rates but there remains a 'significant cohort' of young people Not in Education Employment or Training that increases in size between the ages of 16 and 18 (circa 400 young people).

Improvement needs to be made if we are to ensure all our young people, aged 16 to 19, are making a positive transition into adult life and gaining appropriate employment.

We therefore need to ensure schools and academies are meeting their statutory duty to provide robust careers education, information, advice and guidance and the Council is ensuring sufficient and suitable education and training provision to meet all young people's needs.

The national perspective of what is required of the education sector for young people beyond the age of 16 has changed significantly over recent years and is continuing to evolve. There has been a fundamental national reappraisal of the purpose of post-16 education and training, driven by three key factors, namely,

The Department for Business Innovations and Skills (BIS) Post 16 Skills Plan, July 2016, sets out the Governments intentions to radically reform post 16 education for young people. The reforms if followed through, following the Government Department restructure, will include the following key changes:

- Development of 15 full-time technical pathways after the age of 16, each with a single awarding body.
- The expectation that all 16-year-olds will choose vocational OR academic routes.
- A "transition" year is planned for 16-year olds not ready to enter either an A-level route OR the new 'technical' pathway.
- The Baker Clause has been introduced which has meant schools have to let people from outside organisations into schools to talk about their post-16 options.

**The Liverpool City Region (LCR) Skills Strategy for the period 2018- 2023 and was agreed by the Combined Authority in March 2018.**

Based on stakeholder input underpinned by a skills survey, there is a skills investment statement for 2019/20. There emerged six main principles for immediate focus:

- Improved attainment in English, Maths, Digital and Work Readiness
- Raise Working Age Employment Rate

- Higher Productivity/ Fewer Skills Shortages in Growth Sectors
- More Effective Workforces and Fewer Local Recruitment Difficulties for All Employers
- Employers Investing More in The Skills of Their Workforce
- Simplifying the Skills System

Employer Skills Survey 2017 (DfE) highlights that skills remains an issue in Wirral however there has been improvements since the 2015 survey:

- Reduced employer skills gap from 15% to 11%
- Increase in overall vacancies
- % hard to fill vacancies has not changed
- % skills shortage vacancies reduced

There is a national aim to increase the academic and vocational challenge in qualifications attained by post-16 students as part of their study programmes, and to thus improve the worth of their studies. In particular there has been a focus on increased rigour in qualifications, testing, and an emphasis on improving students' future employability through additional Maths, English and work experience. This will include access to, and engagement of employer will be key to the success of the new Technical Level qualifications which are due to be rolled out in 2020.

The quality of schools based careers information, advice and guidance programmes requires continued support and challenge. Agencies working with Wirral children continue to report low aspiration levels.

This is a view particularly prevalent with employers across the Liverpool City Region (LCR), as reported by **Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)- Careers Enterprise Company 2017**, who feel young people are not always equipped with the right skills to succeed in the work place identifying gaps with communication, confidence, problem solving and resilience. This will present a challenge to how young people are best prepared for the world of work after leaving education and/or training. The Liverpool City Region was chosen as one of 20 LEPs to pilot a Careers Hub in 2017 and has successfully bid for an expansion to this programme. Careers Hubs were set up and are funded by the Careers & Enterprise Company.

As a result of the Careers Strategy, published by Government in December 2017 the Careers & Enterprise Company's remit is growing to include the launch of Careers Hubs. The Liverpool City Region Hub will consist of 34 schools from across the LCR working with Universities, other education and training providers, employers and career professionals to ensure the Gatsby Benchmarks are delivered in each school and college and that careers outcomes are improved for all young people.

## Facts, figures and trends (Wirral and beyond)

The local post 16 participation rates are good with some 92.3% (adjusted figure as at February 2019) of the 16 & 17 (Year 12 &13) cohort (6942) participating in some form of employment, education and training (EET) as seen in table 1 below. This compares to 92.8% nationally and 92.0% for the North West.

The proportions of Wirral young people not in employment, education and / or training (NEET) have stabilised, at a low level, over the last 12 months. The local authority NEET indicator, published March 2018, detailed the average NEET (adjusted) to be 3.6% percent. Analysis of Client Caseload Information Suite (CCIS); this illustrates the proportions of young people that access the key types of local post 16 education and training provision.

**Table 1:** Wirral Resident Participation: Destination of Young People (16 & 17 years) as at March 2019

Young Persons Status	Numbers of Young People by destination and age			
	Year 12	Year 13	Totals	Overall Destination %
<b>Cohort Number</b>	<b>3410</b>	<b>3534</b>	<b>6944</b>	
Cohort in Employment, Education, Training	3283	3258	6541	<b>94.2%</b>
School Sixth Form	1550	1474	3024	<b>43.5%</b>
Sixth Form College	652	550	1202	<b>17.3%</b>
FE College	857	824	1681	<b>24.2%</b>
Other Education	*	*	*	*
Apprenticeship	130	206	336	<b>4.8%</b>
Employment	46	145	191	<b>2.8%</b>
Study Programme	31	40	71	<b>1%</b>
Other Training	11	12	23	<b>0.3%</b>
Not Known	38	118	156	<b>2.2%</b>
Active NEET (Seeking)	82	114	196	<b>2.8%</b>
Inactive NEET (Ill Health, Pregnancy, Expired etc)	7	40	47	<b>0.7%</b>
Other (Custody, Gap Year etc.)	*	*	*	*

**Source:** Internal Resource: Cognisoft IO March 2019 (14-19 Service) (Operational Database)

**Notes:** \* numbers less than 10 are suppressed in this instance. The resource for this table is not published.

Table 1 above also shows that there has been a significant drop in the take up of Apprenticeships across both years 12 and 13, with 2018- 2019 figures at 336 against the previous year 561 ([see Table 1, ages 16 & 17 total only - previous JSNA section](#)), however NEET and Not Known figures have remained low, suggesting that young people are opting to stay in Further Education in college, or Sixth Form College.

Over the last three years the number of young people accessing recognised Apprenticeships has reduced even given the Governments strong focus on raising skills and supporting employers. Wirral apprenticeship participation has dropped dramatically but is in line with Liverpool City Region and national picture. Reduction between 2017 and 2018:

- Wirral: 15%
- Liverpool City Region: 20%

The biggest reduction in apprenticeships is in the 19 to 24 age group at level 2 intermediate level with participation down by 61%. This is explained in more detail in the Apprenticeship section on page 28 of this document. Success rates for Wirral resident Apprentices' on all programme levels are in line with national averages.



This may also raise questions around quality of careers guidance and options for young people at age 16. Employment as a destination has also risen by almost 4% overall from 2016. The 18 year-old cohort has seen the significant increase of people entering Employment.

Further investigation into the local labour market information would be useful to identify sectors, types of employment accessed and any “in house” training undertaken to better understand long term and short term skills base for the future.

As well as identifying if any of the employment taken are in the Growth Sectors across the city region, which are:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Digital and Creative
- Finance and Professional Services
- Health and Life Sciences
- Low Carbon and Energy
- Maritime and Logistics
- Visitor Economy

## **Characteristics of not in employment, education and / or training (NEET)**

### ***National***

A recent view, provided by [House of Commons Briefing Paper \(August 2017\) \(Pages 11 & 12\)](#) suggests that following recent analysis of the make-up of the NEET cohort, that the most vulnerable young people in the NEET cohort have often left compulsory education having had a negative experience of their time there, often leaving school with little or no qualifications. For example, those who have been bullied at school will often disengage post 16 or not engage in Further Education.

Nationally statistics indicate that those who were eligible Free School meals also became NEET. A significant proportion of NEET nationally also includes those who are disabled or who have diagnosed with mental health problems/illness.

### ***Wirral***

On Wirral there are significant numbers of young people, aged 18, that have been NEET for longer than 12 months. A 14-19 action research project in May 2016, engaged with twenty young people from this cohort. The cohort identified had the following key characteristics:

- Most young people suffered from stress, anxiety, low self-esteem and lacked confidence.
- Most had lived an isolated existence in the safety of the family home since leaving school.
- Most felt and feared they would not be able to return / adjust to normal life.
- Most have been treated / are being treated medically for depression/ anxiety.
- Most young people lived in a single parent household and not all families would meet the thresholds to be ‘troubled families’.

This led to the Learning Skills and Employment Service commissioning a service for NEET Engagement and Re-engagement.

The Learning Skills and Employment Service has worked with Wirral Met College to increase opportunities for those with disabilities to provide supported Internships with local employers to increase the number of employment opportunities for this cohort. From August 2013, all young people in full or part-time education aged 16 to 19 (16 to 24 where the student has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan) have been expected to follow a study programme- a coherent, personalised learning programme that offers breadth, depth and progression.

A supported internship is one type of study programme specifically aimed at young people aged 16 to 24 who have a statement of special educational needs or an EHC plan, who want to move into employment and need extra support to do so. Supported internships are structured study programmes based primarily at an employer.

They are intended to enable young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to achieve sustainable, paid employment by equipping them with the skills they need for work through learning in the workplace. Internships normally last for a year and include unpaid work placements of at least six months. Wherever possible, they support the young person to move into paid employment at the end of the programme. For the academic year 18-19 there were 26 young people participating in this provision.

The **Ways to Work Programme**, a Liverpool City Region (LCR) project (funded by European Social Funding) has also provided supported employment opportunities for those NEET young people who have been the furthest away from the labour market Funding for Round One of the Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) Programme ended in August 2018 with further funding committed until 2020. See Table 2 below for programme details.

**Table 2:** Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) Opportunity April 2016-August 2018

<b>Completion of Project ILM Round 1</b>	<b>Number</b>
Total Starts for the Programme	189
Total into Employment	117
<b>Percentage into Employment</b>	<b>62%</b>
Care Leavers Starts	50
Total into Employment	21
<b>Percentage into Employment</b>	<b>42%</b>
Special Education Needs Starts	42
Total into Employment	33
<b>Percentage into Employment</b>	<b>78%</b>

Source: ILM Programme Internal information

## Wirral Active not in employment, education and / or training (NEET)

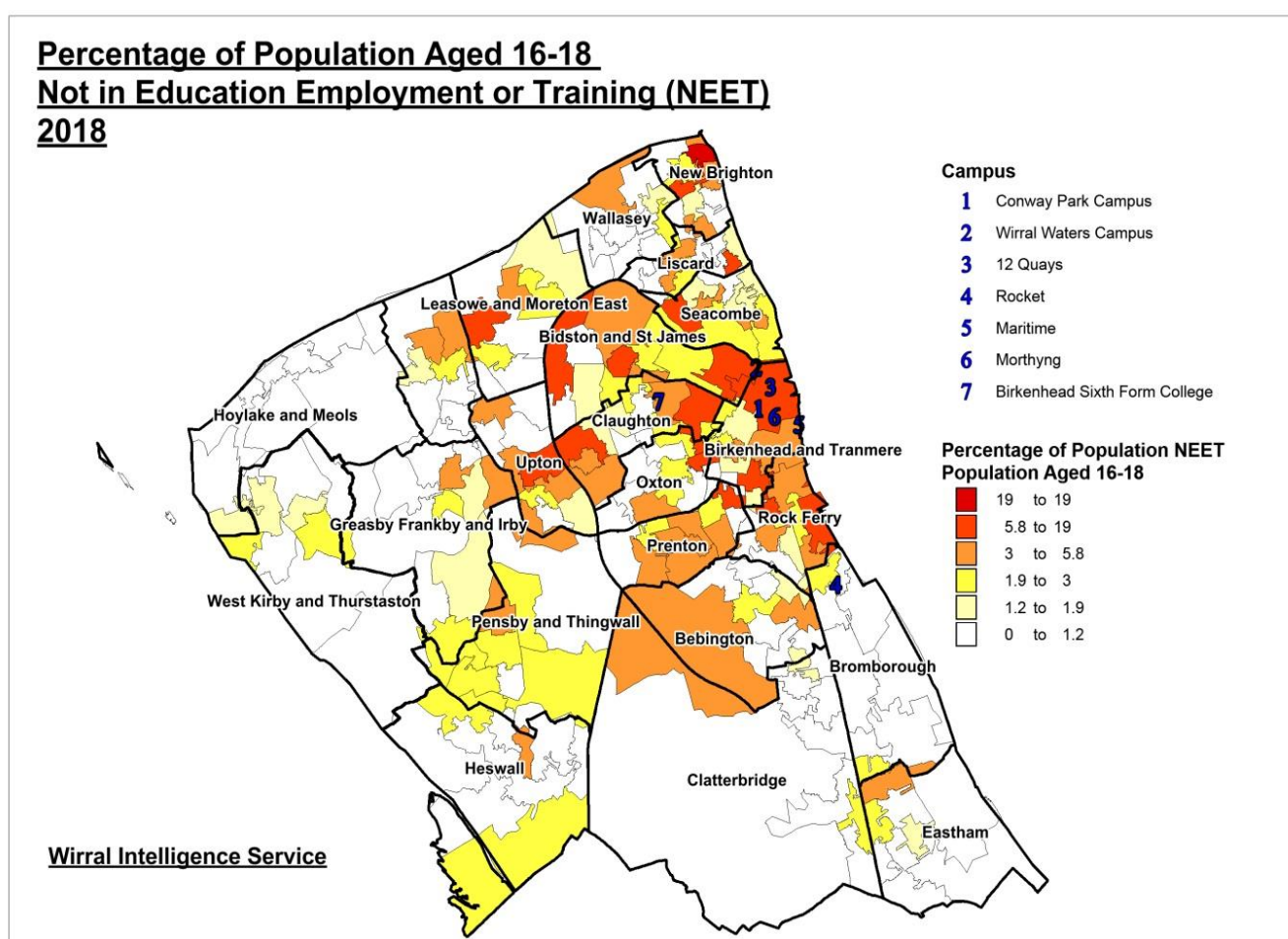
“Active” NEET’s are those young people who are NEET but seeking/able to participate in Employment, Education or Training.

The heat map below (**Map 1**) shows the proportion of young people (16-18) who are Active NEET (able and seeking to participate) by the Ward in which they live in.

The areas marked in red are the “NEET Hotspots”. There are parts of Prenton, Bidston and St. James, Seacombe, Rock Ferry, New Brighton, Liscard, Leasowe and Upton that are identified as having pockets of a high concentration of NEET young people.

Unsurprisingly the West of Wirral has significantly less numbers of NEET than those on the East of the Borough Heswall, Greasby, Frankby and Irby, West Kirby and Thurstaston all have low NEET numbers due to lower density populations in larger rural areas.

**Map 1:** Wirral 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET), 2018



**Source:** Wirral Intelligence Service 2018

**Notes:** “Active” NEET’s are those young people who are NEET but seeking/able to participate in Employment, Education or Training.

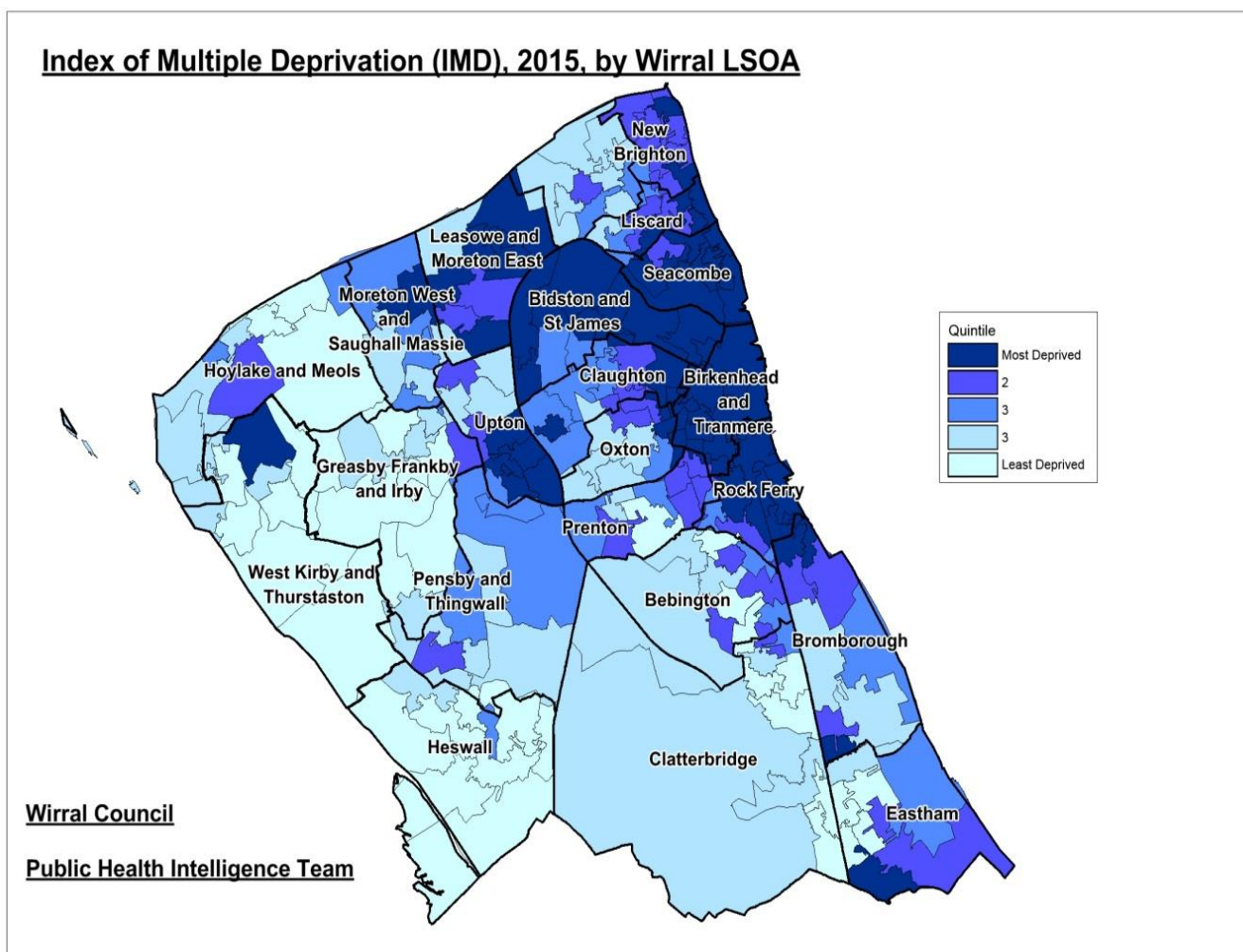
The Active NEET figures also mirror some of the most deprived Wards on Wirral, showing a direct correlation between the two, this is shown when comparing **Map 1** above with **Map 2** below and relating to areas of deprivation on Wirral.

**Map 2** below shows the distribution of deprivation in Wirral and it shows the majority of the areas of acute deprivation (20% most deprived) are in Bidston & St. James, Birkenhead, Tranmere, Rock Ferry and Seacombe Wards. Leasowe & Moreton East Ward also has significant areas of deprivation.

There are also several areas in south and west Wirral (Acre Lane area of Bromborough, Mill Park estate in Eastham, Woodchurch estate in Upton and area around Anglesey Road in West Kirby) which fall into the 20% most deprived, but in general, there is a north & east/west & south split in Wirral with regard to deprivation.

The majority of the least deprived areas of Wirral are in Heswall Ward (Gayton and Heswall) with some other pockets in West Kirby & Thurstaston Ward (Caldy area), Hoylake Ward and Greasby, Frankby & Irby Ward.

**Map 2:** Indices of Multiple Deprivation for Wirral (2015)



**Source:** Wirral Intelligence Service 2017

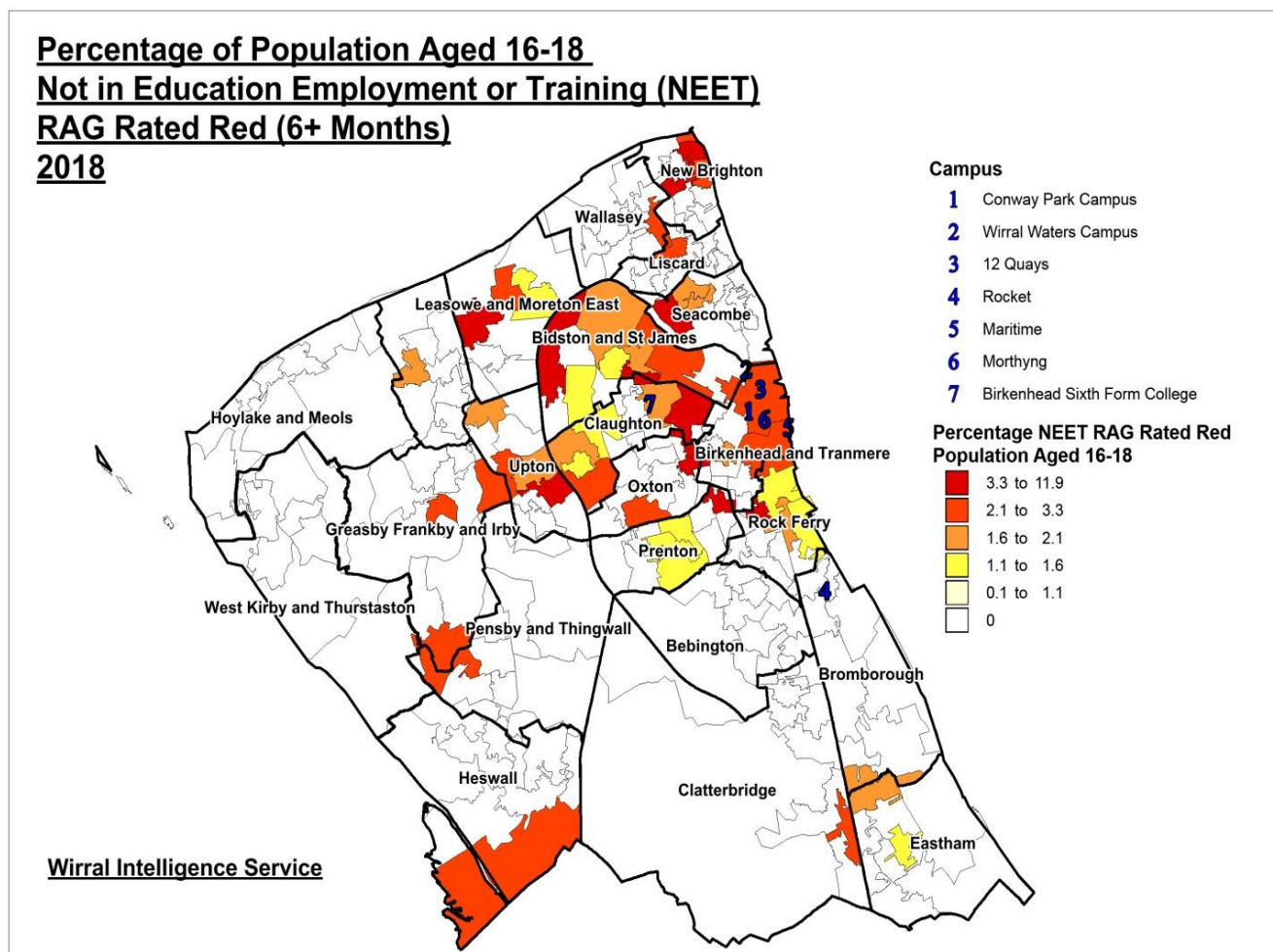
**Notes:** View details at <https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/jsna/indices-of-deprivation-2015>

**Wirral not in employment, education and / or training (NEET) Red-Amber-Green Rated**

In **Map 3** below it highlights the areas where pockets of young people have been NEET for 6 months and over. This again shows hotspot areas such as New Brighton, Birkenhead and Tranmere, Bidston and St James and Leasowe as.

There are small numbers in Heswall and Pensby who fall into this cohort but in general, there is a north & east/west & south split in Wirral. Geographically this is interesting as all of the establishments delivering Further Education (FE) (other than school 6th Forms) or Training are based on east of Wirral suggesting that location of provider does not impact on engagement.

**Map 3:** Wirral Residents not in employment, education and / or training (NEET) for over 6 months (2018)

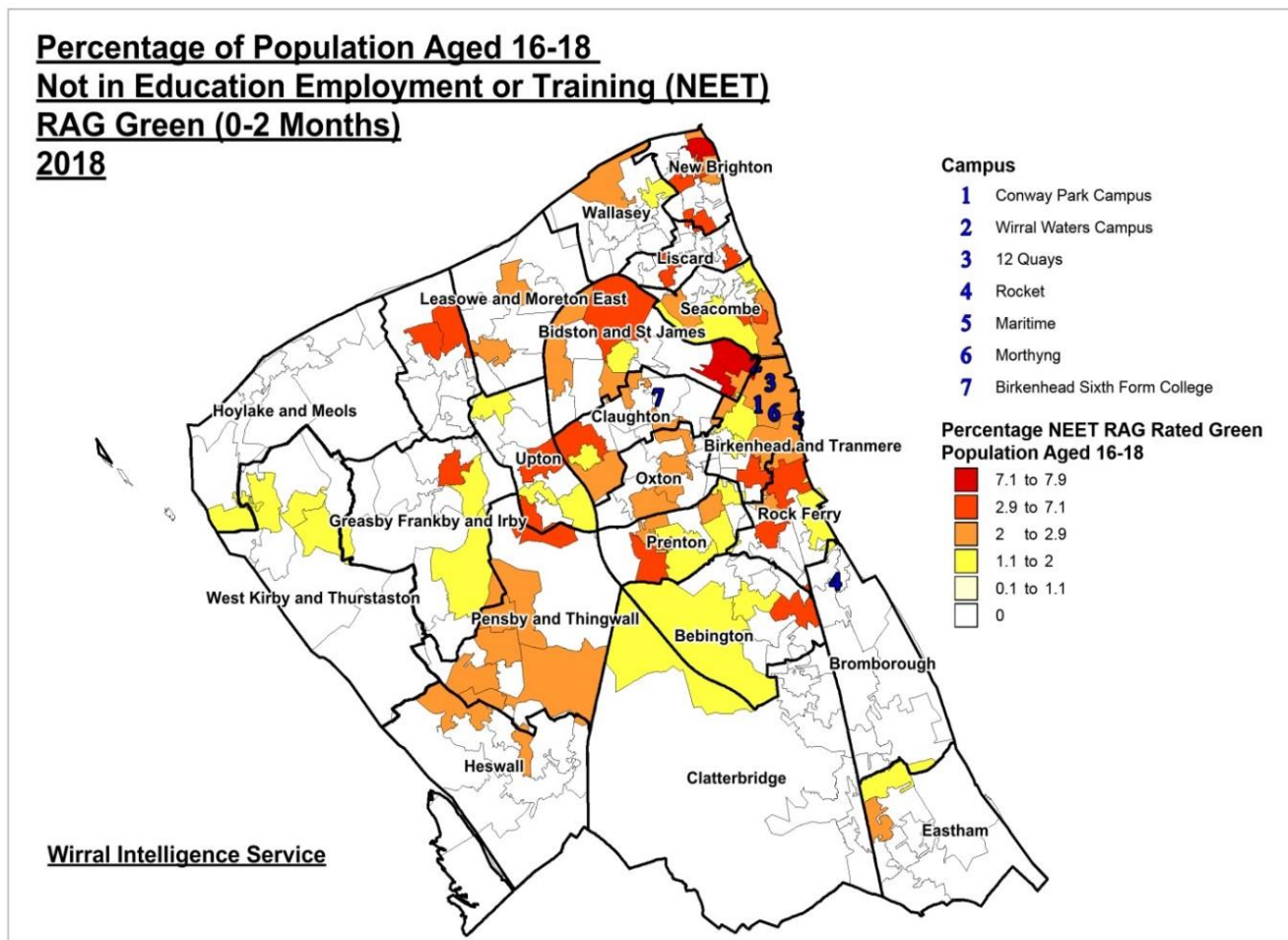


Source: Wirral Intelligence Service 2018

In **Map 4** below it shows areas where young people have been not in employment, education and / or training (NEET) for less than 2 months.

While this shows a greater spread across the borough it also highlights that those from the West and South of Wirral are more likely to re-engage in employment, education and / or training (EET) far quicker than those in the East of the Borough.

**Map 4:** Wirral Residents not in employment, education and / or training (NEET) between 0-2 Months (2018)



Source: Wirral Intelligence Service 2018

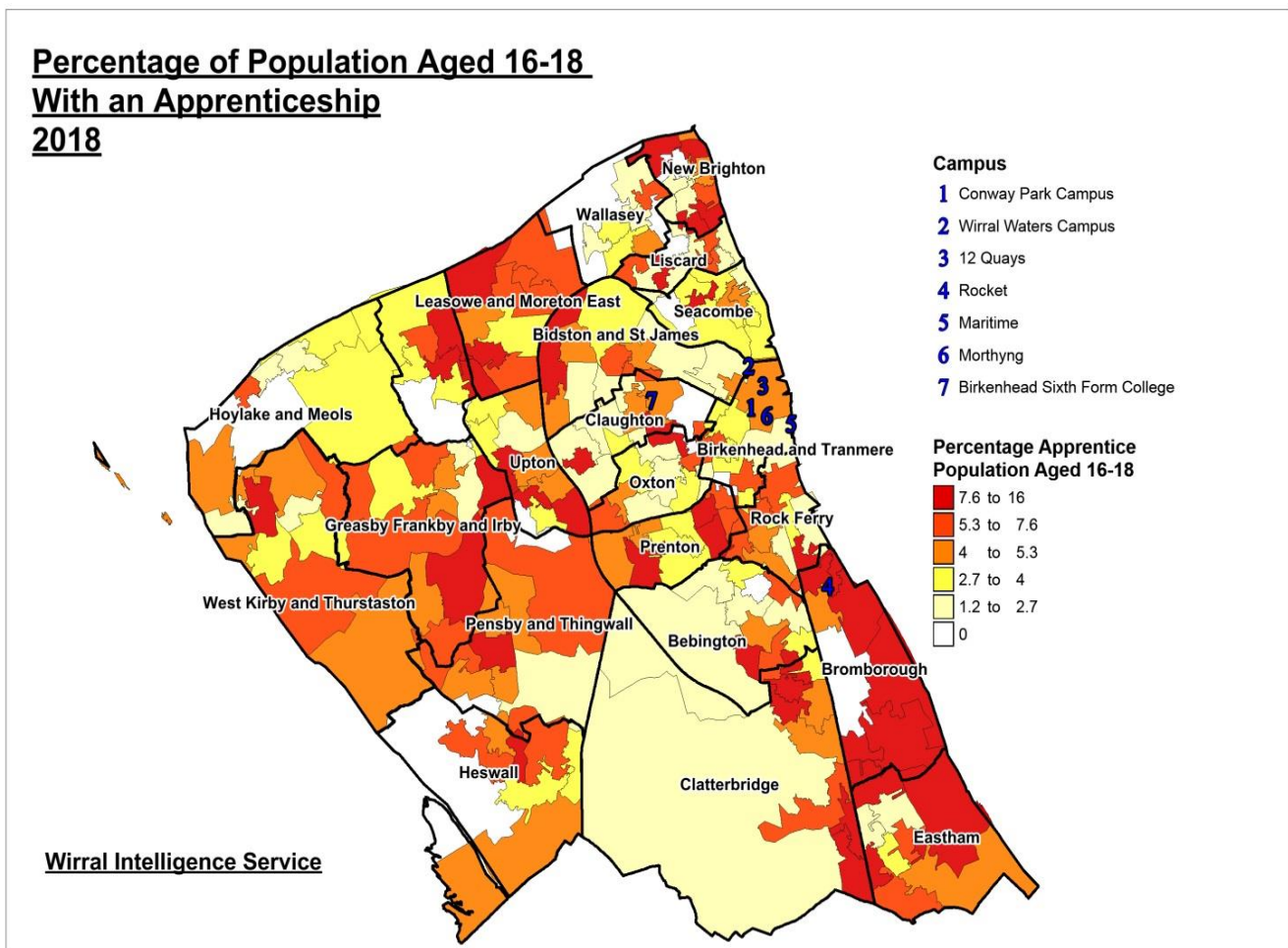
## Wirral 16-18 year olds engaged in Apprenticeships

In **Map 5** below it provides a geographical overview of the areas that young people are from who are engaging in Apprenticeships.

This shows that those residing in the South of the borough such as Eastham and Bromborough are heavily engaged in Apprenticeships which may be due to the opportunities available nearby such as Bromborough Retail park and a number of companies based on Bromborough Industrial estate.

Those resident in Pensby Thingwall, Leasowe and Moreton East and New Brighton also show high numbers engaged in Apprenticeships. While young people in Bebington, Hoylake and Meols and Wallasey are less likely to take up apprenticeships.

**Map 5:** Apprenticeship Participation for Wirral 16-18 year olds (2018)



Source: Wirral Intelligence Service 2018

## Wirral 16-18 year olds engaged in Work Based Learning

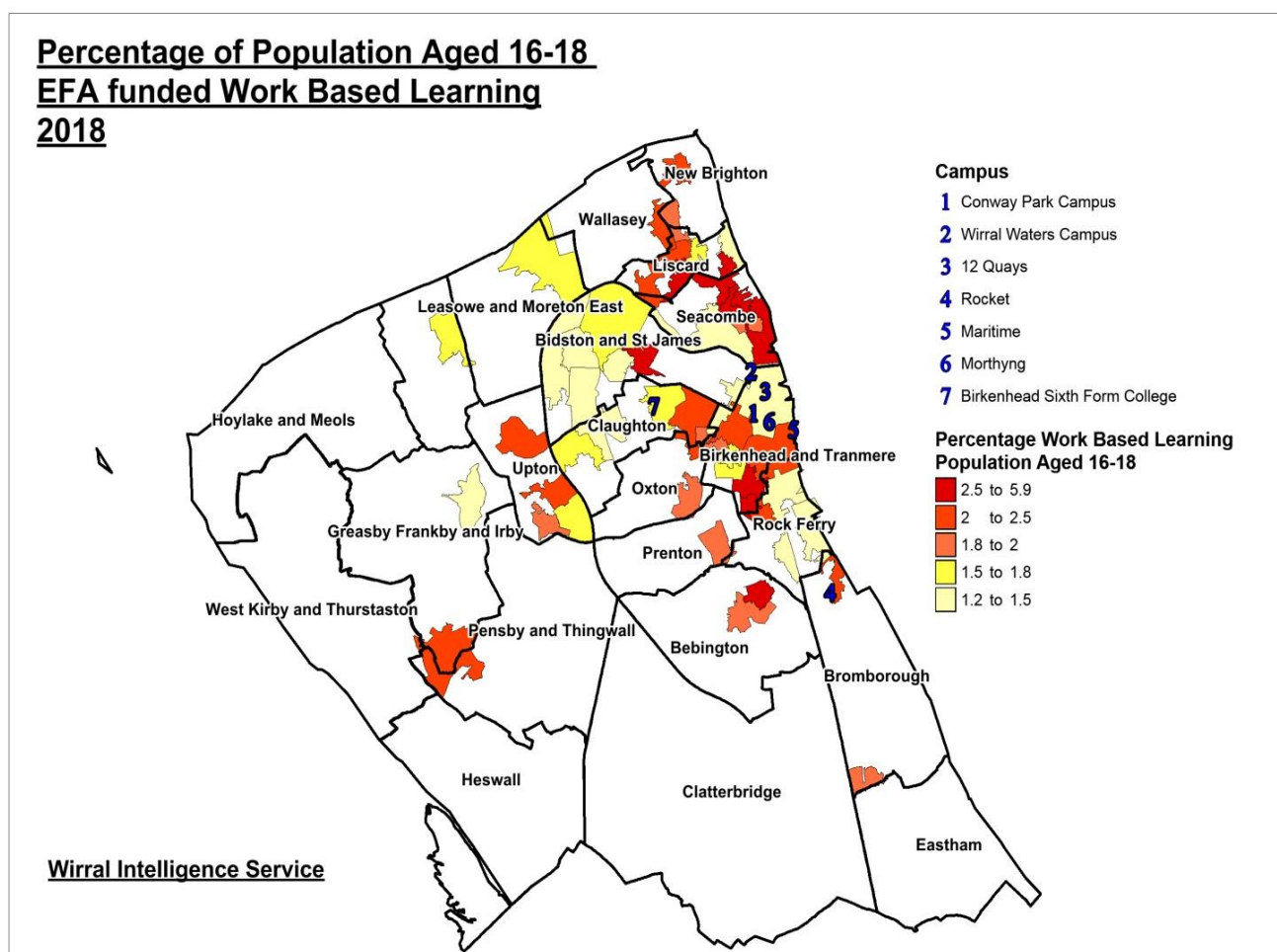
In **Map 6** below shows the geographical area of young people who are engaged in Work Based Learning Provision.

**Work-based learning (WBL)** is an educational strategy that provides students with real-life work experiences where they can apply academic and technical skills to develop their employability. Work-based learning strategies provide career awareness, career exploration opportunities, career planning activities and help students attain competencies such as positive work attitudes and other employability skills.

This demonstrates that many young people who attend this provision are based in the very East of the borough.

This is unsurprising given that these programmes are aimed at supporting those who have low qualification levels, are not yet ready to undertake an apprenticeship or who have barriers to employment. There are smaller numbers of those from Pensby and Thingwall and Bebington, but the majority of young people come from the Liscard, Seacombe and Birkenhead area.

**Map 6:** Work Based Learning Participation for Wirral 16-18 year olds (2018)



**Source:** Wirral Intelligence Service 2018

**Notes:** "Work-based learning (WBL) is an educational strategy that provides students with real-life work experiences where they can apply academic and technical skills and develop their employability." ([Link](#)) It is a series of educational courses which integrate the school or university curriculum with the workplace to create a different learning paradigm. "Work-based learning deliberately merges theory with practice and acknowledges the intersection of explicit and tacit forms of knowing ([Link](#))"



In **Table 3** below there are 5 wards which have not in employment, education and / or training (NEET) figures of over 5% showing a high concentration of NEET in certain areas.

While there are 10 areas that have 2% or under NEET, meaning in real terms these wards have 10 or less NEET young people in that area.

These figures include those active and non-active NEET.

**Table 3:** Reported numbers of young people, aged 16 – 18, not in education employment or training by Wirral Wards (2019)

Ward Name	Number NEET	Number in cohort	Percentage (%) of Ward age population
Bidston & St James	32	388	8.25%
Rock Ferry	27	369	7.32%
Birkenhead & Tranmere	25	409	6.11%
Leasowe & Moreton East	23	351	6.55%
Seacombe	19	345	5.51%
Upton	15	364	4.12%
Liscard	14	358	3.91%
New Brighton	13	308	4.22%
Claughton	12	332	3.61%
Prenton	11	348	3.16%
<b>Total NEET for Wirral (all Wards)</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>6969</b>	<b>3.49%</b>

Source: Cognissoft IO April 2019 14-19 Service)

Notes: Please note table does not include wards where actual figures were below 10 NEET or less than 2% of that ward age population as NEET. These Wards are Oxtan, West Kirby and Thurstaston, Wallasey, Hoylake and Meols, and then Greasby, Frankby, Irby; also, the resource for this table is not published.

### Sixth Form Provision in Wirral Schools and Academies Performance

Wirral has 17 schools offering post-16 provision and they are geographically evenly spread across the borough. Institutions range in size with Grammar school sixth forms having amongst the largest number of students.

Wirral has a number of small (<200 pupils), underperforming school 6th forms where the curriculum offer is limited, and outcomes and/or learner progress is below national expected levels. Further information can be found on page 20 of this document.

Three sixth-forms from West Wirral feature in Top Ten, 3 feature from the Bebington and surrounding area, 2 from the Claughton and Upton area and 2 feature from Wallasey. **Table 4** below provides information on these schools.

**Table 4:** Wirral Schools Sixth Forms and Academies Student Numbers by Institution (Top 10 Institutions 2018/19)

Institution	2016/17		2017/18		2018/19	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Calday Grange Grammar School	369	10.4%	417	11.2%	424	12.3%
Weatherhead High School	358	10.1%	361	9.7%	327	9.5%
West Kirby Grammar School	305	8.6%	341	9.2%	318	9.2%
St John Plessington	317	8.9%	317	8.5%	304	8.8%
Wirral Grammar School for Girls	251	7.1%	298	8.0%	294	8.5%
Wirral Grammar School for Boys	239	6.7%	282	7.5%	268	7.8%
Upton Hall School FCJ	225	6.3%	234	6.3%	219	6.4%
Hilbre High School	157	4.4%	159	4.3%	189	5.5%
St Anselms College	193	5.4%	203	5.5%	177	5.1%
The Mosslands School			192	5.2%	158	4.6%
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>3559</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3713</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3445</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: [Education and Skills Funding Agency](#) 2019

**Note:** Key stage 4 refers to those young people in year 10 and 11, aged 15-16, while Key Stage 5 refers to 6th Form, those ages 16-18. The other 10 schools offering Sixth Form/post 16 offer are: Bebington, Pensby, South Wirral, Birkenhead High School Academy, Oldershaw, Kingsway Academy and St Marys and includes 3 Special Schools: Clare Mount, Foxfield and Meadowside. The resource for this table is not published.

In **Table 4** above Hilbre High School and Calday Grange Grammar School show the biggest increase in numbers in the Top Ten, between 2017/18 and 2019/19, with a 1.2% and 1.1% increase respectively. Calday still remains the most popular school Sixth Form making up 12.3% of the eligible population. Mosslands and St Anselms saw the biggest decrease in cohort size in the Top Ten, between 2017/18 and 2019/19, with -0.6% and -0.4% respectively.

The decrease in numbers of young people attending sixth form is due to a decrease in the cohort size; when looking at the differences in numbers of young people staying in Sixth Form provision either at school or sixth form college, there is only a decrease of 54 young people over the year group – 40 of whom attend Wirral Met College, leaving only 14 opting out of post-16 education of this kind.

With (43.8%) of young people (actual figure 3,048 – November 2018, excluding Sixth Form College) attending Sixth Form provision in 2018 below is some further detail and analysis of the key headline data which illustrates the features of Wirral young peoples' achievements:

- There were 17 schools (a mix of maintained, academy and independent) with a post 16 offer in 2016. Wirral also has 3 Special Schools with a sixth form offer including: Clare Mount, Foxfield and Meadowside. In 2018 performance at Key Stage 5 (those aged 17 and 18) in school sixth forms across academic and vocational programmes is variable. Wirral has some of the best Key Stage 5 academic provision nationally. The selective grammar schools and the Birkenhead Sixth Form College offer a broad choice at A Level. Some non-selective schools offer a more restrictive academic choice but supplement the curriculum with technical and/or general applied vocational provision.
- Analysis of 2018 performance data shows on average, pupils at 7 schools had an average academic level 3 attainment level below a grade C (It would be expected that they would be at grade C as a minimum). All pupils attending selective grammar schools attained an overall average grade C or above. The best Wirral average academic level 3 provision grade being a B+

- 11 of Wirral schools/academies had an upper sixth form (A level or equivalent) year group that completed summer 2018 with less than 100 young people on roll. There is a strong correlation between post 16 institutions with pupil numbers in excel of 200 and good outcomes for young people.
- Analysis of students completing their main study programme for the Wirral is 91.6% which is lower than the national average of 92.5% showing that Wirral young people may not always be choosing the right courses.
- The percentage of pupils achieving grades AAB or better at A level, of which at least two are in facilitating subjects is 15.9% which is below the national average of 16.2% by 0.3%.

### Wirral Further Education and Independent Learning Provider (ILP) Performance

Independent Learning Providers are an alternative to Further Education Colleges. They are institutions that are private or voluntary organisations that deliver training and apprenticeships and hold contracts with the Skills Funding Agency to deliver qualifications.

- Wirral young people attending independent learning providers (ILPs) for study programme curriculum are generally those working at entry level / level 1 and are aspiring to level 2. Wirral has a core of three locally based ILPs.
- ILP success rate performance is variable with little consistency. Success rate performance at some providers is below national averages.

### Apprenticeship Provision

**Table 5:** Wirral 16-18 Apprenticeship Participation and Success Rates (Wirral Provider Only) compared to National Average 2014 - 2017

Year	Level	2014	2015	2016	2017
<b>Learner Volume (No.)</b>	2	550	530	430	420
	3	250	290	240	210
	4+				*
<b>Achievement Rates (%)</b>	2	61.8%	71.8%	66.5%	67.8%
	3	80.3%	76.5%	68.8%	74.5%
	4+				85.7%
<b>National Average (%)</b>	2	69.5%	71.0%	67.8%	67.1%
	3	75.0%	77.3%	72.9%	69.3%
	4+				61.9%

Source: [Education and Skills Funding Agency](#) (2018)

Notes: \* not reported or published at time of producing this assessment

The key headlines in table 5 (above) of the analysis for apprenticeships include:

- The numbers of Wirral young people aged 16 to 18 participating in Apprenticeship provision has been declining year on year from a very high baseline.

- As an indicator of the quality and achievement rates of young people; achievement rates at level 3 have decreased over the last two years after steady improvement previously and are 5.3% above the national average. Level 2 intermediate Apprenticeship success rates have increased on last year by 1.3% and is currently 0.7% above national average, however figures still remain lower than in 2015.
- It is noteworthy that Wirral young people currently engage with over 105 providers from a wide geographical range which makes it difficult to give apprenticeship provision a completely local element.

### **Learner Destinations**

Annually the Department for Education tracks and publishes data relating to the relevant proportions of young people that successfully transition in to post 16 destinations at an institution and local authority level. [Further information on published data.](#)

This measure forms one the key performance indicators used by Ofsted in determining the quality careers guidance provided by schools / academies plus a measure of performance in respect of education and training provision at Key Stage 4 and 5.

There is a lag in the data published which means latest data to be reported on is from 2014/16.

From 2014/16 data Key Stage 4 and 5 learner destination measure of performance for Wirral compares favourably with national averages as can be seen in **Table 6** below:

**Table 6: 2014/2016 Key Stage 4 and 5 Learner Destination Measure Performance**

Key Stage	Area	Year	% of Young People in Employment, Education, Training (EET)	% of Young People in Education	% of Young People that do not sustain their destination
Key Stage 4	Wirral	2016	95%	88%	5%
		2015	94%	92%	5%
		2014	93%	91%	5%
	England	2016	94%	86%	5%
		2015	94%	91%	5%
		2014	91%	89%	6%
Key Stage 5	Wirral	2016	92%	70%	6%
		2015	92%	78%	6%
		2014	81%	73%	3%
	England	2016	90%	67%	6%
		2015	90%	72%	7%
		2014	71%	64%	2%

Source: [Department for Education](#), January 2017

## Narrowing the Gap for Disadvantaged Pupils

In **Table 7** below is the comparison between the proportion of disadvantaged pupils and all Wirral pupils in employment, education and / or training from state funded schools at the end of Key Stage 4 (KS4) and Key Stage 5 (KS5) in 2016/17.

**Table 7: 2016/17 Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 Learner Destination Measure Performance 2016/17**

Key Stage	Area	Disadvantages Pupils*	All Wirral Pupils	% Gap	Destination not Sustained
Key Stage 4	Wirral	89%	94%	5%	10%
	England	88%	94%	6%	11%
Key Stage 5	Wirral	87%	90%	3%	10%
	England	85%	89%	4%	11%

Source: [Department for Education](#), January 2017

At the end of Key Stage 5 a higher proportion of young people transition into employment, education and/or training compared to national averages.

Also, at Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 the percentage of young that do manage to sustain their post 16 destination is comparable to the national averages. Of particular interest from **table 7** above is, the percentages of young people in positive destinations and the percentage of “destination not sustained” by disadvantaged pupils compared with all Wirral pupils.

The destination gap between disadvantaged and all Wirral pupils at Key Stage 4 is 1% for both Key Stage 4 and 5. Key Stage 4 is 5% compared to 6% nationally, and Key Stage 5 is 3% compared to 4% nationally.

Destination measure performance also shows there is a gap at 1% for both Key Stages 4 and 5. Wirral’s proportion of destinations NOT sustained at the end of Key Stage 4 and 5 are both 1% below the national figures.

## Further Education (FE) and Commercial and Charitable Providers (CCP)

Wirral has two large Further Education (FE) providers offering a range of courses and training for over 3,500 students per year.

Due to the geographical location of Wirral some students seek provision outside of the area with these being mainly specialised courses that are only available outside of the area. The main providers are noted in **Table 8** below.

**Table 8:** Further Education and CCP numbers by Institution (Top 10 Institutions) 2014/2015 to 2016/17

Institution	2014/15		2015/16		2016/17	
	Students	%	Students	%	Students	%
Wirral Met College	1,733	42.0%	1,775	43.1%	1,654	44.6%
Birkenhead Sixth Form College	1,208	29.3%	1,184	28.8%	1,197	32.3%
The City of Liverpool College	325	7.9%	326	7.9%	270	7.3%
The Vocational College Ltd	191	4.6%	196	4.8%	156	4.2%
West Cheshire College	115	2.8%	119	2.9%	92	2.5%
Reaseheath College	100	2.4%	91	2.2%	92	2.5%
Morthyng Vocational College	60	1.5%	39	0.9%	44	1.2%
Learn Direct	0	0.0%	46	1.1%	46	1.2%
NCG	23	0.6%	44	1.1%	18	0.5%
Rocket Training	37	0.9%	25	0.6%	14	0.4%
<b>Top 10 providers Total</b>	<b>3,792</b>	<b>91.8%</b>	<b>3,845</b>	<b>93.4%</b>	<b>3,583</b>	<b>96.6%</b>
<b>Total All Providers</b>	<b>4,129</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4,116</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3,708</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: [Department for Education](#), January 2018

The number of Wirral resident young people attending post-16 institutions for 2016/17, as noted in **table 8** above, showed that they accessed less provision out of borough than previous years.

The City of Liverpool College has seen a drop in participant numbers by 0.6% between 2015/16 and 2016/17; with West Cheshire College also seeing a drop in numbers by 0.4% over the same period. However, in that same period between 2015/16 and 2016/17, Birkenhead Sixth Form College showed an increase of 4.5% with Wirral Met College showing a decrease of 1.9% which could indicate that more young people are following an academic route than a vocational route and at Wirral venues.

Analysis of the key headline data illustrates the following key features of how well Wirral young people achieve in Further Education and Independent Learning Providers.

- The number of young people aged 16 to 18 that attended Wirral Met College had increased to reach 1,775 in 2015/16. However, in 2016/17 this figure dropped to 1,654. This could be as a result of more 16-year olds staying on in school sixth form rather than a Further Education (FE) institute. Outcomes (success rate methodology) for young people attending the College are in line with [Education and Skills Funding Agency](#) data with the national average at 83.1% (for level 3 in 2014) against an all-level national average of 84.3%.
- The numbers of young people accessing pos-16 education at the Birkenhead Sixth Form College increased in 2016/17 from 1,187 to 1,197 but remains slightly down on the 2014/15 figure of 1,208. Success rates for long level 2 programmes has improved year on year and is above national averages. Level 3 long programme success rates have also improved year on year, but the 2013 and 2014 success rates remain below the national average (2014, -1.3% at 85.9%). Provisional 2015 success rates illustrate a further improvement with success rates anticipated to be well within the top 10 percent of all sixth form colleges at 89.96%.

### Travel to Learn - In and Out of Borough Learning Success Rates

Significant variation exists in terms of the qualification success of young people that travel and access learning outside of the borough. **Table 9** below illustrates the qualification success rates across the different learning sectors for young people staying and learning in the borough and those that learn outside of the borough.

**Table 9:** Wirral comparison of 16 to 18 year olds, In and Out of Borough Learning Success Rates (2018)

Learning Sector	Success rates for 16-18s learning in borough	Success rates for 16-18s learning in borough and outside of the borough
ALL sectors	82.0%	80.9%
Sixth Form College	86.9%	86.6%
Further Education College	80.7%	80.1%
Independent Learning Provider	64.9%	63.9%

Source: [Skills Funding Agency](#), July 2018

As the data in **Table 9** illustrates that when you factor in the success rates for young people who access learning outside of the borough, there is a drop in overall Wirral young people's global success rates.

There is a significant drop in success rates under the Independent Learning Provider sector, there is a strong learning provider network on Wirral, and this could possibly indicate the strength of successful partnership approach shown by Providers on Wirral and quality of provision.

There is a need to identify and understand why a significant number of young people travel outside of the borough for further education provision. The numbers of out of borough learners has remained significant over the last three years. Even discounting the 'pull' from independent specialist providers such as, Reaseheath Agricultural College, there are still significant volumes of young people still leaving the authority area for learning. Local providers need to investigate if such provision can be made available within Wirral which would lead to more learners staying in borough to access sector specific provision.

## Apprenticeships

**An Apprenticeship Levy was introduced across England from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017.** This requires all large employers, with a wage bill in excess of £3m, to pay a monthly tax of 0.5% of their wage bill to support apprenticeship training costs. Smaller employers were also required from April 2017 to make a financial contribution to their apprentice(s)' training costs. The introduction of the levy was intended to support the Governments aspiration to start 3 million apprentices by 2020. However, the Levy has caused confusion among some employers and reduced the number of apprenticeships starts compared with pre-levy figures. There is also concern over the way in which the Levy is being used with Levy paying employers choosing to spend the majority of the Levy on higher level apprenticeships to upskill current workforce which has seen a rise in management qualifications being delivered. [More information on Apprenticeships](#).

Apprenticeship training for 16-18 year olds was usually paid for by the government meaning there was no cost to an employer. **There are monetary incentives to encourage business to take on 16-18 year olds; however, the payment particularly for small or medium enterprises (SME's) may result in them not employing apprentices.**

This has had a major impact, especially on Wirral as SME's currently employ a large number of apprentices. The impact of the Levy will have to be monitored to identify any trends or issues that that may arise as a result.

## Apprenticeship Reforms

Apprenticeship reforms were introduced to put employers in the driving seat and have more control in shaping the content and delivery of the qualification. Standards have been developed to replace Frameworks which are being phased out. Lots of new Standards that have replaced Frameworks have been developed at Level 3 which risks a gap in provision for those learners who are not at Level 2 and don't have a clear pathway to reach Level 3. This could impact on social mobility and apprenticeships may no longer be an option for those who do not already hold a Level 2 or equivalent qualification. Apprenticeships in the past have been a positive and accessible route into the world of work for those who have not had a positive experience of education and may not have achieved passes at GCSE level.

The introduction of End Point Assessments has caused some delay in achievement and completion rates as the apprenticeship cannot be completed without an independent provider carrying out the assessment. There has been a shortage in providers who can carry out the End Point Assessment in certain sectors leaving apprentices unable to officially complete their apprenticeship until a provider has been sourced.

Increased flexibility in Public Sector Levy now means that up to 25% of an organisation's Levy can be transferred to partners for apprenticeship training. This means that smaller organisations can benefit and are able to access apprenticeship training for staff or new starts without it costing them directly.

**Tables 10 and 11** below show the apprenticeship start figures for both the 2016/17 and 2017/18 time periods based upon geographical area. The figures not only provide yearly comparative start data but also geographical analysis across the Liverpool City Region. The figures demonstrate in part the impact that the Apprenticeship Levy and Apprenticeship Reform have had on apprenticeship starts.

**Table 10:** Apprenticeship Starts by Region (England) 2016/7 to 2018/19

Region	2016/17 Starts	2017/18 Starts	Q2 2018/19 Starts
East Midlands	47,540	33,690	20,080
East of England	44,950	36,700	21,370
London	44,380	36,830	20,620
North East	33,940	22,640	12,720
<b>North West</b>	<b>79,720</b>	<b>60,890</b>	<b>32,640</b>
South East	63,590	52,550	30,750
South West	53,550	43,430	25,370
West Midlands	60,330	42,650	24,040
Yorkshire and The Humber	61,150	44,580	25,390
Other	5,740	4,570	2,710
<b>Total</b>	<b>494,900</b>	<b>378,530</b>	<b>215,680</b>

Source: [Department for Education](#) (2019)

The North West has seen a decrease in apprenticeship starts from 2016/17 to 2017/18 of almost 19,000, as presented in **Table 10**. While figures for Quarter 2 (Q2) offer some encouragement of an increase for 2018/19, projections indicate that numbers would still be below the numbers for 2016/17.



This is a pattern which is mirrored in almost every other region however North West, West Midlands and Yorkshire and Humber appear to have had the most dramatic decreases.

Nationally there were 116,370, a 23% fall from 494,900 in 2016/17 to 378,530 in 2017/18, fewer people who started an apprenticeship.

**Table 11:** Apprenticeship Starts by Local Authority across Liverpool City Region 2016/7 to 2018/19

Local Authority	2016/17 Starts	2017/18 Starts	Q2 (6 months) 2018/19 Starts
Halton	2,880	2,060	1,200
Knowsley	4,420	2,720	1,600
Liverpool	10,640	6,860	3,680
Sefton	6,700	4,200	2,180
St Helens	4,620	3,080	1,680
Wirral	8,060	5,540	2,940
<b>Total</b>	<b>37,320</b>	<b>24,460</b>	<b>13,280</b>

Source: [Department for Education](#) (2019)

In **Table 11** the Liverpool City Region data for this same period also suggests a decrease in starts between 2016/17 and 2017/18.

**Table 11** highlights that every Liverpool City Region Local Authority Area showed a decline in apprenticeship starts, with Liverpool showing the biggest decrease with almost 3,800 less people (down from 10,640 to 6,860) starting an apprenticeship when comparing 2016/17 to 2017/18.

Wirral had 2,520, or 31%, less starts (down from 8,060 to 5,540) which was comparable with our statistical neighbour Sefton. As Quarter 2 (2018/19) figures suggest there may be a slight increase in starts for this period although this again will be markedly below 2016/17 numbers.

Overall some 12,860 less people started an apprenticeship across the LCR in 2017/18 than during the same period in 2016/17.

**Table 12:** Apprenticeship Starts by Level across the Liverpool City Region 2016/17 to 2017/18

Local Authority	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher	
	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18
Halton	1,440	760	1,220	1,040	220	280
Knowsley	2,260	1,280	1,800	1,100	340	360
Liverpool	5,600	3,140	4,140	2,820	900	900
Sefton	3,280	1,820	2,700	1,700	720	660
St Helens	2,300	1,240	1,880	1,380	440	460
Wirral	4,220	2,360	3,200	2,380	640	800
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,100</b>	<b>10,600</b>	<b>14,940</b>	<b>10,420</b>	<b>3,260</b>	<b>3,460</b>

Source: [Department for Education](#) (2019)

**Table 12** demonstrates the dramatic decline of Intermediate (Level 2) apprenticeship starts across the LCR with 8500 less starts in 2017/18 (Down from 19,100 to 10,600). Advanced Level apprenticeships also showed a decrease of over 4500 less starts in 2017/18 (Down from 14,940 to 10,420) while Higher Apprenticeship starts have shown an increase by 200 starts (Up from

3,260 to 3,460). Intermediate starts nationally have decreased mainly as a direct result of the new Standards which have been introduced meaning that some apprenticeships which were previously offered at Intermediate Level no longer exist.

The funding model also means the cost of delivering an Intermediate Level Apprenticeship is not as financially attractive as those at advanced or at a higher level.

As the Intermediate level can often represent first steps into a career especially for those who haven't achieved at GCSE level, there is a real concern that with reduced opportunities at this level, there will be a potential impact on Not in education, employment and training (NEET) figures, social mobility and a recognised pathway to advanced and higher qualifications.

There was an increase in the number of those starting Higher degrees, the apprenticeship levy and reforms will also be a factor in this increase as businesses can use the Levy to upskill existing members of staff with new Standards developed at higher level available.

This has seen a rise in areas such as Project Management apprenticeships which has become one of the most popular apprenticeships over the past 18 months.

For Wirral there were 1860 less starts at Intermediate Level (down from 4,220 to 2,360) and 820 less starts at Advanced Level (down from 3,200 to 2,380) in 2017/18 than in 2016/17. However, Wirral showed the greatest increase in Higher Level apprenticeships across the region with a growth of 140 starts in 2017/18 from 640 up to 800.

**Table 13:** Apprenticeship Starts by Age across the Liverpool City Region 2016/17 to 2017/18

Local Authority	16-18		19-24		25+	
	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18
Halton	660	520	760	520	1,480	1,040
Knowsley	960	760	1,160	700	2,300	1,260
Liverpool	2,020	1,640	2,660	1,760	5,940	3,460
Sefton	1,320	1,180	1,740	1,180	3,640	1,840
St Helens	920	900	1,300	820	2,400	1,360
<b>Wirral</b>	<b>1,580</b>	<b>1,480</b>	<b>2,280</b>	<b>1,520</b>	<b>4,200</b>	<b>2,540</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,460</b>	<b>6,480</b>	<b>9,900</b>	<b>6,500</b>	<b>19,960</b>	<b>11,500</b>

Source: [Department for Education](#) (2019)

**Table 13** highlights the information that apprenticeship starts for 16-18 year olds decreased by 980 across the Liverpool City Region (Down from 7,460 to 6,480) and by 3400 starts (Down from 9,900 to 6,500) for 19-24 year olds between 2016/17 and 2017/18.

Apprenticeships starts for those aged 25+ has shown the biggest decrease down from 19,960 in 2016/17 to 11,500 (or 8460 fewer starts) in 2017/18.

There is a similar picture for Wirral between 2016/17 and 2017/18 with a decrease in starts for 16-18 year olds by 1,000, by 760 for 19-24 year olds and by 1,660 for those aged 25+.

**Table 14:** Apprenticeship Starts by Age and Level Wirral 2017/18

Level	16-18		19-24		25+	
	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18
Intermediate	1,020	920	1,160	600	2,040	840
Advanced	520	520	1,000	780	1,680	1,100
Higher	40	40	120	140	480	620

Source: [Department for Education](#) (2019)

In **Table 14** it suggests that for Wirral there were 100 less 16-18 year olds starting an Intermediate apprenticeship in 2017/18 compared to 2016/17 with numbers remaining the same for Advanced and Higher apprenticeships for that particular cohort comparison across years. For those aged 19-24 Intermediate starts decreased by 560 (down from 1,160 to 600) and 220 (down from 1,000 to 780) for those Advanced Level starts respectively. While starts for Higher apprenticeships for 19-24 year olds increased by 20 from 120 to 140 between 2016/17 and 2017/18. For those 25+ there were 1,200 less starts at Intermediate level (Down from 2,040 to 840) and 580 less starts at Advanced Level (down from 1,680 to 1,100). However, there were 140 more starts for those aged 25+ starting a Higher apprenticeship (up from 480 to 620).

These changes could be attributed to the change over from Apprenticeship Frameworks to Standards which has seen some Intermediate Level Apprenticeships disappear in some sectors as well as the growth and development of Higher level apprenticeships.

Anecdotal feedback from employers across Wirral show that employers have not taken on apprentices due to rise in cost of training, the introduction of 20% of apprentices time to be “off the job” and apprentices not being “employment ready”.

This has impacted on the amount of apprenticeship starts across the borough and are reflected in the above figures. It is important to note that this is a national issue and is impacting equally on Wirral.

## Local, Community and Stakeholder views

Engagement with stakeholders and the wider community takes place through membership of network groups, meetings, forums and conferences with other local authorities and key stakeholders to achieve the same goals, supporting local and regional strategies and visions. Examples include Wirral Council 20:20 vision or Liverpool City Region Skills for Growth. These opportunities are usually on a local or city region level.

The strategy adopted by the Learning Skills and Employment Service to support our most vulnerable NEETs has been to engage with European Social Funded Opportunities and moving forward the new Devolution Deals which will see budgets being passed down centrally to City Regions.

This will see us engage with a range of organisations to secure funding for young people in the LCR; this will include third sector organisations and collaborative approaches to deliver programmes and projects.

### Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Hub

Here we see work is carried out with neighbouring authorities, Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and other partners to plan and implement the City Region apprenticeship strategy.

### ***LCR Participation & Skills Strategy Group (PaSS)***

This group is represented by LCR local authority 14-19 Managers and takes forward the young people's skills and participation agenda. The group reports to the LCR Employment and Skills Board.

### Greater Merseyside Providers Network / Wirral Learning Provider Network

This is where providers of local apprenticeships and study programmes for post 16 learners meet as a forum to monitor, support and challenge local study programme and apprenticeship performance and provision.

## Wirral Careers Information, Advice & Guidance HUB

All grant funded careers information and guidance support providers are brought together by the 14-19 Service to case conference and target support for Wirral secondary schools.

### Merseyside Outreach Collaborative Network Group (MOCN)

A network of local authorities in Liverpool City Region and Cheshire West, FE Colleges and Universities in the region to design strategies to increase access to Further and Higher Education for Care Leavers and disadvantaged groups.

### Young Chamber Steering Group










This provides linkages between education and business, local employers, schools representatives

## Achievements (Targets & Performance)

**Table 15** below provides information relating to National Indicator measures for Wirral, which fall under the responsibility of the Learning Skills and Employment Service relating to educational achievement and progression pathways. National Indicators are a performance framework setting targets for public services helping Local Authorities to focus on its priorities in a co-ordinated way. The table below shows the year on year performance and the national average figures for a comparison.

**Table 15:** Wirral Service Performance Indicators for 14-19 service (May 2019)

### PERFORMANCE INDICATOR UPDATE

Title	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	Benchmark	Direction of Travel
Achievement of a Level 2 qualification by the age of 19	84.3%	85%	83.7%	82.2%	
Achievement of a Level 3 qualification by the age of 19	55.6%	57.2%	58.4%	57.2%	
Inequality gap in the achievement of a Level 3 qualification by the age of 19	29.7%	29.9%	33%	25.7%	
Inequality gap in the achievement of a Level 2 qualification by the age of 19.	19.7%	24.1%	22.7%	21.9%	
September Guarantee (16 & 17 year olds combined)	93.5%	97.1%	*	94.7%	
16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)	3.1%	3.17%	*	2.71%	
% of care leavers in education, employment or training by age 19	40%	47%	54%	51%	
Key Stage 4 Attainment 8	51.8%	48.2%	48.8%	44.5%	
Key Stage 4 Progress 8	-0.04	0.01	0.03	-0.28	

Source: DfE, Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT)

\*Data not yet published

September Guarantee – An offer by the end of September of a suitable place in Education, Employment (with study) or Training.

Attainment 8 – The measure of the average achievement of pupils in up to 8 qualifications.

Progress 8 – The progress a pupil makes from the end of Key Stage 2 to the end of Key Stage 4. It compares pupils' achievement – their attainment 8 score – with the average attainment 8 score of all pupils nationally who had a similar starting point, calculated using assessment results from the end of primary school.

## What is this telling us?

Locally the post-16 provider base includes the following key characteristics and issues:

- Annually variation exists in terms of outcomes for young people at Key Stage 4 at a school / academy level. Opportunities and post 16 progression pathways for those more vulnerable young people who do not achieve A\* to C GCSE (including English and Maths) and/or the equivalent of a full level 2 is limited.
- Constraints in terms of the Study Programme Curriculum linked to substantial qualification aims can be seen as a barrier or restriction for more vulnerable young people entering learning.
- The mix and balance of Post 16 Study Programme opportunities has changed significantly both locally and sub regionally as a result of the current study programme requirements and Ofsted framework. The providers now not in operation locally have generally been those that engaged Wirral's more vulnerable young people at risk of disengagement. This has also led to a lack of breadth and depth of provision available locally.
- Wirral has good overall participation rates but there remains a 'hard core' of not in employment, education and / or training (NEET) young people that increases in size between the ages of 16 -17 (circa 240 young people).
- Wirral has a number of small (<200 pupils), underperforming school 6th forms where the curriculum offer is limited, and outcomes / learner progress is below national expected levels.
- The level 2 and 3 attainment inequality gaps at key stage 4 and at age 19 is amongst the highest of any local authority area nationally.
- Vocational provision is most effective in the further education college and particularly for those students who have not attained 5 (A\*-C) GCSEs at school and go on to study at level 1 or level 2.
- Travel to learn patterns are complex and there exists variation in attainment dependent on whether, as a Wirral resident, you are educated inside or outside of the borough.
- The quality of schools based careers information, advice and guidance programmes requires continued support and challenge.

## Groups most at risk

### Care leavers being in education employment or training

Children Looked After and Care Leavers are amongst the most vulnerable young people across the borough for whom achieving good educational outcomes is a challenge.

When children and young people become looked after they are less likely to achieve, and often leave the compulsory education with less than 1 GCSE. This then impacts on their future employment opportunities and life chances with care leavers being less likely to progress into education, employment or training opportunities post 16

When a young person leaves care their local authority has to continue to support them. The level of support their leaving care service should give them depends on their status, i.e. are they 'eligible', 'relevant', 'former relevant' or 'qualifying'? Their status depends on their age, when they were in care and for how long.

In **Table 16** below the data highlights those Care Leavers who have been in care for more than 13 weeks since the age of 14 (Qualifying Status), including some point aged 16 and 17 (Relevant and Former Relevant) and those aged 17 who are still Looked After (Eligible), in regards to Education, Employment and Training engagement.

**Table 16:** Wirral Care Leavers aged 18-21 who are/are not in education, employment and training (Indicator known as NI 148) (2019)

Care Leaver Age	Cohort volume	Number of NEET March 2019	Number of EET March 2019	% in EET
18	65	25	40	61%
19	68	34	34	50%
20	60	26	34	57%
21	37	19	18	49%
<b>All ages</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>55%</b>
<b>All ages</b>	<b>North West</b>			<b>44%</b>
<b>All ages</b>	<b>National (England Only)</b>			<b>51%**</b>

Source: Liquid Logic Internal data, March 2019\*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/outcomes-for-children-looked-after-by-las-31-march-2016>

Notes: \*Wirral Council – Post 16 Education Team - Internal Data

\*\* Figure based upon 90% of Care Leavers as of November 2018

A requirement of local authorities is to *Keep in Touch with Care Leavers* (identified as Relevant and Former Relevant) aged 17-21 every 8 weeks as a minimum. Their Education, Employment and Training (EET) status, *or education, employment or training*, is a key component of this data.

Using the Government measure accounting for just the 18 to 21 age cohort using Keep in touch criteria 2014/15 (latest data):

- North West average was 44%,
- with the National Average being 51%.
- Wirral recorded EET outcome was 55% as of March 2019 for NI 148 as measuring EET outcomes.

## Children Looked After and Care Leavers

Children Looked After (CLA) and Care Leavers (CL) are amongst the most vulnerable young people across the borough for whom achieving good educational outcomes is a challenge.

[Keep on caring: supporting young people from care to independence](#) (HM Government, 2016) suggested that nationally Children looked after are less likely to gain five GCSE's C or above at Key Stage 4 with only 14% of children in care achieving 5 good GCSEs in 2017, compared to 53% of non-looked after children. For Wirral in 2016 this figure was 14%. Leaving school with few qualifications adversely affects care leavers' progress into further or higher education, apprenticeships or skilled jobs.

In September 2018, seventeen Care Leavers were engaged in Higher Education (HE). This is the highest number of Care Leavers Wirral has had in HE provision and nine of those entered HE this year which again is the highest for a single year.

Nationally just 6% of Care Leavers enter HE compared to almost 50% of the general population. For Wirral, 17 care leavers attending HEI's represents 7% of the care leaver population.

Local Universities; John Moores University and University of Liverpool work closely with our Children Looked After and Care Leavers as part of their Widening Participation teams. This includes academic mentoring, support with Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) forms, and regular visits and residential programmes to help raise aspirations and achievements.

John Moores University also offer a holistic mentoring service this is mainly for Year 11 CLA or those in 6<sup>th</sup> form and considering university.

As part of our Corporate Parenting responsibility Wirral Council ring fenced 5 apprenticeship opportunities across a range of departments for Care Leavers in Sept 2018 with a further 5 planned for Sept 2019. The Wirral Apprenticeship Programme also ring fences a minimum of 4 opportunities for Care Leavers.

### ***Extending Corporate Parenting through Procurement Contracts***

Discussions are currently taking place with external partners who hold contracts with Wirral Council, such as Biffa, to explore the possibility that they can also offer apprenticeship opportunities to our Care Leaver population. As of October 2017, the European Social Fund (ESF) Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) Programme has also supported 43 Care Leavers into employment opportunities.

### **Young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)**

Being a young person with a learning disability presents a huge challenge when trying to break into the world of work. For many, it can be very difficult to transfer skills learned in a classroom setting into a work environment.

Employers often fail to see beyond a person's learning disability due to a lack of understanding or look for skills or experience that many individuals do not have. Compounding this are things such as online-only application processes, formal interviews and a lack of adjustments in the workplace – barriers that employers don't always realise they have created.

Nationally the employment rate for disabled people all ages stands at 51.7% (50.7% a year previously) for the period January to March 2019 against an overall employment rate of 81.7% (up from 81.1%), and yet only 6% of people with a learning disability known to adult social care were in work in March 2018. Those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are also likely to become NEET and remain NEET for longer than a period of 12 months ([House of Commons Library, May 2019](#)).

On Wirral as of June 2019 NEET figure for 16-18 year olds who were identified as SEND was 11.1%, this was compared with those non-SEND of 4.3%. (*Internal Resource: Cognisoft IO March 2019 (14-19 Service) (Operational Database)*)

Wirral Learning, Skills and Education Service is working closely with Wirral Met College to support the college's Internship Programme which supports students with SEND into employment by working with local employers.

As of August 2018, the European Social Fund (ESF) Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) Programme has also supported 33 SEND young people into employment opportunities.

## What are we doing and why?

In order to support participation and engagement for young people in education, employment and training the service has developed a blended approach of interventions. This has included bespoke provision to best target resource and support those who are most vulnerable and at risk.

## Current activity and services

The 14-19 Service focuses on participation and engagement of young people in education, employment or training. This takes place through a mixture of direct delivery, commissioned and facilitated activity.

### Direct Delivery

#### ***Children Looked After and Care Leaver Employability Service***

Dedicated to support CLA and CL into EET through a team of personal coaches working directly with their own caseload of young people aged 16-21.

#### ***Wirral Apprenticeship Programme***

This is an annual programme to support local businesses to offer NEET young people to access apprenticeships through an incentive grant for employers.

#### ***European Social Fund (ESF): Ways to Work Programme (Intermediate Labour Market – ILM - Element)***

This provides a bespoke Liverpool City region programme for each authority. The programme offers grants to support the employment of NEET young people. Employers then offer a sustained employment opportunity once funding has ended. Priority is given to vulnerable young people, who find it difficult to enter the job market and are potentially at most risk. For information on the Direct Delivery contact: Paul Smith [paulsmith@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:paulsmith@wirral.gov.uk)

### Commissioned Activity

#### ***Get Real***

This is an annual bespoke employability programme for Care Leavers including an internship element leading to employment, education or training.

#### ***Participation and Engagement Service***

This is advice and guidance plus education, training and employment engagement support for 16-19 year olds who are NEET.

#### ***A co-ordinated Careers Information Advice and Guidance programme for Schools***

This is a programme to support students in secondary schools to become work ready. This includes engaging with employers and development of enterprise and employability skills.

For information on the Commissioned Activity contact: Paul Smith [paulsmith@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:paulsmith@wirral.gov.uk)

### Facilitated Activity

#### ***Young Chamber Offer***

This is work through the Wirral Chamber of Commerce and its membership to provide schools with an employability programme.



### ***Careers and Enterprise Company Offer***

This approach seeks to link local business champions to senior school leaders, linking enterprise to schools, inspirational business leaders' talks to young people.

For information on the Facility Activity contact: Paul Smith [paulsmith@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:paulsmith@wirral.gov.uk)

### **Further support opportunities**

#### ***Careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG)***

Providing quality careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) to compulsory school age children is the responsibility of school and academies. To support CEIAG in schools, the Wirral Careers Guidance HUB was established, and the Young Chamber 2016/17 schools programme offer continues to be developed.

#### ***Wirral Guild for Alternative Provision***

The Wirral Guild for Alternative Provision for year 11 pupils has been created to offer a range of provision for those students who may be better suited to following a more vocational pathway outside of the school environment by a training provider.

#### ***Liverpool City Region (LCR) 'Ways to Work' programme***

The LCR 'Ways to Work' programme commenced April 2016. The council 14-19 Service is delivering a supported employment programme for vulnerable NEET young people. This is a combination of 167 individual 12 and 6 month fully salaried opportunities equating to just over £1million will be available up to July 2018. The 14-19 Service is also managing a professional careers guidance service for NEET young people being delivered by Career Connect.

For information on the further support opportunities please contact:

Paul Smith [paulsmith@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:paulsmith@wirral.gov.uk)

## **What are the challenges?**

### **Key gaps in knowledge and services**

#### **Champion Work Experience Opportunities**

Findings from the LCR employ survey reveal the high value both young people and employers place on work experience but revealed some of the barriers to participation. Some employers recommend a review of the barriers to participation with a view to creating simplified access routes leading on to a City Region or Wirral campaign backed by businesses and young people championing work experience in all its iterations; for example, internships, short placements.

#### **Review Financial Incentives**

There is overwhelming demand in the current climate for job creation through the use of financial incentives. Therefore, a recommended review of existing incentives and the prioritisation of job creation with wraparound support for participants as core principles in the development of any new programmes would be beneficial especially for new entrants to the job market.

#### **Increase the Prevalence of Vocational Skills**

This findings in this report bear out a long held and deep frustration at the lack of value placed on work focused skills and employment goals and a desire to embed these in the education system from an early age.

There is much work to be done in conjunction with schools, colleges, training providers and Universities to join together to tackle issues and dispel myths among young people and parents.

## Overhaul Careers Support

There was a very strong view, as with work skills, that comprehensive careers support needs to be embedded in the education system from an early age. Again, there is a recommendation to embark on a larger piece of work in conjunction with employers, schools, colleges, training providers and universities to tackle issues.

## What is coming on the horizon?

[Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership Strategies](#) provide the necessary future insight into economic and employment issues for the area

Since 2010 the government's approach to the school, FE and work based learning sectors has been one of greater autonomy and freedom for providers to tailor their provision offer to meet local demand.

This has been accompanied by a move to a further education funding regime based on learner numbers. This position is set to change in the near future with the evolving City Region agenda and devolution agreements now in place with Government. It is local authorities' statutory duties for ensuring the sufficiency and quality of provision and raising participation in education, employment and training.

There is an economic need to increase the number of young people receiving technical and vocational education to meet the demands of the future workforce. This demand is driven by a significant future need for new employees to replace those leaving an ageing workforce, and also the need for additional employees to meet the demands of economic growth.

There is a political consensus that there should be an expansion in the number of young people taking apprenticeships and following work related education that is valued by Higher Education and/or Employers. This is necessary not only to meet labour market demands, but also to improve the employability of young people and thus reduce the current levels of unemployment amongst young people.

In addition to the national changes impacting on the roll and positioning of post-16 education there are also a number of similar substantial developments which are influencing and shaping current and future services and delivery.

The national influences having the greatest impact include:

- **Qualifications have changed to become more demanding in the areas of both academic and vocational education.** Institutional accountability has become more rigorous across all types of provider through the changes in performance measures and the procedures used in inspection.
- There have also been; and continue to be changes in policy and intentions in terms of local areas reviewing their post 16 provision against the context of a tight fiscal environment. **There is a clear drive from the Government to move towards fewer, larger, more resilient and efficient providers of post-16 education.** The Liverpool City Region has undergone such a review, with key considerations including, curriculum, specialisation, demand for skills and the City Region colleges' estates.

The outcome of the review did not result in a reconfiguration of Wirral FE college estate; however, the review has led to a refocus on vocational and skills delivery for 14 to 16-year olds and potential LCR FE college vocational specialisms.

- **There are new providers emerging in post-16 education.** Whilst they bring additional choice and diversity to the sector, they can add to the competition for students amongst established providers of post-16 education. This may however be less of an issue as the Combined Authority takes up its adult learning budget commissioning responsibilities from September 2018.
- **There is an increasing number of Wirral population at year 11 and post 16 stages over the next three years.** This will see numbers for those in year 11 rise by over 300 pupils between 2019 to 2022 and will rise by over 600 pupils by 2028. This will be mirrored by numbers for the post 16 cohort over the same time period. Consideration will need to take place regarding amount, range and level of adequate provision to meet the needs of all young people within the age range and the potential risk this could have on NEET figures for the authority. Further details are shown in **table 17** below:

**Table 17:** Wirral Mainstream Secondary Schools Projections (2019 to 2028)

Year	Year 11	Year 7 to Year 11	Post-16
2019	3,311	17,800	3,125
2020	3,492	18,309	3,242
2021	3,557	18,599	3,436
2022	3,639	18,859	3,553
2023	3,801	19,079	3,630
2024	3,820	19,250	3,757
2025	3,782	19,144	3,821
2026	3,817	19,111	3,781
2027	3,859	19,096	3,765
2028	3,972	18,900	3,790

**Source:** Projections based on SOP 2019-2024 Census data from January 2019 Allocations as at 12th July 2019. Totals may not exactly match due to rounding. Excludes pupils attending special, private and independent schools. Produced by the Admissions and Place Planning team

- **The current HMI Ofsted post 16 skills common inspection framework (July 2017) is having a significant impact on the availability and range of provision offered post 16 across the Liverpool City Region.** Post 16 independent providers delivering study programmes reported to be 'inadequate' under this inspection framework have their ESFA contract removed with immediate effect. There has been a number of significant post 16 study programme provisions that have been removed within the LCR equating to a provision value greater than £2 million.
- **Further analysis of the attainment and progression rates from independent learning providers needs to be undertaken** to enable a better understanding of the inconsistency of 16 to 18 success rates.
- **Further promotion of local transformational and replacement employment sectors needs to take place.**
- **Further work with employers on workforce succession planning** ensuring there is a match between the supply of skills with the local demand from employers needs to take place.

- **Intelligence and data linked to Apprenticeship participation needs to be made readily available by the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to enable better targeting of Council participations resources.** Better intelligence would also facilitate improved and informed local support and challenge dialogue with education sector stakeholders and local employers.
- Following the result of the referendum on the UK leaving the European Union there will be a gap in terms of funding that supported interventions to support young people into employment or aided the up-skilling of young people. Previously ESF funding has provided the region with significant investment which enabled programmes and projects to be set up and target resource specially aimed at supporting hard to reach cohorts of young people. **If the UK no longer being eligible for ESF funding, there could potentially be a gap around programmes being able to support those groups of most vulnerable and hard to reach groups.**
- **With the introduction of the Devolution Deals to the LCR it is important to maximise opportunities and funding which becomes devolved to ensure that vulnerable young people into employment, education and employment opportunities are included in this agenda.**
- As part of the Liverpool City Region Metro Mayor's manifesto commitment, young people aged 19-24 who are **participating on a registered apprenticeship programme can access discounted travel which will help remove one of the main barriers to entry for young people looking to enter vocational training – access to affordable transport.** Discounted travel passes were available to use on buses from November 2018 but has been extended to rail services as of July 2019.
- **Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) have funded a pilot programme named Households into Work Programme. This initiative has supported people from the same household to make the journey from unemployment to becoming employable.** This programme aims to tackle the issue of intergenerational worklessness. This scheme is running across Liverpool City Region as part of the Devolution Deal. The programme will sit within the Learning, Skills and Employment Service for Wirral and is delivered directly; it will run until March 2020. There will be ongoing evaluation which will be able to inform future delivery, services, trends and target resources in the future.

## Key content

- **Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership Strategies**  
<https://www.liverpoollep.org/publications/>
- **Apprenticeship Hub Strategy**  
<https://www.liverpoollep.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/LCR-Apprentice-Hub-Strategy-and-Strategic-Action-Plan-2015-2020.pdf>
- **Keep On Caring-Care Leaver Strategy**  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/535899/Care-Leaver-Strategy.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/535899/Care-Leaver-Strategy.pdf)
- **Apprenticeship Levy**  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-levy/apprenticeship-levy>

- **Keep On Caring-Care Leaver Strategy**

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/535899/Care-Leaver-Strategy.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/535899/Care-Leaver-Strategy.pdf)

## Contact details

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