



Durham Virtual School

Annual Report 2022-2023

Durham Virtual School champions care-experienced children and young people. We support parents, corporate parents, carers, schools, and educational settings to support looked after and previously children in care so that they:

- attend a school or setting which best meets their needs.
- have their needs identified and supported through multi agency working
- feel safe, happy and settled.
- attend regularly.
- make progress and achieve.
- have a voice that positively impacts on the services they receive.
- have stability in home, care, and education placement.
- receive good advice and guidance to progress into further education, employment, and training and, where appropriate, university.
- are well-prepared for adulthood.
- receive recognition for their achievement and have their successes celebrated.

In May 2022 Durham were visited by OFSTED, the Virtual School was part of the ILACS. We were proud to be part of the inspection and were given the opportunity to share the work we do with the HMI for Education.

The outcome was that Durham is Good with Outstanding Leadership and Management. The report said “The virtual school is championing the educational needs of children in care. Personal education plans are used effectively in order to identify and support their educational needs. Children’s aspirations are being recognised and supported. When required, additional support is given to ensure that children meet their full potential”.

This year the annual report reflects the way in which we have continued to work together with Social Care, Health colleagues and SEND and Inclusion to ensure this offer to our children and young people continues and improves to ensure they are supported to better outcomes and a brighter future.

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The Virtual School September 2022 to July 2023

This year the virtual school has continued to support schools and settings to achieve the best outcomes for Children looked After (CLA). In most cases the children have adjusted back into a regular routine and structure of the school day. The Virtual School has worked with carers, social workers, and schools to ensure that children were able to access the best possible education available supported by some of the therapeutic interventions we are able to offer through our connections with colleagues within the Local Authority (LA). The following information summarises how we have supported Children Looked After during this time:

- All schools have had access to the Recovery Grant Premium and School Led Tutoring funding.
- We encouraged schools to make use of their “Catch Up funding” to support the gaps that had emerged during Covid 19 and to support formal examinations. We also liaised with Durham Works to ensure all Year 11 had an exit Personal Education Plan, (PEP) which reflected future aspirations and Year 13 knew what their next steps were.
- A range of learning materials were issued to children including Curious Kids and Story Time packs. Children in Year 2 to Year 8 were given access to Fiction Express to support their reading and comprehension. Every child received a log in for the Anspear Learning App
- The virtual school provided a transition workbook for children in year 6 who were moving to secondary school in September 2023. A copy was sent out by post to every year 6 child and their Carer.
- The virtual school has worked with the Behaviour and Inclusion Panels to support transition for CLA in Year 6 and to identify the correct Alternative Provision (AP) when a child is in crisis and struggles to access their usual school.
- The virtual school has developed a therapeutic offer for schools to help support children who have experienced trauma in their lives to support them with their educational experiences. This provides training focused on Attachment and Trauma for all Designated Teachers who have a Durham CLA on roll in their school. Delivered via Teams this allows schools outside of the LA to attend.
- Staff from the virtual school liaised with various local authorities to secure education for several of our children who are placed out of area. This often brings additional challenges when a child has an EHCP.
- The Caseworkers continue to attend PEP meetings. This has helped to identify any extra interventions a child may need to prevent further gaps in learning developing, to support emotional wellbeing and to identify enrichment opportunities for CLA. Increasing caseloads bring additional challenge to this offer to schools.
- Caseworkers have supported year 11 students and have worked with the bespoke CLA PEP Caseworker and DurhamWorks to provide a smooth transition onto Post 16 pathways.

- Every child who has an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) also had a SEND Caseworker
- Year 11, 12 and 13 received support from a Specialist Senior Progression Adviser, who is seconded to the Virtual School. This has developed relationships with Social Care, the Young Peoples Service (YPS) and Post 16 providers.
- Post 16 CLA and Care Leavers attending College continued to be part of the Pupil Premium Plus Post 16 Pilot Project which led to an improvement in attendance and engagement.
- Relationships with the Children in Care Council (CiCC) developed further. We have allocated them a small amount of funding to enable CLA to apply directly to the CiCC for small grants when they have an interest they wish to pursue. They have called this The Education Fun Fund. They have had ninety –seven applications for this grant.
- Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) are a focus for the Virtual School (VS) and require a bespoke package to meet their educational needs. Securing appropriate education has at times, been a challenge this year with limited resources and access to ESOL places in colleges.

Executive Summary Children in Care 2022-23

In line with DfE reporting, the examination data reported in this document is based on those children and young people who have been continuously looked after for a minimum of 12 months from April 1st, 2022, to March 31st, 2023 – hereafter referred to as the reporting cohort. This executive summary covers statutory school age, whilst the body of the report also includes Early Years and Post 16.

Summary statement

At Durham Virtual School we believe we are making a difference to the education of children and young people in care. This report can evidence educational outcomes and progress from entry to care this year evidenced through formal examinations for all Key Stages. Good attendance, few suspensions, high aspirations, strong vocational and academic pathways, and effective preparation for adulthood continue to be evident for CLA. This is all brought about by a virtual school team which advocates strongly and loudly for our young people through collaborative working. Over the last three years we have insisted on an increasing focus on the education of children in care within schools and with our partners and raised the profile of the work of the virtual school, developing very close working relationships with headteachers and Designated Teachers. The strengthening of the virtual school has allowed us to have increased capacity to attend PEP meetings and work more directly with social workers and schools to achieve the best outcomes for CLA.

Headlines

Progress

Key Stage 1

Of the 32 pupils in the reporting cohort all but 2 attended a mainstream school, with 2 children with an EHCP attending Local Authority Special Schools. 91% of this cohort attended a school rated good or better by OFSTED. Although only 2 children were in a Special School, 53% of the children had some SEN, with the most common primary need being Cognition and Learning. These children will be closely monitored to ensure their needs can continue to be met within their setting, and our PEP Caseworkers will work closely with Schools and SEND Caseworkers to ensure children and schools have access to the funding and support they need.

This cohort of children have been impacted by covid and this will have affected outcomes. However, girls have again outperformed boys in all areas and closer analysis will be required to establish where we can continue to support this cohort to make progress in line with their peers. An area for development in KS1 will need to be ensuring children make expected progress and that adequate support is in place to ensure the children can achieve greater depth across all areas, as only a small number of children achieved this grade in the 2023 assessments.

Key Stage 2

There were 58 children in Year 6 who would have been in the reporting cohort due to length of time in care. However, of these 1 was not on a school roll and 2 were educated in Scotland so therefore the cohort was readjusted. Of the 55 pupils remaining in the reporting cohort, 50 attended mainstream primary schools with 4 attending a special school and 1 in an Independent Special School. The majority (87%) attend primary schools in Durham with 7 being placed outside of the area.

85% of children attended schools rated Good or better, and only 2 children were in a school graded Requires Improvement. The remaining 6 pupils were in schools without Ofsted judgements, as they were Academy Converters who have yet to be inspected.

Although only 5 children attended a special school, 47% of the reporting cohort had SEN, with 12 of those having an EHCP. Of those with an SEN Support Plan or EHCP, most children had a primary need related to Social, Emotional and Mental Health, though all of these were managed in a mainstream setting. Boys in this cohort are more likely to have SEN, with 69% of those with SEN being male.

Outcomes this year are above both the Durham and National figures from 2022 and more in line with those from 2019, although we are still slightly below in Reading and in matching R/W/M. We expect this to be an impact of the disruption caused by Covid. Reading continues to be supported by the Virtual School across KS1 and KS2 by our commitment to provide all children in the primary phases with regular access to high quality reading materials and packs.

Key Stage 4

There were 96 children in Year 11 who would have been in the reporting cohort due to length of time in care, however only 68 were counted in the outcome measures. The remaining young people were not counted for a variety of reasons, including a high number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children, some not on a school roll at the time of census, being educated out of their year group or in a school outside of England. The reporting cohort was therefore adjusted accordingly. However, of these 24 were not on a school roll and 2 were educated in Scotland so therefore the cohort was readjusted.

Of the 68 pupils remaining in the reporting cohort, only 46 attended mainstream secondary schools, 8 attended maintained or academy special schools, 6 attended an independent special school, 3 were in a Pupil Referral Unit, 1 was in Ofsted Registered Alternative Provision and 1 had no school. Those in the Ofsted Registered Alternative Provision had access to a GCSE curriculum.

76% of children attended schools rated Good or better. Only 7% were in schools graded Requires Improvement. A further 11 pupils were in schools without Ofsted judgements, as they were in Academy Converters who have yet to be inspected.

32% of young people were not in Mainstream Schools, and although all followed a curriculum appropriate to their needs, 21% of children did not access GCSEs in Maths and English, therefore impacting on the outcome measures. Although roughly in line with 9-5 in basics grades last year, we saw a drop in the 9-4 EM basics measure. This was impacted by those not accessing GCSE curriculum due to their SEN, but improving this will remain a focus for next year. Continued monitoring and targeted use of support will be used to ensure our young people can access the help they need to achieve their potential.

Attendance and Suspensions/Permanent Exclusions

We are disappointed to report that there has been one permanent exclusion of a Durham child in care during this academic year. We have sought alternatives to permanent exclusions and caseworkers have been successful in working with social workers to engage young people in appropriate education settings and schools. Working with the four secondary Behaviour Panels we are usually able to avoid a permanent exclusion before a crisis point is reached. Thirty-Four CLA received at least one suspension 2021/22 which represented 5.3% of the CLA cohort. This academic year Forty CLA experienced at least one FTE, 5.2% of the CLA cohort. The overall attendance for children in care has remained consistently high since 2014. Local data for CLA has been obtained from schools and providers between September 2022 and July 2023. The local overall attendance for the whole CLA cohort was 91.4%. This shows a dip of 0.6% against last year.

Personal Education Plans and Pupil Premium Plus

2019/20 saw the introduction of the Welfare Call electronic PEP system, and since that date we have undertaken a yearly review of the document and process. A cycle of constant reviewing has led to an efficient process, allowing easy access for the Caseworker to monitor the quality of the PEP and the progress of our young people. During the last year we have been using the enhanced Welfare Call Analytics system to ensure quick and easy access to key data. The PEP also allows monitoring and oversight of progress and Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) use. Schools were encouraged to use Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) to support CLA as individuals but also as a Durham cohort. Progress and attainment data suggest that this is having a positive impact across the key stages. We have encouraged schools to use the funding effectively to meet emotional and social needs as well as focusing on the academic outcomes. We have challenged schools where we considered the spending of PP+ was not having an impact, or where it was unclear how a cohort spend was being used.

1. Introduction

As Virtual School Head for Durham County Council, I am pleased to present the Annual Report for Durham Virtual School 2022/2023 (Academic Year), which details our work, alongside our partners and the wider local authority to improve progress, outcomes and ultimately the life-chances of the children in our care.

The body of the report will outline successes, areas still to develop and priorities from Early Years to Post 16 and up to 25 where appropriate.

The report this year will reflect the achievements of our children in Early Years, Key Stage 1 and 2 SATs and GCSE and A Level examinations for Year 11 and 13.

2. Durham Virtual School

2.1 What is the role of the Virtual School?

The role of the Virtual School Head and the Durham Virtual School team is to take the lead in promoting the educational achievement of looked after children, and from September 2018, that of previously children looked after (PCLA), both are included in the scope of this report. We set aspirational targets and then work closely with schools, the wider local authority, and other partners to deliver the best experience possible so that children in care and young people can achieve success, thereby improving their life chances.

From September 2021 the role of the Virtual school Head was extended to cover all children who had a Social Worker, thus Children in Need and those on a Child Protection Plan. This has involved the VSH raising the profile of this group of children with the Designated Safeguarding Leads in schools and working with the Attendance Improvement Team, and the Behaviour and Inclusion Lead Officer to raise the profile of this cohort in school through the lens of visibility. Multi Agency working has also been a large part of the scope.

We want our children in care to attend, engage with and enjoy school so that they can achieve. We are working hard to ensure their voice is heard and has impact, this is an area for further development as we encourage children to become more active in the PEP (Personal

Education Plan) process. Children are often reluctant to attend the PEP meeting, this is a focus for development.

Our priorities feed directly into, and support:

- Corporate Parenting Strategy and Key Lines of Enquiry
- The Children and Young People's Strategy for Durham
- Durham Promise

As a virtual school we strive to build on the very strong provision in place for all children in care. This year we have continued to build on our strengths, using accurate and detailed data gathered at PEP meetings along with knowledge of the children and young people to target support more effectively. We have streamlined our allocation of the PP+ grant to schools to enable forward planning and we have focused on supporting schools to be more attachment and trauma aware. We intend to continue with our focus on reading and supporting schools to address our priorities for reading. This is a focus area for OFSTED and of high importance for the Virtual School. We will support schools to help CLA to catch up as we move forward into the next academic year.

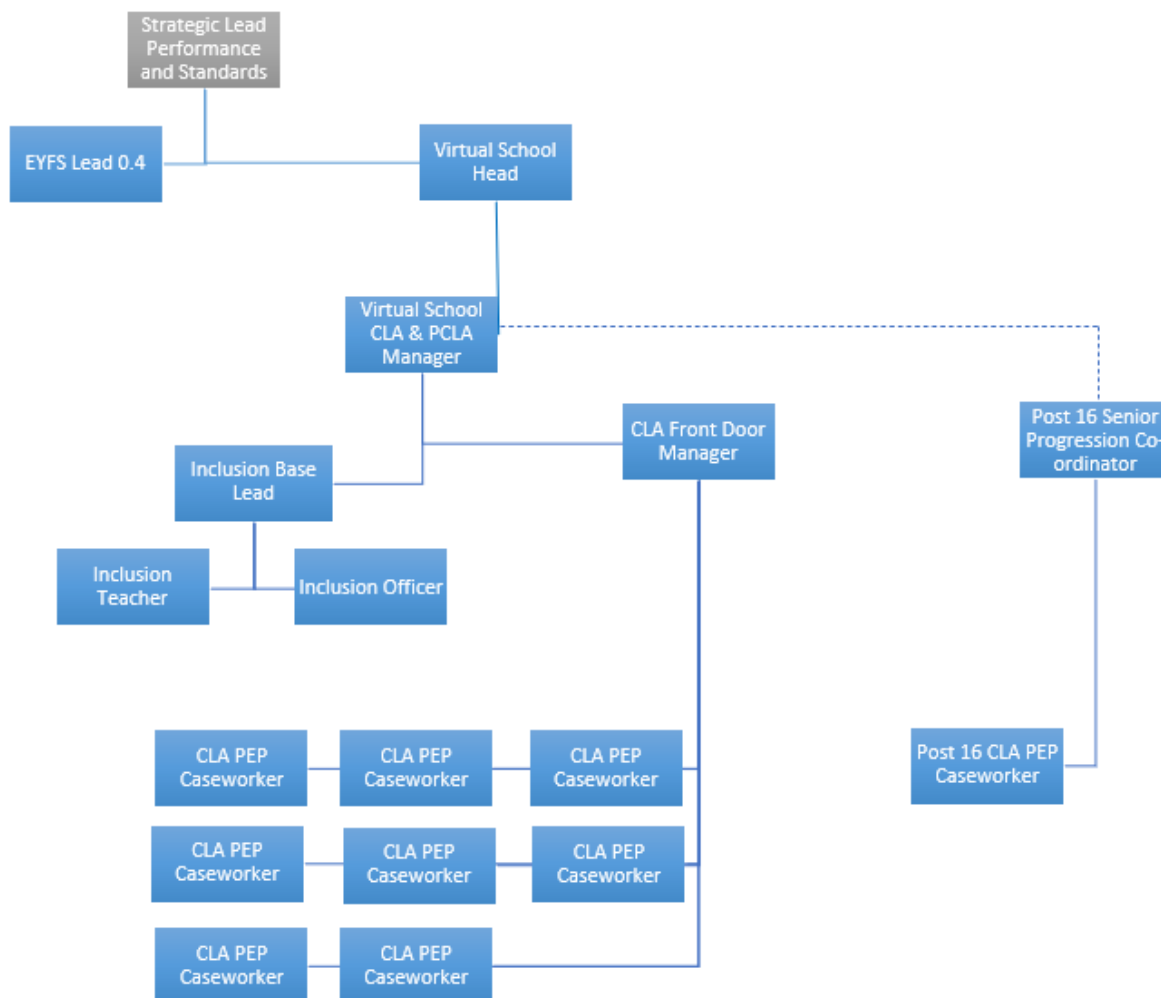
The casework team of eight have been able to maintain the high level of support for our young people and challenge for schools. The team have continued to attend meetings virtually. The agreement by Durham County Council to increase capacity of the virtual school from September 2020 has improved our offer to schools and allowed a more targeted response to our children, however increasing numbers of children coming into care have resulted in increased case numbers. This has led to improved communications with Social Workers and Carers.

2.2 Who are we?

The Virtual School Head (VSH) is an experienced school leader who sits within the Education Service and works in partnership across teams. Durham is a member of NAVSH and the VSH attends the local and national networks. The whole Virtual School team sit in Education. The Virtual School Head is supported by a CLA and PCLA Manager who has taken on additional responsibilities.

We work in close partnership with teams in Social Care, Health, Early Years, Progression and Learning and the wider Inclusion Team. The VSH attends a wide number of strategic meetings. The direction of the Virtual School Operational Group has changed during this academic year developing into a group who identify and look for solutions to the different challenges the virtual school is facing. The focus this year has been upon the processes involved when a child is identified with SEN.

2.3 Structure Diagram



2.4 Who do we report to and how are we held accountable?

The virtual school contributes to Education Durhams Operational plan. In addition to this there is a bespoke development plan for the VS. We use this to carry out regular self-evaluation against the priorities in the plan. The VSH reports to the Head of Service for Education and Skills through Education SMT and meets with the Head of Social Care. The VSH also attends the Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP) and presents the annual report and education outcomes. Line management and reporting for the wider team sits within Education. The virtual school reports to a subgroup of the CPP which is chaired by the vice-chair of the CPP and comprises elected members, local school leaders and representatives from care. We attend the Children Looked After Strategic Partnership group and report into this group three times a year.

3. Profile of learners and numbers on roll at the virtual school

3.1 How many learners are on roll?

As of the start of term in September 2023, there were 717 learners (R – yr. 11) on roll of the virtual school. This is an increase of 9% on the same time last year. There were a further 227 post 16 (an increase of 35% from 2022) and 91 pre-school (Nursery 1 and Nursery 2). In total there were 916 children and young people on the roll of the Durham Virtual School.

Table 1: Number of CLA by Year Group 21 July 2023

Please note this is a different date to the section above.

	Male	Female	Total	% Total	Male2	Female3
R	29	16	45	4.99%	64.44%	35.56%
1	26	19	45	4.99%	57.78%	42.22%
2	24	17	41	4.55%	58.54%	41.46%
3	30	20	50	5.54%	60.00%	40.00%
4	40	25	65	7.21%	61.54%	38.46%
5	29	30	59	6.54%	49.15%	50.85%
6	33	30	63	6.98%	52.38%	47.62%
7	42	22	64	7.10%	65.63%	34.38%
8	34	25	59	6.54%	57.63%	42.37%
9	40	36	76	8.43%	52.63%	47.37%
10	51	45	96	10.64%	53.13%	46.88%
11	64	39	103	11.42%	62.14%	37.86%
12	85	31	116	12.86%	73.28%	26.72%
13	13	7	20	2.22%	65.00%	35.00%
TOTAL	540	362	902		59.87%	40.13%

3.2 What is the profile of the statutory school age cohort?

At the end of July 2023, there were 766 children of statutory school age (SSA) in care. This is an increase of 13.3% from the same time at the end of the 2021-2022 academic year. There is roughly an equal primary / secondary split. 48.04% in primary and 51.96% in secondary. The gender split across SSA and Post 16 is 40.13% female and 59.87% male. Although there are consistently more boys of this age in care, this number has increased slightly from last year. The more marked difference, however, is in P16, where 72.06% are male and 27.96% are female.

22.34% of children and young people (R - yr. 11) attend out of county schools; this is an increase of 2.67% from last year. 77.66% are educated in schools based in County Durham. The increase in children attending provisions may in part be a reflection on the difficulty in placing children in Special Schools appropriate to their need. The remaining children are placed across 47 other local authorities, although a significant number of these are placed in our neighbouring local authorities.

As of July 2023, 76% of the cohort attended a school with an Ofsted judgement of good or better and 11.6% attended a school with a grade of Requires Improvement or below. To avoid additional trauma, we do not routinely remove a child from a school which becomes inadequate unless there was an exceptional reason, but we do provide additional scrutiny and academic support if required. 92 young people attended schools where a current Ofsted judgement isn't available due to a recent academy conversion.

At the end of July there were 29 UASC children of statutory school age on the roll of the VS. 23 of whom were placed out of county for care reasons. This brings additional challenges when seeking a school placement. 20 were in Year 11, all of whom had a Post 16 destination organised.

Any maintained school in Durham that is not judged to be Good or better will receive extra scrutiny and the LA will work closely with these schools to improve provision. As a virtual school we provide additional tuition and scrutiny to all schools, as required.

3.3 How well do we promote placement and school stability?

School and placement stability are crucial to provide the security children in care need in order to learn. We operate in line with the Childrens Commissioners vision for CLA and the vision that every child should be on the roll of a school and attending*. The report issued in May 2023 stated that 2.7% of looked after children are not in school. In Durham 1.6% of children are not on a school roll. This does not include the UASC cohort. This brings additional oversight from the VSH and managers within the VS.

We advise social care teams to maintain stability in the education setting. Where change is unavoidable or is advisable, the casework team ensure there is enhanced transition, and that all key information is shared. For an emergency placement, caseworkers work closely with the school to support integration. Those children who need to move schools during an academic year are supported by additional planning and, if required, funding to meet their needs. The VSH should be consulted on any potential school move.

*[Looked after children who are not in school | Children's Commissioner for England \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/reports-and-publications/looked-after-children-who-are-not-in-school/)

3.4 How many of the cohort have Special Educational Needs (SEND)?

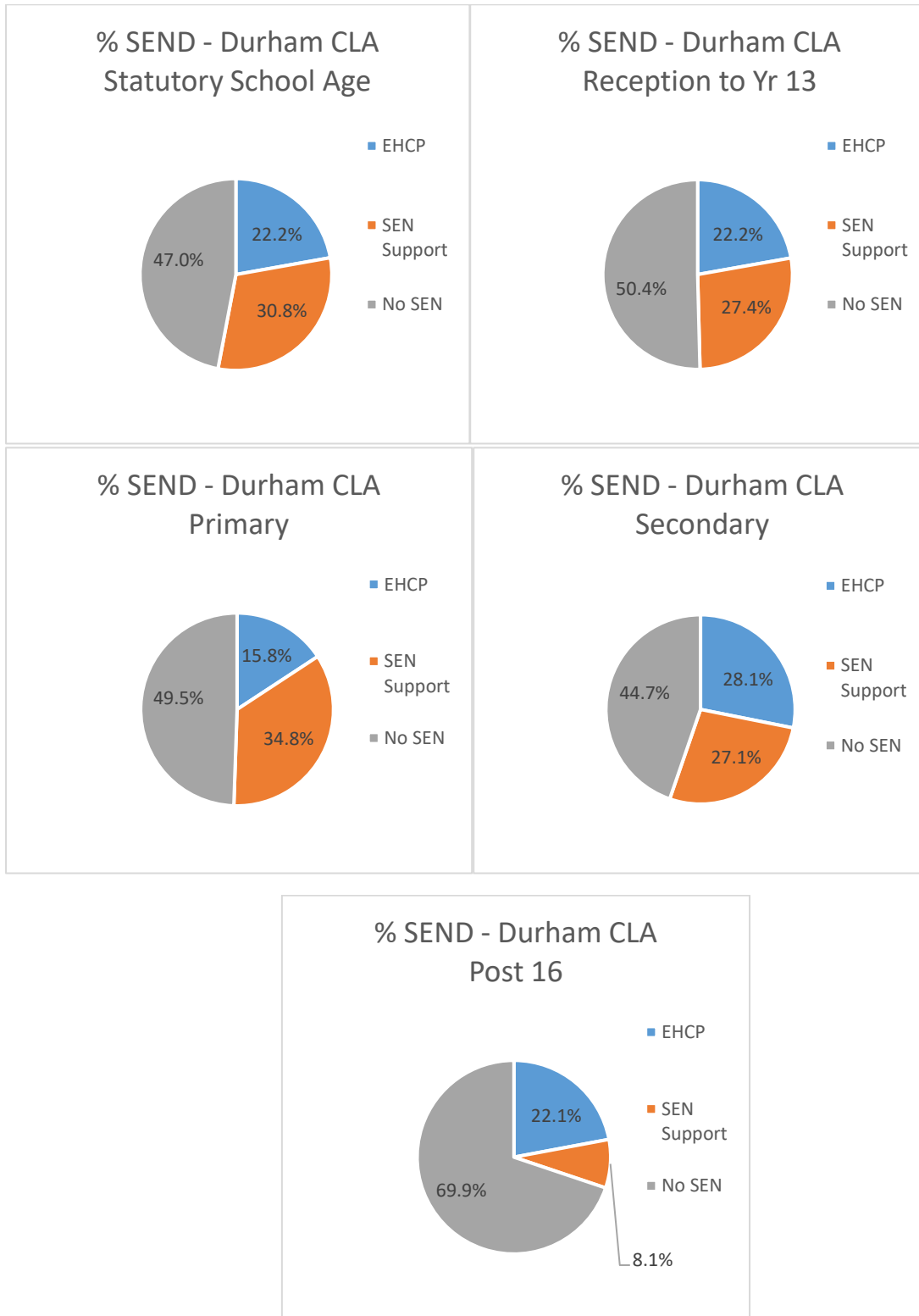
Children in care (12 months at 31 March) are over three and a half times as likely to have an identified SEN and eight times more likely to have an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) than all children. Nationally in 2022, 56.3% of children in care had a special educational need compared to 15.6% of all children. In Durham 2022-23, 53% of children and young people (R-Y11) had identified special educational needs; 22.2% were supported by an EHCP whilst 30.8% had school SEN support plans (K code). There is less than 1% decrease in all areas from the figures for the same time last year.

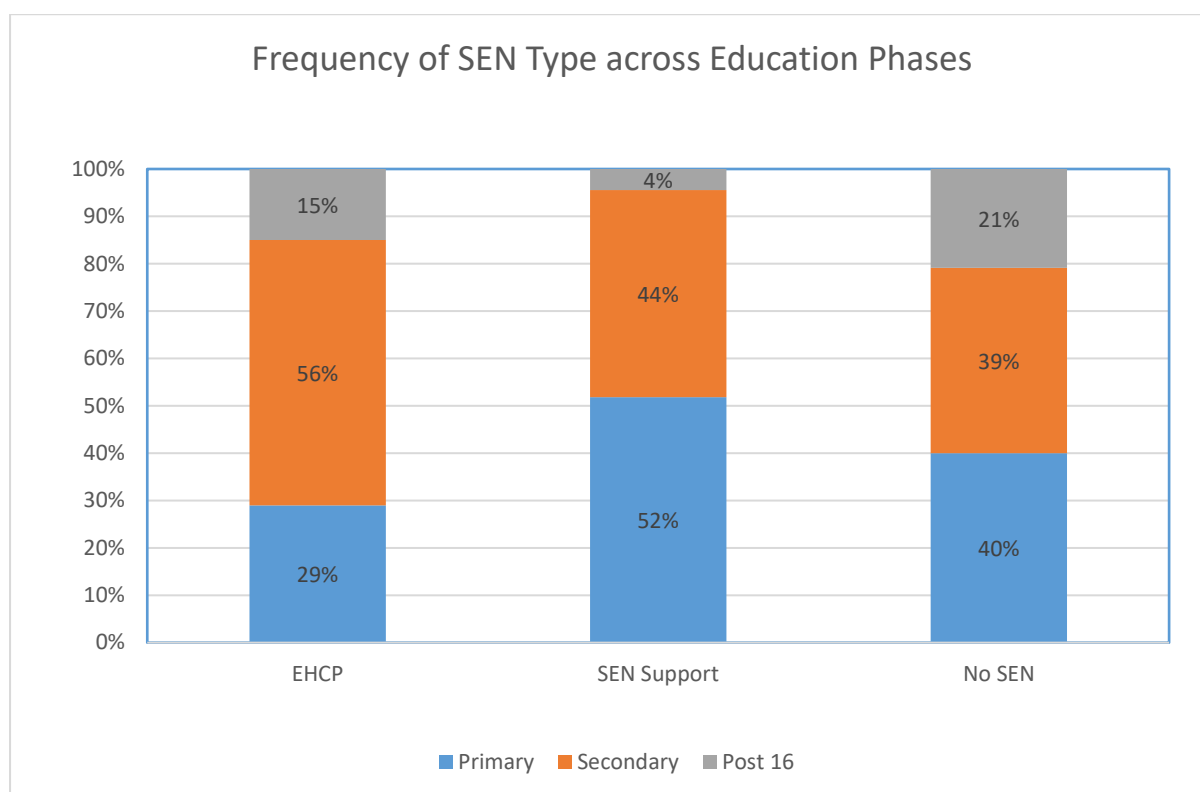
Table 2: Number of CLA with SEND by year group July 2023 (for academic year 2022-23)

Year	EHCP (E)	SEN Support (K)	No SEN	Total
R	6	9	30	45
1	4	17	24	45
2	7	16	18	41
3	4	18	28	50
4	13	26	26	65
5	10	27	22	59
6	14	15	34	63
7	15	21	28	64
8	17	16	26	59
9	27	20	29	76
10	29	28	39	96
11	24	23	56	103
Total SSA	170	236	360	766
12	25	9	82	116
13	5	2	13	20
Total P16	30	11	95	136
Grand Total	200	247	455	902

The percentage of Durham children looked after with an EHCP nearly doubles from primary to secondary school, although the percentage of children with an SEN Support Plan is higher in Primary than secondary. A challenge for Durham Virtual School is to ensure that the needs of children with a SEN Support plan are known and strategies put in place on their transition to secondary school. It is important that our Caseworkers monitor the child's progress closely to ensure the child's SEN needs are being adequately addressed and supported by the plans that are in place. Wherever possible the DT/SENCO from the secondary school will attend the Summer PEP.

Table 3: Charts to show the rates of SEN across different phases.





3.5 What are the primary needs of our cohort with an EHCP?

Nationally children in care are 3 times more likely to have social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) as their primary need than their peers. This is reflected in Durham where 46% of all of our young people with SEND (R-Yr11) have SEMH identified as their primary need. SEMH needs across the Durham children looked after cohort has decreased over the past 3 years from 54% in 2019. However, there remains a significant difference of 20% in the levels of SEMH needs between secondary and primary aged Durham CLA. The level of SEMH need amongst Secondary age young people is 55%. In Primary, SEMH is the primary need for 35% of children, an increase of 4% from last year.

It is important that schools work effectively with Durham Virtual School to ensure that the needs of children looked after are fully recognised and that a child presenting with attachment-based behaviours, for example, is provided with the correct level of therapeutic support. The Virtual School are developing the offer it has for Durham schools to include a higher level of therapeutic support for children and young people having difficulty in engaging in learning due to the impact of the trauma and challenge and uncertainty that they have faced prior to and after entering care including:

- Additional support for KS1 and KS2 children at risk of exclusion from their school
- An enhanced support agreement with the Local Authority EWEL Team
- Increased School counsellor support for Durham children looked after.

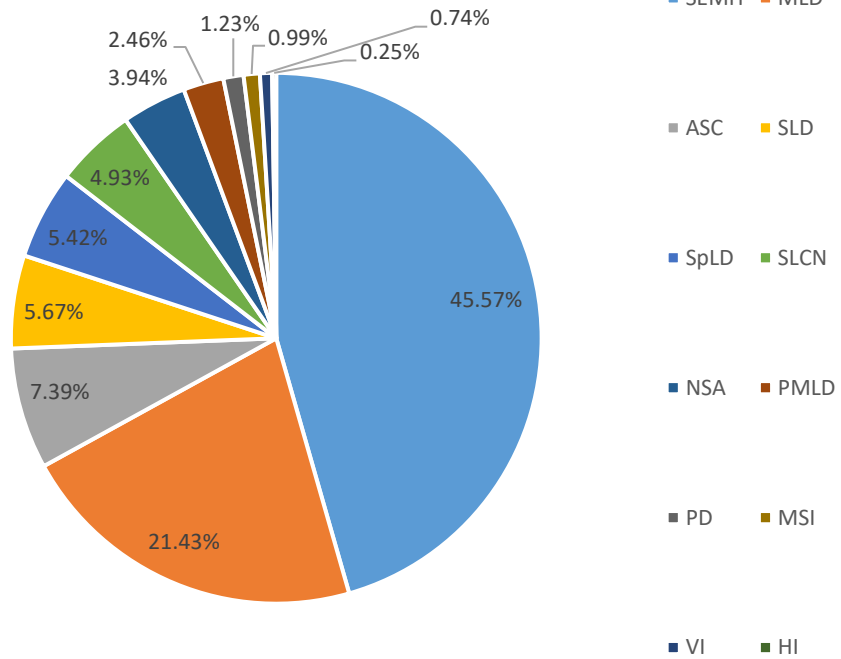
- Enhanced support from a Senior Educational Psychologist
- Additional training for Designated Teachers delivered by the Full Circle Team

Our casework team has expertise in SEND and offers strong advice and support in all areas of SEND. To meet increased need we have continued to use the PP+ grant to maintain our counselling offer and continue to work with Full Circle to ensure schools have access to advice and support through a dedicated helpline. We also provided dedicated Occupational Therapy assessment to help to support our children in care with SEND.

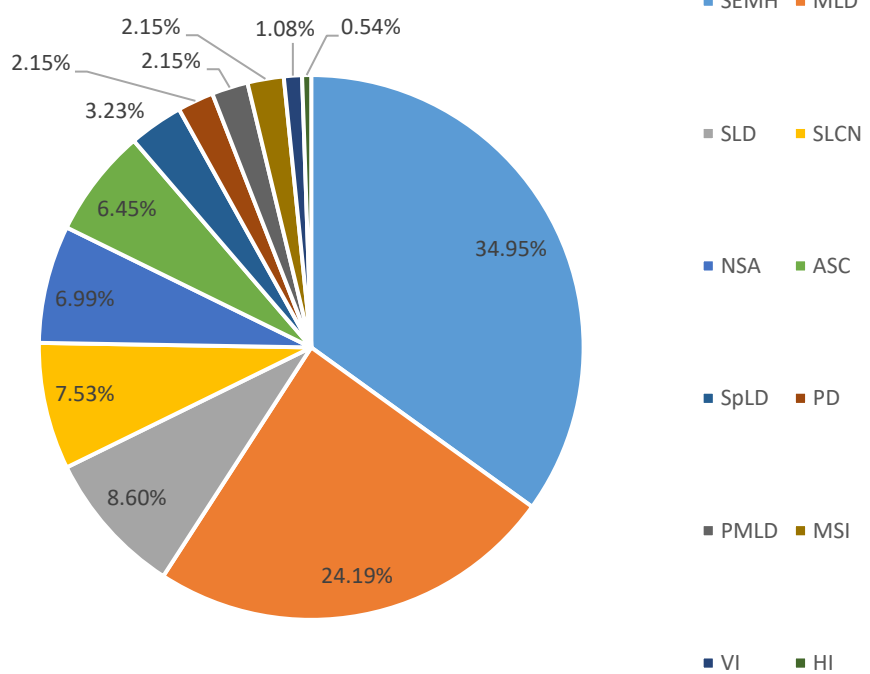
Table 4: Charts to show primary need of CLA with EHCP

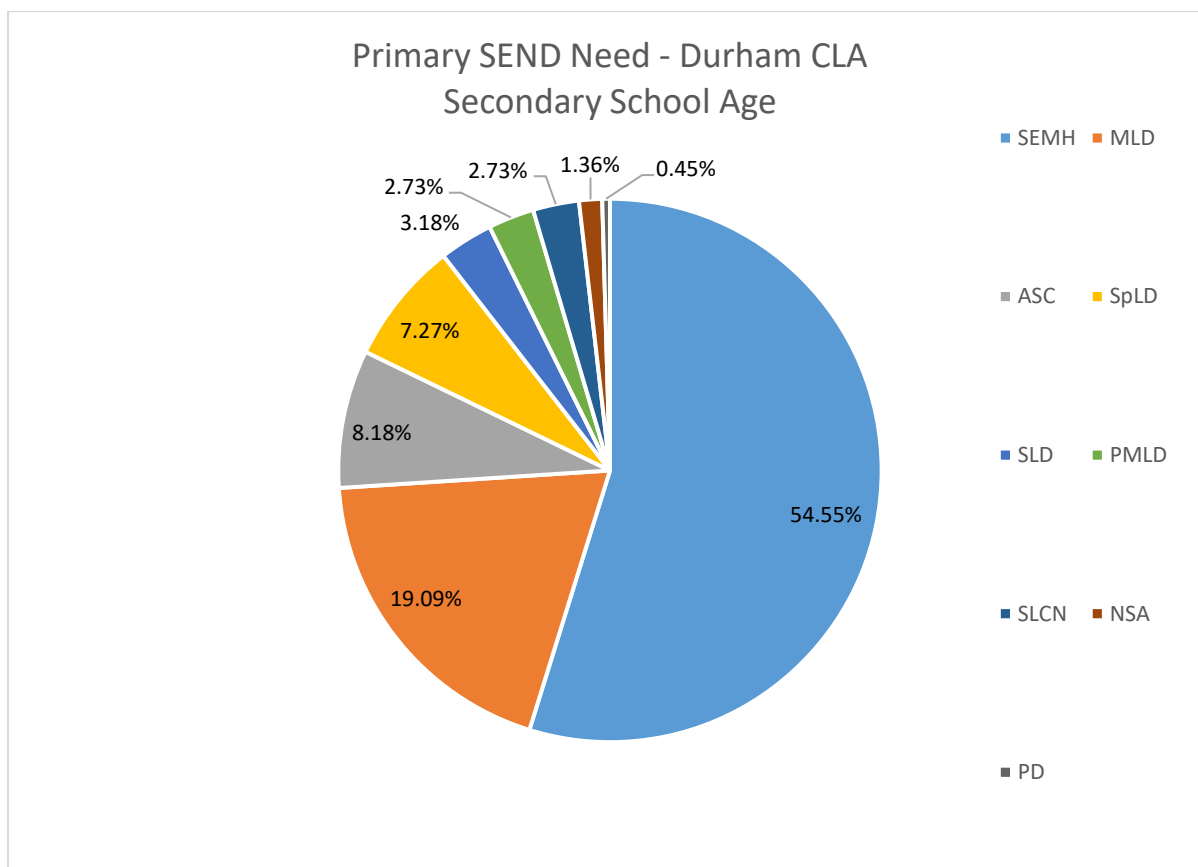
Cognition and Learning - Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)
Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)
Communication and Interaction - Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)
Cognition and Learning - Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)
Communication and Interaction - Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)
SEN support but no specialist assessment of type of need (NSA)
Cognition and Learning - Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)
Sensory and/or Physical Disability - Physical Difficulties (PD)
Cognition and Learning - Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)
Sensory and/or Physical Disability - Multisensory Impairment (MSI)
Sensory and/or Physical Disability - Visual Impairment (VI)
Sensory and/or Physical Disability - Hearing Impairment (HI)

Primary SEND Need - Durham CLA Statutory School Age



Primary SEND Need - Durham CLA Primary School Age





3.6 How do virtual school caseworkers support children in care with identified special educational needs?

Virtual School Caseworkers advise schools to make sure that the SEN graduated approach is followed. This includes:

- considering the needs of the looked after child and exploring with the school how they can be supported at the PEP meeting.
- ensuring the SENCO is involved in discussions round SEND needs and provision.
- working with the Designated Teacher to ensure an SEN Support Plan is put in place if required.
- supporting the school in requesting additional top up funding through the High Needs Budget if required to meet need. In these cases, it is important to scrutinise the child's needs and identify if this is better support than an EHCP, being mindful to the fact that TUF does not transfer with the child if their care placement breaks down and they are moved outside of Durham.
- being part of key discussions to identify if a child requires specialist provision to meet their needs.

- working closely with the SEND Caseworker to identify the correct provision for a CLA with an EHCP
- Where there are difficulties requesting statutory assessment through schools, working closely with the social worker to complete a professional/parental request for statutory assessment.

3.7 How do we collaborate to support children in care with identified SEN?

The virtual school caseworkers liaise closely with the SEND Casework Team who are responsible for the statutory processes to assess and review the EHCPs for each child. We work closely with social workers and increasingly closely with health teams within this process. The Local Authority makes available additional financial support to Durham schools for children and young people supported by a SEN Support Plan. The Virtual School Caseworkers are aware of the process of request and work with schools to ensure Durham children looked after are offered the best possible support. This year we have developed our working relationship with the SEND Team and now hold regular meetings with senior managers to ensure key issues and concerns are addressed. This work has meant we have been able to establish a process for requesting assessment and keeping the EHCPs of our more complex young people in the control of Durham Local Authority. We have also established improved working processes and all our Durham CLA who have a Durham Plan now have a named SEND Caseworker.

4. Duties to previously looked after children

4.1 How do we meet our duty towards previously looked after children?

We adhere to the statutory guidance from 2018 which arose from the Children and Social Care Act 2017 to provide information and advice to parents, kinship carers, and educators or to signpost this. We have promoted this with schools, provided advice and training for designated teachers and governors. From April 2019, we allocated the DfE additional funding provided to local authorities to a temporary specialist manager post so that there is some dedicated time within the team to support the education of previously looked after children. The remit of this post is to develop a sustainable offer for previously looked after children through building links with agencies and teams and raising the profile of this cohort in schools. The post was extended in March 2020 and then incorporated into the new virtual school team as a permanent post in September 2020. We have ensured that other teams within the authority are aware of the priority admission for these children and have briefed social care managers about effective use of PP+.

Support for schools has ranged from advising on staff training to supporting with the effective use of PP+ and how to report it. Support for parents and kinship carers has been on an individual basis to respond to queries and requests for support to ensure their child is accessing the right support for their needs. We have had a significant amount of contact from families and schools seeking advice around the use of PP+ funding, access to support and

mental health services, the use of adoption support funding, academic support and becoming attachment and trauma aware. The Virtual School Management team work together to ensure queries are answered quickly and that parents, carers and school are signposted to appropriate guidance and support. The Virtual School Head attends Local Authority SGO Panel meetings to ensure appropriate advice is offered on educational matters.

We have worked closely with the Kinship Care team, to support guardians to understand the child's entitlement to PP+ and how to inform schools of the child's situation. This must be recorded on the October census each year for a child to be entitled to the premium. We have produced a frequently asked question sheet to make the process simpler when contacting school. The relevant information is on the virtual school website, and we continue to provide advice and support. All Designated Teachers are regularly reminded of their duty of care for previously looked after children at DT Network Meetings and training events. We also ensure they receive reminders about identifying potential students and informing Parents/Guardians of the benefits of identifying their children to the school. The Virtual School ensure new DT's are informed about their duties to support PCLA at the New to Role training.

4.2 How many previously looked after children of statutory school age are there?

According to the Spring Census 2023, there are currently 999 previously looked after children on roll in Durham schools. This reflects an increase of 11 children from January 2022.

The breakdown is:

Category	Number of pupils
Adoption	433 (444 Spring 2022)
Child arrangement order	88 (70 Spring 2022)
Special guardianship order	445 (442 Spring 2022)
Residence order	33 (32 Spring 2022)

Not all adoptive parents want schools to record the status of their children, so these figures reflect those who have shared the information in the October Census. The data is from the census for all schools (maintained and academy) in January 2023. This shows an increase of 11 children, based upon the joint figure of 988 last year. This is a rise of 1.1% from 2022, compared to a rise of 13.4% from 2021.

Whilst these children are not on the roll of Durham Virtual School and we do not monitor the progress of individual children through the PEP system, this extends the reach and remit of our support and advice for those of statutory school age to over 2023 children and young people.

5. Achievement and Progress

As our cohorts are small and vary in terms of their profile from year to year it is difficult to measure trends over time. The PEP's are used as a tool to monitor progress for CLA, whilst key year groups have management oversight through monitoring meetings with the CLA PEP Caseworker.

5.1 Early Years Update

Provisional EYFS Profile data for 2023 notes that 47% of Durham's children who were looked after achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD) compared to 30% regionally and 40% nationally. Due to the changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) and the break in reporting during the pandemic this figure should not be compared with Durham's performance in previous years. These findings are based upon 19 of the 20 Children in the reporting cohort for 2022/23 with 9 children achieved a GLD. Of the remaining 10 children - 4 had SEND, including 2 children with EHCPs.

The findings differed significantly depending upon gender. Of the 19 children, there were 9 girls and 10 boys. 3 of the 10 boys (30%) achieved a Good Level of Development compared to 6 of the 9 girls (66%)

When reflecting upon EYFSP outcomes for our children looked after these three aspects of the statutory guidance should be fully considered

The cohort size is statistically small.

It is important to note that The Early Years Foundation Stage progress is a measure of a child's attainment at the end of the reception year and that the Early Learning Goals are based upon typical child development at the age of 5. It does not demonstrate a child's progress or learning journey from their starting points.

It is a description of the child's level of development at that point in time and does not mean that the child has 'failed'.

For those children who are 'emerging' in one or more of the Early Learning Goals additional information will be needed and any barriers to learning recognised, which will subsequently aid planning, identify appropriate support strategies and interventions for the child, as they transition through into year 1.

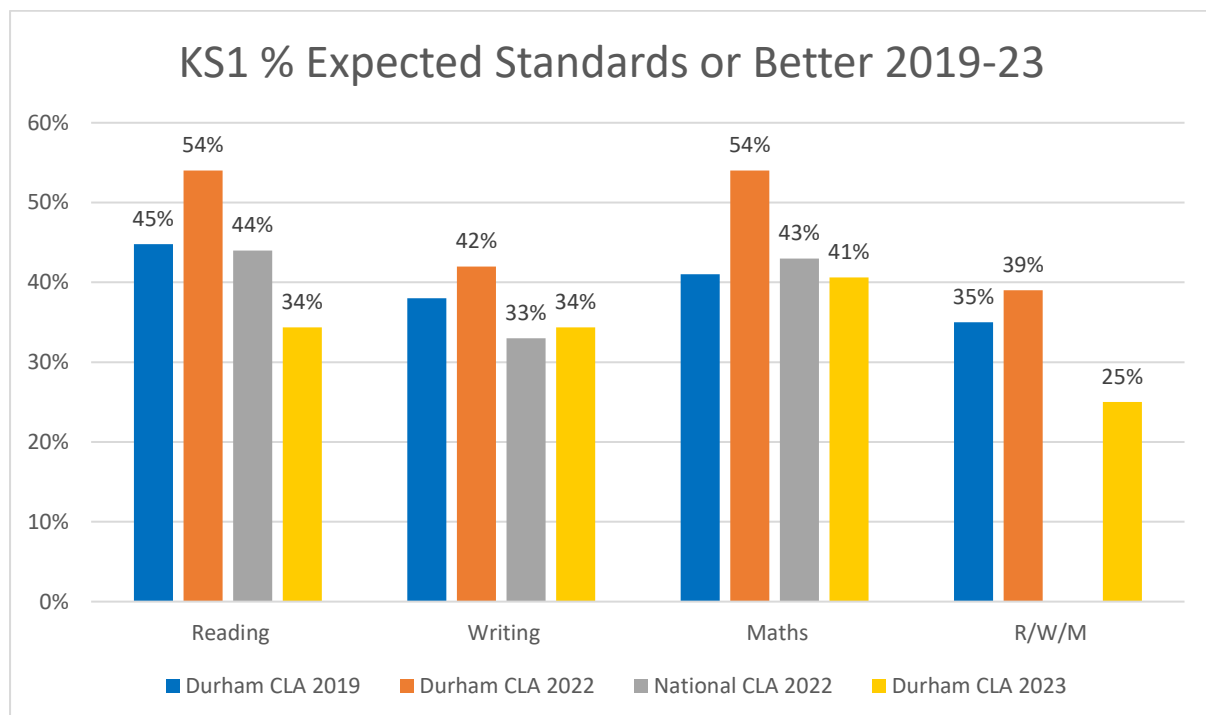
Further to this, it is important that any adverse childhood experiences are acknowledged as well as the negative impact of the pandemic for this cohort of children in terms of limited social experiences and opportunities for therapeutic involvement and recovery.

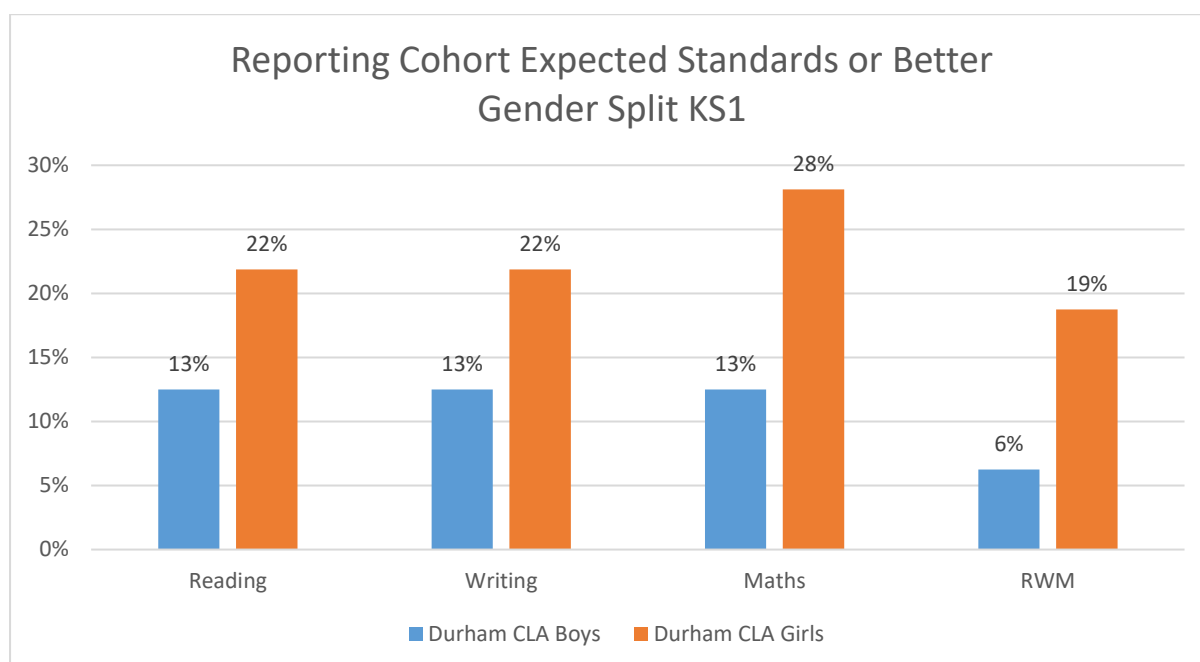
5.2 How well do our children do at KS1?

The reporting cohort in Year 2 was 32.

- There was a roughly equal split of 15 girls and 17 boys.
- 75% of the cohort attended schools in Durham.
- 17 (53%) children had SEN, and increase of 15% from last year, with 6 having an EHCP and 11 with an SEN Support Plan
- The most common Primary need in SEND was Cognition and Learning

Table 5 KS1 Expected Standards or above





This cohort have had a disrupted education since prior to starting school. Although schools have been trying to close the gaps in knowledge due to missed schooling, a lack of opportunity to learn through play and to socialise with peers during the pandemic will have affected this cohort. Unfortunately, this cohort has not performed as well as expected and are compared to both Durham and National figures from 2022, are below in all areas, apart from in writing where children performed slightly better than National CLA from 2022. Compared to other year groups however, this is a reasonably small cohort and comparisons are difficult, particularly as 3 young people were not entered for SATS due to their SEN needs. There is also a significant number of children in this cohort with SEN, with a high proportion of cognition and learning needs, which will have impacted on outcomes.

Although outcomes were below expected, our girls have performed better than the boys across all areas, with quite significant differences in maths and in matching the reading, writing and maths expected, where girls were 3 times more girls achieved expected standards. However, only 4 children achieved Greater Depth in Reading, 1 in Writing and 1 in Maths; this is an area that will require further analysis. We will continue to monitor this cohort closely to ensure continued efforts are made to catch up on missed learning. The Virtual School continues to provide high quality reading materials across KS1 & KS2, and these children will also have access to learning Apps purchased through the top sliced Pupil Premium Plus.

5.3 How well do our children do at KS2?

The reporting cohort in Year 6 was 55; there were a further 3 pupils who would have been in the cohort but 1 was not on the roll of a school and a further 2 were educated in Scotland at the time of the tests so the cohort was adjusted accordingly. There were 29 boys and 26 girls in the reporting cohort.

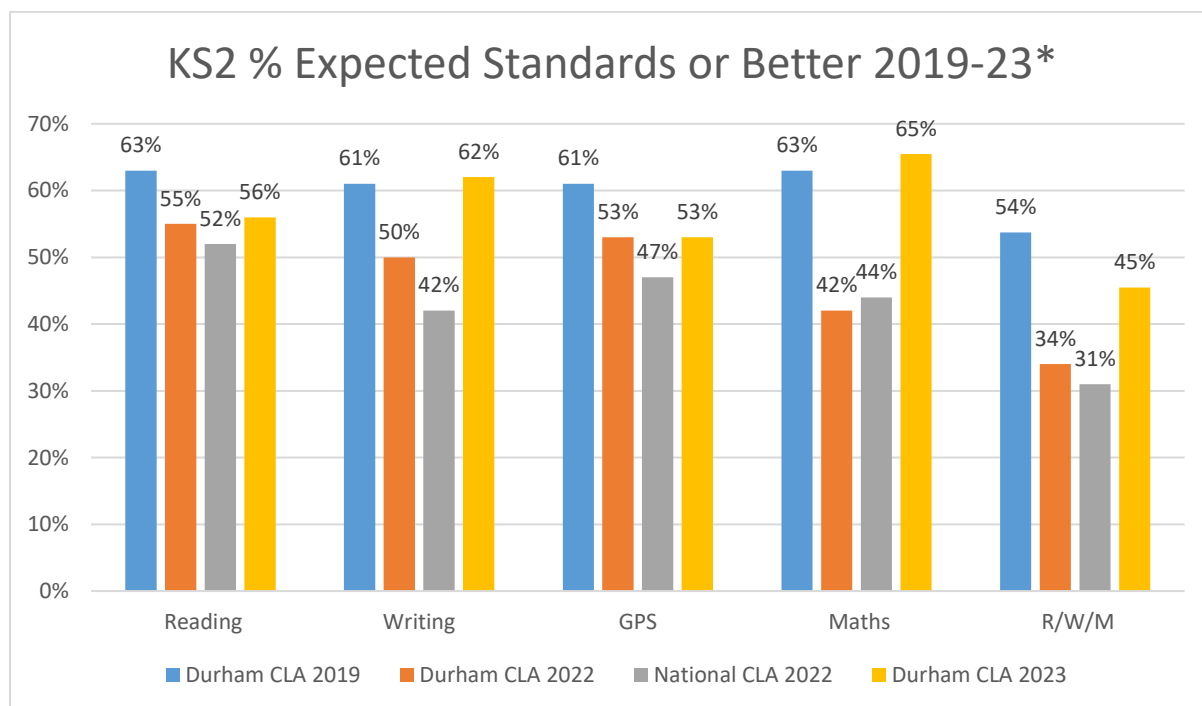
- 48 of the reporting cohort attended schools in Durham, with the other 7 attending schools outside of the local authority.

- 26 (47%) children had SEN, with 12 having an EHCP and 14 with an SEN Support Plan
- Nearly 4 times more boys than girls had an SEN Support plan.

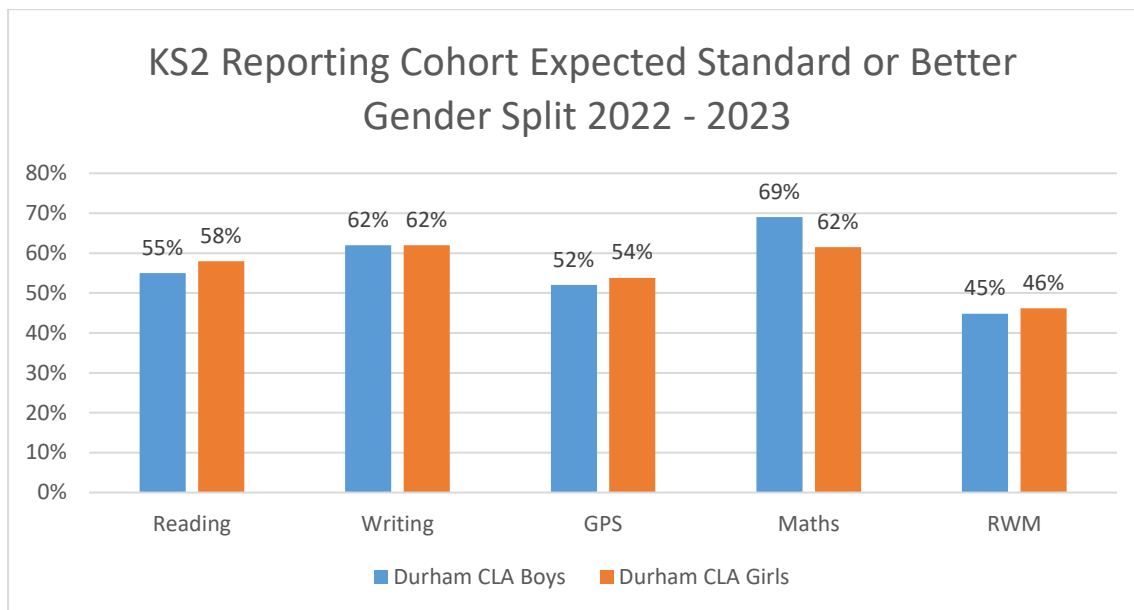
We expect CLA will need additional support to help close any emerging gaps created through the Pandemic. This is a focus for every PEP meeting. To support reading we continue to provide reading packages through Fiction Express.

This is the second year of formal testing since 2019 due to the pandemic. The children in this cohort have had a disrupted KS2 education and many have missed a significant amount of formal learning. The cohort have improved in all areas from 2022 other than GPS where we have maintained 53%. Outcomes are more in line with those from 2019, prior to the pandemic, although with changing cohorts and numbers it is difficult to make comparisons. Although we remain above National CLA figures from 2022, there are still improvements to be made for those achieving RWM at expected standards or above.

Table 6: KS2 Expected Standards or above.



*SATS outcomes are not available for 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 due to Covid measures.



Our girls have performed better or in line with the boys across all areas apart from Maths, where 69% of boys achieved the expected standard compared to only 62% of girls. However, it is also worth noting that the boys account for 69% of the children with SEN. For those children not entered for SATS, their PEPs have shown that they are following an appropriate curriculum in line with their academic and SEN needs. Children are monitored closely to ensure they are making expected progress in line with their ability.

Maths is an area for development as not only did boys outperform girls, but where 13.8% of boys achieved Maths at Greater Depth (110+ Scaled Score), no girls achieved this measure. Although achieving roughly in line across all other measures, we will continue to monitor this year's cohort as we need to improve the numbers achieving greater depth across all areas to ensure our young people have the best chance of achieving their potential.

Although we had hoped for more young people achieving greater depth and matching across Reading, Writing and Maths, given the disrupted education they have experienced and through increased monitoring, we highlighted there may be issues. However, PEP Caseworkers remain focused in PEP meetings to ensure gaps in learning are being addressed through appropriate support funded through catch up funding and Pupil Premium Plus. There is also an increased focus on getting children ready to learn through provision of additional social and emotional support and help to close the gaps in learning due to Covid with increased monitoring in Year 6 along with additional 1:1 support being offered to this cohort. We also continue to support reading through the provision of the Curious Kids Reading packs and access to Fiction Express for Years 1 through to Year 8. Additional learning Apps have now been implemented, and we will identify how we can further support development in Maths.

5.4 How well do our young people achieve in English and Maths KS4?

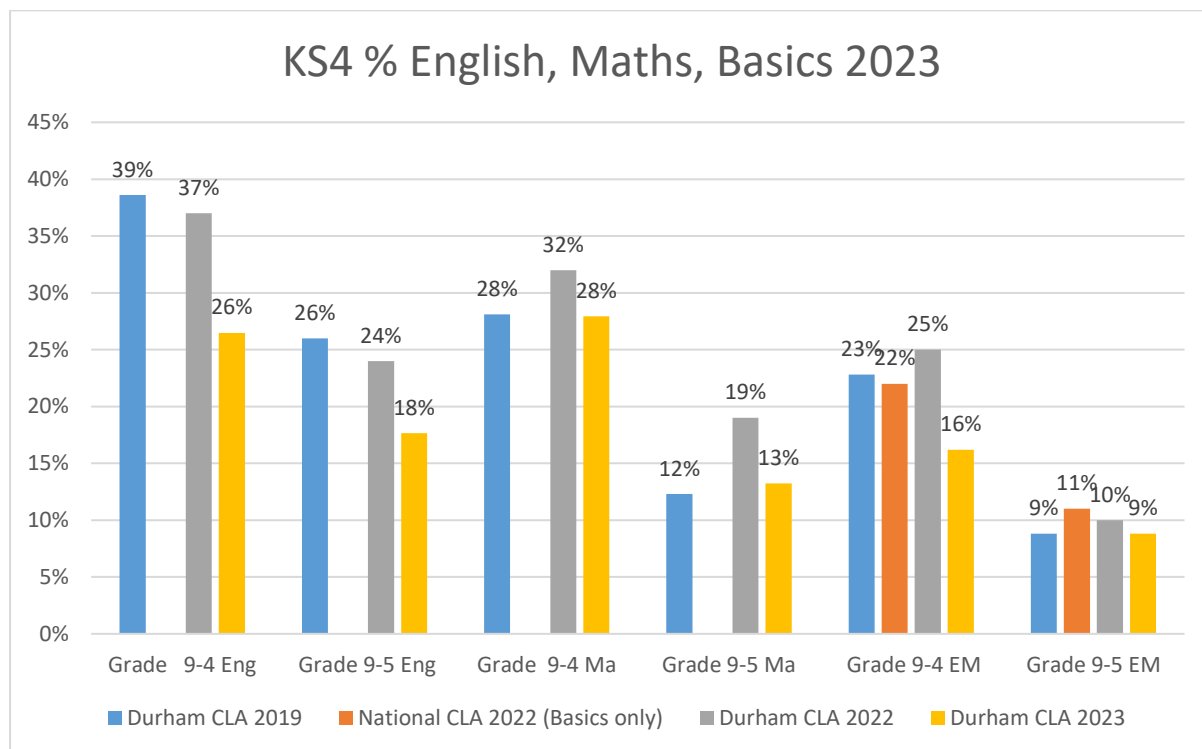
There were 68 young people in the reporting cohort with a full cohort of 79. There were 30 young people who were not reported on for outcome measures as they met certain criteria, including:-

- Not being on school roll at time of census
- Educated outside of England.
- Entered care after 30th April.
- UASC

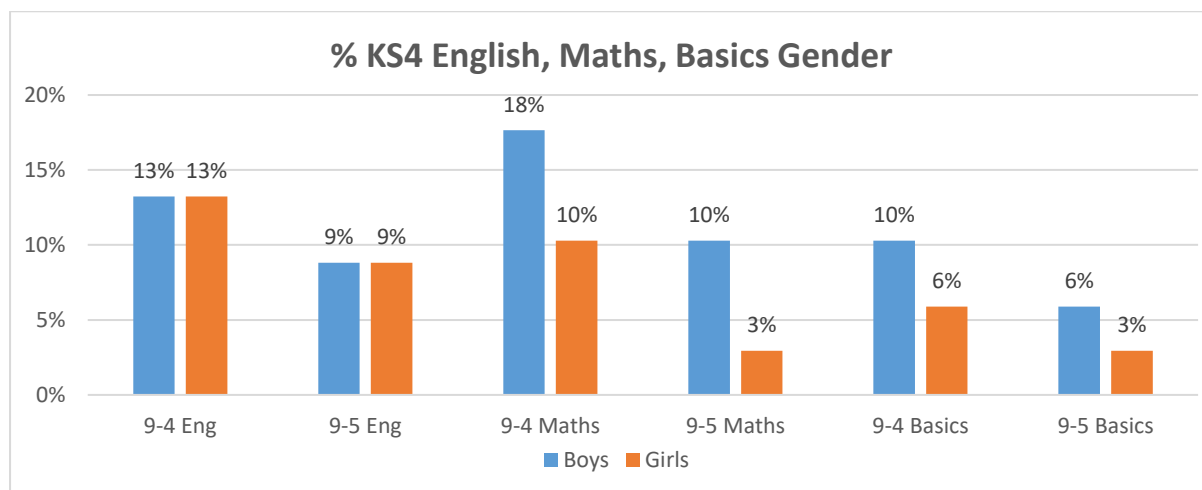
Of the 68 young people in the reporting cohort:-

- 50% girls and 50% boys
- 37 pupils had identified SEN, which is 54% of the reporting cohort
- 20 of these had an EHCP, which is 29% of the cohort
- Only 68% were in a mainstream school, although this is 14% more than in the previous year.
- 12% of young people attended a Maintained/Academy Special School, with a further 10% placed in an Independent Special School. The percentage in independent special school has doubled from last year.
- 15 young people followed a curriculum that did not include GCSEs in Maths and English. Of these, all but 2 had SEN, with 8 having an EHCP. All followed a curriculum appropriate to their needs including teaching in literacy and numeracy.
- 3 young people (4%) attended an Ofsted Registered Alternative Provision.

Table 7: KS4 English, Maths and Basics Outcomes



*Figures from 2020 and 2021 are not included as these were based on Teacher/Centre assessed grades due to Covid measures.



Although there was a drop in the basics grades across all areas over the last two years, it is important to note that the 2020-2021 results were based on Centre Assessed Grades. The disruption caused by Covid affected several areas including having a significant impact on young people’s gaps in learning and social and emotional mental health. Schools worked

hard to prepare pupils academically and emotionally for exams and utilised catch up funding, including Recovery Grant Premium, School Led Tutoring and Pupil Premium Plus to support their young people. Unfortunately, this year we have seen a drop in all areas, though this is most noticeable in English grades. Despite a significant amount of support offered by schools, this cohort of young people, we believe, remain impacted by covid. We have had a significant number disengaged from education and a continued number of persistent absentees, which we believe have impacted on grades. One area which has remained consistent is our young people achieving Maths and English at grade 9-5. In this area, 9% of our cohort achieved this, which is only 1% less than last year.

A significant number of young people had SEN and 29% had an EHCP, with most of these young people attending special schools. 13 young people with SEN did not follow a curriculum that included GCSE qualifications in Maths and English, therefore impacting the results of this cohort. However, all education pathways for our young people are carefully monitored by the Caseworkers at the PEPs so we are confident they are following appropriate an appropriate curriculum matched to their needs and ability.

Results indicate that unlike in previous years, where our girls outperformed boys significantly in English, this year performance at both 9-5 and 9-4 was equal in English. However, boys significantly outperformed girls in Maths, with only 3% of girls achieving the higher measure compared to 10% of boys. Additional monitoring and intervention will be considered this year to ensure appropriate support and intervention is available to all the Year 11 cohort, with a particular emphasis on matching the higher grades in the Basics.

5.5 How well do our young people achieve and participate at KS5 / post 16?

The tables below are a breakdown of the destinations and academic levels being studied by our Care Leavers, taken as a snapshot each year in February as this is usually considered to be a settled period for post 16 destinations:

Table 8: 16-17 CLA and CL –Qualifications (CCIS data)

Destinations (of Cohort Participating)	February 2023	February 2022	February 2021	February 2020
Overall	99	92	113	110
Working Towards <L2	43%	36%	43%	44%
Working at L2	29%	23%	22%	17%
Working at L3	23%	36%	27%	36%
Unconfirmed	4%	5%	7%	3%

There has been an increase in the numbers of Care Leavers working below level 2 compared to 2022 figures with 2023 now showing a similar picture to 2020-21 proportions.

Conversely, this year fewer of the cohort are working at level 3. It can be deduced that the return post COVID to GCSE exams as opposed to predicted grades could be in some way linked to this, however further analysis over the coming years will be required to evidence this.

There has been a sustained rise in the % of those working at level 2 over the past 4 years, which is a positive and steadier trend to show increased attainment levels for our CLA and CL cohort in post 16 education.

Further action has been undertaken to enhance the measures that are in place to support Care Leavers into apprenticeships and for Durham to ensure its responsibilities as a Corporate Parent are being met. Activities include, working with HR and teams to ringfence opportunities and better preparing Care Leavers to apply through individual tailored support by DurhamWorks.

DCC is committed to growing its own workforce and supporting Care Leavers to gain DCC apprenticeship opportunities. During 2022, 10 Care Experienced Young People were supported to apply for vacancies, including 3 ringfenced opportunities. 4 were successful, 3 of whom started in September 2022 with 1 YP deciding to go to college instead of taking up an apprenticeship offer. In 2023, 5 Care Experienced YP are continuing with their apprenticeships with an extra 2 starting in September. We also support our young people into apprenticeships in the private sector, with another 6 Care Experienced young people in non DCC apprenticeships. We continue to promote the bursary available which was increased to £3000 in August 2023.

5.6 What were the destinations for our young people?

We will receive the data for 2023 leavers in November. Please see below destinations for 2022 leavers:

Table 9: Destinations Post 16 2022

Destination	No of 2022 Year 11 School Leavers	% of 2022 Year 11 School Leavers	No of 2022 Year 11 School Leavers CLA/CL	% of 2022 Year 11 School Leavers CLA/CL
Total Participation in Learning (including custodial sentence)	5120	92.9	46	76.7
Re-engagement	18	0.3	0	0.0
Temporary Break in Learning	35	0.6	0	0.0
Employment without training	105	1.9	4	6.7

NEET Total	171	3.1	10	16.7
Other including destination not known	62	1.1	0	0.0

Table 10: Destinations Post 16 2021.

Destination	No of 2021 Year 11 School Leavers	% of 2021 Year 11 School Leavers	No of 2021 Year 11 School Leavers CLA/CL	% of 2021 Year 11 School Leavers CLA/CL
Total Participation in Learning (including custodial sentence)	5246	93.3	42	75
Re-engagement	17	0.3	0	0.0
Temporary Break in Learning	28	0.5	3	5.4
Employment without training	90	1.6	0	0.0
NEET Total	162	2.9	11	19.6
Other including destination not known	76	1.4	0	0.0

Table 11: Destinations Post 16 2020

Destination	No of 2020 Year 11 School Leavers	% of 2020 Year 11 School Leavers	No of 2020 Year 11 School Leavers CLA/CL	% of 2020 Year 11 School Leavers CLA/CL
Total Participation in Learning (including custodial sentence)	4907	93.9	48	76.2
Re-engagement	34	0.7	2	3.3
Temporary Break in Learning	19	0.4	4	6.3

Employment without training	49	0.9	0	0.0
NEET Total	169	3.2	11	17.5
Other including destination not known	53	1.0	0	0.0

The tables above demonstrate the numbers entering and maintaining post 16 placements as of 1st November for the past 3 years. The trends are continuing to show a drop in the % of young people entering EET for the whole population, however the CLA cohort is bucking this trend with a positive rise in the % entering EET for 2023. The drop in wider EET and the continued rise in “Employment without Training” can be seen because of the changing nature of the Labour Market and the “cost of living” crisis. Post Covid there is increased access to shorter term, lower paid, less skilled jobs, and the need to gain paid employment from young people can be both attractive and encouraged by a household needing the income.

For the first time we have seen a rise in the “Employment without Training” destination for the Care Leaver cohort in year 12, previously this wasn’t changing in line with the wider cohort which could have been down to several factors inc. lack of confidence and the tendency to be dealing with more complex issues often making it more difficult to gain and maintain employment at this age. However, with increased support from DurhamWorks those who have wanted “employment only” have been enabled to do so through new initiatives such as DurhamWorks Futures, without these the young people would not be working and would likely be NEET or Temp Break in Learning.

5.7 How do we support our young people to ensure they participate in EET?

Table 14 shows the proportion of Children Looked After and Care Leavers aged 16+ who are: Participating in Learning, Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), and whose current destination is Not Known.

Table 15 data is based on the destinations of young people (CLA/CL) who are academic age 16 and 17. The keeping in touch and confirmation of destinations of all 16- and 17-year-olds is a key statutory duty placed on each Local Authority by the Department for Education. The three-month average (December-February) is used annually as a key performance measure by the Department for Education and is included in national scorecards available on the Explore Education Statistics (EES) portal.

Both data sets are based on the March snapshot over the last three-year period. March is considered a representative and stable snapshot, by the Department for Education, and used widely for monitoring participation rates.

It is worth noting that the cohort size for certain groups of identified young people e.g., Children Looked After, Care Leavers etc. are small, which can have a disproportionate impact on percentage.

Table 12: 2020 –23 Participation in EET of Children Looked After / Care Leavers aged 16 +

	March 2020 %	March 2021 %	March 2022 %	March 2023 %
Education	46.8	47.5	44.3	37.3
Employment	10.2	10.9	15.8	17.8
Training	5.7	3.5	4.7	4.9
Re-engagement Activities	10.2	3.1	3.6	11.1
Total EET	72.8	65.0	68.4	71.1
NEET	23.4	30.7	27.3	27.9
Not Known	3.4	2.3	2.8	0.0
Combined NEET and Not Known	26.8	33.1	30.0	27.9

Table 13: Time Series: Participation in EET of Children Looked After / Care Leavers aged 16-17

	2019/20 %	2020/21 %	2021/22 %	2022/23
Education	61.2	62.8	52.3	51.3
Employment	4.8	6.8	13.5	14.1
Training	4.6	6.6	5.3	5.1
Re-engagement Activities	12.3	3.3	4.1	12.6
Total EET	82.9	79.5	75.2	83.1
NEET	16.7	20.5	24.6	16.9
Not Known	0.4	0.0	0.2	0.0
Combined NEET and NK	17.1	20.5	24.8	16.9

Participation in EET was much improved in 2019/2020, this was just prior to the onset of COVID-19 in which a lot of practical support and provision described was in place with high levels of engagement from young people. The biggest change was the higher numbers on re-engagement activities offered through DurhamWorks, all very bespoke and tailored to the young person's needs. This resulted in a reduction in NEET and increase in EET.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 then happened which led to several factors affecting the progression of our Care Leavers. There was a reduction in the availability of re-engagement and training provision owing to lockdowns, the detrimental impact caused by the ongoing changes to their education settings during this time, a reduction in face-to-face support from DurhamWorks

despite the continuation of contact in a virtual manner and the overall rise in levels of anxiety and Mental Health difficulties making it more difficult to access provision. A rise in the numbers of those NEET was a direct result with this being mirrored across other vulnerable groups and the generic wider population.

2022/23 data is showing extremely positive signs with an increase in EET rates, which exceeded pre-pandemic levels. The NEET and Not Known rate has also reduced to below pre-pandemic levels.

There has been a noticeable change in the destinations of those in EET. A significant increase in “Employment” with and without Training; this trend is reflected both across the region and nationally. Following much consultation with neighbouring and other national Local Authorities the “Employment without training” appears to be a result of the change in Labour Market trends and issues with the “cost of living” crisis as described above.

DurhamWorks ensures Care Leavers receive additional support to enable them to progress into education, employment or training. This is a European funded, Durham County Council led partnership programme to support young people aged 16-24 who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). All Care Leavers have access to a named adviser who provides on-going information, advice, guidance, and support. There are also bespoke activities available to motivate young people and to develop their skills for employment.

DurhamWorks and Social Care teams hold monthly EET surgeries where internal staff to DCC can work closely in partnership to discuss Care Leavers, their educational status and future employment/progression opportunities. EET quarterly meetings are also held with wider external partners, including providers in attendance to ensure a strong focus on support and the ability to ensure opportunities are maximised for our Looked After and Care Leavers in terms of their progression.

Across phases 1 and 2 of our DurhamWorks Programme (2016-2021), 689 young people who have been supported have identified themselves as being Looked After or a Care Leaver. Of these, 618 young people have completed the Programme (89.7%). Of those completions, 70% progressed to education, employment or training with the largest proportion progressing to employment (56% of all progressions) followed by 32% into education or training, 10% gaining an accredited qualification and 1.2% awaiting a finalised start date for their entry to EET.

Since the start of 2022, a further 192 participants have identified themselves as either Child Looked After or a Care Leaver. 108 have exited their supported intervention with 60 progressing to education, employment, or training on leaving (55.6%). A further 84 are continuing their support on DurhamWorks currently and their exit destination remains pending. The overall progression data for 2022 – 2023 as above will be evidenced in next years Virtual School report.

DurhamWorks also has a specific focus on engaging with employers to develop a range of opportunities for young people, including Care Leavers, from work experience placements through to paid employment. As part of the offer to employers, there is the opportunity to take part in ILM’s through GroundWork North East a delivery partner and a DurhamWorks Grant, both provide financial support to small and medium sized enterprises to enable them to employ young people.

County Durham Adult Learning and Skills Service (DurhamLearn) delivers a range of programmes which support young people, including Care Leavers, to develop skills and gain qualifications to progress into employment. Programmes include Apprenticeships as well as

Traineeship and Supported Internship programmes specially designed to meet the needs of those who have Special Educational Needs, including Care Leavers.

The Sessional Employment Programme (SEP) is another example of an initiative to improve opportunities and support for Care Leavers Post 16 which offers the opportunity of paid work experience in DCC. The focus is very much on the young person with opportunities being identified which meet the talents, interests, and aspirations of individual Care Leavers on a bespoke basis. A Sessional Employment Co-ordinator (0.5 FTE) facilitates the programme and is currently actively working with Care Leavers, YPAs, HR and DCC Service Managers to deliver the programme.

Progress includes the development of joint recruitment processes with HR, the design and delivery of a programme of support to all young people on the programme; briefing sessions delivered to senior managers across DCC by senior managers within Social Care and Progression and Learning to enhance the role of DCC as a corporate parent and promote opportunity creation; the agreement for a “Benefits Calculator” to be completed by Welfare Rights for all on the programme.

21 Care Experienced Young People have completed the Sessional Employment Programme in a variety of placements across DCC. Examples of placements being, HR Department, Farming in Protected Landscapes, The Gala Theatre, UASC Team, Peterlee Pavillion, Meadowfield Stores. The variety of service areas highlights the commitment across DCC to corporate parenting responsibilities. Young People can be in EET and NEET to access SEP. YP in education are accessing this programme to complement their studies and enhance their CV's. Recruitment is ongoing.

The implementation of “any time” travel bus passes - was something our Children in our Care have told DCC that they would prefer to have rather than the limited travel passes with restricted times for those in full time education. Progression and Learning worked together with partners and local FE Colleges to implement the ‘top up’ bus passes for Children in our Care. This was initially for those in Years 12 and 13 attending the four County Durham based FE Colleges. In 2022-2023 Academic year we extended this to include all Academic Year groups, therefore, older Care Leavers attending a Durham college benefited too.

Young people are now better off financially and able to travel with no restrictions – allowing better access to services, the community and leisure activities. Some examples include more young people able to gain part time employment as the cost of travel was initially seen as a barrier and increased confidence of independent travel through accessing more bus services and alternative routes, not just the ‘known’ college route.

DurhamWorks Programme for Schools - provides extra support to aid progression. Its aim is to better prepare and support young people on leaving school. It is an ESF funded provision (commenced Sept 2020) targeted to support those at risk of becoming NEET of which those Looked After and Care Leavers are a key priority group. Support includes access to groupwork within an educational setting to better prepare them for leaving school; individual careers guidance with a Progression Adviser; attendance at PEP and EHCP reviews to ensure partnership working; intensive mentoring support to help transition into their chosen post 16 placement; and support to ensure the post 16 placement is maintained.

For the academic year 2021/22 a total of 1,204 year 11 school leavers identified as being at risk of NEET (not in education, employment, or training) were supported. Out of the 72 in year 11 with Looked After or Care Leaver status 49 (68.1%) were supported, out of the remaining 23 (31.9%), 5 of these were not initially referred but are being supported by the

DurhamWorks post 16 team and the remaining are in contact with our other support services including Durham County Council's Sessional Employment Programme. 85.7% of those who received support from DWPfs progressed into a place in education, employment, or training (1st November 2022).

For the academic year 22/23 we have engaged 1,419 year 11s who we are still supporting, further data on the outcomes for these will become available over the autumn term 2023 and will be evidenced in next year's Virtual School report. .

Pupil Premium Plus Post 16 Pilot (PPP+) - DCC were 1 of 30 LAs across 9 regions of England that were successful following a bid to take part in an initial 6-month pilot from October 2021-March 2022. The pilot was successful and was extended to the 2022-2023 Academic Year. The focus is Year 12 and 13 Care Experienced Young People who were attending a college setting with the aim to support sustainment in EET by providing Pupil Premium Plus funding similarly to the way extra funding is provided to school age children who are in our Care. The aim was to strengthen links between Virtual Schools, YPS, Progression & Learning and Colleges providing support to students to prevent disengagement. NEET Young People can become part of the pilot.

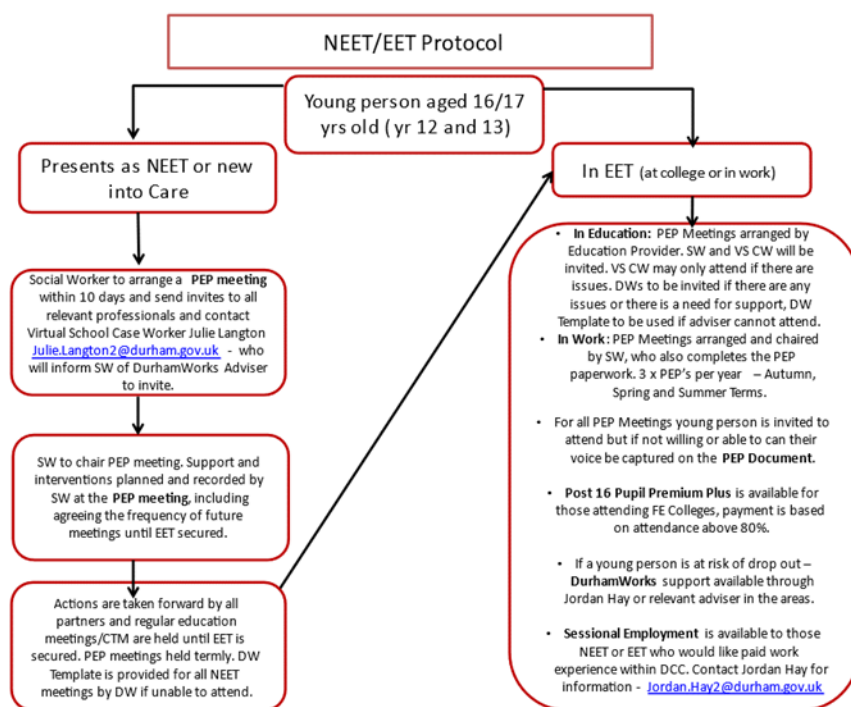
Following consultation with local FE providers DCC decided to use the available funding as follows: A dedicated adviser (0.5 FTE) to oversee those young people currently enrolled in FE, by providing support to young people and professionals both in college and in the community; A 'Keep In College' weekly cash incentive of £20 per week to the young people for over 80% authorised attendance and as a further incentive to NEET young people to encourage them to sign up to FE; Fund the post of a part time Admin Assistant to facilitate the payments of the weekly incentives.

In 2022-2023 we had 81 Young People access PPP+.

The PPP+ has since been awarded again to DCC for the full academic year 2023-2024, the offer has since been revised due to changes in funding and cohort size to now include more education and training settings such as Sixth Form and Training provision rather than only FE colleges. It will still follow an attendance incentivised model of cash payments and includes the support of a dedicated adviser to ensure payment and maintenance of EET placements.

Post 16 PEP Caseworker - In December 2022 a dedicated post was developed to work across both Progression and Learning and the Virtual School to support and strengthen the PEP process for the Post 16 cohort of CIOC. The role currently promotes a robust transition from CIOC to Care Leaver regarding EET and ensures all relevant professionals are involved and accountable for support to our CIOC cohort. The role includes delivering training and support to Social Workers and Designated Teachers on PEP's and Welfare Call.

EET/NEET Protocol - In January 2023 we launched an EET\NEET Protocol with the Children Looked After teams to demonstrate the process to be followed for all young people who are in post 16 education and in particular what to do should a young person they are supporting drop into NEET. This reinforces the PEP process, and ensures a meeting is held within 10 working days to review and plan with the young person and dedicated professionals, ensuring DurhamWorks is invited to all NEET PEP's. A briefing session was held with the CLA TEAMS to launch and gather feedback on the protocol.



5.8 How well do our young people achieve and participate in Higher Education?

Young people have excelled again in Higher Education with 36 attending University during the academic year 22/23, 5 have graduated with good grades. Progressions include Teaching in a Durham primary school, Civil Service Internship in London, Masters, A&E Nurse. 1 Young Person has moved into a DCC Degree Apprenticeship starting September 2023.

20 Year 12/13 young people have been identified as having an interest in attending University in the future. Information and support sessions are happening to ensure CIOC understand the support available to them.

6. Attendance and Exclusion

6.1 How well do our young people attend school?

Attendance continues to be a strength of the virtual school. The slight increase in absence and persistent absence is in line with the national and local trend. It also reflects the anxieties demonstrated by some CLA when realising the return to normality and formal exams post Covid.

Since returning to school in September attendance of children looked after has mostly been good. Attendance of Primary aged children is strong, the attendance of Secondary aged

children is an area to focus on. The Attendance Improvement Team have collected attendance data in July to provide a picture for the academic year.

Attendance was 91.4%, almost 0.6% lower than this point last year. Attendance was broken down as follows:

- Attendance of primary school age CLA (including reception, Y1-Y6) = **95.3%** which is in line with last year.
- Attendance of secondary school age CLA = **86.2%**, a **1.8%** dip against last year.
- Attendance of CLA in County Durham schools and settings = **89.9%**
- Attendance of CLA in out of County schools and settings = **90.6%**

Attendance of our young people is testament to the work of the DVS casework team who maintain regular contact with both schools and carers and to our schools who recognise the importance of attendance for children in care and young people and seek to engage them and meet their needs.

We work closely with the Attendance Improvement Team to ensure CLA are monitored closely and any concerns with attendance can be addressed swiftly.

Table 14: Attendance over three years for CLA

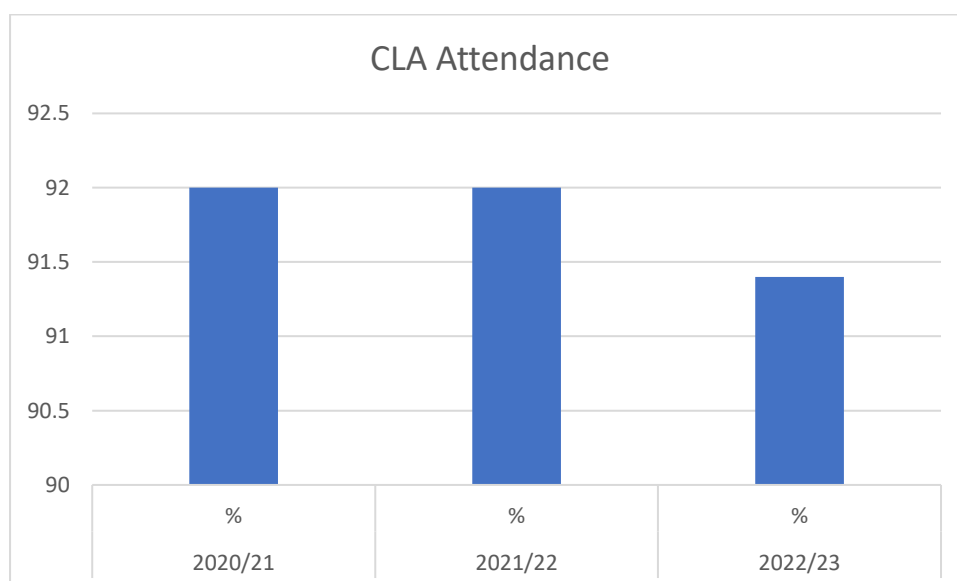
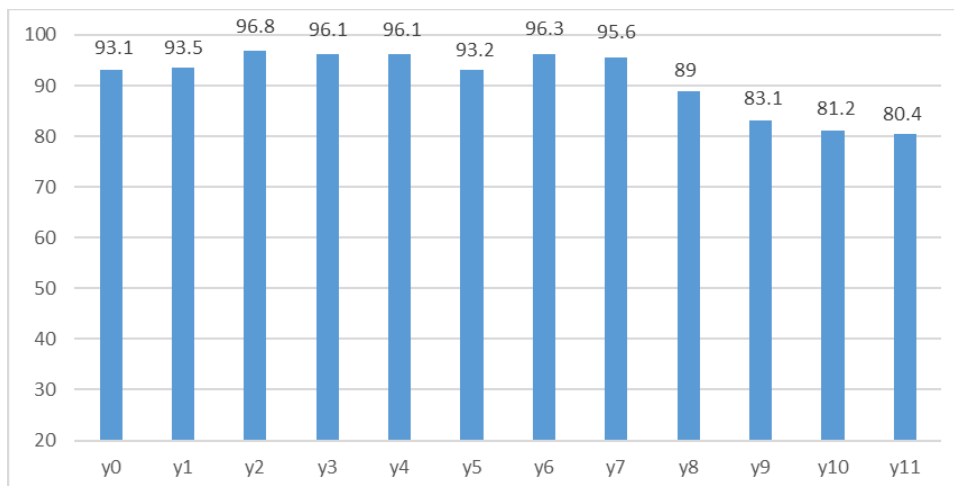
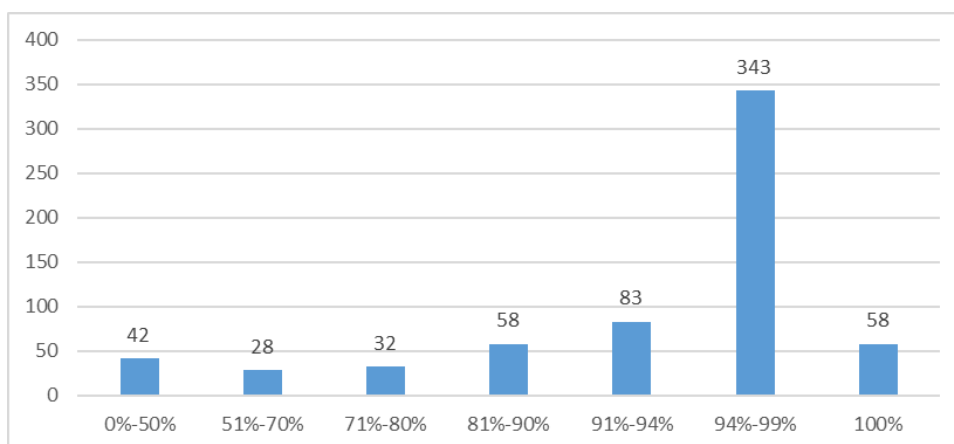


Table 15: Attendance of CLA by year group

This highlights the need for closer monitoring of CLA in Years 8, 9, 10 and 11. CLA PEP Caseworkers target attendance during ePEP meetings.

Table 16: Attendance bands for CLA

The distribution of attendance can also be broken down into attendance bands as seen in this graph. This shows that most children had attendance at 94 - 99% or above.

6.2 How many of our young people have been suspended?

There has been one permanent exclusion 22/23. The casework team work closely with schools to prevent any issues reaching crisis point and explore appropriate alternative pathways better suited to meeting the need of the young person. We challenge any schools which consider permanent exclusion, and then implement appropriate support, using Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) funding to avoid this.

There have been forty Suspensions during the academic year 2022/2023 for CLA. Twenty One children/young people experienced more than one period of Suspension. Twenty Seven

children attended the secondary sector, ten were primary aged children and three children attended Specialist Provision.

We are working closely with schools to address this. We ask schools to contact the virtual school team before implementing a Suspension to discuss alternative approaches.

The VSH works closely with the Behaviour and Inclusion Panels (BIPs). To provide additional support and act as the corporate parent for children who are displaying challenging behaviour, the VSH will attend behaviour panel meetings to support the case for a CLA not to be excluded.

We continue to provide a support package at our Inclusion Base for those young people where a Suspension is unavoidable and where it could put pressure on the home placement. We also offer this to some schools to relieve some pressure, before a crisis point is reached, to give them time to plan more appropriately for a young person's needs.

Table 17: Suspensions over three years for CLA

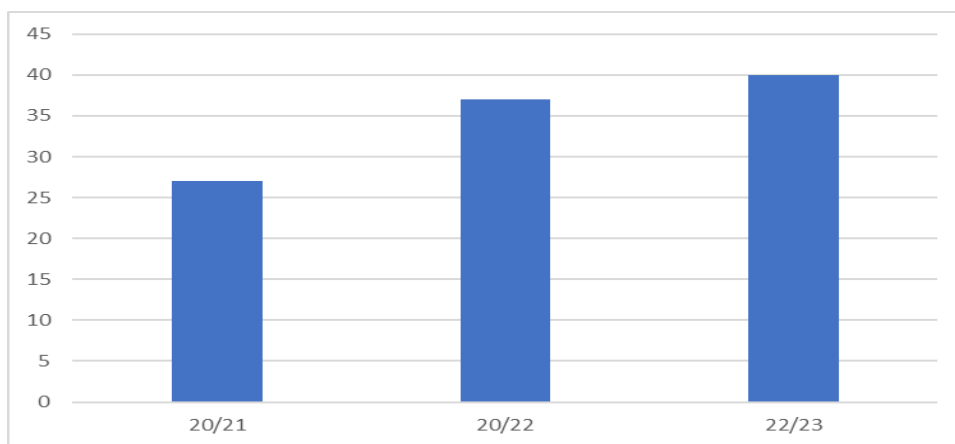
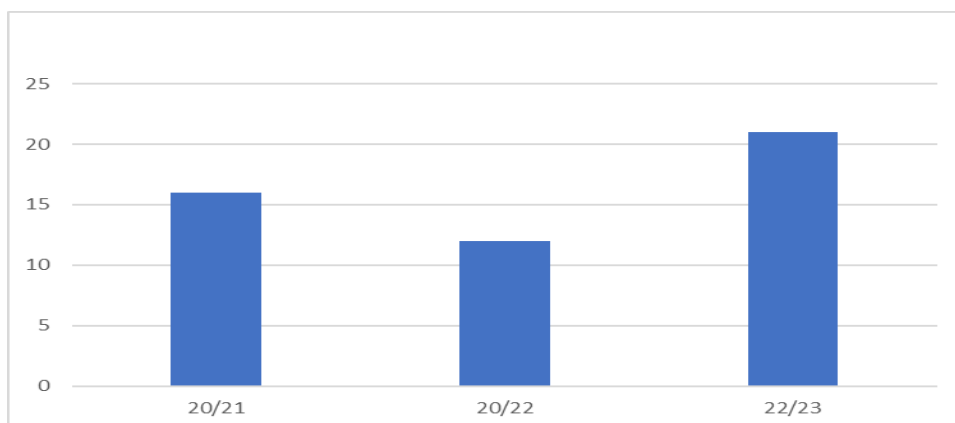


Table 18: Number of CLA with 2+ Suspensions over three years.



7. Admissions, transitions, managed moves and OOC placements

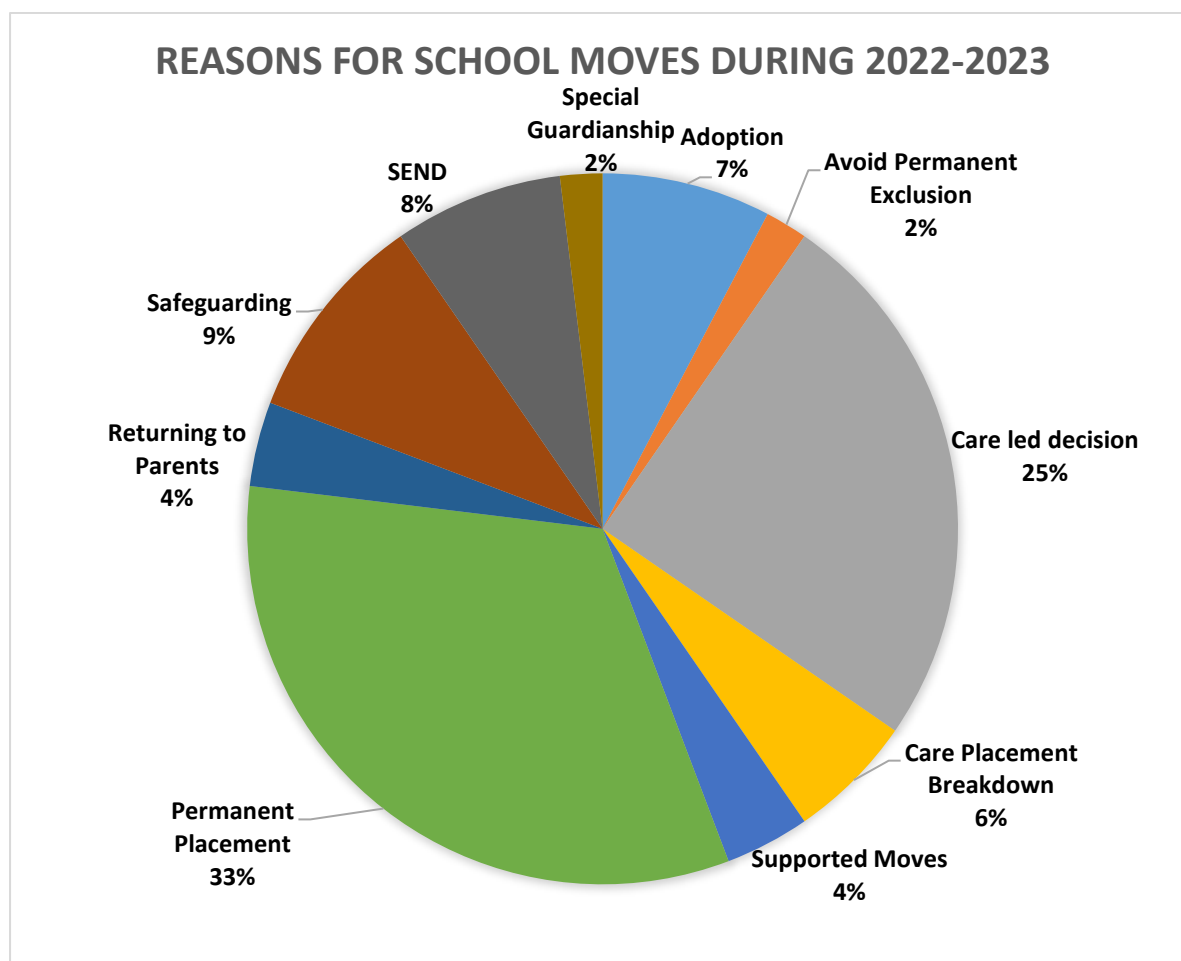
We work hard to meet our statutory duty to avoid any 'drift and delay'¹ in securing full-time education which meets the needs of the child. It remains a challenge to secure mid-year admissions, particularly to secondary schools. We consult closely with headteachers to ensure the best provision. We do place children and young people in schools which are judged to require improvement, where the provision offered meets the need of the child and we believe that it offers them the best chance of a settled education where they can make good progress. The casework team provide enhanced transition for the most vulnerable children and young people at key points. This will be enhanced following the restructure with the focus of the new team on seamless transition from 0-18.

7.1 How many children moved school mid-year?

In 2022-2023 there were 52 school moves that took place during the academic year. A further 54 were suggested, but challenged by the Virtual School and therefore did not take place. We aim to ensure moves take place at the end of an academic year, but there are occasions where a move mid-year is beneficial. Working with the care teams, we have supported moves which:

- were as a result of statutory assessment.
- supported the long-term care pathway for permanence.
- for safeguarding reasons
- enhanced the experience of the child within the family unit – attending school with others from the family.
- enabled them to feel part of the local community – developing relationships with peers in their locality.
- avoided trauma which could have resulted from attending a school with siblings still with birth parents or near birth parents.
- provided an opportunity to develop friendships prior to KS2/3 transition.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-children>

Table 19: School Moves 2022-23

Due to the increasing numbers of school moves in previous years, we developed more robust systems this year to monitor the number of moves requested, reasons for moves and completed moves. More rigorous monitoring took place of school move planning and there was a clear message that school moves would only be considered as a last resort for our young people to promote stability of education.

The main reason for moving school during the academic year was to support a permanent placement with 33% of school moves completed for this purpose. These only take place once consideration has been given to the stability of the care placement and whether there may be a benefit to maintaining the place at their current school. Wherever possible, the education placement should remain stable, but often the distance travelled and opportunities to develop peer groups in their local area need to be considered.

A significant number of school moves took place because of care led decisions, but this also included those who had to move out of the area, so a school move was the only option. 9% of school moves were due to a child leaving care on an Adoption Order or SGO. SEND reasons factored in 8% of in year school moves, although a proportion of these will have been a move to a school more suited to the child's needs and therefore supported by the Virtual School. However, in all cases the PEP Caseworker oversees the move, including agreeing

the chosen school. The Virtual School Head has the final say in agreeing school moves and the PEP Caseworker ensures they are consulted fully in the process.

7.2 How many of our children experienced managed moves?

We do not support Managed Moves. The VS has shared the view with headteachers that a CLA needs to have a sense of belonging. Schools who belong to Academy Trusts have in the past placed a child on a different site within the trust to avoid a Suspension and to give the child time to reflect. When this happens familiar staff from the school where they are on roll continue to support them. Short term moves to The Bridge, Willows and Beeches is acceptable for an interim period and requires an entry and exit strategy.

7.3 How many of our children are placed in out of county education settings?

166 (22%) of the school age cohort were educated out of the boundaries of County Durham in 2022-23. This is a slight increase of 2% from 2021-2022.

8. Personal Education Plans (PEP), (PP+) and Academic Progress

8.1 How does the virtual school ensure the quality of the PEPS?

Responsibility for completion of the PEP was passed to schools in 2016 as it was decided to move greater responsibility for ensuring the completion of the PEP to schools, which are best placed to have an in-depth knowledge of the young person alongside the social worker.

In September 2019 the virtual school implemented an online system for PEPs through Welfare Call. We were confident this would enable swifter quality assurance and, consequently, faster and more robust challenge to schools and settings where needed. This system has now been embedded for statutory school age children, early years and Post 16.

During 2018-2019 we identified early years and post 16 PEPs as an area for improvement, and we worked closely with these teams to streamline practice and embed quality assurance. Our Early Years Team produced a PEP which better matches the phase, and they now lead on the quality assurance. This ensures a level of expertise appropriate to these schools and settings. The emphasis last year was taking this good practice and embedding it into the new online PEP system. Both early years and Post 16 colleagues have been involved in the development of the new PEPs and will be responsible for training settings and social workers. Our Early Years colleagues are responsible for the QA of Nursery PEPS, whilst the PEP Caseworkers complete QA for the Statutory School Age PEPs. During 2022 – 2023 the Virtual School appointed a dedicated Post 16 PEP Caseworker to lead on co-ordination and completion of the documents. There is a robust system in place to 'handover' responsibility to the Post 16 Caseworker as all young people have a 'profile' completed by their SSA

Caseworker. The Post 16 PEP Caseworker is employed jointly by the Virtual School and the Progression and Learning team. The services work closely together to ensure young people have a high quality PEP in place and that they receive effective advice and guidance. All PEPS have a QA document embedded in them which allows communication between the Caseworkers and settings.

8.2 What information does the PEP record?

The PEP is a live, working document which provides a record of the young person's journey through education. In developing the new PEP, we reviewed the effectiveness of the document and asked for the views of young people through the Children in Care Council (CiCC), who contributed their ideas to the new e-pep document. We stress with schools that the PEP document is a snapshot; it is the implementation of the actions which make a difference. Our document is developed to show the strategies in place to support our children and young people and to measure the impact of interventions. Central to this are the views and experiences of our children and young people, and numerous opportunities are given for them to contribute to their PEP meeting. We have worked with the CiCC to develop a fact sheet for CLA to help them to understand how the PEP process works.

8.3 What is the quality of the PEPs?

Since adopting the electronic PEP document, all young people have at least 1 PEP on the Welfare Call system. This was an improvement of 5% from 2018-2019, when compliance was 95%. Using the electronic PEP has improved and streamlined many processes including tracking PEP completion; monitoring involvement; tracking and analysing Pupil Premium Plus use and quality assurance.

Since the ePEP was introduced in September 2019 there have been a series of training sessions to introduce the new system and familiarise both designated teachers and social workers with the document. Welfare Call were initially responsible for training staff, but this responsibility is now with the Virtual School, and we have a full programme of training for both Designated Teachers and Social Workers. Ongoing support is provided to schools through caseworker involvement, business admin and manager support from the Virtual School and the Welfare Call support helpline. PEP quality and feedback on issues and developments are provided to Designated Teachers regularly either through sharing emails or at DT network/training sessions.

During 2022-2023, 2,193 PEPs have been completed for 834 young people of statutory school age. They have taken place across 51 Local Authorities. PEPs ordinarily take place virtually, which allows our PEP Caseworkers to attend more regularly, and we aim to have Virtual School representation at at least 2 out of 3 PEPs held for the child. The focus has been on providing ongoing support on completion of PEPs for Designated Teachers through increased PEP Caseworker participation in PEP meetings. Where a child has no education provision, one of our Caseworkers leads the PEP and ensures there is a robust plan in place to secure a placement, that is then recorded in the PEP document.

The PEP Caseworkers work very closely with the DTs and provide advice and guidance on high quality PEP completion. They also work closely on ensuring PEP completion within timescales. Late submission and completion of the document affects quality as we are unable to share outcomes and interventions with the wider school staff and carers. Therefore, this

year we have revised our policy to grade any PEP as not High Quality if it is not signed off by DTs within 30 days of the meeting. Unfortunately, this has had an impact on the number of PEPs graded as High Quality. In addition to the support given to DTs PEP Caseworkers also work closely with colleagues in Social Care to offer the same support and guidance. This year we have focussed on providing additional support to Social Workers and during the year Virtual School Managers have provided: -

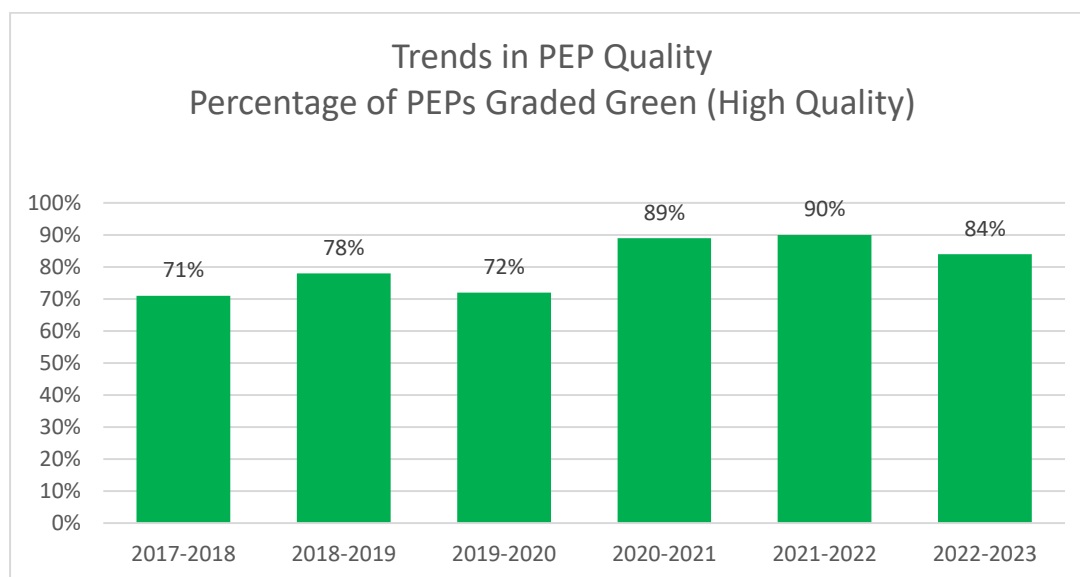
- Regular communication with senior Social Care managers to ensure key messages are disseminated throughout teams.
- IROs have access to the PEP documents.
- Specific written guidance on Welfare Call and the EPEP shared with Social Workers
- Additional support offered to social workers of Post 16 cohort.

A quality assurance document was introduced and embedded in the ePEP document and process. This increased transparency and gave schools and social workers feedback on how the quality can be improved. During 2022-2023 the Summer ePEP quality was rated as 86.7% Green (High Quality) and 13.3% Amber (did not meet expected standard to achieve high quality). This is a fall of 3.4% High Quality PEPs from the same time last year. The fall in PEPs graded as High Quality is due to the increased level of scrutiny placed on completion times. The quality of the documents has remained high, but there has been an impact on the grading as any not signed off by DTs within a month, results in an automatic Amber. The PEP Caseworker continues to Quality Assure the document, making suggestions for improvements, but the document will ultimately be graded as Amber to reflect the need to have a document that is current. Over the year we have seen some improvement in sign-off time and will continue to strive for timeliness sign off to drive up quality.

Table 20: Quality of PEPs Statutory School Age 2022-23

Term	Green High Quality	Amber Below expected quality
Autumn	79.9%	20.1%
Spring	85.3%	14.7%
Summer	86.7%	13.3%
Grand Total	84%	16%

The numbers indicate that the quality of educational provision for our children and young people is strong. However, although increasing the numbers of PEP Caseworkers has no doubt improved our capacity to support DTs and Social Workers with the process, resulting in an increase in High Quality ratings, we also understand this may impact on standardisation of judgements. Therefore, the focus next year will be on standardising quality judgements and improving awareness of the features of a High-Quality PEP. Quality Assurance training for CLA PEP Caseworkers has taken place and a moderation exercise was carried out.

Table 21: Quality of PEPs Statutory School Age 2017-2023

During the year we have continued to challenge schools who submitted PEPs late or below our expectations. We continue to support colleagues in Social Care to understand and navigate the system, with specific support from the Durham Virtual School Team to support Social Care Teams where absence is an issue. Although sign-off times have, this year, impacted on the number of PEPs graded High Quality, there continue to be improvements in this area.

- Of the 783 PEPs completed during the Summer Term:
 - 68% were signed off by Social Worker within the 10 day deadline.
(Average sign-off time 9.02 days)
 - 77% were signed off by Designated Teacher within the 10 day deadline.
(Average sign-off time 7.69 days)
 - The average sign-off time for the PEP Caseworker was 2.69 days.
(Virtual School to QA and sign off PEP within 5 days of the last sign off by SW/DT)

There are several issues that contribute to delays in completing and signing off documents. These include staffing issues within the Virtual School, a Social Care restructure and increased staff absence and an increased number of children entering care. As a Virtual School we are aware of the issues and will continue to put measures in this year to improve the sign off rate for all. These include, but are not limited to, increased monitoring of sign off by managers, additional training for DTs and Social Workers, increasing capacity within the Virtual School staff structure. Therefore, we expect to see sign off rates improve over the next academic year and will be monitoring these closely to ensure our strategies have the expected impact.

Both Early Years and Post 16 PEPs are incorporated into the Welfare Call system and their completion is overseen by the Early Years Team and Post 16 Co-ordinator and PEP CW. Additional training is being developed for settings and social workers to ensure they are confident with the documents and the system. This will hopefully ensure a similar improvement in quality of PEPs in both early years and Post 16. As a Virtual School we have invested in the Welfare Call Analytics System, which this year will be used to full effect to provide our colleagues with regular updates regarding quality of PEPs.

8.4 How do we distribute pupil premium plus funding?

In 2018-19 we adjusted our distribution so that the funding is available without undue bureaucracy when a child enters care and to aid forward planning for schools. We have allocated £600 each term. In line with the DfE guidance of Feb 2018², we have encouraged schools to look at evidenced practice and to consider how the funding can support the cohort of looked after children in care as well as provide individual intervention. Schools account for this in the PEP where we ask whether funding has been used to support the cohort. This process will be strengthened this year with the introduction of a yearly funding resource plan.

8.5 What is the centrally held budget spent on?

In 2022-23 (Financial Year) Durham Virtual School retained approx. £570,000. This funding was used to provide the following centrally managed provision for Durham children in care:

- Additional senior EP capacity for children in care
- Occupational Therapy Assessment
- School Counsellor support for children in care – additional capacity to 8 days per week equivalent
- Supporting the development of the designated teacher role
- Curious Kids reading packages for years 2 – 6.
- Storytime magazine subscription to promote a love of stories for reception and year 1 children.
- Fiction Express for year 2-8
- Learning APPs for young people and Designated Teachers
- Continued to provide additional resources to the 5 location-based inclusion panels (previously behaviour support panels) to encourage locality and school-based solutions to avoid exclusion or school moves. This also provides additional access to the EWEL (Emotional Wellbeing and Effective Learning Team)

2

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

- Help line provision from Full Circle to provide therapeutic advice and training to the virtual school and the schools for our CLA.
- Targeted resources / materials for identified children.
- EWEL Credits for Schools to access emotional Wellbeing support for CLA.
- Alternative provision / curriculum for children in care at risk of disengaging from learning.
- 1:1 curriculum support for year 6 and 11, using PP+ to part fund National Tutor Programme/ School Led Tutoring to Schools. This was widened to all pupils in Years 1 to 11.
- Providing UASC pupils with access to Chrome Books and learning APPs to support engagement in education while finding a school place.
- Turnaround / outreach places secured with The Bridge (secondary) and The Beeches / Willows (primary) teams to provide short term placements or outreach work during a period of crisis at school.

The importance of schools recognising and understanding the impact of insecure attachment and early trauma on the behaviour and progress of young people is well documented. Children and young people who experience toxic stress, emotional turmoil and insecurity will not be ready to learn and are more likely to be excluded from school. This has continued to be a driver in 2022-23 as we increased the allocation of retained funding to inclusion and therapeutic support. This is an area discussed in PEP meetings to highlight the support available. This has been further developed through our offer from Full Circle and our EWEL interventions.

8.6 What academic support and intervention do we provide from central funding?

As in previous years, children in year 6 and 11 were offered up to 6 sessions of tutoring at no cost to the school. This was to be funded through Pupil Premium Plus. However, the team of Tutors we used to support experienced capacity issues which meant the support we could directly offer was limited. Instead, additional funding was given to schools in order to provide that direct support. That included giving additional PP+ payments to schools as well as direct payments of Recovery Grant and School Led Tutoring funding.

We also commission six places at The Bridge turnaround base, which is part of The Woodlands. The number of placements has doubled from last year as we recognise the important work this provision does to re-engage our young people and support them back into school. 17 pupils accessed this during 2022-2023. Several pupils attended for short term placements, but often the pupil would remain with The Bridge for a whole term before transitioning back to their school or next education provision. Often, the Bridge will support the young person whilst they were going through statutory assessment, with the next provision being a new SEND school that meets their identified needs.

As in other years, the Bridge continued to offer outreach support in schools for those young people struggling to maintain placements. Support is also offered to our primary children through the Willows/Beeches linked to the Pupil Referral Unit. Support has been offered both in school and as a temporary off-site placement to avoid exclusion. Whilst in both provisions the young people continue to follow a full curriculum.

In addition to the centrally funded provision, we have an Inclusion Base, which for several years up until 2020-2021 was funded through de-delegated school funds. However, this meant it was only available for those attending mainstream secondary schools, unless schools agreed to fund the place. In 2021-2022, following the change of funding, we made the decision to continue to fund this provision using top-sliced PP+. In doing this we could open the support to all Durham secondary schools, and to our Durham children based in neighbouring local authorities (dependent on distance). 58 young people accessed our Inclusion Base over the academic year, an increase of 32% from last year. Reasons for referral to the Inclusion Base include to avoid an exclusion, to give some space in a more nurturing environment during times of crisis or to offer support for emotional wellbeing. In total there were 105 separate interventions delivered. Over the year 1095 (attendance 76%) sessions (1/2 day = 1 session) were offered over a variety of packages, including inclusion support to prevent exclusion, bridging packages before transition and a 6-week part-time programme looking at communication skills. We also have a teacher on site who offers Maths and English lessons. Several young people made a successful reintegration back to their schools or alternative provision, although 31 attended for more than one intervention. However, this number included those who originally attended to avoid exclusion, who subsequently went on to attend the Programme as a proactive intervention to avoid further exclusion and improve engagement in school.

What difference does our support make? Case study

Background

- ✓ X was displaying negative and disruptive behaviours in school, impacting on both his learning and that of his peers
- ✓ X was continuously making poor choices that resulted in consequences in school
- ✓ X often displayed low level disruptive behaviours and playfighting. He would sometimes copy the behaviours of other children in the classroom.
- ✓ X would make inappropriate comments towards children and staff and was talkative, interrupting his and others learning.
- ✓ X displayed a very negative attitude towards learning and school.
- ✓ X had been looked after for several years and had good relationships with DVS staff.

Action

- ✓ X was referred to attend the Programme at our Inclusion Base
- ✓ X's programme included lessons with the teacher on English and Maths and he was supported in catching up with work he had missed.

- ✓ The Programme included sessions on self-esteem, confidence and making appropriate choices with the expectation that this would improve relationships with staff.
- ✓ Time was allocated to support X to think about his communication and to equip him with the tools to engage in class, to understand the rules and boundaries and take responsibility for actions.
- ✓ X was given the chance to work with others in the group and develop communication skills and make positive friendships
- ✓ Time was taken to talk through X's concerns and worries and to understand why he had such a negative attitude towards learning.
- ✓ Meetings were held at the beginning, middle and end of the intervention. This ensured X's school and Care Team remained fully engaged and able to consider strategies to support him in his education placement.

Outcomes

- ✓ A structure of regular meetings and feedback to School, Carer, Social Worker, and X meant that progress was tracked, and everyone understood the next steps. This also allowed for careful planning for X to return to school full time.
- ✓ X engaged in lessons, completing work and began to have a positive outlook on education and his future.
- ✓ X became more confident in building positive relationships with staff and pupils, and this was reflected on the days he attended school.
- ✓ Through reflection on communication by both X and DT, they were able to build a good relationship, resulting in regular catch ups in school, meaning X felt supported and listened to.

Comments from members of X's Care Team

- ✓ X is happy to go to The Link and he is up and ready and waiting to leave – Carer
- ✓ It has been positive for X to have a place on the programme. He is putting skills into practice which he has learned and is more thoughtful from having this experience – Social Worker
- ✓ There is a noticeable difference when X is receiving support from the Link Inclusion Base. He really enjoys attending – DT.
- ✓ I love it here. It's so nice and relaxed and you listen to me – Young person.

8.7 What therapeutic support do we provide from central funding?

For all our children looked after we offer access to Occupational Therapy assessment, Counselling, Cognition and Learning assessments and additional Educational Psychology time. This is funded through the retained PP+ funding and is open to all our young people.

We also work closely with Full Circle to ensure a joined-up approach to the emotional and mental wellbeing of our children and young people. Full Circle now offer a therapist staffed helpline for our Schools with Durham CLA as well as delivering training in schools where they are struggling to meet a child's needs due to trauma and attachment.

During 2020-2021 the Virtual School established a task and finish group working with colleagues in Full Circle, the Emotional Wellbeing and Effective Learning (EWEL) Service and the CLA EP to establish a more robust emotional and therapeutic offer for our children. Through this group we developed a training package for our schools to improve DT's understanding of attachment and trauma informed approaches in school.

This year Full Circle have delivered 9 training sessions to Designated Teacher through the Virtual School offer.

In addition to this We also identified that our children would benefit from increased support from the EWEL team and purchased a further 100 credits with them to be able to offer assessment and intervention to be more proactive in addressing issues. Over 48 young people were supported through this SLA and several of them received multiple packages included assessment and support. We continue to invest in the EWEL credits to provide access to tailored support and intervention in the next academic year.

8.8 How do schools spend their allocation?

In 2022-23 (Financial Year) our total PP+ budget was £1,896,670. Schools were allocated £1,800 of the government allocation of £2,530), in 3 instalments. In total, approximately £1,4 million was provided directly to schools during the 2022-23 academic year to support their work with children in care. Recovery Grant Premium for eligible pupils was given directly to schools and usage was monitored in the PEP. The School Led Tutoring Grant was used to fund packages of support delivered to some of our most vulnerable learners, including those not attending school, in our children's homes, leaving secure and those at risk of permanent exclusion. Additional funding was also sent directly to schools to fund multiple packages of support.

One to one support is used effectively by schools to help to close the gaps in knowledge caused by school moves and poor attendance prior to entering care. Pastoral support for the looked after cohort includes additional staffing to provide mentoring and advocacy, a safe space, someone to check readiness to learn etc. A significant amount of the PP+ funding given to schools is spent on one to one tuition. 56% of PP+ funding given to schools was used to support individuals with academic progress and achievement. This has proved effective in improving basic skills and basic building blocks that our children need to progress, particularly important after the disruption caused by Covid. For our cohort, additional one to one and small group tutoring is found to be effective especially for those children who have moved schools several times prior to entering care. As was the case last year, the next highest expenditure is on emotional health and wellbeing, as ensuring our children's emotional needs are met is

crucial to their readiness to learn; this again will have been impacted due to Covid and is also an important factor to consider when working with children who have experienced trauma. When considering the outcomes, the majority are either fully or partly achieved. However, there are a significant number of outcomes that are partially achieved.

Training has been provided this year from the CLA Educational Psychologist on developing SMART outcomes. However, we aim to build on this area over the next academic year to hopefully improve the number of outcomes achieved. Our Caseworkers continue to have a presence at PEP meetings and complete quality assurance on all documents to ensure outcomes that are set are SMART and that feedback is given to schools where this is not the case. The number of outcomes set for attendance that were not achieved is disappointing, but persistent non-attenders are overrepresented in these outcomes. We continue to expect excellent attendance from our children and have made this a focus of the autumn PEP. In all cases where attendance outcomes are not achieved the Virtual School are aware of the issues and are supporting schools, carers, and social workers to re-engage young people in their learning and improve attendance.

Table 22: How schools spent their PP+ budget on individual pupils

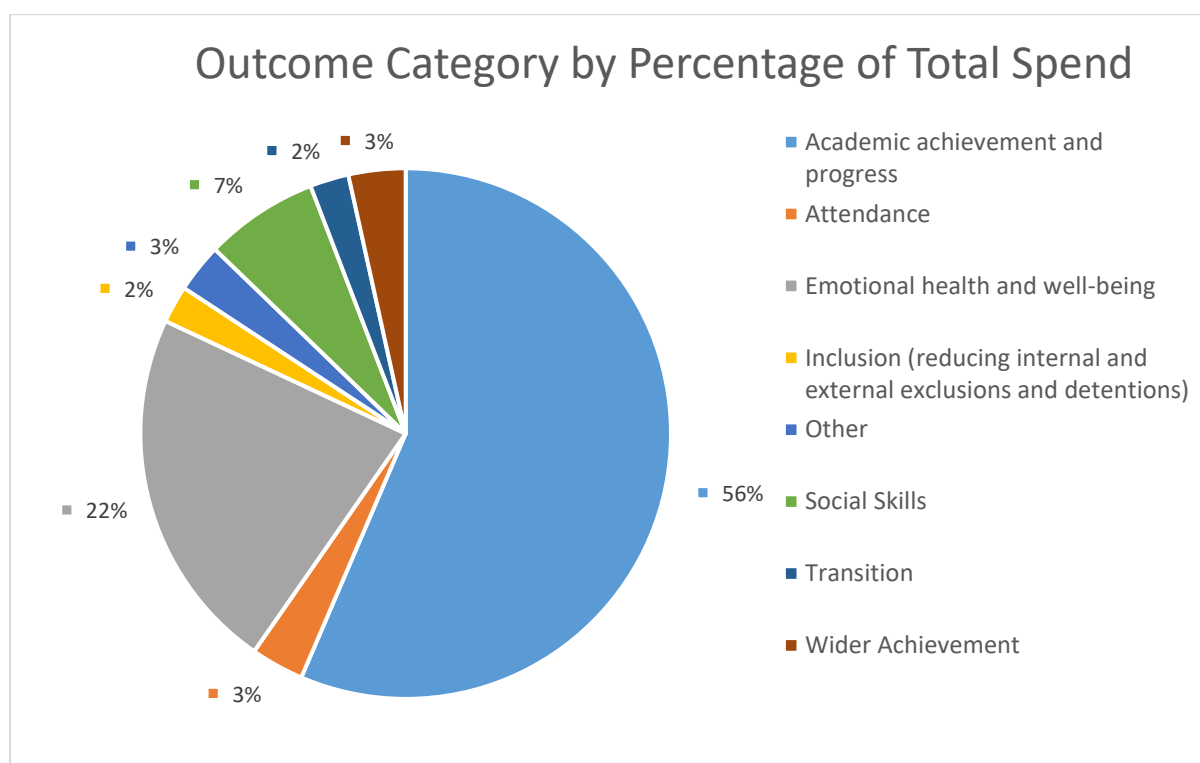


Table 23: Total spend linked to outcomes and EEF Intervention category of spend

Outcomes Achieved in Each Category	Achieved	Partial	Not Achieved
Academic achievement and progress	40%	49%	11%
Emotional health and well-being	37%	52%	11%
Social Skills	49%	41%	10%
Wider Achievement	54%	35%	11%
Transition	47%	35%	17%
Other	41%	46%	13%
Attendance	25%	32%	43%
Inclusion (reducing internal and external exclusions and detentions)	33%	27%	40%
Grand Total	41%	47%	13%

EEF Category of Spend	Amount
Small group tuition	17.23%
One to one tuition	15.04%
Social and emotional learning	15.03%
Other	12.10%
Individualised instruction	6.71%
Behaviour Interventions	3.96%
Metacognition and self-regulation	3.75%
Phonics	3.54%
Early years interventions	3.35%
Outdoor adventure learning	2.78%
Homework	2.22%
Mastery learning	2.20%
Reading comprehension strategy	2.05%
Digital technology	1.99%
Mentoring	1.92%
Oral language interventions	1.63%
Arts participation	1.49%
Within-class attainment grouping	0.98%
Sports participation	0.87%
Collaborative learning	0.76%
Feedback	0.26%
Parental engagement	0.09%
Peer tutoring	0.06%

9. Training Provision

Training is one of our core duties and one which we believe can make a real difference to the lives of looked after young people. We provide (without charge) training for social workers, IROs, foster carers, designated teachers, and governors as well as for the full education improvement team. Our governor training encourages governors to review policies with designated teachers and equips them to provide appropriate challenge around outcomes for children in care.

We also run designated teacher network meetings every term. The training is well attended and well-received. We contribute to the Head of Education's briefings for schools, service days for the education team and team business days. Updates and other information are disseminated through briefing papers, and we provide bespoke support and advice for schools. At the request of designated teachers, we now seek to bring an external speaker to network events.

Full Circle delivered 9 training virtual training sessions across the year, providing vital support for all schools and staff who support our young people. Training has included Trauma Informed Approaches in Education and PACE sessions for adults supporting our young people. In addition to this we offered a session for DTs who wanted to deliver basic training for staff in school on Trauma and Attachment which included a Power Point developed to aid delivery. One of the aims of this training is to allow DTs to help their schools become more trauma informed and attachment aware. There are plans next year to expand this offer and offer another package of training, building on discussions with Designated Teachers regarding what would support them to carry out their role. To further support our schools and young people the Full Circle team offered bespoke training packages to schools, often delivered on site and to a wider range of staff. Over 200 hours of training were offered to more than 60 provisions.

Our CLA EP has provided several training sessions and webinars on topics including supporting our CLA who are anxious about school, understanding working memory and writing good outcomes for CLA. We are developing this offer next year to include additional training opportunities both for our Designated Teachers and Children's Homes.

Within the team we share resources, research, and best practice at our development days. Our virtual school team have expertise in supporting children in care and have accessed a wide range of training. Our new member of the team completed a strong induction programme to develop their skills and knowledge of the Virtual School systems.

The social distancing measures put in place as part of the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted on how training was and will be delivered into the future. The Virtual School have conducted Designated Teacher Network meetings via a shared multi-media platform (Microsoft Teams). The Virtual School continues to deliver all training via this platform, although there are plans to offer some hybrid meetings next academic year. Feedback from participants has been positive and increased numbers of Designated Teachers have accessed the support including those from out of authority schools where Durham children are placed.

Durham Virtual School are in the process of updating the online offer that it provides, and this will include access to up-to-date resources for schools, Designated Teachers, Carers, children and young people and Social Care and other professionals. The online offer will include access to video guidance and tutorials, examples of good practice and access to support

materials for use with children and young people. This will be shared next academic year via the schools portal.

10. Support for mental and emotional wellbeing

We are very aware that research on attachment and trauma indicates that learning can only happen when a child feels safe, secure, and regulated, with children in care four times more likely to have a mental health disorder than those with their birth families. Many children in care will have experienced several childhood experiences (ACES) and, as corporate parents, we have a duty to alleviate the long-term impact of these on learning, health, life chances, but without this simply becoming another label. Colleagues in education, SEND and Inclusion and Early Help are exploring how to develop this understanding to support schools. Our therapeutic provision described above supports schools to be able to understand the context of our young people and support the children directly to be able to feel safe and succeed.

10.1 What screening takes place?

The VS does not carry out screening. We have several service level agreements we can sign post schools and providers to if there are concerns about a child. We use the PEP meetings as a platform to discuss the SDQ scores, a screening tool used by social workers. Practice guidance has been added to the Welfare Call platform, so it is easily accessible for all practitioners. Caseworkers have been trained in the use of the Clear Cut Tool. This assesses the communication skills of the child from age 10. Any new child coming into care, who does not already have identified SLCN will take part in this assessment 10 to 12 weeks after their initial PEP. This will allow professionals to understand if there is a need for further intervention. This year we have ensured there are early discussions with DTs regarding the identification of SLCN to ensure our children receive support as soon as they enter care.

10.2 How does our Educational Psychologist make a difference?

The Virtual School employs a Senior Educational Psychologist (0.5 time) to offer advice and support to young people and the team. Regular clinics are set up and our PEP Caseworkers complete a triage exercise with Designated Teachers before seeking advice or support at the clinic. The process is monitored, and involvements are tracked to ensure we have good oversight of our young people and emerging issues. Over the last year our EP was involved with 60 young people discussed at the clinics. There has been direct involvement with 37 students in settings and indirect involvement with 23 students as consultation was provided to teaching staff. Liaison with school link EPs was frequent and several cases included planning with the EWEL team and school counsellors. Work has been across all Key Stages including nursery both within mainstream and specialist provision. Most of the work undertaken has been on behalf of Durham CLA, educated in Durham, although there is scope to extend involvement outside of the local authority and the EP provides a valuable resource for many of our children placed outside of the area. Work has been across all Key Stages both within mainstream and specialist provision.

Work was very varied, depending on the needs of the child and the timescales for decision making, but typically included:

Individual assessment with the child sought to clarify the nature of their SEND, strengths and challenges. Consultation included carers, educators and social care so as to ensure an appropriate and thorough understanding of need and inform associated provision. In most cases, holistic assessment of the child in context took place involving observation, and some cognitive and academic assessment. A review of existing provision also took place and future provision was discussed and advised in a written format often within an SEN plan. Advice was sent following a visit.

Consultation with school staff, social workers, caseworkers, and carers took place daily however meetings with caseworkers were offered every month. Consultation with school staff (teachers and support staff) often involved supporting them to understand the challenges and presentation of children and young people within the framework of trauma and attachment. Using a Solution Oriented approach, a collaborative process was employed to consider strengths and exceptions before agreeing upon next steps and provision when meeting the child's needs. Consultation undertaken remotely was followed with a written summary to key people, either as a report or detailed emails with a summary.

Attending PEPs, CTMs, LAR reviews and statutory annual reviews to support good decision making for CLA. Discussion around outcomes and provision was constructive and concerns around contact and home school liaison could be addressed.

Statutory Work Involvement included support for 11 EHCP referrals with SENCOs and Designated teachers. Advice was prepared for 7 EHCPs where the EP also attended reviews and multi-agency meetings for CLA.

Liaison with Carers and other services [e.g. EWEL, Social Care, Full Circle] around needs and strategies to support regulation, routines and skills.

Awareness raising of CLA role and support took place with EPS colleagues and teams. This ensured key messages were supported by EPs in schools. Also attended SENCO forums to support around referral systems.

Cases providing examples of impact include:

- Support throughout the year for a year two student with complex social and emotional needs which involved four school visits, attendance of several review multi agency meetings and culminated in statutory assessment that was urgently completed.
- Support for a year 9 student with learning and emotional regulation and transition to a secondary student following liaison with the Designated Teachers, caseworker, social worker, and student.
- Supported a child transitioning from one school to another. School was supported to identify whether the child needed to defer year one due to gaps in learning and supported a successful transition to his new school. He has settled in well.
- Assessment of a year 6 student with concerns around learning and medical needs and support for transition and SEN plan
- Support for two year 7 students including assessment and clarifying a summary of need and outcomes. Liaison with grandparents, carers and social care including advice about provision.

- Continued support for two brothers' regulation and SEMH in primary schools with visits and teams' meetings to discuss provision, nurture approaches and integration.

Positive change has been reported by school staff, caseworkers and carers and has included:

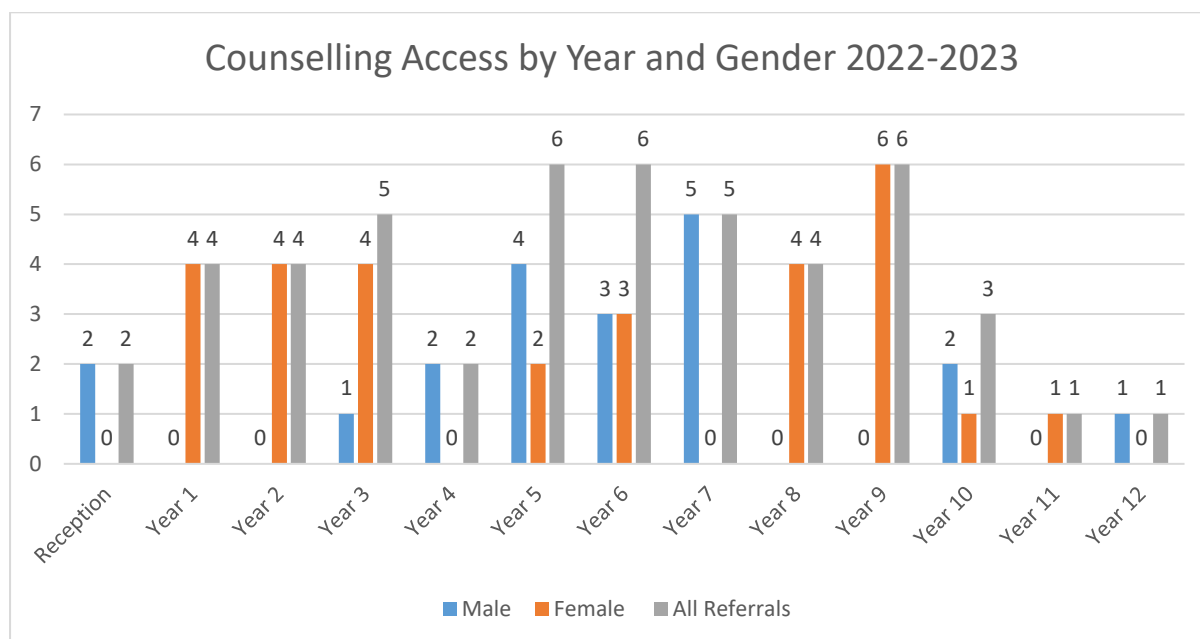
- Special educational needs more fully assessed to inform planning and support (PEP, care team, SEN Support Plan EHCP)
- Teaching staff understanding difficult behaviour in the context of the child's trauma and attachment difficulties and responding to it differently.
- Reduced stress in and increased resilience and feelings of personal efficacy in teachers and support staff so that they are better placed to support the child.
- Support for inclusion for children who might otherwise be excluded or moved into more specialist provision or internal units remaining included in their mainstream school.
- Learning difficulties being identified (where 'behaviour' is the presenting problem) to enable the child's needs to be better understood and met.
- Signposting and facilitating access to other services where there is a gap in assessment or provision identified.
- Ensuring multi-agency liaison and signposting for much needed referrals and future support around specific needs.

10.3 How do our counsellors make a difference?

Mental health and wellbeing for vulnerable groups continues to be an area of priority in County Durham, particularly in the wake of managing the impact of Covid-19 and the global pandemic. Counselling is a specialist intervention that offers a range of interventions that enable pupils to explore their experiences, work through problems and develop effective coping strategies. Counsellors use talking therapy and creative therapies for children and young people to express themselves. Children referred for counselling through the virtual school caseworkers have been significantly impacted by external events and counselling can support them in developing their resilience, while working within a multi-agency system that supports their wellbeing holistically.

School based counselling provides a range of interventions to enable students to explore their issues through talking therapies and creative methods, within a safe and confidential space in school. The service is tailored to each individual student and the difficulties they are experiencing. Through building a therapeutic relationship of trust in which students can safely explore their experiences, thoughts, and feelings, the team can raise their self-awareness and promote wellbeing so that they may achieve their best possible outcomes in their school career and into their future.

The Virtual School SLA with our Schools Counselling Service provides the equivalent of 8 days per week (1.6 FTE) counselling for our CLA. This academic year 44 referrals were made to the counselling service, with a further 5 carried over from the previous academic year. In addition to this, 3 children are on the list for review and can access counselling when timing is right for them. Unlike last year when the children were split evenly across gender, this years have been predominantly female. This year most referrals were of primary age, but with a significant number of referrals coming from KS2 and KS3. A breakdown of the referrals by year group and gender is shown below:

Table 24: Counselling Access by Year and Gender**Table 25: Total Counselling Sessions Attended**

Total number of counselling sessions offered	367
Total number of counselling sessions attended	344
Total number of counselling sessions not attended	23
Meetings with other professionals – includes CTM and LAR*:	30

*Excludes general contact with carers/professionals as required for updates, safeguarding, arranging sessions etc.

Children and young people from 29 primary schools and 20 secondary schools received support. Attendance and engagement in the sessions remains good and 367 direct intervention sessions were offered, with an attendance rate of 94%. We are very pleased with the engagement of our young people and the support offered by schools to facilitate the sessions.

Presenting issues include responses to trauma, domestic abuse, bereavement, transition, separation from siblings/family, impacts of parental mental health and/or substance misuse, as well as low mood and self-esteem. Many of the concerns manifest themselves in school as either behaviours in high arousal states, or withdrawal in low arousal states, emotional regulation difficulties, as well as difficulties building relationships with staff and/or peers.

Most of the children referred are going through transitions or waiting to find out about their future living arrangements and as such prevalent themes in the work have been in supporting these transitions and managing the feelings that surface in times of uncertainty, supporting their resilience and coping strategies, and providing some containment and emotional regulation. Children respond in individual and sometimes unexpected ways to challenging situations, and it can take time before children engage in direct work on trauma so the team deliver interventions that are bespoke to the child and consider their readiness to engage with the issues they may be facing, and the support structures around them. As such, important to their work is regular discussion with staff in school around the impact of trauma and how they can offer a sense of safety and understanding for the child in these difficult times.

Interventions are 10 weeks as standard, with the option of extending to provide more in-depth long-term work where there is clinical need, and it has been agreed by all parties. There has been an increased need to deliver longer interventions this year due to the complexity of needs presenting. This flexibility is essential in providing children and young people with the child-centred support that they need, especially when there are transitions in placements.

Feedback from children, carers and teachers on the counselling:

Carers feedback

"X has really enjoyed their sessions. They share what they've been doing and feel that it has helped them. I've noticed that they're more settled on an evening, and they haven't had any nightmares lately".

"X is a lot calmer; she has settled in the family more and she doesn't show as many controlling behaviours. She developed a routine at home."

"X is a lot more settled now in the foster care placement with us. She is more active and engaged with activities. She enjoyed the sessions and found them useful. Thank you for the help and support."

Child/Young Person Feedback

"I like that you come to see me in school."

"I've enjoyed everything in my sessions. I will miss you a lot".

"Art Therapy is a good place to be! I wish it could be at it all day, so I could be with you".

Feedback from teachers

"X is doing really well since having their counselling sessions. They have less emotional outbursts and are getting on with their work better in class. We've not had to talk to them as much".

"X has come on so much since the sessions. He's started to make friends with the other boys in his class and is joining in with football on the playground at breaktimes. He is more settled and comes and tells me if he wants to talk".

"X was more grounded and happier after the sessions. She has built healthy friendships with other children, and she has been able to fully engage academically and socially. She has really integrated herself in the school's weekly routine."

Case Study

Macy (year 5) was referred for counselling due to concerns following her transition into care. Macy engages well with her academic work in school but presents as quiet and shutdown among peer groups and unstructured time. This is a common presentation with children who have had adverse experiences such as abuse and neglect that result in them being taken into care. School described that when staff talk with Macy she communicates as a much younger child using baby tones, can become emotional, and zones out.*



Weekly counselling sessions with a play therapy approach were facilitated for Macy to have a safe and consistent space alongside an attuned adult. Macy engaged well with creative resources exploring the sensory elements and making mess. This creative play approach enabled Macy to process internal feelings in a non-verbal way, whilst being held by the therapist - having safe limits and boundaries of the session structure, and in-turn developed her ability to regulate her emotions. Additional grounding and calming activities were introduced within her sessions to further support her emotional regulation.



Through her creative play Macy gradually worked through the internal mess of her past experiences and became more present. School noticed that Macy's relations with peers improved, and she presented as happier and more engaged day to day.

11. Voice of the Young Person

All children and young people have an opportunity to have their voice heard through the PEP process. However, young people tell us this is not always child-friendly and is often rushed in the busy school day. Many did not wish to attend so we adjusted our recording to enable them to complete their sections at a different time. We also consulted with the Children in Care Council (CiCC) about the new ePEP. The new ePEP system allows us to collate information from the Young Person's Voice section, which will help us to better understand the issues they are facing.

To further strengthen links with the CiCC the VSH continues to attend meetings and other events they hold. They have been given a small budget which they manage and allows them to award small grants to CLA who have an interest they want to develop. They have developed an application process and a group scrutinise the applications and make decisions on awarding the grants. They have named this "The Education Fun Fund".

12. Enrichment, Unleashing Aspiration and Celebration

12.1 What do we currently offer?

As good corporate parents we want all our care-experienced young people to have the opportunity to experience enrichment activities and resources which will broaden their horizons and show them what might be possible. We support schools through provision of funding or resources to enable this, but we want to extend the provision which currently includes:

- Curious Kids and Storytime for primary children (we also linked this to the summer activity and libraries programme in Co Durham)
- Durham Music Service provides music lessons and instrument hire for looked after young people.
- Working with the Progression and Learning Team to support CLA with sessional employment.
- Encouraging schools to put some of the PP+ towards enrichment activities, to allow them to participate in school residentials and cultural visits.
- Providing books for World Book Day and Good Luck cards before exams take place.
- Providing CiCC with a small budget to help CLA to explore their interests and dreams.

The CiCC also provides a range of opportunities for children and young people and our closer working relationship will enable us to plan some of these in partnership.

12.2 What are we planning for 2023-24 to support CLA and schools?

This is a focus for us for 2023-24:

- We will continue to provide training and network meetings through Teams. The decision to do this is to support the schools out of borough. During the ILACS schools not in Durham expressed how much they valued being able to access network meetings and training. They expressed it helped them to feel part of Durham. It also allows them to access our therapeutic training.
- Continue to work closely with Durham Works to support CLA onto their Post 16 pathway. Making sure that the Year 11 PEP includes the support of the Durham Works Adviser. Track this cohort to identify those who are NEET swiftly and encourage them to have ambitions.
- Work with colleagues in our Special Schools to provide relevant support for CLA in their settings. Identify enrichment opportunities, and effective use of PP+

12.3 How do we celebrate success?

Schools are asked at the PEP meeting how they celebrate success for the child. This ranges from celebration assemblies, achievement points, reward trips, attendance awards, certificates, vouchers, celebration evenings, well done cards posted home, and top student awards.

Children Looked After achievements are recognised at the annual Celebrate Me Awards.

13. Summary

In terms of educational outcomes, KS 1 and 2 data reflects the gaps created through the pandemic, however KS2 data is stronger than KS1. This is an area to address at PEP meetings for Year 2 children. KS4 data has shown a trend in line with that of 2019 in Maths but a dip in English. This will be a focus for the Autumn term PEP meetings which inform us of the progress a child is making through the year and the need for additional tutor hours. We use these meetings to identify where interventions should take place in a timely manner to support CLA to achieve better outcomes. We are working with schools to ensure that gaps in learning which may affect future progress are addressed. Our aim continues to be to close the gap for all CLA. The report notes that for some young people at KS4, high GCSE grades are not within reach yet, but we acknowledge and celebrate the enormous effort they have made to make progress in the face of often huge barriers to enable them to move into education and training. An area of concern has been the attendance of Year 11 at such an important point in their school career. This is an area which we will focus on moving forward and will challenge at every opportunity. The development of monitoring questions as part of the Note of Visit for School Leadership Advisers to discuss with headteachers, along with the CLA PEP caseworker team will ensure that looked after and previously children in care continue to be fully supported to identify and address need and PP+ is spent effectively. We acknowledge and thank those schools who continue to go the extra mile to build confidence and self-esteem, for making a difference and providing strong foundations for next steps for

our young people. Schools have embraced the trauma and attachment approach and hold the CLA cohort high on their list of priorities.

The child is at the centre of everything we do and a strong virtual school team advocate for every child to achieve the best outcomes.

The extension to the role of the VSH to include all children/young people 0 – 18 with a social worker has developed over the year. The Government have decided to continue this into 2023/24 It is important to note that the strategic overview sits with the VSH, who is working in partnership with schools, settings, the wider education team, and social care to develop a model that highlights good attendance and inclusion for this cohort. This is a developing piece of work which focuses on excellent working practice and strong communication of everyone involved with the child and their family to achieve better outcomes through academic intervention and strong pastoral support. The pilot ran in the South of the county this year is now in a position where it can be rolled out across the wider local authority and is the next step for this piece of work.

It is important to note that the offer to the CLA cohort continues to remain strong with a Virtual School team who have not changed their way of working with schools and settings, SEND and Inclusion Team and social care colleagues.

14. Outline Priorities for 2023-24

The key priorities for 2023-24 have been identified through consultation, data analysis, response to the gaps COVID19 has created, the return of formal examinations and the inclusion of EYFS and Post 16 in the ePEP system. Some of our priorities will roll over from 22/23 due to the needs of CLA.

Continuing Priorities from 22/23

We will continue to support more children to achieve higher levels / greater depth in KS2 and KS4 through early intervention and release catch up funding during the Autumn term. Close the gaps emerging in KS1

Continue to increase the focus on attendance for CLA. Working in partnership with the Attendance Improvement Team (AIT) and Social Care to promote a positive ethos around attendance.

Continue to support Post 16 to reduce NEET data through a collaborative approach and by drawing upon the expertise within the Progression and Learning Team.

Further strengthen links with CICC, working towards the Investors in Children Award.

Continue to contribute to an increasingly integrated and joined-up process with health and social care teams to provide a holistic and cohesive approach to support readiness to learn whilst ensuring CLA have stability in their education setting. Ensure a robust system is in place to increase school stability through monitoring and challenge.

Further embed the work for Ever6 CWSW through extended role of the VSH having a strategic lead with this cohort of children.

New Priorities for 23/24

Develop work with Children's Homes to support school anxiety and other barriers to education. Drawing on the expertise of the therapeutic services we make available to schools.

Appoint a Previously Child Looked After Officer to strengthen the Virtual Schools offer for PCLA.

Develop ways of working with the UASC cohort to offer a package to support earlier access into education.

Develop a cohesive system for CLA who require Statutory Assessment and require an EHCP. Produce a process that everyone can work towards to ensure needs are met in a timely manner.

15. Recommendation

That this annual report is noted by members of the Corporate Parenting Panel, Virtual School Subgroup, Virtual School Operational group, Looked After Children Strategic Partnership Group, Education SMT, Children and Young Peoples Services Management Team and the Corporate Management Team.

Appendix A – Wider Teams

<p>Education Durham Team Primary, Secondary and Special SLA's, EYFS, EDAs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liaison with VSH and VS team for advice, challenge and support to schools and settings to improve outcomes. - Work with Leadership Advisors to make CLA a focus in their offer to schools. - Work with EYFS to embed the ePEP for -1 and -2 children.
<p>Wider SEND and Inclusion Team EPS, Equalities, EWEL teams</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liaison with VSH and VS team for advice, challenge and support to schools and setting to improve SEN provision. - Provide a named SEND Caseworker for every Durham CLA who has an EHCP. - 0.5 of EP time support for schools, social workers, carers re SEMH and educational advice - Counselling support - Signpost schools to the EWEL assessment as a tool to support CLA.
<p>Social Care, Health, Youth Offending Teams, Adoption, Full Circle, MACC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liaison with VSH and VS to provide enhanced wraparound care with a focus on stability for CLA and swift access to appropriate professional support. - Attend PEP meetings. - Support monitoring of progress and QA of PEPs - Full Circle liaison around support for CLA and carers / parents - Full Circle advice to schools - Attend Multi-agency Collaborative Care Meetings
<p>Attendance, Admissions and Casework Teams</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support VSH and schools to maintain good attendance of CLA. - Support VSH and schools with inclusion issues around CLA - Support collection and analysis of data re attendance and exclusion
<p>Progression and Learning team / YPS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide Information, Advice, Guidance and Support through Specialist Progression Advisers to enable looked after young people to progress and remain in education, employment, or training. - Provide bespoke activities and interventions to prepare looked after young people for engagement in education, employment, or training through the DurhamWorks Programme. - Implement and manage the Post 16 Pupil Premium Plus Pilot for the second year. - Offer learning opportunities including Traineeships, Supported Internships and Apprenticeships through County Durham Adult Learning and Skills Service. - Provide data and monitor performance in relation to the participation of looked after YP in education, employment, or training, utilising the CCIS Client Caseload Information System. - Seconded Post to VS for 20 months to strengthen work with Post 16 providers as CLA PEP Caseworkers support Post 16 - Embed the Post 16 PEP across providers. - Support CLA to avoid them from becoming NEET
<p>Schools, Colleges, and Educational Settings Designated Teacher</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide, coordinate, and monitor internal school support for CLA and PCLA - Lead on PEPs - Monitor and be accountable for outcomes for LA and PCLA - Advocate for CLA at times when adverse traumas are hindering progress and school stability. - Attend review meetings. - Organise, coordinate, and monitor intervention and support. - Keep up to date with DfE guidance, training etc. - Introduce the Durham CLA Policy

Appendix B - Abbreviations

Name	Abbreviation
Children Looked After	CLA
Previously Children Looked After	PCLA
Virtual School Head	VSH
Personal Education Plan	PEP
Children in Care Council	CiCC
Permanent Exclusion	PEx
Attendance Improvement Team	AIT
Local Authority	LA
Alternative Provision	AP
National Association Virtual School Heads	NAVSH
North East Virtual School Heads	NEVSH
Early Years Foundation Stage	EYFS
Children Looked After Personal Education Plan Caseworker	CLA PEP Caseworker
Virtual School Operational Group	VSOG
Corporate Parent Panel	CPP
Education Health Care Plan	EHCP
Social Emotional Mental Health	SEMH
General Certificate Secondary Education	GCSE
Not in Education, Employment or Training	NEET
Education Employment Training	EET
Out of County	OOC
Looked After Review	LAR
Care Team Meeting	CTM

Independent Reviewing Officer	IRO
National Tutor Programme	NTP
Special Education Needs Disability	SEND
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children	UASC