



ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

2026 - 2027

WIRRAL MET COLLEGE
SINCE 1855



CREATING FUTURES
SINCE 1855.

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Introductory Statement
And Purpose

Wirral Met College supports individuals to progress through education, training and skills development, improving life chances and contributing to local economic growth. As the borough's anchor institution, we play a central role in developing skills, supporting progression and responding to the needs of our communities and local economy.

As a key partner within the local skills system, the College works collaboratively with employers, local authorities and regional stakeholders to support a coordinated, place-based response to skills needs and economic priorities.

This Accountability Statement sets out our priorities for 2026–27, with a clear focus on improving achievement, strengthening progression and increasing movement into sustained employment.

Our priorities are shaped by a clear understanding of local need. In Wirral, employment rates remain below regional and national averages, economic inactivity is high, and progression to Level 3 and above continues to be a challenge. We also recognise that for many people, the barriers to education and employment are complex, including confidence, health, caring responsibilities and previous experiences of learning or work.

At the same time, there are significant opportunities across the Liverpool City Region. Priority sectors identified through the Local Skills Improvement Plan include advanced manufacturing, construction, health, professional services and the visitor economy, with digital and AI as cross-cutting themes. This approach also supports national priorities to improve productivity, drive economic growth and develop skills in key areas such as digital, green technologies and advanced manufacturing.

In response, we are strengthening alignment between curriculum and labour market demand, developing clear and supported pathways into priority sectors and enabling more people to progress confidently into employment, apprenticeships and higher-level study.

The College works in close partnership with employers, the Chamber, the Combined Authority, Wirral Council, the Department for Work and Pensions including Jobcentre Plus, and regional providers to deliver a responsive and joined-up skills system. This includes working collaboratively across the Liverpool City Region to support a plan-led approach to skills, ensuring alignment of provision, reduced duplication and clear progression pathways for students.

Performance in 2025–26 demonstrates continued progress across key areas. Achievement has improved across study programmes and apprenticeships, with apprenticeship achievement now at 69.7%, placing the College as the highest performing provider in the Liverpool City Region and above national rates. The College is also joint highest in the Liverpool City Region for achievement rates in regulated provision, reflecting strong student retention and successful completion across programmes.

Positive destination outcomes remain strong, with 95% progressing into employment, apprenticeships or further study and 93% of destinations known. This reflects the effectiveness of progression pathways, employer engagement and careers support. Outcomes for students with SEND and those facing multiple disadvantage also remain strong, with retention and achievement in line with their peers, reflecting the College's highly effective inclusive approach.

Curriculum alignment to priority sectors has strengthened further, with increased employer involvement in design and delivery, expansion of sector-based pathways and continued delivery of apprenticeships and employability provision. Investment in digital, technical and green skills is supporting the development of provision aligned to emerging labour market needs.

The College continues to demonstrate strong performance in adult provision and inclusive pathways. However, improving progression to Level 3 and above, accelerating progress and improving attendance in English and maths, and reducing variation across provision remain key areas for further development.

These strengths and areas for improvement directly inform the strategic priorities set out below. **Our priorities are to:**

1. Achievement and progression to Level 3 and above
2. Progression into employment and higher-level study
3. Employer-led curriculum in priority sectors
4. Digital, AI and green skills development
5. Inclusion and access for priority groups
6. Responsive and high-quality provision aligned to workforce need

These priorities are informed by a comprehensive review of local and regional skills needs, including labour market intelligence, employer engagement and the priorities identified through the Liverpool City Region Local Skills Improvement Plan. This ensures that provision is closely aligned to employer demand and supports local and regional economic growth.

We hope this document demonstrates how these priorities are being delivered in practice and the difference this will make for students, employers and our communities. By continuing to work in partnership across Wirral and the wider Liverpool City Region, we are committed to supporting more people to progress, access opportunity and contribute to a stronger, more inclusive local economy.

Executive Team



Gill Banks, Principal & CEO



Phil Jones, Vice Principal, Quality, Adults & Commercial



Jo-Anne Tam Chief Financial Officer



Paul Woods, Chief Operating Officer

Corporation Board Members



Joanne Henney, Chair of Governors

Penny Haughan - Vice Chair
Paul Gaskell - Governor
Karen Lowe - Governor
Phillip Vickerman - Governor
Ali Mohammed Amirkhalilin - Governor
Gary Baines - Governor
Debbie Wilkinson - Governor
Jim Parker - Co-opted Governor

Simon Price - Co-opted Governor
Mark Humphreys - Student Governor
Ellie-Mae Woods - Student Governor
Simon Wrigley - Staff Governor
Ian Evans - Staff Governor
Gill Banks - Principal & CEO
Louise Rhodes - Governance Professional

Our Purpose:

> To provide accessible, high-quality education and training opportunities to meet the needs of students and the demands of the local community and industry.

Our Values:

- Ambition
- Resilience
- Inclusivity
- Empowerment
- Accountability

Our Strategic Pillars:

Our Strategy is designed to ensure that we deliver on our Purpose; it includes five complementary but distinctive Pillars with clear aims:

Students:

To create a nurturing and inclusive learning environment that prioritises student success, holistic development, empowerment, and progression.

People:

To attract, empower, and retain a diverse pool of skilled individuals, fostering a culture of self-growth, innovation, and excellence within our organisation.

Place:

To leverage our geographical position as an anchor organisation to optimise opportunities for community engagement, partnerships, and regional economic development.

Sustainability:

To ensure long-term financial stability and advance our sustainability roadmap by embedding sustainable practices across all aspects of our organisation.

Collaboration:

To use internal and external partnerships, to drive innovation, knowledge sharing, and collective impact both across our organisation, the Borough and wider region.

About Wirral Met College

Wirral Met College is the largest post-16 education provider in Wirral and a key anchor institution within the Liverpool City Region. It plays a central role in supporting students, employers and communities, contributing directly to local skills development, economic growth and social mobility.



Operating across five campuses in Birkenhead and Bebington, the College delivers provision that is closely aligned to priority sectors and local economic need:



Twelve Quays:

- Engineering
- Aspiring Shipbuilders
- Arts
- Health, Social Care and Early Years
- Digital
- Automotive
- Creative Media
- Fashion & Textiles



Wirral Waters:

- Bricklaying
- Plastering
- Plumbing & gas
- Electrical
- Carpentry & Joinery
- Built Environment
- Green Technologies



Conway Park:

- Hairdressing
- Beauty Therapy and Make-Up
- Travel and Tourism
- ESOL
- Prep for Life
- Supported Internships
- Employability and Progression

The Oval:

- Sport and Fitness
- Uniformed Public Services

Hamilton Campus:

- Hospitality and Culinary Arts
- Access to Higher Education
- Higher Education
- Professional Qualifications
- Adult Employability
- Trade Union Education

Postcode at Enrolment

This campus footprint ensures accessible, locally delivered education and training, enabling participation, progression and clear routes into employment.

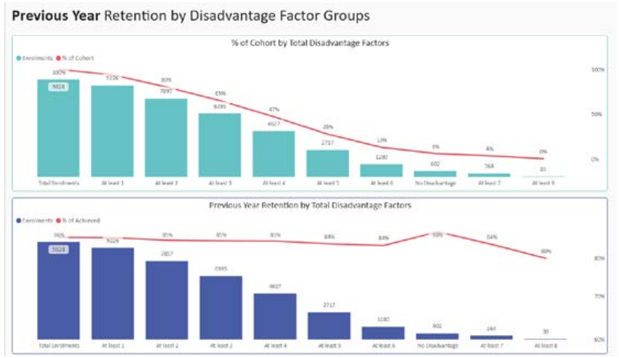
Student Profile Data:



The College serves approximately 7,500 students across all provision types. Its largest cohort is 16 to 18-year-olds, alongside a significant adult population, including a high proportion of ESOL students and adults who are unemployed or economically inactive.

Many students join with below-average prior attainment, particularly in English and maths, and a significant proportion come from disadvantaged communities, reflecting the wider socio-economic context of Wirral, where attainment and qualification levels remain below national averages.

Provision spans the full student journey, including full-time study programmes, T-Levels, adult learning and employability provision, apprenticeships, and higher education and access pathways. This enables individuals at all stages to develop the skills needed for employment, career progression and lifelong learning.



Achievement in English and maths reflects both the starting points of students and the wider local context. A significant proportion of students join the College without having achieved a grade 4 in English and maths, and the number of students resitting these qualifications continues to increase year on year. While achievement rates have remained broadly stable, the College recognises that progress and attendance in English and maths require further improvement. This aligns with Ofsted findings that the rate of progress in English and maths is not yet strong enough and remains a key area for development. In response, the College is strengthening oversight, improving the tracking of student progress and implementing targeted interventions to support more rapid improvement.

The College has a strong commitment to inclusion. It supports a large and diverse cohort of students with SEND, including those with high needs and Education, Health and Care Plans, alongside many students with identified learning difficulties and disabilities who benefit from inclusive, well-structured support. Its approach has been recognised nationally through the AoC Beacon Award for Support for Students, awarded for the 'Design for Life' initiative, which includes sensory-friendly spaces and independent living facilities.

Curriculum design is closely aligned to the Liverpool City Region Local Skills Improvement Plan, the Liverpool Growth Plan, the Wirral Economic Strategy and national priorities such as the Industrial Strategy and Get Britain Working agenda. Programmes are shaped through strong employer partnerships and reflect real job roles, industry standards and working environments.

With over £14 million invested recently in its estate,
a recognised commitment to inclusion as a College of Sanctuary,
and strong links with local authorities, schools and employer networks,

Wirral Met College continues to play a pivotal role in developing skills, raising aspirations and supporting economic growth across the region.



The college works in partnership

with over 500

public & private sector employers

including organisations such as Balaena Birkenhead, formerly known as Cammell Laird and Whitbread Premier Inn, providing training, recruitment and workforce development support to meet evolving business needs.

These partnerships support initiatives such as the Aspiring Shipbuilders programme and Supported Internship pathways, ensuring that provision remains responsive to labour market demand and enables progression into sustained employment.

The College has a strong track record of quality improvement, reflected in improving outcomes across provision types, including apprenticeship achievement rates of 69.9%. Provision for students with high needs is a particular strength, supported by inclusive practice and specialist support. Leadership and governance provide clear oversight and accountability, ensuring a continued focus on improvement and delivery of high-quality provision.

Skills And Economic Context

> *Students are prepared well for their next stage of training or employment.*

Ofsted Report 2026
https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/31/130493

Wirral Met College operates within a local economy characterised by opportunity alongside persistent inequality. The borough is strongly SME-led, with 89% of businesses employing fewer than 10 people. While there are clear sector strengths and growth opportunities, challenges remain in relation to economic inactivity, lower qualification levels and progression into employment.

Key local issues include:

- economic inactivity above national levels
- lower attainment at Level 3 and above
- continued challenges in youth employment
- gaps in English, maths and employability skills

This local context shapes the College's approach, with a focus on strengthening progression to Level 3 and above, improving core and employability skills, re-engaging unemployed and economically inactive residents, and aligning provision to sectors with clear employment routes. Delivery is designed to be flexible and accessible, ensuring that students can access opportunities and progress into skilled employment.

At a regional level, the Liverpool City Region Growth Plan and Local Skills Improvement Plan provide an employer-led framework for skills delivery. Priority sectors include professional and financial services, advanced manufacturing and clean energy, construction, health and care, visitor economy and creative industries. These are supported by cross-cutting priorities including digital and AI, technical progression and workforce development.

Nationally, skills policy is focused on improving productivity, supporting economic growth and strengthening workforce capability. SMEs represent 99.8% of businesses and around 60% of employment but face ongoing challenges including skills shortages and limited capacity for training. National priorities emphasise employer-led provision, progression into higher-level skills and investment in sectors such as advanced manufacturing, health, digital, clean energy, construction and professional services.

In response to this combined context, the College aligns its provision to national, regional and local priorities, ensuring that delivery supports both immediate workforce demand and longer-term economic growth.





Local delivery model: In an economy where most businesses are micro or small, Wirral Met College has developed a delivery model that reflects both national direction and local need.

This approach is based on three core principals:

1. understanding need through labour market intelligence and employer insight
2. keeping engagement simple through clear access points and coordinated support
3. delivering through partnership with employers, LSIP partners and stakeholders

This enables the College to align provision to real job roles and employer expectations, deliver flexible and accessible training for SMEs, support progression into employment and higher-level skills, and strengthen workforce capability and productivity.

These are presented together to illustrate areas of alignment and shared focus, recognising that each framework uses different sector definitions and groupings.

Local Needs Duty

This statement summarises the College's Local Needs Duty review and the actions being taken in response.

Wirral Met College plays a central role in delivering skills that meet local, regional and national priorities, working within a plan-led system and in close partnership with employers, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and the Employer Representative Body. **We work to ensure that our curriculum is directly aligned to:**

- the Liverpool City Region Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)
- the Liverpool City Region Growth Plan
- the Wirral Economic Strategy
- national industrial and skills priorities

This ensures that provision is responsive to both immediate workforce needs and longer-term economic growth, including the development of English and maths skills that underpin access to employment and progression to higher-level learning.

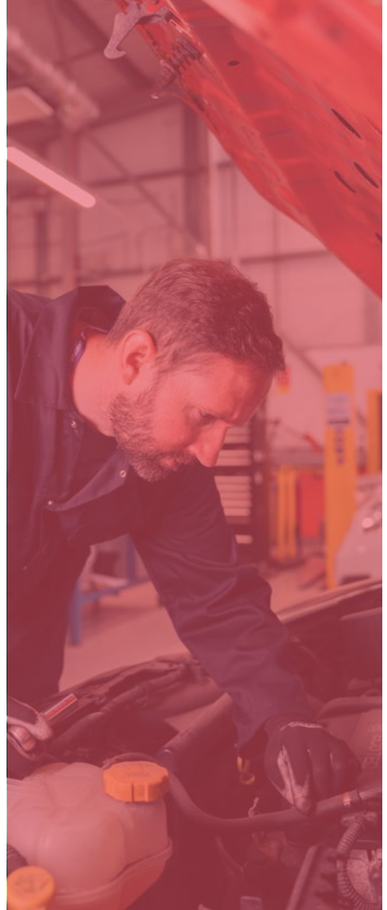
> ***"Curriculums are relevant to local, regional and national priorities."***

Ofsted Report 2026
https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/31/130493

The College plays a proactive system leadership role across the Liverpool City Region, working in close partnership with further education providers, independent training providers and universities to support a coordinated and efficient skills system.

Through active participation in the Association of Liverpool City Region Colleges, Industry Learning Partnerships and the Local Skills Improvement Plan, the College contributes to shared curriculum planning, alignment of provision to priority sectors and the reduction of duplication. This collaborative approach ensures clear and coherent progression pathways for students and supports a more responsive and effective regional skills system.

In line with our duty under Section 52B of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 as amended, the College has undertaken a comprehensive review of how well our provision meets local needs. This review draws on labour market intelligence, employer engagement and Local Skills Improvement Plan evidence, alongside feedback from community organisations and public services, and analysis of student participation and outcomes.



The review identified the following key areas of need:

- progression to Level 3 and higher-level technical skills
- employer-led provision, particularly in priority sectors
- accessible pathways for adults and those furthest from the labour market
- provision in green skills, health and digital sectors
- achievement and progress in English and maths, particularly for students working towards grade 4

Particular focus has been placed on students facing barriers to education and employment, including:

- those who are economically inactive
- those with low or no formal qualifications
- those from disadvantaged communities
- those requiring additional learning support
- students who have not yet achieved a grade 4 in English and maths

In response, the College is strengthening provision through:

- expanded access to Level 3 programmes in growth sectors
- strengthened ESOL and Entry Level pathways into employment
- development of green skills provision aligned to net zero priorities
- increased employer co-design of curriculum
- enhanced supported internships and inclusive provision
- improved delivery of English and maths through strengthened oversight, targeted intervention and greater integration within vocational programmes

Provision is structured to support clear pathways from entry-level learning through to higher-level skills and employment, including:

- study programmes and T Levels for young people
- apprenticeships aligned to employer demand
- adult employability and re-engagement provision
- higher education and professional qualifications
- supported learning pathways
- achievement and progress in English and maths, particularly for students working towards grade 4

Delivery is increasingly sector-focused and employer-informed, ensuring that students develop the skills required for real job roles and can progress confidently into employment and further study, supported by the English and maths skills needed to access these opportunities.

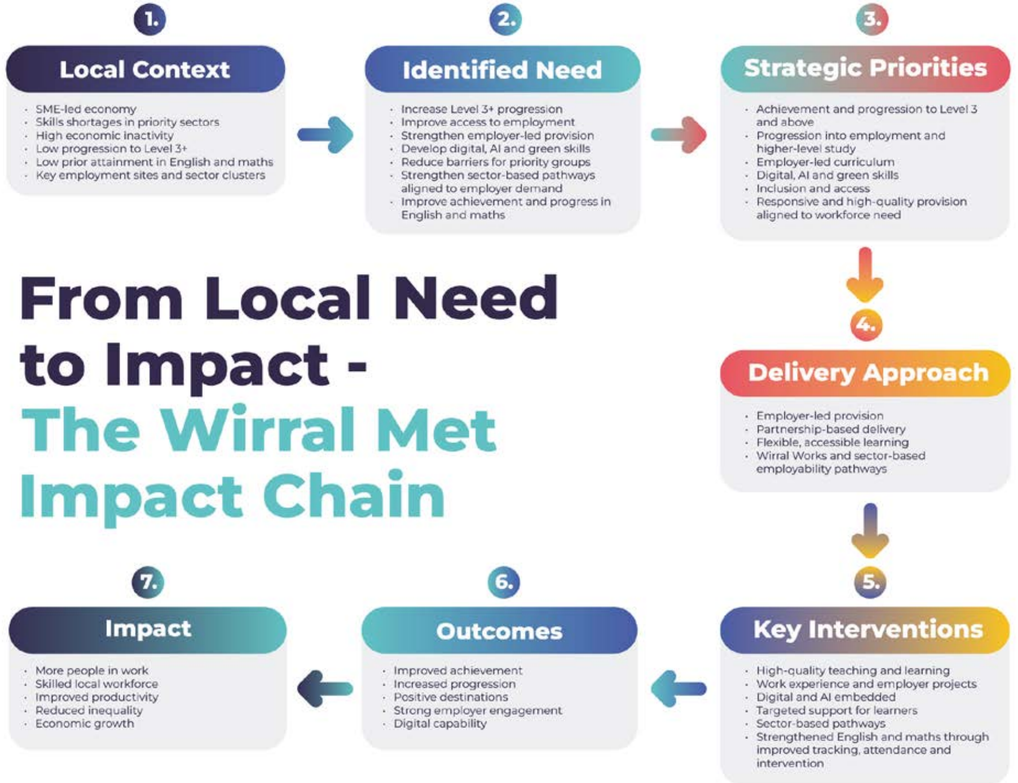
These findings directly inform the College's strategic priorities and objectives, ensuring a clear link between identified local need, planned delivery, measurable outcomes and the impact achieved for students, employers and the local economy.

Contribution To
Skills Priorities

The following table illustrates how the College's current and planned provision aligns to identified local, regional and national priority sectors, ensuring coherence between curriculum delivery and workforce demand.

KEY:
'O' courses currently offered, **'U'** under development for 26/27, **'NP'** new programme being introduced, **'E'** Emerging only

Sector/Skill	Local Priority	Regional Priority	National Priority	Study Programmes and T Levels (14-19)	Apprenticeships	Adults/ Employability Programmes	Higher Education and Higher Apprenticeships
Construction and the Built Environment	✓	✓	✓	✓ O	✓ O	✓ O	
Net Zero, Green Skills and Clean Energy		✓	✓			✓ U	
Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering	✓	✓	✓	✓ O	✓ O	✓ U	✓ U
Creative and Digital Technologies		✓	✓	✓ O	✓ O	✓ O	✓ O
Health, Social Care and Life Sciences	✓	✓	✓	✓ O	✓ O	✓ O	✓ O
Maritime, Logistics and Freeport	✓	✓		✓ U	✓ O	✓ U	
Professional and Financial Services	✓	✓	✓		✓ O	✓ O	✓ O
Visitor Economy	✓	✓		✓ O	✓ O	✓ O	
Defence (E)			✓				



This model illustrates how local labour market need, including sector priorities and place-based economic factors, directly informs the College's strategic priorities, delivery approach and impact.



Strategic Priorities
In Response to Local Need

The College's strategic priorities, set out in the introductory statement, are directly informed by the findings of the Local Needs Duty review and the wider local, regional and national context. Together, these priorities provide a clear framework for delivery, ensuring that provision is aligned to employer demand, supports progression and addresses barriers to participation.

Each priority reflects a direct response to identified skills gaps and workforce needs, aligned to the College's strategic objectives and measures.

The following sections outline how each priority is being delivered in practice, with a focus on measurable outcomes and the impact for students, employers and the local economy.

Priority 1: Achievement and progression to Level 3 and above

Improving achievement and progression to Level 3 and above remains a key priority. While overall achievement has improved, progression to higher levels continues to be affected by students' starting points, particularly in English and maths.

A higher proportion of students join the College without having achieved a grade 4 in English and maths compared to national averages. This reflects the local context, where prior attainment is lower and many students require resit provision alongside their main programme of study.

Students make progress from these starting points, particularly those with the lowest prior attainment. However, progress for students working towards grade 4 from grades 2 and 3 is not yet strong enough, and too many students do not achieve the grades required to progress to Level 3 study or skilled employment.

This aligns with Ofsted findings that improvement in English and maths has not been sufficiently rapid, with attendance and the rate of progress remaining areas for development.

In response, the College is strengthening oversight of English and maths through a more structured and data-informed approach. This includes improved tracking of student progress, earlier identification of those at risk of falling behind and targeted intervention to support progress and achievement. There is a sharper focus on improving attendance in English and maths and ensuring greater consistency in the quality of teaching.

Alongside this, English and maths are increasingly embedded within vocational programmes, enabling students to apply their skills in relevant contexts and supporting more meaningful progress.

These actions will support more students to achieve grade 4 and above, enabling progression to Level 3 programmes, apprenticeships and employment.

Impact

Improved progress and achievement in English and maths, particularly for students working towards grade 4, leading to increased progression to Level 3 study and higher-level pathways.

Priority 2: Progression into employment, apprenticeships and higher-level study

Wirral Met is strengthening progression pathways so that more students move into sustained employment, apprenticeships and higher-level study.

This is underpinned by improving achievement, particularly in English and maths, ensuring that more students are able to access higher-level opportunities. This is delivered through a coordinated, place-based approach that aligns provision closely to employer demand, informed by labour market intelligence and Local Skills Improvement Plan priorities.



Latest destination data demonstrates strong progression outcomes, with 95% progressing into positive destinations and 93% of destinations known. This includes progression into employment, apprenticeships and further study, reflecting the strength of employer-aligned provision and effective careers guidance.

Wirral Works is the College's newly launched employability and skills model, designed to connect residents to jobs and support employers to access a skilled workforce. Working closely with Jobcentre Plus and the Department for Work and Pensions, alongside the Combined Authority and local partners, the College provides coordinated, wraparound support for individuals facing barriers to work, including tailored training, employability support and progression into live vacancies. This is complemented by targeted recruitment and training support for employers, ensuring that provision aligns directly to vacancies and workforce needs.

Employers play a central role in shaping provision. The introduction of the Hospitality Skills Passport, developed in partnership with employers and UKHospitality, provides a flagship sector pathway within the visitor economy. This model will be extended across other priority sectors, creating a suite of employer-led pathways aligned to workforce demand. Programmes are designed around real job requirements and lead to clear outcomes across sectors including health, construction, visitor economy, digital and green skills.

Careers education, information, advice and guidance is delivered through a whole-college approach aligned to the Gatsby Benchmarks and the Matrix Standard. It is embedded across curriculum, tutorials, employer engagement and work experience, ensuring that students are supported to make informed decisions about their next steps. Ofsted recognises that students benefit from well-planned careers guidance, enhanced by employer engagement, enabling them to progress successfully into further study, apprenticeships and employment.

For students who have not yet achieved a grade 4 in English and maths, additional support and clear progression routes are in place to ensure that attainment does not become a barrier to progression.

Impact

More students progress into sustained employment, apprenticeships and higher-level study, increasing labour market participation and strengthening workforce supply across priority sectors.

Priority 3: Employer-led curriculum in priority sectors

Employer engagement directly informs curriculum planning and design, ensuring provision reflects the skills priorities identified through the Local Skills Improvement Plan and ongoing sector-based dialogue with employers.



Wirral Met College has developed a strong partnership with Cammell Laird, a major local employer, to deliver the Aspiring Shipbuilders Programme. The programme has been co-designed to meet local demand within shipbuilding and marine engineering, informed by employer feedback and sector need. It combines training in welding, fabrication, mechanical and electrical systems with English, maths and digital skills, ensuring students develop the technical and transferable skills required by employers. A key feature is the use of real industry experience, including employer-led projects, site visits and work experience within a live industrial environment.

Ofsted recognises the College's strong partnership working, with leaders collaborating closely with employers and stakeholders to align provision to local and regional skills needs.

In an SME-led economy, the College prioritises simple and accessible engagement. The College's Employer Engagement Framework provides a clear route from identifying need through to delivery and impact, supported by an Employer Pledge that sets expectations for both employers and students.

Each curriculum area is supported by an Employer Advisory Board, bringing together industry experts to shape curriculum content, inform investment decisions and ensure that provision remains aligned to current and future workforce needs.

Regional partnership working extends across the wider system, including engagement with the Employer Representative Body, the Local Skills Improvement Plan, the Association of Liverpool City Region Colleges and DWP.

Wirral Met College is a proud partner in the newly announced Northwest Defence Technical Excellence College network, led by Blackpool and The Fylde College. This national initiative is intended to support the development of skills aligned to defence readiness and advanced manufacturing, strengthening workforce capability in strategically important sectors. Through this collaboration, the College will contribute to the development and delivery of specialist technical training, working with partners to build capacity, share expertise and support a coordinated approach to skills across the region.

In parallel, Wirral Met College is the only Further Education provider in the Liverpool City Region participating in the UK Freeport Skills Partnership. This national collaboration brings together circa 20 colleges, plus universities, employers and Freeport stakeholders, to align skills provision with major infrastructure and economic growth opportunities. Through this partnership, the College contributes to a coordinated approach to skills development across key sectors, including logistics, maritime, clean energy, construction and advanced manufacturing, supported by shared curriculum development and access to specialist expertise.





Both strands align closely to local, regional and national priorities. The Liverpool City Region Freeport is a significant driver of economic growth, creating demand for skills across port operations, warehousing, logistics and supply chains. For Wirral, this links directly to local priorities, including logistics and distribution, construction, professional services and emerging opportunities associated with Wirral Waters and regeneration activity. At the same time, national investment in defence and advanced manufacturing is increasing demand for higher-level technical skills and specialist workforce development.

Through its role in both the Defence Technical Excellence College network and the UK Freeport Skills Partnership, the College is well positioned to translate these national priorities into local delivery. This will ensure that students can access opportunities linked to both infrastructure growth and defence-related industries, while employers benefit from a skilled, work-ready workforce. This approach supports inclusive growth by creating clear, accessible pathways into employment and enabling local communities to benefit from major economic investment.

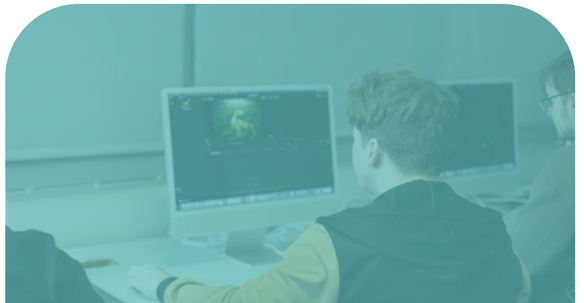
Impact

Curriculum is aligned closely to employer demand and real job roles, supporting progression into employment and strengthening workforce capability in priority sectors.

Priority 4: Digital, AI and Green Skills Development

Wirral Met recognises that digital, AI and green skills are essential across all sectors, reflecting employer demand for improved productivity, data capability and low-carbon skills identified through local labour market analysis and the LSIP. Employers, particularly SMEs, highlight the need for practical, work-ready skills that can be applied immediately in the workplace.

In response, digital and AI are embedded across curriculum areas and workforce development, with a focus on applied, workplace-relevant skills that support productivity and innovation. Staff are supported to integrate digital technologies into teaching, ensuring students experience current industry practice. This aligns with Ofsted findings that students develop the subject-specific and digital skills required for employment and further study, including the use of industry-standard software and technologies.



Students develop the ability to apply digital tools, use AI to support productivity, work with data and understand ethical considerations. Programmes such as the Aspiring Digital and Computing Professional pathway provide an entry point into the digital sector, enabling students to build confidence, develop technical knowledge and explore different career pathways before progressing to Level 2 and beyond. Alongside technical skills, students develop English, maths and employability skills, supported by work experience, employer engagement and industry insight.

Investment in specialist facilities further strengthens this approach, including immersive learning environments, high-specification digital and engineering facilities and the development of the NEXUS centre. These environments enable students to develop and apply digital, AI and technical skills in realistic, industry-standard settings, supporting simulation-based learning, problem-solving and the application of skills in contexts that reflect modern workplaces.

Alongside this, the College is developing and delivering green skills provision aligned to net zero priorities, including emerging demand in retrofit, low-carbon construction and sustainable energy systems. This ensures students are prepared for the transition to a low carbon economy and can apply digital and technical skills within green industries.

Impact

Students develop the digital, AI and green skills required for emerging roles, progressing into further study, apprenticeships and employment. This supports workforce modernisation, improves productivity and contributes to regional economic growth and net zero ambitions.

Priority 5: Inclusion and access for priority groups

Wirral Met is committed to improving access and outcomes for individuals facing barriers to education and employment, including adults who are economically inactive, those with low or no formal qualifications and students with SEND. In response, the College has expanded ESOL and Entry Level provision, strengthened progression routes to Level 3 and enhanced supported internships and inclusive pathways. Targeted employability support through initiatives such as Wirral Works further strengthens engagement with economically inactive residents, providing clear and supported pathways into learning and employment.

Alongside this, the College plays a key role in engaging local communities through delivery in community settings across Wirral. Working in partnership with organisations such as Tomorrow's Women, the Spider Project, Birkenhead Central Library and Forum Housing, the College provides accessible, first-step learning that supports individuals to re-engage with education. This provision focuses on building confidence, supporting wellbeing and developing essential English, maths and digital skills, enabling progression into further learning and employment.

In parallel, the College delivers specialist provision for students with SEND and those facing significant barriers to learning. This includes employability and progression programmes for young people who are not in education, employment or training, alongside Prep for Life and Supported Internship programmes. These programmes support students to develop skills aligned to Preparation for Adulthood outcomes, including employment, independent living, community inclusion and health.

A key feature of this approach is the delivery of supported internships and pre-internship pathways in partnership with employers, including Whitbread through Premier Inn. Delivered within a simulated 'mini hotel' environment at Conway Park Campus and across employer sites, students develop industry-relevant skills, behaviours and workplace readiness using employer training approaches, alongside employability, English and maths. Students progress into supported internships across Premier Inn sites across the Liverpool City Region, including the Wirral, with structured work experience and job coaching providing clear pathways into paid employment or further training.

This inclusive approach is underpinned by a strong evidence base. In addition, the College will use the Inclusive Mainstream Fund in 2026–27 to support transition towards the reformed SEND system, ensuring that students with SEND, high needs and Education, Health and Care Plans can access high-quality provision, clear progression pathways and strong Preparation for Adulthood outcomes. This will strengthen inclusive teaching practice across curriculum areas, improve access to learning through enhanced classroom support, assistive technology and targeted interventions, and further develop staff capability to respond effectively to a growing and increasingly complex SEND cohort.

The Fund will support the continued expansion of supported internships, pre-internship pathways and employer-led opportunities that enable students to progress confidently into employment, independent living and community participation. Alongside this, investment in inclusive learning environments, specialist facilities and transition support will further improve student confidence, resilience and progression, ensuring SEND reform is embedded through practical improvements to student experience and outcomes.

College data demonstrates that students with multiple disadvantage factors achieve strong retention rates, with outcomes comparable to their peers. The number of students with Education, Health and Care Plans has increased year on year, reflecting both rising demand and the College's growing reputation for inclusive provision. Ofsted also recognises this strength, noting that students benefit from high-quality support, develop confidence and resilience, and are well prepared for their next steps in employment and adult life.

Impact

More individuals facing barriers are able to access education, build confidence and develop essential skills, progressing into higher-level learning and sustained employment. This supports inclusive growth, increases labour market participation and improves independence for students with SEND and those furthest from the labour market.

Priority 6: Responsive and high-quality provision aligned to workforce need

To meet the demands of priority sectors and Local Skills Improvement Plan priorities, the College must ensure that provision remains current, industry-relevant and capable of being delivered at scale. This includes responding to growing demand in areas such as green skills, digital technologies and technical training, alongside the need for flexible delivery models that reflect an SME-led economy.





In response, the College is investing in its estate and facilities to support high-quality, industry-standard delivery. This ensures that learning environments reflect real working conditions, enable hands-on skills development and support progression into employment and higher-level study.

Delivery is supported through the development of specialist facilities aligned to priority sectors. This includes low-carbon and retrofit training environments, such as heat pumps, solar PV and modern methods of construction, alongside high-specification digital and engineering facilities. Investment in the NEXUS centre for Engineering will further strengthen capacity for technical training aligned to employer demand.

The College is also expanding flexible, multi-use learning spaces, including the Centre for English and maths, to support delivery across programmes and increase capacity. This enables greater responsiveness to employer need and supports both full-time and short course provision.

Sustainability is embedded across the estate, with learning environments designed to reflect low-carbon technologies and practices. In parallel, employer-facing training spaces are being developed to support co-designed provision, workforce development and initiatives such as Wirral Works.

Impact

High-quality, industry-standard facilities increase capacity, support delivery of priority skills at scale and enable more students to progress into higher-level study and employment.



Key Objectives And Measures
2026-2027

The following strategic objectives and measures provide a structured framework for delivery, enabling the College to monitor progress, assess performance and demonstrate impact for students, employers and the local economy.

These actions reflect the key areas of planned growth and development for 2026–27, directly informed by identified local need, including LSIP priorities, and aligned to local, regional and national priorities.

Strategic Pillar	Objective	Measure of Success	2026-2027 Focus (What will expand / scale / extend)	Impact (Local / Regional / National Alignment)
Students	Improve achievement across study programmes and apprenticeships	· Achievement rates improve to ≥87.3% · Apprenticeship achievement improves by +3pp	Strengthen quality improvement through enhanced tracking of student progress, earlier identification of those at risk of falling behind and targeted intervention to support achievement. Improve attendance and consistency in teaching, learning and assessment, particularly in English and maths.	Increased progression into priority sectors, strengthening workforce capacity and supporting LSIP priorities.
	Increase internal progression between levels	· Internal progression increases to ≥60% (aspirational 70%)	Strengthen progression pathways across curriculum areas, including clearer routes to Level 3 and above aligned to priority sectors. Improve transition points between levels and support students to progress through structured and coherent pathways.	Stronger pipeline into Level 3+ skills, supporting regional productivity and economic growth.
	Improve English and maths outcomes	· Functional Skills achievement improves by +10pp · GCSE English achievement improves by +17pp · GCSE maths achievement is in line with national rates	Accelerate improvement in English and maths through strengthened tracking, targeted intervention and improved attendance strategies. Further embed English and maths within vocational programmes to support more rapid progress and achievement of grade 4.	Improved achievement in English and maths enables progression to Level 3, apprenticeships and employment, addressing key local skills gaps.
	Strengthen personal development, employability and access to learning	· The College strategy is fully embedded across provision · Student engagement and destination evidence are improved · Participation and retention of disadvantaged and SEND students improve	Accelerate improvement in English and maths through strengthened tracking, targeted intervention and improved attendance strategies. Further embed English and maths within vocational programmes to support more rapid progress and achievement of grade 4.	Students develop the skills and behaviours required for employment, supporting progression into sustained work and improved destination outcomes.
	Increase progression into employment, apprenticeships and further study	· ≥80% of students progress into positive destinations	Extend employer-informed learning, including work experience, live briefs and sector-based projects. Strengthen personal development through tutorials and careers education, ensuring students develop the behaviours, confidence and skills required for employment.	Increased labour market participation and strengthened workforce supply across priority sectors.

Strategic Pillar	Objective	Measure of Success	2026-2027 Focus (What will expand / scale / extend)	Impact (Local / Regional / National Alignment)
Students and Place	Improve participation and outcomes for disadvantaged and SEND students	• Achievement gaps between student groups are reduced. • Progression and positive destinations for SEND and disadvantaged students increase. • Supported internship participation and successful progression increase. • Preparation for Adulthood outcomes improve for students with EHCPs and high needs learners.	Expand supported internships, pre-internship pathways, ESOL and Entry Level provision, and strengthen tailored pathways for students with SEND and those facing barriers. Use the Inclusive Mainstream Fund to support transition to the reformed SEND system through enhanced inclusive teaching, assistive technology, targeted intervention, improved classroom support and strengthened progression routes into employment and further learning. Further develop employer partnerships and Preparation for Adulthood pathways to improve progression into sustained employment, independent living and community participation.	Reduced inequality, improved social mobility and increased participation in learning and employment.
Place and Collaboration	Co-create and align curriculum to priority sectors through employer partnerships	• Adult enrolment increases to meet funding requirements (Aspiration +5%). • Employer involvement in curriculum and delivery increases to 100% for all Subject Sector Areas. • T Levels are delivered and embedded within the curriculum offer. • Skills Bootcamps and SWAPs are delivered at scale to meet demand.	Extend employer co-design across all curriculum areas and apprenticeships, ensuring consistent involvement in curriculum planning and delivery. Scale sector-based pathways aligned to LSIP priorities and build on partnerships including the Freeport Skills Partnership and Defence Technical Excellence College network.	Improved responsiveness to labour market demand and increased workforce capacity in LSIP priority sectors.
Place	Embed digital, technical and AI skills across the curriculum	• Digital skills are promoted across all programmes. • AI-informed teaching and learning practices are introduced and contextualised.	Embed digital and AI skills across all programmes, supported by immersive learning environments and high-specification digital and engineering facilities. Expand applied, workplace-focused delivery and flexible provision to support employer demand and rapid upskilling.	Students develop future-focused skills aligned to evolving labour market needs and workforce modernisation.

Strategic Pillar	Objective	Measure of Success	2026-2027 Focus (What will expand / scale / extend)	Impact (Local / Regional / National Alignment)
Sustainability and Place	Develop green skills and low carbon provision	• Participation in clean energy technical excellence college and develop green skills provision in key sector areas.	Expand green skills provision across priority sectors, including construction, engineering and manufacturing. Develop low-carbon and retrofit training aligned to net zero priorities and employer demand.	Supports delivery of green skills at scale and contributes to regional decarbonisation and net zero ambitions.
Collaboration	Strengthen employer engagement through a clear and consistent framework	• Employer engagement increases to 100% across all programme areas. • Employer satisfaction and repeat engagement improve. • A consistent and effective employer journey is established.	Scale the Employer Engagement Framework, simplifying access for SMEs and strengthening coordination across partners. Expand co-designed provision, workforce development activity and employer participation in curriculum delivery.	Improved employer access, increased SME engagement and stronger system leadership across the local and regional skills system.
Sustainability	Deliver estates and facilities strategy	• The recent investment of £14m for a capital programme is delivered on time and within budget. • Estate utilisation and access improve.	Invest in specialist facilities aligned to priority sectors, including low-carbon and retrofit training environments (heat pumps, solar PV, modern insulation and MMC), high-specification digital and engineering labs, and the NEXUS Engineering centre (opening September 2026). Expand flexible, multi-use learning spaces, including the Centre for English and maths, to support delivery across programmes and increase capacity. Continue to position the estate as a live demonstrator of sustainable practice, embedding low-carbon technologies and energy efficiency across learning environments. Develop employer-facing training spaces to support co-designed provision, workforce development and initiatives such as Wirral Works.	Increases capacity for high-quality, industry-relevant provision and supports delivery of priority skills at scale. Strengthens progression into higher-level roles and contributes to regional decarbonisation and economic growth.
People	Implement People Strategy and industry-focused CPD	• Staff participation in CPD increases to 100% across all mandatory training. • Industry and commercial updating planned across the year and made available to all delivery staff.	Expand industry-focused CPD, strengthening staff industry currency and ensuring teaching reflects current industry practice. Increase employer engagement, industry placements and professional updating aligned to priority sectors	Teaching remains aligned to current industry practice, supporting high-quality provision and improved student outcomes.



Monitoring, Review and Accountability

Wirral Met College is committed to transparent, evidence-led governance, ensuring that the priorities and actions set out in this Accountability Statement deliver measurable impact for students, employers and the local economy.

Delivery of this Accountability Statement is overseen by the Executive Leadership Team and scrutinised by the Governing Body, with a clear focus on outcomes, progress and impact, rather than activity alone. The College uses internal performance data and national benchmarks, including the FE Provider Dashboard, to inform target setting, monitor progress and drive continuous improvement. Recent analysis of achievement, progression and destination data has directly informed curriculum design, including the redesign of Level 1 provision, expansion of green skills pathways, and targeted development of adult employability programmes.

Performance Monitoring Framework:
the table below outlines the key mechanisms used to monitor delivery and ensure the College remains on track to meet its priorities:

Review Mechanism	Purpose	Frequency	Lead Responsibility
Half Termly Progress Board	Track progress against key priorities, at risk students, progress achievement, progression and destinations	Half Termly	Vice Principal Quality, Adults and Commercial
Termly Provision Type Boards	Evaluate curriculum quality, attendance, retention, progression and alignment to employer need by provision type	Termly	Executive Leadership Team
Governing Body Reporting	Provide assurance, challenge performance and monitor strategic risk	Quarterly	Executive Leadership Team
Data Dashboards	Monitor real-time performance using national and internal data (including FE Provider Dashboard)	Ongoing	Vice Principal Quality, Adults and Commercial
Strategic Planning Cycle	Review impact and inform future priorities, investment and curriculum planning	Annually	Principal and CEO
External Stakeholder Engagement	Ensure alignment with LSIP, regional priorities and labour market need	Ongoing	Vice Principal Quality, Adults and Commercial Director

Driving Improvement and Accountability

Where performance falls below expectations, timely and targeted interventions are implemented to accelerate improvement, with a clear focus on improving student outcomes and strengthening delivery. The College continues to work closely with key partners, including the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, the Employer Representative Body, the Department for Work and Pensions, including Jobcentre Plus, the Association of Liverpool City Region Colleges and Wirral Borough Council, ensuring that provision remains aligned to local need, regional priorities and employer demand. Progress against this Accountability Statement is reviewed throughout the year, with formal mid-year and end-of-year assessments informing ongoing delivery, future planning and the next iteration of the College's strategic priorities. This approach provides a clear line of sight between identified local need, strategic priorities, delivery and measurable impact.

Corporation Statement

Wirral Met College recognises that the Local Needs Duty and the Accountability Statement are central to the wider skills system reforms introduced through the Skills for Jobs White Paper and subsequent national policy developments. These reforms strengthen alignment between technical education, employer need, local labour markets and economic growth, while improving outcomes for students.

The College remains fully committed to fulfilling its statutory duty under Section 52B of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, as amended by the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022, to keep under review how well its education and training provision meets local needs. This duty is embedded within the Accountability Statement and informs the College's approach to curriculum planning, employer engagement and delivery.

On behalf of the Governing Body, we confirm that this Accountability Statement has been subject to appropriate scrutiny and challenge and has been approved as an accurate reflection of how the College is meeting its Local Needs Duty under Section 52B. Approval was granted at the Board meeting held on [insert date].

The Governing Body is assured that this Accountability Statement reflects an accurate and evidence-based assessment of local skills needs and sets out clear actions to address these.

The Governing Body is further assured that the priorities, objectives and measures set out in this document provide a clear and robust framework for aligning provision to local, regional and national skills needs, and for monitoring progress and impact over time.

This Accountability Statement will be published on the College's website within three months of the start of the 2026–2027 academic year, in line with Department for Education requirements.

We are particularly focused on supporting those facing barriers to participation, ensuring more residents can access opportunities and progress into sustainable employment.



Gill Banks,
Principal & CEO



Joanne Henney,
Chair of Governors

We work in partnership with over 500

public & private sector employers

the following pages shows just a small collection of the many partnerships we have.


Wirral
Waters


CAMMELL LAIRD


WIRRAL GAS
est. 1989


NHS
Wirral University
Teaching Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust


West
Wallasey


Volt Systems
ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING


WELLA
COMPANY


Viz Box


TYRES4U
WIRRAL


Trustland
better building


T.SULLIVAN
ENGINEERING


THE UNIT


TAM O'SHANTER
COTTAGE
URBAN FARM


STAR
INTERNATIONAL


CAR CAB CARE
TRUSTED EV SPECIALISTS


S.C. ELECTRICAL
CONTRACTORS


SMK
AUTOMOTIVE
@JCTI


PLEAVIN POWER
24/7 GENERATOR SPECIALISTS


ProperGeeks


Perfect
GETAWAYS
YOUR HOLIDAY STARTS HERE


PharmaPac


P P S
Plant Property Solutions


PARITYMEDICAL


National
Museums
Liverpool


NEWSTYLE BUILDERS


NAUTILUS
INTERNATIONAL


Little Robins Ltd
Day Nursery &
Out of School Club


MAS-UK
.com


KLAS
Accountants


K J Mock Ltd.
Restoration Contractors


HUNTERS


HYDRONEX


HOWDENS


THE
Hive


HCL
HAVEN CARE WIRRAL LIMITED


HEALEY
BUILDING & ROOFING
SERVICES


G BRADSHAW Ltd
ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS


FUNTRAIN
Day Nursery


A&H JOINERY
& CONSTRUCTION LTD


FOCAL
STUDIOS

Finsa

DOWNMAC
ELECTRICAL

EVERLAST
GYMS

DogsGo

DampSafe
DEVELOPMENTS Ltd

DampSafe
DEVELOPMENTS Ltd

D&D

Charlotte's
BRIGHTSIDE

CARA
BRICKWORK

AIC
Integrated Systems
Trusted Experts in Fire & Security


AZTEC


ADC
entrance
solutions


Design & Stitch
Schoolwear


syncro
CST Ltd


apmitchell


FIRETEK


SPECTRUM


cbes


marshall
electrical




WIRRELEC
ELECTRICAL


N&P
WINDOWS


MtecElectrical


Sefton Council


D&M Motors
Repairing vehicles since 1976


feedwater
the water treatment specialists


VICTORIA GROUP


TWA Warehousing &
Distribution


CHATTELS
imaginative furniture for individuals


Costelloes EV
GROUP


ECS
Evolve Contract Solutions


ELLIOTT
BUILD & GLAZE


Vanessa
Hair Design & Beauty


Wirral
Trusted
Trades


Evoke
Creative


CITYBUILD


OMS
Optimum Maintenance Solutions LTD




LIVERPOOL
EXPERIENCE
CAMPUS


belmar


NHS
Countess of
Chester Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust


JENCO


dtg


O&D


bw


HAMMAC
ELECTRICAL LTD


THE WOODCOTE
& 610 SQUADRON


CARA
BRICKWORK




SJS
Group

D & S
FABRICATION & WELDING

LONSDALE PLASTERING

EXPERT
Property Repairs Ltd

ARK Electrical

TJC
BRICKWORK LTD

PASSINGHAM LTD

Sources

Evidence has been drawn from a range of national, regional and local strategies, alongside labour market intelligence and policy frameworks. The key sources are as follows:

Document Title:
Liverpool City Region Local Skills Improvement Plan
Liverpool City Region Long Term Skills Plan
Get Liverpool City Region Working Plan
NOMIS Labour Market Profile – Wirral
Wirral Economic Strategy 2021–2026
Liverpool City Region Economic Opportunities Framework
Wirral Local Plan 2021–2037
Wirral Supported Employment Strategy 2024–2029
Skills England Report: Driving Growth and Widening Opportunities
UK Industrial Strategy Green Paper (Invest 2035)
UK Plan for Growth
Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth (FE White Paper)
Get Britain Working White Paper
Wirral Met College Strategic Plan
Ofsted Report – Wirral Met College (2026)

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