



**Promoting the Educational Achievement of  
Children and Young People  
Final Draft Headteacher Report  
(Awaiting SFR validated data)**

**2017-18 outcomes  
Self-evaluation 2017-18  
Improvement Priorities 2018-19**

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# **Kirklees Virtual School – Position Statement September 2018**

The role of the Virtual School is clearly defined in *Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children statutory guidance for local authorities February 2018*.

Kirklees Virtual School currently works with all young people in the care of Kirklees from the age of 3 through to age 18 when they become care leavers. This is delivered by an EYFS / primary team and a secondary / Post 16 team. The work with Year 13 has been implemented in September 2018 for the first time, taking through the Year 12 cohort from 2017-18.

## **Context 2017-18**

On 25 November 2016 Kirklees was subject to an inspection by Ofsted using the Single Inspection Framework and was judged to be inadequate. There were positive comments about the work of the Virtual School, recognising that young people were well supported to meet their educational needs. There was a clear message that the Virtual School was well lead and well managed and focusing on the right areas to improve both the attainment and progress of our children and young people in care in Kirklees. During the time following this inspection there was a time of turbulence and whilst we recognise that there now exists much greater stability in leadership and staffing we recognise that we are still on an improvement journey. We recognise that a legacy exists for our young people that will continue to have an impact moving forwards and we will continue to try to address impacts on education.

The instability experienced by our children and young people in care in terms of placement and educational stability, and changes in social workers, has impacted on our ability to work to ensure good educational progress for all our young people, though we have strived to do so. This has resulted in the headline educational outcomes for our children and young people in care that are in line, or slightly below the national outcomes for LAC and we appreciate that there is still work to be done. Whilst we can clearly explain the reasons why this is the case we will continue to put interventions in place to give children and young people in care the best educational opportunities possible.

## **Self-evaluation 2017-18**

The Virtual School Team support and challenge schools and other professionals to enrich the learning experience of our children and young people in care by striving to close the achievement gap through targeted support and intervention when needed. These key areas of work include:-

- Being proactive in supporting Social Workers with school applications (where a school move is unavoidable) and supporting the transition into the new educational placement.
- Leading and coordinating all initial Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings when a young person comes into care – or has turned 3 – to ensure that as much support is in place as soon as possible within their school or educational placement.
- Allocating all young people to an Achievement Coordinator or Teacher, who will be responsible for monitoring and tracking their cohort.
- Reviewing attainment and progress data on a termly basis to identify level of need and intervention and using this data to plan our support.

- Attending PEP Review Meetings according to need and liaising closely with Social Workers and Designated Teachers in these cases.
- Providing advice and guidance to Designated Teachers and coordinating individualised targets and support for our young people to accelerate their progress in education. These are funded through Pupil Premium Plus and their impact are reviewed as part of the PEP process.
- Commissioning work across services to prioritise work for our young people with the Educational Psychology Service, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Assessment and Commissioning Team (SENDACT) and the Early Years Outcomes Team.
- Strengthening partnership working with senior managers in Social Care to ensure that education is central to any decision taken about our children and young people in care.
- Closely monitoring attendance and establishing plans to improve engagement
- Offering support, guidance and training to Foster Carers, Head Teachers, Designated Teachers, Social Workers and Independent Reviewing Officer's to enable them to work together to put education at the centre of all work with our young people.

# Kirklees Virtual School – self-evaluation of 2017-18 priorities

The Virtual School continues to grow and develop using a process of self-evaluation and reflection to identify the key priorities to move forwards.

There is an ongoing pressure within our work to balance the immediate need to be reactive to situations for our children and young people in care, with the balance of a more planned and proactive approach.

## ***Strategic priorities – Virtual School (Taken from the 2016-17 Head Teacher Report)***

RAG rating: 

Achieved	Ongoing	Not achieved
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We identified the following priorities for development for 2017-18:

- 1) Review and streamline the Virtual School data collection, analysis, monitoring and evaluation of impact - links to our intervention criteria:
  - To focus clearly on where we have most impact
  - To use this to refocus the deployment of the team to have most impact on outcomes
  - To identify target groups in a more proactive way, to start to redress the balance between reactive and proactive work

*This will focus on the use of:*

- prior attainment to target groups of pupils
- the attainment and progress across all key stages
- the reduction of the number of PA pupils
- the number of pupils receiving less than full time education
- the completion of initial PEPs

- 2) “Sharpen” the knowledge and understanding within the team to enable a greater challenge to schools, focusing on improving achievement:

- Training to develop clarity around how schools are reporting pupil attainment and progress, and changes and developments around the school curriculum and assessment
- Training about the support you would expect to see in schools to raise achievement, giving greater clarity to – what should we challenge / question?

*This will focus on the appropriate curriculum pathways through to age 18.*

- 3) Post 16 implementation planning

- Ongoing monitoring of the Year 12 and 13 cohorts as for 2016-17
- Work with Year 11 for Post 16 transition and settling in to placements – expect around a 30% change
- All young people should be attending a provision
- All young people should have a PEP this term

*This should enable all pupils to progress post 18 on an appropriate pathway and improve over time the Education, Employment and Training (EET) figures to 25.*

## ***Strategic priorities – cross service***

To work with colleagues in Social Care to:

### ***Robustly address the high rate of care leavers who are not in EET (Ofsted point 24)***

- To address large numbers of care leavers who are NEET, drawing in schools, colleges
- 55% of care leavers (currently 45%) will be in EET in line with the national average by December 2017
- The Virtual School will offer support to young people aged 16-18 to access employment and training by September 2017

To work together across services to increase the stability for our Young People (YP):

- Strategic work to reduce the number of school, placement and Social Worker changes. We will work closely across service to ensure that school moves are only considered when absolutely essential and that we start from the premise that a young person should remain in their current school.
- Commissioning and funding out of area placements where education needs are complex. We have agreed a process for all educational placement changes and need to ensure that educational provision is considered at the earliest stage in planning and is integral to all decisions taken.
- To reduce the number of pupils spending a period of time not in full time education by ensuring that moves are planned and pupils are able to move immediately into their new educational setting without spending time out of education.

Role of the VS for adopted children – awaiting statutory guidance

- Working strategically with the Regional Adoption Group
- Ensuring the Virtual School has sufficient resources to address this work

## **Kirklees Virtual School – Evidence of impact 2017-18**

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) cohort tracking data is in place for the first time to enable prioritisation of resources.
- 93% of all children and young people in care accessing free early education are placed with a provider judged 'Good' or 'Outstanding'.
- All children and young people in care have a PEP from aged 3 until the end of Year 12; these are needs assessed and of good quality – signed off by the Virtual School Headteacher to ensure this quality and consistency.
- All young people in care in Year 12 have a PEP for the first time – valued as many are asking for this to continue post 18.
- The percentage of KS1 pupils reaching expected or higher standard for Reading, Writing and Maths (RWM) combined is above the national average for children and young people in care in 2018 (compared to national for 2017) and is in line or slightly below for other key indicators.
- The monitoring of attendance by the Virtual School is strong and concerns are addressed promptly. Overall attendance was 92.52% for 2017-18 (92.97% in 2016-17) and the number of PA (with attendance less than 90%) students was reduced from 72 in 2016-17 to 62 in 2017-18 (despite an issue with PA pupils in Year 11).
- There has been no permanent exclusion of a child and young person in care for a number of years. This is testament to the collaborative approach to supporting those with challenging behaviour and the access to effective support services that ensure those pupils at risk of exclusion receive appropriate intervention.
- The electronic PEP system enables the Virtual School to monitor the completion and quality of PEPs and allows for systematic application, authorisation and monitoring of Pupil Premium Plus funding for individual pupils. All Designated Teachers (DTs), Social Workers and Independent Reviewing Officers have access to this system and can contribute to the PEP process. This process is used to challenge schools to support pupils' individual needs and is currently quality assured by the Virtual School Headteacher who signs off all PEPs. All previous targets have to be reviewed in terms of impact before further targets are set.
- The Virtual School Team Manager oversees school changes and makes sure the new school is 'good' and will meet the curriculum needs for the young person. In July 2018, 79.73% of children and young people in care were attending good or outstanding schools. We have a clear understanding of the 20.27% who are attending education provisions judged as requires improvement / inadequate at the last Ofsted visit.
- The LAC Education Panel, attended by the Virtual School, SENDACT and a Service Manager from the Looked After Children's and Care Leavers Service, meets every 3 weeks to monitor and to discuss strategies for those pupils receiving under 25 hours of education. This has reduced the number of pupils spending a period of time not in full time education to 46 in 2017-18 from 67 in 2016-17. Any particular complex educational issues for our children and young people in care are also raised with the Panel.
- We work closely with other agencies at all times and this can be clearly evidenced in the PEPs.
- We have commissioned multi-agency support working across the Education Psychology Service, and the Children's Emotional Wellbeing Service (ChEWS) and have additional capacity in SENDACT. Impact clearly evidenced in appendices.
- The DTs and support staff received extensive attachment training in the education provision through the EP Services, who offer follow up bespoke whole school sessions. The feedback has been very positive.

## **Kirklees Virtual School – Key Challenges 2017-18**

- Organisational change and the impact on partnership working has continued to be a challenge in 2017-18. However, this started to improve during the year following the Partnership with Leeds City Council and the recruitment of managers, leading to more stability in the workforce.
- Development of the Virtual School to ensure that all children and young people in care requiring intervention were identified and appropriate support and challenge offered.
- An increase in cohort over the years, from 455 in July 2016, 481 in July 2017, to 508 in July 2018 (including Year 12 pupils).
- Stability of cohort – 99 pupils into care and 77 pupils leaving care
- Placement stability and the impact on school moves (8.4% of Looked After Children with 3 or more placement moves in 12 months – July 2018)
- School stability – 87 school moves outside of the natural transition process from Reception to Year 11
- The impact of instability on school attendance. There has been a reduction in the number of Persistent Absent students, however this is still a concern in Years 9, 10 and 11 – 56/62 are secondary pupils with 43/62 in Years 10 and 11.
- Care Leavers in Employment, Education and Training aged 19 to 21 years-old – 45.6% in July 2018
- PEP completion in 6 monthly timescale – 91.6% in July 2018
- Initial PEP completion in 20 working days – 41.3% in July 2018
- KS2 Reading and Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling (GPS) from the outcomes in 2015, 2016 and 2017 and the number of pupils disapplied, e.g. those exempt from accessing the National Curriculum due to special circumstances, or not sitting the SAT's.
- The variation in the ability and context of the cohort. For example, the 2017 and 2018 GCSE results appear to have fallen, however, this is better than expected in terms of prior attainment, the number of pupils with Education Health Care Plan's (EHCP) and the number of school moves.
- In the academic year 2017-18 there were 46 pupils spending a period of time not in full time education (compared to 67 in 2016-17). These pupils were supported individually to return to a full time provision that meets their needs.

## Priorities for 2018-19

We have identified the following priorities for 2018-19 and these are detailed in the appendices below:

- Ensuring all children and young people in care are in an education provision that is right for them
- Ensuring all children and young people in care have a high quality PEP, completed within timescales, that meets their needs

Further information is available in the following documents:-

- Partnership Plan to implement the new statutory guidance
- Kirklees Virtual School Priorities

### 1. Ensuring all children and young people in care are in an education provision that is right for them



In order to assess whether a young person is in the right provision we will need to ensure:

- Progress and attainment are at least in line with expectations (P1a)
- Attendance is good and exclusions are low (P1b) (*Ref Partnership Action Plan 1c*)
- Reduced timetables are only used in exceptional circumstances (P1c)
- Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) is used appropriately (P1d)
- There is a suitable pathway in place to ensure aspirational outcomes (P1e)
- Additional needs are identified and appropriate support secured (P1f) (*Ref Partnership Action Plan 1b*)



Where the agreed professional view is that a provision is not the right place for a young person we will need to ensure:

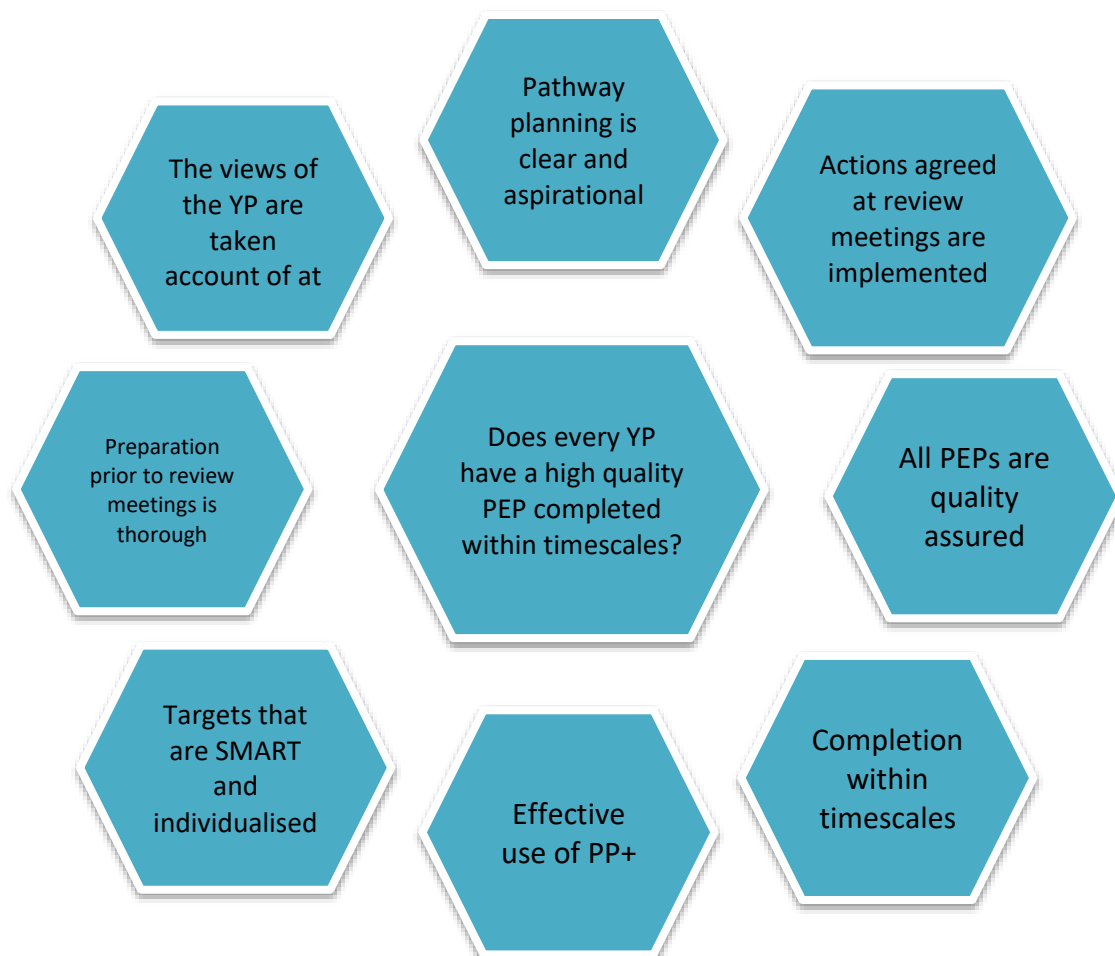
- Changes in provision are monitored and achieved without drift and delay (P1g) (*Ref Partnership Action Plan 1a*)

## Measuring Virtual School Impact

- All young people have an identified provision
- Reduction in the number of persistent absentees
- Reduction in the number of fixed term exclusions
- No permanent exclusions
- All learners making good academic progress
- Reduction in the number of learners with a less than full time offer
- PEP targets are effective with appropriate funding requests
- Increased Y12 participation
- Minimal drift and delay in securing provision where change is necessary

## 2. Ensuring all children and young people in care have a high quality PEP completed within timescales that meets their needs

### Key focus areas



In order to assess whether a PEP is of high quality we will need to ensure:

- Initial PEPs are completed within 10 working days and PEP reviews within 6 months (P2a) (*Ref Partnership Action Plan 2a and 2b*)
- Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) is used appropriately (P2b) (*Ref P1d*)
- Targets agreed at review meetings are relevant, achievable, measurable and regularly reviewed (P2c)
- In preparation for a PEP meeting all relevant information is available in ePEP and key issues / concerns are identified (P2d)
- Young people are consulted and invited to contribute to their PEP; their views are considered and taken into account (P2e)
- There is a clear progression pathway identified, taking account of the young persons' ability, hopes and aspirations (P2f)
- Any agreed actions are followed up and reviewed at subsequent meetings (P2g)
- All PEPs are quality assured and where necessary appropriate challenge is made and / or action is taken (P2h)

## **Measuring Virtual School Impact**

- A higher completion rate of Initial PEP's and PEP reviews within timescales
- Clear evidence that PP+ is used effectively
- Targets have clearly identified outcome / improvements and are RAG rated before new targets are set
- PEP's are submitted for sign off at the meeting as a result of good preparation
- Pupil views are clearly considered and taken into account during the PEP meeting
- There is a clear progression pathway identified, taking account of the young persons' ability, hopes and aspirations in all PEPs
- Agreed actions are clearly followed up and reviewed at subsequent PEP meetings
- All PEPs are quality assured and where necessary appropriate challenge is made and / or action is taken
- More PEPs signed off within 5 days of the meeting
- All PEP's have all appropriate sections completed