

Meeting the needs of Looked after Children

Introduction

1. The Virtual School is required to deliver an annual report to the Corporate Parenting Board. This report is tabled to all the Board to monitor educational outcomes of children and young people in care. This report contains a summary of the current position.

Virtual school arrangements in York

2. From September 2018 a substantive Virtual School Headteacher (VSHT) was appointed 0.6 FTE (three days per week). In addition a Learning and Well Being Worker was appointed 0.6 FTE to support schools in overcoming barriers to learning that SEMH behaviour can present and to reduce the risk of exclusions across the cohort.

Virtual School staffing from September 2018:

Virtual School Headteacher	Karron Young	0.6 FTE
Learning and Well Being Worker	Rachel Duffield	0.6 FTE
Educational Psychologist	Cathy Ardern	0.1 FTE
Learning and Work Adviser	Gill Clapham	0.8 FTE

Virtual School associates (making up the SLT):

- Children's rights team - Nikki Wilson
- Early Years adviser - Maxine Horsman
- School Effectiveness and Achievement Adviser (11-16) - Mike Jory
- Secondary school representative - Dan Bodey (Fulford School)
- Primary school representative - Cath Precious (Tang Hall Primary School)
- Consultant Headteacher - Tricia Head (The Danesgate Community)

Virtual school roll (academic year 2018-19) – data from CYPIC snapshot 22.2.19

3. The city of York has a constantly changing cohort of school aged children in care. The virtual school is made up of the whole cohort of school aged children where York is the corporate parent but they may live and be educated out of area (OOA). In February 2019 that cohort was one hundred and thirty four 5-16 year olds, 69% are educated in York with 31%* in a range of schools and settings across the country. These numbers are still below the national average of children in the care system per 10,000 of the population.

*Please note that the majority of OOA CLA are within a 20 mile radius of York

2018/19 (February 2019 snapshot)	Primary	Secondary	Total
CYC CLA (5-16)	58	76	134
Educated in York	46	46	92 (69%)
Educated OOA	12	30	42 (31%)
Mainstream York	41	35	76 (57%)
Mainstream OOA	9	20	29 (22%)
Specialist York	5	12	17 (13%)
Specialist OOA	3	5	8 (6%)
No current school	0	4*	4 (3%)

*All four of these young people are currently held on the roll of Danesgate and tutoring has been put in place until suitable education provision can be sourced.

4. The snapshot from March 2018 statistics included below demonstrates the rise in statutory school age population for children in care in the last 12 months.

2017/18 (March 2018 snapshot)	Primary	Secondary	Total
CYC CLA (5-16)	47	74	121
Educated in York	32	48	80 (66%)
Educated OOA	15	26	41 (34%)
Mainstream York	27	33	60 (50%)
Mainstream OOA	12	18	30 (25%)
Specialist York	5	15	20 (17%)
Specialist OOA	3	8	11 (9%)

5. There are twenty CYPIC aged 2-4 years who access nursery provision and the educational development of these children is monitored by the VSHT through the PEP process. From September 2018 the Virtual School has worked with social workers, early years advisers and funding teams to collect and maintain an up to date roll of where these children are on roll. The next step is to ensure that all children in nursery settings have a high quality PEP.
6. In addition there are twenty-nine CYPIC who are aged 16-18 years and have left statutory school provision. Their education pathway is also monitored by the virtual school. Some are in work, others have an apprenticeship, most are attending further education post 16 colleges and a small minority are in custody or NEET (3). Nineteen YPIC post 16 remain in education either at school 6th form, further education colleges or in the same specialist provision they accessed pre-16. Seven YPIC have secured apprenticeships or employment, two are in custody and one is currently NEET.

7. This brings the total roll of CYPIC for whom the VSHT has an oversight in terms of education to one hundred and eighty three.

Attendance

8. All schools should promote good attendance. If a child has lower than 85% attendance they are deemed to be 'persistently absent' from school. The statutory guidance for local authorities states that VSHT should have a robust system in place for monitoring the attendance of the cohort of children in care. From September 2018 a contract was secured with Welfare Call Ltd to gather attendance data on behalf of CYC. The reporting shows that from the start of the academic year 2018 to February half term the overall attendance of children in care looked after by York was 90.7% (aged 5-16 years).
9. Of the school aged population: nineteen YPIC have 100% attendance; eighty-three YPIC have over 95% attendance; a further nineteen YPIC have between 90-95% attendance and twenty-seven YPIC have lower than 90% attendance at school. The vast majority of the YPIC have very good school attendance.
10. This remains a key priority for the Virtual School working with social workers and carers to improve attendance across the cohort. The DfE does not collect statistics relating to school attendance for children in care therefore there is no comparative data relating to the cohort.

Exclusions

11. Welfare Call Ltd also collects information regarding exclusions. There have been no looked after children permanently excluded from schools; however reducing fixed term exclusions remains a key priority for the virtual school in York. Since September 2018, sixteen YPIC have been excluded from schools on a fixed term basis resulting in a total loss of 55 school days. Four young people accounted for 27 days between them since September. Since January 2019, as a result of the Learning and Well Being Worker supporting the schools, there have only been 13 days of exclusions across nine YPIC. The Learning and Well Being Worker provides a consultation service to designated teachers where YPIC are at risk of exclusion. Advice and/or training is provided to school staff to adopt attachment aware approaches to responding to challenging behaviours of YPIC as opposed to the traditional behaviourist approaches contained within the majority of schools' behaviour policies.

Educational Outcomes (2017-18)

12. EYFS comment – at the time of reporting EYFS profile data there were five children in care. Three have since left care. None of the children achieved GLD. This is a key priority for the Virtual School and education settings for the current year with nine children in reception at the time of writing. Each child represents 20% within the statistics.
13. KS1 comment – at the time of reporting KS1 data there were nine children in care. One child has since left care. Four out of nine had SEND with two EHC Plans. Those four made progress from the Early Years Foundation Stage starting point but none met the DfE standard of attainment at the end of Y2. Two children are educated in schools outside York. Each child represents 11% within the statistics. KS1 performance remains below national but shows significant improvement from 2016-17.
14. KS2 comment – at the time of the KS2 tests and data reporting there were twelve children in the Y6 cohort. Two are no longer in care. Four out of the nine have SEND with three EHC Plans. Four children met the DfE standard and two children missed the standard by 1 point. Outcomes for Y6 in 2017-18 are significantly better than in 2016-17 highlighting the fluctuating needs of the cohorts and the variances created with such small cohort sizes. Each child represents 8.3% within the statistics.
15. KS4 comment – at the time of the GCSE examinations at the end of KS4 there were twenty young people in the Y11 cohort. Three of the young people are no longer in care. Twelve of the twenty have identified SEND with six EHC Plans. Only two of the young people were attending education out of York at the time of the GCSE examinations, however eleven young people were in specialist provision. After significant improvement in 2017 when York's YPIC outperformed their national counterparts, outcomes for attainment and progress dipped in 2018. However, they remain well above the 2016 level. Each child represents 5% within the statistics.
16. In summary, it is important to note that the cohort sizes are very small and the individual needs of some of the YPIC present significant barriers to progress and achievement. Some outcomes are affected by placement moves, school moves and unidentified potential SEND for young people new into care. Once school places are secured for those young people who move out of area every effort is made to ensure that education assessments are given the highest priority. The cohort at the end of each key stage for 2017-18 presented with higher than national average SEND.

17. The NCER project for CLA data reporting now allows the Virtual School to produce comprehensive end of key stage data which reports on attainment, progress and trends in performance of the cohorts of YPIC at national reporting points.

Personal Education Plans (PEP)

18. The PEP is a statutory document which summarises educational needs and provision for a CLA and, crucially, highlights targets for the year and additional support required. The full PEP must be reviewed at least annually by children's social care and schools in preparation for each Child or Young Person's Care Review. The Virtual School asks that educational targets within the PEP are also reviewed on a termly basis. Welfare Call Ltd is now collecting termly attainment and progress data. All children and young people in the care of city of York have a completed PEP; however there will always be some in need of updating and/or reviewing. The completion rate on the KPI snapshot changes on a monthly basis.

New development for the virtual school since Sept 2018

19. Securing the contract with Welfare Call Ltd from September 2018 has ensured that complete robust and timely data on school attendance, exclusions and current attainment and progress is now safeguarded for the future. The analysis of this data can be undertaken at individual child level and for groups of children in different schools and year groups. The VSHT requests that this contract be continued to ensure that the statutory duties continue to be fulfilled effectively.

The priorities of York's virtual school are as follows:

20. The priorities are:
- Improve school attendance of children in care
 - Reduce exclusions of children in care
 - Raise educational outcomes
 - Monitor the use and impact of pupil premium plus
 - Work with children's social care to ensure that all children and young people in care have high quality and appropriate education placements
 - Further improve the completion, quality and impact on outcomes of PEPs, including effective impact of the pupil premium plus identified in PEPs

- Support the professional development of designated teachers so that they are effective in their role and understand how best to support and improve the educational achievement of children in care and those adopted from care
- Support effective transitions for children in care including those leaving care at 18 years.

Recommendation

21. That the Corporate Parenting Board accepts the report.

Reason: To keep the Board updated.

Council Plan

22. The work of the virtual school is in line with the Council Plan as follows:

- a prosperous city for all – striving to ensure that children in care have the best opportunities for future prosperity as citizens
- a focus on frontline services – ensuring that children in care have access to good education and support
- a council that listens to residents – engaging with the voice of children in care through the Children's Rights team.

Implications

23. The implications are:

- **Financial** - Pupil Premium Plus policy to be in line with DfE statutory guidance regarding allocation and spending
- **Human Resources (HR)** - none
- **Equalities** - none
- **Legal** - none
- **Crime and Disorder** - none
- **Information Technology (IT)** - none
- **Property** - none
- **Risk Management** - none

Contact Details

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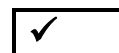
**Report
Approved**



Date 07.03.19

Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes:

Annex A – Virtual School on a page

List of Abbreviations used in report:

CH – Consultant Headteacher
CLA – Children looked after
CPB – Corporate Parenting Board
CYPIC – Children and Young People in Care
DfE – Department for Education
EHCP – Education, Health and Care Plan
EYFS – Early Years Foundation Stage
GLD – Good Level of Development
HT – Headteacher
KPI – Key Performance Indicator
NCER – National Consortium for Examination Results
NEET – Not in Education, Employment or Training
OOA – Out of Area
PEP – Personal Education Plan
PP+ – Pupil Premium Plus
SEMH – Social, Emotional, Mental Health
SEND – Special Educational Needs and Disability
SLT – Senior Leadership Team
VSHT – Virtual school headteacher
YPIC – Young people in care