

Report title	Virtual School Head Annual Report 2018	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Paul Sweet Children and Young People	
Wards affected	All wards	
Accountable director	Emma Bennett, Director of Children's Services	
Originating service	Inclusion Support	
Accountable employee	Darren Martindale Tel Email	Service Manager - People 01902 551039 darren.martindale@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Recommendation for noting:

The Corporate Parenting Board is recommended to note:

1. The Virtual School Head Annual Report 2018.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To update Corporate Parenting Board on the educational outcomes of children and young people in care in 2018 (all results are provisional at the time of writing), and how the Wolverhampton Virtual School has supported the progress and achievements of children and young people in the cohort.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Virtual School Head (VSH) for children and young people in care is responsible for ensuring that the local authority effectively discharges its statutory duty to promote the education of children in the care of the local authority. This report outlines the educational inclusion, attendance and achievement of children and young people in care at all key stages in 2017-2018, as well as the Education, Employment and Training (EET) outcomes for care leavers, plus educational achievement of young people in the criminal justice system. It outlines how these outcomes have been supported by the 'virtual school' (a model by which we view all of our children and young people in care as if they attended the same school, with the VSH as the head teacher) and its partners, and highlights areas and plans for further development.

3.0 Progress

- 3.1 The VSH Annual Report 2018 is included at Appendix 1.

4.0 Financial implications

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.
- 4.2 Any costs associated with the educational outcomes of children and young people in care and any future plans that are identified as a result of this report will be funded from existing budgets within the Inclusion Support Service.
[NM/14012019/M]

5.0 Legal implications

- 5.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.
[TS/15012019/W]

6.0 Equalities implications

- 6.1 An equalities analysis will be undertaken if required, in partnership with the Equalities and Diversities Team. As the work that underpins this report is to overcome any inequality, the analysis is aspirational and will need to be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the work.

7.0 Environmental implications

7.1 There are no environmental implications

8.0 Human resources implications

8.1 There are no human resources implications

9.0 Corporate Landlord implications

9.1 There are no Corporate Landlord implications

10.0 Schedule of background papers

10.1 There are no background papers

Virtual School Headteacher (VSH) Report 2018

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report summarises the educational outcomes of Wolverhampton City Council's children and young people in care for the 2017-2018 academic year.
- 1.2 The report outlines the ways in which the Virtual School Team have worked to raise the achievement of children and young people in care in 2017-2018 and outlines plans for further development.
- 1.3 This report also seeks to inform knowledge and understanding in a number of areas relating to this area.

2.0 Cohort Information

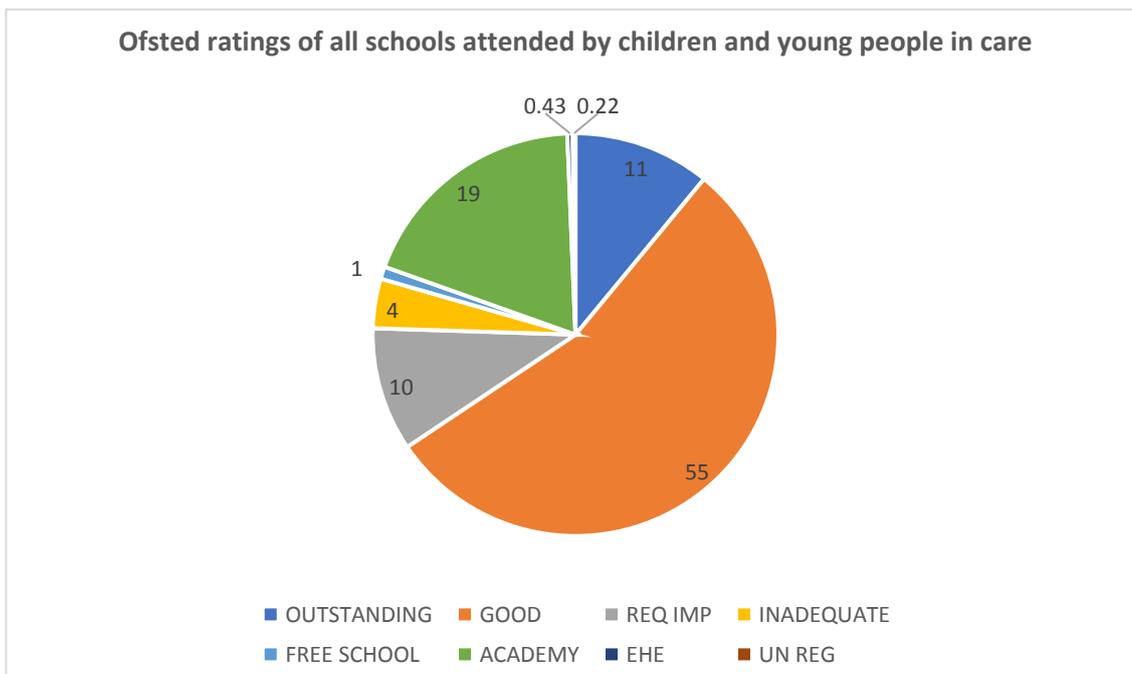
- 2.1 At November 2018, the following cohort characteristics apply to Wolverhampton's Virtual School:

Total pupils (Reception – Year 11)	464
Placed in Wolverhampton	235 = 51%
Placed out of city	229 = 49%
Attending primary schools	220 = 47%
Attending secondary schools	244 = 53%

Attending Pupil Referral Units (PRUs)	9 = 2%
Attending Special Schools	55 = 12%
Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) for Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND)	107 EHCP = 23%
Total ethnic groups	14
None White British	37%

3.0 School Ofsted ratings

- 3.1 Statutory guidance states that children and young people in care should attend schools that are rated as either or Good or Outstanding by Ofsted.¹
- 3.2 At November 2018, 59% of children and young people in care who are educated in Wolverhampton attend a good or better school. 72% of those who are educated outside Wolverhampton attend a good or better school. 66% of the whole cohort attend a good or better school.
- 3.3 However, several schools do not currently have an Ofsted rating because they have recently converted to academy status. Therefore, a more representative measure is perhaps the percentage of Children and Young People in Care who attend schools that are rated as Requiring Improvement (RI) or Inadequate. This figure was 14% for the whole cohort, a slight improvement on 2017. Data for the whole cohort is illustrated in the charts below:

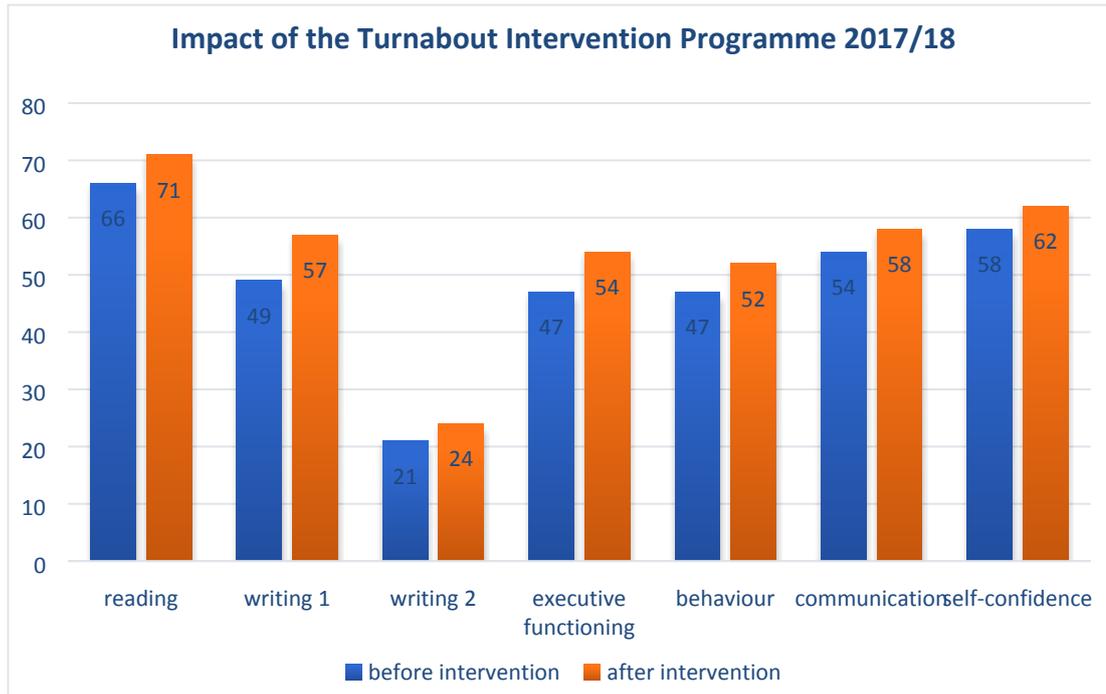


¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-children>

3.4 We aim to place children and young people in care in the best schools available to them. However, it is sometimes appropriate for a pupil to remain in a school rated as less than good or outstanding by Ofsted, for reasons such as placement stability. These factors can be particularly valuable to a vulnerable child's wellbeing and success in school. In such cases, an informed assessment is made in the best interests of the pupil.

4.0 Supporting progress and achievement

- 4.1 Wolverhampton's Virtual School team are committed to improving educational outcomes for children and young people in care through a combination of direct, advisory and strategic work with children, schools, social workers, carers and other stakeholders.
- 4.2 Managed by the Virtual School Head (VSH), the team employ one full-time equivalent (FTE) Education Advisor, 3.5 FTE Education Support Officers, one 0.5 FTE Data Officer and one full-time Administrator together with the VSH. We also benefit from the support of two senior Education Psychologists (0.90 FTE) a Counselling Psychologist (0.60 FTE) and, in 2018-2019, 1.5 FTE Assistant Educational Psychologists, as well as strong links with other key agencies.
- 4.3 The team have an Education Support Officer (ESO) attached to each Wolverhampton school. The workers contact their schools on a termly basis and, in most cases, meets with the Designated Teacher to discuss the progress of children and young people in care in their school. PEP meetings, annual reviews etc are regularly attended and any issues or actions are addressed without delay. The Virtual School track the school attendance and attainment of all Wolverhampton children and young people in care to ensure that interventions are planned in the most efficient and effective way possible.
- 4.4 The Virtual School introduced a dedicated ESO role (.5 FTE) for children in early years in 2017-2018. This has supported significant improvements in the educational outcomes of this cohort, as detailed in Section 9.
- 4.5 ESOs provide 1:1 study support for Children and Young People in Care in schools, helping to remove barriers to learning and supporting good progress. One of the key interventions delivered by the team is the **Turnabout** Programme, an intensive programme (2-3 weekly sessions for eight weeks) which helps younger pupils - usually at Key Stage 2 (KS2), or school years three to six - to overcome barriers to learning and develop their own problem-solving strategies.
- 4.6 Pupils are assessed by teachers at the start and end of the Turnabout programme in key areas – reading, writing, executive functioning, behaviour, communication and self-confidence. Pupils made good improvements in all areas following this intervention, as illustrated in the chart below.



- 4.7 Feedback from schools and carers has highlighted the positive impact that this learning support is having, both in and out of school, as illustrated by the following comments:

“A has more of a ‘can do’ attitude...”

“B has made a lot of progress, is more confident and has improved resilience...”

“C has a considerable increase in confidence and concentration. I feel that it has built his confidence and for the first time he is pleased to be achieving which is a big step for him. It was noted by school also at parents evening that his writing is getting much more legible...”

“thank you; you have made a BIG difference.”

- 4.8 The Virtual School have continued to build their capacity through ongoing training and team development. For example, in summer 2018 they completed both basic and advanced training in delivering “Drawing and talking”, a 1:1 strategy aimed at supporting children to explore their feelings and personal barriers, and to identify possible ways forward.

- 4.9 Case Study - feedback from an ESO on her 1:1 work with a year 6 pupil:

I was asked by Warstones [primary school] if I could try the Turnabout programme with S because she was struggling and lacking confidence in class. Since completing the programme, S has excelled in class and is doing very well. The DT [Designated Teacher] then asked me to do more work with S as her self-esteem and confidence were dipping [again] and she didn't want to take the test for Thomas Telford [selective school]. S was adamant and had made her mind up [that she wouldn't take the entrance test] – end of. I did more work with S around confidence building. We talked at length about Thomas Telford and how the test works. [Eventually] she said she will go for the test and she got in! The carer was so pleased - she called me to thank me and said S is so happy she has

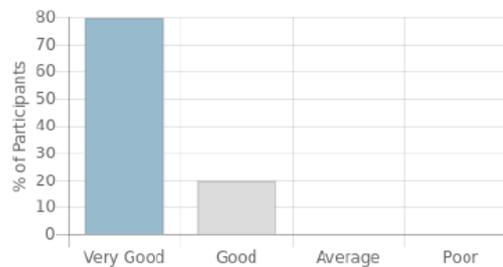
got in and can't wait to start as she knows that her future will be brighter. I went to see S; she is so happy she has got into Thomas Telford and is glad that she sat the test.

- 4.10 The Virtual School deliver **bespoke interventions for groups of children** and young people in care, as well as individuals. In the summer 2018, a communication skills workshop was delivered for 10 pupils in Key Stage four (year 10/11) aimed at building confidence and interpersonal skills. Participants had to work toward delivering a presentation to the rest of the group, at the end of the day. The young people showed dramatic improvements in their confidence throughout the day and feedback was given as follows:

Training Rating

From 10 TTL Respondants

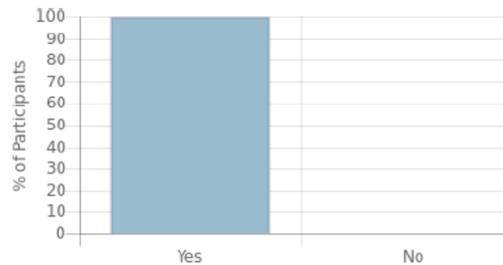
	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Avg.
Training Rating	8	2	0	0	9.60



Would Recommend

From 10 TTL Respondants

	Yes	No	Avg.
Would Recommend	10	0	10.00



- 4.11 The success of this event was also highlighted by comments from the students:
- *It was good and it will help me when I'm older*
 - *The training helped me to understand how people can become more confident. I would recommend it to my friends*
 - *It was fun and we learned a lot about new people and it was interesting. I am now more confident*
 - *The training was really good... Excellent way to meet new people*
- 4.12 The activities of the **Educational Psychologists (EPs) and Counselling Psychologist** working within the Virtual School include:
- **Consultation** with Social Workers, teachers, support staff from a range of agencies and with children

- **Assessment** of children and young people in care, placed both within city and out of City
- **Interventions** either directly or indirectly that relate to learning, social emotional and mental health needs
- **Training** for professionals and carers
- Attendance at **multi-agency meetings** where specialist psychologically based input is required, along with **reflective practice and solution focused case(s) meetings implementing restorative practice principles**

Breaking their work down into hours spent on the delivery of each of these 5 priorities, Virtual School psychologists delivered the following;

Consultation: In City: 100 Out of City: 85

Assessment: In City: 104 Out of City: 134

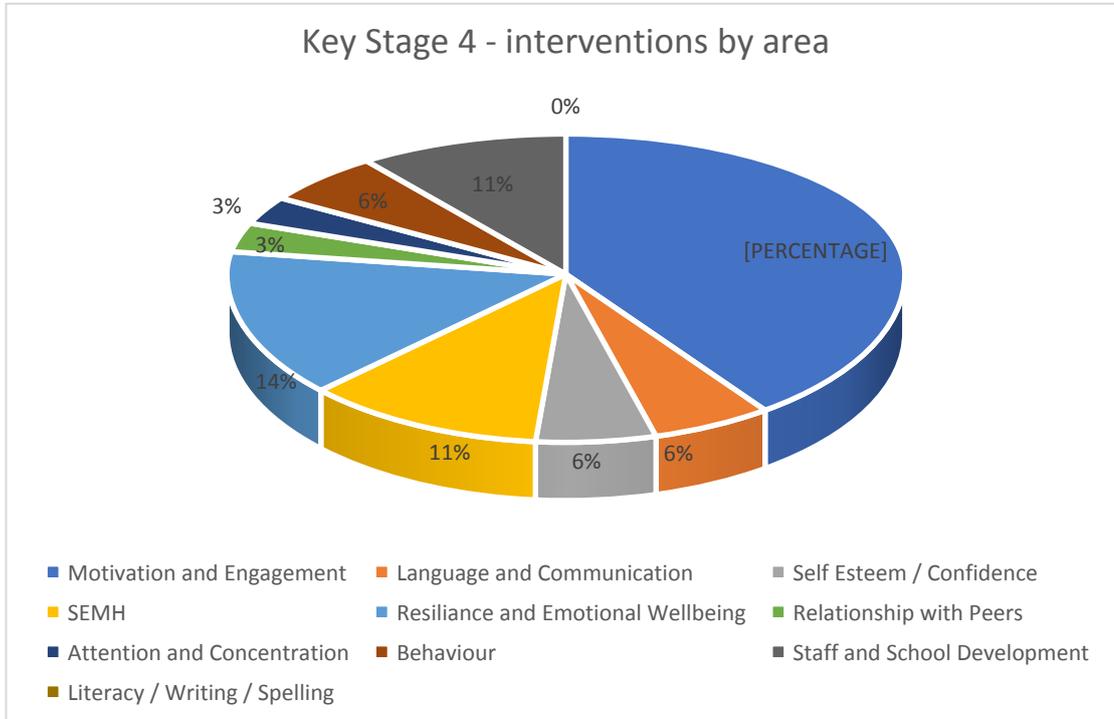
Interventions: In City: 56 Out of City: 66

Training: In City: 65 Out of City: 26

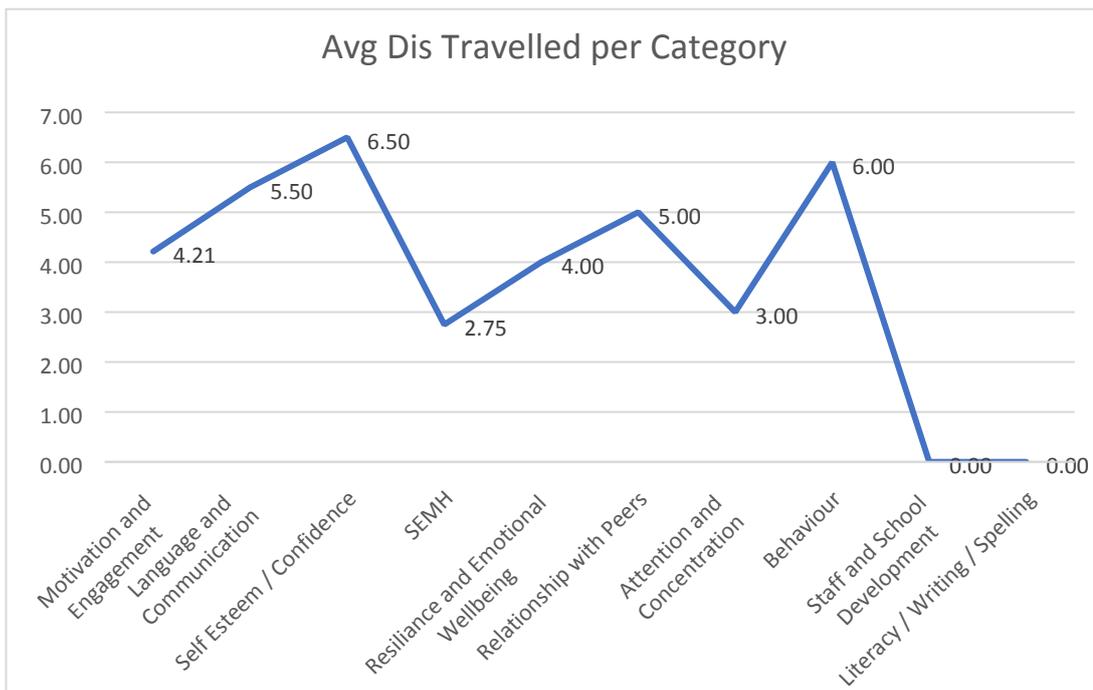
Meetings: In City: 117 Out of City: 82

- 4.13 The VSH employed three **Assistant Educational Psychologists** (1.5 FTE) in 2017-2018, funded by the Pupil Premium Grant. These colleagues supported children and young people in care at KS4, and a small number at KS3, who were at risk of underachieving, by providing extra support with coursework, revision, exam preparation etc. They also provided training for foster carers and Designated Teachers, as well as contributing to the professional development of the Virtual School team itself.
- 4.14 The Assistants complete Targeting, Monitoring and Evaluation (TME) forms, in consultation with the students and their Designated Teachers, to assess the progress of pupils following their intervention. They set, on average, two to three targets for each pupil. A score (from 1-10) is agreed for each target which best reflects where they are at the start of the intervention (their baseline), plus a target score for where they would like to be by the end. A final, actual score is agreed after the intervention, thereby giving an indication of the distance travelled.

4.15 Targets are grouped into 10 categories such as Motivation and Engagement, Resilience / Emotional Wellbeing or Relationships with Peers. The chart below shows which categories interventions tended to focus on, with motivation and engagement being the most prevalent:



4.16 The chart below illustrates the progress made in each category of intervention. All students made positive progress in every identified category (none of the interventions concentrated on the last two categories) with behaviour showing the greatest improvement:



5.0 Raising aspirations – Aspire 2 Uni

- 5.0 The **Aspire2Uni (A2U) Programme** is now in its fourth year and continues to raise aspirations, as well as supporting improved attainment and creating exciting bespoke opportunities for children and young people in care. The VSH manages the project from Wolverhampton’s perspective, and all members of the team provide staffing, organisational and administrative support.
- 5.1 A partnership project with the University of Wolverhampton and the “Creating Chances Trust”, alongside the four Local Authority Virtual schools participating in the project - Sandwell, Stafford, Walsall and Wolverhampton - the programme is embedded into wider strategies for raising aspirations, attainment and progression. A2U is targeted at pupils who are reaching expected standards at the end of KS2. Three cohorts are now following the programme, in years seven, eight and nine and 10. Wolverhampton have between four and 12 Children and Young People in Care in each cohort.
- 5.2 There are three main elements to the programme:
- **Outreach** - the University organises a series of university visits and other events, designed to raise aspirations, break down barriers and inform progression to higher education.
 - **Mentoring** - a dedicated mentor is allocated to the young people and works with them in their home; this ensures they do not miss valuable lesson time and engages the child’s carers and home network with the programme. Children see their Mentor either once per week or once per fortnight
 - **Work Experience and Enrichment** - Working with local businesses, Creating Chances Trust raises funds and accesses high quality, bespoke work placements for individual children, where appropriate. In addition, the trust sources enrichment experiences, such as visits to the theatre or outward-bound experiences, to broaden horizons and build confidence.
- 5.3 In 2017, 32% of looked after children, nationally, achieved the expected attainment in core subjects at the end of Key Stage Two. Some 17% attained GCSEs in English and maths at grade four or above. Alongside the clear attainment gap between Children and Young People in Care and their peers, these outcomes also show how attainment drops between year six and year 11. Given this context, we would expect around 20-30% of all looked after children at secondary school to achieve the attainment standard for their age, on average, with a steady decline throughout their secondary years.
- 5.4 Of the 18 children and young people in care from Wolverhampton who were participating in A2U in the summer of 2018 (so the current years eight, nine and 10), 72% are at the expected standard in both English and maths. This is an exceptional outcome which puts these children broadly in line with all pupils, nationally. Furthermore, the year 10 cohort is doing just as well as those at Key Stage Three.
- 5.5 Comparisons with children and young people in care averages admittedly skewed by the fact that A2U participants all attained the expected standard at KS2, so it doesn’t include

the significant proportion of the cohort with SEND, for instance. However, if we take the current year 11 (who weren't involved in A2U) as a control group, we find that only a very small percentage are at the expected standard. While we would expect their performance to improve by the summer (these pupils are all supported and Wolverhampton are usually above average in this area) it is likely to be significantly less than 72%.

5.6 Feedback from pupils and stakeholders is providing further evidence of the scheme's positive impact. Based on recent consultation with the whole A2U cohort:

- 86% of pupils felt that their attitude to learning had improved due to the programme
- More than half felt that their ability in English and maths had improved. 86% had noticed improvements in other subjects
- Students' confidence had also improved significantly. The vast majority intend to go on to university and 85% feel they're currently 'on track' for that (if pupils decide that HE probably isn't for them, we will keep supporting them toward another positive destination).

5.7 Improvements in children's attitudes and behaviour at home, as well as at school, are highlighted in feedback from this foster carer:

"She is more focussed... and more able to face challenges and tackle areas she struggles with... [she] is having fewer tantrums and seems to have matured in her approach to life."

5.8 Feedback from Designated Teachers has also highlighted how, while the level of engagement and success can vary for individual pupils, A2U is undoubtedly helping to raise aspirations:

S is really enjoying it, he looks forward to attending it. It has opened his eyes to what opportunities are out there. He definitely wants to go to university, and is motivated to do well... I is not as keen as S, however she has decided she wants to go into nursing and is aware she needs good grades to go into university. This will keep her focused and motivated to study.

6.0 Personal Education Plans

6.1 It is a statutory requirement of local authorities to ensure that all children and young people in care have a quality, up-to-date Personal Education Plan (PEP). However, the quality of PEPs is frequently uneven and sometimes poor. This is a reality often highlighted by Ofsted.

6.2 To help to address this, the Corporate Parenting and Education Team audit PEPs for quality. Approximately 50 PEPs are being audited each month. Different children are audited each time, so that all will have had at least one PEP audited by the end of the year. Individual audit results are sent to social workers and Designated Teachers for their

information and guidance. The Virtual School Head provides a termly summary report for the attention on senior managers.

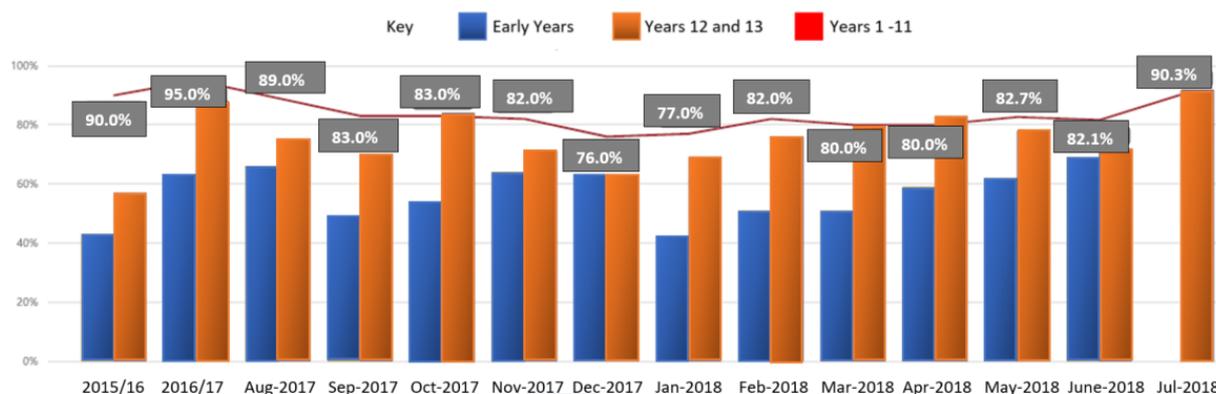
6.3 A recent audit of 100 PEPs that were completed between November 2017 and July 2018 revealed a slight improvement in quality, when compared with summer 2017:

- 74% were either good or outstanding (compared to 73% in 2017)
- 63% had SMART targets (compared to 50% in 2017)
- The 2017 audits showed clear improvements on previous years, so PEP quality shows a slow upward curve
- However, while far more PEPs are being rated as good, fewer were judged as outstanding (6%) when compared to summer 2017 (12%). Therefore, more work needs to be done to make PEPs more aspirational in quality.
- It should be noted that some of the PEPs in the most recent audit were completed on the old paper format. All of the PEPs on subsequent audits should be electronic and therefore we would expect a clearer improvement in quality

6.4 In 2017-2018 The VSH introduced a new electronic PEP form on the Eclipse system, which will eventually replace Carefirst as our information management system for children's safeguarding.

6.5 We have experienced challenges in ensuring that all social workers and Designated Teachers have access to the new PEP form, and are fluent in its use, due to factors such as frequent staffing changes and the availability of mobile internet access. As a result, a minority of PEPs have been completed using the old WORD (paper) format during 2017-2018, which has made it difficult to accurately evidence the impact of the new system on PEP quality. However, it is expected that a true comparison with PEPs of previous years will be possible by the autumn term 2018.

6.6 Anecdotally, we have seen the quality of PEPs generally improving through the introduction of the new PEP and completion rates remain high, as illustrated in the graph below:



7.0 The Pupil Premium Plus

7.1 The Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) is the funding allocated to local authorities, and managed by the VSH, to support improvements in the educational attainment of children and young people in care. Like most local authorities, Wolverhampton allocates most of the grant to schools and also 'top-slices' a portion for specific projects and resources to address identified priorities such as, for example:

- Aspire2Uni
- Beanstalk Volunteer Reading Help (reading support for pupils at KS1/2)
- Training of Designated Teachers
- Britannica School - an interactive, online version of the Encyclopaedia Britannica which we provide to facilitate safe, effective study support at home. Carers receive training in the use of the resource and it is also provided to our adoptive parents
- Assistant EP support to raise attainment at KS4
- to support pupils with higher levels of need.

7.2 In 2018- 2019, PP+ increased from £1,900 to £2,300 per pupil, per annum, giving a total allocation of £1,221,300 for Wolverhampton. However, increasing budgetary pressures have meant that a portion of the grant is now also being utilised to fund several posts within the Virtual School team. Schools, therefore, continue to receive a total of £1,800 per annum for each Wolverhampton children and young people in care on their roll (the same basic allocation as 2017-2018).

7.3 The above spend is equal to the total amount of grant allocated in 2018-2019 (£1,221,300 PP+, plus £30,000.00 funding for 'previously looked after children'²). Any unspent grant must be returned to the DfE at the end of each financial year. As a result, several local authorities have had to return unspent grant to the DfE in the past. However, this has never happened in Wolverhampton Virtual School, as the funding is efficiently and successfully managed throughout the year.

8.0 School Attendance

8.1 The average school attendance of Wolverhampton children and young people in care in years 1-11 in 2017-2018 is outlined in the table below:

In city	93.23%
OOC	95.07%
Combined	94.15%

² This additional funding is allocated by the DfE, in 3 instalments, to support the additional responsibilities on the Virtual School Head, under the Children and Social care Act 2018, to support the education of children who have left care via an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order. This responsibility came into force in September 2018 and entails the provision of information and advice, rather than the same level of direct responsibility as for children and young people in care.

- 8.2 These percentages are slightly lower than the previous year. However, the difference (approximately 2%) is not statistically significant. The vast majority of pupils in the cohort attend school very well (the overall attendance percentage is reduced by a small minority of pupils with persistent absence).
- 8.3 The percentage of pupils with persistent absence are detailed in the table below:

Wolverhampton LAC with < 85% attendance for the 2017/2018 academic year

	No with < 90% attendance	Total no of students	percentage with < 90% attendance	No with < 90% attendance	Total no of students	percentage with < 90% attendance	No with < 90% attendance	Total no of students	percentage with < 90% attendance
Autumn	17	229	7.42%	# 236	7.62%	35	465	7.74%	
Spring	33	230	14.34%	# 233	9.44%	55	463	11.87%	
Summer	30	235	12.76%	# 229	11.35%	56	464	12.06%	
	In City			Out of City			Combined		
	Rolling % 11.53%			Rolling % 9.46%			Rolling % 10.49%		

- 8.4 The overall percentage of persistent absentees is in line with the national average for Children and Young People in Care (2017) which is 10%. The percentage for the OOC cohort is slightly higher than for in-city pupils, which is in contrast to the discrepancy in attainment (see Attainment and Progress below).
- 8.5 The vast majority of persistent absentees also had particularly complex needs, especially in terms of SEMH (social, behavioural and mental health) difficulties. They have often experienced disruptions to their schooling due to such issues, and disruptions were linked, in some cases, to emergency changes in care placement.
- 8.6 The Virtual School will continue to work proactively with schools and other partners, to help them to support the attendance and engagement of pupils with complex needs. Access to alternative provision is made available without delay in Wolverhampton, when it is required. We also work closely with School Admissions, and with schools and admissions and teams in other local authorities where looked after children are placed outside Wolverhampton, to ensure that appropriate school places are secured as quickly as possible.

8.7 An issue which can potentially impact on overall attendance is the frequency with which foster carers request to take children and young people in care on holidays during school term time. While we only agree to such requests in exceptional circumstances, and in agreement with the child's school, there may be such occasions where a term-time holiday may be granted in the interests of the child; for example, where there are clear educational or therapeutic benefits.

9.0 Inclusion

9.1 There were 86 recorded temporary exclusions for children and young people in care in Wolverhampton schools in 2017-2018. This is 2% higher than 2016-2017. While 2% is not statistically significant, exclusions will continue to be monitored and challenged very strongly throughout 2018-2019 to ensure that this does not become a consistent downturn.

9.2 However, slightly fewer children in the above cohort are being excluded than in the previous year - 29 experienced one or more temporary exclusion, compared to 34 in 2016-2017.

9.3 Complete exclusions data for children and young people in care who are educated outside Wolverhampton is available for the first time in 2018, due to Welfare Call monitoring performance in this area. For the out-of-City cohort, the picture is similar: 32 children experienced one or more temporary exclusion in 2017-2018, with a total of 82 exclusions.

9.4 The most frequent reasons for temporary exclusion are persistent disruption and verbal abuse or threat to an adult, which reflects the high level of social, emotional / mental health and behavioural difficulties within the cohort. A breakdown of the reasons for temporary exclusions of children and young people in care in Wolverhampton schools is illustrated in the table below:

No of Exclusions	no of children	no of days	Reasons	no of exclusions
86	29	203		
			Damage	8
			Drug/alcohol related	1
			Other	4
			Persistent disruption	21
			Physical assault against a pupil	9
			Physical assault against an adult	10

No of Exclusions	no of children	no of days	Reasons	no of exclusions
			Verbal abuse/threat to adult	25
			Verbal abuse/threat to pupil	8

9.5 One pupil was permanently excluded in 2017-2018. A significant number of exclusions, and potential exclusions, are avoided through the support and challenge that the Virtual School team and its partners offer to schools, with permanent exclusions being extremely rare for the cohort (one or two per annum).

9.6 At June 2018, eight pupils in the cohort had an education offer of less than 25 hours. The pupils with less than 25 hours all had complex needs which had resulted in instability of education provision and, in most cases, multiple changes of care placement. In such cases, home tuition and other tailored packages of support are arranged in as timely a manner as possible. All pupils without a full-time offer have an action plan detailing how their provision will be extended toward 25 hours, overseen by the Virtual School.

10.0 School Transition and Stability

10.1 Research shows that children and young people in care who changed school in Years 10 or 11 scored over five grades less than those who did not³. The Virtual School works closely with social workers, schools and carers to maintain existing school placements, wherever possible and appropriate. If a change of school is the best option, then we help to ensure a successful transition and support good, joined-up working with all key partners.

10.2 Social workers are expected to consult the Virtual School Head prior to any change of school for a child in care, so that advice can be given as to the suitability of any potential school placement. This requirement is highlighted in the PEP training that is provided to all social workers and Designated Teachers, as well as in our internal policies and Model School Policy. and other guidance. We provide direct support for children and young people in care if they do have to move schools, ensuring a successful transition through mentoring, in-class support, and close partnership working with all key agencies.

10.3 The transition from primary to secondary school can be particularly difficult for many children and young people in care. The Virtual School ensure that all children and young people in care are supported with a successful transition through 1:1 meetings with year 6 children and young people in care and their teachers, and follow-up meetings in the

³ http://reescentre.education.ox.ac.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/EducationalProgressLookedAfterChildrenKeyMessages_Nov2015.pdf

new Secondary school before and after secondary induction sessions. We also help to ensure that children are given their preferred choice of secondary school. If we feel that their preferred choice is not actually the best available school to meet their needs, we will provide advice and support accordingly. Out-of-city pupils are given additional information and support by a dedicated Education Support Officer.

11.0 Attainment and Progress

11.1 The data below outlines the academic performance of children and young people in care in 2018, both those educated in Wolverhampton schools and out-of-city in standard assessments.

11.2 Only children who have been in care for 12 months+ at 1 April 2018 (or 'eligible' children) are included. All 2018 outcomes are currently provisional.

11.3 EYFS attainment – 10 pupils

Subject	Wolverhampton Children and Young People in Care achieving age-related expectation (ARE)	All Wolverhampton pupils 2018
Reading	7 pupils - 70%	74%
Writing	7 pupils - 70%	71%
Maths (Number)	7 pupils - 70%	76%
Good level of development (GLD) in all areas	7 pupils - 70% (38%)	69%

11.4 Outcomes at EYFS have improved in 2018 when compared with all previous years and are in line with the outcomes for Wolverhampton pupils generally.

11.5 Year 1 phonics – pupils achieving age-related expectation in tests

Wolverhampton Children and Young People in Care	OOO Children and Young People in Care	All Children and Young People in Care	All Wolverhampton pupils 2018
7/10 pupils - 70%	6/10 pupils – 60%	13/20 – 65%	81%

11.6 Outcomes in the year 1 phonics test are strong for children and young people in care and equal to 2017, with a 9% gap between Children and Young People in Care and all Wolverhampton pupils.

11.7 KS1 attainment – pupils attaining expected standard

Cohort	Maths	Reading	Writing	math/read/writ
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In-city Children and Young People in Care (11 pupils)	6 – 55%	7 – 64%	5 – 45%	4/11 – 36%
OOO Children and Young People in Care (9 pupils)	4 – 44%	3 – 33%	1 – 11%	1 – 11%
All Children and Young People in Care (20 pupils)	10 – 55%	10 – 50%	6 – 30%	5 – 25%
All Wolverhampton pupils	75%	74%	70%	65%

11.8 KS2 attainment – pupils attaining expected standard

Cohort	Maths	Reading	Writing	GPS	math/read/writ
In-city Children and Young People in Care (24 pupils)	9 – 38%	14 – 58%	15 – 63%	12 – 50%	8 – 33%
OOO Children and Young People in Care (17 pupils)	7 – 41%	6 – 35%	4 – 24%	8 – 47%	1 – 6%
All Children and Young People in Care (41 pupils)	16 – 39%	20 – 49%	19 – 46%	20 – 49%	9 – 22%
All Wolverhampton pupils	75%	74%	80%	78%	64%

11.9 KS2 Progress – Wolverhampton Children and Young People in Care

Subject	Average progress score	National Children and Young People in Care average progress 2017	All Wolverhampton pupils progress 2018
Reading	0.164	-0.7	0.9
Writing	0.45	-0.9	1.2
Maths	-4.33	-1.1	0.5

Subject	% making average or better progress	National Children and Young People in Care average % 2017	All Wolverhampton pupils % 2018
Reading	63	46	56.4
Writing	67	50	62.5
Maths	33	47	53
Reading, writing and maths	58		

11.10 KS4 attainment – pupils achieving grade 4+ in maths and English

Cohort	Maths	English	Maths and English
In-city Children and Young People in Care (19 pupils)	5- 26%	7 – 37%	5 – 26%
OOO Children and Young People in Care (19 pupils)	4 – 21%	7 – 37%	2 – 11%
All Children and Young People in Care (38 pupils)	9 – 24%	14 – 37%	18.4%
National Children and Young People in Care average 2017			17.5%

- 11.11 The average **attainment 8** score for the in-city cohort was 18.47, while for the Out of City (OOO) cohort the average score was 16.48, giving a combined average score of 17.48. The average attainment 8 score for all Wolverhampton pupils (in state-funded schools) was 44.2.
- 11.12 The average **progress 8** score for our in-city cohort was -1.15, while for OOO pupils the average was -1.08. Zero represents average progress; therefore the further below zero the score, the weaker the score. This compares with a progress 8 average of 0.05 for all pupils in Wolverhampton (state-funded schools).
- 11.13 89% of children and young people in care achieved one or more GCSEs at grade one-nine (most of these achieved several GCSEs).
- 11.14 Outcomes for the whole cohort at KS1 – 4 are broadly in line with national and regional averages; while the in-city results are generally higher than children and young people in care averages, the OOO results are lower.
- 11.15 There is a noticeable attainment gap between in-city and OOO cohort at KS1-4. This is typically the case. However, the difference is generally greater than usual this year. KS2 maths is an exception to this, with OOO pupils performing better than in-city.

- 11.16 This difference appears to be due to the OOC cohort having particularly high levels of need and low prior attainment. For example, almost half of the OOC KS2 cohort had an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). This is very high considering that 27.07% of Wolverhampton children and young people in care currently have an EHCP (December 2018) and, nationally, 26.7% of children and young people in care had an EHCP in 2017 (Department for Education (DfE) 2017).
- 11.17 Progress data is arguably a better parameter for vulnerable children (in particular) than attainment. It should be noted that the majority of the OOC cohort in year two to six were reported as making good progress by their schools (considering their starting points, abilities etc) and received high levels of support throughout the year. A high percentage of children and young people in care have made good or better progress in reading and writing at KS2 – better than both national children and young people in care averages and all Wolverhampton pupils – though a lower percentage have achieved that benchmark in maths. It should also be noted that the above attainment gaps are smaller than the (2017) national attainment gap between children and young people in care and all pupils.
- 11.18 The performance of **children and young people in care with Education, Health and Care Plans** presents a varied picture when compared with their peers. 0 children and young people in care with EHCPs achieved GCSEs in English and/or maths at grade four or above in 2018 (compared with just over 5% of all pupils in Wolverhampton). However, children and young people in care with EHCPs achieved better outcomes than other pupils with EHCPs at Key Stage Two, as illustrated in the table below (the cohort includes such small numbers, however, that comparisons are not necessarily particularly meaningful):

Cohort	Maths	Reading	Writing	Math / Reading Writing
In-city with EHCP	1 – 25%	1 – 25%	2 - 50%	0 – 0%
OOO with EHCP	1 – 12.5%	2 – 25%	0 – 0%	0 – 0%
All Wolverhampton pupils with EHCP	7.8%	12.5%	15.6%	4.7%

- 11.19 We should also not overlook the many broader achievements of our remarkable children and young people in care. Many have worked extremely hard and achieved very well, in relation to their starting point and previous outcomes. Several pupils achieved the expected attainment in one of the core subjects, for example, but narrowly missed out on the other, as well as making great strides and achievements in other areas.

12.0 Post-16 outcomes

12.1 Educational outcomes for the 26 young people in the cohort in year 13 (aged 18) who were completing, or expected to complete, an accredited qualification in 2018 as illustrated in the table below:

Entry level	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Total achieved qualifications
1 (Entry 2)	3	3	8	3	18 (69%)

12.2 12 young people in the post-16 cohort started university courses in 2018. Wolverhampton now has 26 care leavers in higher education (HE). This is an excellent number compared to national and regional averages (nationally, only 6% of care leavers progress to higher education (HE) which has continually improved over the past 5 years.

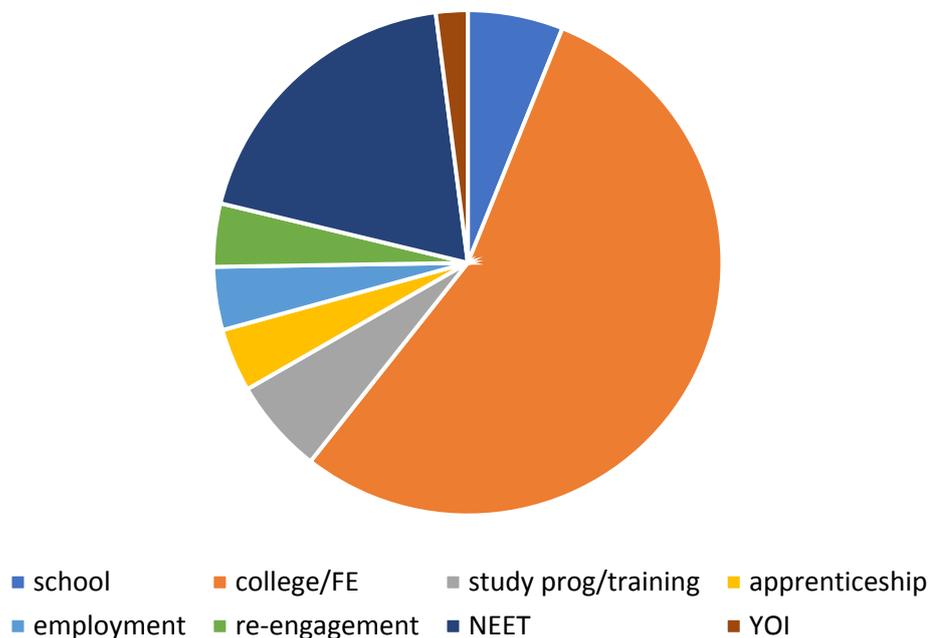
12.3 At July 2018, the percentage of children and young people in care and care leavers in Education, Employment and Training (EET) is illustrated in the table below (NALM refers to young people who are Not Available to the Labour Market – due to illness or disability, pregnancy, custody or other reasons):

	Pass	Fail	%
In EET including NALM	125	175	62.5%
In EET excluding NALM	116	39	74.84%

12.4 The above data places Wolverhampton above national and regional averages for the cohort. The majority of the young people who in EET are in full-time further education.

12.5 Connexions monitor and support the EET status of care experienced young people aged 16-18 who are living / educated in Wolverhampton. Data supplied by Connexions in Autumn 2018 shows that, of this smaller cohort (99 young people), 81% are in education, employment or training, as illustrated in the chart below:

EET status of care-experienced young people in Wolverhampton aged 16-18



- 12.6 Support for young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) is delivered by the Virtual School and Transitions teams, in partnership with Connexions and Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) and led by the EET Coordinator, a post within the Transitions team which is supported and partly supervised by the Virtual Head.
- 12.7 An EET panel, introduced in 2017-2018 and consisting of representatives from the above agencies, meets monthly to consider all children and young people in care and leavers at 16+ who are NEET. The panel agrees SMART actions for each NEET young person and reviews the progress of all cases on a regular basis.
- 12.8 An EET Action Group, chaired by the Virtual School Head, also meets regularly and promotes improved EET opportunities and support for children and young people in care and leavers on a more strategic level. In 2017-2018 the group has created and supported several work placements and apprenticeships, ensured that key resources such as Workbox are promoted to care leavers, facilitated improved joined-up working and provided training and advice to employers and training providers in meeting the needs of young people in the cohort. The group has also initiated consultation work with care leavers to identify any barriers to successful progression into EET. An enhanced apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programme are among the priorities identified for 2018-2019.
- 12.9 The national Care Leaver Covenant⁴, launched by the DfE in 2018, is being co-ordinated by Wolverhampton-based company Spectra First. The VSH and EET Action Group are

⁴ this is a commitment from organisations in the private and voluntary sector to provide support to young people aged 16-25 and help them live fulfilling independent lives after leaving care. See online at: <http://spectrafirst.com/>

working with Spectra to ensure that Wolverhampton's care leavers are at the forefront of any opportunities that are supported by the Covenant. One such opportunity is an initiative with Barclays Bank, to create a bespoke version of Barclays Life Skills programme for care leavers. In summer 2018, the VSH worked with Spectra to provide advisory support to Barclays around the needs, strengths and circumstances of children and young people in care and care leavers in support of the planned programme.

13.0 Participation

- 13.1 Wolverhampton has an excellent Children in Care Council (CiCC) which benefits from close links with the Youth Council and with elected members. The CiCC is actively involved in Participation at a regional and national level, enabling our children and young people in care to act as a real force for change and the improvement of services.
- 13.2 The Virtual School Headteacher Report was shared with the Children in care Council in the autumn term 2017 and educational issues, such as the PEP process, are regularly discussed. The CiCC were pleased with the direction of the 2016-2017 report and have also received an early version of this report in November 2018. They expressed concern about the Lower attainment of young people educated outside Wolverhampton and the percentage in year 11 who achieved good GCSEs. These areas are addressed in the 2017-2018 Attainment Improvement Plan.
- 13.5 The new electronic PEP, which was launched in November 2017, and other participation tools such as MOMO (Mind of my Own) are also being used to enable the voice of children and young people to be better heard through electronic / online access.
- 13.6 Wolverhampton's annual Awards Ceremony for children and young people in care, *the I-Awards*, saw a large number of young people receive recognition for their successes throughout 2017-2018. The VSH was very proud to present the *Intellectual* award, for educational achievement, as part of the event. The Virtual School team take a lead role in the organisation and staffing of the ceremony.

14.0 Education of Young People in the Youth Justice System

- 14.1 The engagement of young offenders in education has been recognised as a challenge at a national and local level. Many young offenders experience an educational offer that is significantly less than 25 hours, due to a variety of personal and systemic challenges, including very high levels of SEND. Even when a full-time educational offer is in place, young offenders experience a number of barriers to engagement.
 - 14.2 In 2015-2016 it was recognised that educational engagement of young people in this cohort was poor in Wolverhampton, even in comparison with national and statistical neighbours. In 2016, the role of the Virtual School Head was therefore extended to support the Youth Offending Team (YOT), to improve partnerships with schools, challenge exclusions and promote educational attendance. The VSH is also a member of the YOT Management Board.
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- 14.3 To this end, the monthly YOT PNIFTED (pupils not in full-time education) meetings have continued to be strengthened with the active involvement of Educational Psychology, Special Educational Needs Statutory Assessment and Review Team (SENSTART), Behaviour and Attendance officers, the VSH and key external partners such as the KS4 PRU, Midpoint, as well as the HOS (Head of Service) for YOT. The panel facilitates action planning and close collaborative working between all partners to increase the levels of ETE engagement for the cohort.
- 14.4 These developments have supported a significant and sustained improvement in the educational engagement of young offenders, as highlighted below:
- At June 2018, 73% of school-aged (age 10-16) young offenders were engaged in full-time education. 60% of young offenders aged 16-18 were engaged full-time, giving a total figure for the whole YOT cohort of 66% full-time educational attendance.
 - For the period April 2017 to March 2018, the average full-time engagement level for the school-aged cohort was 71%. The engagement of the post-16 cohort was 52%, giving a total average for the period of 59%.
 - Prior to 2016, the average engagement level of the school-aged cohort was 56%, while post-16 engagement was historically lower still. Therefore, we have seen a significant and consistent improvement, particularly for the school-aged cohort.
- 14.5 The VSH has not been as actively involved with the post-16 version of the YOT EET panel (which also meets monthly) as the role has been largely related to school-aged children. However, it has been agreed with senior management that the VSH will regularly attend and support the post-16 panel also, from 2019 onward, to support further improvements in the educational provision and engagement of the older cohort.

15.0 Strategic and Partnership development

- 15.1 The Virtual Head has a statutory duty to strengthen the awareness of key professionals around the needs of children and young people in care, to build strong working partnerships, and to develop policy and procedure in this area. In pursuence of this, the VSH is involved in a combination of advisory and strategic work with all key agencies.
- 15.2 The Virtual School drives forward the local development of the 'Attachment Aware Schools' initiative, through which Virtual Heads promote attachment and trauma-informed practice in schools across the country. We have formed the ARC (Attachment Research Consortium), a national hub for the development of research and best practice in this field. Sir John Timpson is a key partner in the project and has commissioned new research in the field of attachment awareness through ARC.
- 15.3 In relation to this and other priorities, the Virtual School delivered the following training in 2017-2018:
- A termly Designated Teachers' Forum (average attendance is approximately 30) and two training sessions on the role of the Designated Teacher
 - One training day for Designated Teachers on attachment and trauma, and one day on attachment and trauma in teenagers (in partnership with the Educational Psychology Service)

- Four training sessions on supporting education for foster carers and two workshop on 'Emotion Coaching' for carers. 75 foster carers attended Virtual School training in total.
 - Three training sessions for School Governors – one the expansion of school's responsibilities to "previously looked-after" children and also (in Wolverhampton) young offenders, one on understanding challenging behaviour (aiming to reduce school exclusions) and another on the governor's role in promoting the achievement of Children and Young People in Care.
 - Two training sessions on the Personal Education Plan for newly-qualified social workers and regular training / briefings on the electronic PEP.
 - Various briefings to social care teams, including two mandatory training sessions for Children and Young People in Care teams on SEND and the SEND Code of Practice (in partnership with the SENSTART manager).
- 15.4 In September 2018, the Children and Social Work Act 2018 extended the role of the Virtual School Head and Designated Teacher (DT) for children and young people in care to include children who have left care via an Adoption, Special Guardianship Order or Child Arrangements Order. Although the statutory VSH role is limited to making information and advice available, this is a significant expansion to the DTs' role. This is now incorporated into Designated Teachers' training as well as being regularly discussed at the DT Forum.
- 15.5 Virtual School Heads (VSH) have continued ongoing work with Ofsted in 2017-2018, to strengthen inspectors' understanding of the needs of children and young people in care and so increase their focus on the cohort during school inspections. Termly meetings have been held and the West Midlands Ofsted team have a lead Her Majesty's Inspector for children and young people in care. Schools are also increasingly aware of their responsibilities and it is now possible for the VSH to be consulted by Ofsted as part of a school inspection.
- 15.6 The VSH contributed a section of advice (on effective use of the Pupil Premium Plus) to the revised statutory guidance on "Promoting the Education of Looked after and Previously Looked after Children" (DfE 2018).
- 15.7 The VSH helped to organise the fourth annual conference of the West Midlands Virtual Schools Network in the summer term 2018, delivering a workshop on the electronic PEP, and also ran a workshop on effective use of the Pupil Premium plus at the National SecEd Pupil Premium Conference in the summer term.
- 15.8 The VSH also held discussions with the educational leads in Youth Offending Teams in Durham and Milton Keynes, to research the improvements they had made in supporting young offenders with SEND (speech, language and communication difficulties in particular). This learning has contributed to the ongoing development of our assessments and support for this very vulnerable cohort.
- 15.9 The VSH was involved in ongoing work in 2017-2018, led by the Principal Educational Psychologist (EP), to reduce school exclusions across Wolverhampton schools, as well as a drive to create a more coherent and joined-up approach to SEMH (Social, Emotional

and Mental Health) support. The training that the Virtual School Team delivers is a key component of that support.

16.0 Conclusion and Next Steps

- 16.1 Once again, there is much to celebrate regarding the educational achievement of the children in our care. A very small percentage of Children and Young People in Care are attending schools which are rated as requiring improvement or inadequate by Ofsted. Attendance rates are generally high and a very small number are not accessing full-time education, while permanent exclusions for Children and Young People in Care are extremely rare. Attainment shows strength in several areas, with excellent improvement at early years. A high percentage of the post-16 cohort are in education, employment and training and a growing number of Care Leavers are attending university. There is evidence that the quality of PEPs is gradually improving.
- 16.2 Data from TMEs, Turnabout interventions and Aspire2Uni programme also shows a very positive picture of the value added by the Virtual School's direct work with children, in terms of their wider progress – e.g. confidence, resilience, general literacy / numeracy and emotional wellbeing.
- 16.3 The educational engagement of young people open to the Youth Offending Team has increased significantly in 2017-2018, with the highest school attendance for several years. Several potential school exclusions have been avoided and YOT officers are increasingly skilled in supporting young people with SEND, supported by the ongoing training and development work driven the Pupils Not In Full Time Education (PNIFTED) panel.
- 16.4 As always, there are areas for improvement and further development. Writing at Key Stage 1 is still a priority, for example, and there is still an unacceptable attainment gap at KS4 in particular, mirroring the historical and national picture. The discrepancy between in-City and out-of-City attainment is a cause for concern and, while there are clear reasons for that gap, the Virtual School Team will continue to strengthen our support for Children and Young People in Care who are educated outside Wolverhampton.
- 16.5 To reiterate, however, we should be very proud of the achievements of our Children and Young People in Care and other vulnerable learners. While some of those outcomes can be measured in terms of academic success, many have made great strides in their wider development and journeys toward independence. The Children and Young People in Care / YOT Attainment Improvement Plan outlines how the Virtual School and its partners will continue to promote high standards, challenge low expectations, and strive to improve the life chances of the most vulnerable children.