

Corporate Parenting Committee

Date of Meeting: 12 November 2019

Report Title: Virtual Headteacher Annual Report

Senior Officer: Mark Palethorpe, Acting Executive Director of People

1. Report Summary

- 1.1. The Corporate Parenting Strategy sets out five pledges to our cared for children and care leavers. Over the year, the Corporate Parenting Committee focuses on each one of the five pledges.
- 1.2. Pledge Two of the Strategy is that 'We will improve education, employment and employment outcomes'. This report updates the Committee on progress, impact and developments in relation to this pledge.

2. Recommendation/s

2.1. Corporate Parenting Committee is asked to:

2.1.1. Endorse the Virtual Headteacher's Annual Report.

3. Reasons for Recommendation/s

- 3.1. The Corporate Parenting Committee is an advisory group to the Cabinet and, as such, needs to be aware of any national or local issues that are likely to impact on cared for children and care leavers. The Corporate Parenting Committee needs to be able to scrutinise and challenge performance to improve outcomes for cared for children and young people.

4. Other Options Considered

4.1. None; this is an annual report.

5. Background

- 5.1. We are currently corporate parents to 517 cared for children. 319 of these are school aged cared for children from Reception to Year 11.
- 5.2. 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*.
- 5.3. This report presents an overview of the operation and impact of the Virtual School during 2018-19. The Virtual School 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.
- 5.4. 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 than last academic year.
- 5.5. 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.

5.6. Legal Implications

5.6.1. Legal advice will be sought, as appropriate, upon all relevant emerging issues.

5.7. Finance Implications

5.7.1. An increase in the number of cared for children does have a financial impact on the resources and capacity of the Council.

5.8. Policy Implications

5.8.1. There are no direct policy implications of this report.

5.9. Equality Implications

5.9.1. There are no direct equality implications of this report.

5.10. Human Resources Implications

5.10.1. There are no direct human resources of this report.

5.11. Risk Management Implications

5.11.1. Cared for children and care leavers are a vulnerable group that are at risk of a number of factors – poor education and training, health, safeguarding and transition into adulthood.

5.12. Rural Communities Implications

5.12.1. There are no direct implications for rural communities.

5.13. Implications for Children & Young People/Cared for Children

5.13.1. The contents of this report have implications for cared for children and care leavers, who are some of Cheshire East's most vulnerable children.

5.14. Public Health Implications

5.14.1. There are no direct implications for public health.

6. Ward Members Affected

6.1. Although the number of Cheshire East cared for children and young people is relatively small, they are a vulnerable cohort who live across Cheshire East and in other local authority areas

7. Consultation & Engagement

7.1. None.

8. Access to Information

8.1. None.

9. Contact Information

9.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

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