

Report to: **Corporate Parenting Panel**

Date: **19 October 2012**

By: **Director of Children's Services**

Title of report: **Educational outcomes for Looked After Children 2012**

Purpose of report: **To outline the performance of the Virtual School between 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012**

RECOMMENDATION: Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to note and endorse the contents of the report

1. Financial appraisal

1.1 There are no increased costs arising from this report.

2. Supporting information

2.1 The Annual Progress report of the Virtual School is attached as Appendix 1

3. Recommendation

3.1 The Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to note and endorse the contents of the report.

MATT DUNKLEY
Director of Children's Services

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Local members: all

Background documents: none

1. Summary

1.1. Overall the best examination outcomes for Looked after Children in East Sussex and the continuation of a clear upward trend that we are confident will continue into 2013.

2. Cohorts

2.1. The cohorts consists of those children who have been in continuous care for at least 12 months to the year ending March 31st 2012 who were at the end of the Key Stage in the summer and who were educated in a school in England. There were 16 at the end of KS1 (Year 2), 32 at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6) and 37 at the end of Key Stage 4 (Year 11). There were 229 care-leavers including three over 21 years old at university.

2.2. A high proportion of each cohort has identified special educational needs and 20% - 25% of each cohort attends a special school.

2.3. We are introducing for the first time a post 16 cohort – that is, young people who are in Year 12 and Year 13 (or would be had they remained in full time education) so that we can more meaningfully report on both engagement and outcomes for these young people. We have set targets for this cohort for the end of this academic year that reflect the raising of the participation age. There are 45 young people in the Y12 cohort and 56 young people in the Y13 cohort.

3. Data Collection

3.1. There is no simple or totally reliable way to collect the data, especially at KS4 and post 16. We rely on phone calls and emails to schools, carers and in some cases the children and young people themselves. The data presented is as accurate as is possible within the resource we have. Where it has been possible to cross check with the Research and Information Team we have done so.

3.2. We have asked to be included in any verification of data before it is submitted for national publication.

3.3. Where comparisons are made to “LAC Nationally” this is done using 2011 national LAC outcomes as 2012 outcomes will not be available until the end of the year.

4. Key Stage 1 (Year 2, 7 year olds)

4.1. Although there were 25 children at the end of Key Stage 1 only 16 of them had been in continuous care for a year or more.

4.2. The proportion of children achieving the expectation of level 2 in Reading, Writing and Maths **is above** that achieved by LAC nationally in 2011. There is insufficient foundation stage data in order to complete a progress analysis and we have not previously collected or analysed this data. In future we will be able to use foundation stage data (which for current Year 2 children is complete) in order to assess the progress of this age group.

5. Key Stage 2 (Year 6, 11 year olds)

5.1. Outcomes for children leaving primary school have **never been better**. Children made exceptional progress in Maths and English, exceeding the very challenging targets set in Maths and achieving close to the target in English. Progress of East Sussex LAC was considerably higher than the progress of LAC nationally in 2011. The proportion of children achieving the expected Level 4 in English and Maths is also significantly higher than in previous years.

5.2. The most significant improvement was in maths where over 90% of the cohort made expected progress and 63% achieved a Level 4.

6. Key Stage 4 (Year 11, 16 year olds)

6.1. Outcomes for young people at the end of Key Stage 4 have also ***never been better***. The proportion of young people achieving the national benchmark of five good GCSEs including English and Maths is the ***highest on record*** at 22% and well above the national figure for 2011 of 13%. The proportion of young people making expected progress in English and Maths is also above the national figure for 2011 and above our target in English but below in Maths.

6.2. The method of calculating progress from KS2 to KS4 in which those with no KS2 outcomes have to achieve at least a grade B at GCSE to count as having made the expected progress, means that this measure will always be a challenge when the cohort includes a number of young people who were working below national curriculum levels at KS2.

6.3. It is pleasing that over 90% of young people end Key Stage 4 with an accreditation of some form and over 80% achieve at least one GCSE. There are no national comparisons available for these broader measures of educational attainment of looked after children.

7. Post 16

7.1. 96% of care-leavers who completed KS4 last summer are in education, employment or training with a further 2% who are engaging with the transition service. This is very encouraging and will ensure we are in a good position to meet our very challenging targets in future years that reflect the raising of the participation age.

7.2. 70% of care-leavers who completed KS4 in the summer of 2011 are in education, employment or training. *The Care to Work Project* is addressing this “fall off” from Y12 to Y13 to help young people completing Level 1 qualifications at the end of Y12 to remain in education or to gain employment and apprenticeships.

7.3. Overall 65% of care-leavers aged 16 – 21 are in education, employment or training.

7.4. Four young people finished two year Level 3 courses successfully, one achieving an A and two Bs at A level, one achieving two Bs and a C, one achieving an A a C and an E and one completing a BTEC level 3 in Uniformed Services achieving a “triple distinction”. All these young people are now at university.

7.5. Ten young people completed the first year of a Level 3 course successfully, including one who achieved two As and two Bs at AS level. All 10 have successfully progressed to the second year of their courses.

7.6. There are currently 9 care-leavers attending university.

8. Reasons for Improvement

8.1. We attribute the improvement partly to a greater emphasis in schools on supporting the progress of vulnerable groups and a greater awareness of the particular needs of looked after children (and, thanks to training provided by the Virtual School, improved knowledge and skills of school staff and a greater awareness of the support that is available).

8.2. Virtual School caseworkers are now linked to individual schools and are able build up strong professional relationships with designated teachers over an extended period of time, attending PEP meetings, working with the children in the schools and helping to identify additional needs to ensure that children and young people make good progress.

8.3. Improved tracking making use of the Virtual School’s SIMS database.

8.4. Access to the Pupil Premium has allowed for considerable resource to be directed to individual learning needs, in particular the use of 1:1 tuition in English and Maths using a small team of specialist tutors.

8.5. Significant improvement in the support for education for care-leavers through good links with FE and training providers, joint projects with the universities, the Individual Advice and Guidance commissioned from My Future Starts Here, the development of work experience opportunities and the embedding of the post 16 PEP.

9. Case Studies

9.1. A small sample of case studies from this year's exam cohorts.

9.1.1 Key Stage 1

JJT has been in care since 4 years old and was frequently excluded from playgroup and from his reception class. Pupil Premium funded additional INA support and the Virtual School provided whole school and individual training for staff. Joint working between the Virtual School, CAMHS, social care and school has enabled JJT to learn how to interact socially and emotionally with his peers so as to be able to access learning in a classroom. JJT was assessed as working below National Curriculum Levels in Year 2 (P Scale Point 8) but succeeded in reaching the expected levels at the end of Key Stage 2 gaining a 2A for English and a 2B for maths.

SCL moved schools during Year 2 and was very unsettled when she started at her new school. A "Boxall profile" was undertaken and supportive strategies provided by the Virtual School and pupil premium was used to fund an additional 'key adult' to support her during the transition period. SCL's Foundation Stage Profile Score was below the East Sussex average and national expected average, but with the additional support provided, she was able to reach Level 1 for Literacy and Level 2B for Maths. Without the additional support of the Virtual School, it is unlikely that she would have achieved a National Curriculum level

9.1.2 Key Stage 2

M.O. had very low self worth due to inconsistent care and chaotic parenting. He mistrusted adults and was unable to express his feelings. The Virtual School facilitated therapeutic story telling sessions and training and resources for the school to enable to build his trust in the adults who worked with him enabling him to make a successful transition to a new school in Year 6. Monitoring identified that he was unlikely to meet his Key Stage 2 target of a Level 4 in literacy. Pupil Premium was used to fund a tutor enabling him to achieve his target

John's progress in Maths during Year 6 was very slow and he was at risk of not securing a level 4 (his end of KS2 target was a 4A). Pupil premium was used to fund a 1:1 Maths tutor, provided by the school and already known to John. It was important that John was tutored by a familiar adult, as he did not respond well to any unfamiliar staff. As a result of the additional tuition, John's confidence was boosted and he achieved a level 4 in Maths.

Louise was emotionally unsettled throughout Year 6; she was aware that her placement was going to change at the end of the year 6 summer term and the uncertainty around this understandably caused her a high level of anxiety. She was also very worried about transferring to Secondary School. It was felt that her level of emotional instability would hinder her attainment. School were able to provide a qualified Listening Helper who Louise met with each week to discuss her worries around her future placement and she was able to form a trusting relationship with this adult. Prior to this school provision, Louise had worked weekly with the Virtual School Play Worker and the Listening Helper was able to build on this work. The Virtual School Caseworker attended PEPs, visited the Secondary School with Louise and delivered 1:1 transition sessions during the final term of year 6. Louise also attended the Virtual School residential transition programme. Without the extra support provided, it is likely that Louise would have failed to make the necessary progress during her final year but she was successful in achieving Level 4s for reading, writing and Maths.

David has always done well in school excelling in Maths where he is gifted and talented however he has struggled with Literacy especially around handwriting. The Virtual School Caseworker worked with him to improve his handwriting during Year 4 and again in Year 5 on

emotional support following a particularly traumatic event in his life. David achieved a level 5 in English and a Level 6 in Maths. He also passed his 11+ exam and now attends a Grammar School in Kent.

Dennis was referred to the Virtual School when he was in Year 3. He was not engaging in any class work and frequently sat under tables, hid under cushions etc. A Virtual School caseworker worked 1:1 with Dennis for three mornings a week for several months prior to additional resources being provided through a Band B statement. Dennis was also helped in the transition to his new school when he and his siblings were moved to a permanent placement. Since then, that placement has also broken down and Dennis had to be moved again all impacting significantly on his emotional readiness to learn. Gradually, with the right support and encouragement Dennis was able to make significant learning gains and he ended Year 6 having achieved Level 4s across the board.

Chris has a statement and has made excellent progress. However, in January this year he was working at a 3b in reading and a 3c in writing so Pupil Premium funded a tutor to work specifically on areas of weakness identified by the school 'reading and evaluating a range of reading comprehension'. Chris achieved all Level 4s across the board having made huge progress in a matter of months.

Tiara moved to a new school at the start of Year 6 following behavioural and friendship issues at her old school. The Virtual School supported the transition promoting the use of the 'Friendship Toolkit' to use for group work with Tiara. Tiara made very good progress, achieving 5b in all areas of her SATS. Tiara is now at her secondary school and has settled in really well. In addition to her academic achievement, Tiara is a Student Leader, has been chosen as one of only two students to represent the school as an ambassador for an International Children's Day workshop, she has been selected for the gymnastics squad, nominated for Student Council and has been put forward to receive a Governor's Achievement Award. Tiara aspires to be Head Girl and wants to train to be a doctor!

9.1.3 Key Stage 4

Gavin moved from a special school into main stream in Kent this was not an easy move and there were ups and downs. The Virtual school were able to provide off site education including a lap top and tutor when he was excluded. At PEPs I was able to act as an advocate and ensure that the school were putting in place appropriate support mechanism for him to be able to achieve his GCSE at the expected levels. Gavin is now attending college in East Sussex.

KG came into care in August 2011 following 9 months of non attendance at school. KG joined Y11 of a local secondary school and the virtual school coordinated a programme of tutoring for maths to supplement the English programme provided by the school and supported a two day a week programme at an FE College. KG achieved a L2 English qualification and a level 1 maths qualification and completed the "Opt in" course. She is now following a Level 1 explorer course at College.

CN came into Care in Term 1 of Year 11 and as a result had to move to a new school which was following different exam syllabuses to his previous school. CN attended the Virtual School Year 11 residential programme and was mentored throughout the exam period by a case worker from the Virtual School. Chris gained a grade C in Maths, a B in English, a double A in Science and a string of other top grades at GCSE. Because CN only came into care at the start of Year 11 we have not been able to include him in our exam data!

CM was on the verge of permanent exclusion throughout Year 11 and we felt strongly that a transfer to another school or to College Central would have impacted on her GCSE courses and outcomes. Unusually we agreed to arrange her education off site for the last few months of her Year 11 course providing her with tutors and support for revision and only attending school for controlled assessments and exams. Chloe achieved a grade B and four Cs at GCSE including grade Cs in both English and Maths.

SC was a long standing school refuser who was at risk of leaving school with no qualifications. The Virtual School supported SC in finding alternative courses for 2 days a week. Her attendance was 95% for the whole of the 6 terms and she finished with two Level 1 qualifications. In addition, The Virtual School organised tutors for her and she achieved a grade F in English and a grade E in Maths. With support SC was able to attend school and complete her ICT qualification, the equivalent of 2 C's at GCSE. SC left school with qualifications equivalent to six GCSEs at C,C,D,D,E,F.

9.1.4 Post 16

TC has just started at Hull University doing criminology. TC had attended Bexhill 6th form college and achieved a triple distinction in BTEC Public Services. TC agreed to have PEP's and these highlighted a need for support and motivation to complete work this was put in place by the care leavers service and monitored via regular PEP meetings.

Following a period in work SG realised a desire to return to education and achieve sufficient qualifications to go to University. He enrolled on a level 3 BTEC in Business and made a request via a PEP to have support in helping him to achieve a C grade in his GCSE maths. The Virtual school put this in place and SG achieved a grade C, as a result he is able to continue with the final year of his Level 3 course.

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