

Meeting: Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee

Date: 23rd January 2020

Title: The Attainment of Looked After Children

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Service: Children's Services

Wards affected: All

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee with an overview of the educational outcomes and progress of the children in the care of North Tyneside Council.

2. Recommendations

The sub-committee is recommended to note the information contained within this report.

3. Information

- 3.1 As Corporate Parents we have a statutory duty to promote the education of looked after children in the care of North Tyneside Council. We also have an extended remit to provide advice and information to schools and families relating to the education of previously looked after children (who have achieved permanence through adoption, special guardianship or a child arrangements order).
- 3.2 The Virtual School sits within The RHELAC (Raising the Health and Education of Looked After Children) Team and together with our health colleagues we closely monitor the holistic needs of our looked after children. The Virtual School has a small team of teachers that provide support, mainly in schools, to help pupils fill gaps in their knowledge and give them a boost in preparation for exams and assessments. Over the last few years we have also developed our psychological support through educational psychologists and counsellors to help our pupils manage their mental health needs that can sometimes be a barrier to learning.
- 3.3 The Virtual School Head manages the Pupil Premium Plus for looked after children and this partly funds the support available within our team. We also use the funding to provide ICT equipment, fund extra tuition or fund educational visits. Schools also receive a direct allocation of £1200 per looked after child each year to provide additional support in school too.
- 3.4 We closely monitor the progress and attendance of our looked after children through their Personal Education Plans and our termly data collection from schools. The Virtual School has a performance officer who supports with presenting the data ready for analysis so

that we can allocate support where needed, identify any gaps in provision and hold schools to account when pupils don't appear to be making enough progress.

4. Educational Outcomes 2019

4.1 The Department for Education (DfE) national data set for looked after children's outcomes does not get published until March. NCER (National Consortium for Examination Results) have worked with local authorities to ensure data was uploaded timely this year so virtual school heads had access to data at almost the same time as other school heads.

4.2 Early Years Foundation Stage

	Eligible	Ineligible	CLA Matches	ACHIEVED AT LEAST EXPECTED											
				GLD ^{1 2}	Avg. Total Pts.Sc	COM	PHY	PSE	Prime Goals	LIT	MAT	UTW	EXP	Specific Goals	All Goals
NCER National (CLA)	1,080	10	100.0%	48.0%	30.2	64.0%	71.0%	64.0%	57.0%	51.0%	59.0%	68.0%	73.0%	49.0%	47.0%
Local Authority - North Tyneside (all schools)	2,384	2	-	72.0%	35.0	82.6%	87.0%	84.5%	79.8%	73.9%	78.6%	84.1%	85.9%	71.8%	70.9%
Virtual School - North Tyneside	7	0	100.0%	71.4%	32.3	85.7%	85.7%	85.7%	85.7%	71.4%	85.7%	85.7%	85.7%	71.4%	71.4%

The 7 looked after children in our early years OC2 cohort (in care for 12+ months) outperformed both looked after children nationally and their non-looked after peers in North Tyneside. Of the two that didn't achieve the expected standard, one only missed by 2 points and the other is below in most areas and further assessment will be undertaken.

4.3 Phonics

Estab. Name	Cohort	No Score	Mark					APS	Outcome				
			0-15	16-23	24-31	32-36	37-40		Q	A	D	WT	WA
NCER National (CLA)	1,300	7.0%	15.0%	8.0%	7.0%	29.0%	35.0%	29.8	0.0%	0.0%	6.0%	29.0%	64.0%
Local Authority - North Tyneside (all schools)	2,327	1.8%	7.1%	3.5%	4.1%	27.3%	56.0%	34.0	0.0%	0.3%	1.6%	14.8%	83.4%
Virtual School - North Tyneside	4	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	36.0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Whilst there are only 4 children in this cohort, they all passed their Phonics test. They also had a higher average point score than the other cohorts. This is the second year 100% of our OC2 cohort have passed their Phonics Check. We have invested in a Reading Recovery teacher who has supported our pupils that met the criteria and provided intensive support in reading and

writing. This enables the pupils to make accelerated progress and catch up with their peers. We feel it is important for children to learn to read as they are then able to access all other subjects at school. The evidence base around Reading Recovery is very strong and we will continue to use this approach as although it is quite an expensive intervention we feel it is well worth the investment.

Key Stage 1

	Cohort **	CLA Matches	READING		WRITING		MATHS		SCIENCE		RWM*	RWMS*
			<EXS	≥EXS	<EXS	≥EXS	<EXS	≥EXS	<EXS	≥EXS	≥EXS	≥EXS
NCER National (CLA)	1,570	100.0%	47.0%	52.0%	57.0%	42.0%	50.0%	49.0%	40.0%	59.0%	37.0%	37.0%
Local Authority - North Tyneside (all schools)	2,354	0.7%	22.0%	78.0%	28.0%	72.0%	21.9%	78.0%	15.3%	84.7%	67.5%	67.3%
Virtual School - North Tyneside	7	100.0%	14.3%	85.7%	42.9%	57.1%	14.3%	85.7%	14.3%	85.7%	57.1%	57.1%

The 7 pupils in this cohort also out-performed their non-looked after peers in Reading, Maths and Science but 3 did not meet the expected standard in writing which has impacted on the Reading, Writing, Maths (RWM) achievement. Looked after children nationally have lower writing scores and writing has been an area of focus for us for many years. We believe this is a combination of poor fine motor skills from neglect in their early life, poorer vocabulary and a lack of experiences to write about. We now have an occupational therapist within the team and hope that she will support with handwriting. The Reading Recovery Programme also supports with writing and hopefully those that have benefitted from this intervention will see further improvements in the future.

Key Stage 2

	Cohort	CLA Matches	RWM*		READING			WRITING TA			MATHS			GPS				
			≥ Exp	High	Avg SS	< Exp	≥ Exp	High	Exp	≥ GDS	Avg SS	< Exp	≥ Exp	High	Avg SS	< Exp	≥ Exp	High
NCER National (CLA)	2,560	100.0%	36.0%	2.0%	100.1	51.0%	49.0%	12.0%	51.0%	6.0%	100.1	48.0%	51.0%	9.0%	101.5	46.0%	53.0%	15.0%
Local Authority - North Tyneside (all schools)	2,457	0.8%	66.7%	11.4%	104.9	24.3%	75.2%	27.3%	79.9%	24.6%	105.3	19.7%	79.8%	26.7%	106.4	21.2%	78.4%	35.6%
Virtual School - North Tyneside	4	100.0%	50.0%	0.0%	80.25	0.0%	75.0%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	76.25	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	51.0	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%

The Key Stage 2 Cohort only includes 4 children that have been in care for more than 12 months (as of March 19). This makes statistical analysis difficult. 50% of the OC2 cohort achieved the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths which is higher than looked after children nationally. Of the 4 pupils included above, one was disapplied due to his Special Educational Needs and another has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) for Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) and due to his emotional needs did not complete the Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling test but did achieve expected standard in Reading (but just missed his Maths).

Key Stage 4 OC2 Outcomes (24 in cohort)

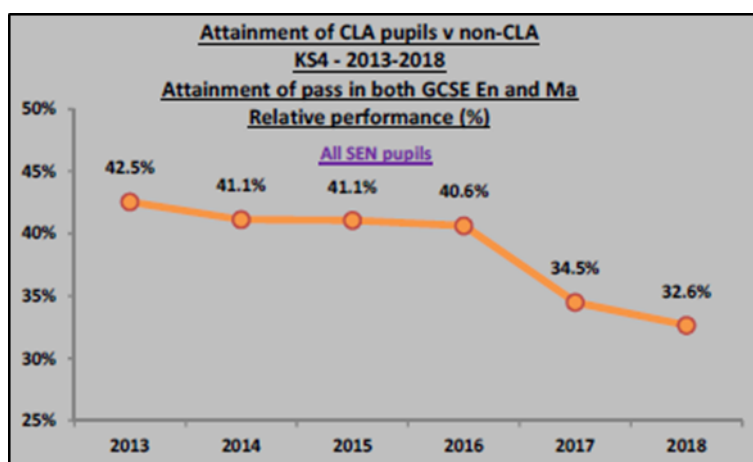
The NCER data for this cohort has too many gaps currently to be included in this report due to the numbers we had in independent residential provision that have not been uploaded to the system yet.

Our Key Stage 4 cohorts are always significantly larger than our other cohorts due to the number of adolescents entering care. 33% entered care during Key Stage 4, making it difficult to fill knowledge gaps in time for the exams.

	Grade 4+	Grade 5+
Maths	30%	9%
English	22%	9%
Maths and English (The Basics)	13%	0

Whilst the number achieving 'the Basics' at Grade 4+ is lower than previously, 22% only missed by one grade. The changes in the GCSE grading system has made it much harder for our pupils to meet the Grade 5+ benchmark that schools are now judged on. We are now doing some targeted work with Key Stage 3 pupils to fill gaps in their mathematical knowledge. Through identifying gaps and teaching pupils the areas they were struggling with we are seeing pupils accelerate their progress. In the past we have perhaps not paid enough attention to Key Stage 3 and hopefully through this work they will be more prepared for the increased expectations at Key Stage 4.

This year's cohort had 25% with an Education, Health and Care Plan which also impacted on our outcomes. The National Association of Virtual School Heads has analysed some of the national data and have found that the new Maths and English GCSEs are much harder to achieve for looked after children with identified Special Educational Needs (SEN). Below is a graph showing the relative attainment of looked after children with non-looked after children with SEN. As you can see, since the changes in 2016 the outcomes for looked after children have declined.



Key Stage 5

Our Post-16 cohort take many different routes to employment. Only 3 looked after children completed A Levels this year and all of them achieved the grades they required to go to university. Others achieve well by taking a vocational route at Tyne Met and Newcastle College and we have an increasing number securing apprenticeships within the council. The Government has announced we will get some Pupil Premium Plus for looked after children in Further Education but we are awaiting further news about this. This is a group we are keen to do more work with so additional funding will be helpful.

Summary

Overall, we are very proud of the achievements of our looked after children this year. Our younger pupils have demonstrated that being in care does not necessarily need to be a barrier to achieving. Our Early Years Foundation Stage and Phonics outcomes were higher than pupils who are not in care and at Key Stage 1 in Reading and Maths, this was also the case. Although our cohort sizes are small, this is still an impressive achievement.

We recognise our Key Stage 4 cohort provides us with more challenge and although outcomes were not as high as we would have liked, many missed achieving the Grade 4s by only one grade. The new higher Grade 5 benchmark will be a challenge for those that have missed significant parts of their education prior to entering care and any instability at home or school impacts on progress. The new GCSEs themselves appear to more challenging for our pupils but we can see the impact of the strategies we have been using in the predicted outcomes of this year's cohort.

5. Background documents

'Promoting the Education of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children' DfE Guidance February 2018.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683556/Promoting_the_education_of_looked-after_children_and_previously_looked-after_children.pdf