



# Wolverhampton SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2024 - 2027



Wolverhampton  
SEND and Inclusion  
Partnership Board

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# Foreword

Welcome to Wolverhampton's SEND and Inclusion strategy for children and young people (0-25).

As a local area partnership we are extremely ambitious for ALL of our children and young people including those with special educational needs and disabilities and strive to provide appropriate support and services across the partnership from the moment needs are identified through early years and all phases of learning including preparation for adulthood and independence.

We are also determined that children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including neurodiversity, health and social support needs in Wolverhampton, live in an inclusive city where we work together to support them and their families to lead a good quality life within communities and achieve their full potential through education into adulthood. We believe that by working together with families and partners we will achieve this.

This strategy sets out the vision and priorities of the SEND & Inclusion Partnership Board's offer to children, young people and their families. It also recognises and builds on our strengths and what works well for families.

The **SEND & Inclusion Partnership Board** is made up of senior representatives of key city partner organisations who meet regularly to provide strategic direction to improve the lives of children and young people with SEND and additional support needs.

We commit to ensuring that this strategy is owned at the highest level of every city partner organisation and stakeholder group within the Wolverhampton area, providing a strong basis to make the positive changes and continuous improvements to the support and services offered across the partnership.

This strategy has been co-produced with all stakeholders and sets out the duties of **SEND & Inclusion Partnership Board**. It will be delivered through an action plan that will be overseen by the **Children and Families Together Board**.

We will review the strategy and action plan on an annual basis to ensure that we remain focused on the right things and improve outcomes for children and young people in Wolverhampton.

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the development of this strategy.

Alison Hinds  
**Director of Children's Services**  
City of Wolverhampton Council

Sally Roberts  
**Chief Nursing Officer/  
Deputy Chief Executive Officer**  
NHS Black Country ICB

Will  
**HY5! Vice Chair**  
#YES

Sarah Baker  
**Chair**  
Voice4Parents

# Scope, vision and purpose

This document sets out the City of Wolverhampton Council's strategy for children, young people, and young adults aged 0-25 years, with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and those with additional education support needs. It builds on our SEND strategy 2020 and the work done since our last Ofsted CQC inspection in 2021.

It is recognised that all children with SEND are individuals with aspirations to lead their own lives. While life for a child or young person with SEND and their family is anything but ordinary, the ordinary life principles are what extraordinary achievements are built on. The strategy is built on the principles of inclusion which are outlined within the department for **Education's SEND and Alternative Provision improvement plan 2023**. The plan explains what the government will do to make sure children and young people with SEND or in alternative provision get the support they need. All partners are committed to developing and embedding an inclusive offer for the children and young people of Wolverhampton.

Our vision is that **every child and young person with additional support needs in Wolverhampton lives in an inclusive city where we work together to support them and their families to lead a good quality 'ordinary life' and achieve their full potential**. We believe that by working together and co-producing our services with families and communities we will achieve this.

The focus for this strategy is:

- children, young people and young adults with special educational needs and disabilities, where they have a learning difficulty and/or a disability that means they need special education, care and health support. We call this SEND.
- working proactively to accept, understand and cater for the educational support needs all children, young people and young adults' difference and diversity, that might be related to ethnicity, language, gender, economic, social or emotional difference. We call this Inclusion.
- providing environments that can appropriately meet the needs of children, young people and young adults whether this be at home, in the community or in education, offering the right support in the right place at the right time. We call this provision.

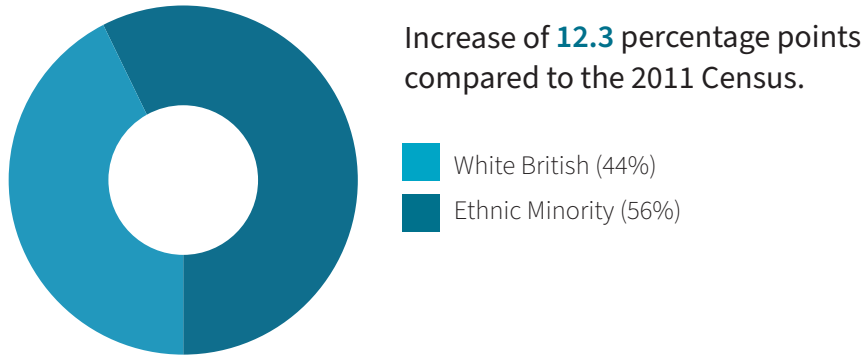
This strategy has been co-produced with children, young people and young adults with lived experience, Voice 4 Parents (our parent carer forum), early years settings, schools, colleges, frontline practitioners, the voluntary and community sector, and the Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust, Black Country Health NHS Foundation Trust, Black Country Integrated Care Board. Public consultation was completed between October and December 2023.

**A child and young person guide can be found and downloaded in easy read on the Local Offer.**

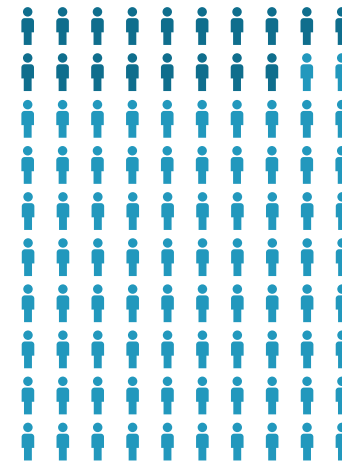
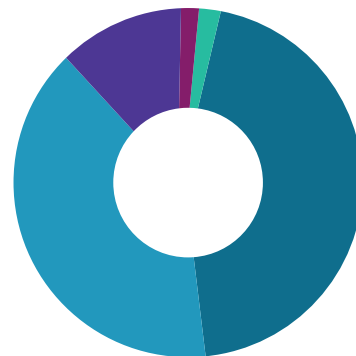
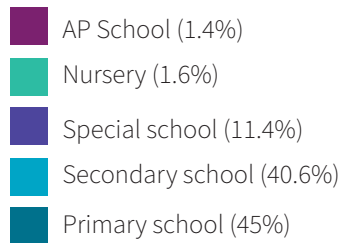
# Context of the local community

## SEND in Wolverhampton

According to the 2021 Census, the Wolverhampton population has grown to **264,036** which is an increase of **5.8%** since 2011. The population of England and the West Midlands saw larger increases of 6.6% and 6.2%, respectively. According to the 2021 Census, in Wolverhampton there are **67,404** young people aged between 0-19 years.

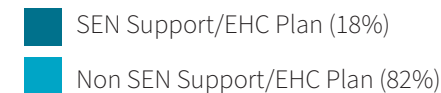


The distribution of pupils with SEND needs amongst State-funded Schools in Wolverhampton.

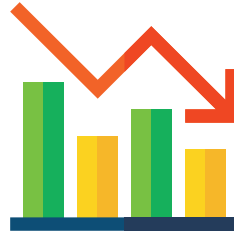


There are **8,881** pupils with SEN Support or EHC plans in Wolverhampton, of which **6,846** pupils receive SEN support and **2,035** pupils have an EHC plan.

For context there are **49,696** pupils in State schools (including nurseries) aged between 3-19 years of age.



In Wolverhampton there is a **strong relationship** with the rate of pupils receiving SEN Support and the index of multiple deprivation (IMD)\* decile that their home resides in. The relationship suggests that there is a **higher rate** of pupils receiving SEN Support in the **most deprived** areas of the city, compared to the more affluent areas. This relationship is not as evident between pupils with EHC Plan and deprivation.



Within primary school age pupils, the most prevalent primary need (2022/23 academic year) is **speech, language and communication** (36.3%); slightly above the national average of 35.4%



Secondary school pupils with SEND have a high proportion of **moderate learning difficulty** at 28.5%, which is 11.7% higher than the national average. Around 21.8% of SEND pupils have **social, emotional and mental health needs**, compared to 23.4% nationally.



Wolverhampton's current completion rate for EHC assessments excluding exceptions is **70.0%** (Jan 2023 - July 2023); this is **above the national rate** of 49.1% (2023).

Within Special schools, 29.2% of pupils have **autistic spectrum disorder** compared to 35.2% nationally. This is linked to the **local partnership work improving performance** of CAMHS and ASD waiting times.



## Local Offer

Discover everything you need to know about education, health and care services in Wolverhampton for children, young people and young adults with SEND 0-25 years at [www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/localoffer).

\*The Index of Multiple Deprivation, commonly known as the IMD, is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in England. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) ranks every small area in England from 1 (most deprived area) to 32,844 (least deprived area).

# Working together to identify priorities

## Co-Production Charter for Children, Young People and Families

This charter is a set of principles and promises of working together with young people and families to ensure they remain at the heart of decision making.

We believe that young people and their families are best placed to shape the services and support they receive.

To communicate in good time and in a way that's appropriate for everyone

To have open and honest conversations

To seek regular feedback from families

To support each other in developing our knowledge and skills

**WE PROMISE**

To demonstrate the value our work is having

Your involvement will be welcomed valued and meaningful

Decisions about shaping services and support will be made together

To embed these promises in everything we do

City of Wolverhampton  
**Children & Families Together Board**

### We commit to delivering this promise using the following principles:

**Trust**  
There will be no conversations about you without you  
We decide priorities together  
Together we will find the best solution

**Shared understanding**  
We all agree about what we want to achieve  
We agree on what 'good' looks like  
We will be mindful of everyone's commitments

**Equal partnership**  
Everyone can take part. Whatever their needs or abilities  
We can learn a lot from each other  
We are all in this together!

**Creative thinking**  
We will plan creatively and do things differently  
We will work in a way that's best for you  
Finding the right solution may take longer but that's ok

**Communication**  
Everyone will be kept informed and updated  
We will be clear about what we can and can't do  
Information will be accessible for everyone

To ensure the strategy and priorities are informed by children, young people, young adults and families our local area partnership is committed to the **Co-production Charter for Children, Young People and Families.**

In developing this strategy, the partnership is dedicated to building trust; sharing understanding; having an equal partnership; being creative in our thinking; and will make sure we communicate and provide updates on what is happening to respond to the priorities.

We will create a range of opportunities to listen to children, young people, young adults, and families so that they can share what is working, what still needs to be improved and how people can get involved.

We will use the feedback to help inform us of our strengths, and to shape the priorities that will inform our **SEND and Inclusion Plan**.

We will also make sure that we proactively share local data and strategic developments across the ICB, NHS Trusts, Local Authority, voluntary and private sectors to ensure best value and shared resource to meet the priorities outlined in this strategy, as identified within the **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and SEND and Inclusion Self-Evaluation Framework**.

To become involved in making a difference, visit:  
[www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/localoffer-co-production](http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/localoffer-co-production)





# Priorities

The priorities in this section are adopted from the Department for Education's SEND & Alternative Provision Improvement Plan 2023. The outcomes are based on the inspection standards set out within the SEND Local Area Inspection Framework. The actions have been identified as priorities within Wolverhampton SEND Self-Evaluation Framework to achieve the outcomes.

## **Priority 1: Develop a System Underpinned by National Standards**

Strengthening inclusive education systems with excellent mainstream and specialist provision that puts children and young people first, being ambitious in reimagining a society that is inclusive at every level. Create environments that are designed to offer every child and young person the support they need to fulfil their potential, both within the classroom and beyond.

### Outcome:

- Children and young people receive the right help at the right time;

### What needs to happen to achieve this:

- Promote pre-diagnosis support options for children, young people, and young adults;
- Provide safe environments within local communities and schools where early support and services can be accessed easily;
- Promote clear pathways for services including assessment and post assessment support through the local offer;
- Promote clear information on the local offer about short breaks, education health and care plans, personal budgets, and alternative provision.

### Evidence of progress:

- Service data will show how and when people are accessing services and the quality and timeliness of assessments;
- From surveys children, young people, young adults, and their families will share if they feel healthy; happy; safe; they are included in their local community; and they are able to learn; and feel they belong.

## **Priority 2: Successful transition and preparation for adulthood**

Further develop a SEND and alternative provision system which supports children and young people to successfully move through education and into adulthood, regardless of whether they have an EHCP, through the wide variety of routes available. Destination planning will be built in from the earliest stages and should continue through their education, centred around the aspirations, interests, and needs of the child or young person. Provision should support children and young people to develop independence, contribute to their community, develop positive friendships, be as healthy as possible, and, for the majority of young people, prepare them for higher education and/or employment.

### **Outcome:**

- Children, young people and young adults are well prepared for their next steps and achieve strong outcomes;
- Children, young people and young adults are valued, visible and included in their communities.

### **What needs to happen to achieve this:**

- Develop an understanding of what can be expected from the earliest point so that children, young people, young adults, and their families can plan for their future;
- Promote clear pathways between services at transition points, between children and adult services, and employment pathways;
- Promote clear and accessible options for young people and young adults so they feel confident to access services for themselves;
- Promote leisure offers that are appropriate and accessible for children young people and young adults within local communities and that are accessible all year round.

### **Evidence of progress:**

- Data will show how well children, young people and young adults move through our services and what their destinations are post 16 in skills, employment, health or care.
- From surveys, children, young people, young adults, and families will share if they are healthy; happy; feel safe; are included in their local community; they are in control of their life and are prepared for adulthood.

### Priority 3:

#### A skilled workforce and excellent leadership

Professionals who deliver for children and young people with SEND – in early years, schools, colleges, health and care settings, specialist and alternative provision, local authorities and beyond – are dedicated, highly skilled and passionate about meeting their needs. Build on the extensive expertise held and focus on setting consistent standards and incentives to build one united workforce around the child or young person.

#### Outcome:

- Leaders are ambitious for children and young people with SEND;
- Leaders actively engage and work with children, young people, and families;
- Leaders create an environment in which effective practice and multi-agency working can flourish.

#### What needs to happen to achieve this:

- Promote and embed a clear understanding around ‘co-production’ and ‘participation’, so that we have a shared agreement of when it is appropriate to consult, co-design and coproduce our services together;
- Promote clear quality assurance processes that will show that the services we offer are good and do what they need to;
- Promote a shared training offer that supports services to test and learn together.

#### Evidence of progress:

- Services will share if they feel confident, are supported, and have the knowledge to work well with children, young people, young adults, and families.
- From surveys, children, young people, young adults, and families will share if they feel their voice is heard; they are happy and feel supported; are included in their local community; and they are in control of their life, now and in the future.

#### **Priority 4: Strengthened accountabilities and clear routes of redress**

A vision for a SEND and alternative provision system where decisions are made, collectively and consistently by partnerships and informed by robust data and evidence. This will be underpinned by strengthened accountabilities for all those responsible for local delivery.

#### **Outcome:**

- Children, young people, and young adults' needs are identified accurately and assessed in a timely and effective way;
- Children, young people, young adults, and their families participate in decision-making about their individual plans and support.
- Leaders have an accurate, shared understanding of the needs of children and young people in their local area;
- Leaders evaluate services and make improvements.

#### **What needs to happen to achieve this:**

- Promote how we co-produce assessment and reviews and share this with professionals and families;
- Further develop the quality assurance framework across the SEND & Inclusion Partnership;
- Complete the actions identified in the SEND & Inclusion Improvement Plan through the designated work groups.

#### **Evidence of progress:**

- Quality assure assessment and plans to show that plans are good or outstanding;
- The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the SEND & Inclusion Partnership Dashboard will be shared appropriately and effectively across our partnership to inform decisions;
- The SEND & Inclusion Self-Evaluation Framework and preparation for the OFSTED/CQC Local Area SEND Inspection shows what is working well and what actions are being taken.
- Monitoring and review of LGCSO decisions, appeals and judicial reviews will help show clear routes of redress.

## Priority 5:

### A financially sustainable system delivering improved outcomes

The SEND and alternative provision system should deliver consistent, clear and early support for children and young people with SEND and provide financial sustainability. The system should enable local partners to work together effectively with families to deliver for children and young people.

#### Outcome:

- Leaders commission services and provision to meet the needs and aspirations of children and young people, including commissioning arrangements for children and young people in alternative provision.

#### What needs to happen to achieve this:

- Promote a clear framework that shows when and how services are commissioned including single service and jointly commissioned;
- Further improve the quality of services commissioned to make sure they are offering the best services, best value and that they are helping to meet needs of children, young people and young adults;
- Further develop opportunities for sufficiency planning to reduce unnecessary use of high-cost provision.

#### Evidence of progress:

- Quality assurance processes will show that our services offer good quality provision to children, young people and families;
- Data shows that there are less children and young people needing high-cost provision due to lack of capacity in the system;
- From surveys, children, young people, young adults, and families will show that they feel their voice is heard; they are healthy; happy; supported; feel safe; are included in their local community; are able to learn; they are in control of their life and are prepared for adulthood.

# Identifying outcomes

The strategy is ambitious towards aspirational outcomes for children, young people and young adults with SEND and additional support needs, ensuring that they have every opportunity to reach their full potential.

Data held within education, health, social care and careers will be used to monitor the outcomes and where needed put improvements in place.

Outcomes are also measured against the expected standards in the SEND Area Inspection Framework and Handbook to ensure that Services in Wolverhampton are compliant and work together to meet the needs of children, young people and young adults locally.

Voice 4 Parents and HY5! are our strategic partners who help shape our strategy based on the voice of children, young people, young adults and families within Wolverhampton. They collate information through annual surveys, or in group discussions. This helps to understand what we need to do to support children, young people and young adults in their everyday lives and this will help to identify our priorities.

Children, young people, young adults, and families share if:

- their voice is heard;
- they are healthy;
- they are happy;
- they are supported;
- they feel safe;
- they are included in their local community and feel they belong;
- they are able to learn;
- they are in control of their life and are prepared for adulthood.

Our 'SEND and Inclusion Partnership Dashboard' tells us how well services are performing to meet children, young people's, and young adult's needs. This information is shared within meetings and helps to identify areas that need to improve and where we are doing well. This will help to monitor progress against our priorities.

## How the strategy will be delivered

This strategy sets the direction for SEND and Inclusion in Wolverhampton, and will be reviewed every two years, and over this time we will continually develop and refine our plans to achieve good outcomes for children, young people, and young adults.

The SEND and Inclusion Partnership Board will oversee the development and monitoring of our **SEND and Inclusion Improvement Plan** which details the actions required to achieve the outcomes for each of the priority areas.

The local area partnership will form working groups to deliver the **SEND and Inclusion Improvement Plan** with representation across social care, education, health and the voluntary/private sectors, children, young people, young adults, and families.

We will make sure that the cost and people needed to deliver this strategy will include local area joint commissioning arrangements and offer value in delivering improved outcomes.

Our **SEND and Inclusion Improvement Plan** will be published on the Local Offer website with updates on our progress every six months.

We will continue to meet regularly with the Department for Education and NHS England to test, challenge and support the delivery of our strategy.



# Governance process

The **SEND and Inclusion Partnership Board** will review this strategy and the **SEND and Inclusion Improvement Plan**. They will ensure that actions are being completed in a timely way to address our priorities and will monitor the progress against our identified outcomes. Where progress is not being made, the board will support with shared solutions and seek to advise those who have responsibility to provide that service.

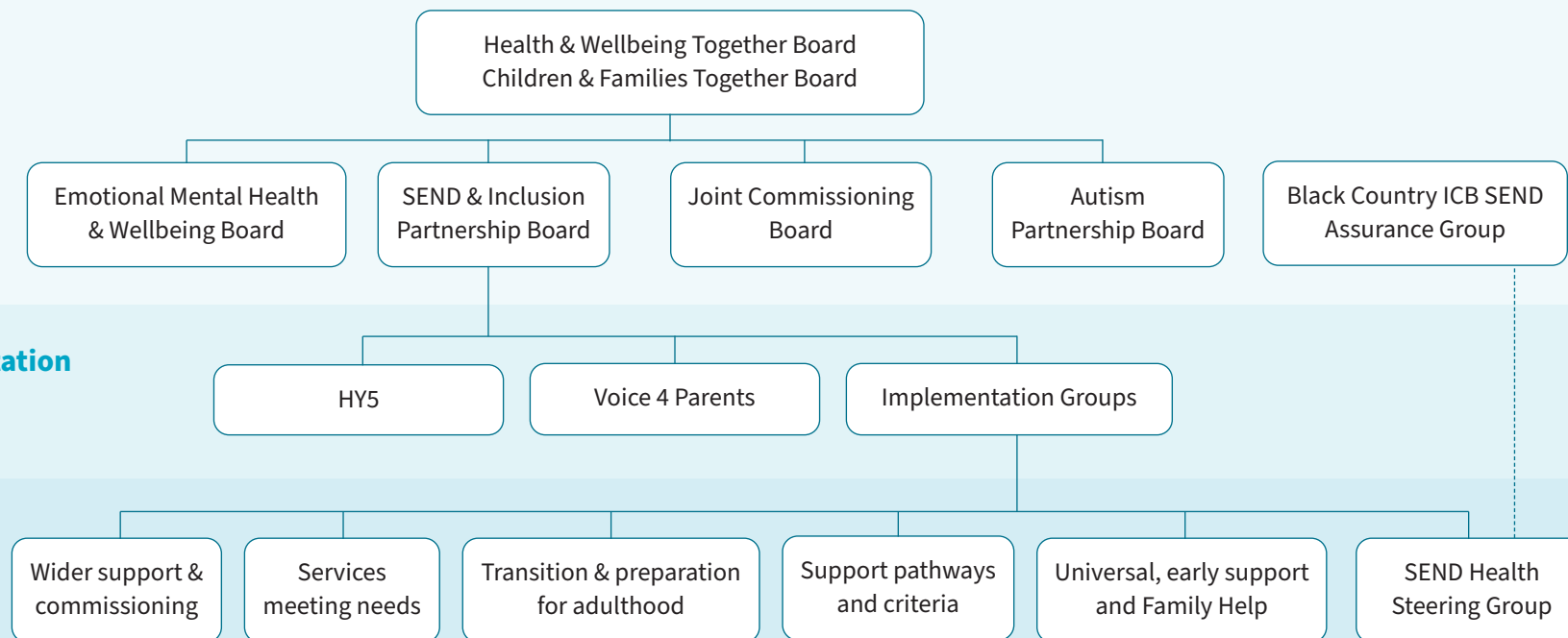
In addition to the Board's overseeing the delivery of the plan and action areas CYP Scrutiny Panel and the Executive Cabinet of City of Wolverhampton Council will receive regular updates on progress as well as responsibility for approving key documents such as this strategy. Similar approval processes are also in place through the ICB Health Partnership.

## Governance structure Boards and Groups:

### Strategic Decisions

### Local Implementation Decisions

### Groups





# Partners and Stakeholders

This strategy is based on the shared understanding that supporting the needs of children, young people and young adults regarding SEND and inclusion is 'everybody's business'.

The following partners and stakeholders are committed to working with communities to continue to support improvements highlighted within the strategy.

**Director of Children's Services, CWC**

**Chief Nurse and Director of Quality, ICB**

**SEND Improvement Advisor, CWC**

**HY5! Young Person Forum**

**Lead Member for Education, CWC**

**Deputy Director of Education, CWC**

**Service Manager & Clinical Lead, BCH NHS Foundation Trust**

**City of Wolverhampton College**

**Director for Safeguarding & Partnerships, ICB**

**Head of Empowerment & Inclusion, CWC; Public Health, CWC**

**Children's Commissioning Transformation Lead, CWC**

**Service Manager – Disabled Children and Young People Team, CWC**

**Head of Service, Adults and Communities, CWC**

**Head of CAMHs Commissioning, ICB;**

**Senior Programme Manager for SEND, ICB; Commissioner, ICB**

**Wolverhampton Special Schools**

**Wolverhampton Mainstream Primary and Secondary Schools  
Wolverhampton Early Years Settings and PVI's**

**Designated Medical Officer, ICB**

**Designated Clinical Officer, ICB**

**Voice4Parents, Parent Carer Forum**

**Wolverhampton Information, Advice and Support Service**

**Wolverhampton Voluntary Community Action**

**Skills, CWC**

**Public Health, CWC**

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audio or in another language by calling 01902 551155  
or emailing [translations@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:translations@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

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