

**Notice of a public meeting of  
Corporate Parenting Board**

**To:** Councillors Orrell (Chair), Fitzpatrick (Vice-Chair),  
Heaton, Hunter, Musson, Rowley, Runciman and Baker

**Date:** Wednesday, 28 April 2021

**Time:** 5.00pm

**Venue:** Remote meeting

**AGENDA**

**1. Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, Members are asked to declare:

- any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests,
- any prejudicial interests or
- any disclosable pecuniary interests

which they may have in respect of business on this agenda.

**2. Public Participation**

At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered to speak can do so. Members of the public may speak on agenda items or on matters within the remit of the committee.

Please note that our registration deadlines have changed to 2 working days before the meeting, in order to facilitate the management of public participation at remote meetings. The deadline for registering at this meeting is at **5.00pm on Monday 26 April 2021.**

To register to speak please visit [www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings](http://www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings) to fill out an online registration form. If you have any questions about the registration form or the meeting please contact the Democracy Officer for the meeting whose details can be found at the foot of the agenda.

### **Webcasting of Remote Public Meetings**

Please note that, subject to available resources, this remote public meeting will be webcast including any registered public speakers who have given their permission. The remote public meeting can be viewed live and on demand at [www.york.gov.uk/webcasts](http://www.york.gov.uk/webcasts).

During coronavirus, we've made some changes to how we're running council meetings. See our coronavirus updates ([www.york.gov.uk/COVIDDemocracy](http://www.york.gov.uk/COVIDDemocracy)) for more information on meetings and decisions.

- 3. Minutes** (Pages 1 - 6)  
To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2021.

- 4. City of York Council Approach to the Corporate Parenting Board** (Pages 7 - 12)  
An initial report was presented to the Corporate Parenting Board in January 2021 which recommended broadening the contribution made to the Corporate Parenting Board by children and young people in care and partner agencies and also some changes to the membership of the Board.

The purpose of this report is to build on the January report and make proposals for how the Corporate Parenting Board could be delivered.

- 5. Virtual School Headteacher Report 2019-2020 academic year** (Pages 13 - 40)  
The Headteacher of the Virtual School for looked after children will present the Annual Report to Members.

6. **City of York Sufficiency Strategy 2020-2023** (Pages 41 - 56)  
This report provides an update on the City of York Sufficiency Strategy 2020-2023.
7. **Update to Sufficiency Strategy regarding Residential Care** (Pages 57 - 58)  
This report provides the Corporate Parenting Board with information regarding the challenges in securing suitable Residential care provision for our young people and therefore, proposed changes to our Residential Sufficiency strategy.
8. **Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategic Partnership - Highlight Report** (Pages 59 - 82)  
This report provides information to the Corporate Parenting Board regarding service updates. This report covers the partnership meeting of the 20 April 2021 and focuses on updates from key teams including response to Covid 19.
9. **Work Plan** (Pages 83 - 84)  
To consider the work plan for the 2021-22 municipal year.
10. **Urgent Business**  
Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

#### Board Members Agreed Areas of Interest

- Show Me That I Matter
- Housing and Pathway Team
- Education/Schools
- Virtual Head and School for Children in Care
- Health
- Placement Team, Fostering Service and Short Breaks
- Connexions / Education, Training & Employment

#### Democracy Officer:

Name: Louise Cook

#### Contact Details:

- Telephone – (01904) 551031
- E-mail - [louise.cook@york.gov.uk](mailto:louise.cook@york.gov.uk)

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democracy Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats

Contact details are set out above.

**This information can be provided in your own language.**

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

 (01904) 551550

City of York Council

Committee Minutes

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Meeting	Corporate Parenting Board
Date	19 January 2021
Present	Councillors Orrell (Chair), Fitzpatrick (Vice-Chair), Heaton, Hunter, Musson, Rowley, Runciman and Baker

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### **30. Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, Members were invited to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in relation to the business on the agenda or any other general interests they might have within the remit of the Board. None were declared.

### **31. Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board, held on 18 February 2020 be approved and then signed by the Chair as a correct record at a later date.

### **32. Public Participation**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Councils Public Participation Scheme.

### **33. Revised approach to the Corporate Parenting Board**

The Board considered a report detailing the revised approach to the Corporate Parenting Board. This included information on the Corporate Parenting Legal Duty, the three levels of Corporate Parenting Responsibility, the Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategic Partnership and role of the Corporate Parenting Board. An updated Terms of Reference for the Board was also included.

The Interim Group Manager Achieved Permanence was in attendance to present the report and he outlined the report noting that the revised approach reinforced the feedback Children in Care Strategy. He explained the proposed changes to the membership of the board to be expanded to include co-opted members to allow the Board to become more interactive. In response to questions from Members he confirmed that Foster Cares would be represented in the membership.

Members discussed the proposed changes to membership and access to meetings. It was confirmed that the board meetings were public meetings. Members welcomed the new approach, including the inclusion of Looked After Children, although concern was expressed about the balance of membership in the context of the Board's decision making.

Resolved:

- i. That a further report would be brought to the next Board meeting detailing how the Board would move forward.
- ii. That the Chair, Vice Chair, Corporate Director Children, Education and Communities and Assistant Director Children's Services would meet to discuss how the Board would move forward.

Reason: To update and revise the approach taken by the Board.

### **34. Children and Young People in Care (CYPIC) Strategy**

The Board considered a report that updated them on City of York Corporate Parenting and Children in Care Strategy 2020 – 2023 and plan. The Interim Group Manager Achieved Permanence presented the strategy and plan highlighting the eight objectives. The Assistant Director Children's Services confirmed that the plan presented covered the period November 2018 to March 2020 and the strategy from 2020 to 2023. In answer to Member questions they clarified that:

- The visits to Wenlock Terrace were undertaken by the Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) and were not a requirement of officers
- The mechanism for members of the Board to engage with Looked After Children (LAC) would be facilitated through the

Assistant Director Children's Services. It may be interesting for members to visit the Beehive, which was commissioned by the council

- The process for the appointment and role of the IROs was explained.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To keep the Board updated.

### **35. Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) Annual Report 2019-20**

The Board considered the Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) Annual Report 2019-20 and IRO Service Plan for Children in Care 2020-21. The Service Manager Independent Reviewing Service was in attendance to give an update and as set out in the report explained how the recalibration of services had a positive impact of wide reaching reform of Children Social Care Services undertaken in York during 2019-20. In answer to Members questions advised that she could provide Members with the data on children out of area and placed in a temporary bridging placements outside of York.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To keep the Board updated.

### **36. Highlight report from last CYPIC Strategy Group**

The Board considered a highlight report that gave them an update on Children in Care and the Care Leavers Strategic Partnership. The Interim Group Manager Achieved Permanence outlined the report, which included a Leaving Care Service Plan update on the Pathway team, Children in Permanent Placements update, Court Team update, Foster Service update, Placement sufficiency, Reducing Costs Board, Covid-19 response, recruitment update and Fostering Panel update. In response to questions raised he explained that:

- The process for step parent adoption remained the same during the pandemic. It was noted that there were different

procedures regarding whether adoptions were made in public private law.

- Recruiting foster carers for teenagers remained a challenge.
- The data for foster carers in York was detailed

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To keep the Board updated.

### **37. Update from VOICE**

The Board considered a report providing them with an Update on Voice. This updated Members on the work of and impact of COVID-19 on the Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum, Advocacy and Mind of My Own (online platform that enables children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings).

The Children's Rights Manager was in attendance to present the report and she updated Members on the current areas of interest identified by I Still Matter (ISM) and Show Me That I Matter (SMTIM). In response to a question concerning digital inclusion, she explained that it had been difficult to engage with some young people with online work. Following discussion on the impact of COVID-19, the Board was advised that a COVID risk assessment was done on every child accessing a service, which was undertaken on a two week basis.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To keep the Board updated.

### **38. Work Plan**

Members considered the Board's work plan for the 2020-21.

Resolved: The Chair, Vice Chair and Corporate Director Children, Education and Communities would meet to discuss the work plan.

Reason: To keep the Board's work plan updated.

Cllr Orrell, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.00pm and finished at 6.37pm].

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## City of York Council Approach to the Corporate Parenting Board

### **Introduction:**

An initial report was presented to the Corporate Parenting Board in January 2021, which introduced the Corporate Parenting and Children in Care Strategy 2020-2023 and reinforced the corporate parenting legal duties and the Council's responsibilities. The report also recommended broadening the contribution made to the Corporate Parenting Board by children and young people in care and partner agencies and also some changes to the membership of the Board.

The purpose of this report is to build on the January report and make proposals for how the Corporate Parenting Board could be delivered as discussed and agreed at the Corporate Parenting Board on the 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021. It was recognised at the meeting that there was a need for change.

To inform this report, information was obtained from other local authorities on how they run their Corporate Parenting Boards and also discussions with young people, senior leaders including the Director of Governance and two elected members who sit on the Corporate Parenting Board.

Research on other local authority approaches to Corporate Parenting Boards highlight consistent themes – Children in care and care leaver membership, a flexible membership linked to agenda items, a young person in care or care leaver as joint chair, young people leading the meetings, an informal and interactive approach to meetings with the needs of young people at the centre i.e. flexibility regarding venue, timing of meetings and a link to full council.

### **What Young People in Care have told us?**

Children and young people in care and care leavers would like stronger links between the Corporate Parenting Board and young people/groups and more representation at the Corporate Parenting Board from different agencies/services. They would also like a less formal, more relaxed and interactive Corporate Parenting Board that better engages young people.

Further consultation was held with the Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum in March 2021 and they told us that they would like representatives from the Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum to be members of the Corporate Parenting Board, being supported to attend and fully participate at each meeting

We asked the Care Leavers Forum how we could best facilitate this and young people told us the following:

1. They would like to have access to the right support and training to enable them to fully participate within discussions in a meaningful way.
2. They would like to have access to written information about each member of the Corporate Parenting Board, explaining a bit about themselves and their role.
3. They would like to receive the agenda items and reports in advance to ensure they have sufficient time to view these and formulate any questions or points of interest.
4. They would like Corporate Parenting Board meetings to remain professional as it is important to them to know that decision makers take their role in relation to children in care seriously.
5. Young people would like meetings to remain professional whilst trying to ensure that young people feel at ease; they should be regularly given the opportunity to speak up within the meetings, whilst ensuring that young people are not put on the spot.
6. Whilst some young people might be confident in this environment, others might feel less comfortable and so attempts must be made to ensure that young people feel at ease by allowing them to submit questions in advance or use the chat function during remote meetings.
7. Young people would like to be treated as equals and respected for their lived experience of the care system.

### **Corporate Parenting Board:**

The purpose of the Corporate Parenting Board is to:-

- Provide leadership across the city to create a more effective and efficient health and wellbeing for children and young people in care and care leavers

- Make sure that the whole council and relevant partner agencies commit to excellent standards of corporate parenting.
- Set high expectations and stable relationships for all children and young people in care
- Seek improved long term outcomes for children and young people in care and their families – for their happiness; well-being; educational success; and future prospects
- Make sure that the voice of the child and young person in care influences both policy and the services that they receive, and that young people are engaged with any action intended to develop and improve services or to recruit key staff members
- Oversee and monitor key performance indicators for the health, well-being and education of looked after children
- Champion the provision of Council based work placements and apprenticeships for children and young people in care and care leavers.
- Review and monitor progress on the actions identified in the Corporate Parenting and Children in Care Strategy
- Monitor the delivery of York's Guarantee to children and young people in care
- Consider the outcomes of regulatory visits and inspection reports on provision for children in care
- Celebrate the achievements of children and young people in care and their carers
- Determine ways in which the role of corporate parenting can be improved, using examples from other local authorities/organisations.

### **Membership of the Board:**

It is proposed that the Board will be Co-Chaired by a representative of Show Me That I Matter and I Still Matter (a young person in care or a care leaver) and an Elected Member.

The Co-Chairs would be nominated at the first meeting of each year.

The Membership of the Board would consist of: -

Up to 4 representatives from Show Me That I Matter and I Still Matter.

A maximum of 4 Elected Members drawn from:

- The Executive Member for Education, Children and Young People's Services.
- The elected Members on the Show Me That I Matter Panel (children in care council).

The Board would also have the power to co-opt non-voting Members to advise, which would include the following:

- Corporate Director of People/Director of Children's Services
- Assistant Director of Children's Services
- Group Manager – Achieved Permanence
- Assistant Director - Education/Virtual School Head
- Representatives from Health
- Care experienced young people as recommended by Show Me That I Matter and I Still Matter
- Up to two foster carers
- Other significant agencies/services involved in corporate parenting as and when required i.e. Police
- Representative of DWP
- Housing Representative
- CAMHS/Mental Health representative

The revised membership, would mean that there is a reduction in the number of elected members sitting on the Board but which in turn would enable young people to join the membership along with representation from partner agencies. Young people would therefore directly contribute to Board meetings and which would mean that the reports and contributions from Officers and partner agencies would be open to more scrutiny and challenge from young people with direct experience of services.

The Board would be able to make changes to the co-opted representation at any time, with the agreement of the voting members of

the Board and having receiving a suitable recommendation from the advisors.

### **Meetings of the Board:**

It is proposed that the Board would be delivered under a new format and be divided into 2 parts. The first part of the meeting would be young people led, on a topic of their choice, perhaps linked to the work plan of Show Me That I Matter and I Still Matter or a particular piece of work they have being working on and the findings. Areas of strength and development would be identified and any actions arising would be taken forward and progress updates provided at future meetings.

The second part of the meeting would be specifically business focussed, be co-chaired and would relate to specific areas of the Corporate Parenting and Children in Care Strategy and include relevant performance information. Crucially, young people's lived experiences and also their direct contribution would feed into the work and inform any actions arising. Progress updates would be provided at future Boards.

The meetings of the Board will take place in private, in the interests of children and young people who attend and participate in the Board meetings. The Board would also become less of a formal body, rather an open forum for engaging with and listening directly to the lived experiences and views of young people in care and care leavers and which will hold Officers to account more.

It is proposed that prior to each Board meeting starting, The Board comes together beforehand, perhaps 30-40 minutes and shares food and a drink such as sandwiches or similar so as to socialise and build relationships. This would also contribute to the informal nature of the meetings.

The Board would meet quarterly. It would not have decision making powers and would not be a formal Board (Committee) of the Council due to the changes in format and membership.

### **Annual Report:**

The Board whilst receiving information and updates and discussing issues relevant to children and young people in care and care leavers and agreeing actions, would not be a scrutiny committee. The Board will prepare an Annual Report from the young person as co-chair to a meeting of Full Council. This will provide elected members with

information about the work of the Board and its effectiveness and also how well council services support children in care and care leavers and how well the Council undertakes its Corporate Parenting Responsibilities.

**Next Steps:**

A transition process would need to be put in place in order to move to the proposed format and structure of future Boards. We would move towards Boards being of a 'hybrid nature' initially.

Training and support would need to be provided to Show Me That I Matter and I Still Matter, so that young people feel comfortable in engaging and contributing. Arrangements could be made for them to visit or speak with young people from other local authorities that deliver their Corporate Parenting Boards in a similar way. Some preparation work would be needed with the elected member who would co-chair the meetings with a young person as this would be new to them. Work on building their relationship in the context of co-chairing may also be required. Some development sessions may be required involving the elected member representatives and young people representatives.

Time and measures would need to be put in place in order for Officers to share and go through Council reports with young people in advance of Board meetings.

Support from the Voice Service will most likely be needed at each Board and in any development sessions.

Revised formal Terms of Reference would need to be provided and agreed by the Board and Member representation on the new Board would need to be approved by Council.

A workshop to be held with members of the Board and Show Me That I Matter to develop how we will work together. It is also proposed that Mark Riddel, national lead for care leavers with the DFE will come to the workshop to talk more about what works and his vision for care leavers.

**RECOMMENDATION:** To invite comments on the information gathered and on the suggested new direction for Board and to note the next steps needed to be taken.

Simon Fisher  
Group Manager – Achieved Permanence  
City of York Council



Promoting the educational achievement of children and young people in care

Virtual School Headteacher Report 2019-2020 academic year

## Context

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 February 2018*. York virtual school currently works with all young people in the care of York from the age of 2 through to age 18 when they become care leavers. This is delivered by the virtual school headteacher (VSHT) and a full time Learning and Wellbeing worker, supported by colleagues in the SEN (Special Educational Needs) and EPS (Educational Psychology Service) teams, Early Years Adviser team, School Effectiveness and Achievement team and the Learning and Work Adviser and Specialist ETE (Education, Training and Employment) teams.

The virtual school supports and challenges schools and other professionals to enrich the learning experience of our children and young people in care by striving to close the achievement gap through targeted support and intervention when needed. These key areas of work include:

- Being proactive in supporting social workers with school applications (where a school move is unavoidable) and supporting the transition into the new educational placement.
- Ensuring that all initial Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings when a young person comes into care – or has turned 2 – are swiftly put in place by social workers to ensure that as much support is in place as soon as possible within their school or educational placement.
- Reviewing attainment and progress data on a termly basis to identify level of need and intervention and using this data to plan support.
- Providing educational challenge following PEP review meetings according to need and liaising closely with social workers and designated teachers in these cases.
- Providing advice and guidance to designated teachers and scrutinising individualised targets and support for our young people to accelerate their progress in education. These are funded through Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) and their impact is reviewed as part of the PEP process.



- Strengthening partnership working with senior managers in children's social care to ensure that education is central to any decision taken about our children and young people in care.
- Closely monitoring attendance and establishing plans to improve engagement.
- Offering support, guidance and training to foster carers, headteachers, designated teachers, social workers and independent reviewing officers to enable them to work together to put education at the centre of all work with our children and young people.

As you can see from the above this role is crucial during this unprecedented time and it has very much been “business as usual” for the virtual school even though the world feels to be a very different place as a result of the Covid pandemic.

The responsibility for a young person's education rests with their education provider. Our children and young people should have attended their education provision throughout the pandemic or there should have been a risk assessment in place detailing how work appropriate for the individual young person was being set and monitored, and what support was being offered to them. During the first lockdown in March 2020 the majority of children in care remained at home in their placements however there was a gradual return to face to face school from the end of April onwards and overall school attendance for 2019-20 despite the pandemic was 84% (2018-19 overall attendance was 89%).

The virtual school role was to support and challenge all providers to deliver education during this exceptional period with each individual young person at the centre of our approach.

These were some of the areas of focus:

#### *Contact and support for carers*

- During the lockdown a questionnaire was emailed via the fostering team to all carers to ascertain what support they needed with home education and online learning
- The learning and wellbeing worker extended her remit from working with schools to providing advice and support directly to carers
- Links to the DfE suggested resources for home learning were sent out via the fostering team to enrich those being provided to them directly from school.



### *Contact and support for children and young people.*

- The ePEP system allows the virtual school to support young people through the setting of targets; funding can be requested at any time and resources supplied for them by their school or education provider.
- Targets were creatively set and managed to take account of the need to continue to support the education of those young people who were not accessing a provision based offer.
- Many of our young people already had the electronic devices and resources that they need at home.
- The local authority took advantage of the DfE digital devices scheme to ensure that all children and young people in care had access to a device and these were delivered by social workers by mid July 2020.

### *Risk Assessments*

- Social workers were asked to coordinate and complete risk assessments for all young people who were not attending a provision in the first lockdown and the virtual school contributed to all requests.
- There was a particular focus on how the schools are “keeping in touch” and monitoring work - offering challenge and support.
- A learning conversation questionnaire was issued to schools to use in their keep in touch conversations with children and young people
- In most cases the support offered by social workers and schools was very positive

### *Young people not on a school roll*

- During 2019-20 there was one young person of statutory school age not on a school roll – the virtual school contributed to risk assessments and planning for home tuition with the social worker as a priority and continue to support the social worker to apply for suitable provision.
- It is the role of the virtual school to work with other professionals to secure education provision asap.

### *Covid-19 PEPs*

- The VSHT worked with Welfare Call Ltd (the ePEP system provider) and other virtual schools nationally to produce a Covid-19 Contact PEP section that enabled relevant information to be collected during the PEP meeting for a young person who attended their provision, or who was being educated at home.



- The virtual school monitored all PEPs during the summer term 2020 (some were joint skype meetings but others were a collation of individual conversations). It is not possible for the virtual school to attend PEP meetings routinely, although the VSHT and the learning and wellbeing worker did attend several PEP meetings for individual children and young people on request and as an exception in some cases.
- The ePEP system ensured that there was at least one completed PEP for all our young people between March and July 2020.
- The questions for the children and young people to respond to were tailored specifically to capture the young person's views in response to being educated during the Covid-19 school closure period.

### *Attendance and monitoring overview*

- Welfare Call provided daily attendance reports and these were monitored to keep an overview of the ever changing situation for our children and young people
- This was been coordinated across the service with input from the virtual school, children's social care managers, Welfare Call and the York attendance data from schools.
- The information was collated, updated and circulated weekly across the service.
- On 17/07/20 87/163 (53%) school aged young people were attending their provision

### *Initial PEP's*

- Between 20.03.20 (lockdown) and the end of the summer term in July 2020 there was an increase of 32 children and young people coming into care and onto the virtual school roll
- Initial PEPs were particularly important during this period of lockdown to ensure that children, young people and their carers had access to all the support and resources they needed as soon as possible on entry to care.

### **York Virtual School self-evaluation - strengths**

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) outcomes are above national for children in care for both GLD and prime areas (2019 data)
- All children and young people in care have a PEP from aged 2 until the age of 18; these are needs assessed and of good quality – signed off by the virtual school headteacher to ensure this quality and consistency.



- Embedding processes and understanding of quality of education for children 2-5.
- All young people in care in Year 12 and 13 have a PEP (for the first time in 2019-20)
- The monitoring of attendance by the virtual school is strong and concerns are addressed promptly. Overall attendance for the 2019-20 academic year was 84% despite the pandemic and school closure period from March-June 2020.
- There has been no permanent exclusion of a child and young person in care for a number of years. This is testament to the collaborative approach to supporting those with challenging behaviour and the access to effective support services that ensure those pupils at risk of exclusion receive appropriate intervention.
- The electronic PEP system enables the virtual school to monitor the completion and quality of PEPs and allows for systematic application, authorisation and monitoring of PP+ funding for individual pupils. All designated teachers and social workers have access to this system and can contribute to the PEP process. This process is used to challenge schools to support pupils' individual needs and is currently quality assured by the VSHT who signs off all PEPs. All previous targets must be reviewed in terms of impact before further targets are set.
- PEP completion in termly timescale – 100% summer term 2020
- The VSHT oversees school changes and makes sure the new school is 'good' and will meet the curriculum needs for the young person.

### **York Virtual School self evaluation – Key Challenges**

- Increase in the number of young people in care and on the roll of the virtual school by 47 in 2019-20
- Linked to this is the stability of cohort – placement moves present a potential barrier to accessing learning. The virtual school continues to focus on supporting schools when children move placement or school as a key priority
- The cumulative effect of this is that there are more young people overall. Many young people entering the system who need a high level of initial support and intervention.
- KS2 outcomes and progress continue to be an issue (data 2019).
- Extension of the age range working with Year 13 for the first time and considering next steps post 18 as young people become care leavers.



- Supporting a shared understanding of processes, timescales and expectations across the wider service.
- Capacity of VSHT to drive forward necessary improvements whilst single-handedly quality assuring over 200 PEPs every term currently.

### Cohort summary 2019-2020

Data is for statutory school age children and young people who were on the roll of the Virtual School as at 17.07.2020. It is presented by gender, school type and location, SEN status, length of care episode and placement stability.

#### Gender

Year Group	Boys	Girls	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>%</b>
Year R	8	4	12	7
Year 1	6	6	12	7
Year 2	5	8	13	8
Year 3	7	7	14	9
Year 4	6	7	13	8
Year 5	7	6	13	8
Year 6	7	3	10	6
Year 7	9	6	15	9
Year 8	6	9	15	9
Year 9	4	4	8	5
Year 10	10	9	19	12
Year 11	11	8	19	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>163</b>	

Key Stage	Boys	Girls	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>%</b>
Reception	8	4	12	7
KS1	11	14	25	15
KS2	27	23	50	31
KS3	19	19	38	23
KS4	21	17	38	23
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>163</b>	

#### School Area

Year Group	In York Schools	In OLA Schools
Year R	9	3
Year 1	9	3
Year 2	11	2
Year 3	10	4
Year 4	11	2
Year 5	9	4



Year 6	5	5
Year 7	9	6
Year 8	11	4
Year 9	5	3
Year 10	8	11
Year 11	14	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>111(68%)</b>	<b>52</b>

**School Type**

Year Group	Mainstream	Special School	Independent School	Pupil Referral Unit	Alternative provision	Awaiting New Provision	Secure Unit / YOI
Year R	11	0	1	0	0	0	0
Year 1	11	0	1	0	0	0	0
Year 2	12	0	0	1	0	0	0
Year 3	13	1	0	0	0	0	0
Year 4	11	2	0	0	0	0	0
Year 5	10	2	1	0	0	0	0
Year 6	9	0	1	0	0	0	0
Year 7	10	2	3	0	0	0	0
Year 8	13	2	0	0	0	0	0
Year 9	7	0	1	0	0	0	0
Year 10	12	1	1	4	0	1	0
Year 11	12	1	0	4	2	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

**SEN status**

Year Group	EHCP	SEN K	% of each Year Group with EHCP / SEN K
Year R	2	3	42
Year 1	0	4	33
Year 2	5	3	62
Year 3	1	6	50
Year 4	3	3	46
Year 5	4	4	62
Year 6	2	3	50
Year 7	7	3	67
Year 8	6	2	53
Year 9	2	4	75
Year 10	5	7	63
Year 11	3	8	58
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>55% of cohort</b>

**Length of care episode**

Year Group	New into care during the academic year 2019-20	In care 12 months or more	Leaving care during the academic year 2019-20
Year R	5	7	2
Year 1	4	8	2
Year 2	3	10	
Year 3	7	7	
Year 4	2	11	
Year 5	3	10	
Year 6	3	7	1
Year 7	4	11	2
Year 8	1	14	
Year 9	1	7	2
Year 10	5	14	1
Year 11	9	10	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>47 (29% increase)</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>12</b>

**Placement moves during 2019-20 academic year**

Year Group	Number of children moving placement at least once during the academic year	Number of children in placement 12 months or more at 20.7.20
Year R	3	9
Year 1	7	5
Year 2	3	10
Year 3	5	9
Year 4	2	11



Year 5	5	8
Year 6	2	8
Year 7	3	12
Year 8	2	13
Year 9	1	7
Year 10	4	15
Year 11	10	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>116</b>

### **Personal Education Plans (PEPs)**

The social worker should arrange initial PEPs within 10 school days of a young person coming into care for all children aged. Timeliness of initial PEPs in York is an area for improvement currently. Schools are responsible for co-ordinating PEP reviews on a termly basis and the virtual school is responsible for reviewing the information in PEPs and attending PEP meetings as appropriate using data to target support for our children and young people as necessary. There is a section where the child's thoughts and feelings are recorded prior to all meetings and the virtual school works together with the social worker and school to respond to their views.

PEPs are completed electronically using the Welfare Call digital system and are quality assured and signed off by the VSHT. To support pupil aspiration and achievement PP+ funding is also requested through this system and these targets are reviewed during the PEP meetings. The completed PEP is then uploaded onto Children's Mosaic by the social worker. For reporting processes, the VSHT does not sign off a PEP until it is completed to a high quality through the QA processes. This may be some time after a meeting has taken place.

100% of PEPs have been completed within the Summer Term in-line with the new termly processes following a reduction in the Spring Term due to the impact of Covid-19. Monthly reports on PEP completion and overdue PEPs are shared with children's social care SMT and the IRO team.

### **Training Delivery**

The Virtual School has delivered the following training over the last 2 years:-

- ePEP Training for designated teachers and social workers
- Designated teacher network meetings
- Early years practitioner network meetings



- Foster carer specific educational sessions
- Attachment training is offered for designated teachers and school staff by the Educational Psychology Service as a traded service
- Bespoke training for individual schools as required
- Social Worker Academy introduction to the virtual school

### **Collaborative Working**

The VSHT regularly works with partner services and agencies across the Local Authority and wider areas to support and challenge schools to improve outcomes for our children and young people in care. This might be initiated through the PEP process or through direct contact with social workers, designated teachers and/or the SEN Team. During 2019-20 the VSHT regularly attended and contributed to multi agency, corporate, regional and national meetings:

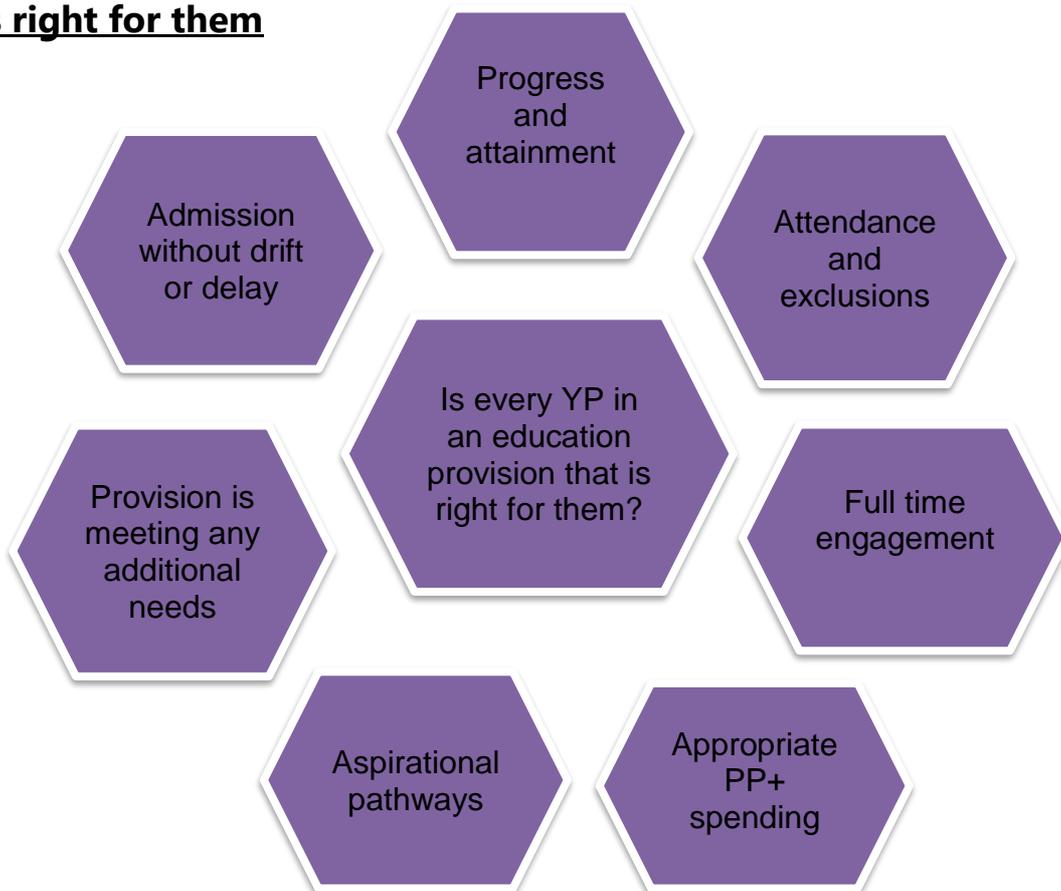
- York Head Teacher meetings
- A range of children's social care meetings, including, SMT and Extended SMT, Permanence Panel, Improvement Board
- Regional VSHT meetings
- Regional Adoption Group
- Early Years Improvement Board
- Children in Care Strategic Partnership
- Fostering Panel
- School Effectiveness and Achievement Team meetings
- Secondary school pastoral leaders meetings
- York and North Yorkshire Care Experienced Network meetings
- PEP meetings for complex children in care

### **Key priorities moving forwards**

- Ensuring all children and young people in care are in an education provision that is right for them
- Ensuring all children and young people in care have a high-quality PEP, completed within timescales, that meets their needs
- Continue to focus on improving outcomes for all children and young people in care with particular focus on KS2 attainment and progress.



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



In order to assess whether a young person is in the right provision it is important to ensure:

- Progress and attainment are at least in line with expectations
- Attendance is good and exclusions are low
- Reduced timetables are only used in exceptional circumstances
- Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) is used appropriately
- There is a suitable pathway in place to ensure aspirational outcomes
- Additional needs are identified, and appropriate support secured

Where the agreed professional view is that a provision is not the right place for a young person it will be important to ensure:

- Changes in provision are monitored and achieved without drift and delay

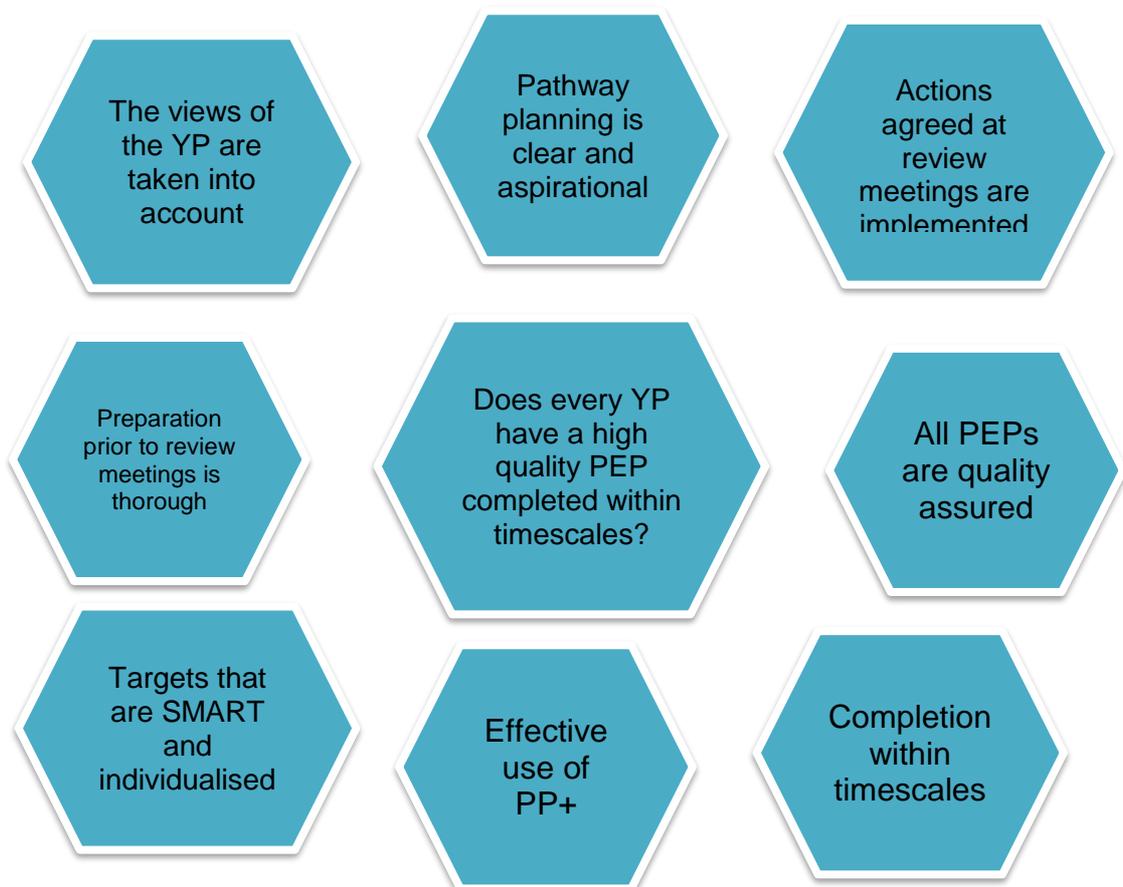
### *Measuring Virtual School Impact*

- All children and young people have an identified provision



- Year on year decrease and in line or below national percentages for persistent absentees
- Year on year decrease and in line or below national percentages in the number of fixed term exclusions
- No permanent exclusions
- All learners making good academic progress
- Year on year decrease and in line or below national percentages of learners with a less than full time offer
- PEP targets are effective with appropriate funding requests
- Increased Y12 and Year 13 participation
- Minimal drift and delay in securing provision where change is necessary

**Ensuring all children and young people in care have a high quality PEP completed within timescales that meets their needs**



In order to assess whether a PEP is of high quality the virtual school will need to ensure:

- Initial PEPs meetings are organised within 10 working days and termly PEP reviews take place subsequently



- Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) is used appropriately
- Targets agreed at review meetings are relevant, achievable, measurable and regularly reviewed
- In preparation for a PEP meeting all relevant information is available in ePEP and key issues / concerns are identified
- Children and young people are consulted and invited to contribute to their PEP; their views are considered and taken into account
- There is a clear progression pathway identified, taking account of the young person's ability, hopes and aspirations
- Any agreed actions are followed up and reviewed at subsequent meetings
- All PEPs are quality assured and where necessary appropriate challenge is made and / or action is taken

### *Measuring Virtual School Impact*

- A consistently high completion rate of Initial PEPs in advance of the first child care review, and PEP reviews take place within the termly timescales
- Clear evidence that PP+ is used effectively through monitoring of individual PEP targets
- Targets have clearly identified outcomes / improvements and are reviewed before new targets are set
- PEP's are submitted for sign off at the meeting as a result of good preparation
- Pupil views are clearly considered and taken into account during the PEP meeting
- There is a clear progression pathway identified, taking account of the young person's ability, hopes and aspirations in all PEPs
- Agreed actions are clearly followed up and reviewed at subsequent PEP meetings
- All PEPs are quality assured and where necessary appropriate challenge is made and / or action is taken
- All PEPs have all appropriate sections completed before sign-off.

### **Improving outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2**

Historically the outcomes for York children in care at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6) have been poorer than for all children in care nationally, for both measures - attainment and progress.



*What can we do to address this?*

At a strategic level:

- Early intervention – ensure that as many of the cohort as possible take up their entitlement to early education and care from age 2 so that early learning is prioritised and children are being supported to achieve and make progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Training for carers – a programme of foster carer training is to be rolled out focusing on their role in supporting learning at home

At cohort level:

- Teacher assessment and progress data is submitted termly from individual schools and Early Years providers for each pupil and is the focus for the challenge and support provided by the virtual school through the Personal Education Plan reviews. Attainment and progress is tracked and monitored by Virtual School for all children from age 2 and reported on termly. Trends and areas of concern are identified and form the basis for decisions around whole cohort needs/interventions/training.
- Going forward there will be an expectation that termly targets are set for reading, writing and maths for all primary aged children where below expected progress is recorded
- Ensure that targeted cohorts are a key priority for schools, social workers and carers, particularly those who achieved age related expectations at prior key stage assessment points (a good level of development at Reception or at least expected in one or more of the core subject areas (reading, writing and maths) at the KS1 assessment point.)

At individual child level:

- Bespoke targets (funded and non-funded) set and reviewed at least termly for each child to support individual attainment and progress in the core areas of reading, writing and maths. Targets also take account of the child's wider interests, preferred learning styles and build on strengths as well as areas for development.
- Progress and attainment of each child could be discussed in supervision meetings between by managers and social workers
- Link to systemic practice across children's social care – every conversation starts with the child – how are children doing in school on a day to day, week by week and term by term?

*Measuring Virtual School Impact*

- Attainment and progress improves and the gap with national narrows.



## **Outcome data and analysis 2018-19**

Owing to the Covid-19 pandemic there are no reported outcomes at EYFS, KS1 or KS2 for the academic year 2019-20. KS4 outcomes were based on Centre Assessed Grades and not exam results. The data is for children who have been in care for at least 12 months so that it can be compared to national data. Appendix A contains a spreadsheet showing data and trend information for EYFS, KS1, KS2 and KS4.

In summary:

### **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

All 3 and 4-year-old children are entitled to a free part-time 'early education' place within an early years setting. Policy initiatives such as free early education for disadvantaged two-year-olds (for which all children and young people in care are eligible) and the early years 'pupil premium' for disadvantaged children offer huge potential to improve access to – and the quality of – early education for children in care. The majority of children in care aged 2 to 4-years-old access free early education and care in York. Where they are not accessing their entitlement, the reason is known and discussed with the child's social worker. The early years PEP is initiated as soon as a two year old takes up an early education place.

Outcomes at the end of the early year's foundation stage (Reception class in the first year of school) in 2019 were above those of children in care nationally. This is an area of strength.

### **Key Stage One (KS1)**

Outcomes at KS1 show a fluctuating trend however over time there are improvements in writing outcomes but not in reading and mathematics. Outcomes were below those of children in care nationally in 2019.

### **Key Stage Two (KS2)**

Performance at KS2 is reported as a combination of attainment and progress. Attainment outcomes have improved over time however they are still below those of children in care nationally. Children in care in York in KS2 do not make good enough progress compared to children in care nationally. In 2018 children in care at KS2 made much better progress however reversed in 2019 which is concerning. This is a priority for the city.



## **Key Stage Four (KS4)**

KS4 outcomes for children in care in York are historically stronger than at primary key stages which mirrors the pattern seen in the York school system (and differs in general from the national trend across the country). Outcomes in 2019 were better than national in both attainment and progress measures for the first time in four years.

## **Pupil Premium Plus**

Please refer to Appendix B for the 2019-20 PP+ policy, which details the rationale for allocating funding to schools to support education outcomes for children in care. Increasingly over the last two years, schools have requested funding to pay for therapeutic interventions such as Art or Play therapy. Such requests are challenged by the VSHT as in all other local authorities in the region therapy is agreed at complex case panels and on the recommendation of clinicians rather than schools and social workers. An action for 2020-21 will be to audit and evidence the number of requests of this type to discuss with the clinical commissioning group so that children's presenting SEMH needs can be better supported outside the classroom.

Karron Young, Virtual School Headteacher

Appendix 1 – CLA Performance 2016-19

Appendix 2 – York Pupil Premium Plus Policy 2019-20

EYFSP

	2018		2019	
	York CLA	National CLA	York CLA	National CLA
Number of Pupils	3	950	4	1090
% GLD	0.0%	46.0%	75.0%	48.0%

KS1

	2016		2017		2018		2019	
	York CLA	National CLA						
Number of Pupils	2	1800	3	1670	6	1690	5	1730
% EXS in Reading	50.0%	50.0%	66.7%	51.0%	33.3%	51.0%	0.0%	52.0%
% EXS in Writing	0.0%	37.0%	0.0%	39.0%	16.7%	42.0%	20.0%	43.0%
% EXS in Maths	50.0%	46.0%	33.3%	46.0%	33.3%	49.0%	20.0%	49.0%
% EXS in Science	0.0%	58.0%	66.7%	59.0%	50.0%	58.0%	20.0%	60.0%
% EXS in RWM	0.0%	32.0%	0.0%	34.0%	16.7%	37.0%	0.0%	38.0%

KS2

	2016		2017		2018		2019	
	York CLA	National CLA						
Number of Pupils	8	2810	9	2980	9	3110	10	3210
% EXS in Reading	37.5%	41.0%	33.3%	45.0%	55.6%	51.0%	40.0%	49.0%
% EXS in Writing	12.5%	46.0%	33.3%	48.0%	44.4%	49.0%	30.0%	50.0%
% EXS in Maths	25.0%	41.0%	44.4%	46.0%	33.3%	47.0%	50.0%	51.0%

% EXS in GPS	25.0%	44.0%	55.6%	50.0%	55.6%	50.0%	40.0%	53.0%
% EXS in RWM	12.5%	25.0%	22.2%	32.0%	33.3%	35.0%	20.0%	37.0%

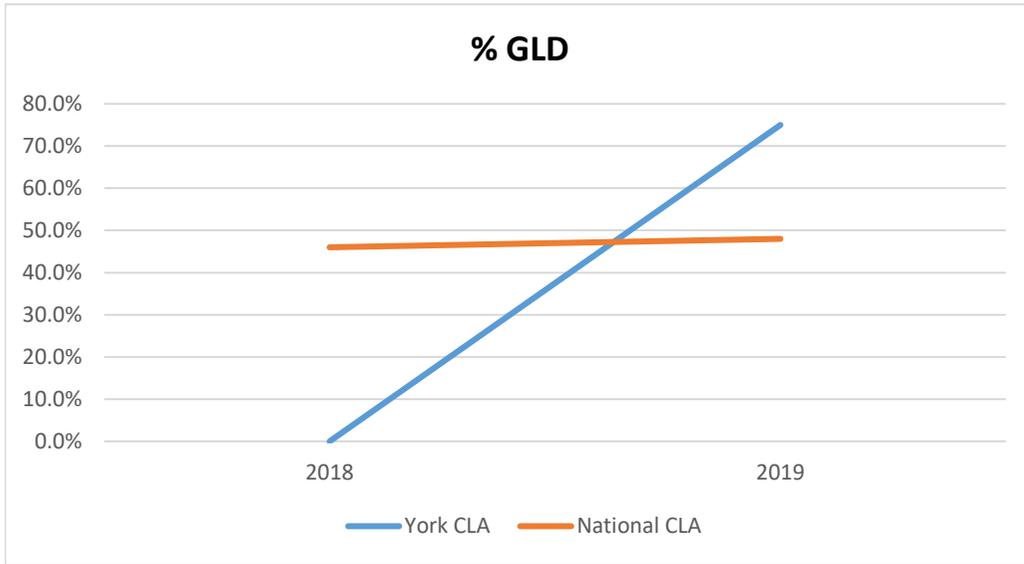
KS2 Progress

	2016		2017		2018		2019	
	York CLA	National CLA						
Number of Pupils	8	2790	9	2970	9	3090	10	3190
Reading	-0.64	-0.46	-3.28	-0.69	0.23	-0.15	-2.95	-0.22
Writing	-3.22	-0.95	-1.94	-0.93	-1.36	-0.81	-4.98	-0.77
Maths	-3.46	-1.26	-2.20	-1.10	-0.62	-0.78	-1.99	-0.95

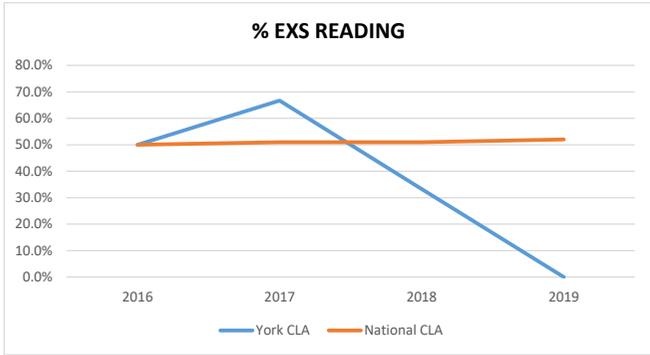
KS4

	2016		2017		2018		2019	
	York CLA	National CLA						
Number of Pupils	21	4870	17	4980	15	5200	24	5410
9-5 E+M	9.5%	17.0%	5.9%	7.0%	0.0%	8.0%	12.5%	7.0%
Progress 8	-1.98	-1.14	-1.10	-1.17	-1.49	-1.24	-0.51	-1.28

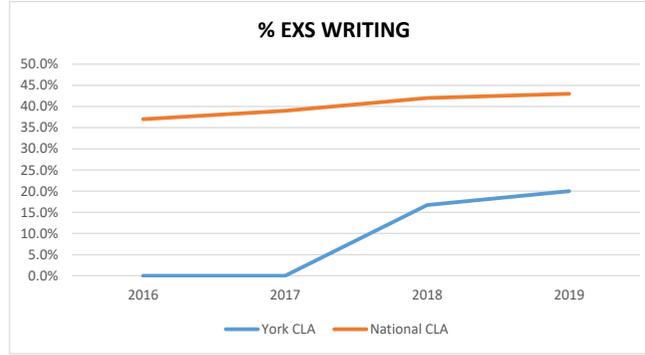
**GLD**



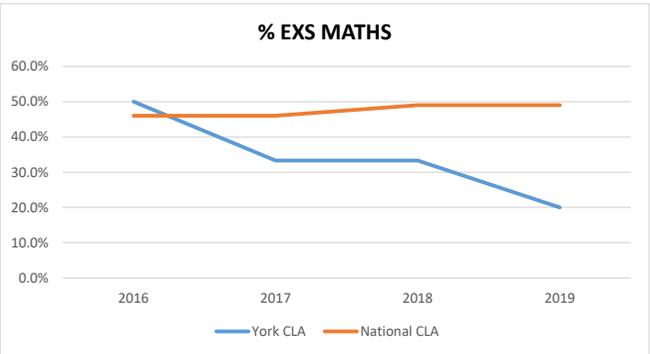
**KS1 Reading**



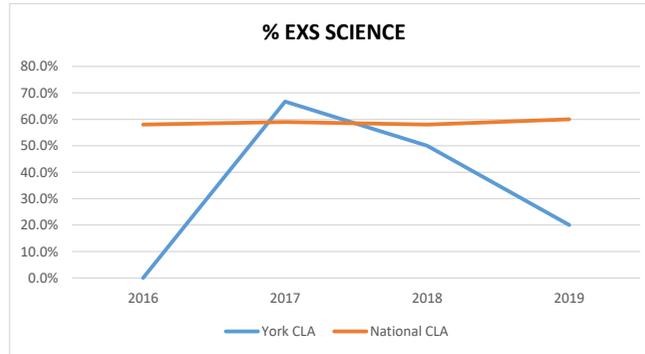
**KS1 Writing**



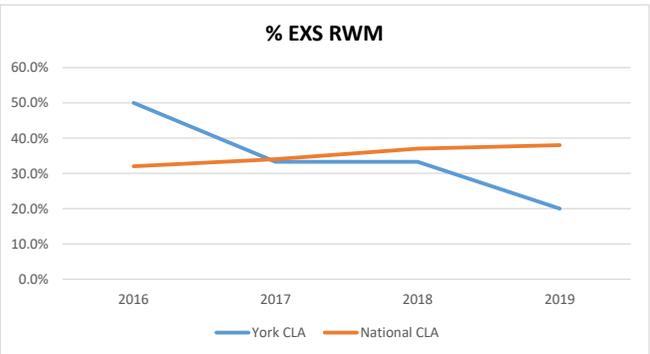
**KS1 Maths**



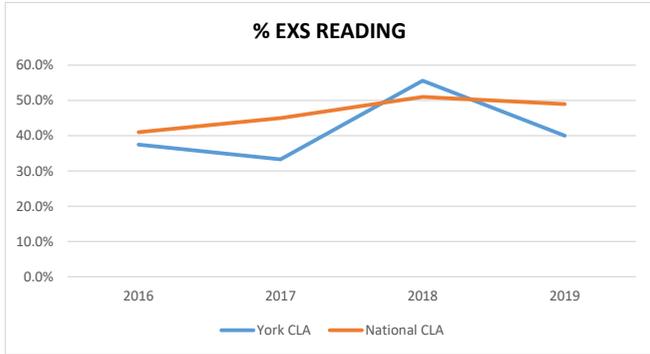
**KS1 Science**



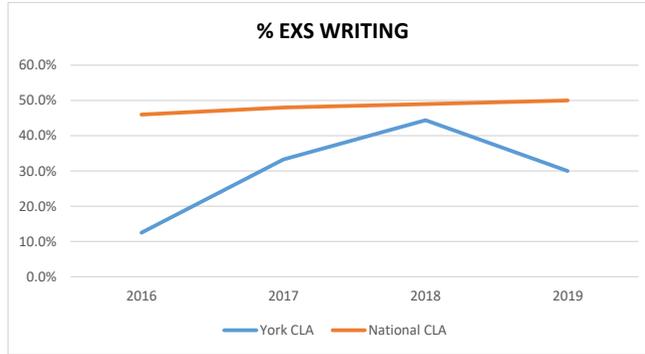
**KS1 RWM**



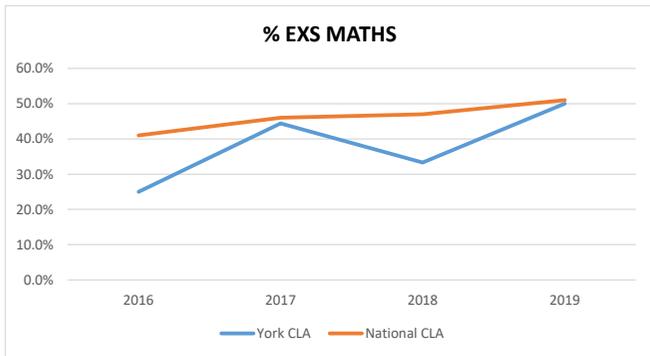
**KS2 Reading**



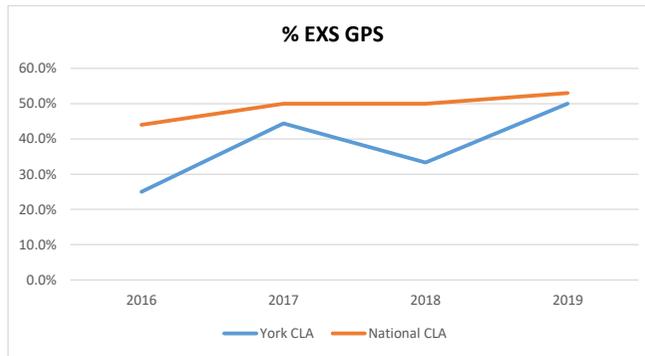
**KS2 Writing**



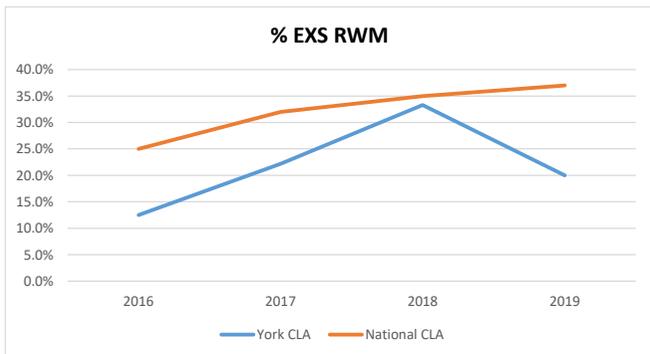
**KS2 Maths**



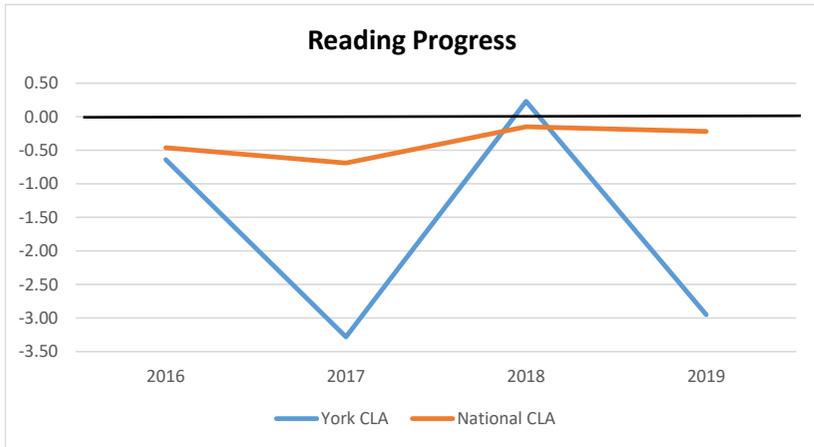
**KS2 GPS**



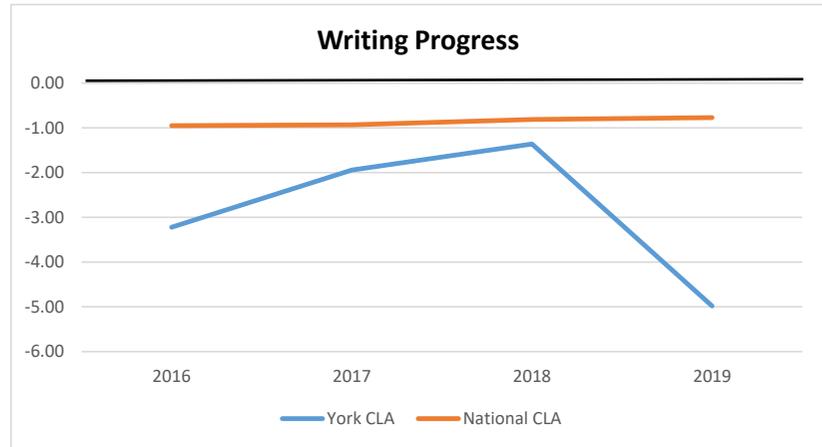
**KS2 RWM**



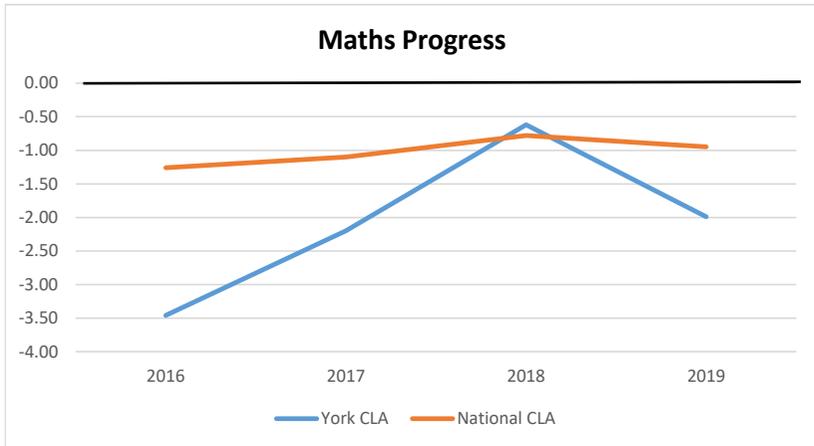
KS2 Progress - Reading



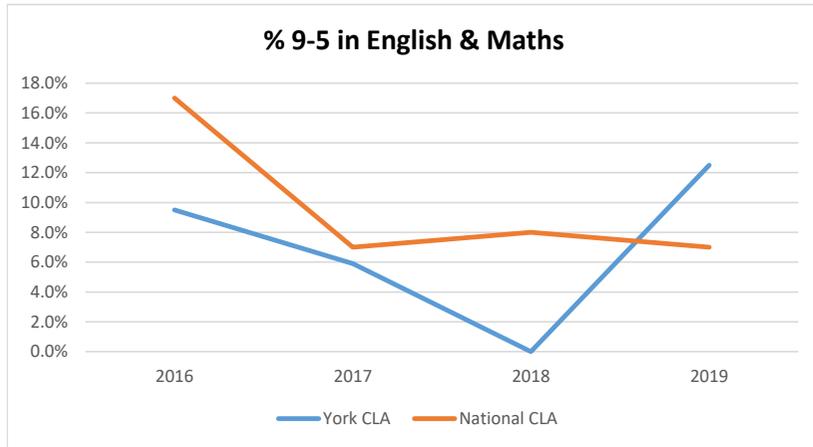
KS2 Progress - Writing



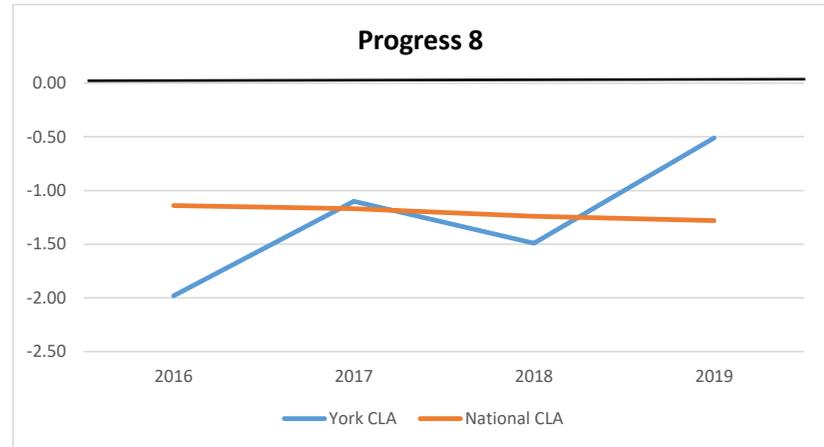
KS2 Progress - Maths



KS4



KS4 Progress 8



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## Virtual School

## York Virtual School Pupil Premium Plus Policy 2019-20

**Introduction**

The policy is informed by the following Department for Education (DfE) documents:

1. Pupil premium 2019-2010 conditions of grant:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-allocations-and-conditions-of-grant-2019-to-2020/pupil-premium-conditions-of-grant-2019-to-2020>
2. Pupil premium: virtual school heads' responsibilities (March 2015)  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pupil-premium-virtual-school-heads-responsibilities>
3. Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children. Statutory guidance for local authorities (February 2018)  
[https://www.google.com/search?q=assets.publishing.service.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2F+uploads%2Fsystem%2Fuploads%2Fattachment\\_data%2Ffile%2F683556&sourceid=ie7&rls=com.microsoft:en-GB:IE-Address&ie=&oe=#spf=1574423856755](https://www.google.com/search?q=assets.publishing.service.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2F+uploads%2Fsystem%2Fuploads%2Fattachment_data%2Ffile%2F683556&sourceid=ie7&rls=com.microsoft:en-GB:IE-Address&ie=&oe=#spf=1574423856755)
4. The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children. Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities (February 2018)  
[https://www.google.com/search?q=assets.publishing.service.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2F+uploads%2Fsystem%2Fuploads%2Fattachment\\_data%2Ffile%2F683561&sourceid=ie7&rls=com.microsoft:en-GB:IE-Address&ie=&oe=#spf=1574423993075](https://www.google.com/search?q=assets.publishing.service.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2F+uploads%2Fsystem%2Fuploads%2Fattachment_data%2Ffile%2F683561&sourceid=ie7&rls=com.microsoft:en-GB:IE-Address&ie=&oe=#spf=1574423993075)

**Principles**

- The City of York Council aims to be an outstanding corporate parent and promotes high aspirations seeking to secure the best outcomes for children and young people in care.
- The Virtual School Head is responsible for managing pupil premium plus funding for all the children and young people in care to York City Council wherever they live.
- The Virtual School Head is responsible for allocating it to schools and alternative provision (AP) settings.
- The allocation of pupil premium plus will be on a needs driven basis as identified in the Personal Education Plan (PEP.)
- The pupil premium plus is to help improve the attainment of children and young people in care and close the attainment gap between them and their peers.
- The impact of the pupil premium plus is reviewed termly in the PEP using the Welfare Call system and will be reviewed by the Virtual School Head.
- The pupil premium plus is not a personal budget for individual children and young people. The Virtual School Head and schools manage their pupil premium plus allocation for the benefit of their cohort and proportionate to the needs of the child/young person.



## **Allocation of Pupil Premium Plus**

For 2019-2020 the DfE will allocate to local authorities a provisional amount of £2,300 per child in care of statutory school age. The Virtual School will allocate the pupil premium plus to schools on a termly basis based on the educational needs identified in the child's/young person's PEP. Schools must submit the PEPs each term via the Welfare Call system to the Virtual School in order to receive the funding. Up to £500 is available per term and it is expected that schools will adhere to this termly expenditure. In exceptional circumstances where additional funding is needed, this can be considered. However there must first be a discussion between the Designated Teacher from the school and the Virtual School Head which should clearly demonstrate how the allocation of additional funding will be used to improve educational outcomes. To ensure the children and young people in school receive their allocation of pupil premium plus the Designated Teacher and Social Worker should complete the PEP on the Welfare Call system within 5 working days of the PEP meetings/reviews. Schools will receive the funding at the start of the following term.

## **Pupil Premium Plus and the PEP**

The PEP is the key document to be used to plan for how the pupil premium plus will be spent and so the role of the designated teacher is crucial in ensuring that the PEP is of high quality and provides the information below:

- The views of the child/young person and how these will be addressed
- Prior attainment and current attainment data, to show whether the child is on track to make the expected level of progress
- Attendance data to ensure that the child or young person has every opportunity to attend and engage in learning
- Educational needs must be identified using the above data and knowledge of the child/young person's wider needs
- Intended outcomes must be clear and quantitative targets for improvement must be set
- Interventions supported by pupil premium plus must be evidence based and in the best interests of the child/young person
- Costings must be provided for interventions and clear timescales for intervention and by whom
- Outcomes must be evaluated when the PEP is reviewed each term. The impact of pupil premium plus must be recorded in section 7 on the PEP through the Welfare Call system.

## **Why might the amount of pupil premium plus a child receives vary?**

Some children and young people need more pupil premium plus and some need less. This is because:

- Children and young people who are new into care may have had a fragmented home and education history. They may have unmet needs and they may be academically behind their peers



- Children and young people in care may have a significant (and often delayed) reaction to trauma, abuse and neglect which manifests in hard to anticipate behavioural 'spikes'
- Children and young people with attachment based needs may require additional support to help them to trust people and form and maintain relationships
- Some children and young people may be in a stable placement and have received a lot of interventions/ additional support which has helped them catch up and they may not need the full amount.

### **Does the young person have a say in how Pupil Premium Plus is spent?**

It is very important that the child/young person is involved in the PEP process and they may be able to identify aspects of their learning where they feel they need additional help. This information is gathered and recorded as part of the PEP process. If the child/ young person feels unable to take part in their PEP meeting, their views must always be included within the meeting and considered in any decision making process. This can be actioned using Mind of My Own from January 2020 – please contact the child or young person's social worker for further information. If for any reason their requests cannot be met an explanation must be provided to them and recorded in the PEP. It may be that a referral to the advocacy team can help with ensuring children and young people's views are conveyed.

### **Can social workers, foster carers and others involved with the child/young person determine how pupil premium plus is spent?**

Social workers, foster carers and others involved with the child/young person have a valuable contribution to make via the PEP meeting. However the overriding principle is that the pupil premium plus must focus on improving educational outcomes. This will be based on the school's assessment and understanding of what will best support the child/young person to achieve well and pursue their aspirations.

### **Circumstances in which pupil premium plus will not be provided**

Pupil premium plus will not be used to double fund or replace funding which should have or has already been allocated to the school to support the child/young person.

Pupil premium plus cannot be used to:

- Fund services that should be provided via an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP.)
- Provide other statutory work e.g. statutory assessment or support from health
- Fund services that the local authority may be responsible for funding, such as support for foster carers, school uniforms, school meals or transport to get the child to and from school.

Pupil premium plus will not be allocated to the school when a child/young person is attending an independent special school, which is named in their EHCP. This is because the specialist provision should be fully meeting the child's/young person's identified needs and thus supporting them to achieve their full academic potential. The effectiveness and suitability of this provision and the progress being made by the young person is monitored through the PEP



process, the SEND review process and any schedule of contract meetings between the Local Authority and the provider. If at any stage the school identifies that the child/young person has further needs, for which additional funding is required, this must be considered through the SEND review processes and in consultation with the Virtual School Head.

### **Recoupment**

The Virtual School may recoup the pupil premium plus:

- If there is evidence that the funding is not being used to address the child/young person's needs.
- If the child/young person moves education placement in order to transfer the money to the new placement

### **Early Years Pupil Premium**

Guidance on the Early Years Pupil Premium can be accessed at:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-national-funding-formula-allocations-and-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-national-funding-formula-allocations-and-guidance)

The Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) can be claimed if a child is accessing a funded early education and childcare place for three and four year olds and falls into one of the following groups:

- Has been looked after by the local authority for at least one day
- Has been adopted from care
- Has left care through a special guardianship order
- Is subject to a child arrangement order (previously known as a residence order)

EYPP is paid on the first 15 universal hours that an eligible child attends a provision. Children will not need to access the full entitlement to be eligible for the EYPP; providers will be paid on a pro rata basis. Further information on how to apply for EYPP funding can be found at the following link: <https://www.yor-ok.org.uk/workforce2014/Childcare%20Strategy/funding.htm>

### **Pupil premium plus for children and young people from other Local Authorities**

York schools who have children and young people in care from other Local Authorities on their roll must contact the Head of the placing Virtual School to request their pupil premium plus policy. The name and contact details of other Virtual School Heads can be requested from the York Virtual School team.

November 2019

City of York Sufficiency Strategy 2020-2023

Report from: Simon Fisher



### Executive summary

The duty to provide or procure placements for Children and Young People in Care is explicit in the Children Act 1989. These regulations require a strategy to be in place that describes how local authorities intend to provide sufficient care placements for its children in care. The introduction of Sufficiency Statutory Guidance (2010) and the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations (implementation April 2011) has provided further clarity on the implementation of section 22G of the Act.

The Statutory Guidance (CA1989) sets out a requirement for local authorities to work with key partners to be in a position to secure, where reasonably practicable, sufficient accommodation for children in care which meets the needs of children and whose circumstances are such that it would be consistent with their welfare for them to be provided with accommodation that is in the local authority's area. The Guidance requires local authorities to do more than simply ensure that accommodation be 'sufficient' in terms of the number of beds provided. They must also have regard to the benefits of securing a number of providers and a range of services. (Goes beyond number of beds to providing a range of providers and services)

The Guidance also includes securing sufficient accommodation for children in need who are at risk of care or custody (referred to as children on the edge of care). This is important since it is preferable (where it is in the best interests of the child) to provide support to avoid the need for them to become children in care.

The City of York Sufficiency strategy has recently been updated and covers the period 2020 – 2023. It sets out how the local authority and its partners will work together to provide the best outcomes for children and young people. We are focused on providing the best environments for children in care and care leavers over the next three years. This strategy is underpinned by our local approach and vision for our children in care. For children who cannot remain in their parents care, the first consideration should be timely permanence through a placement with

extended family or a connected person through, Special Guardianship or A Child Arrangement Order.

The Strategy covers the following main objectives and is underpinned by an action plan: -

1. Children and young people will be supported to stay with their families where it is safe to do so
2. We will focus on achieving permanency in a timely manner through adoption and special guardianship
3. More children will live in a local placement
4. All children will be matched with good quality placements which meet their needs
5. All children in care will be prepared for independence and a healthy adulthood
6. We will review all commissioned placements

The strategy coincides with the Covid 19 pandemic and which has impacted on our ability to deliver some aspects of our sufficiency, in particular, the creation of local residential and semi-independent living provision. During this time our sufficiency has been kept under constant review by the Director of Children's Services and which will continue to be the case while we deal with the impact of Covid 19 during the lifetime of this strategy. We recognise that our plans to develop care provision locally are more likely to be achieved over the second half of the strategy. We also recognise that there are a number of uncertainties regarding demand for placements as Covid 19 restrictions are eased and so this strategy will be responsive to changes in the broader environment.

Progress against this strategy will be monitored by the Strategic Partnership for Children in Care and Care Leavers and the Corporate Parenting Board.

## Background

Most children in York are brought up in their own families but a small number of children become looked after require the help and support of additional services. When children come into care, they become the responsibility of the local authority as the corporate parent. As Corporate Parents, we need to ensure that we can offer and provide appropriate accommodation to support our children and young people through their journey to adulthood and beyond. This means we will ensure that their

welfare, emotional, and physical wellbeing is protected and promoted within environments which will support them to reach their full potential and into adulthood

Where placement within the family is not possible we will ensure: -

- All children are placed in the local area, except where this is not consistent with their needs and welfare.
- There is a diverse range of universal, targeted and specialist services working together to meet children's needs, including children and young people who are already looked after, as well as those at risk of care or custody.
- Children and young people will be looked after in our commissioned children's home or in good quality children's homes if they are not able to live within a family.
- In addition to meeting relevant National Minimum Standards, services are of high enough quality to secure the specific outcomes identified in the care planning process for children and young people.
- Placement providers (including private, voluntary and public sector providers) are linked into the wider network of services and work with these services to offer appropriate support to deliver identified outcomes for looked after children.
- When a child is placed within a residential setting due to their complexity of need there is active consideration to step down to foster placement.
- Recognising the importance of children and young people understanding what is happening to them in terms of care.
  - Children and Young people not being separated from their siblings unless it is part of the child's plan.
  - Children and Young people have a say in their placement.
  - Children and Young people visiting before they are placed.
  - Listening to and acting upon what children and young people tell us about their experiences of being in care.

- Where a young person is in school years 10 and 11 (Key Stage 4) there is an expectation that a young person's education should not be disrupted other than in an emergency. Particular efforts should be made to avoid disruption to their education as a result of a placement move, given the importance of stability whilst studying for GCSEs or equivalent qualifications, and that the disruption may have a negative impact on their chances to enter further education or to get a job in the future.

York Council and its partners are also committed to the seven principles of corporate parenting outlined in the 2017 Children and Social Work Act. As a result, a number of the key actions within this strategy reflect the priorities in our Corporate Parenting and Children in Care Strategy. These 7 principles of corporate parenting are: -

1. To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.
2. To encourage children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings.
3. To consider the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people.
4. To help children and young people gain access to and make the best use of services provided by the local authority.
5. To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for children and young people.
6. For children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work; and,
7. To prepare children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

## Current position

### **Context**

Historically York had low numbers of children and young people in care (CYPIC). Recalibration of the service during 2019/2020 resulted in an increase in the number of children coming into care, including from a

child protection plan. Previously, there had been low numbers in pre proceedings, children had been subject to plans and repeat plans for too long without sustained changes being made. External Peer Review in autumn 2019 determined that the right children were now coming into care and strengthened the view that previous decision making York did not always bring the right children in to care when they needed to have done.

We have reviewed our approach to Permanence Planning and are implementing a refreshed policy in order to reduce drift and delay. We are also strengthening our tracking systems to support more timely permanence planning.

City of York has unique challenges when it comes to foster care sufficiency. As a City there are a number of alternatives to being a foster carer due to the student and home stay market. This, together with most adults in the City being in work and house prices being high, creates a challenging environment in which to recruit foster carers. As a result, there is a lack of internal foster placement sufficiency.

The number of teenagers coming into care increased over a number of years but has slowed in the past 2 years. This means that approximately one quarter of the children in care population are between the age of 15 and 17. We therefore, need to review our accommodation provision for care leavers as children move through the system and into adulthood.

Demand regionally for external residential and IFA provision has increased and we have increased external spot purchasing. The diversity and complexity of placement requirement is changing.

Placement stability has fallen over the last 2 years but has remained roughly in line with the national figure.

### **Profile of City of York Children and Young People in Care**

There were 265 children and young people in care in York on 31st March 2020. This equates to a rate of 70.81 per 10,000, which is slightly above the national average of 65.

- The age profile of children in care has changed over 2018/19 and 2019/20 with a decline in the proportion of 10-15 year olds in York's care. At the end of 2017/18, 43% of CYPIC were aged 10-15. At the end of December 2019, this had decreased to 31%. Nationally, the

proportion of 10-15 year olds in care has held at 39% for the last three years.

- The proportion of CYPIC in the age group of 1-4 year olds has nearly doubled since 2016/17 – from 11.8% to 22%. This difference has not been seen nationally, with 13% of children in care aged 1-4. This trend reflects the recalibration in the Safeguarding Intervention Service.
- One quarter of our CYPIC are age 15 to 17 and so over the next 2/3 years we will see a large cohort of children leave care
- Our use of foster placements is 68.32% just below the national average of 73% nationally but down from 78% in March 2019.
- York has 114 fostering households, 60.5% are mainstream foster carers, 28.9% are Connected Carers and 9.6% are short breaks carers
- 9% of Children Looked After are placed with Independent Fostering Agencies.
- Use of residential placements is 9.92%. The England Average is 9%.
- 16% of children and young people in care are placed with their parents which is higher than the England average which is 6%.
- 6.8% of CLA discharged from care were adopted at 31/01/20 which is lower than the previous 2 years (14%).
- 56% of children looked after are placed outside of York. This is due to the relatively small geography of York.
- It is becoming increasingly hard to find placements for York children as the overall demand across all sectors is outstripping supply. This has been further impacted by Covid 19.

### **Our Objectives For the next 3 years**

#### **1. Children and young people will be supported to stay with their families where it is safe to do so**

The recently updated Early Help Strategy sets out how we are supporting children within their families through the provision of high quality, timely, early help support and therefore prevent concerns from escalating and needing specialist interventions. Any organisation or agency working with children, young people and families should have mechanisms to identify emerging problems and potential unmet need.

The strategy aims to develop and improve the identification of need in families across the city and we know that particular groups of children and young people are known to be at greater risk of poor outcomes. The strategy emphasises the importance of local organisations and agencies working together to:

- identify children and families who would benefit from early help
- undertake an assessment of the need for early help
- provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family which focuses on activity to improve the outcomes for the child

The strategy promotes a shared understating of need across the city, the provision of multi-agency training, the promotion of shared tools and the 'lead practitioner' role' and crucially, early help as a collaboration and not a service.

Through the use of data we will be able to assess the impact of the strategy over the course of the next 3 years

We are developing an adolescence strategy, the scope of which is to improve outcomes for children in the adolescence stage of life. It recognises that to do this effectively for young people going through adolescence, a range of other vulnerabilities need to be better understood and interventions adapted with partners, peers, families and communities being better placed to prevent and respond to the needs of young people in this time of increased vulnerability . The strategy also recognises the complexities of young people's lives and considers that the risk of abuse and exploitation can be exacerbated by a range of vulnerabilities with the impact of suffering such harm leading to life-long consequences unless effectively addressed. During the course of the next 3 years through better targeted support and evaluation of services based on young people's experiences, we anticipate fewer adolescents entering care and being supported with their families.

We are developing a strengths based Social Work Practice Model centred on systemic practice and linked to 'Frontline'. Systemic practice seeks to make sense of the world through relationships, focusing on the whole family system rather than individuals. Through a systemic approach, change can be achieved through exploring relationship patterns and how they impact on children. We have started to introduce systemic practice training to the workforce and over the course of this

strategy we will implement a Social Work Practice Model, which will build on family strengths and relationships. As a result, we anticipate more children will be supported to stay with their families.

Our number of S.20 voluntary accommodation cases has fallen as a result of active management and IRO oversight and led to a number of children's care status changing to care order. For those children where the plan is for a child in care to return home, we will ensure purposeful work is undertaken with the family so that it is safe for the child to return, a clear plan of support is identified and the appropriate senior manager decisions and oversight are in place.

City of York has an Immediate Response and Edge of Care team that intervenes with those children and families closest to breakdown and that are in need of intensive family support for a time limited period.

The 'edge of care' population can be identified as those children or young people who are at risk of being looked after (either immediately or during the timescale of a single assessment) by virtue of:

- Safeguarding concerns
- Breakdown in family relationships
- Risky behaviour towards self or others in the family.

The focus of the intervention of the Edge of Care service is one of de-escalation, prevention and diversion from care with the aim of keeping families safely together.

The service may also include children who we anticipate can be rehabilitated quickly following a short period of accommodation if intensive intervention takes place.

At 31st March the team worked with 120 cases involving 211 children, divided into:

57 Edge of Care cases:

61 Edge of CP cases:

Outcomes continue to be good overall, with 49% of CP cases and 64% of edge of care cases resulting in an outcome below the threshold of child protection at the point of involvement ceasing. Only 6 young people became looked after. IRT maintains close links with the CSA/E senior social worker and have added value to the response to children at

risk of exploitation via the FGC post funded by the trusted relationship project for 1 year, this has also increased involvement with partners in MACEM

We will build on the continued successes of the team and further increase Family Group Conference (FGC) capacity to support children subject to a Child Protection Plan, children on the edge of care and pre proceedings work. The team will also maintain close links with the recently formed child sexual exploitation team and through the FGC posted funded by the Trusted Relationships project continue to add value to the multi-agency response to children at risk of exploitation.

## **2. We will focus on achieving permanency in a timely manner through adoption and special guardianship**

Through our updated Permanence Policy and associated training/workshops, we are focusing on improving social worker's understanding of permanence and the importance of timely permanence planning for children and young people and conversely the negative impact of drift and delay. Over the next 3 years we will improve the early identification and timeliness of children adopted from care. 6.8% of CLA discharged from care were adopted at 31/01/20 which is lower than the previous 2 years (14%). On average, approximately 10 children are adopted each year and we currently have a number of children in proceedings so we expect the number to rise. We are finding that proceedings are taking longer with more reliance on expert assessments which causes delay. We are strengthening our tracking systems through the implementation of a Permanence Tracker and improving understanding of the child's adoption journey by delivering workshops to social work teams, which includes early permanence. The forming of the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA), One Adoption North and Humber (OANH) has significantly increased the pool of adopters for York children allowing early linking and matching and enabling children to stay closer to their cultural heritage. Interagency fees are not paid between the Local Authorities in the RAA. If a match is not possible in the RAA this is known early and so families from the voluntary and private sector can be sought early to avoid delay for children as much as possible.

The proportion of children with a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) has fluctuated over the last three years and there is a need to strengthen our Special Guardianship Offer and reduce the number of children in connected placements. Our current practice results in a number of

children ending proceedings as 'looked after' in a connected placement. Focus on ensuring family assessment are always available prior to issuing proceedings will reduce the number of connected placement alongside strengthening the SGO offer, reviewing the financial package and increasing the social worker capacity to offer ongoing support to these case. Once this is operational we anticipate significant reduction in connected care placements and increase in SGO's.

Connected care placements will be promoted where children cannot be at home but should be with family members and where a Special Guardianship Order is not possible. This is why we have a dedicated support group for connected carers, alongside a specific skills to foster training course.

Where appropriate, we will actively seek to discharge Care Orders on children in Connected Care placements in favour of a Special Guardianship Order, linked to our new SGO offer.

### **3. More children will live in a local placement**

The proportion of children living with foster carers has decreased over 2019/20 to 68.32% linked to the more recent increase in children and young people entering care but also due to the trend of falling numbers of foster carers. We also know that our sufficiency need is changing and that we need to target placement sufficiency in the following key areas: -

- City of York foster carers - generally and specifically for children with more complex needs and also mother and baby foster placements
- Block IFA procurement to enable effective step down from residential to foster care.
- Placements that support children with complex needs.
- Placements that support older children in care to move into independence, such as semi-independent living placements.

We will continue to build our foster carer sufficiency through our ongoing recruitment efforts which will be especially focused on securing in-house carers for the most complex and challenging children. We aim to recruit long term, stable and secure family homes for children with more complex needs, those who can offer step down from residential care, mother and baby placements and those who can take larger sibling groups. In February we commenced a digital recruitment campaign with

the aim of recruiting 15 new foster placements by the end of the financial year. The campaign was temporarily halted in March due to Covid 19, but was re-started in June.

We will also continue to support foster placements through our refreshed core training and developing foster carers knowledge and skills through the following: -

- Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Foster Carers
- NSPCC Reflective Fostering training
- Mental Health and E Safety training

York's use of residential care (not including Residential Special Schools) extends to 9.92% of the Children Looked After population. Our residential strategy is based on a gap and needs analysis that identified the following cohorts of children and young people whose needs are not being met: -

- Children aged between 9 and 11 years who have experienced trauma, struggle with behaviours, attachment and outcomes at school. They have experienced significant moves and disruption, which has compounded the trauma.
- Young people aged 12 to 16 years who have experienced a number of breakdowns and who experience significant challenges living in a family setting and achieving positive outcomes.
- Young people aged 16 plus, who have 'out grown' foster placements or residential provision and are ready to be supported into independence with a flexible and individual package.

Consequently the following provision was identified as being needed locally, with lots 1 and 2 dependent on purchasing residential properties and adapting them into children's homes. Lot 3 is currently a children's home owned by York Council and providing 4 beds for York children and run by a commissioned provider (Hexagon care)

### ***Lot 1 – Residential 9-11yrs***

A two bedded block contract with one provider, consisting of two beds across one home in a property provided by City of York Council.

### ***Lot 2 Residential 12-16yrs***

6 bedded block contract, consisting of two homes with 3 beds in properties provided by City of York Council.

### ***Lot 3 Semi-independent living placements***

The development of 6 semi-independent living beds through the conversion of Wenlock children's home.

Due to Covid 19, our plans to create this provision have been severely impacted. To mitigate this, we are seeking to extend the existing contract at Wenlock for a further 12 months and we will purchase semi-independent living beds via the White Rose Regional Framework or spot purchasing. Linked to Covid 19 restrictions easing, we are monitoring the state of the property market closely whilst also reviewing our plans to develop lots 1 and 2. We have seen a fall in the number of adolescents who have entered care in the last 2 years and in the interim, will purchase these beds as required when placements at Wenlock are full. We do however need to be prepared for potential increases in adolescents at risk of entering care and also existing children in care who may need a residential placement as the impact of the pandemic becomes clearer. We are undertaking further analysis in this area. There is also the possibility of further lockdowns in the future.

Furthermore, the proportion of children returning home to parents (or somebody with parental responsibility) has steadily increased since 2017/18 from 19% to 30%. Ensuring the renewed practice of frontloading proceedings at Letter Before Proceedings stage should further reduce the number of children on Placement with Parents.

We will proactively seek to discharge care orders for children placed with their parents within 12 months of the order being made where this is safe and appropriate to do so, so that children living with their parents can do so where the involvement of the local authority is no longer required.

### **4. All children will be matched with good quality placements which meet their needs**

We know that to secure the most appropriate placements for children in care, we need to understand their needs and capture their views effectively and make decisions for placements that will meet those needs/wishes. This will help to prevent and reduce the risk of placement breakdown.

We recognise that in order to do this we need to identify, gather and supply good quality information which details their needs and views accurately. We now need to continue involving social workers in improving the quality of information supplied to the Placement Finding and Commissioning team so that providers fully understand the needs of the child in order to achieve good matching. We will also continue to work with social workers so they understand what their responsibilities are before, during and after a placement.

We will also review our internal decision-making processes to assure ourselves that there is no duplication or unnecessary hurdles that might introduce undue delay to the timeliness of securing placements on offer. As part of this work we will also review the capacity of the Placement Finding and Commissioning Team, linked to the increased demand for placements.

## **5. All children in care will be prepared for independence and a healthy adulthood**

Young people approaching adulthood need nurturing care, positive boundaries and guidance to make that transition. We will continue to promote Staying Put and also ensure our foster carers have the skills and knowledge to support young people prepare for independence.

We will review Post 18 accommodation provision in light of the increase in CYPIC transferring to the Leaving Care Service (Pathway team).

We will improve access to specialist emotional/mental health support for CYPIC, which includes recruiting to a psychologist post.

We know that for the small number of young people who enter care when they are 17, not all social workers understand Leaving Care entitlements. We will therefore, deliver briefings to social work teams on Leaving Care entitlements.

We know that we have work to do to improve the mental health and well-being support to care leavers and we will work with our care leavers and health partners to achieve this.

We are also working with Adult Social Care to improve the pathways for those young people who will need support transitioning to adulthood

## **6. We will review all commissioned placements**

We want to strengthen our oversight of children placed in a residential setting and ensure that children and young people are supported to move on where this is in their best interests. We will implement a sustainable model of track and challenge to ensure there is no drift in stepping children and young people down to foster care or semi – Independence where appropriate.

Furthermore, we will review all young people in residential care with a view to stepping down to semi independence or supported lodgings where this is safe and appropriate.

### [Improving further](#)

#### **Action Plan:**

To ensure a sufficiency of support for children and families and placements for children in care over the next 3 years we will: -

- Deliver a Strengths based Social Work Practice model
- Increase Family Group Conference capacity to in order to strengthen our edge of care offer
- Implement an adolescence strategy
- Implement the revised Permanence Policy and deliver the training/workshops
- Implement a revised SGO Support offer and increase the number of children exiting care via SGO
- Improve the timeliness of children exiting care via adoption
- Recruit more foster carers, in particular, those who can support our more complex young people.
- Develop local residential care provision and semi-independent care provision over the course of the strategy and have contingencies in place due to Covid 19.
- Proactively discharge children placed with parents from care where appropriate to do so

- Improve the quality of information provided to support placement finding and matching and review capacity within the placement finding service
- Review care leaver post 18 accommodation provision.
- Improve mental health and emotional wellbeing support for children in care and care leavers
- Ensure a more consistent approach to preparing children in care for adulthood and also ensure clear pathways are in place for young people who will need the support of adult social care
- Implement a system for reviewing, tracking and challenging commissioned placements

Progress against this strategy will be monitored by the Strategic Partnership for Children in Care and Care Leavers and the Corporate Parenting Board.

END

Simon Fisher

Group Manager – Achieved Permanence

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**Corporate Parenting Board – Draft Work Plan 2021-22 – for discussion**

<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Strategic Themes</b>	<b>Reports Supporting Strategic Theme</b>	<b>Other Reports</b>
5 July 2021			
4 October 2021			
9 February 2022			

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