

Virtual School for Cared for Children

Headteacher's Annual Report 2018-19



Laura Rogerson
Head teacher
Virtual School for Cared for Children

Cheshire East Council
September 2019 (*provisional data not yet validated)

Introduction

The role of the Virtual School is clearly defined in *Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children statutory guidance for local authorities 2018*.

This report presents an overview of the operation and impact of the Virtual School during 2018-2019. The Virtual School (VS) supports all children in care and relevant care leavers regardless of their length of time in care but the educational attainment data in the report relates to those who have been in continuous care from March 31st 2018 to March 31st 2019. This is the cohort reported in national data which is supplied to external agencies such as Ofsted. National comparative data, where quoted, is that published in Nexus and the Statistical First Release of the Outcomes of looked after children

During 2018/19 the Virtual School has continued to support all cared for children and to continually review its operation to ensure it is meeting its statutory duties while providing effective support. This is delivered by an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), primary, secondary and post 16 team.

The overall number of children has continued to rise; this increase is on average that experienced elsewhere. There are also a higher number of children with high level of Special Educational Needs (SEN), which means that the overall population is more complex as well as larger in number.

Cared for Children are making good progress overall in comparison to both National and previous years data. In order to continue to improve outcomes targeted support is needed to challenge some secondary/independent schools where Cared for Children are underperforming.

Cared for children involved with youth offending have significantly higher levels of SEN. An advisor also works part time for the Youth Justice Service and oversees these cases. She is currently reviewing the support mechanisms to increase attendance at the end of the orders.

The make-up, operation and funding of the Virtual School has been reviewed. There has been an increase in core staffing to include a specialist attendance officer to support increasing overall attendance of all Cared for Children and reduce persistent absence during 2019/20 academic year. Some core staffing is now funded through the Pupil Premium. The impact of these changes is currently being monitored.

All children have access to additional Pupil Premium funding to put in place actions and interventions which are additional to the normal school support and which will help them achieve targets. In April 2017 a new system was introduced whereby schools request funding to carry out specific interventions. This has ensured accountability and allows the impact to be monitored through individual PEP meetings each term.

Attendance at both primary and secondary has slightly decreased this year with the average primary attendance falling from 95% to 90% and the average secondary attendance falling from 93% to 90%. We have identified this as an area of need and addressed this by employing a specialist attendance officer to support through academic year 2019/20 and this will be reviewed for impact. In total last academic year there were 147 individual exclusions which equated to 230.5 lost days overall.

The Virtual School has a duty to work with Head teachers to try and avoid excluding a Cared for Child and to make sure that they have the support in place to thrive and make progress. In the case of repeat exclusions, additional PEPs will be held to check that all necessary support is being given. There have not been any cases of a permanent exclusion in 2018/19.

The Virtual School has commissioned places at the Fermain Academy Alternative Provision in Macclesfield and this has contributed to the reduction in repeat exclusions and total number of sessions lost. The use of good quality alternative provision (AP) has increased and has had good outcomes for children who have previously been unable to sustain or access full time mainstream school. The Virtual School are further supporting having champions within Fermain and Cornerstones (our primary assessment provision), we will be supporting to fund a Teaching Assistant (TA) within each provision who will have sole oversight of Cared for Children to offer 1-1 support, we will be offering regular CPD for staff.

The Virtual School works closely with other services within the local authority: Social Care, SEN, School Admissions, Medical Needs, Attendance and Youth Support. In some cases this is through panels and meeting groups such as the 16+ NEET challenge panel or Resource and Accommodation panel meetings but is often through joint working and collaboration of individual staff. As a result of these collaborations policies and procedures have been revised to become more efficient. The Virtual School has delivered cross service training on how all services can support improving the education outcomes of cared for children. Other services have delivered training sessions alongside the Virtual School at Designated Lead training days.

In order to support schools with significant updates and information, North-West Virtual School Heads coordinated two conferences. This was attended by over 100 school representatives with DFE, Ofsted, Adoption UK and NAVSH chair present as key note speakers.

Contents	Page
Introduction	2
Self Evaluation	5
Remit and Operation	6
School roll	7
Ofsted ratings	8
SEN	8
Staffing	10
Funding	12
PEPs	15
Admissions	18
Attendance	18
Exclusions	20
Participation of young people	21
Learning Mentor	21
Post 16 Tutor	24
Partnership working and training	26
EYFS	30
Phonics and KS1	32
KS2	34
KS4	36
Post 16 ETE	37
Service objectives (2018/19)	38
Development priorities	40

1. Self Evaluation

Area	Self Evaluation		Priority actions for 18-19
Foundation Stage			Early intense intervention for children below targets
Key Stage 1			Monitor progress and ensure early intervention
Key Stage 2			Identify and have support for children working below targets
Key Stage 4			Challenge schools where pupils under-perform, work alongside social care to reduce school moves during KS4
Post-16			Reduce NEET Cygnet and tutor and targeted support
Higher Education			Improve access to tasters and promote HE to Y10, work alongside skills and growth (careers)
Outcomes for cfc engaged with YOT			Align PEPs with YOT documents. Confirm long term plan for YOT education support.
SEN			Introduce an SEN lead with VS team to develop a tracking document to monitor assessments and support and attend panel meetings
Admissions			Agreed policy to support admissions, especially SEN
Attendance			Rapid response to falling attendance, including SEN, students below 90% and those on part-time timetables
Exclusions			Sustain the reduced number of repeat exclusions, especially SEN. Work alongside NWVSH to create a regional guide to support a consistent approach to reducing exclusions
Leadership and Management			Monitor staff capacity/wellbeing as numbers increase. Review working in line with new DfE stat. guidance
Staff Training			Continue to increase attachment awareness in high schools through full staff training
Finance			Monitor new funding plan and impact of support
PEPs			Continue to see increase in quality of returned PEPs with all primary and secondary on ePEPs by June 2020
Changes in school placement and AP			Increase challenge and monitoring of pupils in AP – attendance, attainment, progress and exclusions
Partnership Working			Establish agreed protocols for SEN and admissions. Work with S Care to increase engagement of F Carers
Monitoring and Evaluation			Increase detail and quality of data of monitoring data and use to priorities actions, to review termly assessment data from schools
Participation by children and young people			Review revised My Voice (new design in line with SOS)
Safeguarding and promotion of wellbeing			Continue to work closely with all services including Health, Social care, Schools and SEN

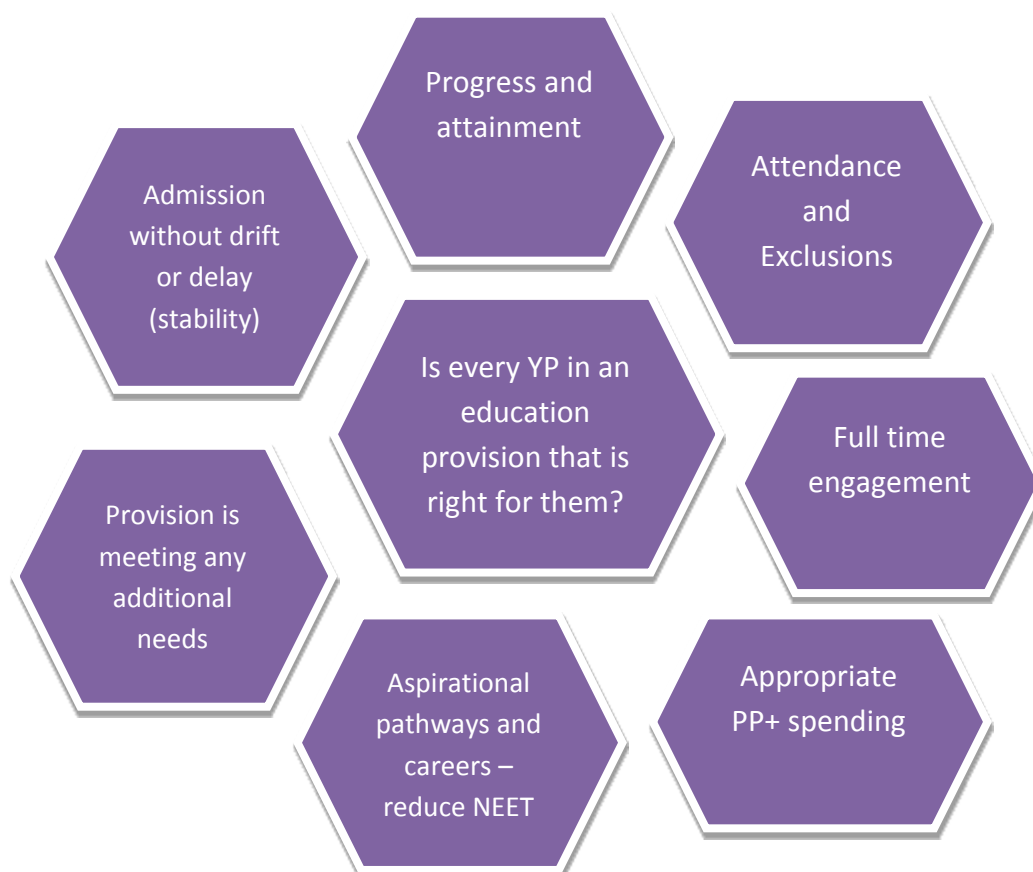
Green = Area doing well

Amber = further work needed

Red = High priority for action

Ensuring all children and young people in care are in an education provision that is right for them

Key focus areas



2. Remit and operation of the Virtual School in Cheshire East

Local authorities have a duty under the Children Act 1989 to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child looked after by them. This includes a particular duty to promote the child's education achievement, wherever they live or are educated. The authority must therefore give particular attention to the educational implications of any decision about the welfare of those children. The local authority is required to appoint a Virtual School Headteacher (VSH) for the purpose of discharging the local authority's duty to promote the educational achievement of its looked after children, wherever they live or are educated.

The maxim of the Cheshire East Virtual School is to "Engage, Achieve and Progress". The Virtual School operates in such a way as to follow the Statutory Guidance to Local Authorities in the document "Promoting the education of looked after children" (DfE, Feb 2018). This requires the local authority to ensure that there are systems in place which promote good education provision for cared for children and to monitor that these are in place. In Cheshire East this duty is taken further by ensuring that every young person in care has a named Virtual School Advisor linked to their case can provide challenge support to schools, carers and social workers. This in turn helps to ensure that there is suitable education in place, champion the needs of the child

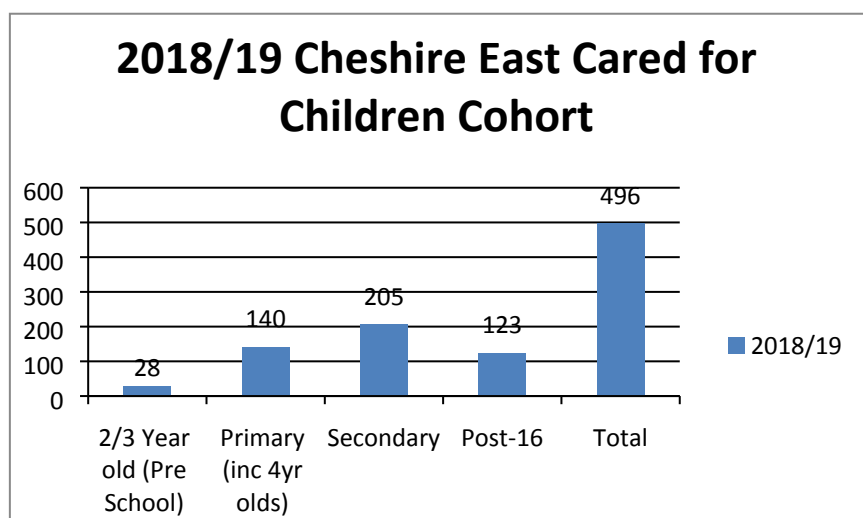
and challenge and support education providers to ensure that they make suitable arrangements to allow the child to reach their full potential. This is carried out through termly PEP (Personal Education Plan) meetings with additional meetings and activities put into place for those with the highest level of need. The service is provided to all children in care up to the end of the school year in which they become 18 and is available to older young people on request.

During Ofsted's focused inspection of children's services visit to Cheshire East at the end of October inspectors stated:

- Children are well-supported with their education through the Virtual Schools Team
- When children's placements change, the head of the virtual school has proactively secured funding and appropriate education placements for children. This ensures that children, including those in placements out of the local area, have continuity of provision.

3. School Roll

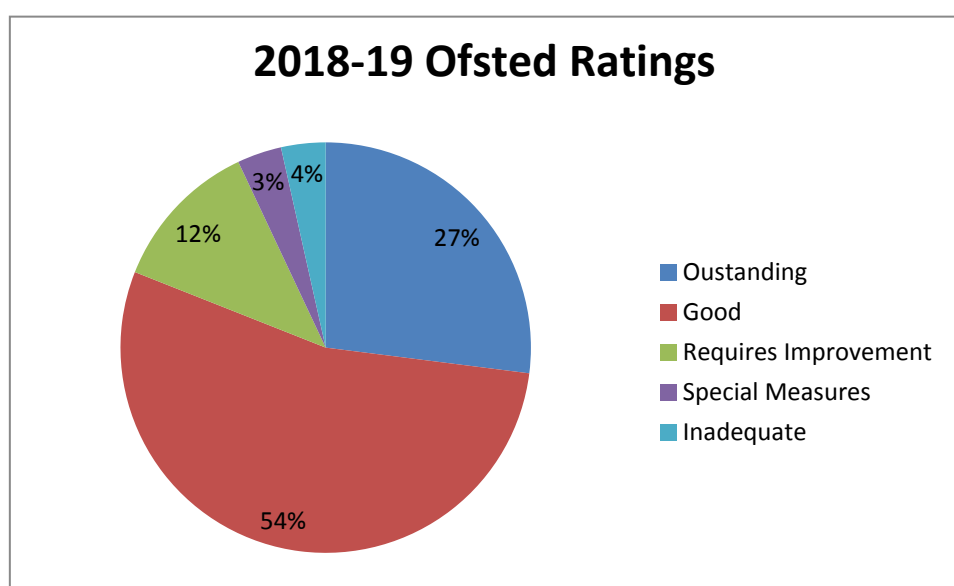
At the end of the 2018/19 academic year there were 496 Cared for Children on Cheshire East Virtual School roll this was an increase from 466 recorded for the same time 17/18, of these 382 were of school age. Cheshire East Cared for Children from Reception to Year 11 attended 166 different schools in 37 different Local Authorities. Of these 26% attended Cheshire East schools. 73% of our children attend schools in the North West.



4. Ofsted Ratings

The statutory guidance states that schools judged by Ofsted to be 'Good' or 'Outstanding' should be prioritised for Cared for children. If any Cheshire East child is placed in a school rated below 'Good' then Virtual School Advisors will visit every school prior to any child being placed to ensure that pastoral and curriculum support is of a good standard. Advisors attend PEPs and track progress at regular intervals throughout the year of all children in schools graded below Good, to ensure that children are making progress. Risk assessments are completed immediately when schools grades are moved below Good following Ofsted inspection to ensure that the needs of the child are being met.

The chart below shows the proportion of pupils attending schools with identified Ofsted ratings:



5. Special Educational Needs

At the end of academic year 2018/19 there were 146 children with identified SEND needs 37% of Reception to Year 11 cohort. Of these 85 had an EHCP, and 56 with either School Support or a School Focus Plan. There are a further 34 Post-16 learners with EHCPs which equates to 27% of Post-16 cohort.

The Virtual School has an identified SEN lead advisor who meets with the cared for lead person from the SEND team every 2 weeks. This is to review cases to ensure effective and timeliness interventions are in place, plans are finalised and advice received. The primary focus is to ensure that school moves between schools are timely and well planned. This is particularly important if school moves are out of county.

There is also a focus on children where Needs Assessments are being granted and to ensure that plans are formed quickly for children and can therefore access specialist support. This has been in place since August 2018 and already consistency and collaborative working across teams has shown improvement. A tracking document is in place to store and monitor information and this is reviewed and updated following each meeting. A checklist has been created to ensure that protocols are procedures are clear and in place for individual children. The Virtual School Head teacher attends

SEND panel every 2 weeks. As best practise we recommend that PEPs and Annual Reviews are held together within schools.

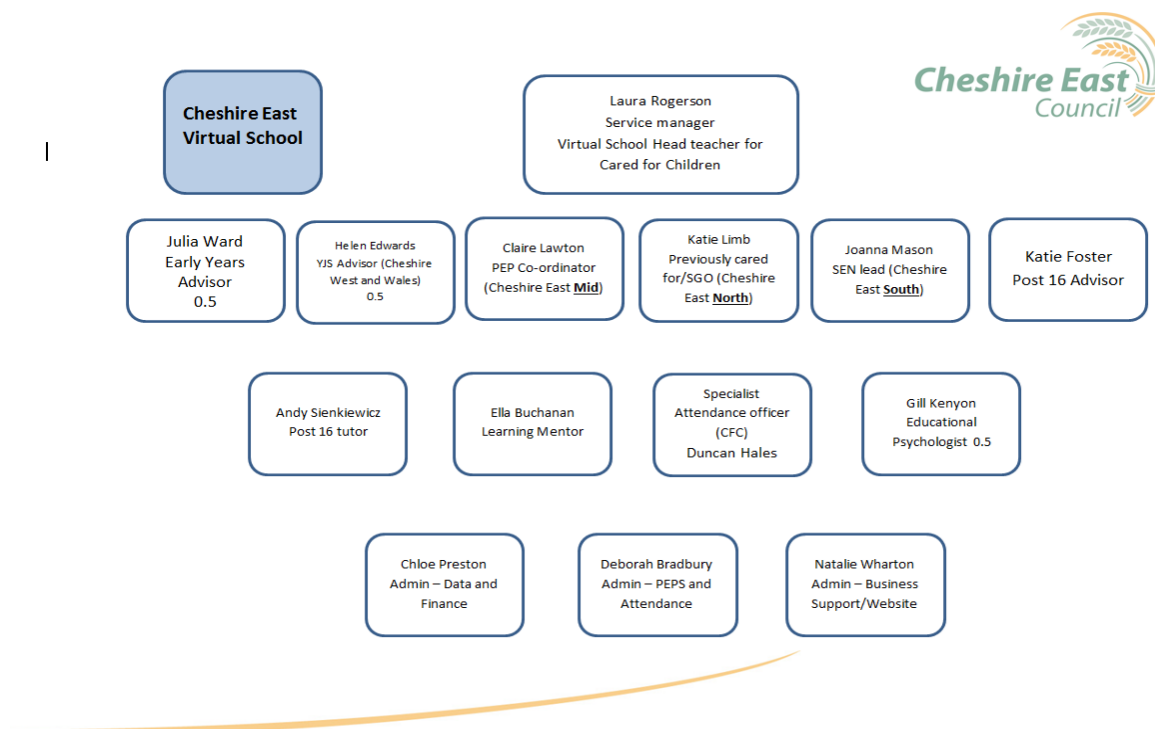
The Virtual School established links with SEN teams in all areas to ensure that children are in the correct school and making progress as quickly as possible. Advisors are involved if an application for a needs assessment is made and will be contacted by the SEN team to request any contextual data which may impact on the decision. If a child has a plan then school are asked to review the EHCP at a PEP meeting so that the EHCP targets can be reflected in the PEP although these are not the same as the PEP actions are usually quite short/medium term and specific while the EHCP outcomes are more generalised or long term.

If a school or carer feel that needs are not being met, the Virtual School will work with school to ensure that due process is followed and all necessary documents are submitted to the relevant SEN team. There can be a delay when finding a new school for an SEN Child, particularly if placed out of Cheshire East while consultations take place and funding agreements are made. Protocols and procedures are now in place to address this.

For SEN cases the following additional support mechanisms were agreed and implemented

- Virtual School to inform SEN of planned moves for cared for children at the earliest point
- Advisors to provide summary of history to be included in consultation documents
- Virtual School head teacher supports the consultation process at each stage to ensure this is sent and responded to in timely manner to ensure there is no drift or delay
- Advisors to provide names of possible schools for consultation as well as those identified by SEN
- Advisor will support visits/observations and communication with potential schools
- Child not to be placed in school without agreement of Virtual School
- Named SEN worker assigned to oversee cases of cared for children
- Guidelines for other councils produced to speed up process of finding schools for children living outside Cheshire East
- Liaison with SEN staff on how to record needs of children not attending or frequently changing schools
- Virtual School to put in place tuition/provision while awaiting a new school place to support ongoing learning and stability within placement

(Staffing structure 2019-20)



6. Staffing and Organisation

The make-up and nature of the Virtual School Team is kept under review to ensure that the skills available match the needs of the cohort. During this academic year school age advisors will be working in localities to facilitate improved support to schools and develop working groups within locality areas to develop training and share best practise.

The team has evolved to provide more direct contact with children and young people so that the support can be more closely tailored to needs and monitored. Tuition is made available to young people to provide additional after school sessions to help prepare for exams or when pupils are between schools by use of agency staff if schools cannot provide the tutor. The Learning Mentor has been employed to work with children in school with SEMH or high levels of anxiety or are at risk of exclusion and who require support in addition to that which the school can provide, the learning mentor can offer targeted support within a range of specialist areas also supporting to empower and train school staff to support children.

The amount of support available from the Education Psychology Service has increased from 2016 and will be reviewed further to see if this is sufficient to give advice and support to schools around children with challenging or complex behaviour.

Monthly staff supervisions are arranged for all staff to discuss their own wellbeing and workload and also to raise any cases that need input from the Virtual School Head teacher (VSH). In addition there are regular team meetings, where the team can receive updates from Senior Managers and the performance of the team can be discussed. All staff are invited to identify training needs which will

allow them to be more effective in their role or any specific area of interest. In addition to this the Virtual School Head teacher meets with advisors every 3 weeks to review Attendance, Attainment, Exclusions and Children causing concern to allow for swift intervention at all stages.

During 2018/19 all staff have been offered courses on attachment and signs of safety, all attended development days and all staff have been offered access to Mental Health First Aiders within the council to support their own emotional wellbeing. All staff have access to all council training including our learning lounge with a range of online courses such as GDPR to support their own professional development.

The VSH is a member of the NWVSH group and also of the National Association of VSH, (NAVSH) and through this network the Virtual School is able to keep abreast of current developments such as new guides for previously looked after, adopted and special guardianship children. This group are working together to develop a range of regional guides.

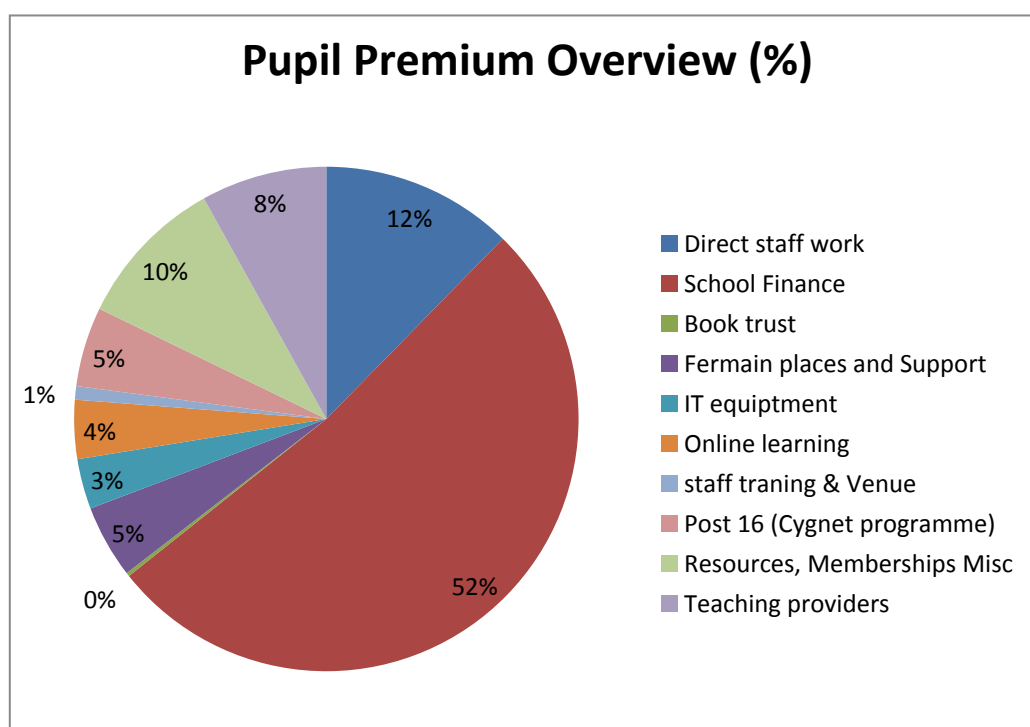
The VSH has regular supervision with the Head of Service for Pupil Participation and completes a monthly scorecard for the Director of Education and Skills as a means to monitor progress. This gives a detailed breakdown of the performance of the VS and key indicators are extracted to be included on the Corporate Parent Scorecard.

The team are a very highly motivated and committed group of professionals who always act in the best interests of the child. During 2018/19 there has been a very low level of absence amongst the team with no long term sickness or stress. The Virtual School Headteacher uses the behaviours toolkit effectively to support 'conversations' and team meetings/activities.



7. Funding

The Virtual School's main budget is the Pupil Premium Plus which is devolved to the Local Authority and is to be used as seen appropriate by the VSH as to best promote achievement and progress. The amount which is made available to the LA is £1900 per child in care as reported on the March return but the guidance makes clear that while it is expected that the majority of this is used for direct support of children, it does not need to be allocated equally as some children will need less than £1900 and some will need considerably more. The funding criteria also states that the Pupil Premium can be used to fund staff or central services such as training as long as they have a direct impact on improving the experience and outcomes for children.



The main use of Pupil Premium was to fund 1:1 or small group teaching, support to enhance social and emotional skills and purchase of specific resources. The remaining funds have been used to provide high cost support for children with particular needs. These include; attending high cost alternative provision for children without SEN who cannot manage mainstream school, providing a series of off-site support such as animal therapy or forest schools, having a weekly work placement to add variety and help prepare for the world or work or funding specialist support such as bereavement counselling. Significant funds were also allocated to schools and children to prepare for exams or to prepare for transition. In almost all cases this helped children to increase their skills and knowledge before the exams but always improved their preparation and confidence. In 2018/19 the total amount received was £890,100.

All school age children in care were allocated Pupil Premium (PP) once the PEP was returned to describe how this would be spent and in some cases funding was allocated to children outside this age range if the need was evident. For example a nursery child with the need for additional speech and language support or a post-16 young person not in education who wished to take up a work

placement to gain skills and confidence. Some school age children did not have a basic allocation if the school felt it had all the resources needed, such as an independent special school which already receives a high level of funding or if the Virtual school was arranging and funding provision such as tuition or off-site learning. In most cases funding is transferred to the school but in some cases funding is used centrally, for example purchase of laptops and book parcels for young children to encourage love of reading and improving literacy. Although the funding formula is based on the number of school age children, requests for children in pre-school or post-16 are also considered. We have funded speech and language intervention within a number of our pre-school nurseries following analysis of our attainment which clearly shown this was an area of need within our younger children.

The virtual school has purchased starting school packs/bags for all children:

- Starting school
- Starting year 7
- Starting Year 11 exam packs
- Starting college exam packs

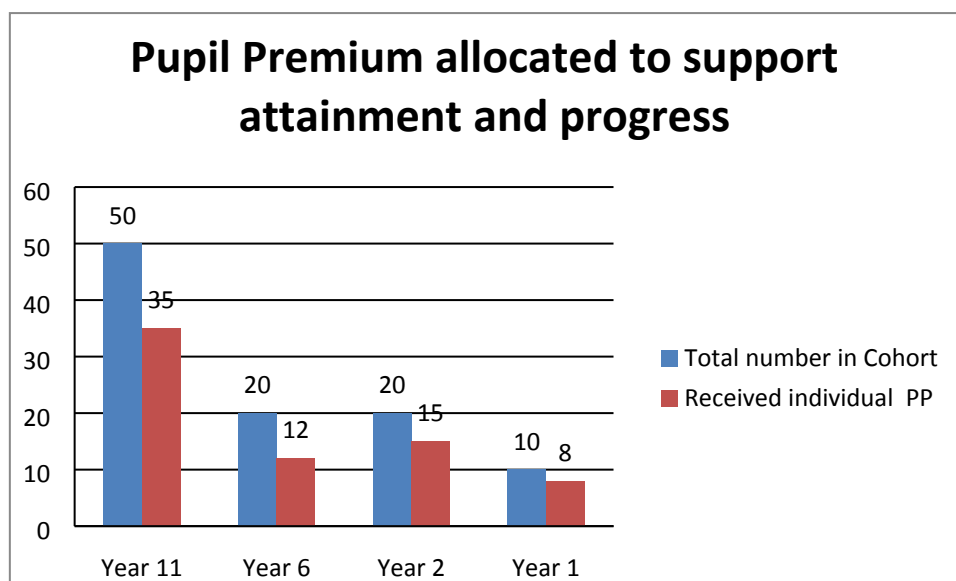
We have received some positive feedback from schools and children on the supply and purchase of these bags.

"I just wanted to say thank you for the bags which Virtual School gave to our 2 Cared for Children. Their little faces lit up when I handed them over this afternoon and it was the first thing they showed their dad when he collected them after school tonight. Something so simple but very kind made two little boys very happy! (Primary school designated lead)

The Virtual School have also supported children to access recreational activities where they would not normally have access such as: Horse riding, Music lessons such as Flute, Piano and Guitar, Swimming therapy, Pony camp and Drama/Acting lessons.

The Virtual School also has an additional budget to fund the Cygnet programme for post 16 to support to reduce NEET figures.

In April 2017, a system was introduced which moved away from a standard allocation but asks schools to give a spending plan for each child. All requests are then considered by the advisor and the Virtual School Head teacher and funding allocated accordingly. The average amount paid per child was almost £1650 and the most frequent support requests were for 1:1 sessions to focus on social and emotional support such as nurture sessions, play/bereavement therapy or meet/greet/review sessions. Funding was also requested when children were at risk of exclusion and this was used to provide additional support or fund alternative provision/off site provision. Funding was made available to schools when a new child joined (following a placement move) so that they could implement an integration plan which involved having regular review and observations to identify any areas of need. In total, requests were received and funding allocated for 260 children and 75 were given laptops



Impact of Pupil Premium

Monitoring systems within the virtual school mean that the impact of Pupil Premium can be observed, although it should be recognised that cared for children are subject to so many changes, such as placement moves or changes in contact arrangements that it is difficult to draw any absolute causal links. PEPs have been adapted this year and now include a section to review each target linked to funding specifically. Within every PEP schools are requested to review and show clear impact of funding allocated. This allows us to monitor interventions and support each term for individual children.

Case Study – Impact of PP

Student A attended a mainstream school and from the start of year 10 quickly disengaged. He was placed in residential care and over the course of the first term of year 10 had attendance below 20%. Various interventions were tried including one to one tutoring, a reduced timetable, online learning and a course at a local college but with no impact and attendance continued to decrease. The Virtual School then sourced a placement at a new provision at the RSPCA that we had not used before designed for Key Stage 4. This was really positive and ended up in the student having a placement one day a week as part of a bespoke timetable. He was placed in an alternative provision in Stoke where his attendance started to pick up very slowly but was still around 40%. A meeting was held and the student informed that he would need to fully engage in school in order to continue with the placement. This had an effect as the placement was so successful. The VS paid using PP+ for a full year at both the AP and the RSPCA. He started to engage in school and consider his longer term aspirations of either becoming an RSPCA warden or dog handler. He also attended events at the RSPCA at the weekend. He completed year 11 in July 2019 sitting 5 GCSEs. Following leaving school he continued to work in his own time at the RSPCA and was successful in gaining a traineeship starting Sept 2019 which has been arranged through the Virtual School directly with RSPCA. He is making exceptional progress and also completing English and Maths each week at the centre with one of the Virtual school tutors. He is due to be offered a full time two year apprenticeship following the traineeship

The PEP is the document which records the children's education provision, achievements and how the school or other provider will help to improve their outcomes. It is the joint responsibility of the local authority and school to ensure that there are PEPs in place and the Virtual School has the duty to monitor these and provide advice and support as necessary. The PEP should be reviewed each term at a meeting between school, carers and social workers. The Virtual School attends all initial PEPs for children and young people between the ages of two and eighteen years old.

While the PEP document is mainly to support children of school age, Cheshire East also provides a similar service to children of pre-school age and those between 16-18 who are included in the Raising of the Participation Age cohort, (school years 12 and 13) although advice and support is available in request to children under 2 and young people in care or care leavers over 18.

The completion rate of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) has risen to over 90% as has the percentage completed to a good or better standard this is due to the robust quality assurance process that is in place within the Virtual School team and training offered to schools through the Designated Lead teachers network events which allows staff in all schools to access practical working sessions to look at outstanding PEPs to allow self-evaluation and development of their own systems. The Virtual School developed and trailed an ePEP during academic year 2017/18 with 7 schools across Cheshire East which will reduce the paperwork and time needed for the PEP process without any loss of quality. Following a trial period this has deemed to be successful by schools and we have now rolled this out to all Primary and Secondary Schools. We have continued to develop the ePEP following feedback from trial schools to further enhance the quality and content of the PEP. During this academic year we are further developing to introduce a new ePEP design for early years and post 16 providers.

Within Cheshire East the Virtual School takes an active role in the PEP process and the cases of all the children which means that prompt action can be taken when issues arise that require specialist education input. Since 2017 the system for checking and loading of PEPs have been simplified using Liquid Logic, as a result of this there has been a significant improvement in the number of cases where the initial PEP is fully completed and loaded within 20 days, with an average rate of completion of 18.5 days overall.

Virtual schools attend all initial PEP meetings and complete the first PEP which will provide a template and standard for future PEPs. This includes ensuring actions and targets are specific and measurable. These PEPs should be held within 20 working days and be available for the first cared for review meeting. The Virtual School also takes responsibility for ensuring that PEP is provided to the Social Worker in readiness for the initial review. PEPs are reviewed each term with the education provider taking a lead in these by reviewing the impact of the previous actions, update the PEP and return to the Virtual School. Support and training is available to assist schools, settings or colleges with the PEP process. There is a robust Quality Assurance process in place within the Virtual School team where each case is reviewed to establish its support needs. Those with the highest support needs are rated as RED, in which case the advisor will attend all PEPs and probably have more frequent contact with the child, carer, school and Social Worker. Cases rated as AMBER have slightly less contact with the advisor whilst those rated as GREEN are monitored with attendance at one PEP

per year. Virtual School are unable to attend all PEP meetings, therefore the criteria for Virtual School involvement is:

- New into care
- School or placement move
- Moved out of Borough
- Red rated cases
- Repeat exclusions
- Attendance below 90%
- Need for independent chair

This year there has been a drive to ensure that all PEPs are completed and loaded onto the child's case with a particular focus on those of school age where it is important to monitor progress. PEPs are deemed unsatisfactory if key information is not provided or if a previous PEP has been amended and it is unclear if information refers to the current or previous PEP. Most PEPs rated as satisfactory are giving this grade because interventions are not specific or because the intended outcomes are not expressed in ways which can be evaluated.

Although the Virtual School Advisor does not attend all PEP meetings, they often do so for the more complex cases and in these situations can be a crucial and consistent link for the child. For example when a child is awaiting a new school or cannot attend school due to mental health issues the advisor will visit the child at home and make sure they have access to some tuition and learning and that this, where possible, includes a chance to include some social interaction.

The quality of the PEP is the joint responsibility of the local authority that looked after the child and the school. Social workers, carers, VSHs, Designated Teachers and, as appropriate, other relevant professionals will need to work closely together. Social Workers have been asked to prioritise attendance at PEP meetings so that they gain essential information about their child, the Virtual School headteacher has attended and led workshop sessions during social workers development day to give clear guidance on PEP process and procedures. As well as updates on their attainment and progress this should include discussion of their attitude, emotional state, friendships etc. If a child has a statement or Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) then one of PEP meetings is run alongside the annual SEN review. This will ensure targets in the EHCP can be addressed through the PEP and that Social Workers and carers have the chance to review the impact of the SEN support for the child. In September 2018 an SEN lead within the Virtual School team has been identified, an SEN tracking document developed and meetings take place every two weeks with SEN team to review all Cared for Children who either have a current SEN status or are under assessment, this information can then be shared through all advisors and be included in all PEPs, this has improved the timeliness of actions and interventions for SEND children, the Virtual School Headteacher is also a core member of the SEND panel which is held every 2 weeks. The Virtual School Head has delivered training to all SEND workers to support sharing information of how all staff can improve the education of cared for children as a corporate parent.

There is a rigorous Quality Assurance (QA) process which has been developed jointly by the Virtual School and the Designated Teachers, this has ensured that the quality of PEPs have increased and

continues to support schools to develop their own practise, this is reviewed each year to ensure process is robust. All PEPs are quality assured by each advisor and each term there is a robust moderation process led by the Virtual School Headteacher to support further improving the quality of all PEPs and to share best practise. A total of 194 summer term PEPs were quality assured and RAG rated for individual children using the following criteria.

OUTCOMES AND EVENTS	PEP RATING	Virtual School Support ACTION
Attendance below 80%	RED	
Episode of FTE since last PEP		Attend next PEP
Planned or possible placement move		Consider calling emergency PEP
Progress below expected for all subjects		Contact Headteacher re concerns
School move planned		Raise concerns with Social Worker
School rated as inadequate/special measures		Offer observation and planning
Attainment below age expected	AMBER	
Attendance between 80% and 90%		
Attendance between 90% and 95%		
Attendance has fallen since last PEP		Call school to discuss case
Attends school outside Cheshire East		Request specific additional information
Attends Special School (maintained or independent)		Call school before next PEP to assess progress
DT is new to post		Contact DT to offer staff training
Episode of FTE in past		Arrange to visit school to meet DT
Has recently moved school		Set up monitoring plan for interventions
In Y11 or Y6		
Lives in residential provision		
Previous PEP targets not achieved		
Progress below expected rate for 1 subjects		
School rated as RI		
Attainment equal to age expected	GREEN	
Attainment above age expected		
Attendance above 95%		Aim to attend 1 PEP per year
Attends school inside Cheshire East		Do not attend next PEP
DT is experienced		Offer advice and support if needed
In year other than 6 or 11		
Placement secure		
Previous PEP targets have been met		

Development of an ePEP

The Virtual School has worked with the Cheshire East Project Development group to develop an ePEP on Liquid Logic. The initial trials started in September 2017 with a pilot group of 7 schools. Due to the sensitive nature of the information being transferred there is a need for several data sharing agreements to be in place before access to the ePEP is granted. Schools using the ePEP are now finding it easier, our aim is to have all primary and secondary schools on ePEP by June 2020, we have further improved the content of the ePEP following feedback and have developed a signs of safety approach and format and have put more emphasis on SMART targets ensuring pupil premium is reviewed in detail for impact. We are further developing during next year to introduce ePEPs for Early Years and Post 16 to align and ensure consistency across all years.

9. School Admissions

The Virtual School are responsible for ensuring that every child has access to suitable education. Where possible and appropriate school moves will be avoided as it has been recognised that school can be a consistent and stabilising feature of a child's life. If a move is essential then the following principles apply:

- Educational provision should mean a full-time place.
- Schools judged by Ofsted to be 'good' or 'outstanding' should be prioritised for Cared or Children in need of a new school.
- The choice of education setting should be based on what any good parent would want for their child. It should be based on evidence that the setting can meet the educational needs of the child and help them make the maximum progress.
- The child's wishes and feelings should be taken into account and the suitability of the education setting tested by arranging an informal visit with the child.

Children move schools for a number of reasons which include

- Change of foster placement which means that continuing at current school is unrealistic
- Carers move house which means that continuing at current school is unrealistic
- Change to live with adopters
- Change of school if proximity to social contacts/family are having a strong negative impact on the child's progress and learning
- Change when school can longer meet needs (SEN or non-SEN)

Cared for children are given the highest priority under school admission arrangements and the usual fair access protocols do not apply. The Virtual School works with Head teachers to make sure that any admission is made as swiftly as possible. Where schools are reluctant to offer places the Virtual School will consider making appeals or directing schools to admit. In 2018-19 there were no appeals made and no directions needed. All children for whom a place in primary and secondary schools were requested were allocated a place swiftly. The Virtual School works with all schools who are admitting a child to offer support, with funding if needed to ensure a smooth integration. Where children are placed in schools rated below 'Good' a clear risk assessment process is in place to review the provision, advisors attend all PEP meetings throughout the academic year to ensure progress, attainment and support is reviewed termly.

10. Attendance

The Virtual School monitors attendance of all cared for children by commissioning an independent company, Welfare Call, to contact schools to collect a record of attendance.

Attendance at both primary and secondary has decreased this year with the average primary attendance falling from 95% to 90% and the average secondary attendance falling from 93% to 90%.

Attendance in secondary school shows an inevitable decrease in May/June while Y11 pupils are taking exams and subsequently recorded as study leave, this occurs in all schools.

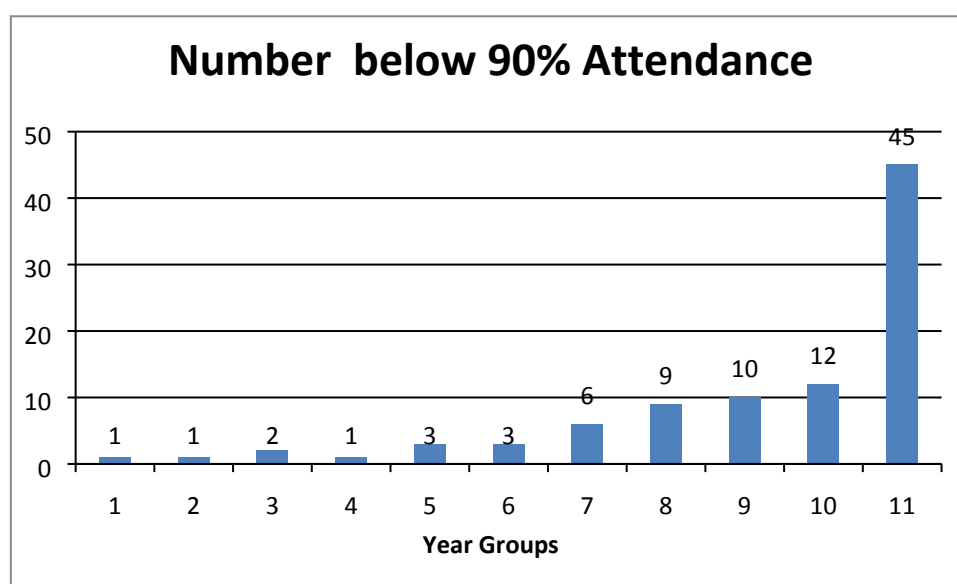
100% attendance	99% and above attendance	98% and above attendance	Below 90%
51 children	103	149	93
15%	30%	44%	27%

All Children with 100% attendance received a letter and certificate from the Virtual School in recognition of this achievement.

Below 90% Special	Below 90% Primary	Below 90% Secondary
20 Children	7 children	66 children

There were 93 children whose attendance fell below 90% and would be considered persistently absentees. This is 27% of the Reception- Year 11 cohort; this has increased from 19% in 2017/18 and 15% in 2016/17.

There were 143 children who experienced placement moves in 2018/19. Approximately 42% of the statutory school age cohort. 30 children moved 2 times, 3 children moved three times, 4 children moved 4 times and 1 child moved 5 times.



Actions taken to improve attendance

- Set up regular tracking meetings with SEN to monitor progress and avoid delays with EHCP and schools changes
- Clear tracking document has been created and fortnight meetings with advisors are in place to review attendance of all children
- Attendance data is shared at corporate parenting workstream groups to support sharing and communicating information

- Work closely with social care to avoid delay in starting school or applying for school places where placement changes occur
- Hold emergency PEPs in cases of repeat exclusions, involving Education Psychologist if appropriate
- Appointed a new specialist attendance officer for 2019/20 with a focus on improving attendance of cared for children. To track and monitor attendance daily and support children, schools, carers and family to improve attendance.
- Inform Supervising Social Workers so that carers can be encouraged and supported to help improve attendance

11. Exclusions

The Virtual School has a duty to work with Head teachers to try and avoid excluding a cared for child and to make sure that he have the support in place to thrive and make progress. During 2018/19 the Virtual School has been quick in its response to exclusion or threat of exclusions so that a joint plan for the child can be implemented which identifies any key triggers and also instances when the inappropriate behaviour does not occur and these strengths can be built on. If an exclusion was unavoidable then there were similar meeting held afterwards to try and avoid any further instances. Schools or carers are asked to inform the Virtual School whenever an exclusion takes place and usually the advisor will call the school to find out more. In the case of repeat exclusions, additional PEPs will be held to check that all necessary support is being given.

The Virtual School has commissioned places at the Fermain Alternative Provision in Macclesfield and this has contributed to the reduction in repeat exclusions and total number of session lost with identified KS4 children. The Fermain staff have been trained in how to support children with insecure attachment and Pupil premium funding has been used to help provide a mentor/key worker to support our children as a cared for champion. There have been no cases of permanent exclusion in academic year 2018/19 with only 2 fixed term exclusions recorded for primary age children. There still seems to be a higher number of fixed term exclusions at secondary school which is that of the national picture, the Virtual School Headteacher is working alongside the Northwest Virtual Head group to design a regional guide to support reducing exclusions and offer advice and guidance to schools.

	Proportion of pupils subject to fixed term exclusion	Average Number of days lost per pupil
2016/17	13%	4 days
2017/18	10%	4 days
2018/19	12%	5 days

12. Participation of young people

The Virtual School recognises that young people are at the heart of all its work and that to be effective in helping young people to succeed in education, their wishes and feelings must be listened to.

All young people are invited to contribute to their PEPs, either by attending the meeting or by sharing their thoughts on the 'My Voice' form which can be presented at the meeting on their behalf. Action plans are influenced by this input in a variety of ways such as:

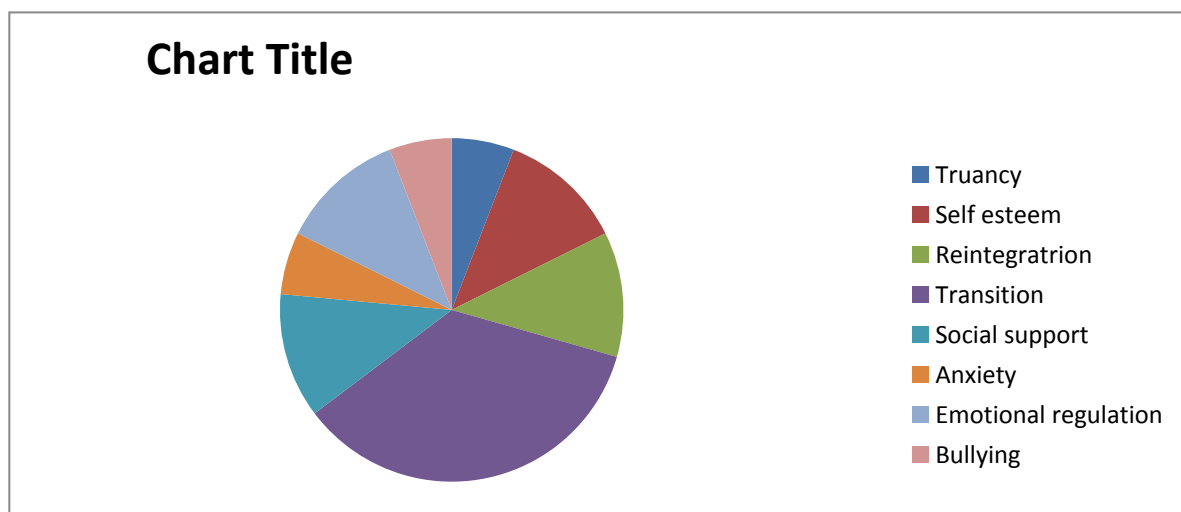
- Deciding what subjects to have tutoring in and when/where this takes place,
- Determining the order in which topics are addressed in revision,
- Agreeing targets for improvement in attendance or behaviour,
- Identifying any particular issues in school which show a staff training need
- Deciding whether additional adult support, eg mentor is required.

The voice of young people is included in staff appointments and children have participated on interview panels this year. They were involved in planning the questions and identifying the desirable qualities and had an equal say with other panel members when the decisions were made. The 'My voice' document has been developed this year following a working group session led by the Virtual School Head teacher with a number of Cared for Children and Careleavers who supported redesigning this document in line with Signs of Safety. The feedback from children and schools of the new format has been positive. The participation team attend all corporate parenting workstream meetings to ensure that information around education is shared and communicated effectively.

Where children are not attaining and are struggling in school the VS advisor works 1-1 to gain understanding from the child of what support can be put in place. The Virtual School has employed a learning mentor who is working 1-1 with children referred due to SEMH or high levels of anxiety who need extra support that schools are not able to offer, she works closely with schools to empower and train staff to continue support children. From May-July the learning mentor set up a transition group to work with children in Year 6 transitioning to high school, many sessions were focused on the needs identified by the children.

13. Learning Mentor

Virtual School has a full time learning mentor who was newly appointed March 2019, the main aim is to work with school aged children to support Social, Emotional mental health and transition, in particular when children have had a placement or school change or where children have high levels of anxiety. The learning mentor works alongside Designated Teachers and other agencies to support Cared for Children to overcome barriers to learning.



Our Learning mentor follows different programmes of study depending on the needs of the child and consults with professionals and carers prior to planning this. This multi-faceted approach aims to upskill the schools and carers enabling them to provide a consistent approach which can be maintained once the direct work with the Learning Mentor (LM) ceases. The focus of work with young people has included:

- Joined up work for Y6-Y7 transition
- Support in reintegrating back into mainstream provision
- 1:1 Anxiety CBT intervention
- How to manage challenging social interactions and friendships
- Support around emotional regulation and the exploration of feelings

Our LM draws from training from an Educational Psychologist (EP) in Emotional Literacy Support (ELSA), Mental Health First Aid and Emotion Coaching in order to support the young people she works with and carries out pre and post assessments to measure impact. The ELSA training in particular has enabled our LM to become skilled in how to deal with the following:

- Emotional literacy
- Building resilience and self-esteem
- Story work, bereavement and loss
- Puppet work, active listening and reflective conversations
- Understanding feelings, social and friendship skills

The Learning mentor has worked with 17 children since April. Throughout next year we will be developing the role of the learning mentor to work with schools to use a range of toolkits to allow for specific identification of needs.

Case study

A was referred to the learning mentor to support her move to a new school following a lack of engagement and deterioration in behavior at her previous school, as well as a number of placement breakdowns.

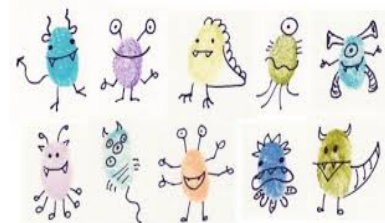
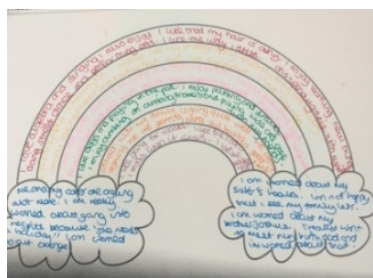
A was very anxious and resistant to starting at her new school and initially completed online learning in the school library. To begin with the LM visited A 3 times a week at school to develop a strong relationship with her.

In summer term the LM supported A in 3 identified lessons a week and A began to complete her online learning in the SEND room with peers.

In September 2019 A was to attend lessons full time with support from the LM and an LSA funded by the VS. The LM did a 'meet and greet' with A for the first two weeks, went into form followed by first lesson.

The LM is now gradually reducing the amount of time supporting A in school as she begins to develop relationships with school staff.

The aim is that, by November, A is attending lessons full time and the LM will complete sessions around anxiety and self esteem.



'Are you the VS? I like it when you come and help me with my feelings. Like when I'm angry' (YP)

I really appreciate everything the VS has done for A in finding him a new school. You have all been very supportive' (carer)

'We have seen a vast improvement in H's ability to regulate his emotions since he has been doing work with the VS. We really appreciate the support you have given to H's teacher around supporting him positively' (SENDCo)

A has a good relationship with both her VS LM and advisor and recently stated that she 'wouldn't have gone into lessons without you (LM) as I get too nervous and everybody stares. I want to be in lessons and make friends now.' (YP)

14. Post 16 Tutor

1:1 tuitions are offered to 16-18 years old. Most of the young people taking part are currently NEET and/or have no formal qualifications. If there is a need and there is a capacity within the caseload, 1:1 tuition is also offered to under-16 and over-18 years old. The purpose of 1:1 tuition is to gain qualifications, improve confidence, to engage in other positive activities and progress to EET.

1:1 Tuition Offer:

Functional Skills Maths and English. Every student gets access to an online learning resource (bksb). Students take an Initial Assessment test to determine current level. Then Individual Learning Plan is created and the student follows that plan, using learning resources provided.

During the last academic year, 100% of the students who attempted, have passed their Functional Skills Exams and gained qualifications.

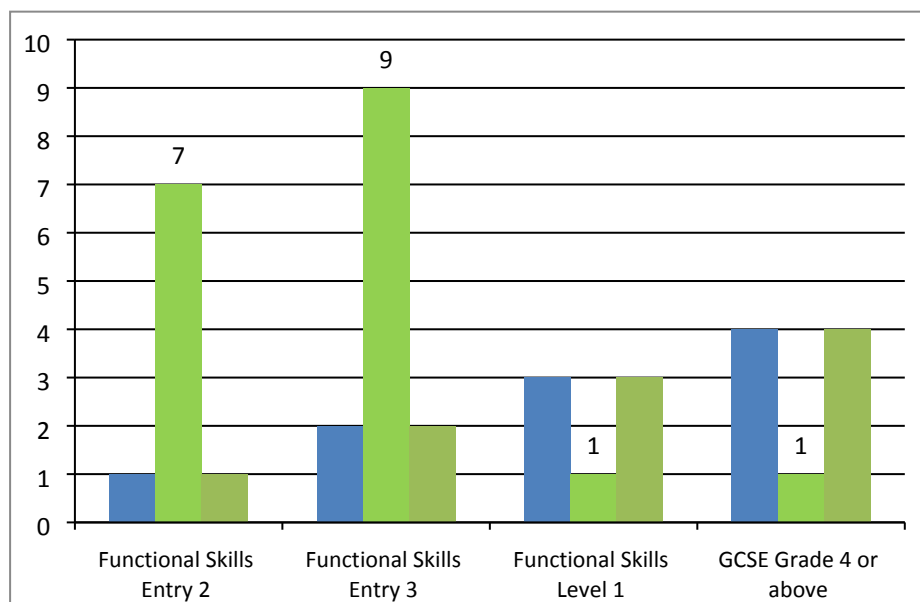


Fig. 1 Qualifications achieved in 2019, from January to September

GCSE Maths and English

Students must be enrolled on a GCSE course with college/other provider VS will support with process.

Additional support is offered to UASC young people who are currently on ESOL courses

ESOL - Teaching ESOL to UASC Young People, who are currently awaiting to enrol to an ESOL course. Students are working at their individual pace and create a portfolio of activities covered in 16 topics of ESOL Activities. Main aim is to introduce English to non-speakers (Pre-Entry Level) and to boost their language skills at Levels Entry 1 and Entry 2.

Student 1	Ascentis Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Speaking and Listening, Writing, Reading) (Entry 2) (QCF)
Student 2	Ascentis Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Speaking and Listening, Writing, Reading) (Entry 2) (QCF)
Student 3	Ascentis Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Speaking and Listening) (Entry 3) (QCF) Ascentis Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Writing) (Entry 2) (QCF) Ascentis Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Reading) (Entry 2) (QCF)
Student 4	Ascentis Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Speaking and Listening) (Entry 2) (QCF) Ascentis Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Writing) (Entry 1) (QCF) Ascentis Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Reading) (Entry 1) (QCF)
Student 5	Pre-Entry (not regulated provision)
Student 6	Pre-Entry (not regulated provision)
Student 7	Currently studying ESOL at Entry 1
Student 8	Currently studying ESOL at Entry 1
Student 9	Currently studying ESOL at Entry 1

Fig. 2 ESOL Qualifications achieved in Academic Year 2018/2019

- Support to catch up with outstanding work for college/other provider's courses e.g. Health and Social Care, Painting and Decorating, Hair and Beauty, Employability, etc.
- Support of the Cygnet Programme (12 weeks work experience with 1:1 tuition of Functional Skills Maths and English)
- Short courses offered by Cheshire East Council Learning Lounge (e.g. Food Safety level 1)

Case Study

Background:

18 years old, NEET, anxiety (don't leave home without presence of the parent or professional)

Reason for referral:

To achieve Maths qualifications, to engage in positive activities

Intervention:

YP initially agreed to 1:1 tuition. Tutor was introduced by PA and YP agreed to meet tutor at the library for Initial Assessment. After several unsuccessful attempts to engage the student, it was decided that PA will attend tuition sessions until YP feels confident to attend unsupported.

YP completed Initial Assessment test. The outcome of the test, clear ILP and Solution-Focused approach, encouraged YP to continue with tuition. After the first session with PA, YP has decided to attend sessions without presence of PA.

Outcomes:

YP started to attend sessions regularly and has passed Functional Skills Maths Entry 2 and Entry 3 exams.

YP continues 1:1 tuition; working towards Maths Level 1

YP has engaged in 1:1 sessions with volunteer, learning crocheting (this was set up by VS as YP expressed an interest in wanting to learn).

15. Partnership working

Partnership working is crucial to the effectiveness of the Virtual School and we recognise our role in part of a team with a child at the heart. The Virtual School is one part of the corporate parent body that works to look after children in care and we recognise that in order to be effective we need to have close working relationships with our partners. Teams with the council with whom the Virtual School works are:

- Social Care – social workers, care leavers, fostering and cared for support therapeutic teams attending all resource and accommodation panel meetings weekly to support sharing information on education when placements moves are being considered/sourced. Attending stability meetings with social workers and carers. Supporting the organisation of annual STAR awards to celebrate the successes of our children.
- Special Education Needs and Disabilities Team, Virtual School Headteacher is a core member of SEND panel which takes place every 2 weeks.
- Youth Justice Service, with an YJS advisor who works part-time within the virtual school team
- Youth Support Service – monthly meetings to support interventions to reduce NEET
- Early Years Team, with an advisor who works part-time within the virtual school team
- Educational Psychology Service, with a senior EP who works part-time within the virtual school team
- Corporate parenting, with the Virtual School Headteacher attending all Corporate Parenting Committee meetings

A SPEED (Sixteen plus education and employment destinations) cross service working group was set up in 2015 and is now well established as a forum for issue raising and action planning for post-16 cared for and care leavers. This group uses the latest data to identify young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) or likely to be so and what can be done to address this. Through good collaboration of managerial and operational staff much work has been done to continue to support reducing NEET and to ensure all young people have timely and effective actions and interventions in place to re-engage back into education.

A parallel group for school age children has now been established called RAIC, (Raising achievement in care). The aim of this group is to ensure that all parties share the responsibility for promoting aspirations and achievements and are active in their efforts. Areas to be addressed by this group have been identified as; improving attendance in persistent absentees or school refusers, minimising the time between school moves, particularly for children with SEN and ensuring that foster carers and residential home staff are involved with exam preparation.

Both are workstreams that feed into the corporate parenting group and committee and have a clear action plan developed as part of the corporate parenting strategy.

The Virtual School also attends or arranges other regular meetings which result in improved support for children. These include

- SEN tracking meetings to maintain momentum on cases with a VS SEN lead now in place within the team
- Children missing out on education to plan with joint services and ensure timely interventions and support is in place for any children not accessing full-time education
- Preparing for adulthood to ensure smooth transition to adult care

The Virtual School also works with the Independent Reviewing Officers and foster carers, providing training and support as needed. Through membership of Education, Headteacher and Virtual School Head groups the Virtual School is able to remain in touch with all current events relating to cared for children and also to make sure that other teams are aware of matters which influence their area.

The other team who are closely linked to Virtual School are Special Education and Disabilities Team (SEND). The VSH is a member of the SEN Assessment and Moderation Panel and the Head of Service/Service Manager have agreements in place which ensure that the Virtual School is involved in any cared for children cases who also have special educational needs and also offer advice for any SEN issues which arise for children placed outside of Cheshire East. The Virtual School Headteacher has led training sessions for all social workers and SEND workers. The Virtual School Headteacher is also part of the induction process for new social workers and IRO's.

Both social care and SEND supported during this years designated lead training network days to deliver workshops to over 90 school representatives as cross-service training, feedback was extremely positive from all attendees.

"Some of the best local authority training i have attended"

"Other services should adopt the cross-service training style"

The Virtual School also works with the Independent Reviewing Officers, foster carers and governors providing training and support as needed. Through membership of Education, Headteacher and Virtual School Head groups both regional and national the Virtual School is able to remain in touch with all current events relating to cared for children and also to make sure that other teams are aware of matters which influence their area.



16. Training Provision

The statutory duties of the Virtual School include providing training on education issues relating to children in care and Head teachers and Governing Bodies are required to appoint a Designated Teacher to champion the cause of cared for children and also to ensure that this teacher has access to training. In CE this is provided in a variety of ways

- a) Update/network meetings open to all schools and led by the Virtual school
- b) Bespoke training in individual schools which can be around a particular child or for all staff including attachment and trauma whole staff training
- c) Arranging outside speakers to provide 'expert' input.

The universal training programme offered by the Virtual School for Designated Leads in Schools

Date	Title	Objectives
Oct 2018	New designated lead training	Understand role as a new designated lead teacher
Nov 2018	Designated teacher network	Social care workshop SEND workshop Adoption counts workshop Attachment and trauma workshop PEPS – what makes an outstanding PEP
May 2019	Regional conference	Ofsted National updates
June 2019	Designated teacher network	SDQ workshop Market place – support and advice on using PP+ effectively Careers and post 16 PEPs – what makes an outstanding PEP

The network events was held in Nov and June were attended by over 90 school representatives. This provided information amnd workshop sessions from a range of services. Feedback was positive with delegates stating that the sessions were useful and would help them to better support children in school.

Bespoke training has been arranged for more than fifteen schools, 1 local college and 1 local training provider where requested, these were all whole staff CPD training to focus on Attachment and Trauma to support schools becoming more trauma informed within their daily practise. All Virtual School staff are able to lead this training (we also work in conjunction with adoption counts) which also includes working with colleges and training providers. The Virtual School Headteacher has also supported to offer extra support in schools to conduct observations and offer feedback as a critical friend to help further support the needs of Cared for Children.

The Virtual School contributes to the Foster Carer training programme. Sessions have been planned on curriculum changes and attainment, preparing for tests/supporting learning at home, SEN and post-16 progression but uptake, like many foster carer training sessions attendance has been poor. This includes an event which was planned for carers and children to attend as an activity/coffee afternoon. Training is not mandatory for carers and there is a concern that the lack of engagement could indicate that carers do not demonstrate high educational aspirations and commitment for their children.

The Virtual School Headteacher has led a series of training sessions to other Virtual School teams within other local authorities.

We have used funding to continue to employ a retired member of the Virtual School team who has been delivering training across all Cheshire East schools - an outline of sessions offered:

In the period March to October we have delivered 20 sessions including Primary schools (10), Secondary Schools (4) and other providers including Reaseheath College, Total People and RSPCA. I have also led Foster Carer training. Some schools have had 2 sessions in the form of a whole school CPD presenting an overview of Attachment, trauma and brain development and then a follow up session looking at practical strategies to support behaviour and learning. As I worked with Cared for Children at Cheshire East for over 20 years this ensures that the training and support is targeted for schools and individual children.

Others have opted for 2 meetings one for teaching staff and then another more practical in nature for pastoral and support staff working directly with these children.

In all cases the training has been very well received:

'Informative and entertaining'

'A very enjoyable training session which has provided me with a deeper understanding of attachment'

'A great insight'.
'Powerful'.

'A very interesting session delivered by a knowledgeable and passionate trainer'.

'Superb, valuable and informative'.

'Very informative and thought provoking - it will help me in my teaching'.

Other sessions offered involved working alongside the Virtual School Educational Psychologist using The Circle of Adults model to help the school recognise exactly how they could best support a very complex child on their roll.

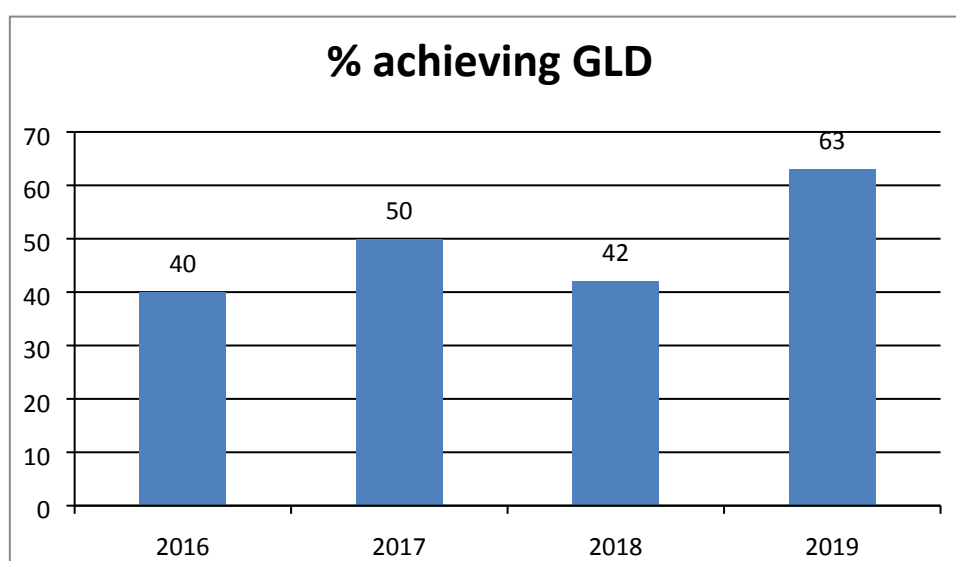
All sessions offered have been tailored to meet the specifications of the individual schools

17. Early Years Foundation Stage

There has been an increase in the number of reception children achieving a Good Level of Development. The number in this group has risen from 5 five in 2016 to 8 in 2017 to 14 in 2019.

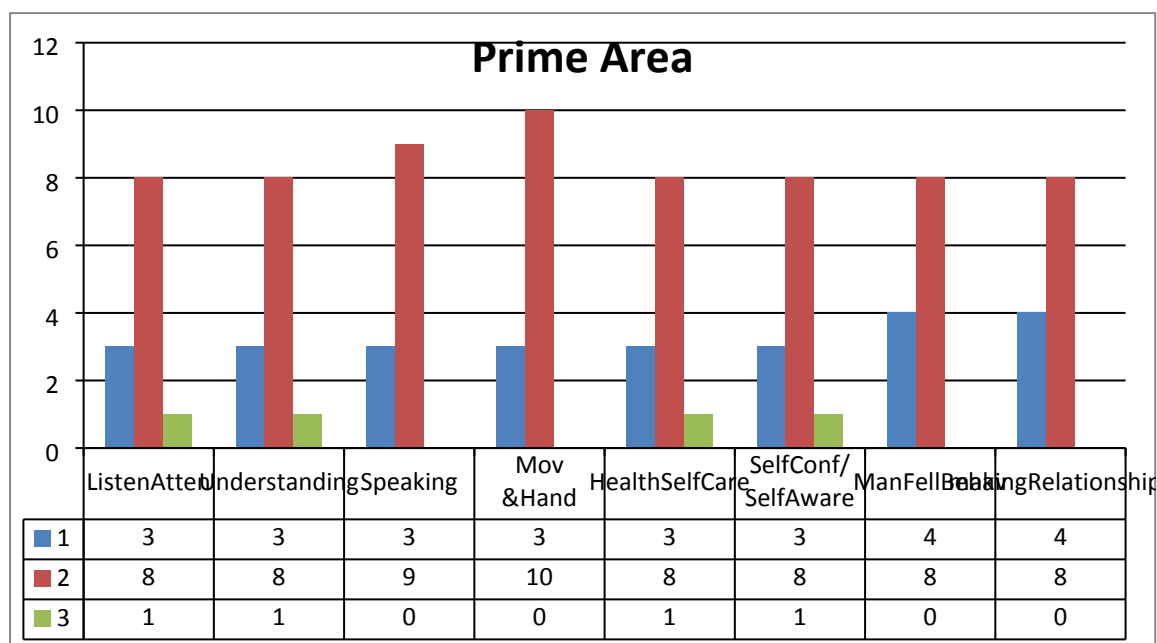
12 children are eligible as they have been in care for at least 12 months or more as of 31st March 2019 (*1 child left care before the end of the academic year). 1 child is exempt as the child is continuing in EYFS provision beyond the year in which they turn 5. Of these 7 children achieved GLD this equates to 63%

Percentage of pupils achieving GLD



For those children who did not achieve GLD 1 child has an EHCP and attends a specialist school that supports children with high level complex needs. Of the children who did not achieve GLD 3 became Cared for during academic year 2018.

Graph below shows the areas prime areas achieved (1 being low and 3 high), this shows that the main areas that our children struggle is with managing feelings and making relationships.



Nadhim Zahawi the former Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families at the end of last academic year outlined his targets for all local authorities. Within his letter he set out his ambitious goal to halve by 2028, the percentage of children leaving reception year without the communication, language and literacy skills they need to thrive. To achieve this ambition 86% of children nationally would need to achieve the expected level in both communication and language and literacy. No local authority is currently is achieving this.

In order to support the Local Authority target the Virtual School Head teacher is working in close partnership with the Early Start Manager to support settings and Reception classes to access the speech and Language training via use of the Virtual Schools Pupil Premium.

18. Phonics Screening Test

The Phonics Screening Check shows how well children can use the phonics skills they've learned up to the end of Year 1, and identifies students who need extra phonics help. The checks consist of 40 words and non-words that a child will be asked to read one-on-one with a teacher. Non-words (or nonsense words, or pseudo words) are a collection of letters that will follow phonics rules children have been taught, but don't mean anything – children will need to read these with the correct sounds to show that they understand the phonics rules behind them. If children's score falls below the standard (32 marks), they will be given extra phonics help and can re-take the Phonics screening check in Year 2.

Year 1 2018/19

There were 10 Cared for Children who ended Year 1 in total, 6 eligible after being in care for at least 12 months. 4/6 were graded as Working At expected this equates to 67%. Early indicators show that we are just above the national average for 2019.

2018 NCER national CLA figure 63%

2018 NCER North West 63%

Of all 10 children in the cohort 7 were Working At standard and passed the phonics screening.

Those who did not pass will be supported during this academic year and will retake in year 2.

Year 2

Data below shows results of eligible children in Year 2 and shows that a further 2 who did not pass in Year 1 met the expected standard in Year 2. Although 3 other children did not pass, 2 of them made significant progress. **1 child shows on KEYPAS eligible data but is no longer Cared for.*

Phonics Year 1		Phonics Year 2	
Mark	Outcome	Mark	Outcome
34	Met standard		
30	Not met standard	33	Met standard
35	Met Standard		
37	Met Standard		
26	Not met Standard	36	Met standard
35	Met Standard		
33	Met Standard		
40	Met Standard		
39	Met Standard		
37	Met Standard		
9	Not met standard	22	Not met standard
12	Not met standard	15	Not met standard
19	Not met standard	28	Not met standard

19. Attainment at Key Stage 1

Children in Year 2 are assessed by teachers in Reading, Writing, Maths and Science. Children were assessed as:

- P Scales
- Pre Key Stage standards
- Working Towards the expected standard
- Working At the expected standard
- Working at Greater Depth of the expected standard

There were 22 Cared for Children who ended KS1 in total, 13 eligible ended KS1 after being in care for at least 12 months or more (**1 child is being taught 1 year below chronological age and 1 child is included on data but left care before taking SATs*). This was a decrease from 14 last year. Of these 13 children 9 were placed Out of Borough. 4 achieved R/W/M combined which equates to 31% which is slightly below last year's figure of 36%.**

Of the 13 eligible 8 have SEN needs with 4 having an EHCP.

Full Cohort (22 children)

	Cohort (20)	Working Towards	Working At expected	Greater Depth	Total % achieved
Reading/Writing/Maths			7	1	46%
Reading		6	9	3	55%
Writing (TA)		8	8	2	45%
Maths		8	10	1	50%
Science (TA)		5	15		68%

*4 children were working at Pre Key stage standards level*1 is age retained *1 left care before SATs

Eligible Cohort (13 Children)

	Cohort	Working Towards	Working At expected	Greater Depth	Total % achieved	National 2018
Reading/Writing/Maths			3	1	31%	35%
Reading		3	5	2	54%	51%
Writing (TA)		5	4	1	38%	42%
Maths		6	4	1	38%	49%
Science (TA)		3	8		62%	58%

*3 children were working at Pre key stage standards

**The changes that have taken place with KS1 and KS2 assessment frameworks over the last few years mean that some comparisons are not valid as the frameworks for some subjects changed.

Writing - "changes were made within the 2017/18 writing TA frameworks mean that judgements in 2018 are not directly comparable to those made using the previous interim frameworks in 2016 and 2017".

Reading, Maths, Science "The 2018/19 reading, maths and science TA frameworks mean judgements made in these subjects are not directly comparable to previous years."

20. Attainment at Key Stage 2

Children in Year 6 were assessed in Reading, Writing SPAG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar), Maths and Science.

1 child is exempt as he was age retained into year 5 so will be starting Year 6 September 2019

This year group was more complex than last year with some outliers and small numbers of children significantly impacts the percentage data. Therefore I have shown all comparison data in the table below: At Key Stage 2 there were 20 Cared for Children in total with 18 eligible ending KS2 after being in care for at least 12 months or more. (*1 child is showing as CLA as was in care on 31st March but left before SATs and was not entered as working below)

- 5 children did not sit SATS as they were in Special Schools and working below; all of these children have an EHCP
- 4 children currently have school support plans in place
- 1 child is currently residing in Wales where they have a different education system and do not sit SATs
- 6 children in total did not sit exams; this equates to 33% (of the 18 children)

Eligible cohort:

Number of children	Reading	Writing	Maths	Science	R/W/M combined	SPAG
18 (all eligible)	6 Achieved Standard 33% (44%)	6 AS 33%	6 AS 33%	7 AS 39%	3 = 17% (28%)	7 AS 39%
17 (- 1 child from wales)	35% (47%)	35%	35%	41%	18% (29%)	41%
12 (number of children who actually sat exams)	50% (66.6)	50%	50%	58%	25% (41.6%)	58%

- 1 child achieved high results in all four subjects, he achieved full marks in SPAG and reading and his GDS in writing is exceptional as nationally only 20% of all children achieved this.
- 1 child achieved high results in reading and SPAG.

There are 2 children who had a scaled score of 99 in the reading test, where 100 is the required standard. They are awaiting remarks. Both children achieved the standard in all other subjects. (see above in red if remarks change reading to 100)

Time period	Level	CLA KS2 Reading %	CLA KS2 Writing %	CLA KS2 Mathematics %	CLA KS2 RWM %
2017/18	National	51	49	47	35
2017/18	Regional	54	52	51	38
2017/18	Local authority	45	45	40	24
2018/19	Local authority (12 who sat)	50	50	50	25

21. Attainment at Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4 there were 50 children overall with 39 eligible who had been in care for 12 months.

Cohort Characteristics (of all 50 children):

- 48% of the cohort have SEND needs
- 28% of the cohort have an EHCP
- 54% of the cohort were educated outside of Cheshire East
- 2 children were detained in Young Offenders
- 3 children achieved a number of grade 6 -8 in either English Literature, Language or Maths

A joint policy paper published by ADCS, NCER and NAVSH in 2015 made the following recommendation in terms of cohort analysis:

“The DfE methodology for assessing local authority performance on ‘closing the attainment gap’ at each key stage is based on the performance of the whole cohort of children where they have been in care longer than 12 months, excluding certain groups of pupils from the measure, such as pupils who attend special schools. Pupils with an EHC plan attending a special school, or an enhanced resource centre attached to a mainstream school, whose additional needs exclude them from access to the national curriculum should therefore be excluded from this indicator. Any analysis should be considered in the light of the cohort size”

If we consider the data for this group: Of the 39 eligible only 29 were entered for GCSEs (inc english and Maths) with a further 3 children at specialist schools/provision with an EHCP who were not entered for a full suite of GCSEs (figures shown in red)

*(Eligible cohort – each child out of 26 is worth approx. 4% points)

Eligible Cohort

	English Language (only)	English Literature(only)	English (achieved in either)	Maths	Eng and Maths	2018 National Eng & Maths CLA
9-5	4 (15%)	4 (15%)	5 (19%)	3 (12%)	3 (7.6% of 39 eligible) (12% out of 26 who sat)	8%
9-4	9 (35%)	7 (27%)	9 (35%)	7 (27%)	6 (15.3% of 39 eligible) (23% of 26 who sat)	17%
3	3 (12%)	4 (15%)		5 (19%)		

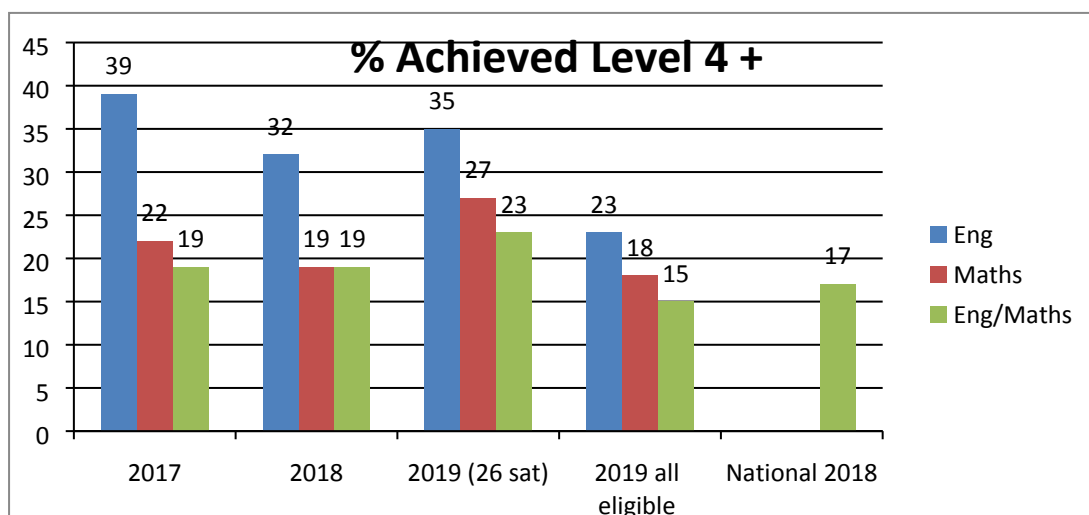
**we will be contacting schools regarding remarks for those children with 3 were appropriate (awaiting a number of remarks)*

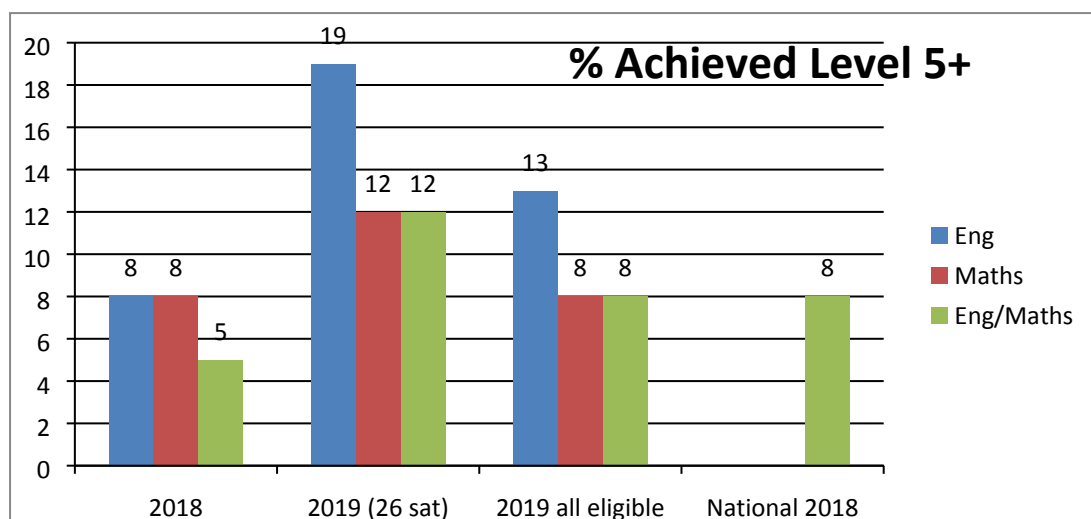
The overall level of SEN within the cohort increased from 48.6% last year to 56.4% this year, 12 children had an EHCP and 10 with School Support. A significant number of students within this group had more than 1 school (56%) and or home placement during secondary school, which increases the vulnerability and would therefore make it harder for students to achieve their potential and target grades.

22 children of those 39 eligible were placed in out of borough schools. All pupils have been supported to find positive destinations for post 16 and almost all started these programmes in Sept 2019.

Progress and outcomes was greatest in pupils with only 1 school/placement with good levels of attendance and so this will be continually monitored and challenged. All children not entered for GCSEs were either working towards functional skills or Btec qualifications to support progression for Post 16 options.

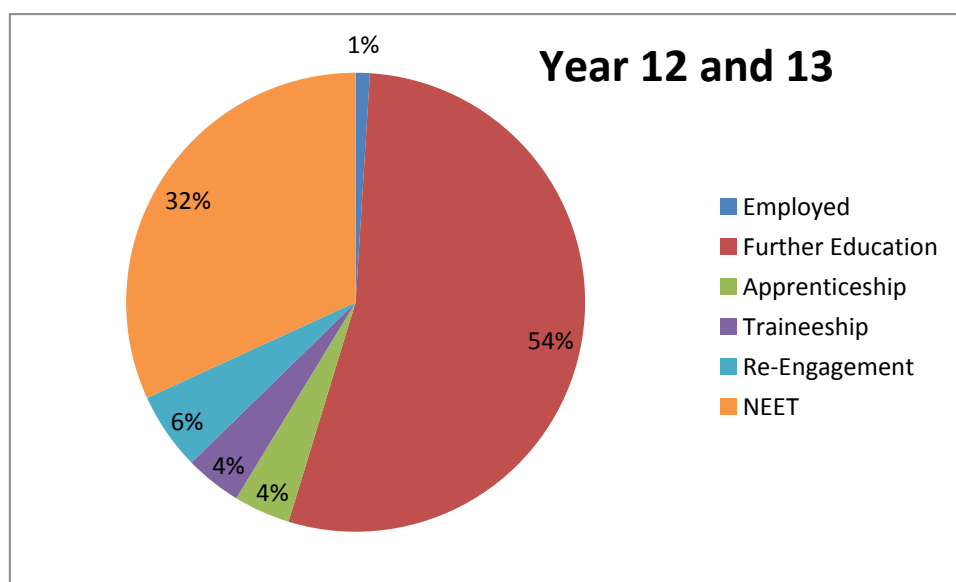
- Progress 8 -1.48 pts 2018 (CLA 12 months -1.24) * awaiting national data for 2019 to allow for calculation of CE data
- Attainment 8 17.5 2018 (CLA 12 months 18.8) * awaiting national data for 2019 to allow for calculation of CE data





22. Post-16 ETE Outcomes

Post-16 engagement is supported by a dedicated post 16 advisor and is monitored in monthly cross service meetings to support timely interventions for identified NEET young people. 8 young people have achieved Level 3/A levels and 5 have secured a place at university from September 2019, the other 3 young people have decided to move onto work/apprenticeships. We have a post 16 tutor who's focus is to work with NEET young people on a range of functional skills to support re-engagement back into education, who works closely with the lifelong learning team to access a range of courses and qualifications.



Year 12:

47 students in total of this 10 were NEET (21%), 5 are ESOL who are all engaging in support. Students are engaging in a range of post 16 pathways including College courses ranging from entry level to level 3, apprenticeships and re-engagement programmes.

3 students are on level 3 courses and are progressing to the next level and 4 are accessing apprenticeships.

Year 13:

40 students in total of this 12 were NEET (30%), 9 are ESOL who are engaging in support to access entry level qualifications. Students are engaging in a range of post 16 pathways.

4 students completed and passed level 3 qualifications, 2 have secured places at university, 1 has secured a higher level apprenticeship and 1 is working.

Year 14:

18 students in total, 5 have completed and passed level 3 qualifications of these 3 have secured places at university, 1 is continuing with education and 1 is working.

Overall this is the highest number of cared for young people we have had moving onto university

23. Service objectives 2018/19

Strategic priority	Summary	Lead	Achieved/Some Progress/ Not achieved
Implement changes resulting from the Social Care Bill which includes Virtual School Head teacher to have responsibilities for previously looked after children as well as looked after and to promote mental health and attachment awareness in schools	<p>Joint training and workshop session (December 2018) for designated lead teachers</p> <p>Guidance booklet for Previously Cared for, Adopted and SGO children working alongside adoption counts regional group – May 2019</p> <p>Attachment and trauma training in over 20 schools, colleges and training providers to support all staff becoming attachment aware following DLT training in Dec 2018</p> <p>Dedicated member of staff to offer support, advice and guidance for previously cared for children and families(Feb 2019)</p>	LR	Achieved
Implement a self-assessment tool for use with and by schools to improve their practice and support for cared for children	<p>Adapted a self assessment tool for schools following DLT to support audit of current protocols and practise</p> <p>Checklist created to support new DLT with roles and responsibilities in line with DFE guidance</p> <p>Created a cared for children profile for use in schools</p>	LR	Some progress
Virtual head teacher to review impact and effectiveness of current arrangements	<p>Clear and robust tracking documents to review attendance of all children.</p> <p>Clear and robust tracking documents to</p>	LR	Achieved

<p>to ensure support and interventions are targeted and lead to improved outcomes.</p> <p>Introduce a SEN lead within the Virtual School team who will track and monitor the progress of assessments and sit on SEN panel to ensure swift communication of information between teams</p>	<p>review attainment of all children.</p> <p>Clear procedures to support improving SEN and aligning EHCP reviews and PEPs with an SEN lead within the VS team in place.</p> <p>Clear procedures to support building Signs of Safety into practise and procedures.</p> <p>Virtual School are working closely across service areas to support clear impact for children.</p>		
<p>Roll out the ePEP(Electronic Personal Education Plan) to all secondary schools by August 2019 to improve the ease of completion, efficiency and allow for measuring impact of Pupil Premium funding.</p>	<p>ePEP and PEP documents have been redesigned to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Signs of Safety format -Review of PP funding to ensure schools are measuring impact each term - My voice was adapted with working group of cared for children and care leavers to change format for scaling system -Training has taken place for schools in Dec 2018 and within identified schools as needed and requested - Over 60% of secondary schools are now accessing ePEP system through Liquid Logic - VSH led training session for other local authority Virtual Schools -VSH has introduced a new Cared for child profile for schools to use for all children to support sharing information across teaching staff and to enable full review of targets and actions prior to each PEP to ensure there is a whole school approach. <p>We have further developed ePEP format following feedback from schools in December 2018 to ensure the system is fit for purpose and meets the needs of all users for ease of use, this includes information being populated and allowing for users to attach documents and evidence to further support information and evidence sent from schools.</p>	LR	Achieved

Implement a revised quality assurance process for PEP arrangement to increase the number of good/outstanding	Clear and robust QA process for advisors is in place. Clear and robust moderation process is in place. Training delivered to Designated lead teachers to support 'what makes an outstanding PEP'	LR/CL	Achieved
Improve attendance to ensure reduction in Persistent Absence figures in particular within Special Schools	Clear and robust tracking documents in place to allow for regular monitoring and reviewing of individual Childrens attendance. To improve overall attendance and reduce PA figures. To appoint a dedicated specialist attendance officer for Cared for Children	LR	Some progress
Reduce exclusions within primary settings	This has continued to improve throughout last and this academic year, there have been no exclusions over 5 days and no Permanent exclusions. The number of Fixed term exclusions has continued to reduce within primary settings and where these have occurred Virtual School advisors and head teacher have been informed immediately to support actions and interventions for support for identified children.	LR	Achieved
Develop careers events across Cheshire East to enable young people to access support and information	Developed links with skills growth company, we are up to date with local careers events Ensure all cared for children have access to a careers advisor Clear transition systems in place for Year 11 Increase number of young people achieving level 3 and accessing university	LR/KF	Some progress

24. Development Priorities for 2019-20

In addition to the specific actions included in the various sections of the report the Virtual School has identified the following priority areas and key actions to be addressed this year.

1. Continue to provide support and interventions for schools and children to improve outcomes and attendance, evaluating the impact of the intervention and use of Pupil Premium.

- Monitor requests and impact of Pupil Premium and develop a system to ensure schools are made accountable for impact.
- Introduce a governing body within the virtual school to scrutinise all areas of the service.
- Increase targeted support and interventions for pupils in Y6, 11 and Post-16.
- Develop locality model working to support children and schools.

- Introduce a specialist attendance officer for cared for children to increase attendance and reduce persistent absence.
 - Improve outcomes of KS2 and KS4.
 - Improve Literacy and Communication of Early Years and Primary aged children.
- 2. Identify and implement changes resulting from the Social Care Act 2017 which includes Virtual School Head teacher to have responsibilities for previously looked after children as well as looked after and to promote mental health and attachment awareness in schools**
- Evaluate models and make changes to staffing structure and use of funding to support improving outcomes of children.
 - Continue to increase support to schools to offer full staff CPD to increase Attachment and Trauma awareness.
 - Continue to work alongside adoption counts to develop information and guidance for Previously Cared for and adopted children.
- 3. Monitor the impact of commissioned and front line services through engagement, progress and outcomes**
- Work with procurement and commissioning to develop monitoring process for commissioned services.
 - Increase direct supervision of commissioned service and clarify expectations to be achieved.
 - Review and monitor the impact if commissioned service to ensure quality and value for money.
 - Improve outcomes of children accessing alternative provision.
 - Work alongside social care to ensure education involvement with Bespoke project.
- 4. Implement the self- assessment tool for use with and by schools to improve their practice and support for cared for children**
- Identify schools where progress is below expected and use self-evaluation to plan for improvement.
 - Share best practice where pupils achieve above expectations.
- 5. Improve completion rate and quality of PEPS and continue to develop the design of the ePEP and be in place in all primary and secondary schools**
- Develop and introduce ePEP for early years and post 16 providers.
 - Improve completion rate of PEPs (termly).
 - Improve number of PEPs graded as 'Good'/'Outstanding'.
- 6. Develop careers events across Cheshire East to enable young people to access support and information**
- Improve the quality of careers and advice for all Cared for Children.
 - Introduce specific enterprise and careers events for Cared for Children.