

Name of meeting:Corporate Parenting BoardDate:3.11.20Title of report:Virtual School Headteacher report 2019-2020

Purpose of report: To brief the Corporate Parenting Board on how the Virtual School has been working during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	No
Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's</u> Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	No
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Not applicable – for information
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Jo-Anne Sanders for Mel Meggs
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?	Not applicable
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?	Not applicable
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr V Kendrick (Children)

Electoral wards affected: None Ward councillors consulted: None

Public or private: Public

Have you considered GDPR? Yes GDPR considered no service users identified

1. Summary

Kirklees Virtual School – Position Statement

Context

Ofsted – June 2019

The effective virtual school has high aspirations for the progress and well-being of children in its care. The virtual school has developed increasingly purposeful links with schools and colleagues in social care to check pupils' progress and provide additional support. Personal education plans are thorough and clearly capture the views of children, young people and carers on the support they receive. The virtual headteacher has supported the creative use of additional funding to improve attendance, provide extra tuition and promote children's involvement in wider experiences. As a result, children in care have achieved outcomes that are largely in line with children in care nationally. Additional support for young people over the age of 16 is encouraging increasing numbers to remain in education, employment or training.

Context July 2020 following the Covid-19 lockdown period

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. (Appendix A – Virtual School Staffing Structure).

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.
- Providing the specialist educational challenge and support in 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 is 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.

As you can see from the above our role is crucial during this unprecedented time and it is very much "business as usual" for us even though the world feels to be a very different place.

The responsibility for a young person's education rests with their education provider. Our children and young people should currently be attending their education provision or there should be a Risk Assessment in place detailing how work appropriate for the individual young person is being set and monitored, and what support is being offered to them.

Our role is to support and challenge all providers to deliver education during this exceptional period with each individual young person at the centre of our approach.

These are some of the current areas of focus.

Contact and support for carers

- We have worked to create a centrally held email contact list for our Kirklees carers and have made initial contact with them, reminding them about the support we can offer and sharing our contact details.
- We have also provided carers with links to the DfE suggested resources for home education to enrich those being provided to them directly from school.
- This will enable us to give them access to specific sections in the electronic Personal Educational Plan (ePEP system) to support the completion of the learner view section (via the Squiddle module) prior to any PEP meetings.
- All children and young people have an allocated member of the Virtual School team providing a key contact for support.

Contact and support for children and young people.

- Our ePEP system allows us to support young people through the setting of targets, funding can be requested at any time and resources supplied for them by their school or education provider.
- Targets are being creatively set and managed to take account of the need to continue to support the education of those young people who are currently not accessing a provision based offer.
- Many of our young people already have the electronic devices and resources that they need at home.
- For others this has meant that we can get resources to them quickly in these difficult times, wherever they are in the country.
- Most young people already have digital devices for working at home, and we have issued an additional 104 since 30.03.20.
- A further 85 digital devices are also being issued through the fostering services team
- 42 young people have requested that they continue to access additional 1:1 tuition remotely.
- We have also approved a further 305 targets for other educational and emotional health and well-being support at home.
- We respond supportively to any request at this time and have a system that enables us to do this efficiently and effectively.

Young people not on a school roll or at risk of withdrawal of their offer

• We currently have 3 young people not on a school roll – we have contributed to Risk Assessments with the Social Worker as a priority for these young people.

- It is our role to ensure that there is work and resources available where possible.
- It is our role to work with other professionals to secure an education provision asap.

Risk Assessments

- Social Workers have been asked to coordinate and complete Risk Assessments for all young people who are not attending a provision and we have currently contributed to all requests.
- We have a particular focus on how the schools are "keeping in touch" and monitoring work offering challenge and support.
- In most cases the support offered by the Social Worker and School have been very positive
- We have flagged concerns that have been raised within risk assessments so that they can be resolved/monitored by the young persons allocated worker from Virtual School in partnership with social care and the educational providers
- However, this has also raised concerns where a school may have not had an appropriate educational offer for some of our young people and we have challenged the schools in these situations.
- We have taken the lead on securing brokerage provision where a risk assessment has identified that the young person's usual provision is closed, and alternative provision is needed to support placement stability

Attendance and monitoring overview

- We have developed an attendance and monitoring spreadsheet to keep and overview of the ever changing situation for our children and young people
- This has been coordinated across the service with input from the Virtual School, Social Work managers, Welfare Call and the Kirklees attendance data from schools.
- The information is collated, updated and circulated weekly across the service.
- On 20/07/20 239/446 (53.6%) school aged young people were attending their provision
- On 20/07/20 24/50 (48%) EY children (aged 2-3) were attending their provision
- We have been proactively working with Social Care to complete risk assessments for the young people who are working at home.
- There are particular challenges for the EYFS, Post-16 and Specialist provisions and we are working across service to support young people at an individual level.

Initial PEP's

- Since 20.03.20 (lockdown) there has been an increase of 56 children and young people coming into care, with a further 23 young people turning 3.
- Except for 2 young people we have been coordinating and conducting all initial PEP's (virtually) within the statutory timescales of 10 working days.
- These are particularly important during this period of lockdown to ensure that the young person and carers have access to all the support and resources they may need as soon as possible on entry to care.

Covid-19 PEP's and squiddle

- We have worked with eGOV (the ePEP system provider) and other Virtual Schools nationally to produce a Covid-19 PEP that enables relevant information to be collected during the PEP meeting for a young person who is attending their provision, or who is being educated at home.
- The Virtual School are coordinating all PEPs this term (some will be joint skype meetings but others may be a summary of individual conversations), to pull together all of the information for PEPs- this is in response to this exceptional situation as we do not usually attend all PEP meetings.
- We will ensure that there is at least one completed PEP for all our young people this term.
- The Squiddle module is also a new addition to the ePEP system, this is so that we are able to capture the views of our young people, even when they are being educated remotely at home.
- The questions for the young people to respond to have been tailored specifically to capture the young person's views in response to being educated in the current Covid-19 situation.

Prioritising PEP's for this term

- We have completed 666 PEP's during the summer term.
- We are currently prioritising PEP's as below:-
 - \circ $\;$ Initial PEP's For young people who are new into care
 - Children and young people not on a school roll
 - \circ $\;$ Young people who did not have a PEP last term
 - Transition planning / PEP's (including NEET)

School transition planning (to discuss during the PEP meeting)

- We now need to start thinking about how we can best support transition in these uncertain times and will work with the wider system locally, regionally and nationally to plan for this group of children.
- Transition planning is being looked at creatively and we are looking to ensure that all young people have an appropriate transition plan.
- It is our role to ensure that all information is transferred from one school / provider to another and that the necessary resources/support is in place when the young person starts.

Young people undergoing SENDACT Statutory Assessment

- This should be progressing under the usual timescales wherever possible and in line with Government advice and guidance .
- Our role is to highlight where this is not the case and work to move forwards without drift and delay.

Self-Evaluation Summary September 2020

Our Key Strengths	Our key areas for development	Actions we are taking to move forward
We are well-resourced and have an experienced and effective team who work with all young people to monitor their educational progress, therefore we know our young people well and their progress and attainment are reviewed at least termly so that we can intervene as appropriate.	Avoiding drift and delay when a young person needs a school move by early involvement in "stability meetings" and the placement search process.	 Close liaison between the achievement coordinators / SW when planning school moves LAC education panel to discuss and move forward key cases Offer to complete placement search proforma Contact with other VS for advice when a young person is placed in another local authority Input into placement protocol across service
We work well with other professionals including Social Workers (SW), Designated Teacher's, Carer's, Special Educational Needs Assessment and Commissioning Team (SENACT), Education Psychologist's (EP) to support and challenge others to provide the best for our young people. We have raised the profile of Personal Education Plans across service and completed initial PEP's in line with the new statutory timescales. We have robust systems and processes which provide accurate data linked to priorities and statutory duties.	Reducing the number of Persistent Absentee (PA) pupils / pupils Not in Full Time (NIFT) education	 All young people with attendance below 90% have a PA plan agreed by all professionals Regular monitoring and tracking of PA/NIFT pupils by team managers to focus where strategies are or are not having an impact Team training – use of welfare call analysis LAC education Panel and weekly sharing of data with SW managers and Independent Reviewing Officer's (IRO) to work in partnership to improve NIFT and PA.
We have clear priorities for improving the work of the Virtual School (VS) and track and monitor our performance against these e.g. impact on Year 12 NEET (not in education, employment or training)Outcomes for our young people are generally in line with national outcomes for children and young people in care. We undertake detailed	An ongoing focus on improving attainment and progress with a particular focus on KS2 outcomes.	 Training for key adults in Schools for Year 5 and 6 - reading comprehension Primary teacher tracks and monitors target cohort ensuring appropriate support is in place All Primary PEP's to have a reading, writing and maths target when appropriate Letterbox - for all EYFS and primary pupils
analysis and use our understanding of this to inform practice moving forwards.We have no permanent exclusions and low numbers of fixed term exclusions because we work proactively with educational providers.Clear evidence that Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) funding is used efficiently	An ongoing focus on quality PEP completion within timescale	 All young people are allocated to a member of the team who quality assure (QA) all PEP's Team manager sign off to further QA and check actions are followed up Weekly sharing of data with SW managers and IRO's to work in partnership to improve quality and sign off within timescales.
- funding is allocated through the <i>ePEP</i> system by the Virtual School Head Teacher – we know how every penny is allocated and track the progress made against each individual personalised target.	Extension of offer for children in care from 0-25	 Termly PEP's taking place for all young people led by the VS. Partnership working with Early Years Outcomes Team and Early Years SEN team Review and evaluation of early years PEP process and further development of tracking and reporting
Commissioned PP+ projects support all schools in Kirklees with an enhanced offer for our children – Early Years Outcomes Team, SENACT, EP and support workers, Childrens Emotional Wellbeing Service, whole school training linked to the Timpson project.	Improve understanding and practice around the work of the Virtual	 Developing the work with the EET strategy group (16-25) Awareness raising around statutory duties and development of advice and guidance offer to schools/providers/carers
We have a rigorous system of PEP quality assurance implemented by the team and signed off by the team managers. This enables team managers to have a rigorous holistic overview of the cohort.	School, aspirations and educational progress	 Develop an internal and external training offer Improved communications across partners including a newsletter

<u>Kirklees Virtual School self-evaluation – Evidence of impact 2018-19</u> and 2019-20

(please also see position statement post Covid-19 lockdown period)

Verbal feedback during the Ofsted inspection July 2019

- The Virtual School is held in high regard by schools.
- The team are accurate in Self-evaluation regarding their areas of strength and areas for development
- Most PEPS reflect the thoroughness of the reviews, and clear and ambitious and show evidence that professionals have a good understanding of children's needs, with a positive move planned to termly PEPs
- The voice of the child and carers are meaningfully and purposefully captured in the PEP process.
- The impact of Pupil Premium Plus is tracked at individual level and it is not just tracked it is evaluated this is 'powerful and effective'.
- The Achievement Coordinators have high caseloads although schools confirmed that they are present at key meetings and prioritise according to need, and at points of transition.
- For most key stage outcomes we are more or less in line (at KS4 better) than CLA nationally.
- Good progress at EYFS
- Post 16 tracking...showing positive EET.
- Safeguarding VS have a clear awareness of Gangs and CSE, schools involve the VS if there is an issue
- Kirklees College and other schools said that the Virtual School were 'good chasers up'
- The sign off process for PEPs is strong, and not just about compliance but about quality.
- Joined up communication is improving for young people in Year 12 and 13
- NEET is reducing for care leavers, heading in the right direction and is known as an area for focus

Virtual School self-evaluation

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) outcomes are above national for children in care for both GLD and prime areas (2019 data)
- The vast majority of all children in care accessing 3 and 4 year old 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 age of 18; these are needs assessed and of good quality signed off by the Virtual School Headteacher and team managers to ensure this quality and consistency.
- 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 2019.
- Outcomes for our young people taking GCSE's were the highest ever in 2019 and above national for children and young people in care. 2020 provisional results are an improvement on these.
- The monitoring of attendance by the Virtual School is strong and concerns are addressed promptly. Overall attendance was 94.02 % for 2018-19 (92.05 % in 2017-18).

- 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 and team managers who signs off all PEPs. All previous targets must be reviewed in terms of impact before further targets are set.
- PEP completion in termly timescale 100% summer term 2020
- Initial PEP completion in 10 school days of VS notification was 93 % in 2019-20
- 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 2020, 83% of children and young people in care were attending good or outstanding schools. We have a clear understanding of the 17% who are attending education provisions judged as requires improvement / inadequate at their last Ofsted visit. When a schools Ofsted judgement is downgraded extra monitoring and support is put in place to ensure that the educational needs of our young people are met.
- There has been an increase in the number of young people who attend an educational provision in Kirklees from 56% to 61% in 2019-20
- 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 regularly to monitor and to discuss strategies for those pupils receiving under 25 hours of education. This has reduced the number of pupils not in full time education to 47 in 2018-19 from 67 in 2016-17. Any complex educational issues for our children and young people in care are also raised with the Panel.
- We always work closely with other agencies 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.
- Designated Teachers 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 self evaluation – Key Challenges

- The impact of COVID -19 lockdown and ongoing issues in terms of missed education and the emotional health and well-being of our young people.
- The ongoing concerns around inclusion being magnified by the current Covid-19 pressures on the system.
- Increase in the number of young people in care and on the roll of the virtual school by 24 in 2019-20
- Increasing number of boys in the cohort with the issues around boys attainment and progress in school.
- Linked to this is the stability of cohort there has been an increase in pupil mobility by +47 since 2018-19

(119 pupils into care and 75 pupils leaving care in 2018-19, 166 pupils into care and 77 pupils leaving care in 2019-20)

- The cumulative effect of this is that we are working with more young people overall, and have more young people entering the system who need a high level of initial support and intervention.
- In the academic year 2018-19 there were 47 pupils not in full time education. These pupils were supported individually to return to a full-time provision that meets their needs.
- In 2018-19 the number of Persistent Absent students was 62 pupils (14.5%). This is a concern especially in Year 11 (28/62) where we believe study leave may be impacting on figures. Attendance is also impacted by fixed term exclusions (279.5 days) although this is better than national, and mid-term school moves where education was not planned at the time of transition.
- School stability remains a concern though we have seen a large decrease in 2019-20 (60 school moves outside of the natural transition process from Reception to Year 11 though this was a reduction from 82 in 2018-19, mainly in primary where it has reduced from 49 to 28))
- Linked to this KS2 outcomes continue to be an issue (data 2019). 33.3 % of pupils were disapplied and/or did not sit the KS2 tests. This impacted negatively on overall results compared to children in care nationally.
- Whilst outcomes at KS4 appear to be strong we have seen a reduction in the number of 5+ 9-5 inc E and M. This could be as a direct result of our inability to deliver an input to effect change from March 2020 due to COVID-19 and the lockdown. This suggests that our "catch up" in Year 11 has a direct impact on our young people attaining the higher grades.
- Extension of the age range working with Year 13 and considering next steps post 18 as young people become care leavers.
- Embedding processes and understanding of quality of education for children 3-5.
- Supporting a shared understanding of processes, timescales, and expectations across the wider service.

Key aims of Kirklees Virtual School - priorities moving forwards

- 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

1. <u>Ensuring all children and young people in care are in an education</u> provision that is right for them

Key focus areas



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
- Attendance is good and exclusions are low
- Reduced timetables are only used in exceptional circumstances
- Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) is used appropriately
- There is a suitable pathway in place to ensure aspirational outcomes
- Additional needs are identified, and appropriate support secured

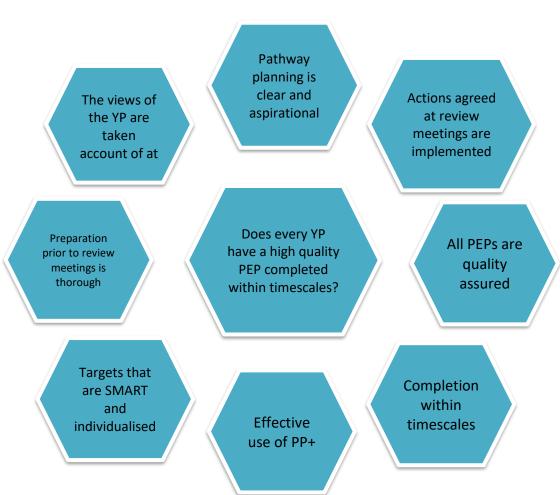
Where the agreed professional view is that a provision is not the right place for a young person we will need to ensure:

• Changes in provision are monitored and achieved without drift and delay

Measuring Virtual School Impact

- All young people have an identified provision
- Year on year decrease and in line or below national percentages for persistent absentees
- Year on year decrease and in line or below national percentages in the number of fixed term exclusions
- No permanent exclusions
- All learners making good academic progress
- Year on year decrease and in line or below national percentages of learners with a less than full time offer
- PEP targets are effective with appropriate funding requests
- Increased Y12 and Year 13 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 termly PEP reviews.
- Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) is used appropriately
- Targets agreed at review meetings are relevant, achievable, measurable and regularly reviewed
- In preparation for a PEP meeting all relevant information is available in ePEP and key issues / concerns are identified
- Young people are consulted and invited to contribute to their PEP; their views are considered and taken into account
- There is a clear progression pathway identified, taking account of the young persons' ability, hopes and aspirations
- Any agreed actions are followed up and reviewed at subsequent meetings
- All PEPs are quality assured and where necessary appropriate challenge is made and / or action is taken

Measuring Virtual School Impact

- A consistently high completion rate of Initial PEP's within 10 school days, and PEP reviews within the new termly timescales
- Clear evidence that PP+ is used effectively through monitoring of individual PEP targets.
- 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
- All PEP's have all appropriate sections completed before sign-off.

3.Improving outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2

Context:

Historically the outcomes for Kirklees CLA at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6) have been poorer than for all CLA nationally, for both measures - attainment and progress.

We are working to attempt to understand any key contributors to this picture and to turn the curve and narrow the gap.

What are we doing to address this?

At a strategic level:

- Early intervention work is being undertaken across service to ensure that as many of our cohort as possible are taking up their entitlement to early education and care from age 2 so that early learning is prioritised and children are being supported to achieve and make progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Training for carers work is being carried out through commissioned projects to support carers in supporting home learning particularly in relation to early literacy and communication and maths.
- Kirklees Learning Partner support is being commissioned to offer targeted training to schools/education providers around improving outcomes/progress in the core curriculum areas/assessment tests.

At cohort level:

- Teacher assessment and progress data is submitted termly from individual schools and Early Years providers for each pupil and is the focus for the challenge and support provided by the virtual school through the Personal Education Plan reviews. Attainment and progress is tracked and monitored by Virtual School for all children from age 3 and reported on termly. Trends and areas of concern are identified and form the basis for decisions around whole cohort needs/interventions/training.
- From September 20 there will be an expectation that termly targets are set for reading, writing and maths for all primary aged children where below expected progress is recorded
- There is an identified targeted cohort made up of children who have have achieved age related expectations at prior key stage assessment points (a good level of development at Reception or at least expected in one or more of the core subject areas (reading, writing and maths) at the KS1 assessment point.) Achievement co-ordinators are supported by the Primary Teacher and EY/Primary Team Manager to pay particular attention to progress for this cohort so that any dips are addressed where possible.

At individual child level:

- Bespoke targets (funded and non funded) are set and reviewed at least termly for each child to support individual attainment and progress in the core areas of reading, writing and maths. Targets also take account of the child's wider interests, preferred learning styles and build on strengths as well as areas for development.
- Progress and attainment of each child is discussed in regular cohort supervision meetings between EY/Primary Team Manager and allocated achievement co-ordinator

Measuring Virtual School Impact

• Attainment and progress continue to improve and the gap with national narrows.

2. Information required to take a decision.

Not applicable.

3. Implications for the Council

- **3.1 Working with People.** Not applicable
- **3.2 Working with Partners.** Not applicable
- **3.3 Place Based Working.** Not applicable.
- 3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality. Not applicable
- **3.5** Improving outcomes for children. Oversight and monitoring of education outcomes for children in care. Corporate Parenting Board to monitor progress, as requested by the Chair.
- **3.6 Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources).** Not applicable.
- 4. Consultees and their opinions. Not applicable
- 5. Next steps and timelines. Virtual School Head to continue to lead on this way of working during the pandemic.
- 6. Officer recommendations and reasons. That the report be noted.
- 7. Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations. Not applicable
- 8. Contact officer.

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9. Background Papers and History of Decisions For information only

10. Service Director responsible

Jo-Anne Sanders