

APPENDIX E

Schools Forum funding to Nottingham City Virtual School

September 2017

1. Context

- 1.1. The Children and Families Act 2014 required all local authorities in England to appoint at least one person for the purpose of discharging the local authority's duty to promote the educational achievement of its looked after children, wherever they live or are educated. That person, the Virtual School Head (VSH) must be an officer employed by the authority or another local authority in England.
- 1.2. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 expands the remit of VSHs to include the promotion of educational achievement of adopted children in England and children subject to Special Guardianship Orders.
- 1.3. The purposes of the Virtual School for Children in Care consist of:
 - Supporting with closing the attainment and progress gap between looked after children and their peers, and creating a culture of high aspirations for them.
 - Ensuring looked after children have access to a suitable range of high quality education
 - Monitor, tracking and reporting on the attendance and educational progress of the authorities' children in care.
 - Ensuring there are arrangements in place to improve the educational experiences and outcomes of their authority's children in care.
 - Ensuring every child in their authorities care has a high quality and up to date Personal Education Plan (PEP)
 - Ensuring social workers, designated teachers and schools, carers and IROs understand their role and responsibilities in promoting the education of children in care and initiating, developing, reviewing and updating the child's PEP.
 - Managing and allocating Pupil Premium Plus and ensure there are arrangements in place to ensure schools are using the allocated funding to benefit the educational needs of the child.

2. Nottingham City Virtual School

- 2.1. The Nottingham City Virtual School consists of:
 - Virtual School Head- Accountable for the management, activities and development of the Virtual School. This post is not funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant, it is funded from local authority funding.
 - Service Manager- provides leadership, management and development for all aspects of the Virtual School.

Report Author: Jasmin Howell, Virtual School Service Manager.

Date: September 2017

APPENDIX E

- 2x Achievement Consultants- provides advice, support and training to key stakeholders, specifically Designated teachers, social workers and teachers, in respect to the education of children care,. Has responsibility for 'complex' children in care cases; monitoring and supporting their educational experience and outcomes. Attends and contributes to PEP meetings, re-integration meetings and exclusion meeting to offer advice and support.
- 2x Education Support Officers- provides advice, support and training to key stakeholders, specifically carers and social workers, in respect to the education of children care. Has responsibility for 'less complex' children in care cases; monitoring and supporting their educational experience and outcomes. Attends and contributes to PEP meetings, re-integration meetings and exclusion meeting to offer advice and support.
- 2x administrators- carrying out all the administrative tasks associated with the Virtual School; administration of Pupil Premium Plus and EPG funding, data inputting and cleansing.
- 1x data lead- developing and maintaining the information management systems for the Virtual School to enable effective reporting and tracking of the authorities' children in care.

APPENDIX E

3. Funding Allocation:

APPENDIX E

Table 1: Projected income and expenditure of the Virtual School 2018/19				
	£m	£m	£m	Intervention/support
Income				
Projected DSG Income		-0.47		
Local Authority Contribution		-0.017		
Total estimated income			-0.487	
Less Expenditure				
Staff Costs				
Virtual School Manager	0.060			Recruited in December 2016. Role detail in paragraph 2
Achievement Consultant	0.060			Role detail in paragraph 2
Achievement Consultant	0.060			Post part-time, savings contributing to 3rd ESO role. Role detail in paragraph 2
Education Support Officer	0.040			Post being recruited to. Role detail in paragraph 2
Education Support Officer	0.040			Job evaluation to higher grade commencing April 17. Role detail in paragraph 2
Education Support Officer	0.040			Left post, position filled with secondment. Role detail in paragraph 2
Administrative support	0.023			Role detail in paragraph 2
Administrative support	0.023			Role detail in paragraph 2
Data Management	0.032			Commenced in post June 2016 currently working pte. Role detail in paragraph 2
Travel expenses	0.002			Travel cards, mileage and rail tickets
Staff CPD/Conferences	0.004			Training, travel
Total Staff Costs		0.374		
Support Costs				
Welfare Call and SIMS	0.043			
Letterbox Trust – Support for pupils	0.015			Letterbox and postage
Designated Teacher Network support and Conference Costs	0.015			Venue hire
Intervention Funding – e.g. 1-1 tuition, translation	0.040			One to one tuition for LAC
Total Support Costs		0.113		
Less Total Expenditure			0.487	
Projected surplus/deficit			0	

4. Nottingham City Virtual School Intended Outcomes:

Report Author: Jasmin Howell, Virtual School Service Manager.

Date: September 2017

APPENDIX E

- Support with closing the attainment and progress gap between looked after children and their peers.
- There is a culture of high aspirations for children in care as a top priority.
- Children in care have access to a suitable range of high quality education placement options and commissioning services for them takes account of the duty to promote their educational achievement.
- Robust procedures and arrangements are in place to monitor the attendance and educational progress and experience of Nottingham City children in care that can inform interventions and support as necessary.
- Social workers, designated teachers and schools, carers and IROs understand their role and responsibilities in initiating, developing, reviewing and updating the child's PEP and how they help meet the needs identified in that PEP.
- All Nottingham City children in care have an up-to-date, effective and high quality PEP that focus on educational outcomes.
- Regular reporting to relevant stakeholders on the attainment and educational experience of children in care.
- Designated teachers, social workers, independent reviewing officers and carers have appropriate training to undertake their role and fulfil their duties in promoting and supporting the education of children in care.
- Effective arrangements are in place to manage, monitor and distribute Pupil Premium Plus Funding to schools, in accordance with the Conditions of Grant, to help improve the attainment of children in care and close the attainment gap between this group and their peers.

5. **Impact**

- 5.1. Children in care are often negatively impacted by their experiences in their families before being accommodated. There is a wealth of national research that evidences that these historical experiences will impact on the outcomes for that child/young person for the rest of their lives. Whilst care provides a safe and stable environment and often mitigates the impact of these experiences (particularly where children have been in care from a young age or for a significant amount of time) the outcomes of this cohort are generally worse than their peers.
- 5.2. Virtual School roll: There are currently 359 children in care of statutory school age on the roll of Nottingham City Virtual School.
- 5.3. School attendance: School attendance rate has improved for Nottingham City children in care. The total percentage school attendance in the 2015-16 academic year was 89.7%, in the 2016-17 academic year the total percentage attendance was 94.6%.
- 5.4. Exclusions: There have been no permanent exclusions of children in care during the 2016/17 academic year. There were 159 incidents of fixed term exclusion over the 2016/17 academic year. The breakdown of exclusion codes/reasons are noted in Table below. The most common causes of fixed term exclusion were 'physical assault against

Report Author: Jasmin Howell, Virtual School Service Manager.

Date: September 2017

APPENDIX E

an adult', 'verbal abuse/ threatening behaviour against an adult' and 'persistent disruptive behaviour'.

- 5.5. We are unable to do a comparison of exclusions between the 2015-16 academic year and the last academic year, 2016-17; although raw data was collected in 2015-16, a systematic arrangement and quality assurance approach to scrutinising the data was not in place at that time. To make a comparison in data that has been scrutinised and checked this year to data which wasn't in the previous academic year would therefore be inappropriate. Arrangements are now in place to make comparisons in exclusions each academic year going forward.

Exclusion Code	Number of Incidents 2016-17	%
Bullying	2	1%
Damage	1	1%
Drug and alcohol related	2	1%
Other	84	53%
Persistent disruptive behaviour	15	9%
Physical assault against a pupil	5	3%
Physical assault against an adult	22	14%
Racist Abuse	1	1%
Theft	3	2%
Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against a pupil	4	3%
Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against an adult	20	13%
Grand Total	159	

- 5.6. There were 403.5 days lost to fixed term exclusion in total across the 2016/17 academic year. There were 29 fixed term exclusions lasting 5 days or more, with the longest being a fixed term exclusion of 12 days- these account for 41% of all fixed term exclusions during the year.
- 5.7. There were significantly more fixed term exclusions for pupils at secondary phase (132 fixed term exclusions for secondary-phase pupils and 27 for primary-phase pupils).
- 5.8. Pupil Premium: The entire budget of Pupil Premium was allocated/spent in the last financial year; the table below details the number of applications received from schools:

Term	Number eligible schools	Number schools applying
Summer term 2016	210	167
Autumn term 2016	219	180
Spring term 2017	219	162

- 5.9. Attainment: The tables below detail attainment for children in care at Key Stage 1, 2 and in the 2016-17 academic and how this compared to the previous year:

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Key Stage 1 attainment	Reading		Maths		Writing	
	15/16	16/17	15/16	16/17	15/16	16/17

Report Author: Jasmin Howell, Virtual School Service Manager.

Date: September 2017

APPENDIX E

Number of pupils	18	13	18	13	16	13
Number working at ARE	9	6	6	7	5	7
% working at ARE	50%	46%	33%	54%	31%	54%

5.10. At key Stage 1 for reading the number of children in care achieving age related expectations in 2016-17 has decreased by 4%, however, for the other two subjects attainment has significantly increased; maths by 21% and writing by 23%.

Key Stage 2 attainment	Reading		Maths		Writing		RWM		SPAG	
	15/16	16/17	15/16	16/17	15/16	16/17	15/16	16/17	15/16	16/17
Number of pupils	23	37	23	32	23	37	23	32	22	37
Number working at ARE	13	13	15	14	14	18	11	8	11	15
% working at ARE	52%	35%	65%	44%	61%	49%	48%	25%	50%	41%

5.11. Generally, the number of children at Key Stage 2 in 2016-17 who have achieved age related expectations across all subject is similar to the previous year. The 2016-17 cohort is approx. 50% bigger than the previous year and therefore percentages can be misleading when making a direct comparison.

Keys Stage 4 attainment	Number		+/- change	Percentage		+/- change
	15/16	16/17		15/16	16/17	
Total number in cohort	44	48	+4			
No qualifications	4	5	+1	9%	10%	+1%
Any qualification	33	40	+7	75%	83%	+8%
5+ GCSE A*-G	18	23	+5	41%	48%	+7%
5+ GCSE A*-C	3	7	+4	7%	15%	+8%
5+ GCSE A*-C, incl E & M L4+	3	5	+2	7%	10%	+3%
E & M L4+	5	8	+4	11%	17%	+6%

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Date: September 2017

APPENDIX E

5.12. For the Key Stage 4 cohort in 2016-17 we have seen an increase for each performance indicator of attainment on the previous year.

5.13. Until the DfE release full data on average Attainment 8 scores of all pupils nationally in the same key stage 2 prior attainment fine level band, we are unable to calculate Progress 8 scores as there are no groupings of similar pupils to calculate against. This data should be being released in October this year.

6. **Developments in Nottingham City Virtual School**

The Nottingham City Virtual School has recently reviewed and developed its arrangements in respect to the following following developments in arrangements

- Case allocation: Cases are now allocated to each staff member within the Virtual School team who have standard minimum expectations of the work required for each case.
- PEP review: The Virtual School are currently working on development of an electronic PEP
- Training: An Annual Programme of support has been developed for the 2017-18 academic year that details the training available for Designated Teachers, social workers, foster carers, residential carers, independent reviewing officers and school governors.
- Pupil Premium Plus: a review has taken place of the previous PPP arrangements, consequently the arrangements for both applying, distributing and monitoring Pupil Premium Plus has changed starting this academic year (2017-18). The new arrangements make it more efficient and easier for schools to apply for the funding and for the Virtual School to track, monitor and measure impact.
- Additional Funding Requests: new arrangements have been put in place to enable schools to apply for additional funding for interventions that support and improve the education outcomes of children in care, this is funding additional to the £1900 PP allocation.
- Information and case management systems: The Virtual School are currently in the process of developing their information and case management systems to enable effective monitoring and tracking of educational outcomes and the experience of individual children in care. Systems are being developed to enable the Virtual School to consider the trajectory of children in care in respect to their education and suggest/recommend/advice/implement targeted interventions to improve outcomes.

Report end.