

Report title	Education, Employment and Training (EET) Update	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Beverley Momenabadi Children and Young People	
Wards affected	All wards	
Accountable director	Emma Bennett, Executive Director of Families	
Originating service	Children and Young People in Care	
Accountable employee	Helen Woodvine Tel 07900708268	EET Coordinator Helen.woodvine@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report has been considered by	Care Leavers' Independent Collective Children and Young People in Care Managers	15 February 2023 1 March 2023

Recommendation for action:

The Corporate Parenting Board is recommended to:

1. Receive the Education, Employment and Training (EET) Update report.

1.0 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the current performance and key developments to the support on offer to Children and Young People in Care (CYPiC), Care Leavers (CL) and vulnerable young people around Education, Employment and Training (EET) by the City of Wolverhampton Council.

2.0 Overview

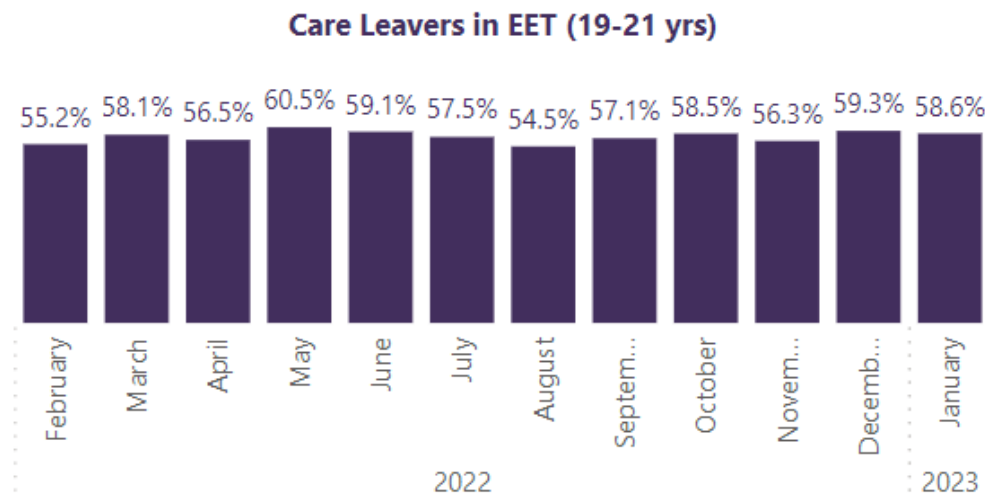
2.1 The service offers a range of EET opportunities and experiences that can assist young people to engage in activity that enhances and supports their journey to the labour market. Recognising that there are enhanced barriers to engagement not only due to the Covid pandemic but also consideration to being a Care Leaver or a child in care.

2.2 Some of the issues facing Children and Young People in Care and Care Leavers are:

- History and culture of low aspiration,
- Trauma and/or attachment-related difficulties and negative previous experiences,
- Disrupted education and high level of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND),
- Negative assumptions around children and young people in care and care leavers
- Financial issues – e.g., apprenticeships, traineeships and second chance learning (care leavers can access training/education up to level three), they do not have an equal financial incentive, therefore financial barriers come into play, considering travel, living costs, etc.

3.0 Background

3.1 For the last 12 months, EET figures (outlined below) have increased by 3.8% with reporting on the 1 February 2023 being 59% positively engaged in EET activity. Of the 19 – 21 cohort we have 26 young people who are NEET. They are currently being offered support from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), the EET Coordinator and the EET Advisor.



4.0 Current Positive outcomes for EET

4.1 The City of Wolverhampton Council have five apprenticeships opportunities for Children Young People in Care and Care Leavers in a variety of positions and levels. These are all within Children's Social Care:

- Corporate Parenting, two apprenticeships at Level 2,
- Participation, one apprenticeship at Level 2,
- Supported Accommodation, Housing Team, one apprenticeship at Level 3,
- Education Employment and Training, one apprenticeship at Level 3.

4.2 The Apprenticeship Recruitment Process is Council-wide, and now includes Care Leaver Support that allows Care Leavers and CYPiC to access and apply for apprenticeship vacancies at the internal stage.

4.3 Work is ongoing to explore:

- More vocational roles within Parks and Gardens, Refuge, Facilities and Maintenance, Car Parks and Parking, Transport, and Catering Services.
- Alternative pathways into apprenticeships to allow care leavers the ability to access work experience or taster days to experience prior to applying.
- An increase in Level 2 apprenticeship opportunities and the ability to be able to study functional skills alongside the apprenticeship framework.
- Develop inclusive apprenticeship opportunities for our Children and Young People in Care and Care Leavers with Special Educational Needs and that have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

4.4 We currently have additional Care Leavers in post within apprenticeship opportunities with the Council including:

- Strengthening Families Service, one apprenticeship at Level 4 Children and Young Peoples Practitioner apprentice,
- Regeneration, Youth employment support team, one Level 3 Creative Content Assistant apprentice,
- Procurement, one Level 3 Procurement Assistant apprentice,
- Communications, one Level 3 Junior Content Producer apprentice.

4.5 Work continues by the EET Team to promote apprenticeship opportunities within the council to our Care Leavers and CYPiC.

4.6 There is one ring fenced opportunity for a Care Leaver on the City of Wolverhampton's National Government Degree Programme (NGDP). This is currently being undertaken by one Care Leaver.

- 4.7 The [Civil Service Internship Scheme](#) is a flagship scheme that gives Care Leavers a chance to benefit from a 12 month paid internship in a central Government department, with the possibility of the post being made permanent at the end of the 12 months
- 4.8 We have a Care Leaver who has successfully been appointed for a position within HM Courts and Tribunals Service and is due to start her employment on the 6 March 2023.
- 4.9 The EET Panel now runs bimonthly and has recorded a 61% success rate for supporting young people's engagement into EET activity. There are additional panels over the summer months to allow for those at risk of not being in EET (NEET) to be captured before the start of the next academic year.
- 4.10 As of September 2022, the City of Wolverhampton Council has 25 Care Leavers attending Higher Education (HE) with a further three taking a break from studies for a year. The number of Care Leavers accessing university has increased year on year as you can see below, with a dip for the COVID year intake of 2020 - 2021.

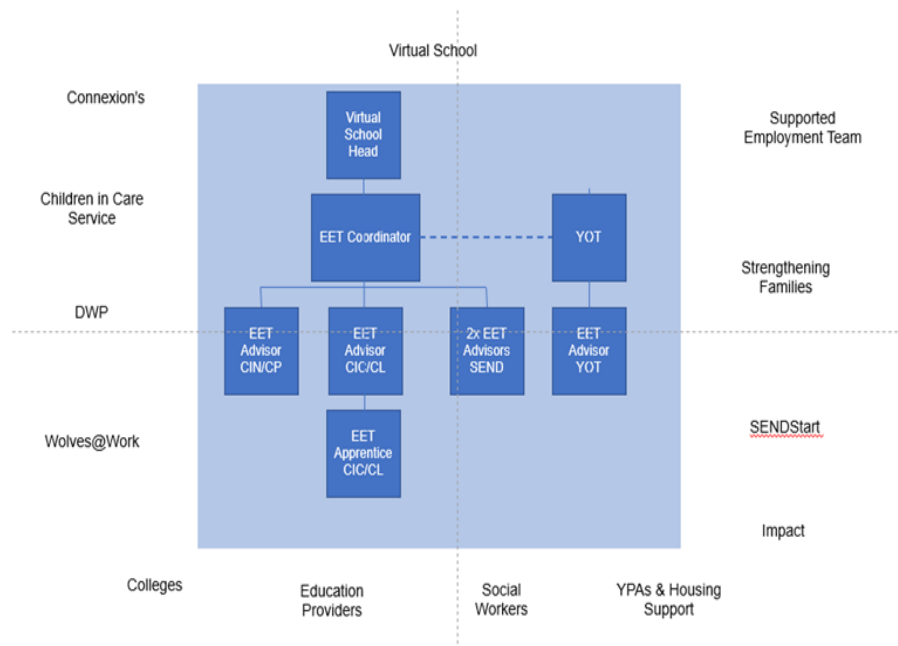
Academic Year	Number of new starters each year
2013 - 2014	2
2014 - 2015	3
2015 - 2016	8
2016 - 2017	9
2017 - 2018	8
2018 - 2019	10
2019 - 2020	11
2020 - 2021 (COVID)	5
2021 - 2022	11
2022 - 2023	8

- 4.11 The City of Wolverhampton graduates of 2022 - 2023., who have worked extremely hard and showed resilience not only through their studies, but also through the COVID pandemic with heavily disrupted learning, have achieved the following:

University	Classification
Harper Adams	2.1 BSC Hons Bio veterinary Science
Coventry	2.1 BSC Hons Bio medical Science
Wolverhampton	2.2 BA Hons Social Care, Criminology and Criminal justice
Lincoln	3 rd class with honours BA Hons Music
Wolverhampton	2.1 BSC Hons Psychology
Heart of Worcester	2.2 BA Hons Game Design and Digital Media
Sheffield	2.1 BA Hons Social Care and Criminology
Worcester	2.1 BA Hons Primary Education
Wolverhampton	2.1 BSC Hons Psychology and Counselling

- 4.12 We continue to support our Care Leavers in Higher Education with a bursary, support with accommodation costs, equipment and two academic reviews a year to support their wellbeing and academic studies. They are also given access to the Ask Jan app for additional wellbeing support.
- 4.13 The EET Drop-in continues to run every Thursday from 1.00 to 6.00 pm and is supported by the EET Coordinator and the EET Advisor to support young people who want to access Information Advice and Guidance and support with all aspects of employment, education, and training needs. The DWP also support the Drop-in monthly with the attendance of our Care Leaver designated contact.
- 4.14 The EET Advisor supports all young people that are to be released from custody prior to release and attends their last release meeting to support and plan for post release to offer advice and guidance around education employment and training and opportunities that are available to them.
- 4.15 The Positive Change programme is written and ready for delivery. The programme will target a small group of NEET young people with barriers to EET from the 19 – 21 cohort. We are currently looking to deliver elements of this to a younger age group of 17- and 18-year-olds. The programme will be delivered by the EET Coordinator and the EET Advisor with the support of external and internal agencies. This will be a 15-week programme to explore barriers to EET and offer enhanced support for care leavers to engage in a variety of EET activity:
- Exploration – Skills assessments, research, labour market information, strengths, transferable skills, CV's and covering letters
 - Step up – Visits to employers, training providers other support mechanisms (Job change, A2B, Youth Hub, DWP, college AES,) individual tasks to prepare for EET - applications, interviews, and next steps
 - EET – Taster sessions, increase in hours and days, work experience, weekly check ins, how to sustain EET and support mechanisms.
- 4.16 The relaunch of EET Strategic Group will occur to drive and monitor the EET action plan, enabling collaborative working between stakeholders and aligned with the Corporate Parenting Plan.
- 4.17 In June 2022, a proposal was agreed by Families Senior Leadership Team to provide additional EET support to our most vulnerable children and young people in the City to support their transition into Employment, Education and Training. This supports one of the key aims of in Our City, Our Plan to ensure there more local people in good jobs and training.
- 4.18 It was recognised that, while young people open to the Youth Offending Team (YOT) and Children in Care and Care Leavers already receive additional support and are monitored and tracked to ensure they stay on track to achieve positive EET outcomes, some other vulnerable groups still lack that bespoke support and coordination.

4.19 It was agreed, therefore, to increase the capacity sitting underneath the Education, Employment, Training (EET) Coordinator role to create two SEND EET Advisors and one EET Advisor for children who are, or have been subject to, Child in Need or Child Protection planning. The advisors will track young people through the vulnerability matrix and identify young people who need more targeted support. Becoming part of the Virtual School Team, they will work closely with School Improvement Advisor for children with a social worker, Connexions, schools and other key partners.



4.20 Work Experience for CYPiC and Care Leavers is now available to over 18s and is managed by the Organisational Development Team.

4.21 During Care Leavers week we showcased an EET event at the Civic Centre, an event to promote opportunities to Care Leavers attended by 25 providers including training providers, DWP, employers, volunteering, and internal apprenticeship support.

4.22 We have met with Employability UK and they are able to offer our CYPiC and Care Leavers a suite of four sessions to be delivered to a group of young people either face to face or in a hybrid approach to support their personal development. Employability UK supported John Lewis in their campaign for Care Leavers' support. The programme is supported by volunteers from business. We are looking to bring a group of NEET young people together to access this provision.

4.23 The programme is called Journey to Success:

- A to Z of confidence
- Be the Best You
- Vision board and guest motivational speaker
- Presentation and discussion

4.24 We have been in discussion with four organisations to promote new external opportunities for Care Leavers and have secured a commitment from the following organisations to offer work experience, volunteering opportunities and development of either apprenticeship or employment opportunities to be made available with a priority interview being given to CYPiC and Care Leavers:

- The Little Dessert Shop
- Eurofit
- The Haven Wolverhampton
- Hub for Grub – Volunteering opportunity
- Progress Care
- Collins Aerospace
- Eurovia

This work is still in progress.

5.0 Financial implications

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.
[JG/22022023/U]

6.0 Legal implications

6.1 The publishing of a Local Offer for Care Leavers is a legal requirement as set out in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 to improve support for looked after children in England and Wales, especially for those leaving care.
[SB/2102/2023/K]

7.0 Equalities implications

7.1 Outcomes for Children in Care and Care leavers as a result of their pre-care and in care experience are poorer than their peers. Unfortunately, sometimes being in care can have a negative impact on children's education as frequent placement and school moves will all impact on a child's confidence and ability to learn.

7.2 Traumatic experiences before entry into care can also cause difficulties, which may affect a child's behaviour, self-esteem, self-regulation, or trust in authority figures. This experience means that nationally compared to the general population care leavers are (DoE, Published 12 August 2019):

- less likely to be in education, employment, or training - over a third of 19-year-old care leavers are not in education, employment, or training.
- more likely to be attempting to live independently - some are unable to remain in their placements beyond the age of 18. They are therefore likely to experience compressed and accelerated transitions to independence.
- Impact of childhood trauma means they are more likely to suffer with issue relating to emotional health and wellbeing.

- more likely to have a criminal conviction and may have experienced unnecessary criminalisation. Care leavers are estimated to represent between 24% and 27% of the adult prison population.

7.3 The support provided by the EET Team is to help mitigate against the negative impact of being in or leaving care and the inequality they can face in society.