

Committee: **Corporate Parenting Panel**

Date: **18 October 2013**

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

Title of Report: **Educational Outcomes for Looked After Children in 2013**

Purpose of Report: **To inform the panel of the educational attainment for Looked After Children**

Recommendation: The Panel is recommended:

(1) to note the significant educational achievements of Children Looked After by East Sussex County Council; and

(2) to thank the Virtual School staff for their support to enable children to succeed in this way

1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 The educational outcomes for Looked After Children in 2013 are set out in appendix 1.

3. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendation

3.1 Overall these are 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 2014. Key outcome measures have been significantly above the average for looked after children for the last four years and there is clear evidence that the gap between the overall outcomes of looked after children and all other children in East Sussex is narrowing. Of the 32 children who left Year 11 last summer, 30 of them are currently in education or training.

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Local Member(s): All
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

1. Summary

- 1.1. Overall these are 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 2014. Key outcome measures have been significantly above the average for looked after children for the last four years and there is clear evidence that the gap between the overall outcomes of looked after children and all other children in East Sussex is narrowing. Of the 32 children who left Year 11 last summer, 30 of them are currently in education or training.
- 1.2. The cohorts for attainment measures consist 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 23 at the end of KS1 (Year 2), 20 at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6) and 32 at the end of Key Stage 4 (Year 11).
- 1.3. The cohorts for progress measures vary considerably (and can vary between different subjects) as only children with “matched data” are included in the calculations.
- 1.4. A high proportion of each cohort has identified special educational needs. At KS2 70% of children have identified special needs half of whom have a statement of special educational needs, at KS4 80% of children have identified special needs with 30% having a statement of special educational needs
- 1.5. There were 32 young people in the Y12 cohort (who left Year 11 in Summer 2013) and 42 young people in the Y13 cohort (who left Year 11 in Summer 2012)

2. Data Collection

- 2.1. 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 but some of our children are placed outside the local authority or in non-maintained schools.
- 2.2. Where comparisons are made with national data this is based on 2012 figures, Overall East Sussex figures for all children are included from the 2013 cohort where available.

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

- 3.1. The proportion of children achieving the expectation of level 2 in Reading was significantly above looked after children nationally (77% against 67%) in writing it was below (52% against 57%) and in Maths was broadly similar (70% against 71%). It is difficult to draw conclusions from these figures as there is no progress data available yet and the cohort is small. (see Table 3)

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

- 4.1. Outcomes for children leaving primary school are very encouraging. See Table 1 and Table 2 (because of the added complexity of English results being split between

Reading, Writing and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling I have not included graphs from KS2)

- 4.2. Overall 81% of the cohort made expected progress in Reading and 69% expected progress in Writing. 74% of LAC nationally made expected progress in the old combined measure last year.
- 4.3. In Maths 75% of the cohort made expected progress compared to 66% of the national LAC cohort last year

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

- 5.1. Outcomes for young people at the end of Key Stage 4 have ***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 25% and well above the national figure for 2012 of 14.6%. The proportion of young people making expected progress in English and Maths is also the highest on record and significantly above the national figures for 2012. See Table 1 and Table 2 and Graphs.
- 5.2. Over 80% of young people end Key Stage 4 with an accreditation of some form and around 70% achieve at least one GCSE. There are no national comparisons available for these broader measures of educational attainment of looked after children

6. Post 16

- 6.1. 93% (30/32) of care-leavers who completed KS4 last summer are in education, training or employment with training.
- 6.2. Four care leavers graduated from university in 2013, five are currently completing university courses and five have started university this September.
- 6.3. Students who don't fall in to this cohort because of when they come into care are also supported with tutoring and in some cases with alternative provision to re-engage them back into education. We work closely with the youth offending team to monitor those who are in custody. One young person who came into care after the end of year 11 in September 2012 now attends Bedes 6th Form, has accessed support from Sussex University and has attended a university summer school.
- 6.4. Of the 42 young people who left Year 11 in Summer 2012, 31(73%) are engaged in education, training or employment with training, 9 following L3 courses at college or in 6th form provision, 5 have either progressed on to L2 courses or are developing more specific skills, 3 are on L1 vocational courses. 2 are in employment with training. 1 YP is in custody, the remaining are in specialist provision as they have a statement or are supported via college on, foundation learning or specialist courses. Six young people are planning to apply for university courses.

7. Reasons for Improvements

- 7.1. We continue to attribute these positive outcomes to a greater emphasis in schools on supporting the progress of vulnerable groups and to 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).

- 7.2. Virtual School caseworkers have now been linked to individual schools for the last three years and as a consequence are able to 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.
- 7.3. The Virtual School has a school based database for tracking each individual child and we contact every school on a weekly basis in order to be in a position to provide additional support or guidance where necessary
- 7.4. 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. Pupil Premium has also funded the “Letter Box Club” where all children across Key Stage 2 receive regular parcels of “fun” educational materials for use at home.
- 7.5. 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.

8. Future focus and challenges

- 8.1. The disparity between Reading and Writing at both KS1 and KS2 suggests a greater emphasis on writing may be required and we will be working with our tutors, schools and the school improvement service to see how best to support improvements in writing.
- 8.2. Changes to the national curriculum and to exam syllabuses and GCSE equivalent courses, together with a likely reduction in early entry to GCSE courses, may present some of our children with greater challenge and fewer opportunities to succeed in the future and we will be working with schools and the young people to ensure that this does not put them at a disadvantage.
- 8.3. The planned increase in Pupil Premium for 2014 will provide additional resource to support looked after children achieve their potential and to continue to close the gap between the outcomes of looked after children and their peers

9. Case Studies

Key Stage 1

S entered KS1 with a very low Foundation Stage Profile score. She was described by LAC CAHMS professionals as one of the most damaged and complex children they had come across. S struggles with any changes and found the transition to KS1 particularly difficult. Not only did she make limited progress at the start of year 1, but it also became increasingly evident that she would benefit from an additional key adult to act as a secondary attachment figure in school. The Virtual School funded additional one to one support for an extended period and supported the school’s application for an SEN statement by completing a Boxall Profile to highlight S’s emotional, social and behavioural needs. S was provided with additional resources from her statement which allowed for provision of a part-time Individual Needs Assistant At the start of year 2, the Virtual School again funded additional support to supplement this to full-time to help achieve a smooth transition. S achieved level 2s for both reading and maths at the end of KS1, a real achievement for a child with such a high level of emotional and learning needs.

T has experienced several changes of placements and schools (including out of county) since coming into care and she has also been separated from siblings. The Virtual School has closely monitored T’s

progress and attended PEPs to offer advice and guidance regarding supporting changes of school. Despite these numerous changes, T achieved outstanding end of KS1 results - all level 3s!

Key Stage 2

L was working at P8 (below national curriculum levels) in both reading and writing and 2C in maths at the end of Key Stage 1. With his exceptional hard work, support from school and the tutor supplied through the virtual school L came on in leaps and bounds receiving a 4C in English and 4B in Maths at the end of key stage 2 and also received regular parcels of reading material and maths game through the Letter Box Club which he was able to make use of at home with his carer. This was excellent progress for L and a fantastic start for him as he enters into secondary education.

M. entered KS2 below the national curriculum levels. Initially when she came into care, she lacked any motivation to succeed at school and frequently tried to abscond. Over the course of KS2, her primary school and Virtual School worked collaboratively with her carers to help turn around M's attitude towards learning and with the addition of extra tuition funded by the Virtual School, she achieved level 4s at the end of KS2, representing outstanding progress.

L. had 4 changes of school and 5 changes of placement in Year 2. He left care to live with grandparents out of county, but unfortunately this quickly broke down and he was returned to care in East Sussex. Despite all these changes and losses, he has managed to maintain progress and achieved level 2As for reading and maths and 2B for writing - all above the national expectations. L is currently finding it hard to deal with his return to care and make sense of his world and so the Virtual School are funding play therapy sessions to support his emotional well-being.

Key Stage 4

BR has been in the UK for 4 years, he arrived with minimal English. BR embraced education and in partnership with his social worker, carers, school and Virtual School a robust plan was put in place to ensure he was well supported to make progress. BR had an additional English tutor in year 10, he gained a C grade in maths in November 2012 and achieved 5A*-C in June 2013. BR is a gifted cricketer and was selected to be part of the new Sussex Cricket Academy which combines a development cricket programme with robust academic studies. BR plans to go on to University.

JL has a statement of SEN and at the start of year 11 experienced considerable difficulty with peer relationships at school following the breakdown of her foster placement and significant changes at school. The Virtual School worked closely with JL's new carers and social worker and were able to negotiate an individualised school timetable and provide one to one tutoring to ensure that JL achieved GCSE grades that would allow her to go on to college to do a Level 2 Health and Social Care Course (HSOC). She achieved 7 A*- G grades including C grades in science and ICT. She has started her L2 HSOC.

Due to a need to change the location of where she was living AB changed school in April 2012; she embraced the change of school and to support the transition the Virtual School provided a tutor to help her settle in all key subjects and fill the gaps where there were aspects of the GCSE syllabus that she had missed. AB took every opportunity via her school and the Virtual School to visit colleges and HE providers, to get involved in additional workshops and residentials. AB achieved an exceptional set of GCSE results and is now studying for 4 A levels at 6th Form College.

Post 16

CK had a statement of special educational needs until he was 16, he tried various engagement opportunities and at 17 he decided to return to college to study ICT. He took 3 years, starting at L1 to achieve L3 BTEC ICT Diploma with 2 Distinctions and 1 merit. At the start of his 3rd year he decided he wanted to go to University and couldn't do this without English and maths GCSE. The Virtual School funded a maths and English tutor for 7 months and a dyslexic specialist who supported him with strategies. In addition the Virtual School linked him with the widening participation team at Sussex University who provided mentoring and set up a work placement with the ICT department. CK had offers from 2 universities to do ICT. He achieved a C grade in his maths and a D grade in English; his first choice University accepted him and he has started at university.

JG did extremely well at GCSE, however he has always been reluctant to engage with support or advice from the Virtual School. He agreed to a PEP in Year 13 and as a result had his awareness raised about opportunities for care-leavers at University. He agreed to visits and taster days at both Sussex and Brighton University and met with a mentor as a result he applied to University and received offers from all. He achieved an A and 2 B grades at A level, and is currently doing an Art foundation course with plans to go on to University in September 2014

AW left his special school in July 2011 with 5 GCSE's D-G, he joined the "Explorer" Course at a mainstream college in September 2011. He achieved a Level 1 in Vocational Studies and Entry Level functional skills English, maths and ICT. AW Progressed on to L1 public service and sport course which he passed and has now been accepted on to a L2 ICT programme with the plan to move on to an apprenticeship, he has a regular work placement working alongside an ICT technician.

NB is a young mother who completed her GCSE's in 2012 and went on to an Equine studies course where she achieved outstanding results and is continuing with her L3 studies alongside caring for her child.

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KS4 Charts Closing the Gap

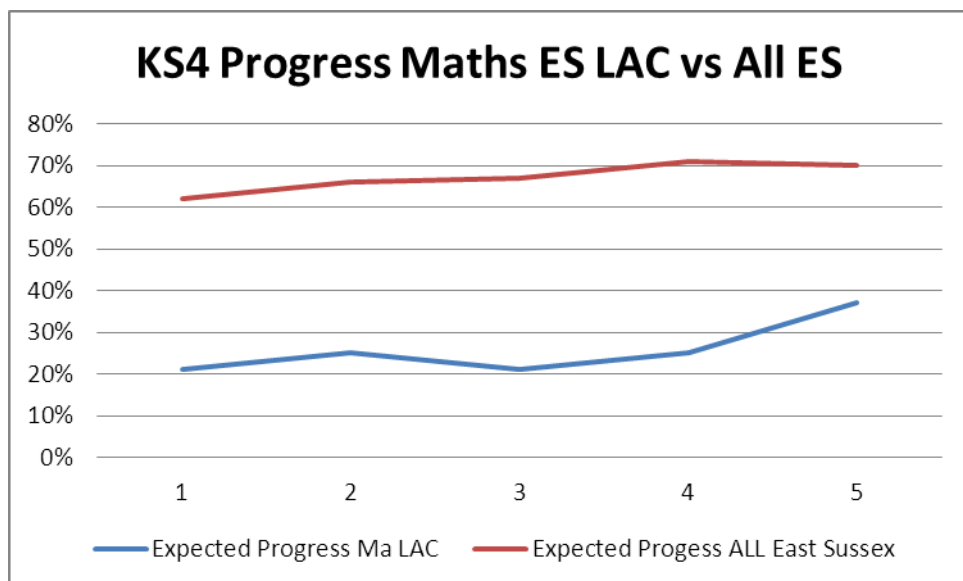
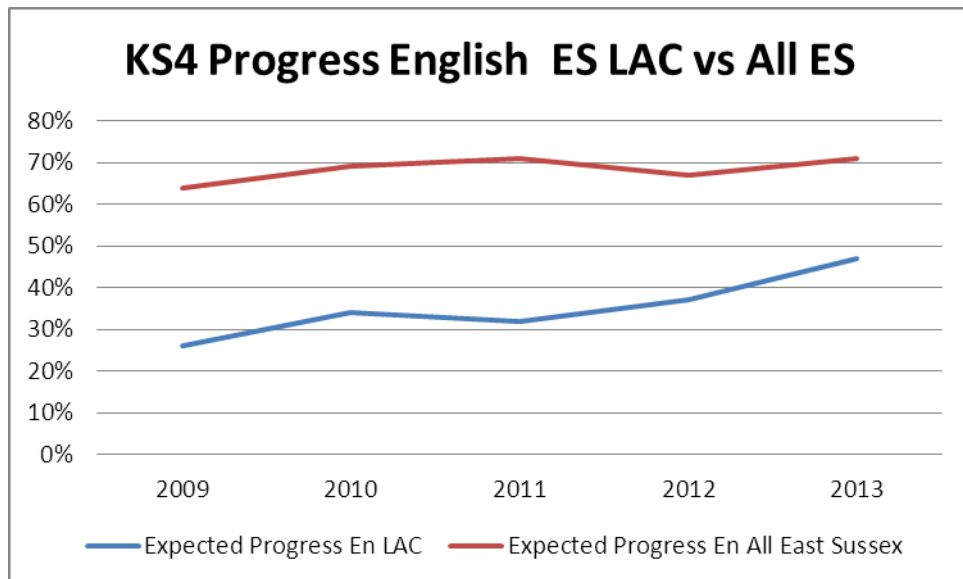
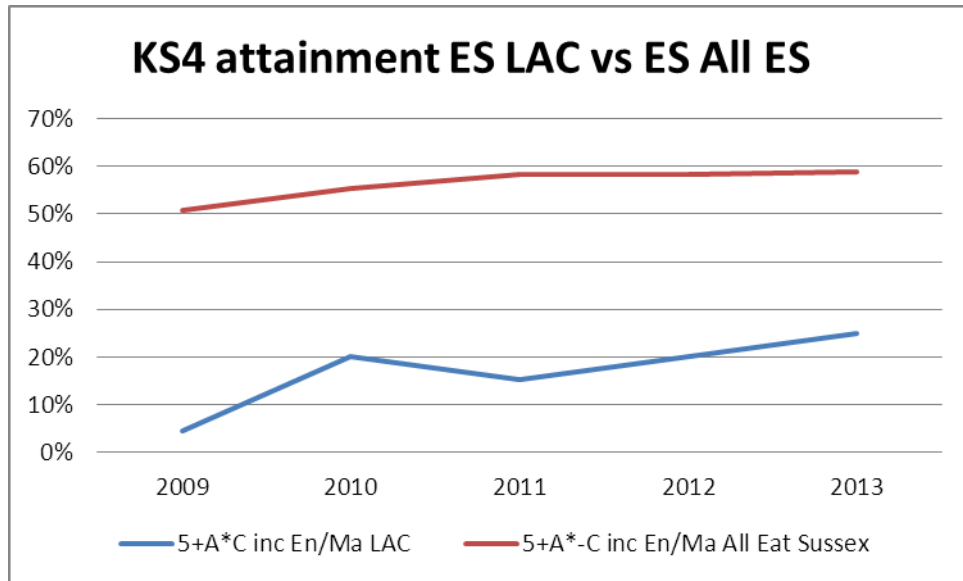


Table1
Headline outcomes East Sussex LAC 2013 KS2 and KS4

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2012 LAC England
KS4 5+ A* - C including English and Maths	4.4%	20%	15.2%	20%	25% (8/32)	14.6%
KS4 Expected Progress in English	26%	34%	32%	37%	46.7% (14/30)	31.5%
KS4 Expected Progress in Maths	21%	25%	21%	25%	36.7% (11/30)	24.4%
KS2 Level 4 English	44%	27.3%	40%	52%	Reading 65% (11/17)	60%
					Writing 41% (7/17)	
					GaPS 47% (8/17)	
KS2 Level 4 Maths	36%	32%	47%	70%	71% (12/17)	56%
KS2 Expected Progress English	56%	80%	67%	82%	Reading 81% (13/16)	74%
					Writing 69% (11/16)	
KS2 Expected Progress Maths	33%	63%	67%	91%	75% (12/16)	66%

Table 2
Closing the gap, East Sussex LAC, KS2 and KS4

	2009		2010		2011		2012		2013 ¹	
	LAC	All	LAC	All	LAC	All	LAC	All	LAC	All
KS4 5+ A* - C including English and Maths	4.4%	50.8%	20%	55.4%	15.2%	58.4%	20% ²	58.2%	25% (8/32)	59.3%
KS4 Expected Progress in English	26%	64.2%	34%	69.2%	32%	71.2%	37%	66.9%	46.7% (14/30)	71.6%
KS4 Expected Progress in Maths	21%	62%	25%	66%	21%	67.4%	25%	71.1%	36.7% (11/30)	69.8%
KS2 Level 4 English	44%	79.4% R85.8% W65.2%	27.3%	79.5% R83.7% W68.9%	40%	80.2% R83.2% W72.4%	52%	84.1% R85.7% W78.9%	Reading 65% (11/17)	85.4%
									Writing 41% (7/17)	81.2%
									GaPS 47% (8/17)	69.9%
KS2 Level 4 Maths	36%	76.2%	32%	77.6%	47%	78.6%	70%	84.1%	71% (12/17)	81.7%
KS2 Expected Progress English	56%	82%	80%	83%	67%	81%	82%	88%	Reading 81% (13/16)	88.0%
									Writing 69% (11/16)	90.7%
KS2 Expected Progress Maths	33%	77%	63%	80%	67%	80%	91%	84%	75% (12/16)	84.8%

¹ English results split between Reading, Writing and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GaPS) in 2013 so comparisons with previous years difficult. Progress cohorts vary as a result of variations in children with both KS1 and KS2 levels. All figures based on national approach at measuring LAC outcomes. Cohorts will vary for different measures.

² 18.4% was reported nationally, the national dataset contained three children who were not in the cohort (out of age).

Table 3
East Sussex LAC, KS1 (aged 7)

	Reaching Level 2			
	Cohort	Reading	Writing	Maths
Looked after Children (ES)	23	77% (18/23)	52% (12/23)	70% (16/23)
Looked after children (England)	1670	67%	57%	71%
East Sussex (All)		87.3%	82.8%	90.5%
All Children (England) ³		87%	83%	91%

