



**WIRRAL
INTELLIGENCE
SERVICE**

Post 16 Participation in Employment, Education, Training & Skills Development

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

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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 or go to <https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/>

Version Number	Date	Authors
1.0	November 2017	G. Jones , P. Smith, J. Highton, S. Dodd, H. Carney

Content overview

Abstract	<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. 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>
Intended or potential audience	<p>Internal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children and Young People’s Department Senior Leadership Team• Children’s Joint Commissioning Group <p>External</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wirral Partnership• Partners across multiple sectors
Links with other topic areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name sections of WIS site – will be added post FINAL DRAFT REVIEW

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 400 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 and 3 attainment inequality gap at key stage 4 and at age 19 is amongst the highest of any local authority area nationally.
- 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. Level-3 advanced participation has performed better than expected in 2015. 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.
- 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: Children, Young People and Families: 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 a number of 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 neighbouring local authority or beyond.

Analyses of local post 16 education and training provision shows young people's participation rates in the borough, 93.7 percent (16 and 17 year olds as at April 2016) are at or above the national and regional rates of 91.3 percent and 90.8 percent respectively. Improvement needs to be made, however, 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 Government's 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.
- Laws are planned forcing schools to let people from outside organisations into schools to talk about their post-16 options.

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.

The requirement for young people to participate in education and training was raised to the age of 17 from September 2013, and raised again to the age of 18 in 2015. There is a commonly held view that we need to improve the abilities and increase the aspirations of young people through continuing education, whether their next steps are in higher education, training or employment.

This is a view particularly prevalent with employers across the Liverpool City Region, as reported by **LCR 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.

Facts, figures and trends (Wirral and beyond)

The local post 16 participation rates are good with some 91.4 percent (adjusted figure as at June 2017) of the 16 to 18 cohort (11,141 young people) participating in some form of employment, education and training (EET) as seen in table 1 below. 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 national indicator, published March 2017, detailed the average NEET (adjusted) to be 3.6 percent which shows a positive reflection as last years' data for the same time period stood at 4.5%. Analysis of Client Caseload Information Suite (CCIS) data (June 2017) illustrates the proportions of young people that access the key types of local post 16 education and training provision. This analysis is detailed in the table below:

Table 1: Wirral Resident Participation: Destination of Young People (16 to 18 years) June 2017

Young persons status	Numbers of Young People by destination and age				Overall Destination (%)
	At age 16	At age 17	At age 18	Totals	
Cohort Number	3,719	3,777	3,645	11,141	
Cohort in Employment, education, training	3,419	3,478	3,291	10,188	91.40%
School Sixth Form	1,848	1,658	172	3,678	36.10%
FE College	1,195	1,226	720	3,141	30.80%
Higher Education	N/A	*	1,142	1,144	11.20%
Apprenticeships	219	342	524	1,085	10.60%
Employment	72	179	614	865	8.50%
Not Known (Including ill Health, Pregnancy, status expired etc...)	170	158	219	547	4.90%
NEET	130	141	135	406	3.60%
Study Programme	16	63	65	192	1.89%
Other (Custody, Gap year etc)	21	*	54	83	0.80%

Source: Internal Resource: Cognisoft IO June 2017 (14-19 Service)

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

Those identified as NEET and Not Known are the most vulnerable groups. Those NEET at 18 are arguably at greater risk due to potential lack of access to future provision for training as programmes are not fully funded for 19 year olds. Not Known rates at 18 are higher than at 16 and 17 which again could place them in the most at risk category.

School sixth form is the most popular destination at age 16 with the number decreasing at age 17, Further Education (FE) College, Apprenticeship and Employment figures increase at 17 and then rise again at 18. Figures for those entering Higher Education at 18 have remained similar to previous years. Numbers of those participating in Apprenticeships has risen from last year across all age ranges in the table from 7.8% to 10.6% with more than double the amount of young people accessing apprenticeships at 18 rather than 16, suggesting they are becoming increasingly attractive after 6th form or FE courses.

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.

Characteristics of 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 (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 house hold and not all families would meet the thresholds to be ‘troubled families’.

This has led to the 14-19 service testing and trialling an intensive mentoring and coaching approach during 2017/18 to support those young people who are isolated and often refuse to

come out of their bedroom making it impossible for them to enter Education, Employment or Training opportunities.

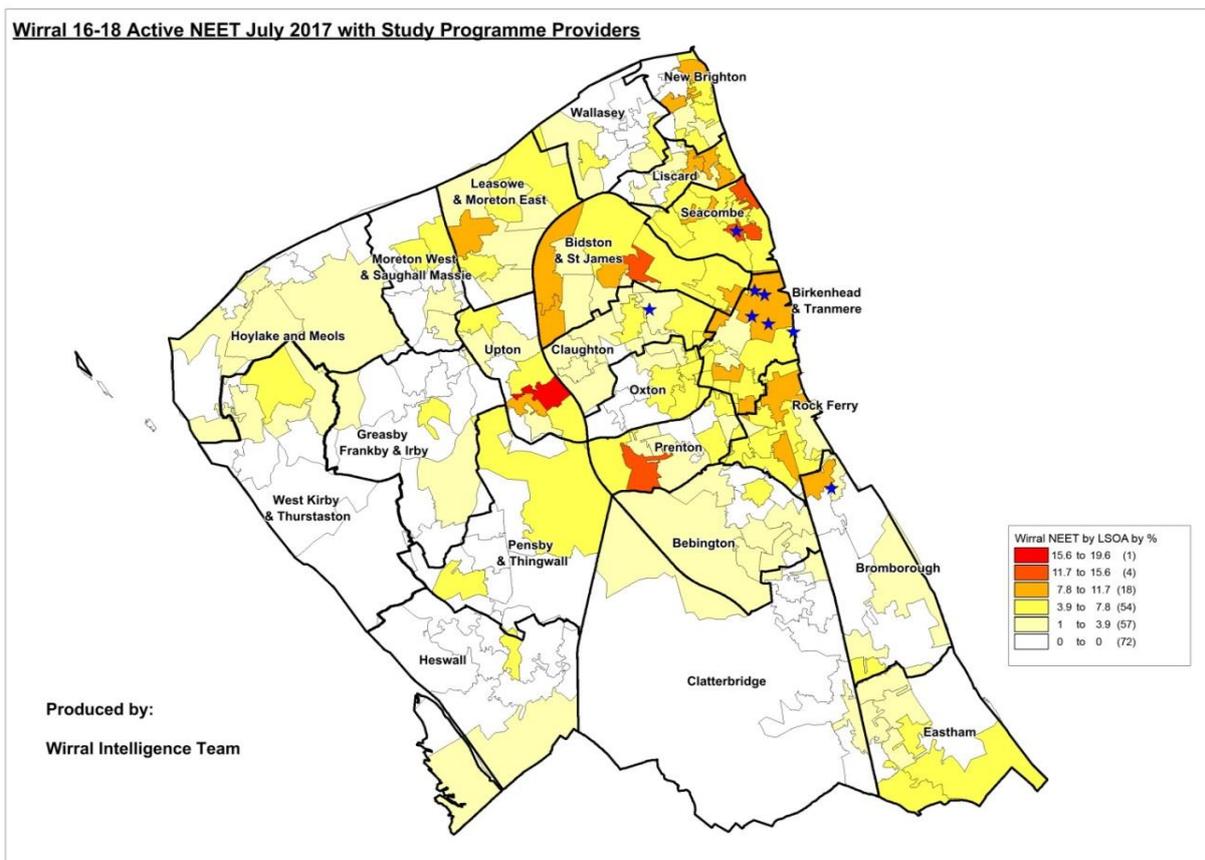
The 14-19 Service has also worked with Wirral Met College to increase opportunities for those with disabilities to provide supported Internships with local employers to increase the number of employment opportunities for this cohort. The Ways to Work Programme (funded by European Social Funding) has also provided supported employment opportunities for those NEET young people who have been the furthest away from the labour market.

Wirral Active 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 16-19 year olds Active but not in education, employment or training, 2017

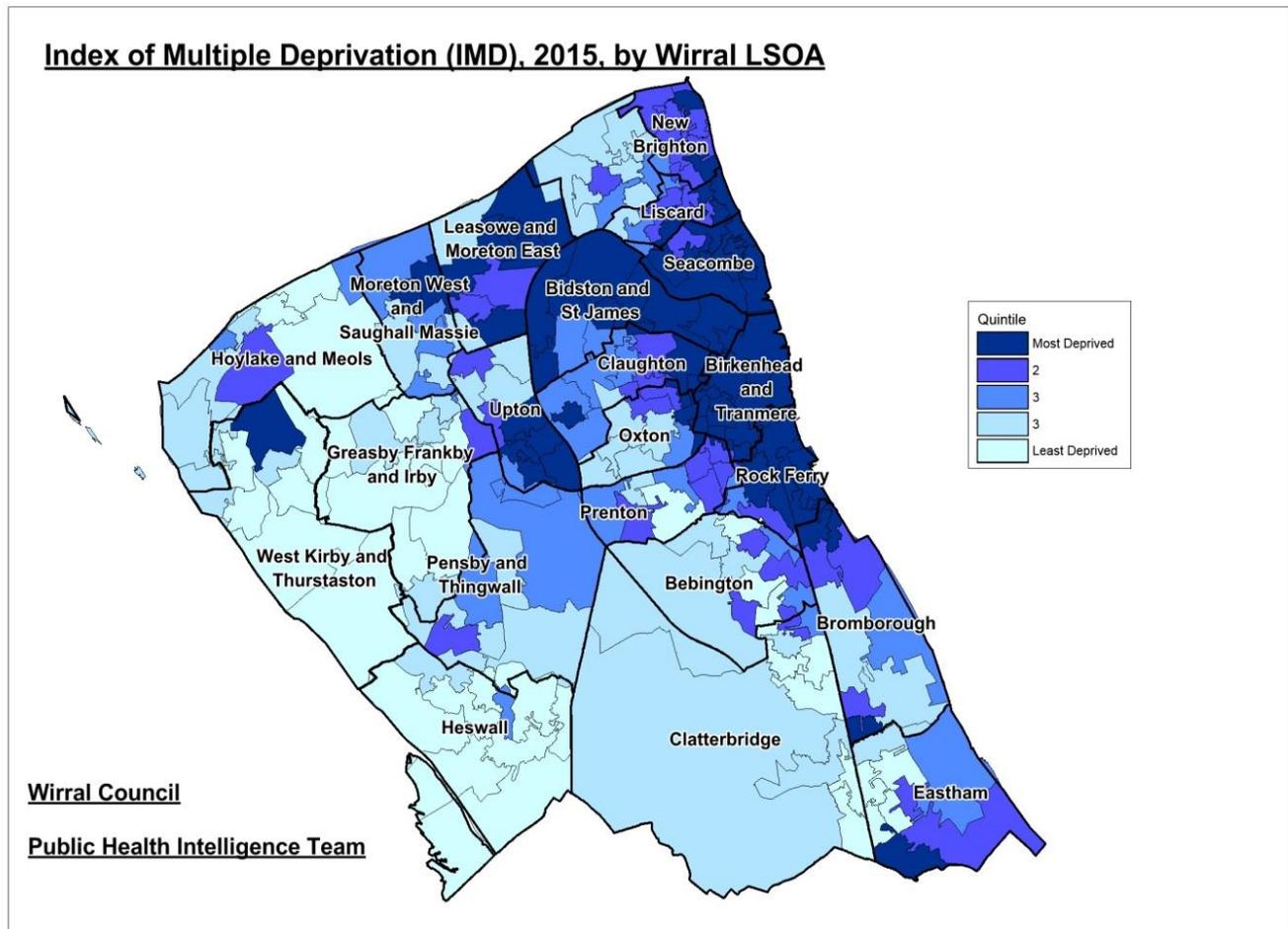


Source: [Wirral Intelligence Service 2017](#)

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: Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2015



Source: Wirral Intelligence Service 2017

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

Map 2 above 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, Franky & Irby ward.

NEET by Wirral Ward

In table 2 below there are 6 wards which have NEET figures of over 5% showing a high concentration of NEET in certain areas. While there are 8 areas 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 2: Reported numbers of young people not in education employment or training 2017

Ward Name	NEET	Cohort	As % of Ward age pop
Seacombe	60	685	8.8%
Rock Ferry	52	692	7.5%
Bidston and St James	50	729	6.9%
Upton	41	740	5.5%
Birkenhead and Tranmere	62	1141	5.4%
Liscard	35	668	5.2%
New Brighton	29	600	4.8%
Leasowe and Moreton East	27	600	4.5%
Claughton	26	690	3.8%
Bromborough	18	584	3.1%
Prenton	20	652	3.1%
Eastham	13	546	2.4%
Moreton West and Saughall Massie	12	531	2.3%
Bebington	14	644	2.2%
Total NEET for Wirral (all Wards)	511	13,877	3.68%

Source: Cognisoft IO June 2017 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 Oxton, 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. 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 3 provides information on these schools.

Table 3: Wirral School Sixth Forms and Academies Student Numbers by Institution (Top 10 Institutions)

Institution	2014/15		2015/16		2016/17	
	Students	%	Students	%	Students	%
Calday Grammar	327	8.9%	370	10.0%	369	10.4%
Weatherhead High	388	10.6%	334	9.0%	358	10.1%
St John Plessington	276	7.5%	313	8.5%	317	8.9%
West Kirby Grammar	279	7.6%	280	7.6%	305	8.6%
Wirral Grammar Girls	248	6.8%	255	6.9%	251	7.1%
Wirral Grammar Boys	206	5.6%	233	6.3%	239	6.7%
Upton Hall School FCJ	254	6.9%	223	6.0%	225	6.3%
St Mary's College	N/A	N/A	255	6.9%	216	6.1%
St Anselms College	198	5.4%	206	5.6%	193	5.4%
Hilbre High School	193	5.3%	175	4.7%	157	4.4%
Top 10 Total	2,369	64.6%	2,644	71.4%	2,630	72.9%
Overall Total	3,669	100%	3,701	100%	3,559	100%

Source ESA Table June 2017

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 aged 16-18. The other 10 schools offering Sixth Form/Post 16 offer are Oldershaw, South Wirral High, Bebington High, Mosslands, Pensby, Birkenhead School Academy, and Kingsway Academy and includes 3 Special Schools: Claremount, Foxfield and Meadowside. Also the resource for this table is not published

Weatherhead, St John Plessington and West Kirby Grammar all showed the biggest increase in numbers for the academic year 2016/17 making up 27.6% of the sixth form eligible population provision between them. While Hilbre High and St Mary's Catholic College showed the biggest decrease however they still make up 4.4% and 6.1% of the sixth form eligible population provision respectively.

With 36.1% of young people (actual figure 11,141) attending Sixth Form provision in 2017 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: Claremount, Foxfield and Meadowside. In 2016 performance at Key Stage 5 (those aged 17 and 18) in school sixth forms across academic and vocational programmes is very 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 2016 performance data shows that on average, pupils at 7 schools (37 percent) 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-
- Nine (47%) of Wirral schools/academies had an upper sixth form (A level or equivalent) year group that completed summer 2016 with less than 100 young people on roll. There is

a strong correlation between post 16 institutions with pupil numbers in excess of 200 and good outcomes for young people.

- Analysis of 2016 key stage 5 performance data illustrates that average points score per exam entry and high outcome grades (A* to A) at A level, are in line with national averages.
- The percentage of students achieving grades AAB (20.5%) or better, and those pupils achieving grades AAB or better at A level, of which at least two are in facilitating subjects (14.6%) is below national averages by 1.1% and 2.1% respectively.
- Analysis of the 2014 local authority A-level value added report brings a further level of intelligence. Key messages include:
 - Between 2012 and 2015 average A-level value added for the borough is at the 50th percentile nationally. The average GCSE grade held by Wirral young people entering A-level provision is grade 'B'
 - A-level value added (measured as UCAS points per exam entry) for learners with high average GCSE grades at the end of key stage 4 (A*-A) is low. Wirral position is 10th to 24th percentile nationally.

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 five locally based ILPs.
- ILP success rate performance is variable with little consistency. Success rate performance at some providers is below national averages. The Vocational College, however, was reported nationally (FE weekly, May 2015) as one of the country's top three performing ILPs in 2014 in terms of success rates.

Apprenticeship Provision

Table 4: Wirral 16-18 Apprenticeship Participation and Success Rates (Wirral Provider Only) compared to National Average 2012 - 2016

Year	Level	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2016
Learner Volume (No.)	2	930	570	550	530	430	380
	3	270	250	250	290	240	180
Achievement Rates (%)	2	75.1	61.4	61.8	71.8	66.5	66.1
	3	74.4	70.9	80.3	76.5	68.8	74.2
National Average (%)	2	71.9	69.7	69.5	71	67.8	*
	3	76.5	75.9	75	77.3	72.9	*

Source: ESFA 2017 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-achievement-rates-tables-2015-to-2016>

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

The key headlines in table 4 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 4.1 percent above the national average. Level 2 intermediate Apprenticeship success rates have however declined in 2016 after showing improvement the previous year and are 2.3 percent below the national average (2016- see table above).
- Looking at Wirral Provider delivery (providers who are based and deliver on Wirral), then Achievement rates at Level 2 are 1.7 below National Average while at Level 3 achievement rates are above national average by 2 percent.
- 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.

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 2014/15.

From 2014/15 data Key Stage 4 and 5 learner destination measure of performance for Wirral compares favourably with national averages as can be seen in Table 5 below:

Table 5: 2014/2015 Key Stage 4 and 5 Learner Destination Measure Performance

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

Source: DfE, January 2016

Notes: View at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-destinations#destinations-after-key-stage-4-and-5>

Narrowing the Gap for Disadvantaged Pupils

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 KS4 and KS5 in 2014/15

Table 6: 2014/2015 Key Stage 4 and 5 Learner Destination Measure Performance

Key Stage	Area	Disadvantaged Pupils*	All Wirral Pupils	% Gap	Destination not sustained
Key Stage 4	Wirral	89%	97%	8%	10%
	England	88%	96%	8%	3%
Key Stage 5	Wirral	91%	92%	1%	7%
	England	86%	91%	5%	6%

Source: DfE, January 2016

Notes: View at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-destinations#destinations-after-key-stage-4-and-5>

At the end of KS5 a higher proportion of young people transition in to employment, education and/or training compared to national averages.

Also at Key Stage 4 and 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 6 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 in line with the England average; however, at Key Stage 5 the destination gap closes significantly to 1% compared to 5% nationally. Destination measure performance improves and the gap narrows at Key Stage 5. What is of concern is that Wirral has a significantly higher proportion of destinations NOT sustained at the end of Key Stage 4 (-7%) compared to the national statistic.

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 2000 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.

Table 7: 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%
Top 10 providers Total	3,792	91.8%	3,845	93.4%	3,583	96.6%
Total All Providers	4,129	100%	4,116	100%	3,708	100%

Source: DfE, January 2016

Notes: View at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-18-data-and-management-information-mi-reports>

The number of Wirral resident young people attending post-16 institutions for 2016/17, as noted in table 7 above, showed that they accessed less provision out of borough than previous years. The City of Liverpool College has seen a drop in participants by 0.6% from previous academic year; West Cheshire College also had a drop in numbers by 0.4%. However in that same period,

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 FE and ILP's

- The number of young people aged 16 to 18 attend Wirral Met College have increased over the last two years to 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 an FE institute. Outcomes (success rate methodology) for young people attending the College are in line with national averages at 83.1 percent (level 3 2014) against a national average of 84.3 percent.
- The numbers of young people accessing post 16 education at the Birkenhead Sixth Form College increased in 2016/17 by 10, 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 Patterns

Outward migration of young people from other local authority areas

Annually a significant volume of young people travel outside of the borough for further education provision. Figure 1 suggests that in 2013/14 it was 28%, or 1,159, Wirral resident young people were accessing further education at providers and colleges outside of the borough.

The draw effect of out of borough school sixth form provision for 2013/14 is less with only 5.2%, or 201 young people, of school sixth formers travelling outside of Wirral.

Of the 201 young people then 67% of that group travel outside of the borough to attend Neston High School in Cheshire West and Chester Local Authority area.

Figure 1: Wirral resident out of borough education placement numbers 2012/2013 to 2014/15

Institution Data Type	Learning Local Authority	Resident Learner Numbers		
		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Further Education College / Independent Private Provider	Cheshire East	144	154	113
	Cheshire West and Chester	153	140	137
	Halton	4	1	8
	Knowsley	42	70	70
	Lancashire	30	8	7
	Liverpool	856	745	574
	Sefton	43	35	22
	St Helens	3	6	3
	Wirral	2,914	2,995	2,835
School Sixth Form Provision	Cheshire East	1	1	
	Cheshire West and Chester	144	137	122
	Knowsley	1	1	1
	Liverpool	15	57	99
	Sefton	1	5	4
	St Helens	1		1
	Wirral	3,863	3,701	3,682
		8,215	8,056	7,678

Source: Education Funding Agency, July 2015

Notes: Figures are reached by collating data from above authorities without the Wirral cohort.

View at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-interactive-tool-lait>

Inward migration of young people from other local authority areas

In 2013/14, there were 193 (5.7 percent) young people that travelled from outside of the Wirral to attend Wirral based FE institutions. A similar proportion (5.0 percent or 196 young people) travelled in to Wirral for school sixth form provision. The numbers of young people travelling in to the borough from Cheshire West and Chester is increasing year on year. In 2014/15 there were 199 learners that travelled in to Wirral for school sixth form provision, an increase of 14% based on 2013/14 statistics.

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 8 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 8: Wirral comparison of 16 to 18 year olds, In and Out of Borough Learning Success Rates (2014)

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	79.5%	78.2%
Sixth Form College	86.2%	86.3%
Further Education College	79.7%	78.0%
Independent Learning Provider	57.2%	54.5%

Source: Skills Funding Agency (July 2015)

Notes: View at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-18-data-and-management-information-mi-reports>

As the data 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.

Learner travel to learn patterns and data analysis has been included as part of the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Area Based Review (ABR). Further discussion is to take place with Wirral Met College regarding digital and media opportunities. Through ABR further consideration, discussion and agreement will be reached regarding sector level institution specialisms.

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 14-19 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.

Wirral NEET Action Group

This provides such aspects as case conferencing meetings with Participation and Engagement Service and local providers to identify provision to engage young people who are NEET.

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)

Figure 2 below provides information relating to National Indicator measures for Wirral which fall under the responsibility of the 14-19 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.

Figure 2: Wirral Service Performance Indicators for 14-19 service (September 2016)

Headline Performance Indicators						
PI No.	Title	2014 Actual	2015 Actual	2016 Actual	England Av	Direction of Travel
NI 79	Achievement of a Level 2 qualification by the age of 19 (Includes E&M)	87.3% (69.7%)	87.2% (72.3%)	84.3% (70.8%)	85.3%	
NI 80	Achievement of a Level 3 qualification by the age of 19	56.7%	58.9%	55.5%	57.1%	
NI 81	Inequality gap in the achievement of a Level 3 qualification by the age of 19	37.7%	30.1%	29.8%	24.5%	
NI 82	Inequality gap in the achievement of a Level 2 qualification by the age of 19.	19.2%	19.3%	19.7%	17.5%	
	September Guarantee	91.90%	96.50%	93.5%*	94.5%	
NI 117	16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)	4.3%	4.5%	3.5% (16/17 year olds only)	Not Known 2.2%	
NI 148	% of care leavers in education, employment or training by age 19 (from 2014 includes young people aged 20 and 21)	47.0%	40.0%	45.0%*		
	% KS4 cohort remaining in a school sixth form		36%*			
	% Overall sustained EET KS4		94% (nat 94%)			
	% KS5 that entered a Level 3 qualification remaining in education / employment at the FE College	12%	14%			
	% KS5 that entered A level / level 3 qualification, going / remaining in education destination – top 3 rd HEI's	22%	22%			

Notes

*September Guarantee – 2016 year 11 leavers with a guaranteed offer = 98.1%, 2016 year 12 leaver with a confirmed offer = 89.4%. Issues included late data transfer from Wirral Met College and Liverpool Life Sciences UTC.

% care leavers in EET at age 19 – stabilised against new performance measure criteria at 45%

What is this telling us?

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

- Annually huge 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.
- Wirral has good overall participation rates but there remains a 'hard core' of NEET young people that increases in size between the ages of 16 and 18 (circa 400 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 gap 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.
- 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. Level-3 advanced participation has performed better than expected in 2015. Success rates for 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 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 who are 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 9 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 9: Wirral Care Leavers aged 18-21 who are/are not in education, employment and training (Indicator known as NI 148)

Care Leaver Age	Cohort volume	Number of NEET	Number of EET	% in EET
18	63	14	49	77%
19	58	18	40	69%
20	69	25	44	63%
21	57	25	32	56%
All ages	247	82	165	66%
All ages	North West			46.2%
All ages	National (England Only)			47.8%

Source: Liquid Logic Internal data, July 2016*

<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

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 EET status, *or education, employment or training*, is a key component of this data. The EET figures above are taken either 3 months before or 1 month after their birthday.

Using the Government measure accounting for just the 17 to 21 age cohort using Keep in touch criteria 2014/15 (latest data) North West average was 46.2%, with the national average being 47.8%. Wirral recorded EET outcome was 66% in 2016/17 for NI 148 as measuring EET outcomes.

Latest data

Wirral Care Leavers aged 18-21 in education, employment and/or training in August 2017, as seen in table 10 below, was 52%. This is real time data and therefore presents a different statistic than the figures above which are taken from status at three months before or one month after their birthday.

Table 10: Wirral Care Leavers aged 18-21 and their education, employment and training status as recorded in August 2017 at Keep in Touch meetings*

Type	Number	Percentage
In Full Time/Part Time Employment	115	52%
Not in Education Employment or Training	102	48%
Total Cohort Size	217	100%

Source: Liquid Logic Internal data, Wirral Council

Notes: *This is using current real time data and does not include the number of 17 year olds who have Care Leaver status as it is below 5

Children Looked After and Care Leavers

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.

Nationally Children looked after are less likely to gain 5 GCSE's C or above at Key Stage 4 with only 14% of children in care achieving 5 good GCSEs in 2015, compared to 53% of non-looked after children. For Wirral in 2016 this figure was 13%. Leaving school with few qualifications adversely affects care leavers' progress into further or higher education, apprenticeships or skilled jobs.

As part of our Corporate Parenting responsibility Wirral Council ring fenced 5 apprenticeship opportunities across a range of departments for Care Leavers in Sept 2017. The Wirral Apprenticeship Programme also ring fences a minimum of 4 opportunities for Care Leavers.

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 don't 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 stands at 48.3% for the period July to September 2016 against an overall employment rate of 80.5%, and yet only 6% of people with a moderate to severe learning disability known to adult social care are in work.

Those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities are also likely to become NEET and remain NEET for longer than a period of 12 months

On Wirral as of July 2017 NEET figure for 16-18 year olds who were identified as SEND was 9.2%, this was compared with those non SEND of 4.5%.

Wirral 14-19 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 October 2017 the European Social Fund (ESF) Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) Programme has also supported 25 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 Apprentices 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

Commissioned Activity

Get Real

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

Unlocking Potential

This is a mentoring programme in schools to support those at risk of NEET

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

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

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. A full audit of careers education, information, advice and guidance and was completed between October 2015 to March 2016 by the 14-19 Service. The audit was completed as a support and challenge activity with 21 secondary schools opting to participate. Key outcomes following the audit have included the establishment of a Wirral Careers Guidance HUB and the development of the Young Chamber 2016/17 schools programme offer.

Unlocking Potential Programme

The Unlocking Potential Programme was able to engage 268 young people between April 2015 and January 2016 across 15 school settings. The programme has continued to run during the 2016 /17 academic year.

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

What are the challenges?

Key gaps in knowledge and services

New support programme as another ends

As the ESF Ways to Work Programme comes to an end in July 2018, there will be a need for a similar initiative to replace it.

There is a real danger that without this programme or a replacement programme that NEET and unemployment figures will rise especially among those most vulnerable and hard to reach young people across the borough.

The impact of Council interventions, pre 16, including the Unlocking Potential Programme delivered by Career Connect needs to be considered in any future planning and review.

Long term impact of Youth Unemployment

Youth unemployment has a scarring effect on individuals, communities and generations. Therefore we need to do our utmost to support young people to get a foothold in the labour market and forge a successful career, so they themselves can go on to inspire future generations. The Youth Unemployment landscape for Wirral can be seen in the sections below:

Population

Wirral has over 30,000 18-24 year olds living in the borough; this is shown in single year age bands in the table 11 below.

Table 11: Wirral 16-24 Population by Single Year Age-band

Age	Male	Female	Total
Age 16	1,898	1,877	3,775
Age 17	1,961	1,849	3,810
Age 18	1,940	1,827	3,767
Age 19	1,660	1,384	3,044
Age 20	1,578	1,194	2,772
Age 21	1,569	1,485	3,054
Age 22	1,655	1,643	3,298
Age 23	1,742	1,682	3,424
Age 24	1,808	1,828	3,636
TOTAL	15,811	14,769	30,580

Source: NOMIS, 2016 Population estimates.

The largest of these cohorts are those aged 17 and the smallest are those Aged 20. The gender split is fairly even for the majority of age bands however there are significantly more Males than Females in the Aged 19 & 20 age bands.

Benefit claimants

There are 2,300 young people claiming an out-of-work benefit in Wirral, this equates to 9.8% of all claimants in the borough. Table 12 shows the breakdown of these benefit claimants:

Table 12: Number of claimants aged Under 25 by benefit group

Benefit Group	Number of Claimants
JSA	190
ESA / IB	1,460
Lone Parent	540
Other income related	110
Total Out-of-Work Benefits	2,300

Source: NOMIS, 2016 DWP Working-age Client Group.

Of the 2,300 claimants 45% are Male and 55% Female. The breakdown shows the majority of claimants are in the Employment Support Allowance / Incapacity Benefit category (63%) and this cohort of claimants also have a been claiming the benefit for a significant length of time. 27% of young people in this benefit group have been claiming between 2-5 years and 29% have been claiming over 5 years.

These figures do not include those claimants in Wirral who are now claiming Universal Credit (UC). As at July 2017 there were 1,387 young people claiming Universal Credit. 918 (66%) of these are claiming the 'Not in Work' element of UC. The other 468 claimants (34%) are in employment.

Understanding the particular issues faced by young people in seeking and accessing sustainable work

The Liverpool City Region Employment and Skills Board was established in 2010 to provide leadership for employment and skills within the Liverpool City Region, which covers the Council areas of Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral. Led by employers, the Board brings together business, provider and civic leadership, and leads on employment and skills issues in the City Region.

The Employment and Skills Board expressed concern in early 2012 at youth unemployment in the Liverpool City Region, highlighted by the numbers of young people claiming Jobseekers' Allowance remaining stubbornly high at 17,460 (April 2012) and significantly above levels in early 2008 before the recession started.

In June 2012, the Employment and Skills Board requested a Youth Unemployment Task Force be established to highlight the key issues and make appropriate recommendations.

The Board recommended the Task Force be made up of young people and businesses from across the City Region, some of the key findings are below.

Champion Work Experience Opportunities

The findings reveal the high value both young people and employers place on work experience but revealed some of the barriers to participation. recommends 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

The findings revealed overwhelming support 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

The findings 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.
- The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) published their intentions and policy (April 2015) in terms of local areas reviewing their post 16 provision in 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 is unlikely to result in a reconfiguration of Wirral FE college estate; however, the review will lead to a refocus on vocational and skills delivery for 14 to 16 year olds and potential LCR FE college vocational specialisms.

- **An Apprenticeship Levy has been introduced across England from 1st 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 are also required from April 2017 to make a financial contribution to their apprentice(s') training costs. The introduction of the levy is intended to support the Governments aspiration to start 3 million apprentices' by 2020.
- **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.
- **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 EFA contract removed with immediate effect. In 2016 a number of significant post 16 study programme provisions 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. **With 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 announcement of the Devolution Deals to the city region which have a metro mayor, which includes LCR, it will be 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.
- April 2017 saw the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy. 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 would have 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.
- **Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) have agreed to fund a pilot programme named Households into Work Programme. This initiative will support people from the same household to make the journey from unemployment to becoming employable.** This will aim 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 with the 14-19 service for Wirral and will be delivered directly; it will run from January 2018-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

Links and Relevant and related National and local strategies

- **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
- **Apprenticeship Levy**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-levy/apprenticeship-levy>

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Keep On Caring-Care Leaver Strategy

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/535899/Care-Leaver-Strategy.pdf

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