

# **Cambridgeshire Virtual School**



## **Head Teacher's Annual Report**

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## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to detail and evaluate the work undertaken by the Virtual School from September 2019-July 2020 and to set out the key priorities for the academic year 2020-2021. Furthermore it is to share the outcomes of the qualifying cohort (children in the care of Cambridgeshire County council for a year or more as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019).

### 1.1 Context

Since April 2014, every local authority in England has had to appoint at least one person to fulfil the local authority's statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of its Children in Care (CiC) wherever they live or are educated. This person is called the Head of the Virtual School. Within Cambridgeshire there is a team of education professionals who support the Virtual School Head in fulfilling these responsibilities. Cambridgeshire Virtual School support children and young people between the ages of 2 and 18.

The statutory remit of the Virtual School expanded in September 2018 to include information and advice for children previously in care; including those who have been adopted from care, those under special guardianship and child arrangement orders. Cambridgeshire Virtual School are responsible for children previously in care who attend a Cambridgeshire school or education setting.

Cambridgeshire Virtual School sits within the Education Directorate. The Virtual School Head is line managed by the Director of Education. The Virtual School has a 'management board' which offers both challenge and support to the work and direction of the Virtual School.

Since the last reporting period the Virtual School has strengthened capacity by appointing a Data Officer, Education Advisor for Children Previously in Care, increased leadership capacity by promoting a teacher to a senior post and appointed a further Senior Advisory Teacher (to start September 2020).

#### Cambridgeshire Virtual School Team:

Role	Full Time Equivalent
Head of Virtual School	1
Deputy Head of Virtual School	0.9
Senior Teacher	1 (+ 0.8 to start September 2020)
Teachers	5.8
Post 16 Officers	2
Access and Inclusion Officers	3
Education Psychologist (seconded)	0.6 (decreasing to 0.4 from September 2020)
Data Officer	0.7
Business Support	0.7 (41 weeks a year)
Education Advisor for Children Previously in Care (joint role with Peterborough)	0.4

## **2. Role of the Virtual School**

The Virtual School should be judged by the degree to which it diminishes the difference between outcomes for Children in Care and all children and that Cambridgeshire Children in Care do at least as well as Children in Care nationally. The Virtual School strive to achieve this by working in the following ways:

### **Child Centred Work**

- To ensure the voice of the Child / Young Person (CYP) is paramount within the Personal Education Plan (PEP) process
- To monitor the attainment and progress of all CYP in care and provide challenge and support in order to maximise this
- To manage and distribute the pupil premium grant and ensure that it is used effectively by schools and settings in order that CYP in care achieve specific outcomes as detailed in their PEPs
- To advocate on behalf of the CYP where it is felt that the school is not fully meeting individual needs

### **Education Setting focused work (including Early Years (EY) and Post-16 settings)**

- To support schools, specifically designated teachers, to carry out statutory duties including completion of the PEP
- To support EY and post-16 settings, specifically designated persons, to carry out statutory duties including completion of the PEP
- To deliver training which addresses particular needs of Children in Care and Children Previously in Care (collectively referred to as care experienced children and young people)
- To promote aspirational attitudes when setting targets and outcomes for care experienced CYP

### **Access and Inclusion**

- To hold a detailed knowledge of individual schools and settings in order to secure the best provision
- To have knowledge of services within and beyond the Local Authority (LA) in order to access additional support where appropriate
- To support the admissions process in order to minimise the amount of time out of education
- To challenge attendance issues and support interventions to improve outcomes
- To monitor exclusions and any CYP not accessing full time education to challenge and improve outcomes

### Key Partners

- To deliver training to social workers, foster carers and other key partners to promote the educational needs of care experienced CYP
- To work in partnership with other key partners, within and beyond the LA, to secure the best possible educational outcomes

## 3. Cohort characteristics

The Virtual School Head Teacher's report is required to report on the 'qualifying cohort'. This means those children that have been in the care of Cambridgeshire Local Authority for a year or more on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019. The actual Virtual School cohort is fluid, with children entering and exiting care by way of reunification, adoption, Special Guardianship Orders or Child Arrangement Orders, or reaching adulthood throughout the year. The Virtual School work with all Children in Care (as described in section 2) regardless of the length of time in care; therefore it should be recognised that there are differences between the data reported and the actual number of CYP supported by the Virtual School.

In May 2020 there were 716 Children in Care on the Virtual School roll compared with 706 at the time of reporting last year. The qualifying cohort totals 376 children.

### 3.1 Placements

Placements of the qualifying cohort according to region where the CYP is placed. 51% of Children in care are placed in Cambridgeshire.

Placement Region for Cambridgeshire Children in Care	% of Cohort	Number
East	73.7%	277
South West	1.1%	4
South East	4.5%	17
North West	0.8%	3
East Midlands	13.0%	49
London	4.3%	16
West Midlands	1.6%	6
North East	1.1%	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>376</b>

The OFSTED focused visit (2020) identified 'still too many of Cambridgeshire's Children in Care live in placements which are outside the county and a long way from their families and friends.' Whilst there is a drive within Children's Services to increase capacity in county, the Virtual School has the following arrangements in place to mitigate against barriers for children who are currently placed out of county:

### **New to Care / Placement Move**

- All children new to care or requiring an education placement move are assigned to a member of the Virtual School Team
- Where an education placement is required out of county, the Virtual School research OFSTED ratings and seek advice from the Virtual School (and where relevant SEND Services) in the receiving authority to support a decision on which school to apply to

### **Personal Education Plan (PEP) Support / Training**

- Schools new to supporting Cambridgeshire Children in Care receive phone / skype support on how to complete the PEP
- There is a PEP Champion within the Virtual School that all schools can seek advice via email, phone or skype on an ongoing basis
- The Virtual School have created documentation such as exemplar PEPs which are available on E-PEP system
- All PEPs are quality assured by the Virtual School and feedback provided
- Out of county schools, within reasonable travelling distance are invited to all face to face training offered
- This academic year the Virtual School have introduced live webinars to facilitate the involvement of designated teachers all over the country in training; these have been recorded and are also available for DTs to view at their convenience

### **Support for Children in Education Settings**

- The Virtual School support all Children in Care from 2 years old (if attending early years provision) to 18 years old (until the end of year 13 if in education)
- All schools where there is a Cambridgeshire child placed have an named link advisory teacher / officer
- The offer of advisory meetings is according to need rather than location
- The PEP is used to monitor attainment, progress and attendance each term
- There is daily monitoring of attendance for all children who are of statutory school age
- Where there is a specific need regarding an individual student the Virtual School provide advice and guidance to empower the designated teacher to lead and manage complex situations and ensure teams within the receiving authority are supporting the situation

### **Specific Education Challenges for Children Placed Out of County**

Admissions – It can be harder to source education when a child moves out of county. This is particularly relevant for CYP placed in some local authorities e.g. Kent.

Actions to support:

- The Virtual School work closely with the Admissions Team within Cambridgeshire. Where an academy refuses to admit, notice to direct is served promptly

- The Virtual School work closely with the Virtual Schools in the Eastern Region and will elicit support to navigate LA systems when needed
- Since September the Virtual School have been working more closely with the Access to Resources Team and Social Care, so that education is considered at the earliest opportunity; the Virtual School's views are routinely sought to feed into placement searches
- Where it is likely securing a school place will be delayed the Virtual School source and fund tuition

SEND – There are additional challenges in securing an EHCP for children placed out of county and for admissions when a CYP has an EHCP. This is linked into a dependency on services managed by other local authorities

Actions to support:

- The Virtual School have worked with Social Care and the Statutory Assessment Team to create a joint protocol with the aim of minimising drift in these situations.
- The Virtual School, SAT and Social Care hold solution focused meetings (CENE) every two weeks aimed at moving situations forward. The Virtual School provide challenge at these meetings

### 3.2 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

	SEN Support			EHCP		
	2018	2019		2018	2019	
	% of Cohort		Difference 2018 to 2019	% of Cohort		Difference 2018 to 2019
National - ALL Pupils	11.6%	11.7%	0.1%	2.9%	3.1%	0.2%
Cambridgeshire - All Pupils	11.1%	10.7%	-0.4%	3.0%	3.2%	0.2%
National - CiC	29.6%	29.0%	-0.6%	26.5%	27.2%	0.7%
Cambridgeshire - CiC	25.8%	22.6%	-3.2%	30.8%	29.3%	-1.5%

The percentage of Cambridgeshire CYP in care, reported to have a categorisation of SEN Support is slightly below the figure for national CiC, whereas the percentage of Cambridgeshire Children in Care with an EHCP is above the national level. There is a significant difference between those in care with SEND and all pupils (both nationally and within Cambridgeshire). This reflects the complexities of the cohort of Children in Care.

#### 4. Training and development

The Virtual School recognise the importance of training in developing practice and empowering professionals working with care experienced CYP.

Training is offered at no charge; the retained Pupil Premium Plus and Previously in Care grant fund this.

Training for Schools and other education settings:

Training	Number of settings attended	Number of participants
Designated Teacher Training	39	45
Attachment Awareness and Trauma Informed Schools	10	19
FASD	28	47
Designated Person for Children Previously in Care	12	12
Towards a new way of working	16	16
Towards a new way of working – Early Years	22	22
Network Meeting (Virtual)	12	12
Supporting Unaccompanied Asylum Minors	6	21

This totals 194 participants. This is a reduction on last year's figures (479). However COVID-19 impacted on the training; training from March-July was cancelled.

The Virtual School has offered bespoke sessions as required.

Training	Number of settings attended	Number of participants
Attachment, Trauma and Executive Functioning	1	20
Trauma and Attachment Awareness	6	120



Training for other key stakeholders has comprised of;

Training delivered	Number of participants
<b>1. Foster Carers</b>	
Virtual School: New way of Working	58
FASD	8
Role of the VS	9
<b>2. LA Partners</b>	
Virtual School: New way of Working	31
Social Care, Education Training	84
IROs, Education Training	10
Education Inclusions Officers	12
<b>3. New Adopters</b>	
Supporting Education	19

## 5. Attainment and Progress Context

The attainment and progress data referred to in sections 5 to 9 is a year old. This is the data local authorities are required to report on. The cohort of children it refers to will have changed with children over the last year both coming in and leaving care. Specific consideration is not therefore contained on the response to individual data. However in recognition of the limitations of the reported data, a focus for the Virtual School over the next academic year is the collation and analysis of termly data. This will be a golden threading running through each of the development priorities. It will be used to provide enrichment opportunities to children in care and to support and challenge designated teachers to match appropriate support and intervention to promote educational outcomes for children in care. This will be achieved through training, advisory meetings, regular 'check ins' with DTs and PEP quality assurance. Further details can be found in section 16.

## 6. Early Years Attainment Data

GLD refers to Good Level of Development. This is the national benchmark for children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (aged 5). Children are deemed to have met GLD if they have achieved the Early Learning Goals in the curriculum areas of Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development, Communication and Language Development, Literacy and Mathematics.

It is the second year outcomes for this age group have been published, therefore year on year comparisons are limited.

Good Level of Development (GLD)	RECEPTION (EYFSP)			
	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Cambridgeshire - CiC Number in Cohort</b>	x	x	12	8
<b>Cambridgeshire - CiC</b>	x	x	42%	38%
<b>National - CiC</b>	x	x	47%	48%
<i>Cambridgeshire - All Pupils</i>	70%	71%	71%	71%
<i>National - All Pupils</i>	69%	71%	72%	72%

- The Cambridgeshire cohort consists of only 8 children meaning the percentage per child is 12.5%. Such a small cohort means that cohort analysis is not valid.
- Cambridgeshire are 10% below the national figure for Children in Care (less than one child).

## 7. Year 1 and 2 Phonics Screening

All children complete a phonics screening check towards the end of year 1. Those that do not pass have a further attempt in the summer term of year 2. The assessment involves the child reading 40 words to a familiar adult. There are a combination of real words and 'non-words'. The 'non-words' are included to ensure the child could not have encountered the word previously and therefore must rely on their phonic knowledge rather than sight vocabulary.

Phonics - Working at Expected	Year 1 and Year 2	
	Year 1	Year 2
<b>Cambridgeshire - CiC Cohort</b>	14	9
<b>Cambridgeshire - CiC</b>	57%	56%
<b>National - CiC</b>	64%	48%
<i>Cambridgeshire - All Pupils</i>	80%	54%
<i>National - All Pupils</i>	82%	56%

- The percentage passing in year one is slightly below the national level for Children in Care, however the percentage in year 2 is above this figure

## 8. Key Stage 1 and 2 Attainment and Progress Data

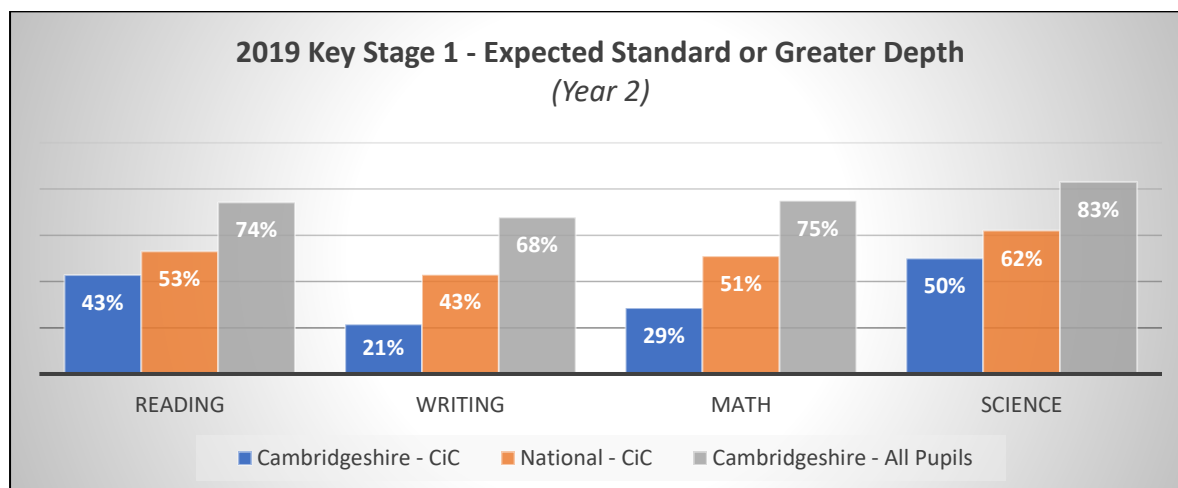
At the end of Key Stage 1 (aged 7) and Key Stage 2 (aged 11), children are assessed as:

- **Working towards the expected standard:** not yet reaching the standard expected for their school year
- **Working at expected standard:** at the level expected for their year group

- **Working at greater depth:** working more deeply within the expectations for their year

### 8.1 Key Stage 1 Attainment Data

- There are 14 children in this cohort (one child equates to 7%)
- 3 children have EHCPs, 2 of which attend special school
- There are 6 children with a classification of 'SEN Support'



- The percentage of children achieving expected standard in reading, writing and maths is 21% compared to 38% nationally
- Year on year data shows a decline with 31% of Cambridgeshire Children in Care achieving the combined expected standard last year
- This Virtual School team are aware of the results of this cohort, and as a result there will be greater scrutiny of ongoing progress through advisory visits and PEP quality assurance, with a specific focus on how to use the pupil premium plus to maximise progress. This is in line with the overall focus next academic year on attainment and progress. See development priorities 2020-2021 for further details (section 16)

### 8.2 Key Stage 2 Attainment and Progress Data

- There are 26 children in this cohort (one child equates to 4%)
- 8 children have an EHCP (with 6 attending specialist provision)
- There are 7 children with a classification of 'SEN support'

ALL Subjects - 2019 (Expected Standard or Greater Depth Standard)					
Expected or Better	KEY STAGE 2				
	Reading	Writing	Maths	GPS	RWM Combined
Cambridgeshire – Number in CiC Cohort	26				
Cambridgeshire - CiC	35%	52%	54%	50%	28%
National - CiC	50%	51%	52%	53%	37%
Cambridgeshire - All Pupils	73%	75%	76%	76%	63%
National - All Pupils	73%	78%	79%	78%	65%

- Writing, maths and grammar, punctuation and spelling are in line with Children in Care nationally
- Reading is below Children in Care nationally; there were 3 children that narrowly missed the expected standard in reading (within a scaled score of 3). All three achieved the expected standard in both writing and maths
- Cambridgeshire compares favourably with its statistical neighbours (11 authorities), with Cambridgeshire being ranked highest in writing, maths and grammar, punctuation and spelling. Cambridgeshire is 6<sup>th</sup> for reading
- Year on year data shows a percentage point increase from 2016-2019 in all areas with the exception of reading which in line with the outcomes in 2016. This is illustrated in the tables below:

Reading				
Expected or Better (EXS or GDS)	KEY STAGE 2			
	2016	2017	2018	2019
Cambridgeshire - CiC Cohort	26	22	29	26
Cambridgeshire - CiC	35%	32%	38%	35%

Writing				
Expected or Better (EXS or GDS)	KEY STAGE 2			
	2016	2017	2018	2019
Cambridgeshire - CiC Cohort	26	21	29	26
Cambridgeshire - CiC	39%	36%	45%	52%

Maths				
Expected or Better (EXS or GDS)	KEY STAGE 2			
	2016	2017	2018	2019
Cambridgeshire - CiC Cohort	26	22	29	26
Cambridgeshire - CiC	35%	27%	38%	54%

Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling				
Expected or Better (EXS or GDS)	KEY STAGE 2			
	2016	2017	2018	2019
Cambridgeshire - CiC Cohort	26	22	29	26
Cambridgeshire - CiC	42%	41%	38%	50%

### 8.3 Progress Data From Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2

Progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2	KEY STAGE 2		
	Reading	Writing	Maths
<b>Cambridgeshire - CiC</b>	-1.05	0.83	0.43
<b>National - CiC</b>	-0.22	-0.77	-0.95
<i>Cambridgeshire - All Pupils</i>	0.16	-0.80	-0.30
<i>National - All Pupils</i>	0.03	0.01	0.04

- Progress data demonstrates the progress the cohort have made from their Key Stage 1 results to their Key Stage 2. A score of zero indicates expected progress from the Key Stage 1 result
- The cohort have made less than expected progress in reading
- The cohort have made above expected progress in writing, making better progress than all children in Cambridgeshire and all children nationally
- The cohort have made above expected progress in maths, making better progress than all children in Cambridgeshire and all children nationally

### 9. Key Stage 4 Attainment and Progress Data

For the first year all GCSEs are graded 9-1, with 9 being the highest grade and 1 the lowest; the new GCSE content is recognised as more challenging. The phrase 'Achieving the basics' refers to 'a pass' English and maths. Grades 4 being equivalent to a low C and 5 equivalent to a high C in the 'old' GCSE grades. Grade 5 is known as a strong pass and grade 4 as a standard pass. Students that do not achieve at least a 4, will be expected to re-sit the GCSE (unless there are specific circumstances e.g. SEND). The ongoing changes to the Key Stage 4 examinations mean it is hard to compare year on year; meaningful comparison can only be made against 2017 and 2018 data.

- There are 64 children in the cohort (one child equates to approximately 1.6%)
- There are 26 children in the cohort with EHCPs, 22 of whom attend specialist provision
- There are 7 children in the cohort with a categorisation of 'SEN Support'

Achieved Basics	KEY STAGE 4					
	2017		2018		2019	
	Standard (9-4)	Strong (9-5)	Standard (9-4)	Strong (9-5)	Standard (9-4)	Strong (9-5)
<b>Cambridgeshire - CiC Cohort</b>	43		55		64	
<b>Cambridgeshire - CiC</b>	12%	7%	15%	7%	13%	5%
<b>National - CiC</b>	17%	7%	17%	8%	18%	7%
<i>Cambridgeshire - All Pupils</i>	67%	47%	67%	46%	57%	43%
<i>National - All Pupils</i>	x	43%	64%	43%	56%	40%

- The number of children achieving a standard pass is 5% below national for Children in Care but Cambridgeshire was within 2% of national (Children in Care) for a strong pass

Attainment 8 score is a measure of performance in 8 subjects. The progress 8 score shows how they have improved during secondary school, compared to other pupils who were at the same level when they finished primary school. The average progress 8 score of all secondary schools nationally is 0. Further explanation of these measures can be found here: [https://www.slideshare.net/SimonPerry9/naht-progress-8-and-attainment-8-explained?next\\_slideshow=1](https://www.slideshare.net/SimonPerry9/naht-progress-8-and-attainment-8-explained?next_slideshow=1)

Attainment 8	Key Stage 4
<b>Cambridgeshire - CiC Cohort</b>	64
<b>Cambridgeshire - CiC</b>	17.4
<b>National - CiC</b>	19.1
<i>Cambridgeshire - All Pupils</i>	46.1
<i>National - All Pupils</i>	44.8

Progress 8 (Progress from KS2 to KS4)	Key Stage 4
<b>Cambridgeshire - CiC Cohort</b>	59
<b>Cambridgeshire - CiC</b>	-1.04
<b>National - CiC</b>	-1.28
<i>Cambridgeshire - All Pupils</i>	0.14
<i>National - All Pupils</i>	-0.08

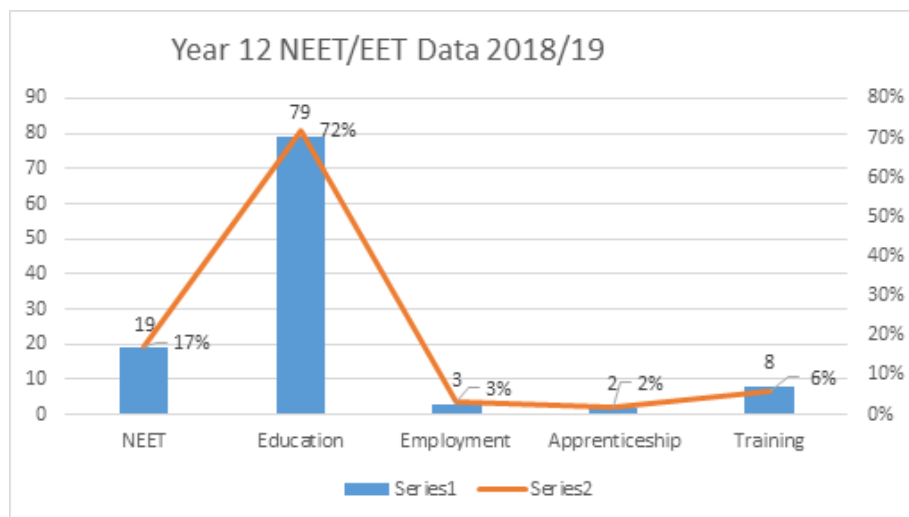
- The discrepancy between the number of children accounted for within the attainment 8 figure (64) and the number of children in the progress 8 figure (59) is because there are 5 children whose Key Stage 2 results are not available and therefore progress between Key Stage 2 and 4 cannot be measured.

- Attainment 8 scores show Cambridgeshire Children in Care were two points below Children in Care nationally. This ranks Cambridgeshire 6<sup>th</sup> (out of 11) against statistical neighbours
- Cambridgeshire Children in Care made better progress from their Key Stage 2 results to their Key Stage 4 results than Children in Care nationally (0.24). This ranks Cambridgeshire 4<sup>th</sup> (out of 11) when compared to statistical neighbours

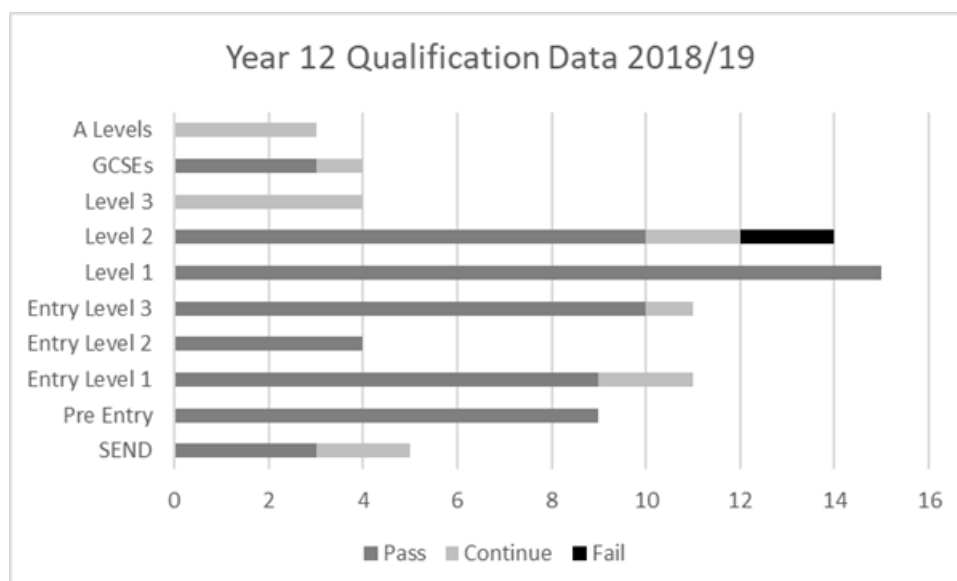
## 10. Post 16 Data

Post 16 data focuses on the full cohort rather than those that have been in care for a year or more.

### 10.1 Year 12

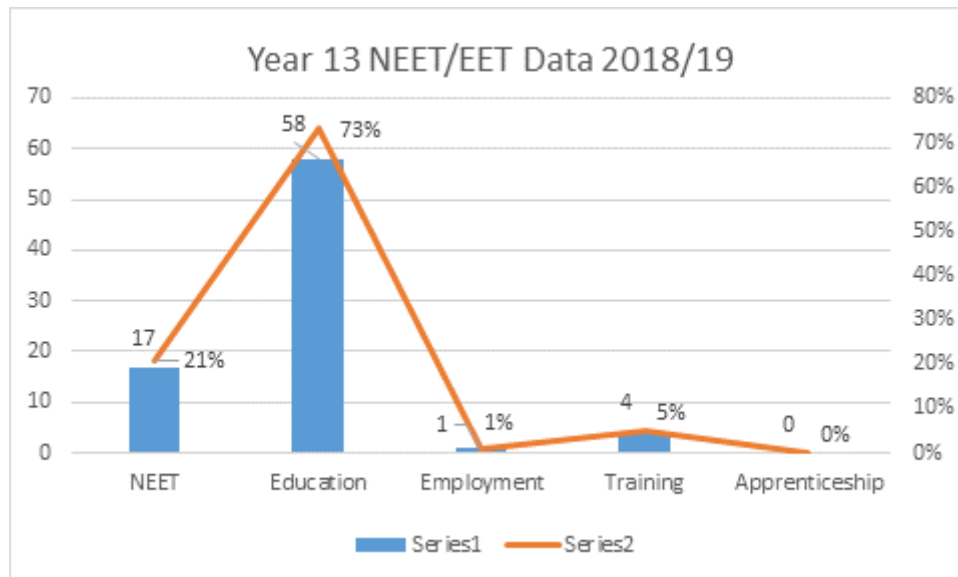


Of the 79 young people that continued in education. At the end of year 12 the following qualifications were achieved:

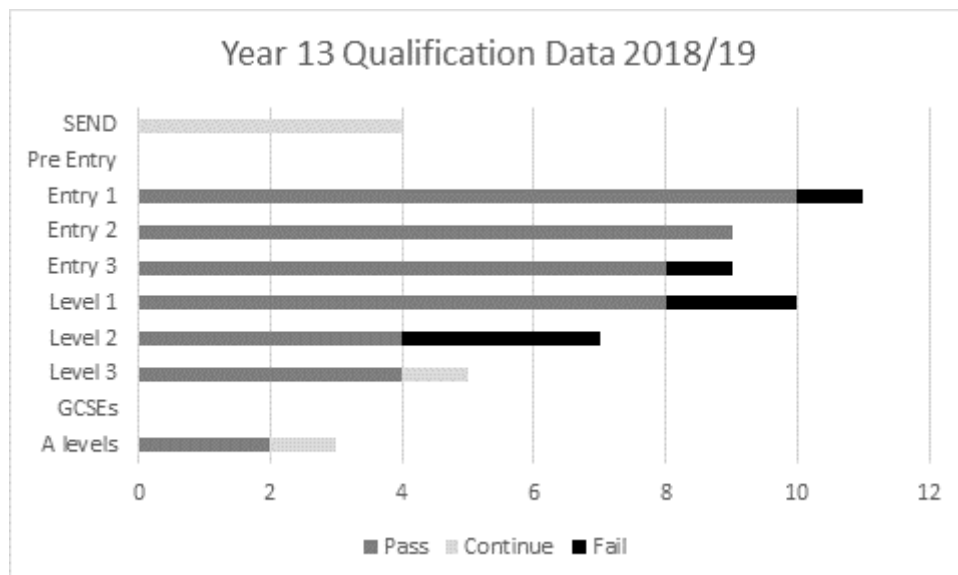


- 47 of the cohort are UASCs which accounts for the high number of Pre Entry – Entry 3 figures (as most were on ESOL at those levels)
- Both A level and Level 3 studies are two year courses which is why all these students are continuing not completing in Year 12

## 9.2 Year 13

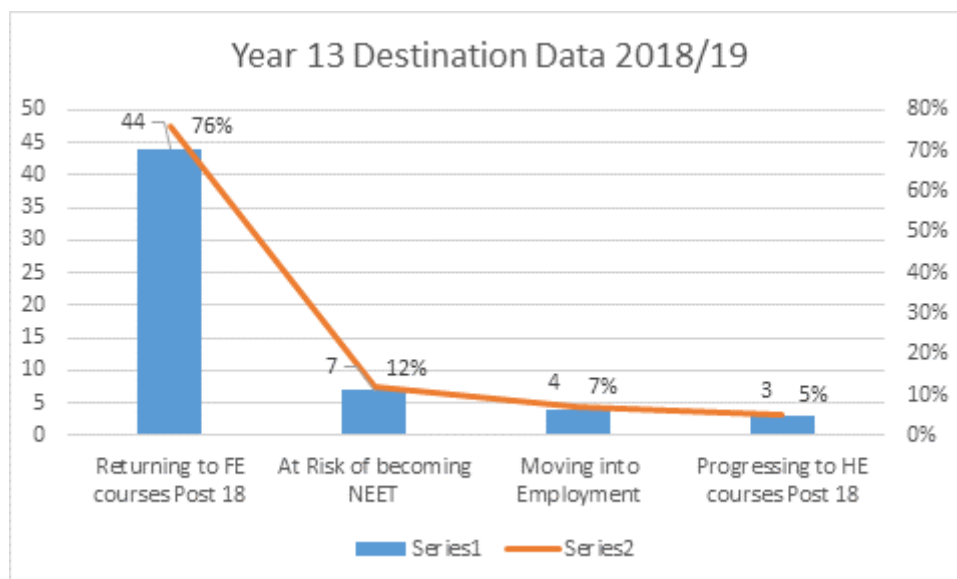


Of the 58 young people that continued to access education in year 13, the following qualifications were achieved:



- 30 of the cohort are UASCs which accounts for the high number of Pre Entry – Entry 3 figures (as most were on ESOL at those levels)





- 76% are returning to Further Education, as they need to complete further courses to be able to move on to Higher Education
- The figure of 76% also includes 30 UASC students who need to progress up to an Entry 3 ESOL course before they can access vocational subject study

## 11. Inclusion

### 11.1 Attendance and Exclusions

- Absence from school is deemed unauthorised where there is no acceptable reason for the absence
- Persistent absence is where a child has missed 10% or more

	Unauthorised Absence	Persistent Absence	At Least 1 Fixed Term Exclusion
	% of Sessions	% of Sessions	% of Sessions
<i>National All Pupils</i>	1.4%	10.9%	4.8%
<i>Cambridgeshire All Pupils</i>	1.1%	9.0%	5.9%
<b>National CiC</b>	1.4%	10.9%	11.7%
<b>Cambridgeshire CiC</b>	0.9%	9.8%	12.5%

The exclusion figures relate to 2018 because exclusion data is published a year behind attainment data by the DfE. Detail has therefore also been provided of the Virtual School real time data (2019-2020).

- Cambridgeshire Children in Care's unauthorised absence and persistent absence data compares favourably to both the national Child in Care percentage and to all children

nationally. Against statistical neighbours Cambridgeshire are ranked 4<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> (out of 11) respectively. This compares to 9<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> the previous year

- Cambridgeshire Children in Care experience a slightly higher rate of fixed term exclusions than Children in Care nationally. However Cambridgeshire ranks favourably against statistical neighbours (4<sup>th</sup> out of 11 authorities). The previous year Cambridgeshire was ranked 3<sup>rd</sup>

### Virtual School Internal data

The data is for September 2019 to the end of March 2020 only due to COVID. Please note this relates to the full Virtual School statutory aged cohort (not the qualifying cohort). Furthermore COVID will still have had an impact on these figures as lockdown commenced on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, offering explanation as to the contrast between the reported data and the figures below.

Type	Percentage of Cambridgeshire CiC
Unauthorised Absence	9.6%
Persistence Absence	19.4%
Fixed Term Exclusion	8.8%

### 11.2 Alternative Provision

Where it meets the needs of individual pupils, alternative provision (including tuition) has supplemented the education offer for Cambridgeshire Children in Care. This provision was offered in a variety of circumstances including new to care, unplanned placement moves and children who were not managing the 'typical' education offer currently on offer to them.

At the time when COVID-19 necessitated lockdown (March 2020), 54 children received education outside of a 'typical' offer. This figure includes:

- 9 new to care UASCs
- 2 children who had recently moved into pre-adoptive placements
- 19 children unable to attend their on roll school; of these 2 children are missing abroad and 17 were children who experienced unplanned placement moves meaning that they were unable to continue with current education provision

Excluding the 30 children detailed above, 24 children did not receive a full offer from their on roll school; 5 of these children were on a reduced timetable, 4 of the children received a top-up education offer of tuition or an alternative programme and the remaining child was a reception child moving into an pre-adoptive placement, not yet of statutory school age, for whom a reduced timetable was deemed to be in his best interest.

For the remaining 19 children, where it was not possible for the primary provision to offer 25 hours, this was typically supplemented by:

- Tuition (face to face and online)
- Alternative learning opportunities including noise solutions, farm club and equine assisted learning

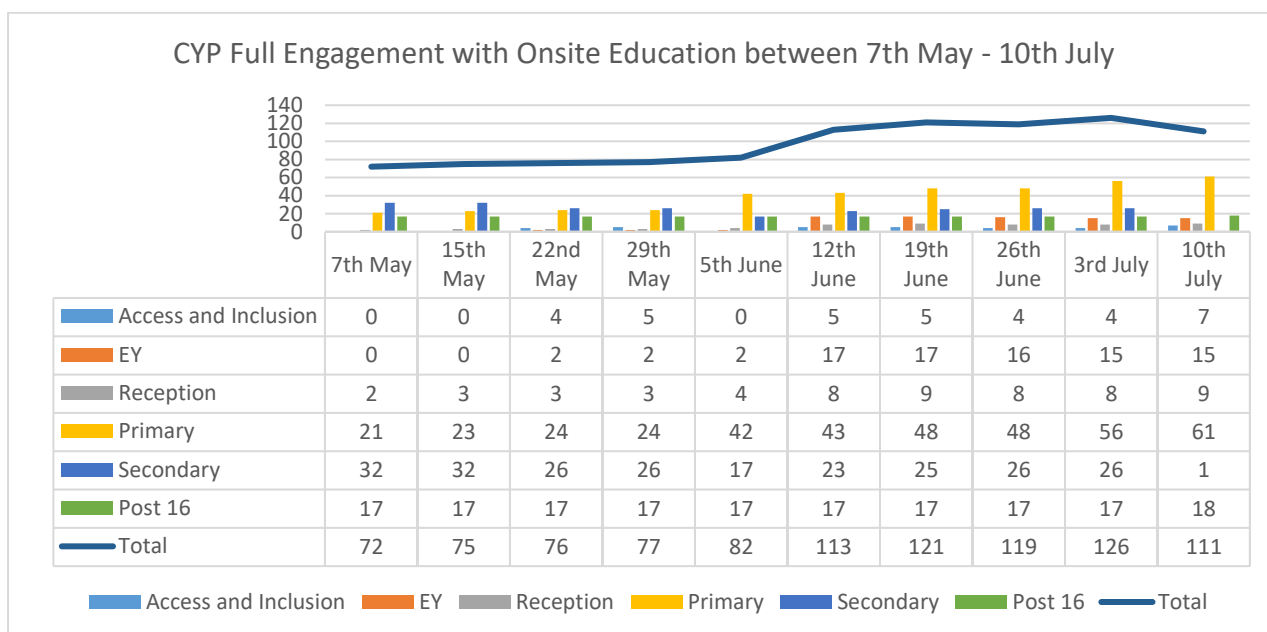
These 19 children received upon average 20.74 hours education per week although this average is significantly skewed due to refusal from 5 CYP who did not engage in any offer; there are significant CCE/CSE concerns for all 5 of these CYP and agencies beyond the Virtual School, including Youth Offending Service are already proactively involved.

11 of the 54 children within this overall group are placed within county, the rest are placed outside of Cambridgeshire. Significant work has been invested in order to develop relationships and further understanding within CCC Access to Resources team in order to mitigate the impact of unplanned placement moves and minimise disruption to education, including work towards keeping increasing numbers of Cambridgeshire Children in Care In county. Cambridgeshire Virtual School are aware of the limitations and barriers regarding suitable placements within county and are working in partnership with social care colleagues around this (as described in section 3.1). For all CYP who experienced an unplanned placement move, a tuition offer was put in place.

### **11.3 Impact of COVID on Education Engagement**

Since March 2020 when schools closed to the majority of CYP, the Virtual School has:

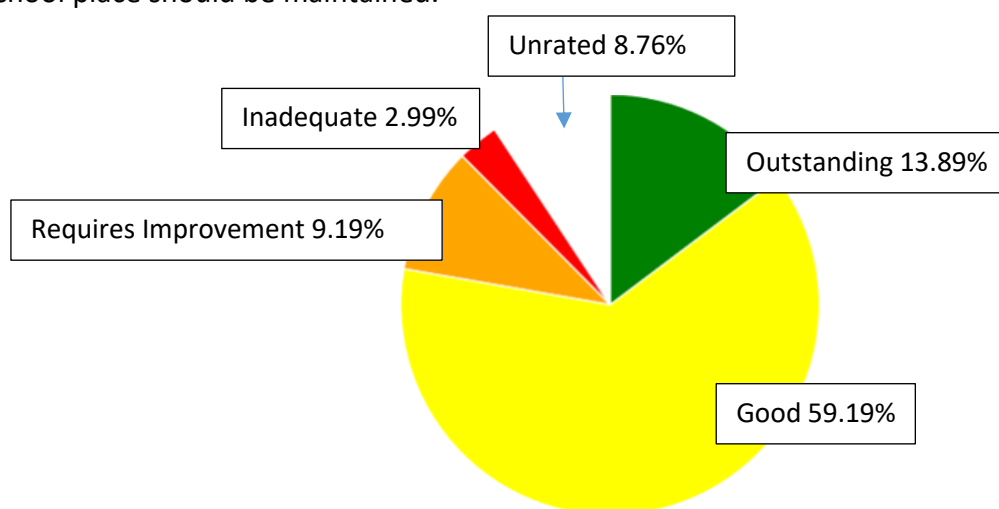
- Monitored attendance and engagement
- Supported CYP to access on-site provision; where deemed to be in the best interests of the CYP and carers
- Provided laptops to facilitate home education
- Provided guidance to carers to support home learning
- Operated a foster carer's support line
- Revised PP+ spend to take account of individual circumstances



As the term progressed more CYP returned to on-site provision. This can be explained by the national increased provision for all Early Years, year 1, year 6 (from 5<sup>th</sup> June) and year 10 (from mid-June). Additionally, there was a sense that in some instances the longer children were at home, the greater pressure this began to put on placements. Where this was the case, the Virtual School supported attendance.

#### 11.4 Quality of Provision

73% of CYP in care of statutory school age, attend good or outstanding provision (July 2020 data). The schools with no ratings typically are new schools or schools that have converted to an academy, and not yet experienced an inspection. Where a child or young person is in a school that is less than good, the Virtual School consider on a case by case basis, whether the school place should be maintained.



## 12. Personal Education Plans

Improvements in the compliance and quality of PEPs has been a key priority for the Virtual School this year. In particular, there has been a focus on the quality of the desirable outcomes and the linking of pupil premium plus to these. In order to facilitate this the Virtual School have:

- Streamlined the PEP
- Added a RAG rating to each section of the PEP
- Provided a prompt within each section, asking the DT to decide if anything detailed in the section needs to be reflected in the desirable outcomes
- Revised the quality assurance process
- Developed webinars and a leaflet on desirable outcomes
- Created exemplar PEPs
- Created specific guidance documents on key aspects of the PEP
- Focused advisory visits on PEPs
- Offered training to social workers on their role within the PEP
- Introduced the PEP Champion role
- Written termly reports analysing the compliance and quality of PEPs to further inform practice

There has also been an external review of PEPs by the Local Authority Quality Assurance Team. See section 14 (priority 1 and 3) for the strengths identified. All action points have been reviewed and are detailed within the full Virtual School development plan.

### 12.1 Impact of COVID-19 on PEPs

In light of COVID-19, the Virtual School worked with Welfare Cloud (the e-PEP provider) to create a bespoke PEP which was more meaningful. This focused on current provision, wellbeing, the views of the CYP, the carer and social worker and transition. Where possible virtual meetings were held. If this could not be achieved, views were gathered by the designated teacher to feed into the document.

In relation to this one DT wrote to the Virtual School to say: *'Thank you for creating such a helpful Covid-19 summer term PEP. I think you are the only LA we work with who has done this and as it is designed for the current situation, is very helpful.'*

The change in PEP for the summer term has impacted on the possible analysis across the full year.

## 12.2 Compliance with the PEP Process (including attendance)

Term	Percentage of children with a PEP	Social Worker Attendance	Social Worker sign off of My Details	Designated Teacher sign off of education sections
Autumn	99.5%	64%	73%	86%
Spring	99.2%	62%	60.1%	80.6%
Summer	98.0%	See below	84.0%	16.0%

	Social Worker Contribution			Designated Teacher Compliance		
	Full	Partial	No	Full	Partial	No
Summer	74.6%	10.8%	14.6%	90.0%	8.0%	2.0%

- It is disappointing that there has not been an improvement in social worker attendance or PEPs sign off between the autumn and spring term PEPs. A start and finish task group has convened to plan how to impact on this for next academic year. It is also a priority identified in the ILACS action plan following the Focused Visit in February 2020.
- There was some impact of Covid-19 which resulted in a low number of PEPs being submitted after the submission deadline in the spring term and this was communicated with link advisory teachers; allowances were made for late submission, however all PEPs were signed off on the final day of the spring term regardless of completion (27<sup>th</sup> March 2020)
- The contributions from social workers to the summer term COVID PEP was pleasing
- Designated teachers responded positively to the COVID PEP and compliance was high

## 12.3 PEP Quality

Each section of the PEP is now rated separately. The analysis below focuses on desirable outcomes. These are the targets set by designated teachers using the identified strengths and needs detailed in all sections of the full PEP. There are also details on the quality of the 'my details' tab. This contains relevant social care information.

	Autumn Term 2019			Spring Term 2020		
	GREEN	AMBER	RED	GREEN	AMBER	RED
Desirable Outcomes (Early Years)	EY moved to the revised model in the Spring term			70%	24%	6%
Desirable Outcomes (Year 1-11)	24%	46%	30%	42%	44%	9%
Desirable Outcomes (Post 16)	55%	29%	16%	66%	22%	12%

- It should be noted that in the autumn term, where outcomes were red, DTs were given feedback and an opportunity to amend them before the final ratings. In the spring term, DTs were not.

- It is pleasing to see the improvement in desirable outcomes, evidencing the impact of the Virtual School's focus. It is not possible to compare the summer term owing to COVID-19

Social Care 'My Details' Rating	Autumn	Spring	Summer
RED	21%	33%	31.8%
AMBER	13%	23%	30.8%
GREEN	64%	42%	37.4%

- There has been a decline in the quality of social care sections over the year
- There will be a focus on improving the quality of the 'my details' next academic year. Social Care are invested in working with in partnership with the Virtual School to achieve this

### 13 Pupil Premium Plus Spending and Impact

#### 13.1 Allocations to Schools

- Following the implementation of the new model, changes were made in the Autumn Term 2019 which required schools to request PP+ and account for this by setting and reviewing 'desirable outcomes' at an individual child level. Designated teachers are now required to set a 'desirable outcome' within the PEP, identify an action and then cost it, identifying what PP+ is required to enable the action to take place. This is reviewed termly
- At the end of the Autumn Term £211,706 PP+ was awarded to CiC of statutory school age. The approximate breakdown of this can be seen below:

Autumn Term 2019	
Area of Learning / Development	% of PP+ Grant
Cognition and Learning	59%
Communication and Interaction	5%
Sensory and Physical	1.5%
Social Emotional & Mental Health	30%
Attendance	0.25%
Transitions	1%
Wider Achievement	3%
Other	0.25%

- The impact of the autumn term allocation was reviewed within the spring term 2020 PEPs. Prior to quality assurance £251,643 was requested for summer term PP+ spend. Following the QA process and challenge from the Virtual School regarding appropriateness of planned spend and carry over from previous term, the final

planned PP+ spend was determined to be £199,703.50. The approximate breakdown of this can be seen below:

Spring Term 2020	
Area of Learning / Development	% of PP+ Grant
Cognition and Learning	60%
Communication and Interaction	5%
Sensory and Physical	2%
Social Emotional & Mental Health	32%
Attendance	0.5%
Transitions	2%
Wider Achievement	0.5%
Other	0%

- As a result of Covid-19, designated teachers were asked to review their proposed PP+ spend and resubmit only those interventions which could still be accessed. As a result of this, £119,083.20 was paid to schools in the summer term 2020
- Impact is currently identifiable at an individual child level. Between the autumn and spring term desirable outcomes were fully achieved in 37.8% of cases and partially met in 43.2%; they were not met for 19%; this can be broken down further in line with the areas of learning and development

	Outcome Fully Achieved	Outcome Partially Achieved	Outcome Not Achieved
Cognition & Learning	38.6%	41.2%	20.2%
Communication & Interaction	35.5%	46.8%	17.7%
Sensory and/or Physical	33.3%	55.6%	11.1%
Social Emotional Mental Health	31.4%	51.8%	16.8%
Attendance	58.8%	29.4%	11.8%
Transitions	45.0%	27.5%	27.5%
Wider Achievement	44.9%	36.7%	18.4%
Other	46.7%	40.0%	13.3%

- Comments from PEP reviews included:
  - "CiC has received regular and intensive adult support for learning this term, and has made excellent progress in all areas of learning, reaching or exceeding ARE in all areas (see assessment data section of PEP). This represents excellent progress from his starting points"
  - "CiC is now able to move from the playground during his break and lunch times smoothly. He responds well to completing small tasks around the classroom when returning"
  - "CiC is now working at a level 5 for science which is now within her target range of 5-7 where previously CiC was working at a 4. CiC is doing regular recap work at home on Doodle and also My Maths. CiC has been covering science topics at level 5-



7 with her home tutor for 1 hour per week and has made good progress in chemistry word equations and in electricity where she now has a good understanding, CiC is also completing science practice exam papers. CiC's teacher in school checks regularly with CiC her understanding of lesson content"

- Within the Academic Year 2019-20, 26 CYP had tuition which was paid for from PP+. This equates to just over £70 000. This was made up of new to care (8), placement move (13), school breakdown (3), Covid19 (2) and does not include CYP who have an EHCP as this tuition is funded by SAT. Engagement within tuition has varied between CYP and is detailed below

Summary of Engagement within Tuition Provided by PP+		
Full Engagement	Partial Engagement	No Engagement
15/26 = 58%	6/26 = 23%	5/26 = 18%

- 101 laptops have been provided at an approximate cost of £54 000. The Virtual School opted to purchase laptops out of PP+ as opposed to using the DfE allocation for school aged children. This was because the DfE laptops are loaned rather than owned by the child and the allocation did not arrive in the local authority until the end of June, they then needed to be set up and distributed. The Virtual School were able to source and allocate the first requests in March 2020. The DfE allocation has been used for 16-18 year olds who do not attract the PP+ grant

### 13.3 Staffing Within the Virtual School:

#### Access and Inclusion Team (4.0)

- Following the restructure of the model, there are now 4 members of staff who work in a sub-team dedicated to promoting the access and inclusion of CiC. (x1 Senior Advisory Teacher, x3 Access and Inclusion Officers). The remit of this team includes processing of CiC new to care, managing school admissions, sourcing interim provision for CiC not accessing provision
- Access and Inclusion Officers also offer support across the whole Virtual School, each holding a specific responsibility including the roles of PEP Champion, Safeguarding Lead and CENE (Children with an EHCP not in Education) Lead
- Since September 2019, the Access and Inclusion have supported 134 CiC. Approximately 35% of these have been CYP new to care, including UASCs, for whom the initial assessment remains the undertaking of the Virtual School
- There have been 59 planned school moves, including CiC moving into pre-adoptive placements. Typically these are attributable to SEND needs, planned care moves and school moves following approval of permanence
- There have been 62 unplanned school moves as a result of placement moves/breakdown or school breakdown where the child is not new to care

- There have been two formal directions this academic year and one case where direction was considered, although this was then resolved before the formal process commenced
- 3.5% of PEPs were completed by the Access and Inclusion team due to the cohort not attending an educational setting

#### **Educational Psychologist (0.6)**

- An EP was seconded to the Virtual School in April 2019 for 3 days a week.
- Following the ILACS inspection in January 2019, the EP was asked to lead improvements in the quality of the Desirable Outcomes within the PEP. She undertook work with the Virtual School team in order to upskill advisory teachers and also delivered face-to-face training and webinar sessions; these remain on youtube to be viewed by new designated teachers.
- Data from quality assurance has been detailed in section 12.2, which demonstrates clear impact on the quality of desirable outcomes
- The EP has also provided bespoke EP support for complex cases, including CiC placed out of county. She has led complex case discussions, specifically with the Access and Inclusion team
- The EP has offered supervision to members of the Virtual School Team upon request
- During the COVID-19 period she has worked with SEND Services and the Clinicians to provide advice and support to carers. This has had limited usage with only two carers using the service. The service is currently being reviewed with plans to extend the remit to include advice where there are children previously in care, and an offer for schools and education settings

#### **Data Officer (0.7)**

- A tracker has now been established which ensures that the Virtual School roll remains accurate. This tracker also includes child level detail for CiC aged 2 and below to ensure that there is a smooth transition for the Virtual School Early Years Advisory Teacher.
- The use of Welfare Cloud Analytics, Nexus, LAIT and Fischer Family Trust is now embedded in the work of the Virtual School.

### **13.3 Training**

All training offered by the Virtual School is funded through PP+. Please see section 4 for details.

### **13.4 Resources**

The Virtual School have invested in virtual reality headsets. These have been incorporated into key training courses in preparation for next academic year. The Cornerstone VR programme provides an immersive experience which offers accelerated learning and understanding of the needs of children in or that have experience of the care system.

The Virtual School has purchased the 'Reach to Teach' App for all schools and education settings / providers worked with. This app supports educators to reflect on what various behaviours may be communicating and provides suggestions / approaches which may increase the inclusion and participation of the child or young person.

The Boxall Profile is one tool which supports educators to consider the social and emotional needs of children and young people. The Virtual School have purchased this resource and will be making it available to schools next academic year.

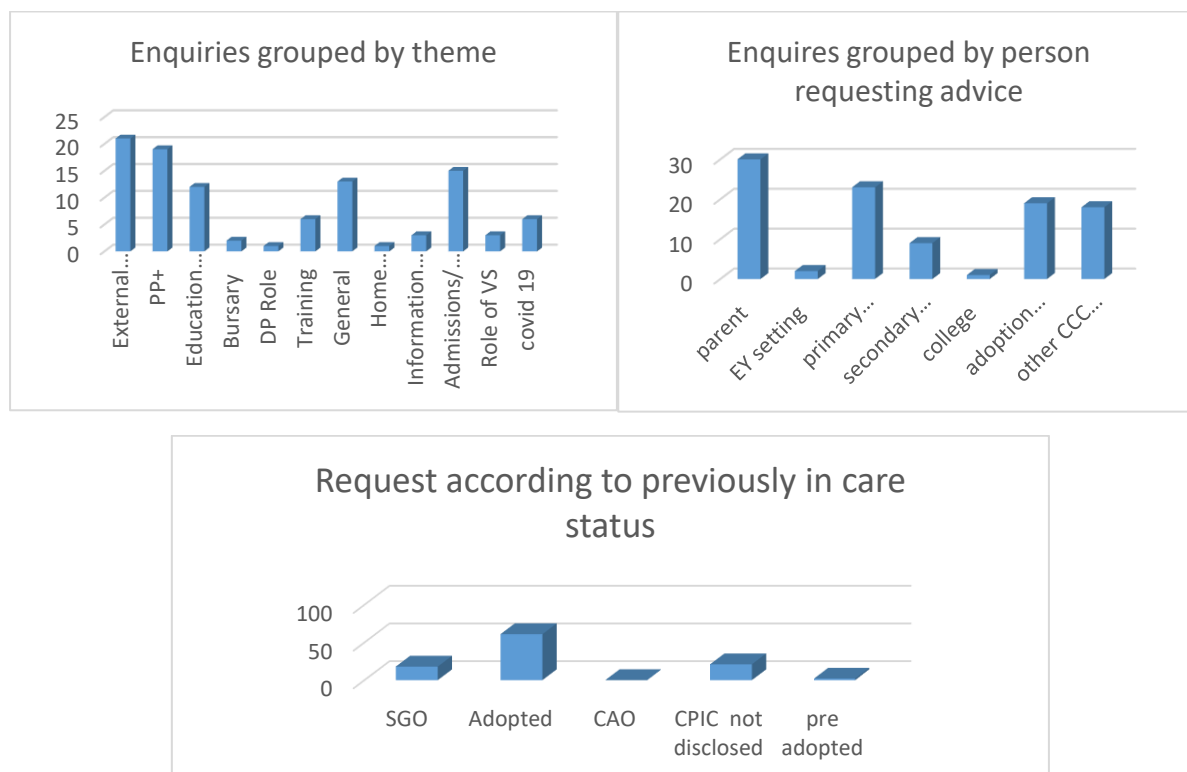
## 14 Children Previously in Care

In October 2019 the Virtual School recruited a Previously in Care Advisor jointly with Peterborough Virtual School. This offered Cambridgeshire two days of support. The Advisor is leaving in August. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have made the decision to split the role, but will continue to work closely together.

The focus this year has been on:

- The creation of resources and literature to support families and professionals
- A training offer for families and professionals
- Advice and information for families and professionals around individual circumstances
- Creating links with key agencies and other Virtual School Previously in Care Advisors within the Eastern region.

Over the year there have been 102 enquires of which 60% received a response the same day and a further 37% were responded to within 1-3 days.



- The analysis by type of enquiry has informed the production of literature to cover these common themes.
- It is evident that the service has been more commonly used by families and professionals linked to adoption (64% of enquiries compared to 18% of enquiries linked to SGOs and no enquiries where there is a CAO). Over the next year, further consideration will be given as to how to promote the role of the Virtual School to families and professionals linked to children subject to Special Guardianship Orders and Child Arrangement Orders.
- £68,796 was provided to the local authority to fulfil this duty. A further sum is guaranteed for the next year.

### **15 Review of Priorities for 2019 / 2020**

Six priorities were identified in the Virtual School development plan; the first four of which are central to the Virtual School's long term development plan. These are:

1. PEPs consistently meet the needs of children and young people in care
2. Children and young people in care have increased access to and inclusion within education, leading to improved outcomes
3. Projects and intervention (including those funded by PP+) raise attainment, engagement and aspirations
4. There is a collective responsibility for the education of Children in Care, with all parties feeling empowered to support effectively
5. Policy and practice promotes educational outcomes for children previously in care
6. There is stability within the Virtual School Team and a sense of wellbeing

The first year's impact can be evidenced in the following way:

#### **Priority 1:**

- Education sections of the PEP have shown a term on term improvement in quality (see section 12 for further details)
- There has consistently been above 98% of children in receipt of a PEP

The external PEP audit completed December 19 identified the following strengths:

- The Virtual School Quality Assurance standards are applied in the majority of cases.
- Virtual School QA system is effective in identifying actions which are not SMART, and are producing resources to assist ePEP authors make improvements required
- Children and young people were given support to assist with transitions between school and through key stages

#### **Priority 2:**

- Relationships have developed between the Virtual School, Social Care, Statutory Assessment Team and ART
- The Virtual School Access and Inclusion Team are now leading on support for children new to care or requiring a change to education provision\*

- CENE meetings are now taking place fortnightly\*
- All children without an EHCP have an offer of education within 10 days of the need arising
- There were no permanent exclusions. Where a school did initiate the process, VS intervention enabled an alternative outcome

*\* Data processes are currently being developed which will enable the impact of changes made to be monitored and reported on*

#### Priority 3:

- Pupil Premium Plus spend now links directly to desirable outcomes
- Examples of the review of spending are reported (see section 13.1 for details)
- The spend can be reported against 'area of need' (see section 13.1 for details)
- 8 children took part in the REES Centre Paired Reading intervention. Post intervention assessments are currently underway
- The impact of the role of the EP is evidenced in section 13.2

The external PEP audit completed December 19 identified the following strengths:

- Pupil Premium Plus payments were appropriately scrutinised by the Virtual School
- Children's views were being used to create child centred actions for Pupil Premium Plus spending

#### Priority 4:

- Evaluations from the Early Years launch demonstrate an understanding of the new model
- A total of 500 advisory visits took place over the autumn and spring term
- Advisory visits paperwork show that the majority of education settings have made progress towards the outcomes set. These have linked to the empowerment of DTs in their role and support to enable DTs to complete PEPs with increased confidence Where this isn't the case, there is evidence of increased VS intervention
- There is an understanding within the VS of the remit of other teams and direct lines of communication are established

### **16 Priorities for 2020 / 2021**

These four priorities will continue to underpin developments within the Virtual School, with data being a golden thread running through. For this year a fifth priority has been identified, which relates to COVID recovery. All of the priorities identified will be detailed in the Virtual School Development Plan 2020 / 2021. The development plan will include key actions and termly review points, in order to measure impact. The progress towards achieving the outcomes will be shared both through the Corporate Parenting Board Sub-Committee and with the Virtual School Management Board.

Within these priorities, the following developments are planned:

- 1. PEPs consistently meet the needs of children and young people in care**
  - There is increased compliance and quality of PEPs within social care
  - Personal Advisors have increased understanding of PEPs and their role within it
  - Engagement of MATs in raising compliance and quality of PEPs within their schools is piloted
  - Attainment and progress data is accurately completed within PEPs
  - The Advisory Team are upskilled and able to use the data within PEPs to offer support and challenge to schools
  - There continues to be a high level of training around PEPs; the offer is supplemented by the creation of webinars
  - The initial PEP process is embedded, ensuring compliance is above 95%
  - The scope of the role of the PEP Champion is formalised
  - A PEP QA audit panel (to include representatives from social care, the education sector and the local authority) is created which provides greater scrutiny of the QA process
  
- 2. Children and young people in care have increased access to and inclusion within education, leading to improved outcomes**
  - Data systems for SEND, AP, NEET (at Post 16), attendance and exclusion enable accurate monitoring and reporting which inform a VS response
  - Processes are further developed which enable education to be seen as central at the point of entry to care / placement move
  - Tuition is tailored to the individual's strengths and needs. It is evaluated in terms of cost and impact
  - SEND protocol is operational. The VS team and key partners understand the protocol and CENE meetings; it is used to increase inclusion leading to improved outcomes for children and young people
  - The foster carers support line is extended to include families and professionals supporting children previously in care, and educational professionals supporting Children in Care
  - Resources which promote inclusion e.g. Boxall and Reach to Teach are provided for DTs
  
- 3. Projects and intervention (including those funded by PP+) raise attainment, engagement and aspirations**
  - Aspirational Futures project is initiated and developed
  - The feasibility of participating in the Dolly Parton Imagination Library scheme is considered and if relevant progressed
  - Virtual Reality Headsets are incorporated into VS training offer and the impact is measured
  - PP+ allocated through PEPs is monitored and analysed to evaluate impact against attainment and progress

- Advisory visits focus on using term on term data, alongside end of year stage data to support and challenge DTs in targeting effective intervention to raise attainment and progress
- A VS grant is available to support the educational needs of 16-18 year olds, increasing EET
- A programme is developed which supports life skills for young people (post 16)
- Trauma informed training is extended to include targeted young people

**4. There is a collective responsibility for the education of Children in Care, with all parties feeling empowered to support effectively**

- The training offer is further developed to include virtual network meetings, webinars and face to face sessions for all key partners (IROS, carers and residential carers, SW, schools, governors, ART, connected persons team, Adoption team)
- Data is used to highlight key barriers and successes, this is shared with key partners in order to drive forward change
- Policy and practice is developed to enable the VS Team to empower others to effectively support care experienced children
- Internal VS data and tracking facilitates effectively support the work of the wider VS team
- The website is updated and kept relevant
- Twitter is used to promote key messages with all key partners
- Current barriers with access to shared systems are overcome

**5. COVID 19 Recovery Plan**

- The Virtual School is abreast of the national and local context and responds accordingly
- The VS EP provides support to carers, parents and schools to support transition back into school post COVID
- Additional PP+ requests are considered in response to impact of COVID (catch up provision and SEMH support)
- Tuition is in place for year 11s and 13s who wish to re-sit following the results being issued
- There is strong advocacy for any year 11s and 13s who have not achieved the minimum grades required to enable entry to the next phase of their education, impacting on EET
- Risk assessments facilitate the return to office bases and face to face working in line with CCC policy

## 17. Glossary of Acronyms

ARE	Age Related Expectation
CAO	Child Arrangement Order
CENE	Children with an Education Health Care Plan not in Education
CiC	Child/ren in Care
CPiC	Child/ren Previously in Care
CYP	Children or Young Person
DfE	Department for Education
EET	In Education Employment or Training
EHCP	Education Health and Care Plan
EP	Education Psychologist
ESOL	English to Speakers of Other Languages
EY	Early Years
FASD	Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders
GLD	Good Level of Development
ILACS	Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services
IRO	Independent Reviewing Officer
KS (1,2,3,4)	Key Stage (1,2,3,4)
LA	Local Authority
LAIT	Local Authority Information Tool
NEET	Not in Education Employment or Training
PA	Personal Advisor
PEP	Personal Education Plan
PP+	Pupil Premium Plus
RAG	Read Amber Green (rating)
SEMH	Social Emotional Mental Health
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SGO	Special Guardianship Order
UASC	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child/ren
YOS	Youth Offending Service