



Draft Headteacher Report
September 2023
Outcome Data 2022-23
Self-evaluation 2022-23
Improvement Priorities 2023-24

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Kirklees Virtual School self-evaluation

We rate ourselves as good overall with some outstanding features and some areas for development

Key strengths of Kirklees Virtual School:

Most recent national indicators show that Kirklees Virtual School is Quartile B in 4 of the indicators including Key Stage 4 Attainment 8, Key Stage 4 Progress 8, Key Stage 4 9-4 pass in English and maths and Exclusions.

Personalised Approach for each young person

Every young person is allocated to a member of our experienced Virtual School Team; therefore we know our young people well and their attendance, progress and attainment are reviewed so that we are able to challenge and support in a timely manner and relevant interventions can be put in place. 100% PEP completion within termly timescale ensures that every young person's education is discussed with professionals and those in complex situations have multiple educational meetings each term. Between 1.09.22 – 25.07.23, 99% (154/156) of all initial PEP's were completed within 10 school days of notification to the Virtual School.

The electronic PEP system enables the Virtual School to monitor the completion and quality assurance of PEPs and allows for systematic application, authorisation, and monitoring of individualised Pupil Premium Plus targets and intervention for young people. Young people are encouraged to give their views and have their voice heard and influence their educational journey. All Designated Teachers and Professionals (DTs and DP's), 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 and providers to support pupils' individual needs and is quality assured by the team managers who sign off all PEPs. Completed PEPs are recorded in Liquid Logic and uploaded to Wisdom.

Internal and External Scrutiny of Data and Systems

There are robust systems and processes across the Virtual School which provide accurate data linked to our priorities and statutory duties. A monthly report is produced, analysed and reviewed as a leadership team and presented to Governing Body, Corporate Parenting Board, Scrutiny, Quality Assurance Panel and shared across service. This allows us to react quickly to developing patterns of need and work proactively as a team to embed creative solutions. For example, we can see every suspension that takes place and ensure that we are working with professionals to prevent any further suspensions and highlight any patterns in the data. This has resulted in a decrease in the number of suspensions this year with the number of days lost reduced from 455.5 to 307, with pupils with more than 1 suspension down from 37 to 29.

There is an established Governing Body that meets regularly, with a cross section of representation that holds the Virtual School to account through supportive and challenging meetings.

Early Years

The majority of children in care aged 2 to 4-years-old access their entitlement to funded early education and care. Where they are not accessing their entitlement, the reason is known, and the validity checked by a lead social worker. Protocols are in place to ideally place children in care in a provision judged by Ofsted to be "good" or "outstanding". The percentage of young people achieving a Good Level of Development has been consistently strong over the last three years. PEPs are completed from the term after a child's 2nd birthday to ensure oversight of each child's development as soon as they are eligible to take up the entitlement to a funded place.

We have commissioned programmes of work from the Kirklees Early Years Outcomes Team to provide opportunity for parents/carers and Early Years Practitioners to work together around school readiness (START programme) and language development (50 things to do before you're 5 programme)

Key Stage 1

The percentage of KS1 pupils reaching expected or higher standard for Reading, Writing and Maths and RWM combined is above the national average for children and young people in care 2022. Provisional 2023 data indicates that Kirklees CLA achieved above nationally reported 2022 CLA outcomes across the core areas and the majority of those that achieved a GLD in early years went on to achieve expected or above at the end of Key Stage 1.

Key Stage 2

The progress for those that achieve at least expected at Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 achievement is good.

Key Stage 4

Attainment and Progress at Key Stage 4 has been consistently strong and the latest validated results (2022) show Kirklees Children Looked After in quartile B for attainment, progress and 9-4 English and Maths and these were all above regional and national data.

Participation and Post 16 Progression

Participation and progression remain strong in Post 16 despite the remaining challenges following the pandemic. Significant developments have taken place across Post 16 providers with the Post 16 Pilot which has been introduced this academic year. Attendance data is now collected for Post 16 young people which helps inform the intervention support. English and Maths pilot has been introduced at Kirklees College to address the gaps in learning and equip our young people with functional English and numeracy skills as well as improving their potential outcomes and progression opportunities. Kirklees College have also been successful in being shortlisted for the Alex Timpson ARC Attachment Award for their strong commitment to attachment and trauma informed approaches across the organisation.

Collaborative Working

The Virtual School Leadership team work strategically across service with numerous partners including Heads of Service in Children Looked After, Assessment and Intervention, Children With Disabilities Service, Youth Engagement Service, Multisystemic Therapy (MST) team, Sufficiency, Careers, Health and One Adoption. The Virtual School has a key voice at a range of decision-making groups and panels such as Permanence, Childrens Access to Services, Placements Panels, Early Support and Learning Leadership Team, Early Learning and Progression Board and Quality Assurance Panel.

We collaborate well with other professionals including Social Workers (SW), Designated Teacher's, Carer's, Special Educational Needs Assessment and Commissioning Team (SENACT), Education Psychologists (EP) to provide the best for our young people.

Implications for educational stability and provision are considered by professionals at key decision points, including permanence and placement moves.

We have commissioned multi-agency support working across the Education Psychology Service including dedicated Educational Psychologist support, inclusion workers supporting complex young people, and nationally recognised work with schools through the Timpson Project. Additional resource is also commissioned for Childrens Emotional Wellbeing Service (ChEWS) which enhances the offer to our children and young people in care.

PEX

There has been no permanent exclusion of a child and young person in care since the Virtual School established. 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 Virtual School Leadership team challenge and support Head teachers making difficult decisions to ensure that no child looked after is not permanently excluded. We are working proactively around suspensions to prevent further escalation. The latest validated data (2021) Kirklees is in quartile B.

SEND

We have developed our structure in the Virtual School to ensure that young people with SEND have specialist and timely support from the Virtual School. All staff have received SEND specific professional development opportunities to increase knowledge and understanding of how we better support our young people with SEND. We work closely with schools regarding identifying needs and meeting these in provision. We have established links nationally with LA SEND teams to reduce drift and delay regarding statutory assessments and EHCP linked processes.

CWSW

We have developed our structure to integrate the work for Children with a Social Worker into the work of the Virtual School. In order to take forward the developments we have in place an Executive Virtual School Headteacher who primarily focusses on this area of work supported by a Team Manager who also has responsibilities around these areas. We work closely with Headteachers, Principal Social Workers, Social Care Leadership Team, Designated Safeguarding Leads, Social Workers, Youth Engagement Service and MST Team, to ensure that education is a key focus area for all young people with a social worker. We are developing a joint action plan to enhance social work practice and ensure detailed education targets are in place and reviewed in all Child in Need and Child Protection Plans.

How do we get to outstanding?

Most recent national indicators show that Kirklees Virtual School is Quartile C in 2 of the indicators including Overall Absence and Persistent Absence and Quartile D in 3 of the indicators for unauthorised absence, % reaching expected standard in Spelling Punctuation and Grammar and KS2 Reading, Writing and Maths.

We have highlighted several areas that we believe would take Kirklees Virtual School to Outstanding. Each of these are addressed fully in our Action Plan

Attendance

Attendance is the key area that needs to be addressed in Kirklees Virtual School. There are several areas which can impact on attendance.

Overall attendance – Increasing attendance for the cohort, this is remaining static for the whole cohort with 88% attendance. Every day that is missed by a young person impacts on their education attainment and progression but can also impact on their placements as well as their ability to build key relationships.

Persistent Absence - Improving strategies to re-engage young people who have significant attendance issues – particularly in Key Stage 4.

Unauthorised Absences remain too high with 148 of 403 young people had a period of unauthorised absence which is 36.7% of the overall cohort. Of these 98 young people had more than one day unauthorised 24.3%.

Young People Not In Full Time Education (NIFT) There have been 69 episodes of less than full time education in the academic year for young people in the whole cohort. This includes those without a school place as well as those who are on part time timetables. Every young person is entitled to their 25 hours of education, and we need to ensure that they all have an appropriate offer.

The number of young people with one or more suspensions has decreased. Suspensions remain too high with 307 days of education lost to suspensions overall (reduced from 455.5 days in 2021/22). This needs to remain a focus for the Virtual School.

Attainment

The Virtual School needs to concentrate on improving attainment and progress for all young people. We have a particular focus on Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4. We need to support professionals to enable young people to make at least in-line progress or above progress in order to close the gap in their attainment levels. The latest published DFE Data (2022) shows Kirklees in quartile D for both Key Stage 2 measures. Although KS4 Kirklees were in Quartile B in all areas, this years provisional results show a decline in numbers of those achieving the grades 4 and 5.

EHCP / Access to Appropriate Provision

The number of young people with an EHCP are disproportionately represented in those who have not got access to appropriate provision and those who receive suspensions.

School moves

Focussing on school stability and minimising changes is a key priority. Reducing drift and delay when young people are facing school moves / finding a school place is really important. There were 83 school moves which have taken place during the school year, some of these have been positive moves to ensure they are in the right provision or where permanence has been achieved, however where these are not planned or emergency situations, we need to ensure that the young people are transitioned well and provisions are able to meet need.

Development Work

- Developing partnership working with the care leavers team and SAPT, to work with all young people if they remain in education / training to 25 and ensure care planning is linked as young people approach 18.
- Enhanced the provision to support UASC young people for the full year. (Provision in place over the summer)
- Further develop partnership working and support and training for Early Years providers to maximise potential and impact of earlier intervention.
- Embedding the work for Children and young people with a social worker so that it becomes system led and system wide throughout the authority and education system. (Improved discussion and educational information in Child in Need and Child Protection plans.)