

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Thursday, 24 January 2019

REPORT TITLE:	Participation and destination analysis of Wirral young people aged 16 to 19
REPORT OF:	Director for Children's Services

REPORT SUMMARY

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 This report identifies the numbers of young people transitioning into post 16 learning and training opportunities whilst also assessing how successful they are by pathway. An analysis of learner attainment on entry to post 16 learning (all learning routes) has been completed in addition to valued added performance for some sectors. The report analyses the current destination data for Wirral young people upon leaving key stage 4 at age 16 and key stage 5 sixth form provision at age 18. In doing so the report supports pledge 3 from the Wirral 20:20 Vision: Young people are ready for adulthood and employment.
- 1.3 Young people's post 16 participation rates in the borough are currently at or above sub-regional and regional averages. Challenges currently exist with recognised apprenticeship participation though which is at an all-time low. To support this, schools and academies must meet their statutory duty to provide robust, impartial careers education, information, advice and guidance. The Council must also ensure there is sufficient and suitable education and training provision to meet young people's needs.
- 1.5 The national perspective on what is required of the education system in relation to 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,
 - a. The Governments Post 16 Skills Plan aims to revitalise technical education policy with vocational 'T Levels' at the same level as A levels. Our Further Education sector will need to ensure readiness to meet the opportunities presented by T Levels prior to 2020. The ability to offer quality work placements will underpin a shift-change in employer involvement.

- b. Government Apprenticeship reforms have resulted in all apprenticeships being real paid jobs; having a minimum duration of 12 months and involve sustained training and clear skills gain with at least 20% off-the-job training. The Government also introduced the Apprenticeship levy for large private and public sector employers from April 2017.
- c. 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 further reduce the current levels of unemployment amongst young people.

1.6 In addition to the national policy changes impacting on the roll and positioning of post 16 education there are also a number of substantial national developments which are influencing and shaping current and future services / delivery. The national influences having the greatest impact include:-

- Qualifications are changing to become more demanding in the areas of both academic and vocational education. This is particularly so at GCSE level where the new english and maths curricular is extremely challenging.
- The apprenticeship reform agenda, including standards development, the removal of some level 2 opportunities and end point assessments are making this routeway into employment inaccessible for some young people.
- The number of local post 16 training providers delivering on Wirral has reduced year on year as a result of real terms funding cuts, increasing study programme curriculum demands and inflexibilities and the challenges of meeting the needs of vulnerable young people.

1.7 Locally, post 16 participation rates are good with some 93.5% (as at August 2018) of the 16 and 17 year old cohort (7,134 young people) participating in some form of employment, education and training (EET). The proportions of Wirral young people not in employment, education and / or training (NEET) have been maintained at a low level for the last 4 years. The local authority NEET national indicator (mean NEET for December, January and February 2018), published March 2018, detailed the average NEET to be 3.2 percent and Not Known 1.7 percent. Against the same indicator the Northwest NEET average was 3.4 percent and 3.1 percent Not Known.

- 1.8 Analysis of Client Caseload Information Suite (CCIS) data (August 2018) illustrates the proportions of young people that access the key types of local post 16 education and training provision. This analysis is detailed below in table 1.

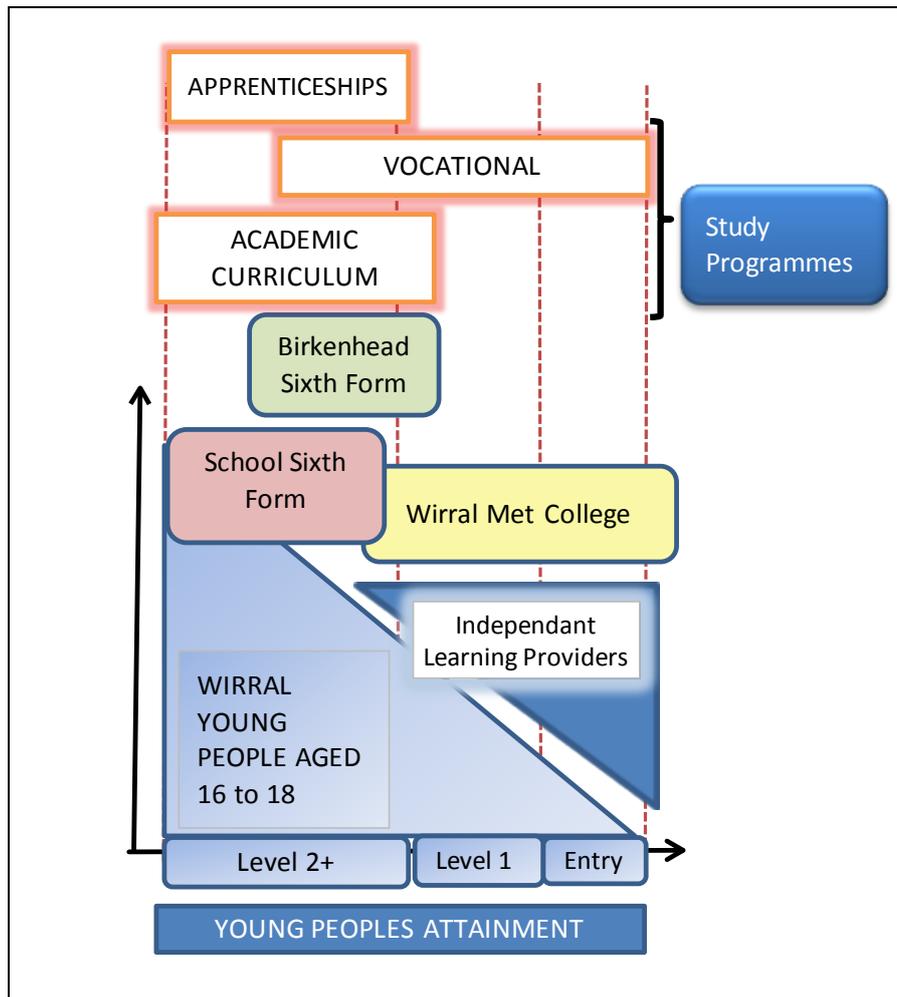
Table 1. Wirral Resident Participation - Young People aged 16 and 17 as at, August 2018.

	Yr 12	Yr 13	Total Cohort	% (adjustment applied)
Cohort total				
EET Total	3363	3307	6670	93.5%
i. of which in education, post Year 11 (includes FE and SSF)	3057	2728	5785	81.1%
ii. of which in Employment	254	544	798	11.2%
a. of which in Apprenticeships	185	325	510	7.1%
iii. Training	52	35	87	1.2%
b. of which EFA funded Work Based Learning	37	28	65	0.9%
NEET Group	118	148	266	3.7%
Current situation not known	63	131	194	2.7%
RPA Participating in EET	93.4%	87.0%		
Meeting RPA the Duty	93.5%	86.9%		

(Source: DfE, NCCIS, September 2018)

- 1.9 Diagram 1. below illustrates, in general terms, how the current mainstream Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency post 16 provision meets the needs of young people locally. The diagram illustrates that the highest attaining young people at age 16 generally progress into schools sixth form provision at a grammar school. Moving down the attainment continuum provision is offered at the sixth form college and other secondary schools.
- 1.10 The majority of young people choosing vocational options do so at Wirral Met College where the specialist facilities and resources exist. Some schools through their sixth form offer are also offering increasing volumes of vocationally related qualifications. Those more vulnerable young people with a lower level of academic achievement will access first steps provision at an independent learning provider as a stepping stone to further education and / or training. GCSE maths and english are key components of all study programmes, particularly for those young people that have not achieved a grade 4 or above.

- 1.11 Diagram 1. An illustration of how Government funded post 16 education and training provision meets the needs of young people locally.



1.12 This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

1.13 I can confirm this report does not require a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.14 Children's Services (14-19 Team) and the Strategic Commissioning team are to continue to develop and pursue new innovative approaches to leaver social value from council contractors and service providers. Social value in this context is with offering 'ring fenced' employment opportunities for vulnerable young people currently not in employment, education and / or training (NEET). A model has been established, tested and trialled with BIFFA and Continental Landscaping.
- 1.15 Ensure that Wirral Growth Company and Wirral Waters developments prioritise opportunities for Wirral young people. Children's Services (14-19 Team) will be represented at planning meetings with MUSE Developments alongside Wirral Met College. The Council's 14-19 Team will identify the

NEET young people and make referrals as appropriate. Detailed planning dialogue regarding opportunities for young people is to commence in January 2019.

- 1.16 The Council is to produce and publish a local skills strategy, led by the Place and Investment team that clearly identifies local growth, replacement employment sectors and the skills and attributes key to a prosperous local economy. The education sector (particularly schools) need to understand local employer plans regarding workforce succession planning and future industry skills needs. Greater intelligence in this area would help educators support meeting the demand for skills from local employers.
- 1.17 Providing quality careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) to compulsory school age children is key to raising aspirations and supporting robust careers decision making. Delivery of careers education is the statutory responsibility of schools and academies. The Council's 14-19 Service should continue to resource, support and challenge schools to shape and inform their CEIAG programme offer but also to scrutinise existing practice.
- 1.18 Continue to prioritise the 'Ways to Work' supported employment grants (European Social Fund monies) for young people aged 16 to 21 currently not in employment, education and / or training. The grant can provide a real opportunity for our most vulnerable young people for whom local employers might not ordinarily take a chance on. The programme has proved that with the right support, employment can be sustained beyond the grant phase and young people can have a happy and prosperous future. Of the 168 participants between June 2016 and July 2018, 64 percent were sustained in employment beyond grant funding. The grant will be in place until March 2020.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The recommendations support (a) a continued focus and scrutiny on schools providing robust and impartial careers educations ensuring that young people have high aspirations and make informed careers decisions, (b) bring clarity and understanding to what are the local skills needs and opportunities of local employers, and (c) ensuring that any potential opportunities to 'ring fence' or initiate employment opportunities for vulnerable young people are maximised.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 This is not applicable to this report.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 This section of the report provides a detailed breakdown and analysis of the effectiveness and quality of the post 16 provision accessed by Wirral young people. It identifies how well young people progress, develop skills and transition from key stage 4 and 5 in to new destinations.

- 3.2 **Sixth Form Provision in Wirral Schools and Academies** Analysis of the key headline data illustrates the following key features of how well Wirral young people achieve:-

- 2018 performance at Key Stage 4 is in the main good with just some geographical hotspots where attainment and progress scores dip below national averages. Within the Liverpool City Region Wirral has some of best performing institutions at key stage 4.
- At key stage 5 (post 16) there are currently 17 schools (a mix of maintained, academy and independent) with a post 16 offer. In 2017 performance at key stage 5 in school sixth forms across academic and vocational programmes is variable. Wirral has some of the best key stage 5 academic provision nationally. Analysis of DfE performance data (2017) shows that 12 schools (71 percent) had A level average points scores per entry at or above national averages.
- Nine (53% percent) of Wirral schools / academies had a sixth form provision in 2017 with less than 200 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. It is thought that school sixth form with rolls less than 200 can have a limited breadth of course offer and suffer from very small class sizes negatively impacting on learner experience.
- Analysis of DfE Level 3 progress measures (value added) illustrates that 53 percent (9 schools) of Wirral secondary schools ensure their pupils make at least expected levels of progress at level 3 in academic qualifications (A levels).

- In terms of vocational level 3 qualifications only two schools (12 percent) have statistically significant negative scores whereas three schools (18 percent) have statistically significant positive progress measure scores.
- Analysis of the 2017 local authority ALPS A-level value added report brings a further level of intelligence. Key messages include:
 - Between 2012 and 2014 average A-level value added for the borough is at the 40th percentile nationally. The average GCSE grade held by Wirral young people entering A-level provision is grade 'B' (6.31 QCEA points).
 - Between 2016 and 2017 the average A-level value added quality indicator score has remained consistent at, 'very good'. Very good refers to a national performance rating between the 60th and 74th percentile.
 - 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 39th percentile nationally.

3.3 Wirral Further Education and Independent Learning Provider (ILP) Performance.

Analysis of the key headline Wirral based further education college data illustrates the following key features of how well Wirral young people achieve:-

- Number of young people aged 16 to 18 attend Wirral Met College have increased over the last three years to 1,957 in 2017/18. Outcomes (overall achievement rates) for young people attending the College are in line with national averages at 84.7 percent (level 3 2017) against a national average of 85.5 percent. Between 2017 and 2018 level overall achievement rates improved by 8.2 percent. Early indications are that this has been improved again in 2018.
- The numbers of young people accessing post 16 education at the Birkenhead Sixth Form College are the highest ever in 2017 at 1,278. Overall achievement rates for young people on level 2 programmes has improved year on year and has constantly been above national averages. In 2017 the college level 2 overall achievement rate was 89.9 percent compared to the national average, 86 percent. Level 3 long programme success rates have also improved year on year but remain 1 percent below the national average (2017, -1.1% at 86.6%).
- Birkenhead Sixth Form College has notable positive value added performance detailed in the Department for Education 2018 performance tables. With a progress score of 0.25 the college is performing in the top 15% of all schools / colleges nationally for adding value to learners outcomes between the of key stage 4 and finishing at the college.
- 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 only has two locally based ILPs, in addition to Wirral Met College, with Wirral based centres. In 2014 Wirral had five locally based study programme ILPs; however, national policy

and mismanagement have reduced the diversity of provider to a core of two.

- ILP success rate performance is variable with little consistency. Success rate performance at Morthyng Vocational College has improved dramatically but remains slightly below the national average.

3.4 Table 2 (below) contains information relating to Wirral young people participating in Apprenticeship provision. The key headlines of the analysis 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. The net effect between 2014 and 2017 is a reduction of -170 apprentices.
- Early indications are that 2018 will detail much greater reductions (>= -15%) in 16-18 apprenticeship participation as the reforms have been rolled out.
- As an indicator of the quality and achievement rates of young people; success rates at level 2 have improved over the last 4 years (+6 percentage) and are in line with the national average. Level 3 intermediate Apprenticeship success rates have however declined between 2014 and 2016 but have improved in 2017 and are 5.2% percent above the national average.

Table 2 Wirral 16-18 Apprenticeship Participation and Overall Achievement Rates

Metric	Apprenticeship Level	Academic Year				Change 2014 - 2017
		2014	2015	2016	2017	
Wirral Learner Volume (No.)	2	550	530	430	420	-130
	3	250	290	240	210	-40
	4+				*	
Wirral Achievement Rates (%)	2	61.8%	71.8%	66.5%	67.8%	+6%
	3	80.3%	76.5%	68.8%	74.5%	-5.8
	4+				85.7%	
National Average (%)	2	69.5%	71%	67.8%	67.1%	-2.4%
	3	75%	77.3%	72.9%	69.3%	-5.7%
	4+				61.9%	

(Source: Skills Funding Agency, Apprenticeship Success Rate Reports, 2018)

3.5 Ofsted and Post 16 Education and Training Quality

3.5.1 **Sixth Form Provision.** As at December 2018 there are only two secondary schools with a sixth form provision graded, 'requires improvement'. In summary, Ofsted highlighted the following key themes in terms of the schools with underperforming sixth forms requiring improvement:-

- i. Pupil attainment consistently below average.

- ii. Pupils not making good progress from their starting points.
- iii. Courses not well matched to pupils prior attainment levels.
- iv. Not all students have embarked upon courses that are well suited to their interests and aptitudes.

3.5.2 **Further Education College Provision.** As at December 2018 Wirral Met College and Birkenhead Sixth Form Colleges are currently graded as overall good and outstanding respectively. Ofsted inspections at Birkenhead Sixth Form College and Wirral Met College were carried out in December 2016 and October 2017 respectively.

3.5.3 **Private independent learning providers (ILP).** Table 3 below illustrates the current overall inspection grades for Wirral’s core ILPs. Post 16 ILP provision is therefore in the main ‘good’ with only Rocket Training requiring improvement.

Table 3 Independent Learning Provider Ofsted Inspection Grades

Wirral Based Independent Private Provider	Latest Inspection Date	Overall Grade
Morthyng Vocational College	October 2017	Good - 2
Rocket Training Ltd	August 2016	Good - 2

(Source: Ofsted Website, July 2015)

3.6 Learner Destinations

3.6.1 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 of 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.

3.7 2014 to 2016 key stage 4 and 5 learner destination measure performance compares well against the national averages – see table 4 below:-

Table 4 2014 to 2016 Key Stage 4 and 5 Learner Destination Measure Performance

Key Stage	Area	Year	% of YP in Employment, Education, Training (EET)	% of YP in Education (Excludes apprenticeships)	% 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: DfE, January 2018 (comparison with state funded schools))

3.8 Key points to note regarding learner destinations post end of key stage 4 and 5 include:

Key Stage 4 (at age 16)

- i. Overall positive destinations, at 95%, are 1 percent better than national average.
- ii. Significantly higher proportion of young people stay on in sixth form provision (53% Wirral vs 39% national) compared to national.
- iii. Sixth Form College and Apprenticeships destinations – similar to national at 15 percent and 4 percent respectively.
- iv. Proportion of young people transitioning to the FE College is much less than national average (19% vs 34%).
- v. Wirral has 5 percent of its young people for whom their destination is not sustained which is equal to the national data.

Key Stage 5 (at age 18)

- i. Positive transition to employment, education and / or training (EET) is higher than national average at 92 percent compared to 90 percent.
- ii. A higher proportion of learners post key stage 5 go in to the higher education – 63 percent versus 59 percent nationally.
- iii. 28 percent of young people get into the top third of HEI's (higher than national and NW).
- iv. Wirral has 6 percent of its young people for whom their destination is not sustained which is equal to the national data.

3.9 Travel to Learn Patterns

3.9.1 Annually a significant volume of young people travel outside of the borough for further education provision. In 2015/16 17.8 percent (or 733 young people) of Wirral resident young people accessing further education did so at providers and colleges outside of the borough. In 2017/18 the proportion of Wirral residents accessing further education outside of the borough has reduced significantly by 184 young people. Some 15.2% of Wirral resident study programme learners studied outside of Wirral in 2017/18.

3.9.2 Significant variation exists in terms of the qualification success of young people that travel and access learning outside of the borough. Table 6 below illustrates the qualification overall achievement rates across the different learning sectors for young people staying and learning in the borough and those that learn outside of the borough. The data illustrates how when you factor in the overall achievement rates for young people accessing learning outside of the borough there is a drop in overall Wirral young people's global overall achievements rates (1.1 percent).

Table 6 Comparison of 16 to 18 In and Out of Borough Learning Success Rates (2016/17)

Learning Sector	Overall achievement rates for 16-18s learning in borough	Overall achievement rates for resident 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: National Achievement Rate Tables, 2016/17)

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no specific local financial implications associated with the implementation of the recommendations in this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no direct implications for ICT, staffing and assets arising from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 There is a risk that Council contractors may look to recruit people from outside of the borough when opportunities arise. This situation will be mitigated by working closely with the council Strategic Commissioning and Transformation teams ensuring service providers and contractors are committed to supporting Wirral young people as required.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 All relevant information and documentation will be shared with the Association of Wirral Secondary Head teachers (WASH) and Wirral Further Education College Principals.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

(a) Yes and impact review is attached –
<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-2017-1>

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APPENDICES

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Report for the Children's Sub Committee	16 th December 2015