Cheshire East

TOGETHER for Children and Young People

Together we will make Cheshire East a great place to be young

Virtual School for Cared for Children

Head Teacher's Annual Report 2021/22

Introduction

This report presents an overview of the operation and impact of the virtual school during 2021-22. 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.* The virtual school (VS) supports all children in care regardless of their length of time in care, however the educational attainment data in the report relates to those who have been in continuous care from 31 March 2021 to 31 March 2022.

During 2021/22, the virtual school has continued to support all cared for children and to continually review its operation and new ways of working following the challenges faced by the Covid-19 pandemic to ensure it is meeting its statutory duties while providing effective support to children and young people, families, carers, schools, and settings. Every child and young person has an allocated worker within the virtual school to ensure effective oversight and support is in place. The head of service for inclusion fulfils the role of head teacher at the virtual school and also leads on special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). To ensure sufficient leadership capacity, a deputy headteacher of virtual school role has been developed to support with the operational running of the virtual school alongside the head of service for inclusion.

The overall number of cared for children has been relatively consistent at just over 500 for the past 12 months. Cared for children are making good progress overall. To continue to improve outcomes, targeted support is needed to challenge some secondary and independent schools where cared for children have underperformed in previous years.

All children have access to additional pupil premium funding, to put in place interventions which are additional to the normal school support and are linked to specific targets within personal education plans (PEPs), to ensure interventions are tracked and monitored for evidence of impact and accountability.

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 2021/22.

The virtual school works closely with other services within the local authority: social care, SEN, school admissions, medical needs, attendance, and youth support. As a result of the partnership working, processes and procedures have been revised to become more efficient. The virtual school have delivered cross service training on how all services can support improving the educational outcomes of cared for children.

Contents

Self-Evaluation

Area	Self-Evaluation			Priorities for 22-23
Foundation stage	🟥			Track and Monitor attainment and progress throughout academic year to support to identify any gaps. Undertake deep dive into attainment data for individual children and young people where there are gaps in attainment and progress to ensure that PEPS reflect the support needed and intervention is in place and measured for impact.
Key stage 1		🟧		
Key stage 2		🟧		
Key stage 4		🟧		
Post-16		🟧		
SEN		🟧		Graded as amber as systems are in place across Virtual School and SEND, focus is to align PEPS and annual reviews consistently. Ensure timely support
Admissions			🟩	Admissions process supports all cared for children, we have not had to direct any school to admit a cared for child; we work effectively with the admissions team to ensure phased transitions are tracked and support in place
Attendance		🟧		The overall attendance is 88.8% for the full academic year, we need to ensure there is a clear focus on further improving attendance of all children those who are most vulnerable ensuring timely support in place when attendance dips below 90%. Working closely with social care to ensure where placements changes occur, there is no drift and delay.
Exclusions			🟩	We have had no recorded permanent exclusions for the last 3 years
Leadership and Management			🟩	Leadership and management are effective with introduction of deputy virtual school headteacher this year, to support operational oversight alongside virtual headteacher
Staff Training		🟧		To strengthen virtual training sessions further for wider staff and partners following the pandemic.
Finance			🟩	Finance systems are robust and effective to ensure that funding is tracked and monitored
PEPs		🟧		To strengthen the moderation process, leaders will focus next year on the introduction of leadership PEP sampling to review the quality of PEPs termly and provide effective feedback to ensure improvement in overall quality of PEPs throughout the academic year.

Partnership Working			🟩	We have systems in place to ensure cross service working is effective and good relationships with our schools and wider partners with good communication; ensuring positive outcomes.
Participation by children and young people			🟩	Children/young people have continued to participate within PEP meetings and through reviews to ensure their voice is captured
Safeguarding and promotion of wellbeing		🟧		Ensure all staff have had clear training in relation to our most vulnerable children and young people

Key: Green = area doing well, **Amber** = further work needed, **Red** = high priority for action.

Making a difference to education outcomes for every child

Below outlines the key focus areas for the virtual school regarding promoting the educational achievement of cared for children, wherever they live or are educated

- Progress and attainment
- Admission without drift or delay (stability)
- Attendance and Exclusions
- Is every young person in an education provision that is right for them?
- Provision is meeting any additional needs
- Full time engagement
- Aspirational pathways and careers – reduce NEET
- Appropriate PP+ spending
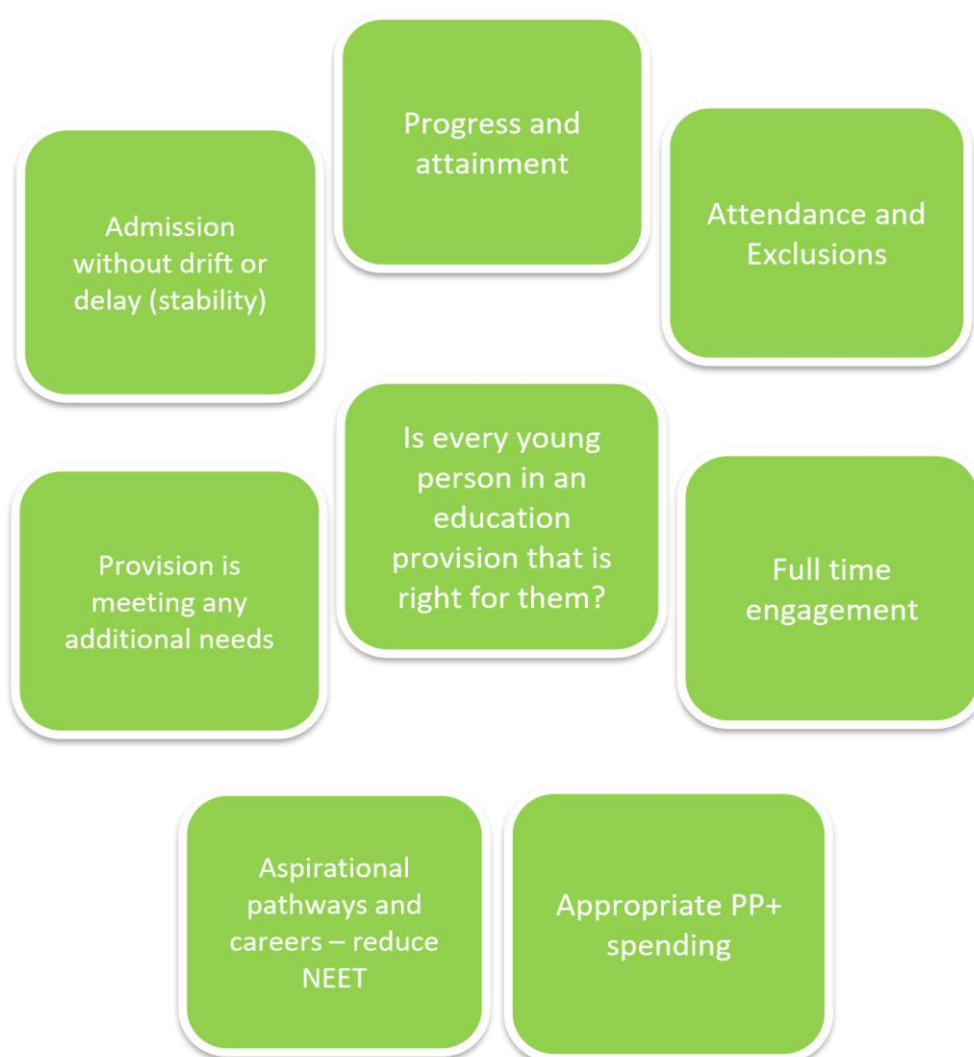
Remit and operation of the virtual school in Cheshire East Council

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 educational 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 head teacher (VSH) for the purpose of discharging this duty to promote the educational achievement of its looked after children, wherever they live or are educated. Our head of service for inclusion holds the role of the virtual school head teacher.

The virtual school operates using a locality model. This has helped significantly in the development of relationships with schools and other professionals resulting in better working practices.

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 documents 'Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children' (DfE, February 2018), 'virtual school head role extension to children with a social worker' (DFE June 2021) 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 every young person in care has a named virtual school advisor who can provide support and challenge to schools, carers, and social workers. This in turn helps to ensure that there is suitable education in place, the needs of the child can be championed, and education providers can be challenged and supported to ensure that they make suitable arrangements to allow the child to reach their full potential. This is carried out through termly PEP 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; we have a dedicated post 16 advisor who works closely with our care leavers team to ensure the smooth transition and preparation for adulthood.

During Ofsted's focused inspection of children's services in October 2019 inspectors stated: "Children are well-supported with their education through the virtual school team."

The findings of the joint targeted area inspection of the multi-agency response to the criminal exploitation of children in July 2022 found that the role of education, as a protective factor, is not high profile enough in multi-agency work. Too often, children at risk of exploitation do not attend school or are engaged in minimal tuition. Partners do not challenge each other or have sufficiently robust plans to address low engagement in education. In addition, the impact of placement moves on children's education is not sufficiently considered by multi-agency partners. Too often, placement moves result in a breakdown in education which exacerbates the risk of children being exploited.

Partnership working

Partnership working is crucial to the effectiveness of the virtual school, and we recognise our role in being part of a team with the child at the heart. We recognise that to be effective we need to have close working relationships with our partners.

Teams within the council that the virtual school works with 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.
- Independent reviewing officers
- Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) team
- Youth justice service (YJS), with an YJS advisor who works part-time within the virtual school team.
- Youth Support Service – monthly meetings to support interventions to reduce young people who are not in education, employment, or training.
- Early years team, with an advisor who works part-time within the virtual school team.
- Corporate Parenting, with the virtual school head teacher attending all corporate parenting committee meetings.

The virtual school also works with the independent reviewing officers and foster carers, providing training and support as needed. Through membership of education, head teacher and virtual school head regional groups, the virtual school can keep abreast of all current events and news items both regionally and nationally to ensure best practice is shared and partners are aware of matters which influence their area to promote the educational outcomes of cared for and previously cared for children.

Our key priorities are outlined in the cared for children and care leavers Strategy; **Pledge Two: We will improve education, employment, and training outcomes are:**

We will have high aspirations for every child and young person and will help them to achieve their ambitions, including using opportunities in the 'family businesses and our contacts so that they can be happy and successful in their education, training, and employment.

Every child and young person will have an education plan that is targeted, our ambition is to ensure they have the support in place to reach their full potential.

We will strive to that ensure that every child and young person will have access to consistent, high-quality, well-matched opportunities in education, training, and employment.

Training and Support

The virtual school provide training on education issues relating to children in care. Head teachers and governing bodies are required to appoint a designated teacher, to champion the needs and support of cared for children and to ensure that this teacher has access to training. Wider school training has proved harder this year due to the pandemic but has continued to be offered to all schools/settings. In Cheshire East this is provided in a variety of ways:

- Update/network meetings open to all schools and led by the virtual school
- New designated teacher training
- Annual cross service designated lead training
- Bespoke training in individual schools which can be around a particular child or for all staff including attachment and trauma whole staff training
- Arranging outside speakers to provide 'expert' input.
- Training for social care and new social workers on improving educational outcomes of cared for children, statutory responsibilities, and PEPs.

The universal training programme offered by the virtual school for designated leads in schools

Date	Title	Objectives
February 2022	Designated teacher locality sessions held in Macclesfield & Middlewich	Locality sessions were held for: • Introductions and meeting the team • Care leaver & Venture with confidence information session lead by Katie Foster from the Virtual School and Duncan Allen the Apprenticeship coordinator alongside one of our care leavers. • Attachment and ACE's training lead by the Education Psychologists' team • PEPs - Improving the quality of PEPs from a school perspective, ran by two of our designated teachers to share good practice. • Encyclopaedia Britannica demonstration • Mockingbird fostering session • Pupil Premium and additional grant funding and extended duties update • Wellbeing session led by Lisa Carden Doorey

The network events held in February 2022 were attended by 49 school representatives. This provided information and 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.

Some of the best training I have attended by the Virtual School

As part of the training, we had a PEP session delivered by two designated teachers. This proved invaluable for giving other schools support and ideas about how to complete a PEP ensuring SMART targets and content are detailed and can measure progress and impact. Following the training and feedback we have noticed a significant improvement in identified school PEP returns.

Impact of training:
Session delivered on improving quality of PEPs data shows:

- Autumn term 1 (September 21 – December 21 prior to training sessions)
- 131 PEPs were quality assured and graded good
- Spring term (post training)
- 150 PEPs were quality assured and graded good
- 7 PEPs in autumn term (pre training) were graded as poor by Spring term 4 had moved to satisfactory and by Summer then graded as good.
- Access to training from educational psychology service – emotional literacy support assistant

Training scheduled for October 2022 - December 2022

- New designated lead training/network sessions
- Annual designated teacher training network day Pupil premium workshop
- Foster carers training session

During these sessions we will be gaining feedback from schools to identify wider training needs and themes for this academic year and will work with partners to set up and deliver cross service training and workshops.

It was great to hear from a fellow designated teacher about PEPs

Universal training offer for children with a social worker

The Department of Education have recently announced an extension of the virtual school head teacher duties to include all children and young people with a social worker from September 2021- March 2022. This extension is supported by some grant funding. The guidance outlines this as a strategic role rather than direct working with our key responsibilities to offer support/advice and guidance indirectly. To be able to support as many schools as possible, we are using the funding to put together a universal training offer. This training will be paid in full and is available to all schools/settings with children with a social worker.

Please find below a list of training available:
- Attendance and children out of school
- Safeguarding children in an education setting - basic awareness training
- Safeguarding children in an education setting - level 2 refresher for designated safeguarding leads
- Safeguarding children in an education setting - level 2 designated safeguarding lead training
- Safeguarding children in an education setting - preparing evidence for inspections, audit, and scrutiny
- Emotional literacy support assistant training
- Emotional literacy support assistant supervision
- Emotion coaching
- Attachment and trauma

Training Type	Number of Staff	Number of Settings
Attendance – to support schools to understand the impact of attendance on attainment and access support through the attendance and out of school team	17	16
Emotional literacy support assistant (figures are recorded for schools who have accessed training with a social work and those with cared for children)	53	
Attachment and trauma – Understand adverse childhood experiences, creating an attachment aware environment	8	8
Emotion coaching – Understanding emotions and how to listen empathetically, validating feelings and supporting to identify strategies	4	4

We also worked with several schools to undertake some targeted work for those settings with a higher number of children with a social worker this included projects such as:

- Family ties - emotional literacy intervention
- My happy minds
- Better readers intervention sessions
- A wrap around wellbeing programme with school having access to an identified social worker

These duties have been extended for a further 12 months to allow for the support to be extended; over the next 12 months we will be monitoring these programmes of support and reporting on the impact this has made in relation to the overall remit of work undertaken

The support we have had from your team has been amazing! The team are wonderful human beings and have made such a difference to my work. I spoke to my CEO of our MAT this week to say what a difference it has made.
Please pass on my positive feedback because having another professional involved for me, as senco/DSL/CFC teacher/teacher etc has been so supportive - both team members are just brilliant and worth their weight in gold. (Feedback from a teacher sent to the attendance and children out of school team)
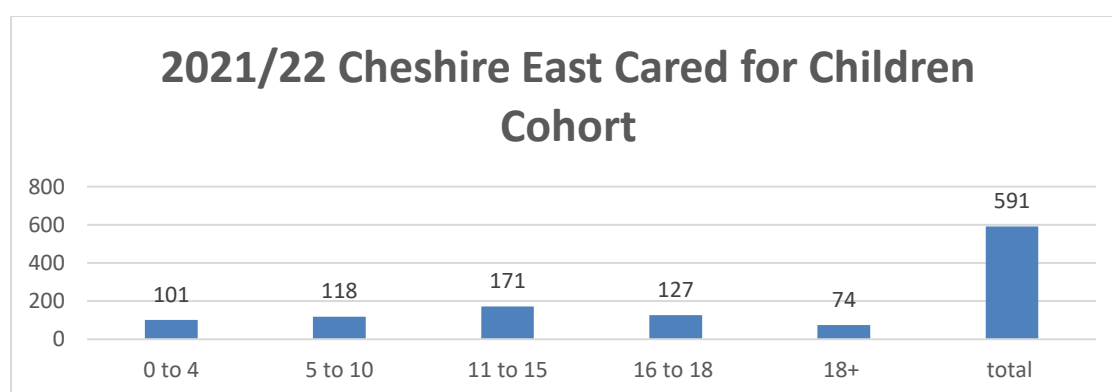
School Roll

At the end of the 2021/22 academic year there were 591 cared for children being supported by the virtual school, this was a slight increase from 587 the previous year. Of these, 333 were of school age. Cheshire East cared for children from reception to year 11, attended 192 different schools in 34 different local authorities. 56.5% of our children attended Cheshire East schools. Those children and young people that are attending schools out of authority is mainly due to placements being out of borough. Of these, we have 188 children and young people placed within Cheshire East and 145 children and young people placed out of borough, with 62 children placed within neighbouring authorities such as Cheshire West, Manchester, Stockport, Warrington, Staffordshire, and Stoke on Trent. The chart below shows a break-down of age/school groups.

2021/22 Cheshire East Cared for Children Cohort

Category	Value
0 to 4	101
5 to 10	118
11 to 15	171
16 to 18	127
18+	74
total	591

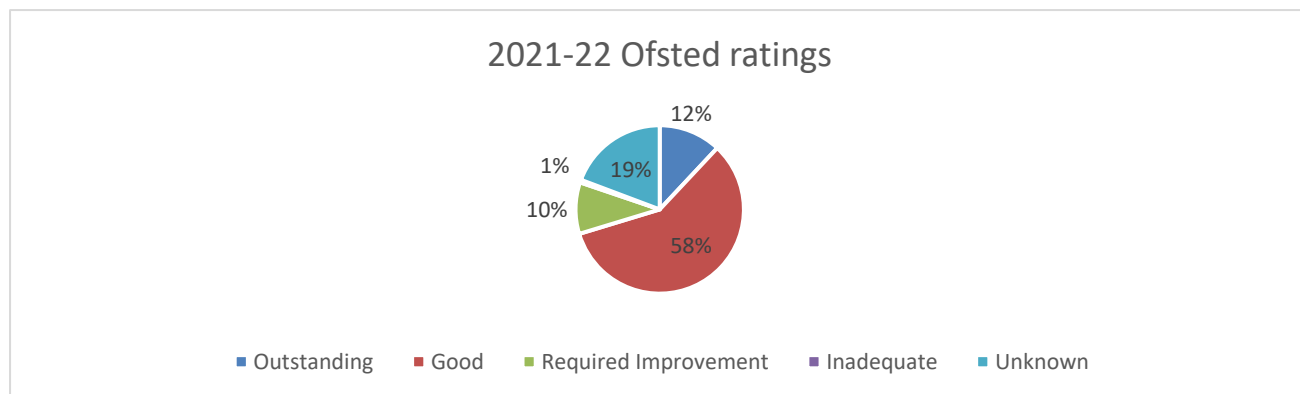*Some school age will fall in the 0-4 categories due to their birthdays.

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 will attend PEPs and track progress each term throughout the year of all children in schools graded below 'good' to ensure that children are well supported and are making progress. PEPs 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.
* 19% (37 schools) Unknown due to conversion to academy or new schools so they have not had their first inspection report.

2021-22 Ofsted ratings

Legend: ■ Outstanding ■ Good ■ Required Improvement ■ Inadequate ■ Unknown

Values shown on chart: 12%, 19%, 1%, 10%, 58%

Special Educational Needs

At the end of academic year 2021/22 there were:

- 127 children and young people with an education, health, and care plan across all years (0-18)
- 90 school age children with an education, health, and care plan
- 1 early years child with an education, health, and care plan
- 36 post 16 young people with an education, health, and care plan
- A further 44 children and young people identified as having SEND needs: of these 10 children are at the needs assessment stage and 34 children and young people with either a school support plan or school focus plan.

The virtual school has an identified SEN lead advisor who meets with the cared for keyworker lead from the SEND team weekly. This is to review cases to ensure effective timeliness and interventions are in place, plans are finalised, and advice received. The primary focus for next year is to continue to improve timeliness within the needs assessment process ensuring annual reviews are aligned with PEPs, and to ensure that moves between schools are timely and well planned. This is particularly important if school moves are out of authority. We have robust tracking and monitoring procedures in place.

The virtual school has continued to embed cross-service working within the SEND team to ensure that children are in the correct school to meet their needs and making progress. Advisors are involved if an application for a needs assessment is made and are contacted by the SEND team to request any advice to be included in the assessment process. If a child has an education, health, and care plan (EHCP), we are working to ensure schools/settings are aligning the EHCP review alongside the PEP in order that the targets can be aligned to complement and reflect each other and support the holistic outcomes for children and young people. In cases where school moves are required for children with an EHCP there is support in place to ensure that all children have access to interim education whilst the consultation process takes place.

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 we have moved to working in localities to facilitate improving support to schools and develop working groups within locality areas to develop training and share best practice.

We have now appointed a permanent deputy head teacher to monitor and support the team on a day-to-day basis and to inspire and lead to facilitate the best outcomes for all.

The team has evolved to provide more direct contact and support for children and young people so that the interventions can be more closely tailored to meet needs and monitored for individual impact.

Virtual School Team
- Head of service for inclusion (SEND and virtual school head teacher)
- Deputy head teacher
- Education advisor (north, central, south)
- Education advisor (YJS)
- Learning mentors (north, central, south)
- Post 16 education advisor
- Post 16 learning mentor
- Post 16 tutor
- Two specialist attendance officers (to cover across all areas, including children out of borough)
- Data and administration manager
- Team administrator
- PEP administrator

The virtual school head teacher is working alongside the head of service for education and pupil participation and principal educational psychologist to further develop the support, advice and guidance to schools and settings.

The virtual school head teacher and deputy head teacher are members of the northwest virtual school head group and of the national association of virtual School heads (NAVSH) and through this network the virtual school can keep abreast of current developments and to be updated on government guidance, attend workshops and training days, and share good practice.

Pupil Premium Funding 2021-22

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 of cared for children. The amount which is made available to the LA is £2345 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 £2345 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 if they have a direct impact on improving the experience and outcomes for children.
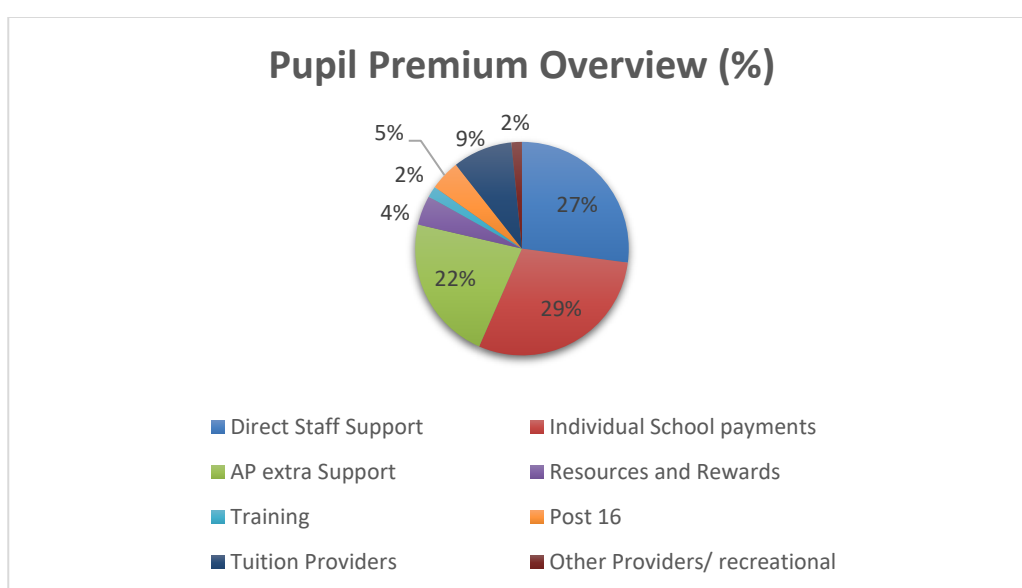
The main use of pupil premium was to fund intervention work and provisions delivered directly through school and identified through individual PEPs. The remaining funds have been used to provide support for children which is above and over what is offered as part of the usual school curriculum/ offer. These may include attending alternative provision sessions, as part of bespoke timetable packages for children who require additional support within mainstream school. These provisions offer a series of off-site support such as animal therapy or forest schools, having a weekly work placement to add variety, help with preparing for adulthood or funding specialist support such as counselling. Funds were also allocated to schools to support with remote learning, access targeted support or to prepare for transition. The aim of this was to ensure that children were supported regarding increasing their skills and knowledge before the exams/assessments and to support improving their preparation and confidence.

School age children in care are allocated pupil premium when a PEP is returned with a funding request form which outlines how this would be spent and the intended outcomes and, in some cases, funding was allocated to children outside this age range if the need was evident. For example,

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 access to wider learning opportunities. In most cases funding is transferred to the school, but in some cases, funding is used centrally, for example purchase of resources, equipment, and book parcels for young children to encourage love of reading and improving literacy.

Case study of a young person that has received pupil premium funding

Background:
Child X attended high school and gained 6s and 7s in GCSEs
-Child X is now in sixth form.
-The November data collection still showed that child X's predicted grades to be lower than needed to complete preferred A-Levels at sixth form.
-
Type of intervention:
-1-1 tuition in Maths and Science.
-Study packs were issued to help focus revision and review and these included some exam practice.
-Study periods to read through the chapters in the textbook and answer the end of page questions.
-Teachers available to support with any questions that they struggled with and couldn't complete on their own.
-Child X has also been given videos that walkthrough the assessments that have been done so far and was advised to make sure they used these to plug the gaps in knowledge.
Impact of interventions:

	Predicted grade at the start of the year	Assignment and assessment grades in spring term	Assignment and assessment grades in summer term following targeted intervention
Biology	D	E& U	D & C
Maths	B	C	B

Child X found the extra tuition beneficial and is pleased with the impact it has had on the grades which will support their aspiration to attend university.

Below is an outline of some of the most used interventions funded through pupil premium to support our children and young people.

Emotional literacy support assistant

ELSA (emotional literacy support assistant) is designed to build the capacity of schools, to support the emotional needs of their pupils from within their own resources. This is achieved by training teaching assistants to develop and deliver individualised support programmes to meet the emotional needs of children and teenagers in their care. It recognises that children learn better and are happier in school if their emotional needs are also addressed. Within Cheshire east we have worked alongside our educational psychologists to fund delivery of ELSA for our three new learning mentors and additional places were allocated for designated teachers from Cheshire East schools to attend and to help support with their cared for children. This support will ensure that provision is in place for one to one or small groups with social, emotional, and mental health needs alongside school staff.

Letterbox Book Trust

The virtual school are supporting our children to have access to books and reading through funding Letterbox parcels; each child receives their own colourful parcel of books, maths games, stationery, and other high-quality materials once every month for six months. This year we have had a specific focus on signing up all our children moving into reception, year 1 and year 5 to receive the letterbox book trust parcels to support them with their transition into their assessment years.

Recreational Activities

The virtual school have also supported children to access recreational activities where they would not normally be open for them to access; we have supported with additional funding for swimming lessons, horse riding lessons, music lessons, performing arts and forest school. One of our young people has achieved grade 2 in piano and is now working towards grade 3.

Britannica

Britannica Digital Learning has been working in partnership with virtual schools across the UK since 2014 to help support the challenges that cared for children and young people face when online. We know it is important for parents/ carers to feel assured that children are using a safe, reliable website and one that they can explore independently and unsupervised. For 250 years, Encyclopaedia Britannica's editorial team have collaborated with experts, scholars, and specialists to produce trusted content. Through working closely with authorities, carers, parents, and educators, we have been able to adapt this for the new generation of digital learners. Cheshire East virtual school have funded this to ensure that all children, parents, and carers have access to Britannica online digital learning platform.

Since Britannica presented at our training sessions in February there has been a significant increase in people accessing the site for access to resources and materials.

Quote from Britannica following designated training in February 'you'll be as pleased as I am to see what an impact our February training sessions have had! I am thrilled to see the resource is being used so well across your community'

Date/Time	Searches	Documents	Multimedia	Sessions	Hits
Feb 2022	859	161	7	70	20312
March 22	173	74	14	29	8585
April 22	31	42	40	30	3991
May 22	360	173	5	100	11619

Work Based Learning Programmes

Within the virtual school we have supported to fund children and young people to have access to structured work-based learning programmes which supports children and young people with the transition from school to workplace. We ensure that all programmes are a structured employability pathway designed to ensure children are equipped with the tools they need to go into the world and become an independent employee, fully preparing them for adulthood. Alongside this the virtual school also has an additional budget to fund a targeted programme for post 16 to support increasing engagement into education, employment, and training.

Learning Mentors

The virtual school has three dedicated learning mentors who work with all school aged children and are allocated to a locality. The main aim is to work with school aged children to support social, emotional mental health and transition. Most referrals are made when children have had a placement or school change or where children have high levels of anxiety. The learning mentors work alongside designated teachers and other agencies to support cared for children to overcome barriers to learning.

> "This is an amazing outcome. He mentioned that he really enjoys his sessions with yourself and feels comfortable to chat."
> (Quote from a school about mentor support for a child)

Our learning mentors are all ELSA (emotional literacy support Assistant) trained and follow different programmes of study depending on the needs of the child and consult with different professionals and parent/ carers and social care prior to planning the sessions. This multi-faceted approach aims to upskill the schools by enabling them to provide a consistent approach which can be maintained once the direct work with the learning mentor (LM) ceases. The focus of with the young people has included:

- Joint work for year 6 to 7 transition
- Support in reintegrating back into mainstream provision
- 1:1 support around anxiety
- How to manage challenging social interactions and friendships
- Support around emotional regulation and the exploration of feelings
- Understanding feelings, social and friendship skills.
- Support visits to schools and alternative provisions
- Prepare young people for their post 16 option
- Develop revision plans and exam techniques
- Promote positive self-image and esteem
- Support children with understanding online safety
- Promote trusting relationships with adults

Case Study from the Learning Mentors Support

Child B in a mainstream school. 94.8% attendance. Age expected. No SEN

Areas of concern:

•Missed learning due to school change

•Emotional wellbeing

•Management of emotions in the classroom

•Truanting and leaving lessons

Learning Mentor support:

•1:1 ELSA sessions focussed on discussing emotions and developing coping techniques

•Supported a visit to alternative provision as part of school timetable

•Promote positive relationships and safety online

Outcome of support:

•B has developed a trusting relationship with the mentor and attends every session

•B attends an alternative provision programme one day a week, alongside school curriculum. This has been successful as B has developed skills linked to child b's interest.

•B has had the confidence to become involved in wider school activities and apply for leadership positions in school, as supported by the mentor
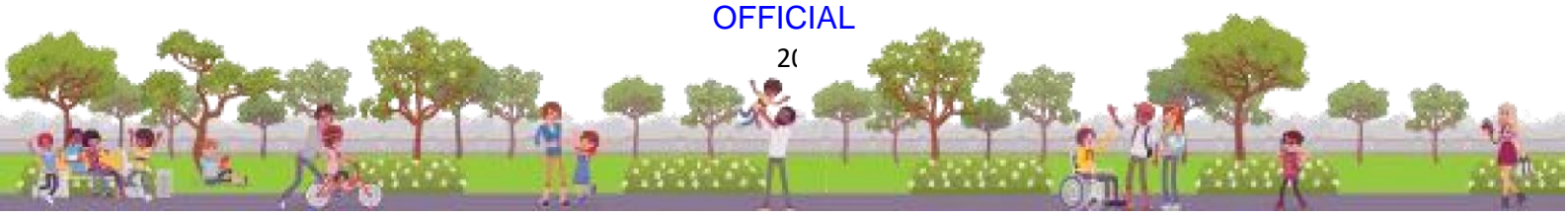
Virtual school post 16 tutor

1:1 tuition is offered to 16–18-year-olds. Most of the young people taking part are currently not in education, employment, and training 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 young people under-16 and over-18 years old to support clear transition planning. The purpose of 1:1 tuition is to gain qualifications, improve confidence, to engage in other positive activities and progress to education, employment, and training.

1:1 Tuition offer – functional skills maths and English

Every student has access to an online learning resource. Students take an initial assessment test to determine current level. An individual learning plan is created for the students to follow, using learning resources provided. As a result of the learning plans provided targeted support could then be provided based on individual needs this meant that during the last academic year, 99% of the students who were entered have passed their functional skills exams and gained qualifications.

English speakers of other languages (ESOL)

Teaching ESOL to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people (UASC) who have just come into care and are waiting to enrol to an ESOL course. Students work at their individual pace and create a portfolio of activities covered in 16 topics of ESOL activities. The main aim is to introduce English to non-speakers (Pre-Entry Level) and to boost their language skills at entry level 1 and 2. The post 16 tutor offers 1:1 intervention for several ESOL learners. All of them will either continue their ESOL education at the college courses or are enrolled for September 2022.

Over the year, UASC students have been supported with tuition prior to gaining a place at college and in some cases, the tuition has continued to reinforce college learning.

Post 16 learning mentor

We have our post 16 learning mentor who offers specific support to our young people to support in re-engaging them back into education, employment, and training. Below is a chart showing the reasons for the referrals she has had this year:
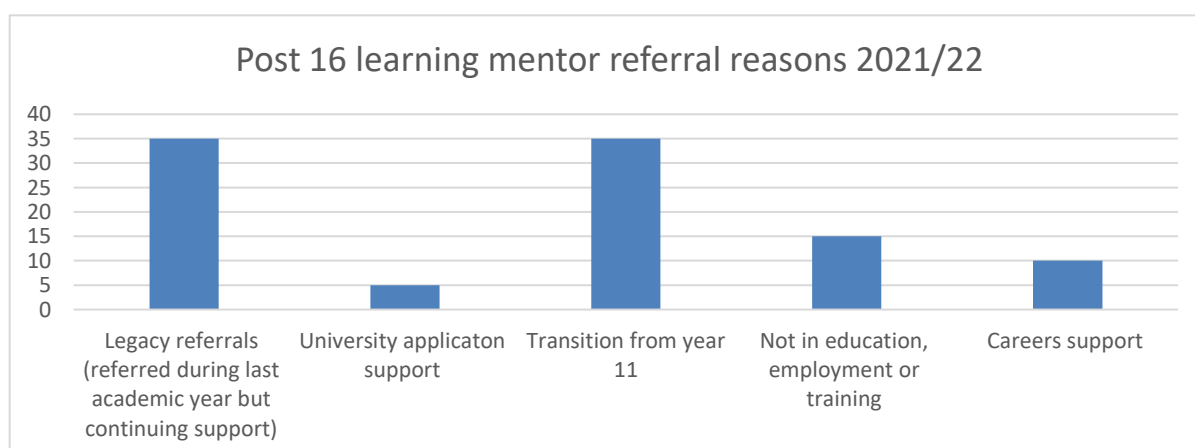
Post 16 learning mentor referral reasons 2021/22

Post 16 learning mentor case study

Case Study:
- Child A was in year 12, in their first year at college
- Had received transition support to enrol at college, apply for bursary etc.

Key concerns:
- Poor attendance as they were not enjoying their course
- Limited engagement with support
- Poor sleeping routine
- No clear career pathway

Type of intervention:

- Support from post 16 learning mentor to link in with the college support staff – organised and supported meetings with their wellbeing worker
- Support from post 16 learning mentor to look at other education options
- Child A was referred to targeted programme to access support through the virtual school

Impact of intervention:
From the work that has been undertaken, child A and the post 16 learning mentor have built a positive relationship, and child A now has built confidence to be able to communicate effectively with wider peers and adults... It gave them the opportunity to try new things, and time to think about their next steps. They really enjoyed the adventure activities and having the opportunity to speak to the outdoor education team helped with deciding their next steps. With the support of the post 16 learning mentor, child A has applied for college, and will be successfully starting in September 2022

Venture with confidence programme

This year we worked closely with our care leavers service to run a joint programme for children who are not in education, employment, or training with the newly improved name of Venture with Confidence which was decided by the young people themselves to avoid any negative connotations of the word NEET. The 12-week programme aims to help them into employment, further education, or training. The objective of the programme is to support our young people to:

• recognise their skills
• develop further skills
• build their confidence
• explore ideas of what they might like to do in the future; and
• arrange work experience

The young people also had the opportunity to achieve an ASDAN (Award scheme development and accreditation network) certificate in citizenship, first aid certificate and work towards their Duke of Edinburgh awards. The 'venture with confidence' scheme is run by members of virtual school team and care leaver service. The teams worked together with other services including our own youth support service, pure insight, safe opportunities, Healthwatch and journey first.

During the 12-week course the young people took part in team building activities such as canoeing and climbing, they visited Delamere Forest, the Roaches, and Llandudno. They also enjoyed employability workshops and completed community projects. This year the young people made planters at the charity Motherwell and a sun sail shade area at the Pure Insight allotment. All the materials for these projects were kindly donated by local supplier.

Early Years

Early years cared for children have been supported by three members of the early years team during the year 2021/22. We carry out early years PEPs from age 2 to 4 years old. An early year's consultant oversees the early years support for cared for children including training for designated practitioners and PEPs, supported by two targeted support officers (TSO's) for 2-year-olds. They have supported foster carers and parents to find nursery places and where possible have visited our 2-year-old cared for children in their settings. They have ensured our 2-year-old cared for children receive their statutory progress check at age two. Foster carers and parents were signposted at PEPs to the facilities and activities being run by the Children Centres and through the Parenting Journey Facebook pages.

Pupil premium plus funding was provided to purchase back packs and school equipment in preparation for our children starting school in September 2022.

'She got a little giraffe – she loves it! She took it into school on her first day. '
(Response received about the backpacks from a foster carer)

Pupil premium has been allocated to provide all our 3- and 4-year-old children with book trust letterbox parcels. The parcels contain books, games and/or resources. The children receive six parcels and a free, festive parcel at Christmas. The parcels help support literacy skills in a fun way, helping our children to explore and enjoy access to literacy and reading.

We have continued our roll out of electronic PEPs for our 2, 3 and 4-year-old early years children which helps to ensure we are able to fully support children of all ages to monitor and track attainment and progress. Training for settings was jointly delivered by the virtual school and a member of the business intelligence team.

'Everything has been very good. Excellent. Can't complain about anything.'
(Quote about support from our early years VS worker from a family carer)

Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

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, young people, 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 on request to children under 2 years and young people in care or care leavers over 18.

We have continued to develop the PEP following feedback from schools to further enhance the quality and content, with almost all primary and secondary schools now effectively using the PEP portal system. This year we have focussed on getting the post 16 and early years settings onto the portal system and we will continue to do so across all ages to ensure we are using our systems in the most efficient way.

Within Cheshire East, the virtual school takes an active role in the PEP process, ensuring prompt and proportionate action can be taken when issues arise that require specialist education input.

Virtual school advisors attend all initial PEP meetings and complete the first PEP which will provide a template and standard for future support. This includes ensuring actions and targets are specific and measurable. These PEP meetings take place within 20 working days and are available for the first cared for review meeting. PEPs are subsequently reviewed each term with the education provider taking a lead alongside social care by reviewing the child's progress, the impact of the previous actions and updating the PEP targets where appropriate.

There is a quality assurance process in place within the virtual school team where each PEP is reviewed and categorised based on the level of support needs of the child. Those with the highest support needs are rated as red, in which case the advisor will attend all PEPs and will provide more frequent contact with the child, carer, school and social worker. Cases rated as amber may require less oversight from the advisor whilst those rated as green are monitored with attendance at one PEP per year. The virtual school criteria involvement in the PEP is:
- New into care
- School or placement move
- Moved out of Borough
- Red rated cases
- Repeat exclusions
- Attendance below 90%
- Need for independent chair.
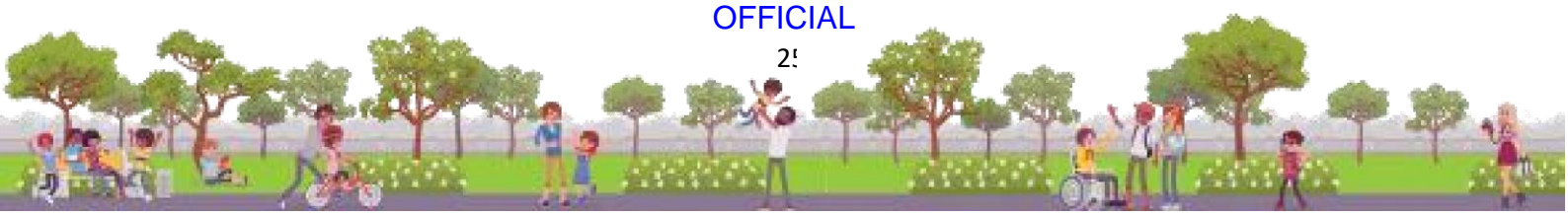
This year there has been a drive to ensure that all PEPs are completed and loaded onto the child's case file with a particular focus on those of school age where it is important to monitor progress. PEPs are deemed unsatisfactory if key information is not provided or if a previous PEP has been amended 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. Where this is the case advisors support individual schools (designated leads) to develop the PEP to ensure that the quality is improved, and targets are SMART. Exemplar PEPs are shared across localities during training sessions to share good practice.

Autumn term 1 (September 21 – December 21 prior to training sessions delivered to specifically focus on 'what makes a good PEP'

131 PEPs were quality assured and graded good

Spring term (post training)
150 PEPs were quality assured and graded good

7 PEPs in autumn term (pre training) were graded as poor by spring term 4 had moved to satisfactory and by summer then graded as good.

The quality of the PEP is the joint responsibility of the local authority and the school. Social workers, carers, VS, designated teachers and, as appropriate, other relevant professionals, work closely together. Social workers prioritise attendance at PEP meetings so that they gain essential information about the child. The virtual school head teacher has attended and led workshop sessions during social workers' team meeting 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. During next academic year we will be having specific focus on improving alignment of the EHCP annual review and PEP meetings, now that we a dedicated SEND keyworker and strengthened the links with the virtual school we will be developing systems to be able to effectively track and monitor data regarding annual reviews and PEPS to be able to measure and report on impact.
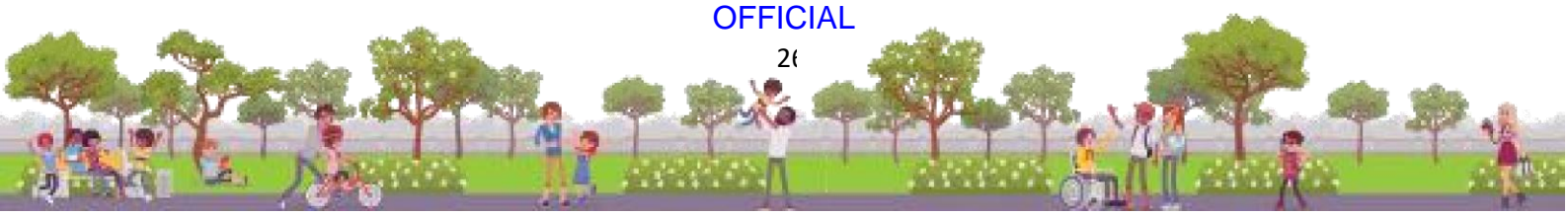
OUTCOMES AND EVENTS	PEP RATING	Virtual School Support ACTION
Attendance below 80%		
Episode of FTE since last PEP		Attend next PEP
Planned or possible placement move		Consider calling emergency PEP
Progress below expected for all subjects	RED	Contact Headteacher re concerns
School move planned		Raise concerns with Social Worker
School rated as inadequate/special measures		Offer observation and planning
Attainment below age expected		
Attendance between 80% and 90%		
Attendance between 90% and 95%		Call school to discuss case
Attendance has fallen since last PEP		Request specific additional information
Attends school outside Cheshire East		Call school before next PEP to assess progress
Attends Special School (maintained or independent)		Contact DT to offer staff training
DT is new to post	AMBER	Arrange to visit school to meet DT
Episode of FTE in past		Set up monitoring plan for interventions
Has recently moved school		
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		
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	GREEN	Offer advice and support if needed
In year other than 6 or 11		
Placement secure		
Previous PEP targets have been met		

There is a 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 the process is robust.

We will have a specific focus this year on further strengthening this process with the virtual school headteacher/deputy headteacher undertaking moderation and supporting to feedback to schools/settings and social care to ensure we are sharing good practise and further improve the quality and completion rates of PEPs; this will be monitored and tracked to evidence impact throughout this year.

Number of PEPs in 21/22 school year	Aged 2-4 Number in cohort= 44	Aged 5-11 Number in cohort = 142	Aged 12-16 Number in cohort = 222	Aged 16+ Number in cohort = 126	All children aged 2+ Number in cohort = 534
5	0	0	1	0	1
4	0	2	7	13	22
3	22	77	79	72	249
2	9	33	30	23	95
1	3	21	21	21	66
% at least 2 PEPs	70.45%	78.9%	52.7%	80% 85.7%	68.7%

80% of children aged 0-18 that were in care for 12 months at the end of 21/22 received at least one PEP (those recorded as not having a PEP equates to 28 young people who have had PEP meeting, but paperwork has not been returned, therefore unable to record as completed (19 are under 2 years old).

Following the successful implementation of our integrated PEPs within Liquid Logic, we currently have 276 primary and secondary schools effectively using this system. We have further improved the content of the PEP following working with our schools and have developed a signs of safety approach with more emphasis on SMART targets ensuring pupil premium is reviewed in detail for impact. We have now continued with the development of our integrated PEP system to enable it to be used for post 16 and we have now 41 colleges using the system effectively. We are also continuing with the development to include early years to ensure consistency across all age ranges and currently have 20 nurseries using the PEP portal effectively. This year we will be further developing the PEP system to ensure that preparing for adulthood is included to support careers and aspirations for all children/young people.
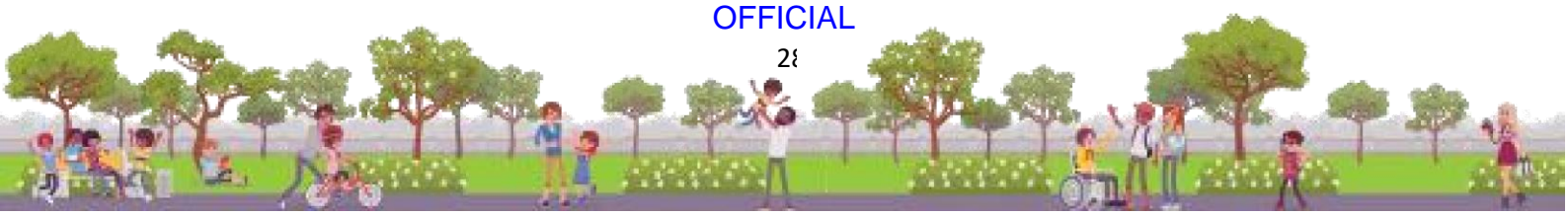
School Admissions

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' are prioritised for cared or children in need of a new school.
- The choice of education setting is based on what any good parent would want for their child. It is 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 are considered, and the suitability of the education setting tested by arranging an informal visit with the child.

Children move schools for several 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.

Virtual school attend weekly social care placement meetings to ensure we are effectively communicating and planning for subsequent placement moves at the earliest opportunity, ensuring where possible there is no drift and delay.

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 a place, the virtual school will consider making appeals or directing schools to admit. In 2021-22 there were no appeals made and no directions needed. The virtual school work with all schools who are admitting a child to offer support, with funding if needed, to ensure a smooth transition. Where children are placed in schools rated below 'good' a clear 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.

Attendance

The virtual school monitors attendance of all cared for children by commissioning an independent company to contact schools to collect a record of attendance. This data is then used to track and monitor all children to ensure effective and timely support is in place. Within the virtual school we have two specialist attendance officers that monitor attendance daily and work with schools and partners to ensure timey support is in place.

Breakdown of Month-by-Month Attendance
Data Sept – July 2021/22

	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July 2022	JULY 2020/21
Overall attendance Sept to Date %	91%	89.5%	92.0%	90.4%	90.2%	91.0%	90.4%	90.4%	90.5%	90.0%	89.0%	80.0%
Monthly attendance	91%	89.0%	90.8%	89.2%	86.6%	90.0%	90.0%	91.0%	90.8%	86.0%	83.0%	75.0%
Below 90% Sept to date	21.0%	26.0%	24.0%	22.0%	25.1%	26.3%	26.3%	23.0%	24.0%	25.0%	39.0%	51.3%
100% sept to date	56.0%	43.0%	35.1%	29.0%	20%	20.0%	16.0%	17.0%	14.0%	12.1%	13.5%	8.1%

As you can see in the table the comparison to the end of this year is that our attendance has risen by 9% overall and our cumulative below 90% attendance is 12.3% lower. Those children who have achieved 100% attendance is also 5.4% higher than previous.

	2020-2021	2021-2022
Primary attendance %	92.8%	86.2%
Secondary attendance %	80.4%	86.3%
Children with 100% Attendance	8% (34 children)	13% (39 children)
Children with above 95% Attendance	45% (153 children)	55.4% (163 children)

	% attendance	2019	2020**	2021
895	Cheshire East-LAC* Attendance	95.4		88.8
981	Northwest-LAC Attendance	94.6	-	90

970	England-LAC Attendance	94.9	-	90.9
895	Cheshire East- All pupils Attendance	95.6	-	95.7
981	Northwest-All pupils Attendance	95.3	-	95.3
970	England-All pupils Attendance	95.3	-	95.4

*LAC stands for looked after children which are known as cared for children in Cheshire East.

** No national data was published in 2020

Attendance Support provided by the virtual school

Our two specialist attendance officer have had a specific focus this year to ensure that we are able to report and record accurate attendance data ensuring we have systems in place to be able to track individual childrens data effectively, the overall cumulative attendance for this cohort has increased by 9% from July 2020 to July 2021; with the % of children below 90% attendance having reduced by 12.3%. Over the next 12 months following analysis of data, we will be focusing on targeted work for primary aged children and undertaking a deep dive of analysis for individual children and young people to understand the gap in the overall attendance of cared for children compared to all other children to further improve overall attendance. Our main aims next year will be to:

- Strengthen the work with key staff in schools to identify and resolve attendance concerns to ensure timely interventions and support in place.
- Work in conjunction with advisors to ensure clear communication and effective support.
- Meeting parents/carers and pupils at school or home to offer guidance and support.
- Jointly working alongside social care to ensure clear and consistent communication.
- Working alongside schools regarding education plans and development of bespoke packages where this is deemed necessary to support children's needs.
- Attending reintegration meetings following fixed term exclusions to support with next steps and effective planning to help reduce further repeat exclusions.
- Developing communication with supervising social workers so that carers can be encouraged and supported to help improve attendance, offering support and guidance.
- Robust tracking and monitoring to ensure that direct intervention is quickly put in place for when attendance falls below 95%.
- Continue to support Year 11 and Year 6 transitions during the summer holidays to be key point of contact for support.
- Review weekly/monthly/yearly attendance data that feed into scorecard to enable oversight by leaders to measure impact and outcomes.
- Deliver training and guidance on how to support improving attendance for schools and settings
- Provide training and support to foster carers
- Strengthen the monitoring systems in place to track post 16 college student's attendance

Case Study of a Young Person That Has Received Attendance Support

Key Concerns during last academic year
•Attendance
•Mental Health and wellbeing concerns
•Exclusions and unauthorised absences
•Child A received 38 half day exclusions
•Child A received unauthorised marks
•School, social worker and advisor agreed that needs were not being met in school

Type of Intervention:
•Home visits
•Alternative provision identified to support access to wider programmes of learning as part of school curriculum

Impact of Intervention:
•Child A started accessing alternative provision
•Child A has settled into the routine of attending school,
•Attendance has improved.
Attendance % prior to intervention - 46.38%
Fixed term exclusion % 31%

Attendance post intervention 75%

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 they have the support in place to thrive and make progress. During 2021/22 the virtual school has been quick in its response to exclusions so that a joint plan for the child can be implemented which identifies any key triggers and intervention required. If an exclusion was unavoidable then there were similar meetings held afterwards to try and avoid any repeat exclusions for children. Schools or carers are asked to inform the virtual school whenever an exclusion takes place. In the case of repeat exclusions, additional PEP meetings will be held to check that all necessary support is being given.

The virtual school has funded places at both the Fermain Academy and Cornerstones, and this has contributed to the reduction in some instances of repeat fixed term exclusions. The staff have accessed training through the virtual school on understanding the needs of cared for children and how to support children with insecure attachment; 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 2021/22 with a decrease in primary exclusions from six individual fixed term exclusions recorded (for four individual children) last year to two individual exclusions recorded this year (for two individual children) this year of primary age. The data shows that there were 91 individual exclusions recorded (for 34 children) at secondary age.
The table below outlines fixed term exclusion data from 2018-2020 which shows that we have continued to see overall reduction within Cheshire east and are below both North-West and national figures.

% Of pupils with at least one fixed term exclusion from school		2018	2019	2020	2021
895	Cheshire East-% LAC fixed term exclusions	7.69	7.52	6.38	6.09
981	Northwest-% LAC fixed term exclusions	10.17	10.63	8.60	
970	England-% LAC fixed term exclusions	11.28	11.38	9.38	

Year	Proportion of pupils subject to fixed term exclusion	Number of pupils subject to FTE	Average Number of days lost per pupil
2017/18	10%		4 days
2018/19	12%		5 days
2019/20	9%	35	4.5 days
2020/21	8%	30	4 days
2021/22	6%	36	4.5 days

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. Specific interventions and 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 based on aspirations
- Agreeing targets for improvement in attendance or behaviour
- Identifying any issues/concerns in school
- Deciding whether additional adult support, e.g., mentor is required

The 'my voice' document was further developed following a working group session led by the virtual school head teacher with several cared for children and care leavers who supported redesigning this document.

Where children are not attaining and are struggling in school the virtual school advisor works 1-1 to gain understanding from the child of what support can be put in place. The virtual school has dedicated learning mentors who work 1-1 with children, they work closely with schools to empower and train staff to continue to support children/young people.

> Your input with the young people has been amazing since I have been in post as the manager. You are always proactive and willing to look at other solutions; you are dedicated to your role and make a massive difference to the young people's lives. You have been a great support to me as the registered manager with supporting with education. (Quote from Children's Homes Manager)

> The Virtual School Post 16 support team are fabulous with my children. They can build positive relationships with young people. They are prepared to go above and beyond to support my young people. They are all very experienced and very creative with their thinking on identifying an education plan. It is very rare that I must remind them to do something. They are all very good at communication and nothing is too much trouble. I really appreciate everything you do for my young people, and I know this view is the same across the board. I would be very lost without you all. (Quote from a Social Worker)

> To see young people, grow in confidence and find a career/education path that changes their lives is inspirational and a pleasure to be a part of makes me so proud to be part of a team that achieves this and on the journey with the young people. (Quote from Cared for Children and Care Leavers)

I just wanted to thank you both for all your help and support over the years. You have always been at the end of the phone (or email) if I needed anything, and the support Cheshire East have offered us as an 'out of authority' school has been fantastic! (Quote from a designated teacher)

"Thanks so much for all the great joined up work that is being undertaken. Great to hear the positives and that he is engaging with the support." (Quote from a social worker about school and mentor supporting a child)

Education is a strong point and the youth justice service education worker (YJS & VS advisor) sorted it out for me and I got into college. YJS are good at education.

(Quote from a cared for child also under the youth justice service)

Attainment

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) assessments

The EYFS profile is a statutory assessment of children's development at the end of the early years foundation stage (EYFS). A new EYFS was introduced in September 2021 with revised early learning goals (ELG's) making data comparison with previous years incomparable.

The EYFS profile is intended to provide a reliable, valid, and accurate assessment of each child's development at the end of the EYFS. It is made up of an assessment of the child's outcomes in relation to the 17 early learning goal (ELG) descriptors.

For each ELG, teachers must judge whether a child is: • meeting the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS (expected); or • not yet reaching this level (emerging)

Children are defined as having reached a good level of development (GLD) at the end of the EYFS if they have achieved at least the expected level for the ELGs in the prime areas of learning and the specific areas of mathematics and literacy.

There were 21 cared for children in reception as of July 2022 with 13 in the eligible cohort (in care for 12 months as of 31 March). Of the 13 eligible Reception age children 2 reached a good level of development in July 2022.

Group	Pupils	% Of results received
Full Cohort	20	
Out of area	4	
Out of Age Range	3	
Results received for	20	
Achieving GLD	5	25%
Expected in Writing	7	35%
Expected in Maths	8	40%

% GLD for the whole year was around 66% so significantly above the 25% for this group although the small size of the group is an important consideration.

Looking at individual learning areas the % reaching the expected level ranges from 35% (Self-regulation and Writing) to 75% (Being Imaginative ...). In the wider cohort the equivalent figures are 71% (Writing) to 94% (Gross Motor Skills)

During next academic year we will be reviewing the data for this cohort of children and working with the early years team to better understand the areas of support needed to develop clear interventions to support measuring impact. We will ensure that all PEPs are reviewed to incorporate SMART targets to ensure targeted intervention and support is in place.

Key Stage 1 *data is not yet validated and may change during this period until publication

Year 1 Phonics

As of July 2022, there were 16 cared for children in total and 11 were within the eligible cohort (in care for 12 months or more as of 31 March 2021). We have received results for 13 children (7 are eligible).
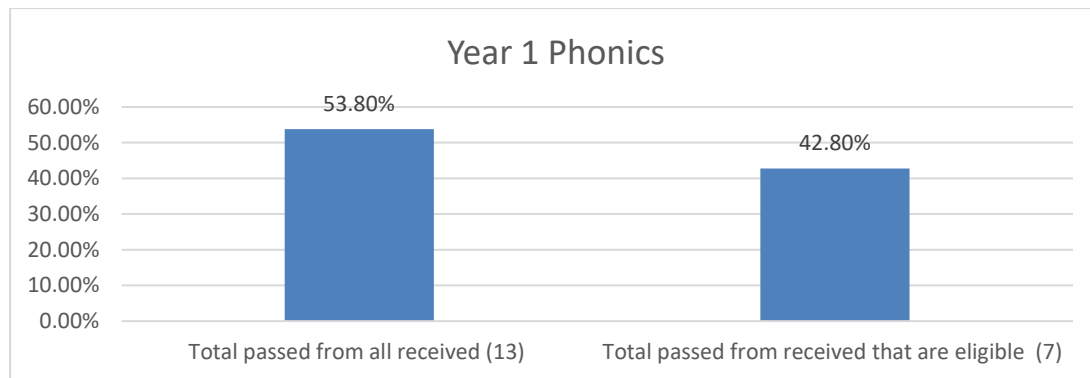
Year 2

As of July 2022, there were 14 cared for children in total and 9 were within the eligible cohort (in care for 12 months or more as of 31 March 2021). We have received results for 11 children (7 are eligible)

Phonics

Due to COVID some of our year 2 children sat their phonics assessments in the autumn term.

SATS

Key Stage 1 SATS Results

Bar chart showing:

- Achieved expected standard in Reading: % of whole cohort (14 Children) 29%, % of received eligable cohort (7 children) 29%
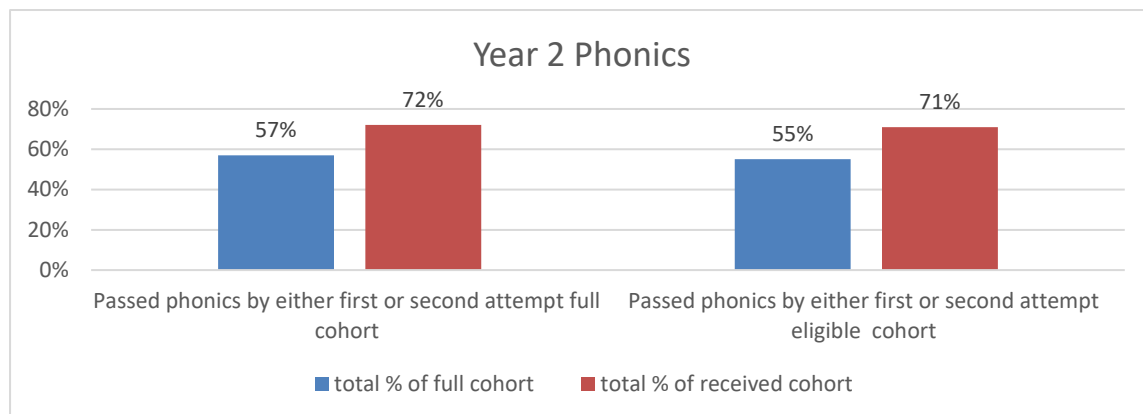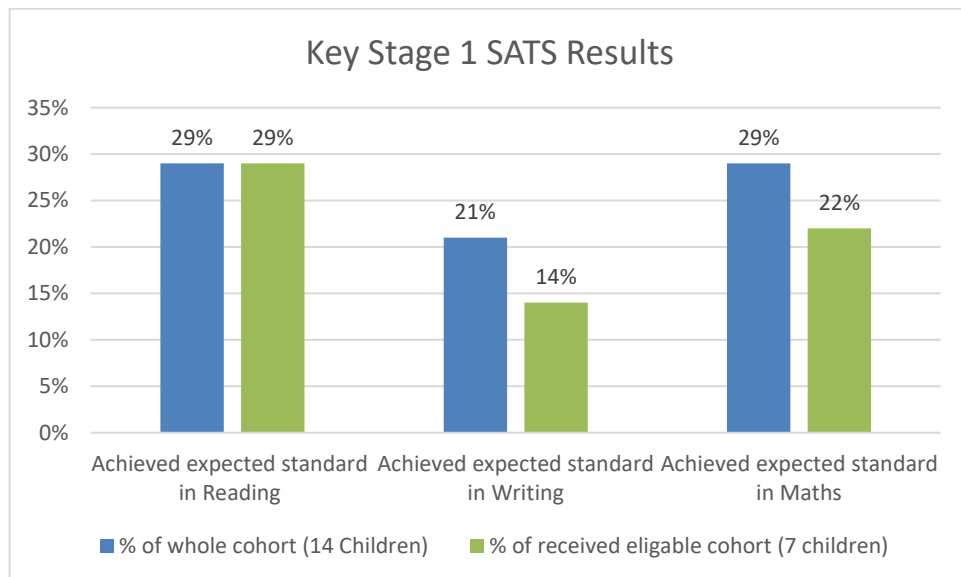- Achieved expected standard in Writing: % of whole cohort (14 Children) 21%, % of received eligable cohort (7 children) 14%
- Achieved expected standard in Maths: % of whole cohort (14 Children) 29%, % of received eligable cohort (7 children) 22%

Legend:
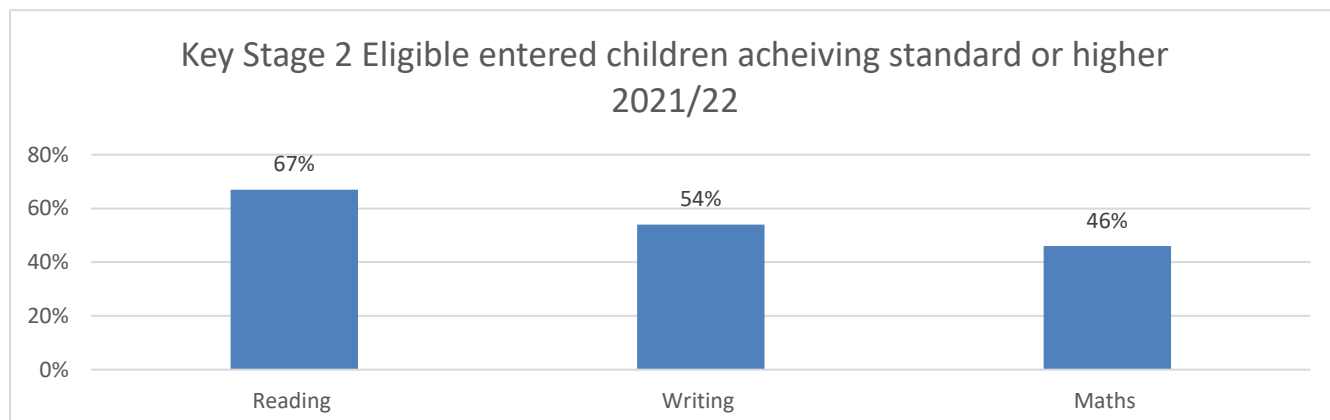■ % of whole cohort (14 Children) ■ % of received eligable cohort (7 children)

Key Stage 2

As of July 2022, there were 31 cared for children with 28 within the eligible cohort (in care for 12 months or more as of 31 March 2021). 26 children (24 eligible children) were entered for the SATS tests. Of the 5 children not entered 4 were due to specific SEND needs and one was due to them being placed in a Welsh school where they do not sit SATS.

In all eligible cohort (total of 28 children)	Number of eligible children	Number of eligible children%	% Of entered cohort (24 children)
Achieved expected standard in Writing	11	39%	46%
Achieved greater depth in Writing	2	7%	8%
Achieved standard in Reading	16	57%	67%
Achieved standard in Maths	11	39%	46%
Achieved standard in Writing and Maths	9	32%	37.5%
Achieved standard in Reading, Writing and Maths	9	32%	37.5%

Key Stage 2 Eligible entered children acheiving standard or higher 2021/22

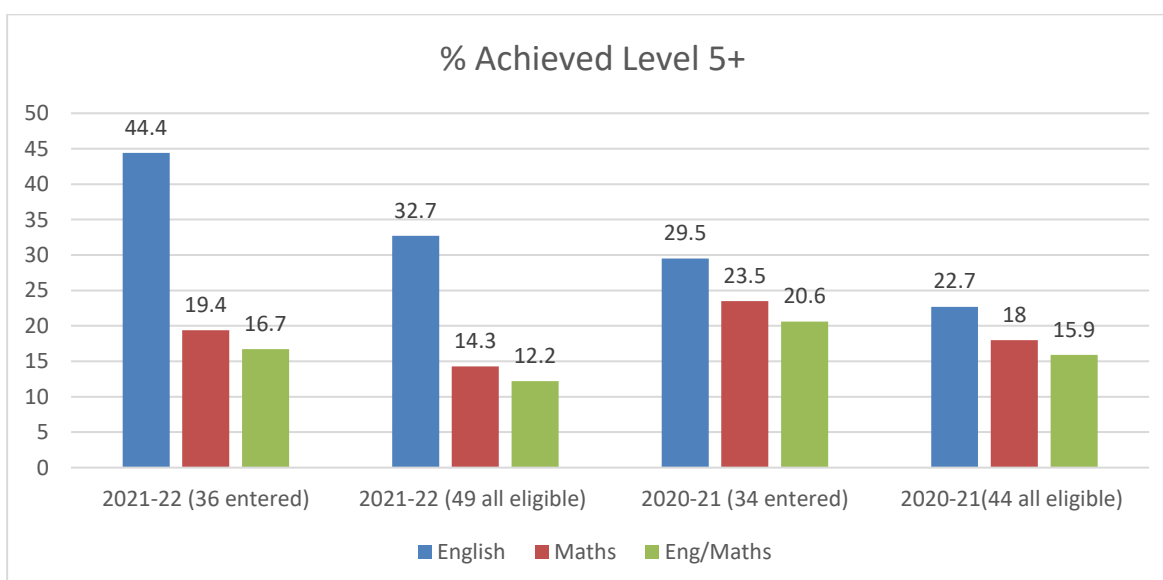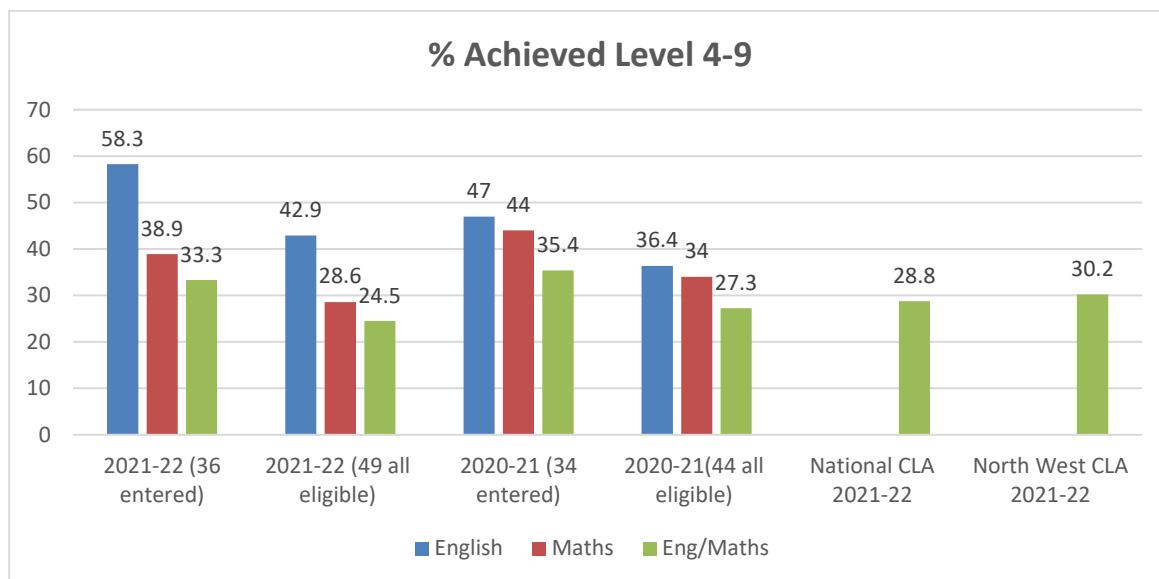Reading: 67%
Writing: 54%
Maths: 46%

Key Stage 4

At the end of the academic year July 2022, there were 61 children in total that are Cheshire East cared for children. Of the 61 there were 49 in the eligible cohort (in care for 12 months or more as of 31 March 2021). Of the 49 eligible, 36 were entered for GCSEs, (the other 13 children gained a range of other functional skills qualifications, most attended specialist schools for children with complex needs).

In all eligible cohort (total of 49 children)	Number of eligible children	Number of eligible children%	Number of entered cohort (36)	% Of entered cohort
Achieved 9-4 in English	21	42.9%	21	58.3%
Achieved 9-5 in English	16	32.7%	16	44.4%
Achieved 9-4 in Maths	14	28.6%	14	38.9%
Achieved 9-5 in Maths	7	14.3%	7	19.4%
Achieved 9-5 in English and Maths	6	12.2%	6	16.7%
Achieved 9-4 in English and Maths	12	24.5%	12	33.3%
Achieved 8 in English	1	2%	1	2.8%
Achieved 8 in Maths	1	2%	1	2.8%
Received grades for at least 5 GCSEs	31	63.3%	31	86.1%
Received grades for at least 8 GCSEs	16	32.7%	16	44.4%

*Although data below includes that of this year and national, as per DfE/OFQUAL guidance this year's data should not be published or compared to previous years'/national data.

% Achieved Level 4-9

Bar chart legend: English (blue), Maths (red), Eng/Maths (green)

Category	English	Maths	Eng/Maths
2021-22 (36 entered)	58.3	38.9	33.3
2021-22 (49 all eligible)	42.9	28.6	24.5
2020-21 (34 entered)	47	44	35.4
2020-21 (44 all eligible)	36.4	34	27.3
National CLA 2021-22			28.8
North West CLA 2021-22			30.2

% Achieved Level 5+

Bar chart legend: English (blue), Maths (red), Eng/Maths (green)

Category	English	Maths	Eng/Maths
2021-22 (36 entered)	44.4	19.4	16.7
2021-22 (49 all eligible)	32.7	14.3	12.2
2020-21 (34 entered)	29.5	23.5	20.6
2020-21 (44 all eligible)	22.7	18	15.9

% Of pupils achieving 9-4 pass in English and Maths		2019	2020	2021*
895	Cheshire East-9-4 English & Maths	15.00	36.60	33.3
981	Northwest-9-4 English & Maths	17.80	23.90	30.2
970	England-9-4 English & Maths	17.80	24.40	28.8

*Provisional early data collected on results day and is for all eligible pupils entered for GSCE or equivalent examinations.
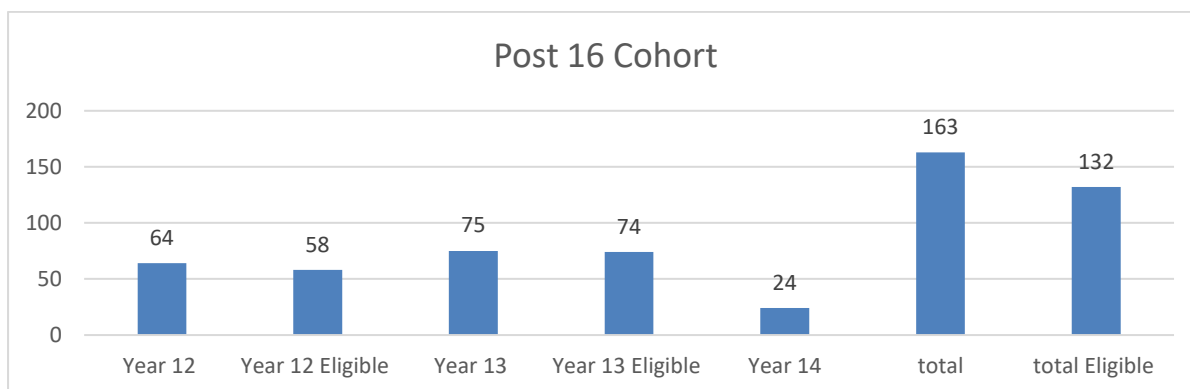
Although the 2021 result based on the provisional data is down by 3.3 percentage points on last year it is still significantly higher than the results for England and the Northwest. During next academic year we will work with schools and settings to focus in specific areas such as maths, as this has seen a decrease with attainment levels this year.

Post-16 education, employment, and training

Post 16 Cohort

	Year 12	Year 12 Eligible	Year 13	Year 13 Eligible	Year 14	total	total Eligible
	64	58	75	74	24	163	132

Year 12

At the end of the academic year 2021/2022, there were 58 eligible students in total. Of this, 7 were not in education, employment, or training (12%), a number now have clear next steps and pathways of which

3 have an offer of a place in college from September 2022, 1 has applied to the army and 1 young person has secured an apprenticeship.

Of this cohort a further 8 young people are on re-engagement programme being supported by the post 16 tutor and accessing the venture with confidence programme 7 young people are in employment.

Students have engaged in a range of post 16 pathways, including specialist provision, college courses ranging from Entry Level to Level 3, apprenticeships, and re-engagement programmes.

54 young people have a clear post 16 pathway in place for September 2022 (93%). The virtual school are working alongside social care and wider services to ensure that all young people have access to support and services.

Qualifications 2021/2022

All eligible Year 12 students who were entered for examinations achieved a pass in every subject as listed below.

Vocational Entry Level	Level 1:	Level 2:	Level 3(first year):
1	9	7	3

A Levels (1st year):	4

ESOL	Entry 1	Entry 2	Entry 3
6	3	2	1

GCSE	English	Maths	Science
19	7	10	2

Functional Skills	English Entry 2	English Entry 3	English Level 1	English Level 2
	1	1	1	2
Maths Entry 1	Maths Entry 2	Maths Entry 3	Maths Level 1	Maths Level 2
1	2	6	2	2

Year 13

Qualifications 2021/2022

All <u>eligible</u> Year 13 students entered for an examination passed at the levels below:

Vocational Qualifications	Entry Level 1	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3 (first year)	Level 3 (Second Year)
	1	5	7	2	6

A Levels:	3
A Levels (first year):	1

A Level Results:

Classics A

English Language B

English Language C

Textiles B

History C

Design and Technology C

Art C

Art D

Geography D

Apprenticeship:	1

ESOL	Entry 1	Entry 2
	8	5

GCSE	English	Maths
	3	6

Functional Skills	English Entry 3	Maths Entry 1	Maths Entry 3	Maths Level 2
	3	6	5	1

Year 13 Additional Learning Pathways

Legend: Princes Trsut · Work experince through Cygnet · Employment · Apprenticeship · Specialist provision
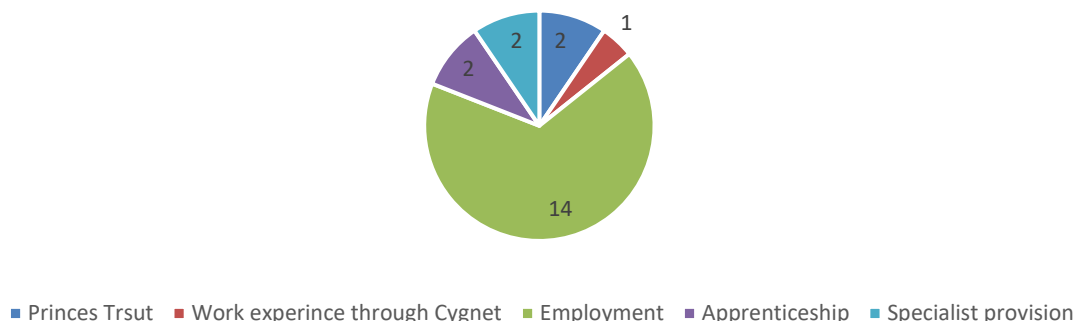
At the end of the academic year 2021/2022, there were 75 students in total. 76% of young people (57 students) have a pathway in place for September 2022. These pathways include university, college/training, work, and apprenticeships.

Of the 75 students in the overall cohort 18 were not accessing education, employment, or training which equates21.3% (20.2% of the eligible cohort), this was a reduction compared to the same time last year.

All these young people will continue to be supported by the cared for and care leavers team working alongside the virtual school advisor and wider services to ensure all support is in place.

Apprenticeships

4 young people are successfully currently on an apprenticeship in year 13 and will continue to be supported.

Year 14 and 14+ Students
Qualifications 2021/2022

Vocational Qualifications	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3 (Frist Year)	Level 3 (Second year)
	1	4	2	4

ESOL	Entry 1	Entry 2	Entry 3
	1	1	1

Apprenticeships:

7 young people are currently on an apprenticeship programme within a wide range of areas including outdoor education, electrician, childcare, and teaching assistants.

To ensure effective and timely support is in place the NEET challenge panel takes place monthly, monitoring destinations of all relevant and former relevant cared for children and care leavers in Cheshire East. The virtual school, care leaver service and Journey First attend meetings to identify barriers and discuss best ways to support young people who are not in education, employment, or training or at risk of becoming NEET. The NEET figure in August 2022 was 26% which is an improvement compared to 28% in August 2021.

University 2022

There are four students starting at the following universities this year.

 Keele University - Law

University of Bangor – Product Design

Liverpool John Moores University – Criminology and Sociology

Edge Hill University – English Literature

16 pupils are successfully continuing and progressing onto the next phase of their course at a range of universities, including Manchester Metropolitan, University of York, and Leeds.

1 student has just successfully completed her degree in Fine Art.

Service Objectives 2020/21

Strategic priority	Summary	Lead	Achieved/Some Progress/ Not achieved
Implement a Governing Body to ensure governance and scrutiny to include core members from across key partners and stakeholders	To introduce a Governing Body, to include key partners from across all key stakeholders including foster carers, health, social care, members and education	LR	Achieved – In place with representatives from across all key stakeholders included, continue next year to embed
Work with council leaders to ensure development of apprenticeship opportunities for our cared for children/care leavers.	To work with the cared for/care leavers service and Workforce Development to secure opportunities across the council	LR/CL/KF/AP	Some progress – apprenticeship lead is being appointed within the council, led by AP. Successful progression of apprentices this year

Strategic priority	Summary	Lead	Achieved/Some Progress/ Not achieved
Development of a pupil council voice to ensure our children/young people are fully involved with key developments across the service.	To ensure the development of the child's voice regarding strategic developments across the service	LR/Participation Team	Some progress – Survey in progress to capture children and young people's views, continue to focus on this next year for analysis of returns and next steps
Work alongside council members as part of the corporate parenting strategy to develop access to front line services.	Members to support: Governing Body, Priority 2 workstream, direct work with children and young people to improve access to education	LR/KB	Achieved – Member representatives allocated to all group and workstreams.

Continue to provide support and interventions for schools and children to improve outcomes (narrow the gap and lost learning) and attendance, evaluating the impact of the intervention and use of pupil premium. In relation to the return to schools following impact from Covid-19.	Monitor requests and impact of pupil premium and develop a system to ensure schools are made accountable for impact. Embed locality model working to support children and schools. Improve outcomes for all years and support with impact from Covid-19 and gaps in learning. Improve literacy and communication of Early Years and primary aged children.	LR/VS team/DVSH/EY team	partially/ongoing as a key focus area over the next year 12 months

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	Continue to review the impact of staffing changes and use of funding to support improving outcomes of children. Adapt training to increase support to schools to offer 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. Continue to work alongside regional VS partners to share good practise. Continue to develop online webpages and resources to further support advice and guidance.	LR/CL	Achieved – will be ongoing to ensure we are continuing to strengthen our support, to include new DfE extended duties for children with a social worker.

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.	LR/VS team/commissioning	Achieved – ongoing to ensure we are embedding monitoring of commissioned services to ensure quality and value for money. Key focus next year will be to ensure we have systems in place to easily report and record impact data linked to commissioned services.
	Review and monitor the impact of commissioned service to ensure quality and value for money. Continue to work with alternative provisions to ensure outcomes of children accessing alternative provision is further improved. Work alongside social care to ensure education involvement with Bespoke and Mockingbird.		

| Improve completion rate and quality of PEPs and develop to extend to Early Years and Post 16 | Review and roll out pilot for online PEP for early years and post 16 providers.

Continue to improve completion rate of PEPs (termly).

Continue to improve number of PEPs graded as 'Good'/ 'Outstanding', sharing best practise within locality network sessions.

Develop PEP to ensure PFA is a clear focus | LR/CL | | Some progress – ongoing to ensure that quality continues to be improved and consistent. |

Development Priorities for 2022-23

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.

Strategic Priorities for 2022-2:

1. **The governing body to ensure governance and scrutiny to include core members from across key partners and stakeholders.**
   - Scrutinise the attendance, progress and outcomes of pupils and effectiveness of interventions to ensure impact on the lived experience of pupils
   - Evaluate methods of capturing and using pupil voice to ensure our children/young people are fully involved with key developments across the service.
   - Adapt training to increase support including understanding the needs of cared for children, attachment and trauma and mental health and wellbeing.
   - To work alongside social care implementing extended duties for children with a social worker to ensure we have a clear framework and universal offer of support and guidance.
   - Monitor the impact of placement moves on children's education to ensure it is sufficiently considered by multi-agency partners

2. **To provide support and interventions for schools and children to improve outcomes (narrow the gap and lost learning) and attendance, evaluating the impact of the intervention and use of pupil premium.**
   - Improve literacy and communication of early years and primary aged children to improve the percentage achieving GLD.
   - Monitor requests and impact of pupil premium and develop a system to ensure schools are held accountable for and can report and record   impact.
   - Identify schools where progress is below expected and use self-evaluation to plan for improvement.
   - Share best practice where pupils achieve above expectations through training

3. **To ensure sufficiently robust plans address low engagement in education.**
   - Work with social care and wider partners to strengthen the support for our most vulnerable, ensuring attendance is a key priority and ensure all pupils have a full-time timetable with appropriate levels of tuition.
   - Work with social care and wider partners to improve the systems for planning of placement/school moves.
   - Continue to work with alternative provisions to ensure attendance and outcomes of children accessing alternative provision is further improved, ensure clear framework/protocol and procedures are in place.

4. **To further improve the quality of PEPs ensuring increased targeted support and interventions for pupils where this is needed to improve progress and outcomes**
- Strengthen the moderation process identifying good practice and areas of learning and disseminate leading to continuous improvement PEPs
- Further improve systems and recording tools across SEND and virtual school to ensure alignment of EHCP reviews and PEPs
- Review pilot for our online PEP system for early years and post 16 providers.
- Continue to improve completion rate of PEPs (termly).
- Continue to improve number of PEPs graded as 'good'/ 'outstanding', sharing best practice within locality network sessions
- Develop the PEP to ensure preparing for adulthood is a clear focus.

5. **Review and monitor the impact of commissioned service to ensure quality and value for money.**
- Monitor the impact of commissioned and front-line services through engagement, progress, and outcomes.
- Increase direct supervision of commissioned service and clarify expectations to be achieved.