

# Post 16 Statement of Education

## Training and Skills Priorities 2025 to 2028

Warrington - June 2025

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**WARRINGTON**  
Borough Council

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# 1 The Vision

- 1.1 The vision is that all Warrington education establishments provide children, young people and adults access to high quality education which results in the achievement of the highest possible qualifications, that enables them to go into employment and achieve their career aspirations.

Warrington Borough Council is committed to working in partnership with local providers of education to achieve the following objectives:

- For every educational setting to remain good or outstanding.
- To narrow the education attainment gap between disadvantaged<sup>1</sup> students and their peers.
- To maximise the number achieving level 3 qualifications, including A Level outcomes at the highest level.
- A local education offer that meets the needs of Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) young people in Warrington, avoiding the need to access out of borough placements.
- To ensure all learners successfully transition from school into post 16 education with a reasonable education offer in place, including employment with training, in accordance with participation requirements.
- For all young people to maximise entry into Higher Education and higher apprenticeships, increasing Level 4 attainment of disadvantaged young people.
- For all young people and adults to prosper in Warrington in the future by providing understanding of the local employment opportunities and education pathways into those careers.

- 1.2 **Post 16 Statement of Education, Training and Skills Priorities 2025 to 2028.** In order to successfully achieve these objectives, where appropriate, schools, colleges and private training providers should take account of these priorities within their strategic planning processes and delivery. The priorities are as follows:

- **All post 16 provision is Ofsted good and outstanding** ensuring the continued commitment of schools and colleges to deliver quality curriculum programmes which enable young people to achieve.
- **Increase attainment of disadvantaged young people** at Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5, with particular focus on Children in Care, young people on Free School Meals, young people with SEND. Using alternative provision and interventions and strategies as outlined in the Education Strategy, and effective use of pupil premium and processes such as Personal Education Plans, and Education and Health Care plans.

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<sup>1</sup> Disadvantaged pupils are defined by the Department for Education as those eligible for Free School Meals or are Children in Care (as defined by their eligibility for pupil premium).

- **Provide quality and relevant careers education information, advice and guidance at the earliest opportunity.** Using risk of NEET<sup>2</sup> tools and providing early interventions and strategies as outlined in the Careers Strategy<sup>3</sup> and in accordance with the Gatsby Benchmarks<sup>4</sup>. Ensure clear education pathways are identified that prevent disengagement and enable achievement to the highest possible academic level, leading to employment and achievement of long-term career aspirations.
- **Meet the increase cohort needs by ensuring sufficient A Level and higher level vocational qualifications are on offer. Continue to provide quality and creative post 16 Entry Level and up vocational provision, with in year starts.** Providing ongoing transition support to overcome barriers that enable vulnerable young people to achieve and progress in education.
- **Improve A level results** by ensuring there is sufficient stretch and challenge for the most able young people, while also providing additional support for those who may be struggling with the higher academic level of study.
- **Increase the number of disadvantage young people<sup>5</sup> entering into Higher Education (HE)** by providing additional support as required to achieve high Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 qualifications but also by providing access to social mobility programmes that support access to HE.
- **Successfully implement the post 16 curriculum reform in accordance with government guidance and timelines, taking account of qualification changes and new performance measures.** Monitoring their impact to ensure a smooth post 16 transition into quality academic or technical pathways (new T Levels) – as a route into higher education or employment.
- **Increase the local education offer for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)** especially within mainstream provision, which is accessible and supportive enabling an increase participation in local provision in Warrington that provides clear pathways for progression. Enabling SEND young people in post 16 education to progress to the next level upon completion, whether that is independent living, an apprenticeship, higher education, and/or into employment
- **Increase partnership work between employers and education providers** informed by the Warrington Skills Partnership, to ensure curriculum and education pathways are based on local employment and future skills needs. Provide access to

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<sup>2</sup> NEET – Not in Education, Employment or Training

<sup>3</sup> Warrington Careers Strategy 2023 - 2027 <https://www.warrington.gov.uk/warrington-life>

<sup>4</sup> The Gatsby Benchmarks are included in the government statutory careers guidance <https://www.gatsbybenchmarks.org.uk/>

<sup>5</sup> Disadvantaged pupils are defined by the Department for Education as those eligible for Free School Meals or are Children in Care (as defined by their eligibility for pupil premium).

quality work experience placements<sup>6</sup> and utilising employers' expertise to inform delivery of quality programmes, in accordance with the Gatsby Benchmarks

- **Increase the apprenticeship opportunities and the number of disadvantaged young people doing an apprenticeship**, through promotion to employers of the benefits of offering better wages (aligned to national living wage rather than apprenticeship minimum wage). Also, support employers to convert employment opportunities into apprenticeships or employment with training, especially for those young people of participation age.
- **Increase breadth of employability programmes** by ensuring effective delivery of meaningful work experience, supported internships, and employability skills within foundation learning and adult learning, which provides actual progression into a job.
- **Provide adult learning in sectors that meet the economic skills requirements** by ensuring adult education budget and DWP funded programmes are aligned to employer's needs and local area commissioning strategies. Utilising opportunities within devolution to develop local skills provision, where appropriate.

## 2 Introduction

2.1 The local authorities (LAs) duties are focused on ensuring sufficient supply of school places for all young people, with additional support provided to vulnerable young people. LAs are also responsible for tackling underperformance in education providers and ensuring high standards. LAs continue to have an all-encompassing role as champion of parents, families and local communities.

2.2 Specifically for post 16 education, Warrington Borough Council (WBC) has a duty to work with education providers, employers, local voluntary and community organisations and neighbouring authorities to secure access to high quality post 16 education and training provision.<sup>7</sup> This includes a duty to increase participation of 16 and 17 year olds<sup>8</sup> and reduce those not in education employment or training (NEET) for those under 18 years, and to raise achievement and tackle education inequality for the most vulnerable. As champions of all young people in the area, it is essential that we are clear about the local education and training strategic priorities which subsequently informs education provider plans.

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<sup>6</sup> Gatsby Benchmark 6: Experience of workplaces <https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/employers/engage-with-education/guidance-for-employers-gatsby-benchmark-updates/#:~:text=Include%20opportunities%20for%20young%20people,young%20person%20about%20their%20work>

<sup>7</sup> Sections 15ZA and 18A of the Education Act 1996 (as inserted by the Apprenticeships, Skills and Children and Learning Act 2009) and Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

<sup>8</sup> Section 10 Education and Skills Act 2008

- 2.3 Research into the potential future skills needs for Warrington has identified a gap between the skills needs around what employers want, and the education routes that are on offer meeting the requirements of the future job market.<sup>9</sup> Section 5 in this report provides more detail on the local economic context, but in accordance with the Gatsby Benchmarks it is clear that there is a role for employers to be more involved with schools and colleges in the curriculum design and delivery of employability skills, and that local labour market intelligence needs to be taken account of within the Careers Education on offer.
- 2.4 It is important that Careers Education and the development of advice and guidance in schools and colleges positively encourages demand for education pathways that lead to the jobs available in Warrington at present and in the future. Also, it should account for the different routes that can be taken that meets the learning styles of young people, whether that is an academic route of A levels, a vocation route such as T-Levels, or a combined route, which could be full time within an education provider setting or within the workplace, such as an apprenticeship.
- 2.5 Greater pressures on funding means that we need to ensure that we have clear education priorities to meet the needs of Warrington residents, which influence education provider delivery strategies.
- 2.6 Based on all the elements stated within this report the above priorities for provision requirements and outcome aspirations over the next three years have been clearly identified. This will continue to be reviewed on an annual basis to assure the priorities remain relevant to the needs of Warrington residents.

## 3 National Context

- 3.1 Qualification Reform – The post-16 qualifications landscape is changing and by 2027 will look significantly different to the present one. The government state that the purpose of post-16 education is to support people to move into high-skilled jobs, either directly, or through progression into good quality higher education courses.
- 3.2 At present there is a wide range of vocational qualifications, such as Cambridge Technicals and BTECs, available to post-16 students in a variety of sizes and subjects. To enable their objectives for post-16 education the government is in the process of reforming current post-16 qualifications at Level 3 and below. This is happening over three phases:

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<sup>9</sup> Warrington Skills Commission 2023 <https://www.warrington.gov.uk/skills>



### **Phase 1**

The DfE removed funding from qualifications with sustained low or no publicly funded enrolments in England.

### **Phase 2**

The DfE removed funding for 16-19 qualifications which overlap with T Levels to allow the T Levels to flourish

### **Phase 3**

A new integrated approval process is introduced for qualifications that will receive public funding for first teaching in September 2025. This sets quality criteria for all academic and technical qualifications. Those qualifications that get approved will be those that provide skills for the future and lead to good outcomes.

- 3.3 The reforms mean that most current Level 3 post-16 vocational qualifications will lose their funding by 2025 unless they meet these strict criteria. Level 2 qualification reform continues until 2027. From September 2025, post-16 students will have to choose between one of two routes – academic or technical – as they plan their way into higher education or employment.
- 3.4 The academic route is primarily designed to support progression to further/higher education and would mean studying A Levels. The technical route is primarily designed to support progression to skilled employment and will mean studying T levels.
- 3.5 **Apprenticeships** continue to be a focus of central Government, whose vision is to ensure that qualification frameworks are set to employer-led standards, to meet skills needs.
- 3.6 Apprenticeships are also clearly part of the ‘Lifetime Skills Guarantee’. With a view to an increase in achievement of higher technical qualifications across Apprenticeships and T Levels. Apprenticeships and technical education will fit within a single framework which will enable clear docking points between qualifications and apprenticeships, for example T Level to higher apprenticeships at level 4 where appropriate.
- 3.7 **Skills for Jobs** – The Government published a White Paper in January 2021 setting out the reform of further education so that it supports people to get the skills the economy needs throughout their lives. The title of the white paper ‘skills for jobs’, rather than stating Further Education, is rather telling. There is a clear focus on embracing employers and meeting their needs in the local areas and communities. The core mission of the reform

as stated in the white paper ‘is to increase productivity, support growth industries, and give individuals opportunities to progress their careers.’<sup>10</sup> They plan to do this by:

- Putting employers at the heart of the system so that education and training leads to jobs that can improve productivity and fill skills gaps.
- Investing in higher-level technical qualifications that provide a valuable alternative to a university degree.
- Making sure people can access training and learning flexibly throughout their lives and are well-informed about what is on offer through great careers support.
- Reforming funding and accountability for providers to simplify how funds are allocated, give providers more autonomy, and ensure an effective accountability regime which delivers value for money.
- Supporting excellent teaching in further education.

3.8 This reform is based on the ministers announced ‘Lifetime Skills Guarantee’ in September 2020, where government are committed to supporting everyone to get the skills they need at every stage of their lives. This includes the implementation of a flexible ‘Lifelong Loan Entitlement’ for the equivalent of a four years of post 18 education from 2026.<sup>11</sup>

## 4 Local Education Context

4.1 In September 2024 Warrington has 17 high schools, including 1 community school, 3 voluntary schools, 1 free school, 7 academies (2 with sixth forms), 3 special schools (2 with sixth forms), 1 alternative provision provider, and a 14 to 19 University Technical College. (see Appendix 1 for map of schools). Warrington were successful in a bid for a new ASD SEND free school in 2019, which is scheduled to open in September 2026.

4.2 There is a general further education college - Warrington & Vale Royal college, a sixth form college - Priestley College, and a small college provider which offers study programmes - Morthyng Training. In addition, Warrington has over 200 private training providers delivering apprenticeships in the area and is home to the University of Chester's Warrington Campus in the centre of Warrington. There are potential plans in place to extend the Woolston Sixth Form and Post 19 SEND provision sited at The Peace Centre – scheduled to open in 2026.

4.3 Kassia Academy is Warrington’s main alternative provision. There are three centres: Willows, Oaks and Redwood. Each centre provides personalised offer to help young people return to mainstream education via specialist social/emotional support. They offer 10 alternative provision places for pupils with EHC plans on a single registration basis.

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<sup>10</sup> [Skills for jobs: lifelong learning for opportunity and growth - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/white-papers/skills-for-jobs)

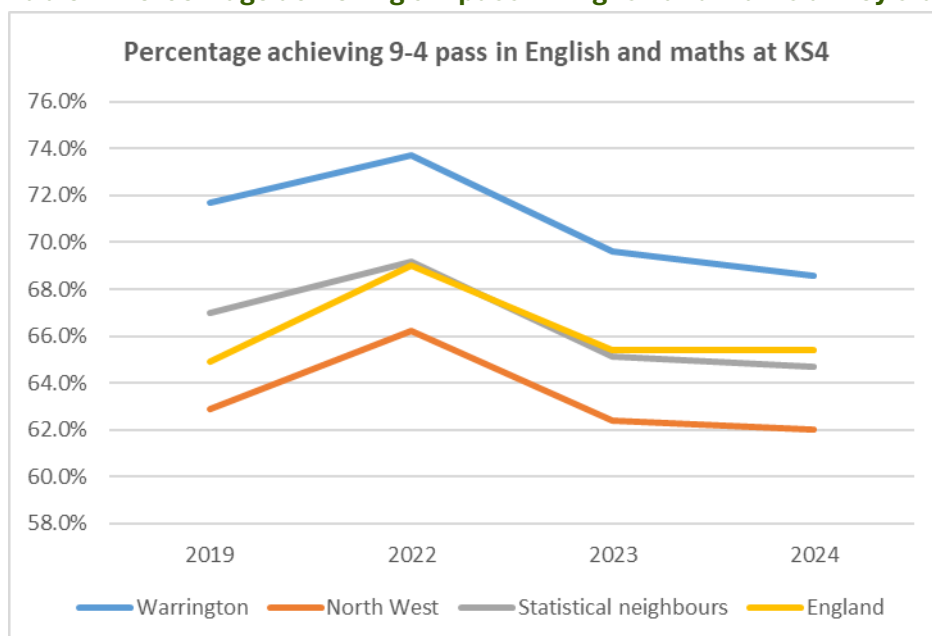
<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lifelong-learning-entitlement-lle-overview/lifelong-learning-entitlement-overview>



- 4.4 As a result of the loss of ESF funding and the tightening up on the ability of lead providers to subcontract provision, Warrington has experienced a reduction in the offer of charity and community-based education provision. This has resulted in a loss of offer on vocational engagement programmes and entry level qualifications for anyone over 16 years, and much reduced the offer of in year start of programmes.
- 4.5 We know that **cohort sizes** are increasing in secondary schools, with 2459 in year 11 cohort in 2020/21, increasing to 2713 leaving year 11 in 2024, a 11% increase (please note that year 11 is by Warrington school and will include pupils that live outside of Warrington). How these increasing figures are putting pressure on provision sufficiency at Post 16 level will be discussed in Section 6.
- 4.6 The Department for Education (DfE) scorecard summarises the number of pupils accessing quality education based on **Ofsted HMCI** (Her Majesty's Chief Inspector) statistics for each local authority in terms of this measure. At the time of the latest report in 2022, 100% of pupils in Warrington secondary schools and special schools attended a good or outstanding school. Approximately 99% of 16 to 18 year old Warrington residents studying academic or vocational routes were with providers that had Ofsted judgements of good or outstanding in 2022 (excluding Apprenticeship provision) see appendix 2. Approximately 100% of adult education budget providers delivering in Warrington are Ofsted judged as good in 2022, with the two prime providers being Priestley College and Warrington & Vale Royal College who had inspections in 2023 and 2024 respectively.
- 4.7 A learner in full time education will follow a study programme that can be made up of more than one **course/subject**, these are referred to as 'learning aims' and may include a mix of vocational and academic subjects which could also be at different levels eg two A Levels and one AS, or a BTEC and an AS Level, or BTEC and two GCSEs etc. For many years the Sector Skill Area with most learning aims undertaken by Warrington residents was 'Preparation for Life and Work' (tier 1 categorisation), which includes Functional Skills, the AS Extended Project Qualification and General Studies:
- **The largest sector of study for 16 to 19 year olds** in Warrington (not including apprenticeships) are Science and Mathematics; Sport, Leisure and Recreation; Art and Design, Media and Communication; Business, Administration and Law; Social Sciences; and Public Services.
  - **The largest sector of study for 19+ yrs** for Warrington residents (not including apprenticeships) are Care Services; Business, Administration and Law.
  - Broken down by **apprenticeship frameworks**, the largest sector of study by Warrington residents are Business, Administration and Law; Health and Science, Care Services; Engineering and Manufacturing; Digital; Construction and the Built Environment; Education and Early Years.

- 4.8 In 2023, Warrington's **Key Stage 4** average attainment 8 score per pupil was 48.0, which is better than regional at 44.6 average and national at 46.4 average. Also, better than statistical neighbours (SN) at 46.0. Refer Appendix 1.

**Table 1: Percentage achieving 9-4 pass in English and Maths at Key stage 3.**

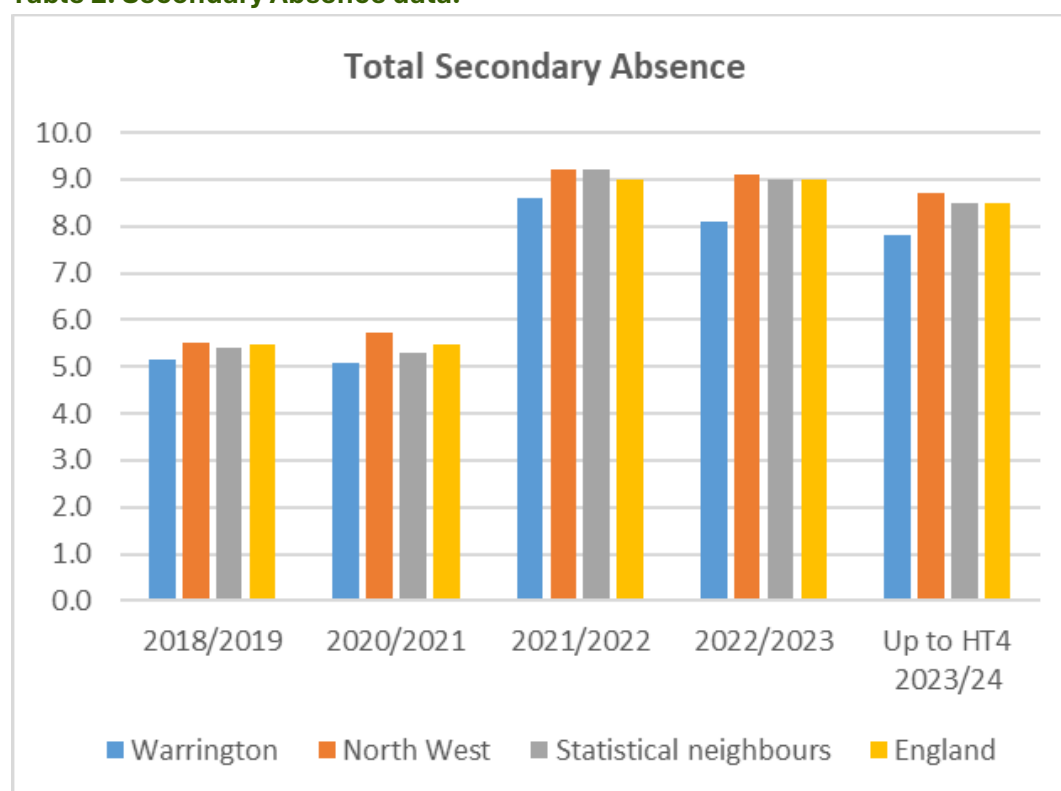


- 4.9 18.4% of Warrington's secondary pupils were eligible for Free School Meals compared to 26.0% regionally and 22.7% nationally. FSM percentages have increased by 46% between 2019 and 2023 in Warrington, higher than regional increase at 38.3% and national increase at 42.8%.<sup>12</sup> **The Key Stage 4 progress 8 attainment for pupils eligible for FSM** reported 35.8 average in 2023, compared to 33.3 regionally and 34.9 nationally (SN reporting 32.78). Noting that for those pupils not eligible for FSM are attaining 50.5 average points in Warrington. While the gap remains a concern, those on FSM are achieving better than national, regional and SN averages
- 4.10 **Disadvantaged pupils** are defined by the Department for Education as those eligible for Free School Meals anytime in the last six years or are Children in Care (as defined by their eligibility for pupil premium). The average 8 attainment for disadvantage pupils in 2023 reported 35.5 in Warrington compared to 33.5 regionally and 35.1 nationally (SN reporting 33.0). Whilst noting that none disadvantaged pupils attained 51.0 points resulting in a gap of 15.5, disadvantaged pupils are achieving better than national and SN averages.
- 4.11 In 2023 the **Key stage 4 for pupils with an Education Health Care Plan (EHC)** average attainment 8 score was better at 18.1 compared to 14.0 nationally. Warrington consistently reports a higher attainment at Key stage 4 than regional and national averages over the years. The gap between SEN attainment and those not SEN also reporting better at 15.0 compared to nationally at 17.8.

<sup>12</sup> [Local authority interactive tool \(LAIT\) - GOV.UK](#)

- 4.12 Progress 8 aims to capture the progress a pupil makes from the end of **Key Stage 2 to the end of Key Stage 4**, in Warrington the average progress 8 score per EHC pupil in 2023 was -0.88, which is substantially better than -1.12 nationally. Meaning that pupils progress on average better than their expected levels in Warrington.
- 4.13 Numerous studies have established a link between **absence and attainment** at KS4. Over the entire cohort, pupils with 95-100% attendance were 1.6 times more likely to achieve the expected outcome in reading, writing and maths than pupils with 90-95% attendance and 2.4 times more likely than pupils with 85-90% attendance.<sup>13</sup>

**Table 2: Secondary Absence data.**



- 4.14 Overall, in 2023, at **Key Stage 5, Level 2** and **Level 3** attainment at 19 years is better than the national average and regional averages. Level 2 attainment by age 19 is 87.2% which is 4.1% points above the regional average and 2.9% points above the national average. Level 3 attainment by age 19 is 62.1%, which is a slight drop compared to the previous year however remains 5.5% points above the regional average and 3.3% above the national average.

<sup>13</sup> [The link between attendance and attainment in an assessment year](#)

- 4.15 **Key Stage 5 Level 2 attainment of those young people eligible for free school meals** in 2023 has increased to 65.0% which is the best it has been for over five years and is slightly better than regional average of 64.9% however worse than national average of 66.9%. Warrington FSM attainment data has been up and down between better and worse than regional and national averages over the last five years. 85.7% of those not eligible for FSM achieve a Level 2, which is unfortunately the worst it has been for over five years; however, it still remains above regional and national averages (85% and 84.8% respectively). This has resulted in a slight increase in the achievement gap of 27% between those eligible for FSM and those not eligible for FSM, which remains wider and therefore worse, than both the national gap of 22.1% and the regional gap of 24.1%.
- 4.16 **Key stage 5 Level 2 attainment at 19 years for young people with an EHC** is 35.2% in 2022, consistently reported better than regional 27.5% and national 28.9% averages over the last eight years. **Level 2 attainment (including English and Maths) at 19 years for young people with an EHC** in 2022 is 16.7% compared with 16.2% regionally and 17.2% nationally. Performance moves up and down each year – never constant in being better or worse than national or regional results.
- 4.17 In Warrington, 34.1% of those eligible for **FSM achieved a Level 3 qualification by age 19 years**, worse than regional 36.3% and national 39%. 67.9% achievement of those not eligible for FSM in Warrington, compared with regional 62.4% and national 64.2%. The achievement gap between those on FSM and those not eligible for FSM qualified to Level 3 has worsened to 33.8% in 2022. Warrington's achievement gap is worse than the gap at regional and national level by 7.6% and 8.5% points respectively.
- 4.18 Key stage 5 **Level 3 attainment at 19 years for young people with an EHC** is 13.9% compared to 12.2% regionally and 14% nationally. 2022 was the first time in eight years that Warrington was slightly worse than national averages. Those SEN without an EHC attain better in Warrington at 46.3% compared to 33.8% regionally and 36.7% nationally.
- 4.19 The percentage **attaining a Level 2 qualification including English and maths at age 19 for those who had not achieved this level by age 16** is consistently year on year better at 37.9%, than 37.8% North West and 36.7% England averages, indicating that local post-16 providers are working well to address this gap in previous attainment.
- 4.20 The **A Level results** for students accessing Warrington provision reports 97.9% achieve A\*-E grades, compared to 97.1% nationally. However, Warrington is below regional and national averages for: the average score per student, average score per entry, the number of AAB or more passes at A levels or equivalent, and below regional and national average on candidates achieving 3 or more A-A\*. This is also reflected of results year on year in Warrington.

It should be noted that increasingly many students are taking vocational qualifications which may be impacting on the actual A level passes. Young people are also exercising freedom of choice with some high ability students choosing to attend post-16 provision out of borough, such as Carmel College, Sir John Deane's College and Winstanley

College, therefore the achievement of Warrington residents is potentially a lot higher than is reflected in these Warrington provider figures.

- 4.21 There were 1,440 **Apprenticeship** starts in Warrington<sup>14</sup> in 2022/23, a decrease of 120 starts on 2021/22 figures. There has been a general trend of decreasing uptake of Apprenticeships, especially since a number of equivalent Level 2 courses were removed. Post 25+ Apprenticeships have stayed reasonably constant over the last 4 years and amount to 48% of the starts. In comparison for 16-18 year old starts the picture has remained fairly static over the last 4 years and this group still only accounts for 24% of overall starts suggesting that employers prefer to recruit apprentices who are older and therefore more mature or work ready. 19-24 year olds making up the remaining 28%.
- 4.22 Due to the change in curriculum choice, the majority of Apprenticeships are at Advanced (equivalent to Level 3) at 48% with High and Intermediate Level Apprenticeships accounting for 33% and 34% respectively. As expected, the percentage of 16 to 18 year old starts (41%) undertaking Intermediate Apprenticeships is higher when compared to learners aged 19-24 (26%) or for the 25+ (33%) age groups. There are concerns however that a lot of young people doing an intermediate apprenticeship are actually capable of studying at a higher level, noting that the majority of young people accessing a Level 2 Intermediate Apprenticeships already have 5 GCESs including English and maths, therefore technically able to do an Advanced Apprenticeship. There is also little evidence to suggest that those doing an intermediate apprenticeship progress onto an advanced apprenticeship.
- 4.23 All young people are required to remain in some form of education or training until they are 18 years olds or achieve a Level 3 qualification (whichever comes first). Warrington performs very well, and the majority of young people do remain in education with **participation** data reporting that in March 2025 92.3% of 16 and 17 year olds are complying to the duty to participate. This is reporting better than national averages at 92% and regional averages at 90.6%. The qualification base of Warrington residents is better than the regional and national average, with a quarter of its working age population achieving NVQ 4 or above, and as stated in the local context, Warrington has an above national average achievement of both L2 and L3 at 19 years.
- 4.24 In Warrington, 48.2% of students that attended a Warrington school entered **Higher Education (HE)** in 2021/22, this is above the regional average (45.4%) and the national average (46.8%)<sup>13</sup>. However, there is a stark contrast between those who were eligible for free school meals entering HE and those who were not, with only 19.8% of Warrington FSM pupils progressing to HE compared to 26.6% regionally and 29.2% nationally. Warrington reports a progression gap of 31.6% between those eligible FSM students

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<sup>14</sup> Explore Education Statistics Service - [Step 6: Explore data - Create your own tables](#) .

progressing to HE compared to non-eligible FSM students, which is far higher than regional gap of 22.1% and the national gap of 20.2%.

- 4.25 Those young people **not in education, employment or training (NEET)** are provided with support across a network of stakeholder organisations throughout Warrington. The collation and reporting of NEET sits within the Warrington LiFE Service at Warrington Borough Council. The Warrington LiFE service is tasked with managing the authorities’ statutory requirements, and offers a targeted service, which supports those people who are NEET or vulnerable to the poorest outcomes. The responsibility for providing transition support and information, advice and guidance (IAG) to any young person in education became is the responsibility of schools and colleges. The Warrington LiFE team works closely with schools to ensure young people are supported through this transition period and with providing additional support for those young people that are at risk of becoming NEET post 16.
- 4.26 Table 1 below is nationally published data and includes 16 and 17 year old NEET data and Not Knowns over the three months of December, January and February. This data shows how NEET and Not Known comparisons are with regional and national averages and how NEET can change each month.

**Table 3: Total reported NEET by Warrington, regional and national averages in the months of December, January and February, comparing year on year changes.**

| Academic Age 16-17 (Year 12-13) NEET plus Not Known |        |        |        |      |        |        |        |      |
|-----------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|------|--------|--------|--------|------|
|                                                     | 2025   |        |        |      | 2024   |        |        |      |
|                                                     | Dec 24 | Jan 25 | Feb 25 | Ave  | Dec 23 | Jan 24 | Feb 24 | Ave  |
| <b>England</b>                                      | 6.2%   | 5.5%   | 5.1%   | 5.6% | 6%     | 5.3%   | 4.9%   | 5.4% |
| <b>North West</b>                                   | 6.1%   | 5.6%   | 5.4%   | 5.7% | 6%     | 5.5%   | 5.2%   | 5.6% |
| <b>Warrington</b>                                   | 3.9%   | 3.6%   | 3.5%   | 3.7% | 3.6%   | 2.8%   | 3%     | 3.1% |

- 4.27 Warrington is reporting better than national and regional NEET plus Not known. Warrington has increased in NEET plus Not Known compared to previous years, which is aligned with increases in national and regional averages. In Warrington we have managed to keep our NEET and Not Known relatively low, despite a series of challenges regarding a changing landscape in terms of what can be offered for young people.
- 4.28 Breadth of post 16 provision in Warrington is at an all-time low - something we know is reflective across the country and is a national issue. Partly due to losing traineeships but also due to a reduction of funding for 16-18 provision outside of traditional institutions and reduction in subcontracted provision.

The situation is also compounded by changes from BTEC to T Levels as part of the Level 3 and Level 2 reform, as they are academically more challenging. It is also worth noting that



the total cohort has increased by 231 young people and the NEET cohort has increased by 31%. The overall cohort is set to increase further over the coming years.

## 5 Local Economic Context

- 5.1 Warrington has a strong and resilient economy making it a **significant centre of employment** in the North West. The potential reason for this success has been the Borough's well-developed infrastructure and connectivity, by road and rail, and its' geographic placement between the cities of Manchester and Liverpool. Warrington residents are less likely to be unemployed than the regional and national average, are more likely to want a job and if out of work these residents are more likely to find work within six months than expected within the national average.<sup>15</sup>
- 5.2 Warrington has a **higher job density** than either the North-west or the national averages, with over 1 job available for each resident aged 16-64. As a result, Warrington acts as a net importer of labour, with more people travelling into the area to work than travel out of it on a daily basis, therefore this means that equipping local residents with the necessary skills to fill jobs vacancies in Warrington is vital given expected future population stagnation and expected employment growth.
- 5.3 Warrington continues to have a healthy economic and business vitality based on having **above average income and below average welfare costs** – a status desired by the government for the whole country. High employment rates, employment growth, and low unemployment points to well-functioning labour market, with high demand for workers amongst employers. Southern cities tend to perform better than cities elsewhere. However, Warrington remains a high-performance city in the North of England with 82.2% in employment compared to 76.5% in the North West and 78.9% in Great Britain.
- 5.4 The number of out of work **benefits claimants** remains low for Warrington at 3.4% compared to 4.8% in the North West and 4.2% nationally.<sup>16</sup> Also **unemployment** figures remains low at 3.5%, compared to 4.6% regionally and 4.4% nationally. While unemployment has risen during covid19 and remains slightly higher than pre-covid19, Warrington is reporting better than March 2019 and earlier. Warrington consistently has remained below regional and national averages for both the percentage of unemployed as well as benefits claimants for over twenty years (NOMIS data start of reporting).
- 5.5 The number of **economically inactive** remains low, with Warrington reporting 17.8% of the population are not employed or claiming benefits between January 2021 and December 2021, compared to 23.5% in the North West and 21.6% nationally<sup>12</sup>. Of note is that those not working due to long term sick are worse than regional and national averages (32.3% in Warrington, compared to 27.5% in NW and 24.6% in GB - a trend

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<sup>15</sup> [www.nomisweb.co.uk](http://www.nomisweb.co.uk); March 2022

<sup>16</sup> [www.nomisweb.co.uk](http://www.nomisweb.co.uk); March 2022

since April 2020). Also student inactivity at 27.2% is worse than the NW at 25.2% (although at present aligned with national data at 28.1%), however this is a reporting trend since April 2019.

- 5.6 Warrington's **largest sector of employment is professional, scientific and technical** which accounts for 16.4% of its economic base, followed by administrative and support service activities (15%), retail (14.3%), and health and social work activities (11.4%). Warrington has a greater proportion of professional, scientific and technical sector workers' compared with the Cheshire East (13.1%), Cheshire West and Chester (9.8%), as well as regional and national averages (8.9% and 8.7% respectively).<sup>17</sup>
- 5.7 Warrington has remained reasonably static or seen a **growth across most sectors**, including construction where nationally and regionally has seen a far greater reduction. The exceptions are accommodation and food services, and retail trades, which has experienced a steep decline in Warrington over recent years, covid19 potentially affecting Warrington in these sectors more than nationally or regionally.
- 5.8 The strategic context for **the economic future of Warrington** is set by:
- The Atlantic Gateway World Trade Corridor
  - Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington (ECW)
  - The Warrington Local Plan - Core Strategy
- 5.9 **Warrington Means Business**<sup>18</sup>, the 4<sup>th</sup> edition published in May 2024, captures the opportunities that we are afforded by both the recently adopted local plan and the potential impact that large infrastructure projects such as Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) will have on the town's future growth.
- 5.10 There have been significant funding changes for **Local Employment Partnerships (LEP)** for 2024/25 with the intention that LEP responsibilities will transfer into Local Authorities and core funding will end. Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington is the name of the newly formed organisation picking up the mantle of the former Cheshire and Warrington Local Economic Partnerships (LEP). The Cheshire and Warrington LEP had identified that there will be challenges to overcome to deliver an ambitious growth for Warrington. A priority is to ensure that Cheshire and Warrington objectives and interests are reflected in skills, education and employment policies at national and sub-national level to maximise local impact. 3 key objectives are reducing the attainment gap of disadvantaged young people, reduce the number of long term unemployed/economically inactive and finally increase the number of people with higher level technical skills. This aligns with the DFE National Skills priorities who would like providers to prioritise delivery, where practical, through a small number of high-quality programmes that have been co-designed with employers

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<sup>17</sup> Employment by sector in Warrington compared to regional and national totals in 2020, Office for National Statistics 2020 [www.nominsweb.co.uk](http://www.nominsweb.co.uk)

<sup>18</sup> Warrington Means Business, <http://warringtonandco.com/info-centre/downloads-and-publications/>

and have a strong track record of delivering good outcomes for learners. These programmes are T levels, Apprenticeships, Free Courses for Jobs, Skills Bootcamps, and Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs)

- 5.11 Warrington Borough Council has an established **Skills Commission**.<sup>19</sup> Reflection on the progress made since the last review in 2013 has shown that even though a number of the recommendations of that report came into fruition – for example, through the establishment of the Warrington Pledge, connecting businesses with over 20 schools and supporting the transition of our younger generation into the world of work, much has changed in the last decade and this refreshed look at our strategic needs comes at the right time. If the town wants to respond as well to future challenges as it has to those of the recent past, it needs an agile skills policy, built for the growing challenges of our time. With this in mind, their recommendations were divided into three key categories: collaboration, alignment and preparation.

## Collaboration

- Work with partners across the subregion to seek a new regional devolved skills settlement from national government
- Enable a 'place based' focus and expand coordination between stakeholders via a new strategy skills body for Warrington
- Consolidate a single online skills portal
- Improve learner engagement in skills information
- Conduct representative polling for future skills reviews via a polling agency and collect comprehensive destination data for learners leaving Warrington
- Help employers to take advantage of and collaborate on the apprenticeship levy

## Alignment

- Maintain a vision of skills training aligned with employer needs
- Target key growth areas for skills provision, specifically information technology, logistics and e-commerce, green industries, retrofit work and care work.
- Replenish skills that are ageing out of the labour market
- Offer soft skills training to all learners and support learners in demonstrating them to employers
- Celebrate fair employment practices via a fair employment charter
- Promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in Warrington
- Begin breaking down barriers to training before KS2
- Conduct more regular skills reviews and analysis

## Preparation

### Net zero

- Adopt a forecast-led skills strategy
- Create a retrofit-ready workforce

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<sup>19</sup> WBC Skills Commission (2023) [www.warrington.gov.uk](http://www.warrington.gov.uk)

- Improve access to skills training through public transport
- Offer green training provision across education

## Care economy

- Support 'Warrington Together'
- Address the cause of recruitment and retention difficulties such as low pay and poor working conditions in the sector
- Offer regular training opportunities and promote greater awareness of these

## Digital futures

- Offer core digital skills training for all school age leavers
- Make digital skills readily accessible to adult learners and the employed
- Establish digital training initiatives for the economically inactive and unemployed
- Build automation resilience into Warrington's skills provision

- 5.12 **Warrington's Health and Wellbeing Strategy**<sup>20</sup> clearly identifies a commitment to achieve a strong economy which maximises opportunities for everyone with more residents with the skills to benefit from local economic prosperity, and improved employment rates for all communities but especially for the most vulnerable.

Warrington will be a place where:

- Children are given the best start in life and can fulfil their potential.
- Adults can work and live fulfilling lives, in a vibrant and healthy borough.
- Older people enjoy a healthy, independent, and fulfilling old age, feeling safe and connected within their communities.

- 5.13 Public Health have produced a joint intelligence approach to investigate and understand **the inequalities in education attainment in Warrington**<sup>21</sup>. The report highlights education disparities for disadvantaged families, stating intergenerational factors perpetuating inequality, as well as the lack of family financial or practical means to enable involvement in those extracurricular interests that can build confidence and skills, in addition to not being able to provide the resources or support that promote learning in the home. Absenteeism is a key cause of lost learning, poor progress and gaps in attainment with national and local figures showing that absentee rates among disadvantaged pupils are twice that of their non-disadvantaged peer. Recommendations include:

- To work with our schools to identify and target families to address limited access to materials, support and experiences.
- A need to identify how better to lessen the impact of transition and support the integration of disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils.
- A need for a collaborative approach and pooling of resources (such as pupil premium) to provide a consistent level of support across Warrington

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<sup>20</sup> Warrington Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2024 - 2028 <https://www.warrington.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing-strategy-2024-28-summary>

<sup>21</sup> A joint intelligence approach to investigate and understand the inequalities in educational attainment in Warrington. Produced by Warrington Borough Council Public Health Knowledge and Intelligence and Business Intelligence Teams. June 2024

- Sharing good practice across schools, especially with regards to support of our most vulnerable pupils.
- The need to increase flexibility of programmes on offer, including alternative provision, which engages children and young people into learning and supports them to achieve.
- A need to understand the pervasive impact of poverty and the cost of living crisis. Identifying the challenges it presents for families to release children from its clutches.

5.14 The **SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment** (JSNA) was reviewed and published in 2025 which identifies the following priorities with regards to the needs of SEND children and young people in Warrington for services delivered by WBC and NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board (ICB):

- Embedding of the graduated approach in all education settings.
- Continue to review the data infrastructure and forecasting model for sufficiency needs.
- Develop an Alternative Provision strategy.
- Understanding the health and education needs of complex children.
- Consider the recommendations of the C&M CYP learning disability Pathway review group.
- Building on the 'Commitment to Inclusion' school kite mark.
- Managing transition periods due to it being an area of high risk for children and young people, particularly preparing for adulthood. Ensuring a clear post 16 education offer, including supported internships and apprenticeships. Also ensuring a shared responsibility approach.
- Integrated pathways and developing shared digital records across stakeholders, supporting the 'Tell It Once' approach.
- Conduct cost benefit of the Portsmouth Model<sup>22</sup>, which is focused on early interventions and support in mainstream education for neurodiversity needs led provision.
- Early identification of SEND and deliver holistic, family centred care. Emphasis of the role of health visitors and early years practitioners.

## 6 Current 16 to 18 Capacity Projections

6.1 Warrington has grown steadily over the last decade from a **population** size of around 202,200 in 2011 to 211,580 in 2023. This rise in population has led to a significant demand in primary and secondary places and these larger cohorts are now reaching the end of their school education and are looking at their next steps.

Warrington's cohort of 16-17 year olds have stayed reasonably steady from 2018 until 2023. The first substantial rise was seen at the end of academic year 23/24 with 146 extra KS4 completions. A further rise of 154 KS4 completions on top of the 23/24 figure sets the

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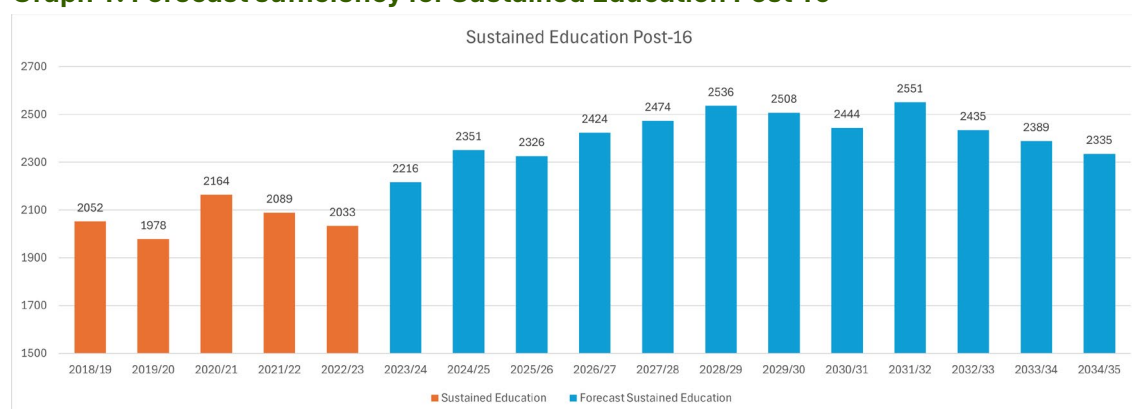
<sup>22</sup> Change NHS <https://change.nhs.uk/en-GB/ideas/portsmouth-model-neurodiversity-needs-led-approach>

trend until 2031 with year on year increases and hence pressure on Post 16 sufficiency. The issue of demand outstripping supply for post 16 places has been anticipated for a number of years and is anticipated to peak in 2028 and again in 2031 as pupils apply for sustained education post-16 places.

**Table 4: Forecast KS4 completions from mainstream education in Warrington**

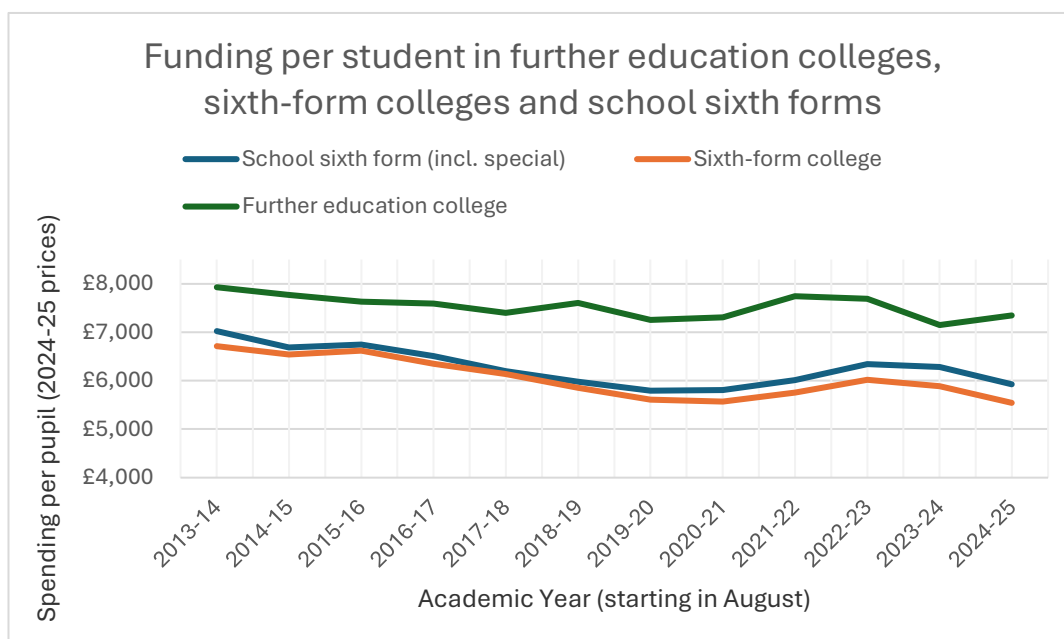
|                            | Actual |       |       |       |       | Forecast |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |  |
|----------------------------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--|
|                            | 18/19  | 19/20 | 20/21 | 21/22 | 22/23 | 23/24    | 24/25 | 25/26 | 26/27 | 27/28 | 28/29 | 29/30 | 30/31 | 31/32 | 32/33 | 33/34 | 34/35 |  |
| KS4 Completions            | 2326   | 2257  | 2390  | 2412  | 2371  |          |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |  |
| Forecast completions (Y11) | 2332   | 2267  | 2389  | 2412  | 2379  | 2525     | 2679  | 2651  | 2762  | 2819  | 2889  | 2858  | 2785  | 2907  | 2774  | 2722  | 2661  |  |

**Graph 1: Forecast sufficiency for Sustained Education Post 16**



- 6.2 Some sixth forms within mainstream schools have suffered a low uptake, causing financial viability pressures. In 2021 King's Leadership Academy, a new free school, decided to make their sixth form provision dormant, and after a period of low demand Birchwood High school closed their sixth form in summer 2024. As these sixth forms closed before the recent growth in post-16 numbers, the impact of growth in cohort is shared by less Post 16 providers, which will continue to put pressure on provision.
- 6.3 From **16-19 funding** allocations, there is now a clear trend that pupils are heading to colleges rather than sixth forms, with Priestley College increasing funded head count numbers from 2020/21 to 2024/25.
- 6.4 Out of all areas of education spending, colleges and school sixth forms have struggled with funding: when overall spending increases, further education tends to receive smaller boosts and have failed to reverse the real term cuts experienced since 2010.

**Table 5: Funding per student in further education colleges, sixth form colleges and school sixth forms**



HM Treasury, GDP deflators, October 2024 [Further education and sixth forms | Institute for Fiscal Studies](#)

- 6.5 In the 2024-25 academic year, projected funding per student in FE colleges is approximately £7350, compared to £5,900 in school sixth forms and £5,500 in sixth-form colleges. This is reflected in the allocated funding table where it can be seen that Warrington Vale Royal have overtaken Priestley in real term funds with less pupils. This is because FE colleges are more likely to pursue vocational qualifications with the students often coming from more disadvantaged backgrounds, both of which attract increased funding levels.
- 6.6 With the rising 16-18 population, the need for sufficient funding levels for 2026-27 and 2027-28 will play heavy on the minds of further education providers, who will be trying to accommodate the student growth. In March 2025, the DFE announced they will ‘only cover two thirds of what schools and sixth-form colleges expected’ as numbers have leapt above the levels ministers had budgeted for.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> [March 2025 update for 16 to 19 funding: in-year growth for 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK](#)



- 6.7 Historically KS4 completions in Warrington have shown averaged **destination** percentages below.

**Table 6: 16 to 18 years destination data – students preference of providers**

| Establishment/Course Type                        | 16-18 Destination of Students in 22/23 | Percentage of Students in 22/23 | Forecast ongoing percentage of Students |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| School Sixth Form                                | 297                                    | 13%                             | 11%                                     |
| Sixth Form College                               | 1093                                   | 46%                             | 48%                                     |
| Further Education                                | 638                                    | 27%                             | 27%                                     |
| Sustained Other Education                        | 5                                      | 0%                              | 0%                                      |
| Apprenticeships                                  | 71                                     | 3%                              | 3%                                      |
| Employment                                       | 120                                    | 5%                              | 5%                                      |
| Not recorded as sustained destination or unknown | 147                                    | 6%                              | 6%                                      |
| <b>Total</b>                                     | <b>2371</b>                            | <b>100%</b>                     | <b>100%</b>                             |

- 6.8 As Warrington forecasts the surge in pupil numbers to hit the Sixth Form Colleges the most, the fact that this draws the lowest funding is of major concern.

**Table 7: Warrington funded 16 to 18 yr old residents and the education provision they accessed in 2023/24**

| College/school                                         | Local authority | 16-18 students enrolled in 23/24 | Percentage | Ofsted grade               |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Priestley sixth form college</b>                    | Warrington      | 1640                             | 34%        | Good (November 2023)       |
| <b>Warrington &amp; Vale Royal</b>                     | Warrington      | 1060                             | 22%        | Good (October 2019)        |
| <b>Riverside college (includes Cronton sixth form)</b> | Halton          | 420                              | 9%         | Outstanding (April 2024)   |
| <b>Great Sankey high school (academy)</b>              | Warrington      | 220                              | 5%         | Good (September 2017)      |
| <b>Lymm high school (academy)</b>                      | Warrington      | 360                              | 6%         | Good (March 2024)          |
| <b>Sir John Deane's college</b>                        | CWAC            | 250                              | 5%         | Outstanding (October 2022) |
| <b>Carmel college</b>                                  | St Helens       | 170                              | 4%         | Outstanding (April 2019)   |
| <b>University Technical College Warrington</b>         | Warrington      | 80                               | 1%         | Good (May 2019)            |
| <b>Winstanley college</b>                              | Wigan           | 150                              | 3%         | Good (February 2020)       |
| <b>Morthyng vocational college (Warrington site)</b>   | Warrington      | 70                               | 1%         | Good (September 2017)      |
| <b>Others</b>                                          | Various         | 520                              | 10%        |                            |

- 6.9 **Priestley College's** pupil numbers for September 2024 for 16-19 study programmes were 2126. Over the last two years pupils number have been 23/24 at 2275 and 22/23 at 2248. Even though Priestley have a PAN of 2250, operating at this capacity has caused challenges within the college with catering, study space, buses etc and the college is hoping to stabilise at between 2100 and 2200 for optimum student experience. Currently for 2025 intake, Priestley have 2600 applications pending.
- 6.10 The PAN is typically split into Level 2 and Level 3 intake with the Level 3 being predominantly A Levels.
- 6.11 Level 2 150 pupils – these are mainly Maths and English retakes which take place over one year. Level 3 1100 Year 12 pupils and Level 3 1000 Year 13 pupils.
- 6.12 The difference in the Year 12 and 13 numbers is a typical 'drop off' of pupils with some pupils leaving the course or progressing to AS level only.

- 6.13 **Warrington and Vale Royal (WVR) College** is operating across two main campuses in Warrington and Winsford. Warrington Vale Royal (WVR) offer a wide range of vocational and technical courses for both school leavers and adults, including T Levels, apprenticeships, higher level, and professional courses. WVR projected pupil numbers for September 2025 for 16-19 study programmes are 1793 with a post 6 week target of 1723.
- 6.14 Whilst 16-18 numbers have remained buoyant and indeed growing, some adult education and HE courses have experienced delays in starting due to lack of numbers with 106 HE students enrolled for September 2024 start. Apprenticeship enrolment remains strong.
- 6.15 **Lymm High** currently has a sixth form with a PAN of 250 Year 12 intake. Currently on roll 395 with 216 in Year 12. Level 3 delivery is predominantly A Levels with BTECs on offer in health and social care, sport, fashion, and business studies.
- 6.16 **Barrow Hall College** at Great Sankey High school currently has a sixth form with a PAN of 200 Year 12 intake. Currently on roll 220 with 107 in Year 12. Level 3 delivery is predominantly A Levels with vocational qualifications on offer for creative media, IT, food science and nutrition, applied science, business, sport, criminology, health and social care.
- 6.17 **UTC** operates over Year 10 to Year 13 with a PAN of 130 Year 12 intake. On roll in years 12 and 13 combined are 106 pupils. UTC provides Science, Technology, Engineering or Maths (STEM) pathways, studying T-Levels, including: design and development for engineering and manufacturing; engineering, manufacturing, processing and control with fitting and assembly technologies; design, surveying and planning for construction; digital support services and digital infrastructure; laboratory science; healthcare science; engineering T Level foundation year, engineering pre apprenticeship programme.
- 6.18 **Morthyng Training** provides 100 places for ages 16 to 18 years, with employability pathways which include English and Maths GCSE or Functional Skills. Their vocational pathways include beauty, electrical qualifications, childcare, and health & social care. They have a roll on/roll off provision throughout the year.
- 6.19 **Catch 22** provides 30 places for ages 16 to 18 years, with employability pathways which include English and Maths GCSE or Functional Skills. Their vocational pathways are being developed. They have a roll on/roll off provision throughout the year.
- 6.20 WBC have replaced the councils ESF funded engagement offer with a successful bid to its replacement the UK Shared Prosperity fund. This allowed the council to retain a number of existing experienced and skilled staff and deliver a wraparound support service for young people who are economically inactive and face many complex barriers which prevent them from moving on in their lives. The project is called '**Reach Your Potential**' and in May 2024 had 107 young people on programme, who would have been NEET. With many progressing into full time education or employment with training.

6.21 Forecast sustained education demand numbers show the pattern of need across the providers up to the first spike in 2028. This approach has also been mirrored for Apprenticeships with results in the following two tables.

**Table 8: Forecasted student numbers in the next three years by provision type**

| Establishment/Course Type                        | Forecast ongoing percentage of total Student Numbers | Available PAN | Forecast Numbers 2026 | Forecast Numbers 2027 | Forecast Number 2028 |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| School Sixth Form                                | 11%                                                  | 450           | 304                   | 310                   | 318                  |
| Sixth Form College                               | 48%                                                  |               | 1326                  | 1353                  | 1387                 |
| Further Education                                | 27%                                                  | *2270         | 746                   | 761                   | 780                  |
| Apprenticeships                                  | 3%                                                   |               | 83                    | 84                    | 87                   |
| Employment                                       | 5%                                                   |               | 138                   | 140                   | 144                  |
| Not recorded as sustained destination or unknown | 6%                                                   |               | 165                   | 168                   | 173                  |
| <b>Total</b>                                     | <b>100%</b>                                          |               | <b>2762</b>           | <b>2819</b>           | <b>2889</b>          |

**Table 9: Forecasted student numbers in the next three years for apprenticeships**

| Sustained Apprenticeship Modelling              |                                    | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 | 2026/27  | 2027/28  |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|----------|
| KS4 Completions                                 |                                    | 2326    | 2257    | 2390    | 2412    | 2371    |         |         |         |          |          |
| Sustained Apprenticeships                       |                                    | 90      | 90      | 43      | 66      | 71      |         |         |         |          |          |
|                                                 |                                    | 4%      | 4%      | 2%      | 3%      | 3%      |         |         |         |          |          |
| Forecast completions (Y11)                      |                                    | 2332    | 2267    | 2389    | 2412    | 2379    | 2525    | 2679    | 2651    | 2761.955 | 2818.793 |
| Ongoing Takeup Percentage at KS4                |                                    |         |         |         |         |         | 3%      | 3%      | 3%      | 3%       | 3%       |
| Forecast Apprenticeships                        |                                    |         |         |         |         |         | 78      | 82      | 82      | 85       | 87       |
| PAN                                             | 86 (Available Warrington Feb 2025) |         |         |         |         |         | 8       | 4       | 4       | 1        | -1       |
|                                                 |                                    |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |          |          |
|                                                 |                                    | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 | 2026/27  | 2027/28  |
| KS4 Completions                                 |                                    | 2326    | 2257    | 2390    | 2412    | 2371    |         |         |         |          |          |
| Sustained Apprenticeships (Intermediate)        |                                    | 64      | 47      | 28      | 28      | 29      |         |         |         |          |          |
|                                                 |                                    | 3%      | 2%      | 1%      | 1%      | 1%      |         |         |         |          |          |
| Forecast completions (Y11)                      |                                    | 2332    | 2267    | 2389    | 2412    | 2379    | 2525    | 2679    | 2651    | 2761.955 | 2818.793 |
| Ongoing Takeup Percentage at KS4                |                                    |         |         |         |         |         | 2%      | 2%      | 2%      | 2%       | 2%       |
| Forecast Apprenticeships (Intermediate)         |                                    |         |         |         |         |         | 42      | 45      | 44      | 46       | 47       |
| PAN                                             | 22 (Available Warrington Feb 2025) |         |         |         |         |         | -20     | -23     | -22     | -24      | -25      |
|                                                 |                                    |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |          |          |
|                                                 |                                    | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 | 2026/27  | 2027/28  |
| KS4 Completions                                 |                                    | 2326    | 2257    | 2390    | 2412    | 2371    |         |         |         |          |          |
| Sustained Apprenticeships (Advanced and Higher) |                                    | 26      | 43      | 15      | 38      | 42      |         |         |         |          |          |
|                                                 |                                    | 1%      | 2%      | 1%      | 2%      | 2%      |         |         |         |          |          |
| Forecast completions (Y11)                      |                                    | 2332    | 2267    | 2389    | 2412    | 2379    | 2525    | 2679    | 2651    | 2761.955 | 2818.793 |
| Ongoing Takeup Percentage at KS4                |                                    |         |         |         |         |         | 1%      | 1%      | 1%      | 1%       | 1%       |
| Forecast Apprenticeships (Advanced and Higher)  |                                    |         |         |         |         |         | 35      | 37      | 37      | 39       | 39       |
| PAN (Level 3)                                   | 64 (Available Warrington Feb 2025) |         |         |         |         |         | 29      | 27      | 27      | 25       | 25       |

- 6.22 **Travel to learn** patterns show that 30% of Warrington residents choose to study outside of Warrington, Riverside College, Sir John Deane's College, Carmel College and Winstanley College are the most popular providers outside of Warrington. Compared to 28% of students from outside of Warrington traveling into Warrington to study, with Cheshire West and Chester (CW&C – based on WVR being based on Warrington), Halton, St Helens, Wigan and Salford attracting the most Warrington residents who travel out of area. Those students choosing to travel into Warrington to study are mainly from Halton, CW&C, St Helens, Wigan, Salford and Trafford LA areas, with the majority studying at Priestley Sixth Form College (456), Warrington & Vale Royal (565 – they do have a site in Winsford), Lymm High School (58) and UTC (22).<sup>24</sup>
- 6.23 **Devolution** could potentially have a major impact for Warrington with regards skills training and travel for Post 16 pupils. Both Manchester and Liverpool have already implemented a free travel pass for 16-18 year old residents who are in full time education in school or attending a FE college. The passes typically take the resident to the border only which may potentially reduce the number of students travelling to Warrington to study. Other devolution agreements have included post 19 skills provision.
- 6.24 In 2023/24, 67% of **high-cost post 16 funded SEND** learners were educated in Warrington, however this equated to only 46% of the overall post 16 high needs budget<sup>25</sup>. While the education costs are very similar wherever a young person studies within mainstream provision, the additional cost for residential and/or transport, and the additional out of school hours support costs means that pressures on budgets are extremely high. There is also concern about the benefits of SEND young people learning independent living skills and social development skills outside of the borough, away from their local community (including family and friends) and not geographically within the area they plan to live independently. The local demand within the two specialist sixth form providers<sup>26</sup> is high, with the majority of the local offer provided within the mainstream colleges (both within Warrington and in bordering councils).
- 6.25 Further investigation into the SEND needs by the **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)** identified a potential gap for local specialist education provision for Autistic young people, including high functioning Autism<sup>27</sup>. Warrington was successful in the DfE Wave 13 SEND free school bid for an ASD school in 2019 (year 7 to year 11 provision). After many delays the new school is scheduled to open in 2026 academic year. This will require a pathway to post 16 provisions. In addition, due to the increase in SEND school place needs as identified by the Warrington SEND Sufficiency Strategy 2025, the Woolston Sixth Form is scheduled to move into the Peace Centre in September 2026. This will provide additional pre 16 places at Woolston Learning Village, as well as provide additional Post 16 places in the Woolston Sixth Form. The Peace Centre is also planned to include a 19 years to 25 years SEND offer, to support pathways to independence and employment.

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<sup>24</sup> Travel to learn data obtained from 'viewourdata.education.gov.uk' 2020/21

<sup>25</sup> High Needs Funding Arrangements <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/high-needs-funding-arrangements-2023-to-2024>

<sup>26</sup> Green Lane Special School and Foxwood Special School

<sup>27</sup> JSNA – Autism, Warrington Borough Council [www.warrington.gov.uk](http://www.warrington.gov.uk)

## 7 Subjects Delivered

- 7.1 The two main providers over time have demonstrated that they have focused on specific learning programs, and it is essential to understand their current and planned future delivery to plan for necessary places for the expanding KS3 cohort.
- 7.2 It can be clearly seen from the tables in Appendix 4 that the A levels numbers lost from school sixth forms have been absorbed by Sixth Form Colleges more so than the FE college, Priestley College in particular. Due to the forecast decrease in popularity of the school sixth forms it would be prudent to look at potential expansion of a quality A level offer, especially for the core Sciences and English and Mathematics.

## 8 Conclusions

- 8.1 Post-16 provision across Warrington is varied and schools that provide post-16 options through sixth form provision offer an important part to play across the school landscape. This report has explored current post-16 provision and shown that at present the mix of providers have coped with demand but there are challenges remaining with the current uncertainty about **reform of Post 16 education qualifications** and the adapted offer across Warrington.
- 8.2 There is a small gap in need emerging from September 2026 onwards, with lack of available places in Sixth Form College, FE Colleges and Apprenticeships combined. This is caveated due to the complexities of data collection in this area and does not include the number of young people who remain in college age 18, in year arrivals, educated at home children and those not counted who attend Independent schools. The pressure on sufficiency increases as the KS4 cohort size increases up to 2028, with a **possible 120 place shortfall** of education places.
- 8.3 The shifting school sixth form landscape means it would be prudent to **bolster A level and T Level places**. A note of caution though, that even at this late stage the DFE are shelving T levels with just recently Catering, Beauty and Healthcare Science, which has run since 2021, enrolling its final cohort of students in September 2026. Even though T levels are not as purely academic as A levels, they are designed to be equivalent to 3 A levels and can give a sound stepping stone onto further study.
- 8.4 It would be prudent to encourage FE colleges to be **more flexible with course starts/end** like Morthyng. Even apprenticeships have pretty standard academic year admission so this can mean a full years wait to enter the college. There is an anticipated shortfall in Intermediate Apprenticeships which seems to have been overlooked since 2023 although there is a sufficient number of Advanced and Higher available according to the forecast. Smaller providers with in year starts/ends will be a key offer in the coming years, as education places become more sparse the most disadvantaged students will be the ones effected the most as providers will be able to fill places with the most academic able young people.
- 8.5 There is a clear need to further develop the **SEND/EHC mainstream offer** post 16, to encourage more young people towards independence and enable access to the variety of vocational pathways available from entry level and up through the pathways within mainstream settings. Ensuring mainstream provision is accessible and supportive of SEND/EHC young people continues to be a priority, including apprenticeships.
- 8.6 With considerable local, regional and national changes in the next few years, there is a key role for the stakeholder partnership, including employers, to ensure young people continue to be supported through school, transition, post 16 education and into employment.



# Appendix 1: Key Stage 4 Data

Average Attainment 8 score per pupil

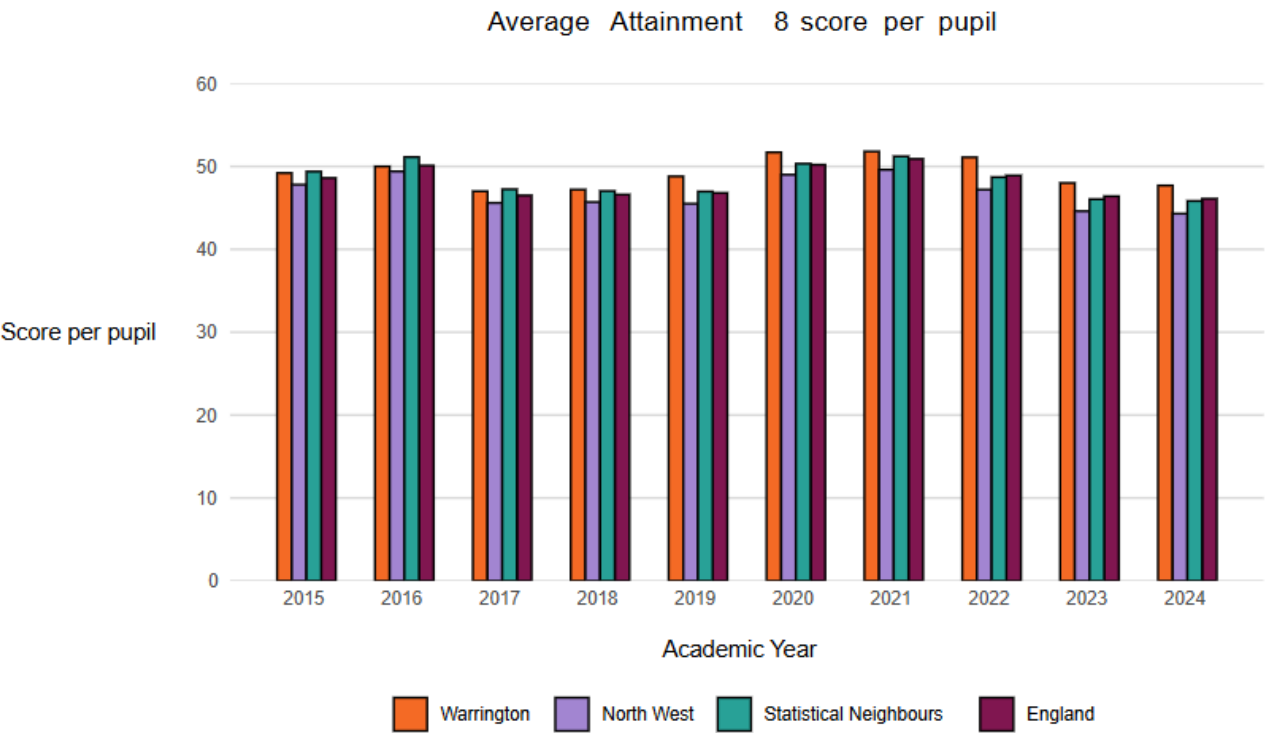
## Warrington - Local Authority View

Local Authority: Warrington Topic: (Key Stage 4) All Topics Indicator: Average Attainment 8 score per pupil

| Table     | Download data          |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |                           |
|-----------|------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---------------------------|
| LA Number | LA and Regions         | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | Change from previous year |
| 877       | Warrington             | 49.2 | 50.0 | 47.0 | 47.2 | 48.8 | 51.7 | 51.8 | 51.1 | 48.0 | 47.7 | -0.3                      |
| 981       | North West             | 47.8 | 49.4 | 45.6 | 45.7 | 45.5 | 49.0 | 49.6 | 47.2 | 44.6 | 44.3 | -0.3                      |
| -         | Statistical Neighbours | 49.4 | 51.1 | 47.2 | 47.0 | 47.0 | 50.3 | 51.2 | 48.7 | 46.0 | 45.8 | -0.2                      |
| 970       | England                | 48.6 | 50.1 | 46.5 | 46.6 | 46.8 | 50.2 | 50.9 | 48.9 | 46.4 | 46.1 | -0.3                      |

Summary

| LA Number | LA and Regions | Trend | Change from previous year | Latest National Rank | Quartile Banding | Quartile bands |            |              |              |
|-----------|----------------|-------|---------------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
|           |                |       |                           |                      |                  | A              | B          | C            | D            |
| 877       | Warrington     | ↓     | -0.3                      | 46                   | B                | 59.1 to 48.1   | 48 to 45.4 | 45.3 to 43.5 | 43.4 to 33.8 |



Average attainment 8 score per pupil eligible for FSM

Local Authority: Warrington Topic: (Key Stage 4) All Topics Indicator: Average Attainment 8 score per pupil eligible for FSM

Table

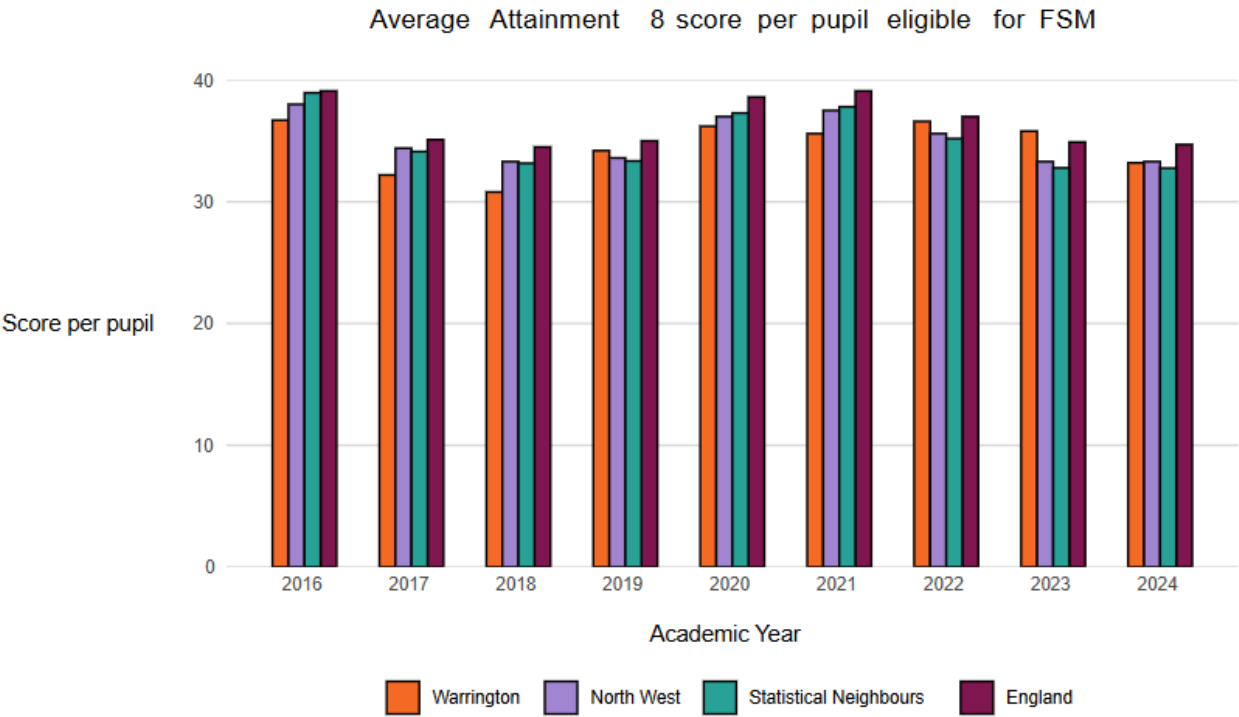
Download data

| LA Number | LA and Regions         | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | Change from previous year |
|-----------|------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---------------------------|
| 877       | Warrington             | 36.7 | 32.2 | 30.8 | 34.2 | 36.2 | 36.6 | 36.6 | 35.8 | 33.2 | -2.6                      |
| 981       | North West             | 38.0 | 34.4 | 33.3 | 33.6 | 37.0 | 37.5 | 35.6 | 33.3 | 33.3 | 0.0                       |
| -         | Statistical Neighbours | 39.0 | 34.1 | 33.2 | 33.4 | 37.3 | 37.8 | 35.2 | 32.8 | 32.8 | -0.0                      |
| 970       | England                | 39.1 | 35.1 | 34.5 | 35.0 | 38.6 | 39.1 | 37.0 | 34.9 | 34.7 | -0.2                      |

Summary

Quartile bands

| LA Number | LA and Regions | Trend        | Change from previous year | Latest National Rank | Quartile Banding | A          | B            | C          | D          |
|-----------|----------------|--------------|---------------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------|--------------|------------|------------|
| 877       | Warrington     | <div>↓</div> | -2.6                      | 77                   | C                | 53 to 37.3 | 37.2 to 33.3 | 33.2 to 32 | 31.9 to 27 |



# Average Attainment 8 score disadvantage pupils

Local Authority:
Warrington

Topic: (Key Stage 4)
All Topics

Indicator:
KS4 Attainment 8 - disadvantaged pupils

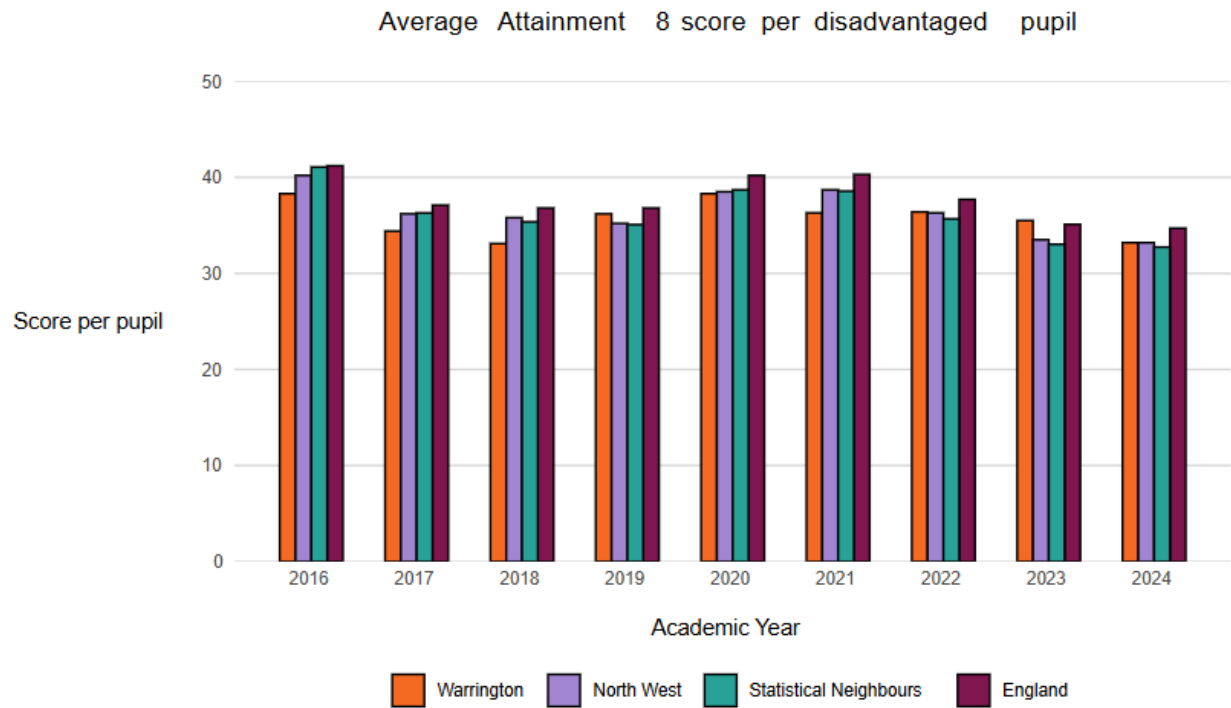
Table
Download data

| LA Number | LA and Regions         | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | Change from previous year |
|-----------|------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---------------------------|
| 877       | Warrington             | 38.3 | 34.4 | 33.1 | 36.2 | 38.3 | 36.3 | 36.4 | 35.5 | 33.2 | -2.3                      |
| 981       | North West             | 40.2 | 36.2 | 35.8 | 35.2 | 38.5 | 38.7 | 36.3 | 33.5 | 33.2 | -0.3                      |
| -         | Statistical Neighbours | 41.1 | 36.3 | 35.4 | 35.1 | 38.7 | 38.6 | 35.7 | 33.0 | 32.7 | -0.3                      |
| 970       | England                | 41.2 | 37.1 | 36.8 | 36.8 | 40.2 | 40.3 | 37.7 | 35.1 | 34.7 | -0.4                      |

Summary

Quartile bands

| LA Number | LA and Regions | Trend | Change from previous year | Latest National Rank | Quartile Banding | A          | B            | C            | D            |
|-----------|----------------|-------|---------------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 877       | Warrington     | ↓     | -2.3                      | 77                   | C                | 53 to 37.2 | 37.1 to 33.3 | 33.2 to 31.9 | 31.8 to 27.2 |



## Appendix 2: September Guarantee Offers (Percentage)

| LA Number | LA and Regions         | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | Change from previous year |
|-----------|------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---------------------------|
| 877       | Warrington             | 98.4 | 98.6 | 97.3 | 97.0 | 96.3 | 97.6 | 97.4 | 98.1 | 98.1 | 98.8 | 0.7                       |
| 981       | North West             | 94.7 | 94.5 | 95.3 | 95.9 | 96.3 | 96.0 | 95.7 | 95.0 | 94.9 | 95.6 | 0.7                       |
| -         | Statistical Neighbours | 96.1 | 96.2 | 97.2 | 96.9 | 97.2 | 97.1 | 96.9 | 92.2 | 95.6 | 96.0 | 0.41                      |
| 970       | England                | 94.6 | 94.5 | 94.7 | 94.5 | 95.0 | 94.3 | 95.5 | 94.6 | 94.6 | 94.6 | 0                         |

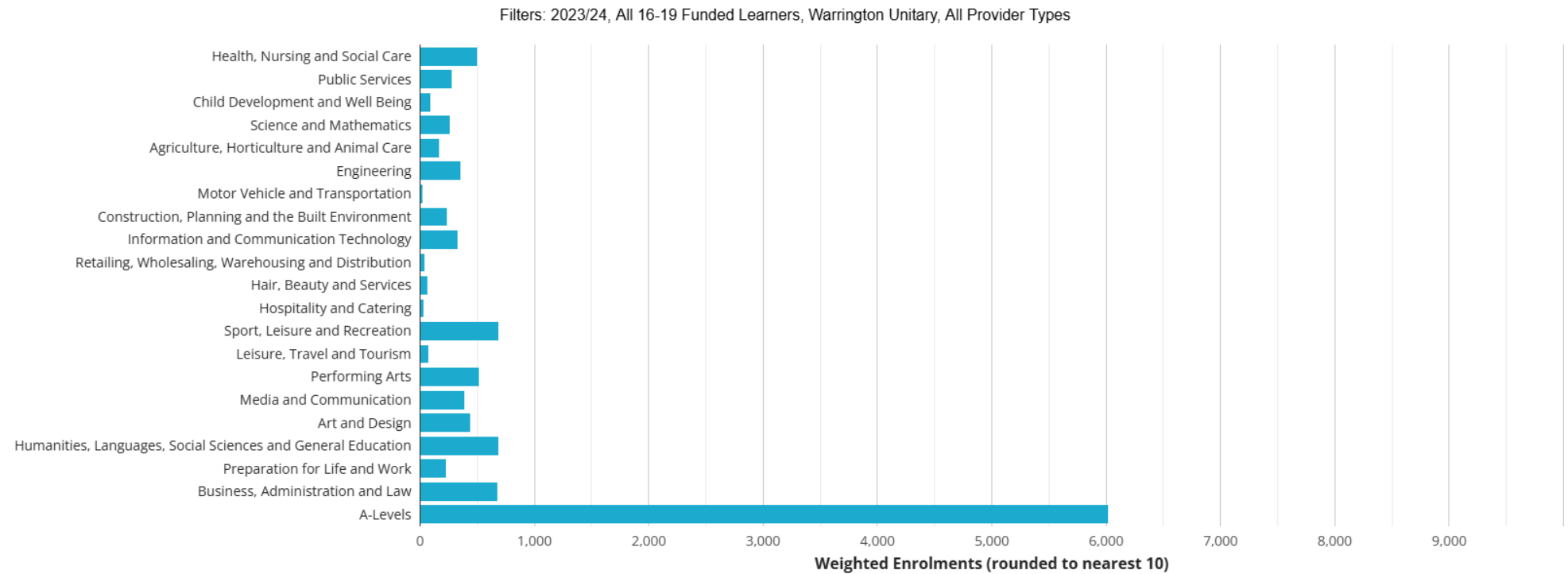
## Appendix 3 – Funding Allocations

| Institution details |                 |                                                  |                              | Students |                              |                           | Total funding                  |                             |            |
|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------|------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| Region              | Local authority | Institution name                                 | Category                     | Total    | of which high needs students | of which T Level students | High needs student funding (£) | Student support funding (£) | Total (£)  |
| <b>20-21</b>        |                 |                                                  |                              |          |                              |                           |                                |                             |            |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Birchwood Community High School                  | Academy                      | 114      | 4                            | 0                         | 24,000                         | 12,391                      | 584,361    |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Great Sankey High School                         | Academy                      | 292      | 3                            | 0                         | 18,000                         | 14,751                      | 1,332,685  |
| NW                  | Warrington      | KING'S LEADERSHIP ACADEMY WARRINGTON Free School | Free School                  | 46       | 0                            | 0                         | 0                              | 5,632                       | 241,525    |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Lymm High School                                 | Academy                      | 360      | 3                            | 0                         | 18,000                         | 14,692                      | 1,674,383  |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Priestley College                                | Academy                      | 1,951    | 31                           | 33                        | 186,000                        | 241,124                     | 9,578,265  |
| NW                  | Warrington      | UTC Warrington                                   | University Technical College | 96       | 0                            | 0                         | 0                              | 12,188                      | 620,893    |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Warrington and Vale Royal College                | General FE and Tertiary      | 1,510    | 75                           | 0                         | 450,000                        | 295,883                     | 8,392,242  |
| <b>21-22</b>        |                 |                                                  |                              |          |                              |                           |                                |                             |            |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Birchwood Community High School                  | Academy                      | 100      | 4                            | 0                         | 24,000                         | 9,492                       | 529,846    |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Great Sankey High School                         | Academy                      | 324      | 3                            | 0                         | 18,000                         | 10,808                      | 1,496,381  |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Lymm High School                                 | Academy                      | 405      | 3                            | 0                         | 18,000                         | 9,795                       | 1,834,761  |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Priestley College                                | Academy                      | 2,064    | 31                           | 185                       | 186,000                        | 243,929                     | 9,885,203  |
| NW                  | Warrington      | UTC Warrington                                   | University Technical College | 98       | 0                            | 0                         | 0                              | 8,643                       | 615,169    |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Warrington and Vale Royal College                | General FE and Tertiary      | 1,524    | 100                          | 0                         | 600,000                        | 309,086                     | 8,926,417  |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Willow Green CIO                                 | Special Post-16 Institution  | 10       | 10                           | 0                         | 60,000                         | 1,755                       | 116,395    |
| <b>22-23</b>        |                 |                                                  |                              |          |                              |                           |                                |                             |            |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Birchwood Community High School                  | Academy                      | 102      | 4                            | 32                        | 24,000                         | 8,646                       | 608,182    |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Great Sankey High School                         | Academy                      | 274      | 1                            | 0                         | 6,000                          | 6,664                       | 1,341,712  |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Lymm High School                                 | Academy                      | 402      | 3                            | 0                         | 18,000                         | 9,146                       | 1,997,238  |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Priestley College                                | Academy                      | 2,149    | 31                           | 102                       | 186,000                        | 273,821                     | 11,110,480 |
| NW                  | Warrington      | UTC Warrington                                   | University Technical College | 75       | 0                            | 0                         | 0                              | 8,332                       | 496,463    |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Warrington and Vale Royal College                | General FE and Tertiary      | 1,689    | 100                          | 0                         | 600,000                        | 363,530                     | 11,056,092 |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Willow Green CIO                                 | Special Post-16 Institution  | 14       | 14                           | 0                         | 84,000                         | 2,535                       | 169,033    |
| <b>23-24</b>        |                 |                                                  |                              |          |                              |                           |                                |                             |            |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Birchwood Community High School                  | Academy                      | 37       | 4                            | 0                         | 24,000                         | 4,041                       | 229,227    |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Great Sankey High School                         | Academy                      | 241      | 1                            | 0                         | 6,000                          | 7,312                       | 1,245,728  |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Lymm High School                                 | Academy                      | 355      | 0                            | 0                         | 0                              | 9,048                       | 1,810,890  |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Priestley College                                | Academy                      | 2,337    | 30                           | 159                       | 180,000                        | 334,447                     | 12,566,710 |
| NW                  | Warrington      | UTC Warrington                                   | University Technical College | 65       | 0                            | 44                        | 0                              | 12,152                      | 690,505    |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Warrington and Vale Royal College                | General FE and Tertiary      | 1,553    | 100                          | 76                        | 600,000                        | 338,244                     | 11,123,994 |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Willow Green CIO                                 | Special Post-16 Institution  | 17       | 17                           | 0                         | 102,000                        | 3,338                       | 212,577    |
| <b>24-25</b>        |                 |                                                  |                              |          |                              |                           |                                |                             |            |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Great Sankey High School                         | Academy                      | 216      | 0                            | 0                         | 0                              | 8,206                       | 1,165,568  |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Lymm High School                                 | Academy                      | 356      | 0                            | 0                         | 0                              | 8,201                       | 1,882,227  |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Priestley College                                | Academy                      | 2,373    | 30                           | 126                       | 180,000                        | 342,510                     | 13,227,771 |
| NW                  | Warrington      | UTC Warrington                                   | University Technical College | 80       | 0                            | 78                        | 0                              | 14,446                      | 887,918    |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Warrington and Vale Royal College                | General FE and Tertiary      | 1,723    | 100                          | 229                       | 600,000                        | 377,175                     | 13,688,250 |
| NW                  | Warrington      | Willow Green CIO                                 | Special Post-16 Institution  | 13       | 13                           | 0                         | 78,000                         | 1,968                       | 173,659    |

Data gathered from [16\\_19 Published Allocations Dataset 2425.ods](#)

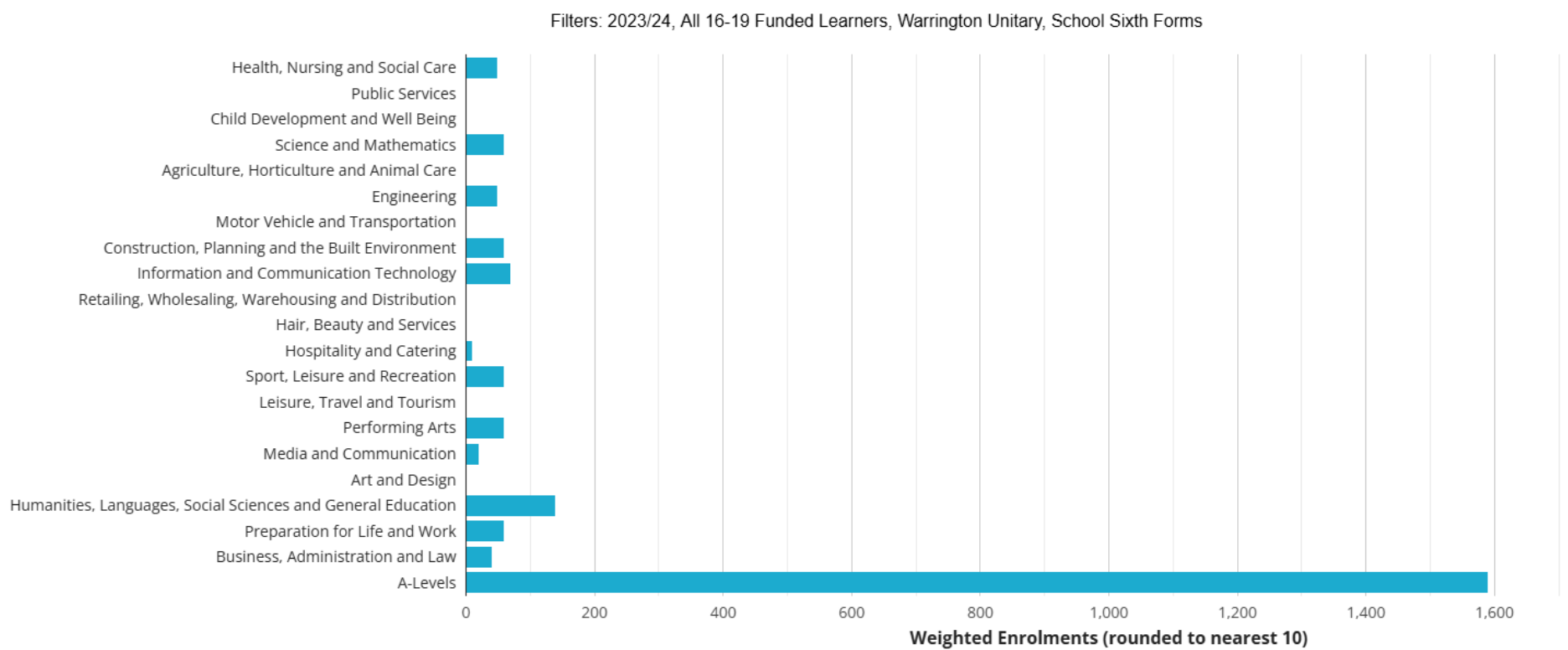
## Appendix 4 Subjects Delivered Post 16

### Subjects Delivered – all providers



Data Sources: ILR data (2020/21 - 2023/24) and schools data (PLAMS/Autumn Learning Aims and Pupil Census 2020/21 - 2023/24)A \*\* indicates that a figure has been suppressed due to low numbers (<5)

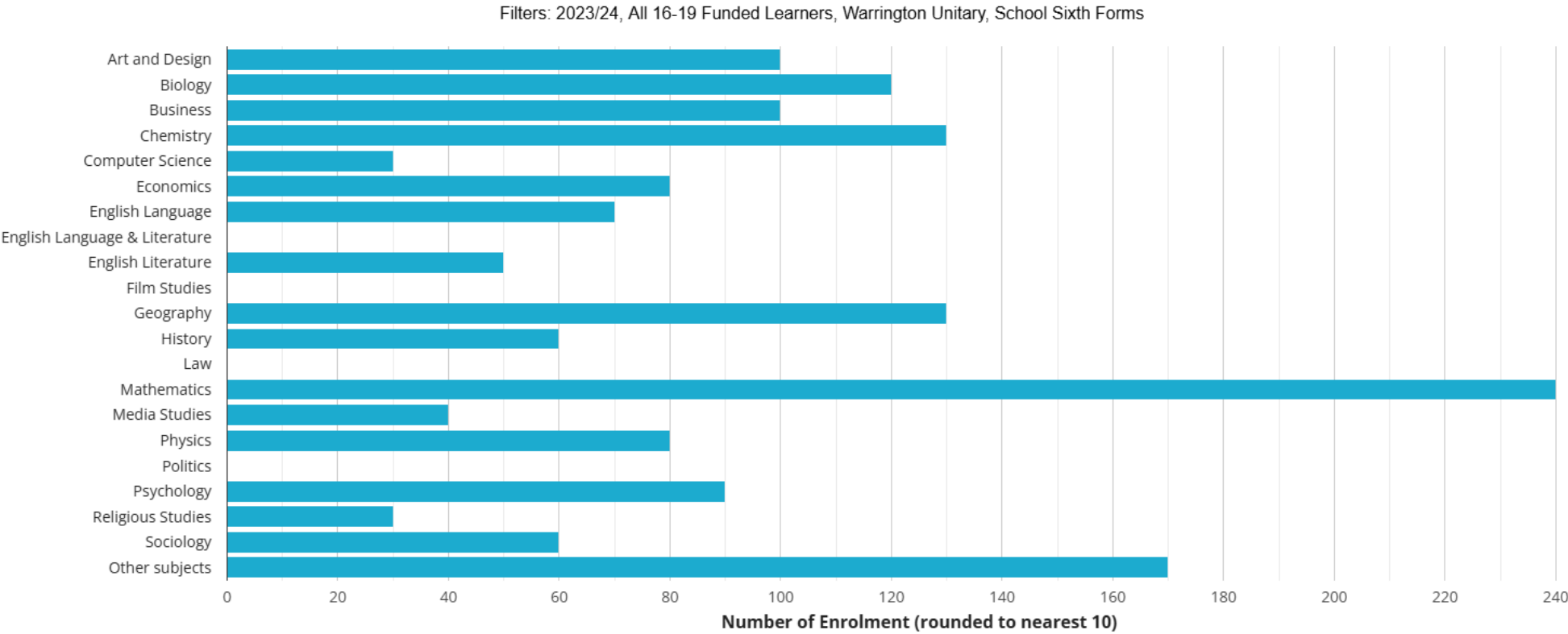
# Subjects Delivered by Provider – School Sixth Form



Data Sources: ILR data (2020/21 - 2023/24) and schools data (PLAMS/Autumn Learning Aims and Pupil Census 2020/21 - 2023/24)A \*\* indicates that a figure has been suppressed due to low numbers (<5)



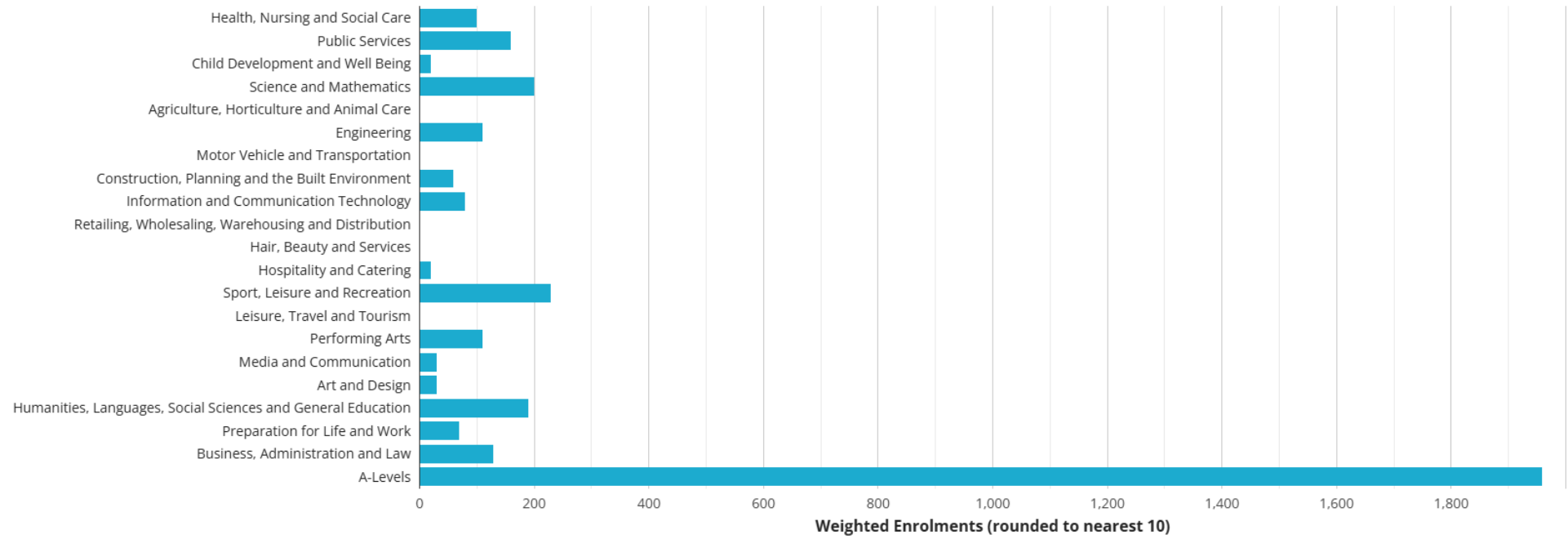
From 2020/21 to 2023/24 enrollment at A Level within sixth form dropped 370 pupils with Law dropping off the curriculum offer.



Data Sources: ILR data (2020/21 - 2023/24) and schools data (PLAMS/Autumn Learning Aims and Pupil Census 2020/21 - 2023/24)A \*\* indicates that a figure has been suppressed due to low numbers (<5)

From 2020/21 to 2023/24 enrolment a number of learning frameworks like Public Services and Child Development and Well Being are no long offered with school sixth forms with numbers numbers universally dropping over all other subjects too.

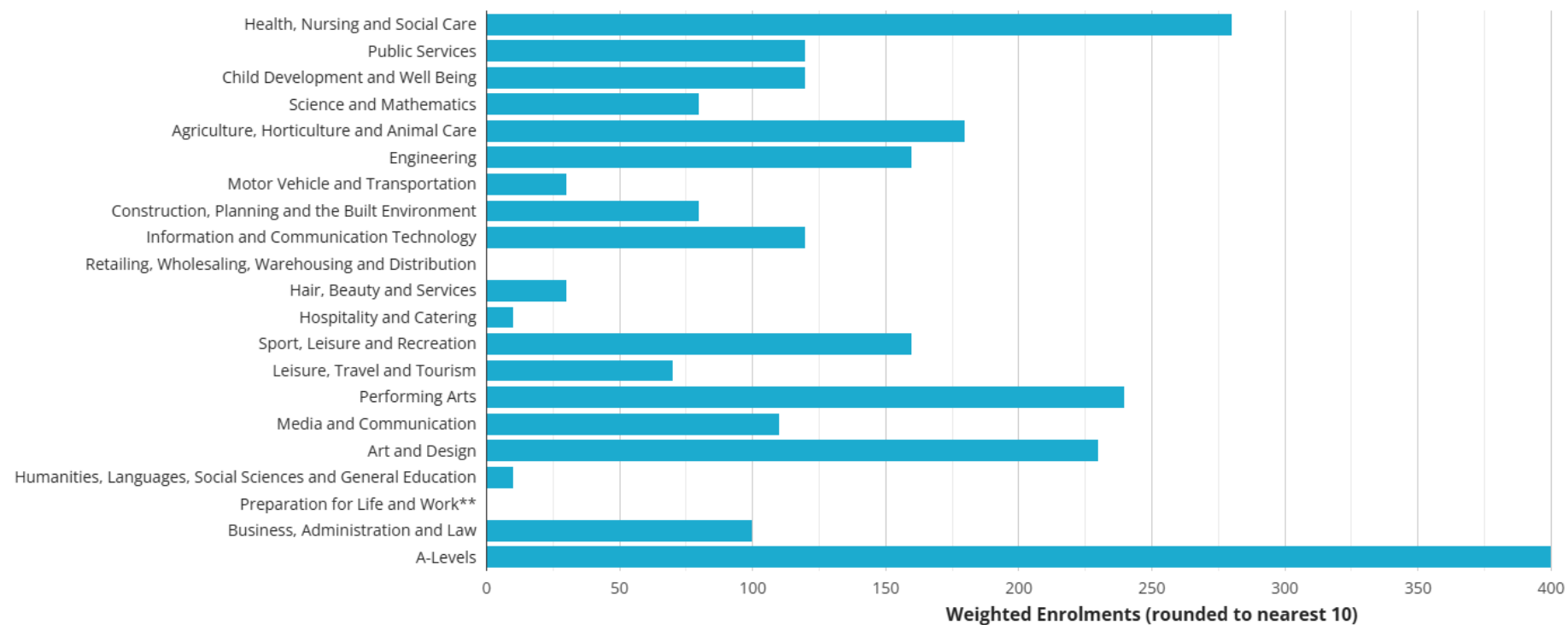
Filters: 2020/21, All 16-19 Funded Learners, Warrington Unitary, School Sixth Forms



Data Sources: ILR data (2020/21 - 2023/24) and schools data (PLAMS/Autumn Learning Aims and Pupil Census 2020/21 - 2023/24)A \*\* indicates that a figure has been suppressed due to low numbers (<5)

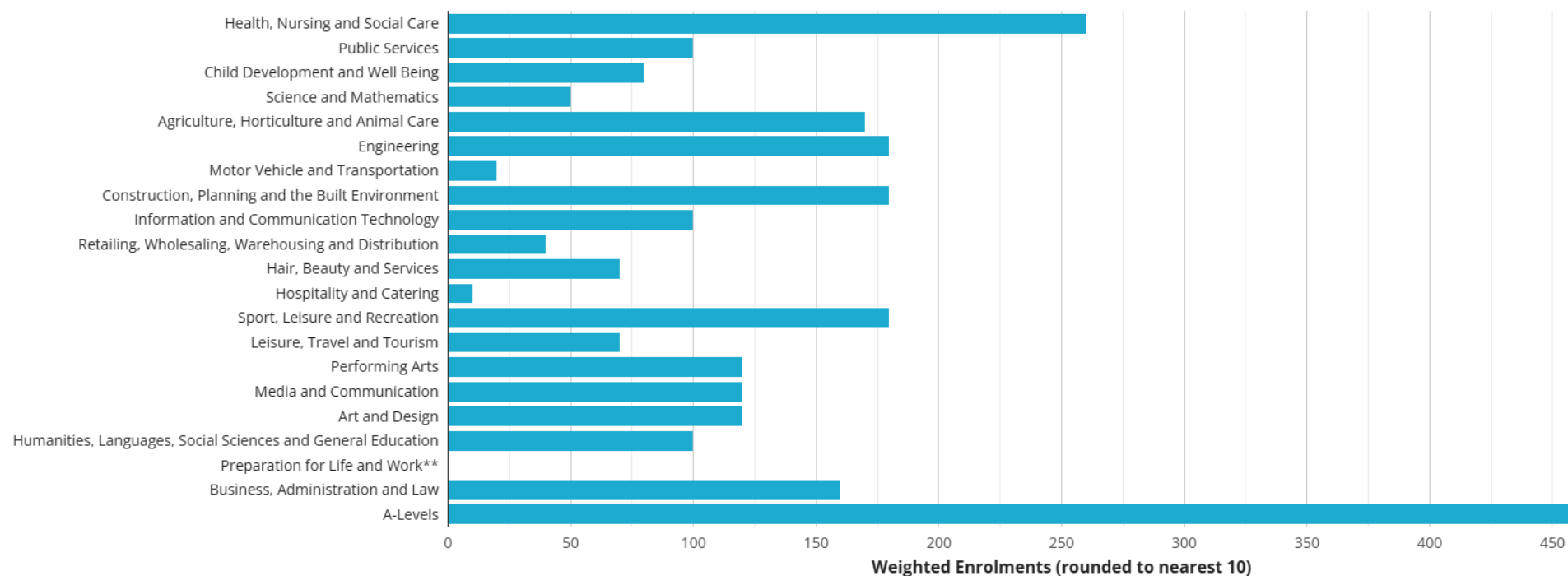
## Subjects Delivered by Provider – FE colleges

Filters: 2020/21, All 16-19 Funded Learners, Warrington Unitary, Other GFE Colleges



Data Sources: ILR data (2020/21 - 2023/24) and schools data (PLAMS/Autumn Learning Aims and Pupil Census 2020/21 - 2023/24)A \*\* indicates that a figure has been suppressed due to low numbers (<5)

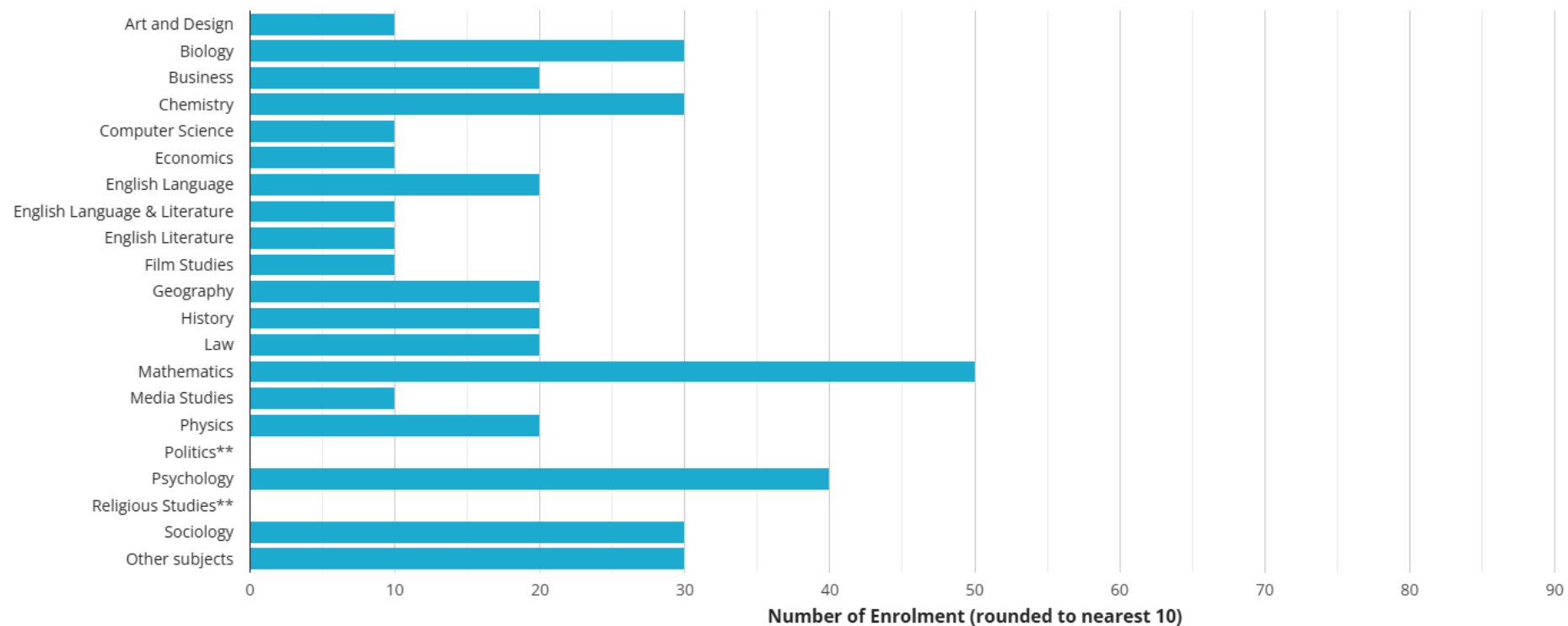
Filters: 2023/24, All 16-19 Funded Learners, Warrington Unitary, Other GFE Colleges



Data Sources: ILR data (2020/21 - 2023/24) and schools data (PLAMS/Autumn Learning Aims and Pupil Census 2020/21 - 2023/24)A \*\* indicates that a figure has been suppressed due to low numbers (<5)

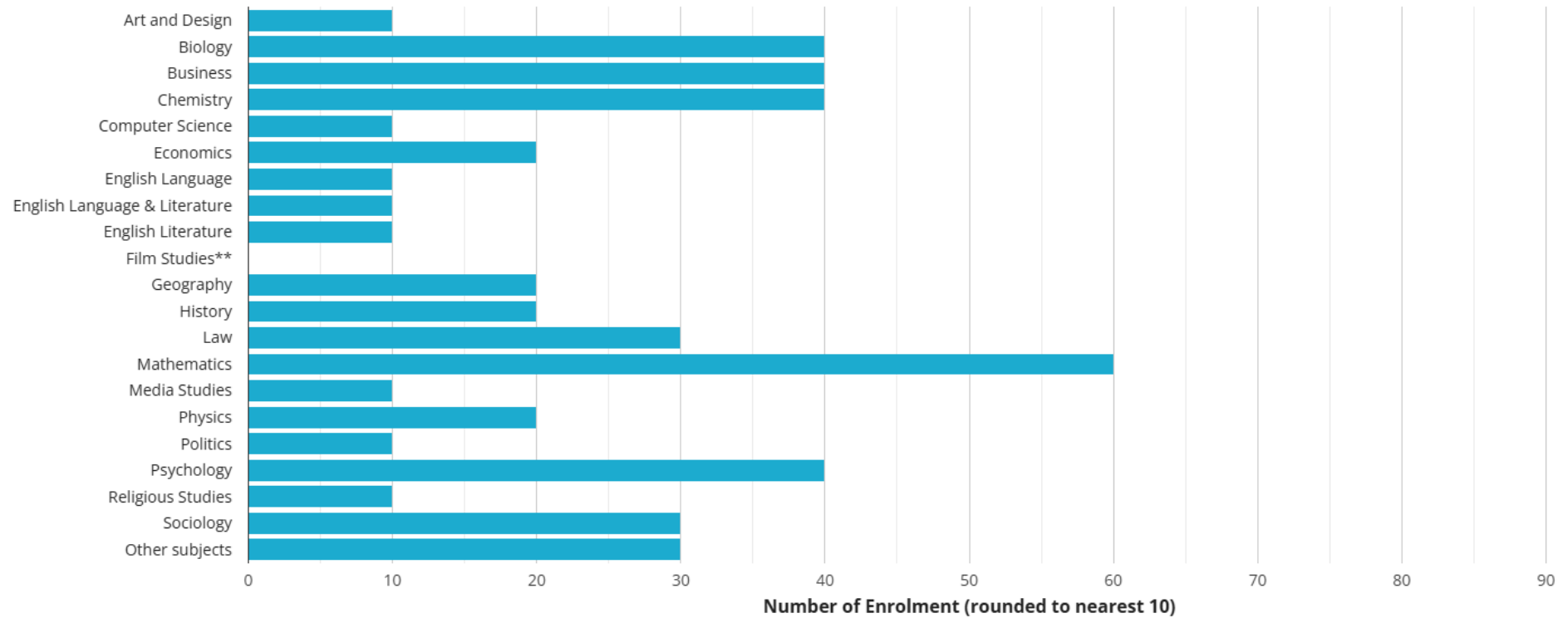
From 2020/21 to 2023/24 enrollment at A Level within FE colleges for Warrington residents have Film Studies dropping off the curriculum offer and Politics and religious Studies gaining small numbers.

Filters: 2020/21, All 16-19 Funded Learners, Warrington Unitary, Other GFE Colleges



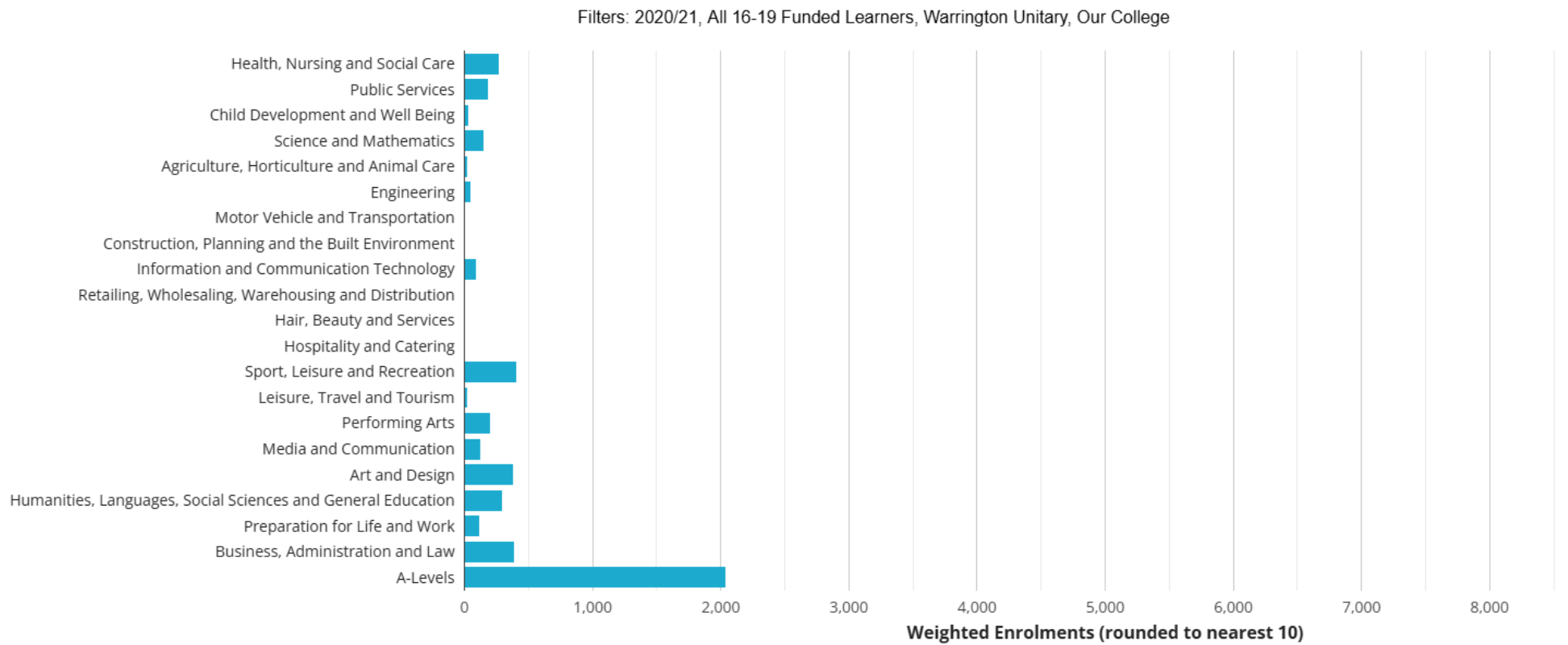
Data Sources: ILR data (2020/21 - 2023/24) and schools data (PLAMS/Autumn Learning Aims and Pupil Census 2020/21 - 2023/24)A \*\* indicates that a figure has been suppressed due to low numbers (<5)

Filters: 2023/24, All 16-19 Funded Learners, Warrington Unitary, Other GFE Colleges



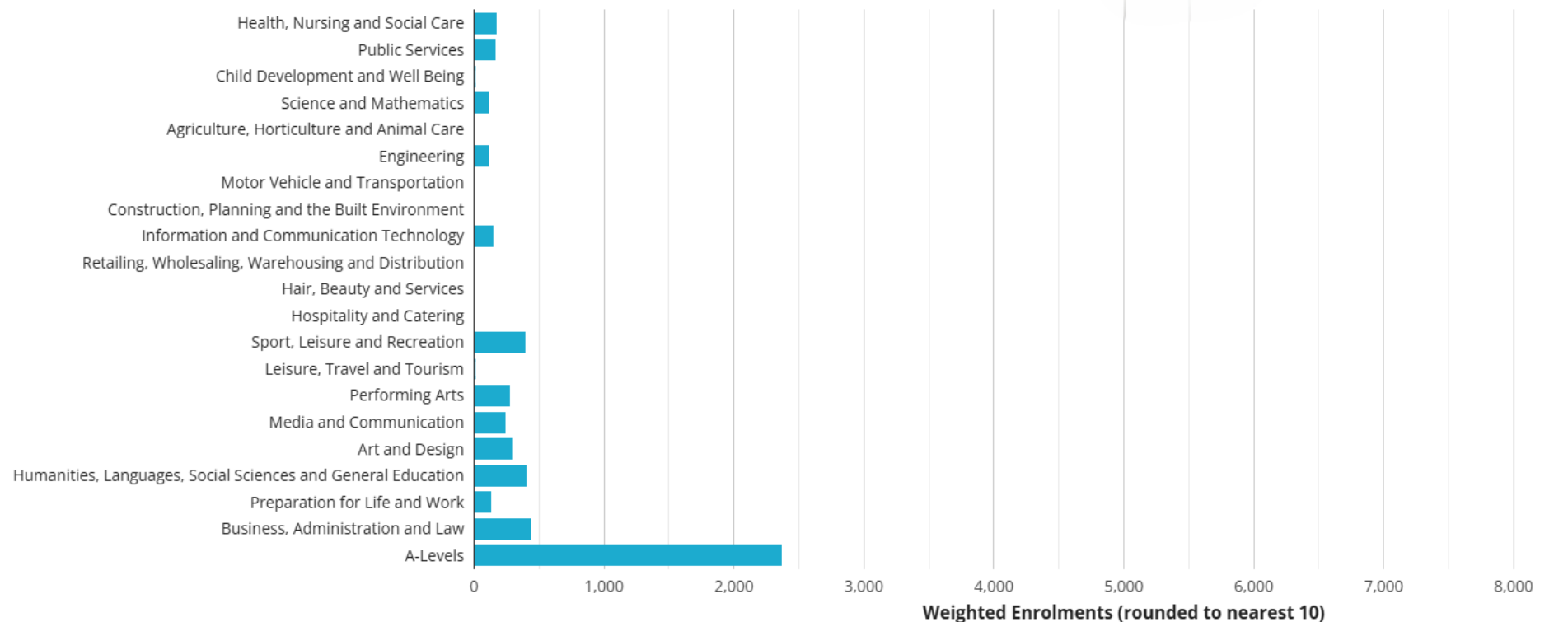
Data Sources: ILR data (2020/21 - 2023/24) and schools data (PLAMS/Autumn Learning Aims and Pupil Census 2020/21 - 2023/24)A \*\* indicates that a figure has been suppressed due to low numbers (<5)

# Subjects Delivered by Provider – Sixth Form colleges (Priestley)



Data Sources: ILR data (2020/21 - 2023/24) and schools data (PLAMS/Autumn Learning Aims and Pupil Census 2020/21 - 2023/24)A \*\* indicates that a figure has been suppressed due to low numbers (<5)

Filters: 2023/24, All 16-19 Funded Learners, Warrington Unitary,



Data Sources: ILR data (2020/21 - 2023/24) and schools data (PLAMS/Autumn Learning Aims and Pupil Census 2020/21 - 2023/24)A \*\* indicates that a figure has been suppressed due to low numbers (<5)



