

VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEADTEACHER'S ANNUAL REPORT



2022-2023

Education & Skills Children's Services

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1. Purpose

This report serves to provide a detailed overview of the activities and impact of the BCP Virtual School during the academic year 2022-23. The Virtual School operates on behalf of the Local Authority, collaborating with partners to advocate for Children in Care (CIC) in education and ensuring positive and aspirational educational outcomes.

The report outlines the future priorities and development plans for the BCP Virtual School, aiming to improve outcomes and support for a positive transition to adulthood for all Care Experienced young people.

The report is based on the LA held pupil information and results from schools. At the time of publishing, there is no comparative national data available for the academic year 2022-23. Comparative data will be available upon its publication in April 2024. By conducting comparative analysis throughout the academic year, we aim to identify areas where the Virtual School has significant impact and areas where improvement is needed in relation to national benchmarks. This information will guide our efforts in providing the best possible support for children in care, aligning with broader educational standards.

The Role of the Virtual School

The Children and Families Act 2014 mandates local authorities in England to designate at least one individual to fulfil the responsibility of promoting the educational achievement of Children in Care. The appointed Virtual School Head (VSH) is required to be an officer employed by the local authority. The VSH assumes the lead role in ensuring the establishment of effective arrangements to enhance the educational experiences and outcomes of the authority's children in care, including those placed outside the home authority's boundaries.

The educational specialists within the Virtual School (VS) collaborate with partners to champion the educational achievement of children in care to Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP), regardless of their location or educational setting. The Virtual School's responsibilities extend to offering advice and guidance to parents and professionals regarding previously looked-after children (PLAC), including those under special guardianship orders, adopted, or subject to child arrangement orders. Since September 2021, the duties of the Virtual School Head have been expanded to strategically promote the education of children who have or have had a social worker, encompassing children in need (CIN) and those subject to child protection plans (CP).

In collaboration with early years settings, schools, Post 16 colleges, and social care leaders, the Virtual School team concentrates on fostering a culture of high aspirations for all children with a social worker. This involves both direct collaboration with schools for children in care and strategic engagement for children with a social worker. The emphasis lies in enhancing the skill set of professionals working with this cohort, ensuring the presence of mechanisms for offering advice and support to narrow the attainment gap, promote school attendance, identify intervention needs and promote aspirational outcomes.

Notably, in 2021, BCP Virtual School was among the 30 local authorities selected to receive additional Pupil Premium Plus (PPG+) funding aimed at bolstering support for Children in Care and Care Leavers in Further Education. The evidence across the Pilot reflected a positive impact on raising attendance, attainment and progression. As a result, the Pilot was extended to March 2022 and the decision has now been made to issue to all Local Authorities from March 2023.

Findings from the investigation into the Extended Duties Role and Post-16 PPG Pilot

A comprehensive evaluation of the initial six months of the Virtual School Head's role extension and the PPG+ Post-16 Pilot was conducted by the Rees Centre at Oxford University. The key discoveries have been outlined in a research report released in December 2022, available on GOV.UK under the title "Evaluation of the Virtual School Heads Extension and the Pupil Premium Plus Post-16 Pilot."

The recommendations for Virtual School Heads include the following:

- VSHs should establish greater consistency in Personal Education Plan (PEP) formats and actively share models of exemplary practices.
- VSHs are encouraged to persist in their training efforts and collaborate with social workers to comprehend the protective value of post-16 education for Children Looked After (CLA) and Care Leavers (CLs)
- Virtual Schools should enhance guidance for foster carers, providing information on the available support at post-16.
- VSHs should systematically document evidence reflecting local progress toward achieving outcomes outlined in the Theory of Change for the programme.

The report also provides crucial recommendations for the Department for Education (DfE), Virtual School Heads, and local authorities, particularly in relation to the extended role:

- Professionals working with Children with Social Workers (CWSW) should ensure minimal disruption to lesson times.
- Local authorities are urged to establish appropriate governance structures to support and scrutinise the VSH's work in connection with their extended duties.
- Regional VSH groups should collaborate to share models of exemplary practices and communicate with Ofsted.
- VSHs are advised to prioritise understanding the protective value of education for CWSW.
- Systematic documentation of evidence on local progress toward achieving outcomes identified in the Theory of Change for the programme is recommended for VSHs.

Extended Duties

Since September 2021 the Virtual School has assigned one Assistant Head teacher post to the fulfilment of its strategic extended duties. This does not include any case holding work. In line with the Theory of Change model, the initial work in this area has focused on improving data quality and analytic capacity and raising awareness of the educational needs of the CWSW cohort across schools, council agencies, health partners and children's social care. The Virtual School attends termly networking groups with colleagues from the South-East to share best practice and keep up to date on recent developments as this area of work evolves.

There has been a focus on raising the profile of regular school attendance as a significant protective factor for the CWSW cohort. The Virtual School has piloted and is now rolling out the use of the School Refusal Assessment Scale (SRAS-2) for CWSW who are persistently absent (i.e. those with attendance below 90%). This now forms part of the toolkit for social workers, attendance officers and the Keeping Families Connected Team and is used to assess the underlying function of any school refusal behaviour. This in turn helps professionals better target interventions and support to improve attendance as part of Child in Need and Child Protection planning. Moving forward, the use of the SRAS-2, is being fed onto the wider Emotionally Based School Avoidance strategy that is being developed by CAMHS and the Educational Psychology Service.

Raising the profile of education for CWSW is being further advanced by active involvement with the Keeping Families Connected, CHAD (Child Health and Disability) Resource, and In-Year Fair Access Panels along with regular attendance and representation on the Education Entitlement Board. The Virtual School holds a weekly education surgery for social workers and colleagues from the Youth

Justice Service to support and advise on education matters and there are early signs that this is leading to improved partnership working and communication between children's social care, YJS and the school inclusion team. Since its inception in September 2022, the CWSW Education Surgery has offered advice and guidance to social workers in over 200 individual cases where education is a pressing concern.

Work is under way to clarify expectations around social worker attendance at Governors Disciplinary Committee meetings when CWSW are Permanently Excluded from school. This is in line with the current statutory guidance on school exclusions. At present, wherever permanent exclusions of CWSW are challenged, the social worker is supported in preparing for the GDC by the Virtual School and the allocated school inclusion officer.

Building on the progress already made, the intended outcomes by the end of the 2023/24 academic year are to:

- have strategies in place that will promote more inclusive practice in schools through a better understanding of the needs of the CWSW cohort,
- increase CSC's understanding of the education sector and vice versa.
- strengthen partnerships between schools, children's social care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service and the Virtual School.

Further priorities moving forward include a focus on improving parental capacity to engage with the education system and agreeing on Key Performance Indicators for this area of the service that can be monitored at PAG.

Previously looked after children

At present, the Virtual School's responsibilities in terms of Previously Looked After Children relate children and young people who are subject to Adoption, Special Guardianship and Child Arrangement (or Residence) Orders and who have previously been in state care. This duty involves the provision of information, advice and guidance to schools and carers to promote positive educational outcomes for this group of children.

Since the local authority does not have corporate parenting responsibilities for Previously Looked-After Children, there is no expectations that the Virtual School monitors the academic progress of this cohort and nor is it accountable for their educational outcomes. Accordingly, any intervention in the education of a Previously Looked-After Child can only be undertaken with the agreement of those who have parental responsibility for the child since they are responsible for overseeing their child's progress in education.

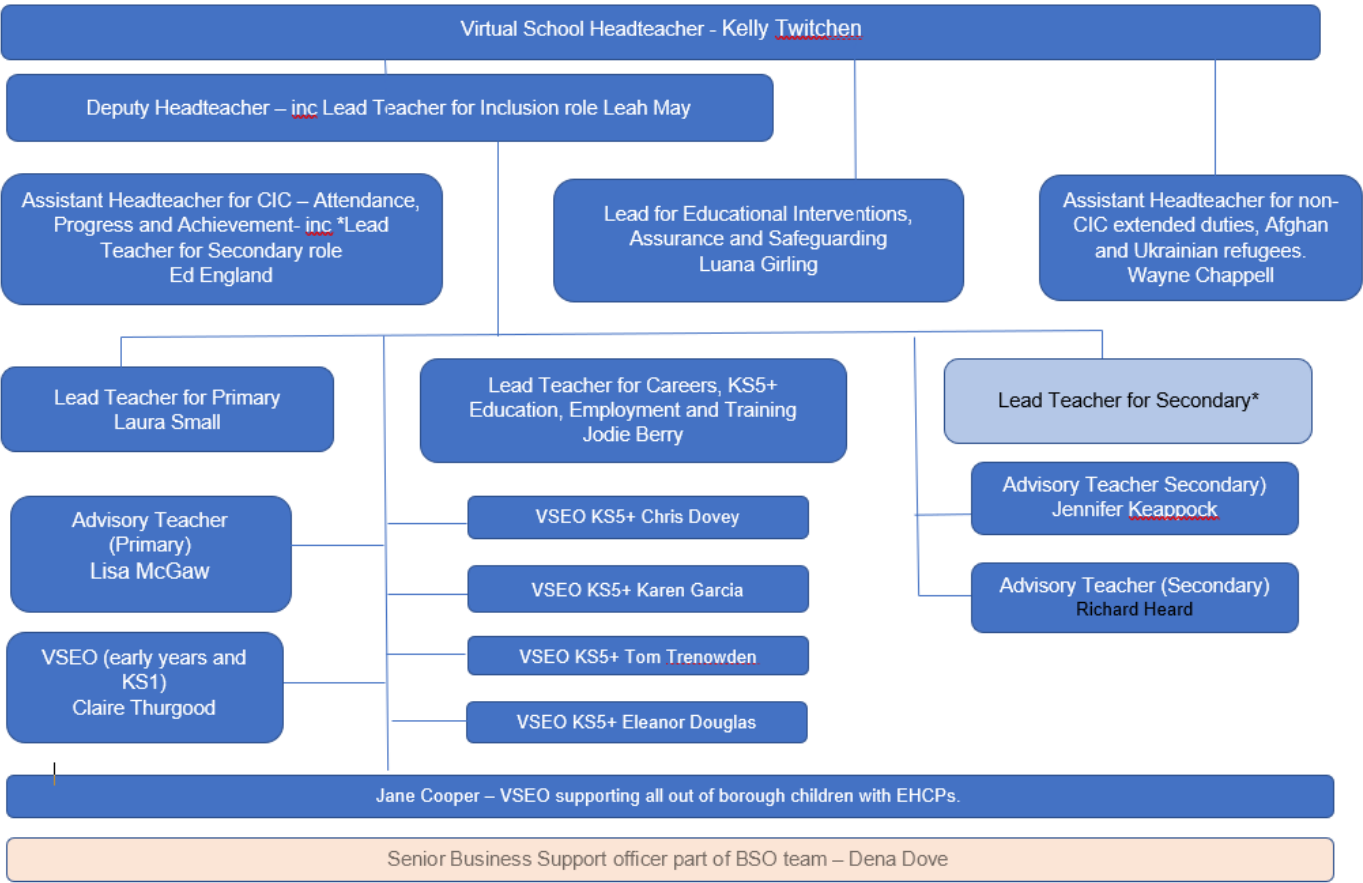
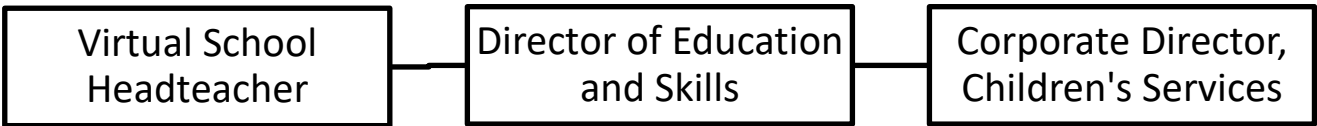
Considering the above, support for Previously Looked-After children is focused on empowering parents and guardians to advocate for their children in the strongest possible terms, although it can extend to addressing any concerns and queries raised directly by schools and other education providers (assuming parents or guardians have consented to contact being made). As with the CWSW cohort, the Virtual School holds a weekly surgery for parents and guardians, and this can lead to more direct work and intervention with schools as appropriate. To date, over 80 families have been supported by the Virtual School via the Previously Looked-After education surgery. Whilst this is significantly lower than for the CWSW cohort, it is important to note that this work stream often entails a higher level of support over an extended period.

As part of the close working relationship with Aspire, the Virtual School also attends SGO and adoption support groups. This is helping to increase visibility and build positive relationships with parents and guardians as well as helping us gain a clearer understanding of the challenges faced by this cohort of children and their families. These events also provide an opportunity for additional advice and guidance as required.

2. Structure

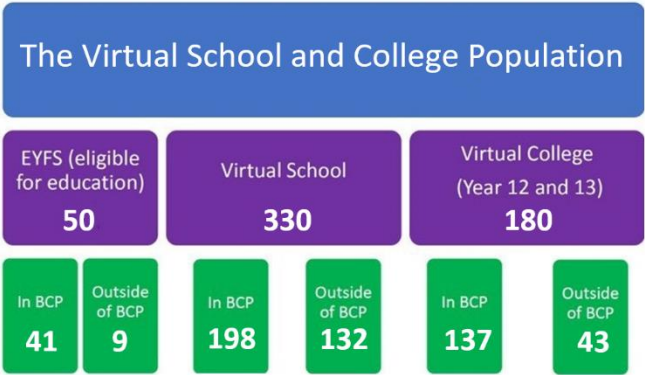
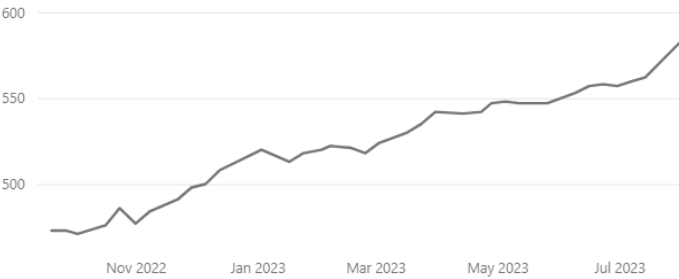
The organisational framework of the Virtual School emphasises specialised knowledge and support during statutory school age, post-16 education and for care leavers up to the age of 25, with focused leadership across all Virtual School cohorts. The successes attained this year are attributable to the dedication, perseverance, and expertise exhibited by Virtual School officers and Leaders.

Their close collaboration with schools, carers/ parents, other local authorities, social workers and wider professionals has played a pivotal role in achieving positive outcomes. These individuals have actively fostered a cooperative ethos within the multi-disciplinary team and established strong connections with both internal and external networks.



3. Profile of Our Children and Young People

The number of young people in care in BCP constantly changes as they move in and out of the Care System. The data reflects the population of CIC across Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Statutory School age (SSA) and Post 16 (Years 12 and 13) and Care Leavers in Year 13 in July 2023. There has been a 18% increase in the number of CIC compared to the previous academic year. This represents 87 Children.



The distribution of BCP Virtual School population across different geographical areas remains consistent with previous years. Currently, 33% of children looked after are enrolled in schools located outside the boundaries of BCP.

EYFS includes pre-school and nursery children from 2.5 years and above and children in Reception.

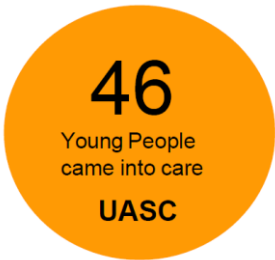
Gender Distribution

Across all cohorts, there is an overall higher percentage of males (64%) compared to females (36%). The data indicates a substantial shift in gender distribution from Reception to Post 16, where the male percentage increases significantly. This is reflective of the male Unaccompanied

	Number of males	Male %	Number of females	Female %
Reception	13	65%	7	35%
SSA	186	56%	144	44%
Post 16 (Years 12 and 13)	138	77%	42	23%
Total all cohorts	337	64%	193	36%



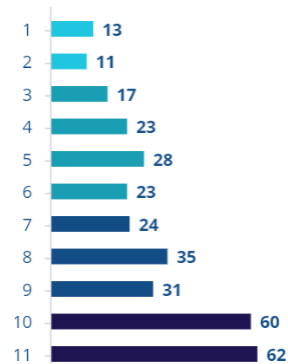
Asylum-Seeking Seeking Children (UASC) cohort from Year 10 to Year 13.



We worked with 3 young people that were pregnant and 2 parents last academic year.

UASC are 10% of the total population and 39% of the Year 12 and 13.

The largest year groups are Year 10 and 11 making up 38% of CIC at statutory school age.



The number of children in care by year group.

4. 2022-23 At a Glance

The Virtual School is dedicated to evaluating processes, practices and outcomes to assess the positive impact it has on the educational experience and outcomes for CIC and areas that require improvement in comparison to national benchmarks. This reflective process informs our commitment to delivering optimal support for children in care, aligning with overarching educational standards. This report identifies necessary improvements and outlines priority areas for development.

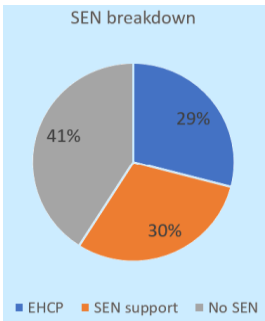
Good	Improving	Not Yet Good Enough
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No permanent exclusions for 4th consecutive year 100% PEP completion 90% of PEPs contain aspirational and SMART targets. Expansion of monitoring criteria to provide a sharper focus on all vulnerable learners to ensure no children miss out on education. Improvements in attainment in all aspects of the core curriculum were achieved in KS1 and KS2 tests. Writing outcomes at KS2 increased by 34% to 63% School refusers in Year 11 reduced from 24% to 3%. There are positive trends in the achievements of young people, particularly in Grade 5+ in both Maths and English. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 79% of CIC progressing into Further education after Year 11 Attendance for CIC, age 16-17, attending Further Education provisions was 85%. 78% PEPs quality assured as ‘green’ or ‘amber’. 89% of CIC are attending ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ provisions. KS2 age related expectations in reading, writing and maths. 80% of CIC (for 12 months) achieved Year 1 Phonics standard. At KS1, 57% of CIC met expected standard in Writing. 24% of CIC (for 12 months) achieved Grade 4+ in English and maths. 85% of PEPs contain Pupil Voice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total absence is 9.8% (CIC for 12 months) Persistent absence is 24.9% (CIC for 12 months) 140 suspensions for 48 pupils in 38 different schools 78% of suspensions were for all CIC with SEND 50% of EYFS (CIC for 12 months) reached GLD. 82% of PEPs quality assured as ‘Red’ are due to social worker incomplection. Attendance at KS4 is 82.14% Average % of Not on Roll that were SEND due to waiting for consultations/ appropriate provisions is 40%

5. Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

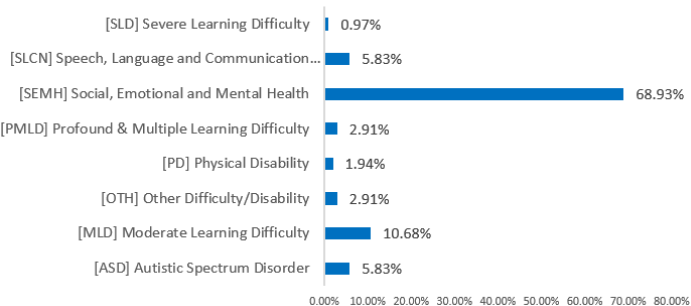
The percentage of statutory school age BCP CIC with SEND in 2022-23 is 59%.

- There is 29% prevalence of Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP) among CIC in 2022-23.
- The percentage of CIC receiving SEND support in 2022-23 is 30%.

It is important that the category of primary need is ascertained to ensure that the right targeted support is provided by their educational provision or by additional services. Social, Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) and Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) are prevalent categories of need and can usually be attributed to being because of previous trauma and adverse childhood events. It is essential that this is highlighted with the professionals working with the children to ensure that provision matches need. Awareness of early identification of learning needs should not be delayed due to focus on SEMH needs related to attachment and trauma or experiencing school moves because of care placement moves.



Breakdown of SEND primary area of need



Geographical Distribution of CIC with SEND

Special Educational needs in / Out of Borough				
Year group	Total CLA	Total EHCP	IB with SEND	OOB with SEND
1	13	1	5	1
2	11	1	1	1
3	17	3	6	6
4	23	9	12	7
5	28	8	8	6
6	23	8	10	4
7	24	12	12	9
8	35	9	22	8
9	31	10	12	10
10	60	21	26	16
11	62	20	25	12
Total	328	102	139	80

The data highlights an elevated need for individualised support in Year 10 and 11, with the highest counts (23/21) of EHCPs indicating a focus on addressing the unique requirements of these year group.

A significant number of CIC with an EHCP are placed out of borough, with Year 11 recording the highest count (21). This trend reflects the challenges associated with meeting the specific needs of CIC both in care placements and education within the local context and the subsequent impact on achieving outcomes at KS4.

The lack of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision both within BCP and nationally contributes to these challenges:

- **Insufficient SEND Provision** – Insufficient SEND provision poses a hindrance to CIC in accessing appropriate educational support, potentially resulting in underachievement.
- **Lack of timely support** - A deficiency in appropriate support delays access to education and may contribute to issues such as school refusal, absenteeism, or disengagement from the educational system altogether, highlighting the importance of tailored support for this vulnerable cohort.

The challenges identified underscore the critical need for strategic interventions, increased local SEND provision, and collaborative efforts to address the unique learning needs of CIC with SEND. This report serves as a foundation for informed decision-making and targeted support initiatives aimed at enhancing the educational experiences and outcomes for CIC with SEND. We are currently working with Social Care, Inclusion and SEND across all improvement groups to ensure the Virtual Schools contributions and knowledge contribute to the development of action plans.

Virtual School Support for SEND

To mitigate the potential adverse consequences associated with out-of-area placements and lack of SEND education provision both within BCP and nationally, the Virtual School has implemented a series of effective processes and support initiatives. These measures include:

- **Enhanced collaboration with SEND teams:** A dedicated team member collaborates closely with the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) team. This collaboration aims to improve communication with BCP and other Local Authority (LA) Virtual Schools and SEND teams, thereby preventing drift and delay in the EHCP consultation process, funding agreements, and school admissions. All VSEOs contribute to Annual Reviews and phase transfers to ensure smooth transition and appropriate support is provided.
- **Active Involvement in Decision-Making Panels** - The Deputy Headteacher of the Virtual School actively participates in weekly Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) and EHCP decision-making panels for SSA and Post 16 students. This involvement enhances the understanding and input intelligence concerning the specific needs and required support for Children in Care (CIC) in the realm of education.
- **Contribution to Care Placement Resources Panel** - Weekly attendance at the Care Placement Resources panel allows for informed contributions to facilitate collaborative decision-making for care planning and education.
- **Leadership in SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co Ordinator) Role** - The Deputy Head fulfils the critical role of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo), prioritising CIC with SEND as a key focus for all professionals within BCP and beyond.
- **Regular Data Focus and Knowledge Enhancement** - A weekly focus on CIC with SEND in Virtual School team meetings ensures comprehensive data analysis. Additionally, updates on SEND knowledge, policies, provisions, and processes are provided to the Virtual School team, enabling them to offer support and constructive challenges to provisions and broader professionals.
- **Support for Early Identification of Learning Needs and Statutory Assessments** - The Virtual School team actively supports schools in referring pupils for statutory assessments. This includes assisting SENDCos in completing applications for needs assessments, addressing thresholds, and ensuring a graduated response.
- **Utilisation of PPG+ for Educational Psychologist Assessments** - Strategic use of Pupil Premium Plus (PPG+) funding is employed to finance private Educational Psychologist assessments and other evaluations. This proactive approach, especially when young people enter care or when schools face challenges in accessing assessments, prevents drift and delay, fostering a clear understanding of the young person's needs and facilitating EHCP needs assessments.
- **Use of PPG+ funding to support initial SEND provision** - PPG+ is used to fund alternative provision for 3 weeks while SEND processes for transferring out SEND files, consulting with new provisions and securing funding occurs. This has resulted in no young people with EHCPs in July 2022/23 receiving less than 10 hours of AP per week while consultations/admissions process occurs to secure provision.

These initiatives collectively exemplify the Virtual School's commitment to addressing the unique challenges associated with out-of-area placements for Children in Care and accessing SEND specialist provision and support for schools to meet needs to ensure the learning needs of CIC with SEND are met promptly and comprehensively.

6. Ofsted

Following the ILACS in December 2021, Ofsted has conducted a series of five monitoring visits. The initial ILACS inspection revealed positive advancements within the Virtual School, indicating strengthened visibility and impact, particularly in preventing permanent exclusions. However, areas for improvement were identified, including the need for consistent preparation of personal education plans across educational settings and enhanced monitoring of children's achievements and progress.

Subsequent Monitoring Visits:

Monitoring Visit 3 - Focus

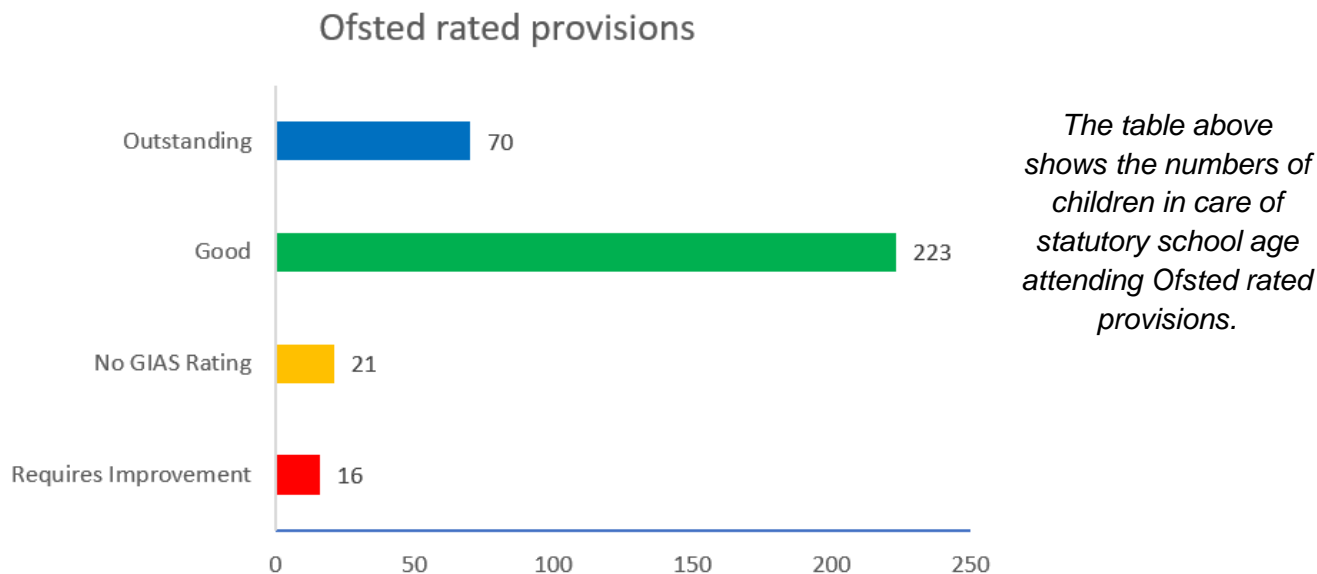
- After the ILACS inspection, the Virtual School has refined the mapping and analysis of attainment for children at all educational stages.
- Quarterly reports now meticulously outline areas of concern, accompanied by strategies to support children.
- The addition of a new deputy headteacher has facilitated more regular oversight of children's progress, with a particular focus on those facing unique challenges, such as those living in unregistered children's homes and those on the verge of exclusion.
- The influx of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) posed an additional challenge, met with a successful response in providing education beyond English for speakers of other languages.

Monitoring Visit 5 – Focus Care Leavers

- Children and young people now benefit from a welcoming and accessible safe space known as "The Hub," available throughout the week.
- The Hub initiative has created an environment where care-experienced young people can interact with peers, Personal Advisors (PAs), and partner agencies, fostering support for education.
- The building itself serves as a creative hub, exemplifying good practice by promoting collaboration, active listening, and a sense of safety.
- Notable initiatives such as drop-ins and Club Class contribute to the success of The Hub in supporting care leavers.

These monitoring visit responses signify commendable progress, especially in addressing the identified areas for development. The Virtual School remains dedicated to enhancing the educational experience for Children in Care and Care Leavers ensuring a supportive and aspirational focus.

7. Ofsted ratings of education provision and attendance



The BCP Virtual School is dedicated to the pursuit of placing CIC in educational institutions that hold the Ofsted rating of "Good" or "Outstanding." This commitment aligns with our objective to provide the highest quality educational provision for all children under our care.

Research has consistently demonstrated that CIC enrolled in schools rated as "Outstanding" are significantly less likely to undergo mid-year school transfers when compared to their counterparts in schools rated as "Inadequate."

It is important to note that placements in schools classified as "Requires Improvement" (RI) are an exception and occur under specific circumstances. For instance:

- When a previously "Good" school experiences a suboptimal inspection outcome, yet it is deemed in the best interests of the child for continuity in that educational setting.
- In situations where children were already attending a school before entering the care system.

This strategic approach is aligned with our overarching goal of prioritising the well-being and academic progress of CIC. By placing them in schools of high repute and carefully considering exceptions in line with their best interests, we aim to provide a stable and conducive learning environment for each child within our care. This commitment remains central to the BCP Virtual School's mission of fostering educational success and positive outcomes for Children in Care.

On the rare occasion where a preference for an RI School or academy converter that was rated as RI in the previous Ofsted Inspection, is requested by parents/ carers, SEND or wider professionals, a School Approval form including contributions from all stakeholders, including the young person, must be submitted for approval from the Education Service Director.

In 2022-23, the number of CIC attending 'Good' and 'Outstanding' provisions compared to 2021-22 has increased by 11% to 89%. Of the remaining 11%, 6% were attending schools that do not have an Ofsted outcome – these are either academy converters not yet inspected since conversion or newly opened schools. 5% attended RI provisions for the following reasons:

- 11 children were already attending the Requires Improvement Provisions prior to coming into Care.
- 2 children with an EHCP were placed in a school that after consultation was deemed as the only school that could meet the Special Education Needs.
- 3 children were placed in a good school prior to the Ofsted inspection that saw the school move to Requires Improvement status.

Additional Support / Monitoring of RI schools

These recommendations by the Virtual School aim to establish a comprehensive and proactive support framework, ensuring that young people in care within RI schools receive the necessary resources, attention, and tailored interventions for their holistic development and educational success:

- **Communication of Ofsted Impact** - Clearly articulate how Ofsted judgments impact the wellbeing, progress, and outcomes of young people in care. Disseminate this information to all professionals involved in their care and education.
- **Quality Support in RI Schools** - Ensure that schools rated as 'Requires Improvement' can provide high-quality support tailored to the needs of young people in care. Consider alternative provisions if RI schools cannot meet these requirements.
- **Utilisation of PPG+ Funding** - Strategically employ PPG + funding to support schools in achieving accelerated progress and age-related attainment or better for young people in care. This may involve additional staff training or targeted interventions.
- **Training and Support for School Leadership Teams (SLT) and DTs** - Provide additional training and establish support processes for SLT and DTs in RI schools. This aims to ensure close monitoring and effective support for young people in care within this context.
- **Monitoring and assessments alongside support to SENCOs** - Allocate additional funding and support for monitoring and assessments to identify learning needs. This proactive approach aims to secure the required educational support for young people in care and support SENCOs to meet needs of CIC in RI schools.
- **Regular Monitoring of Attainment and Progress** - Establish a more frequent monitoring system for the attainment and progress of young people in RI schools. This includes regular reviews of assessments and assessed work to verify standards used and assess progress effectively.
- **Increased frequency of collection of Pupil Voice** - Centrally position pupil voice in the PEP and on more frequent occasions, collecting perspectives from both the school and social care. This comprehensive approach ensures a holistic understanding of the educational experiences of young people in care attending RI schools.

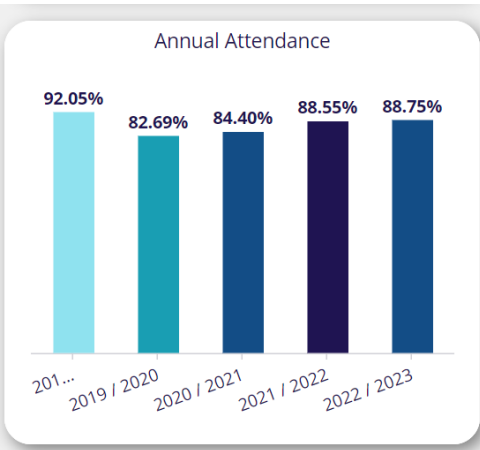
8. Attendance

The Virtual School recommissioned a cloud-based system designed to meticulously track, monitor, and analyse attendance (from Reception to Year 13) and educational progress (2 to 20 years). The system facilitates the daily collection of live attendance data and is used in collaboration with frequent reviews and focus in PEPs meetings to improve attendance of CIC:

- **Daily Live Data Analysis** - This real-time information is subject to weekly analysis by the Virtual School Senior Leadership Team (SLT), allowing for prompt identification of individual concerns. Subsequently, Virtual School Education Officers (VSEOs) can establish immediate contact with schools, social workers, and carers in instances of declining attendance.
- **Monthly Attendance Trend Reviews** - Managers conduct a comprehensive monthly review of attendance trends. This ongoing analysis informs timely and strategic responses and interventions, ensuring a proactive approach to attendance management. Regular liaison with SEND and CSC colleagues to highlight and resolve issues pertaining to process and placement.
- **Mitigating Miscoding through Data Analysis** - Regular data analysis has proven instrumental in identifying and rectifying miscoding issues. This proactive measure has contributed to the reduction of unauthorised absences and provided an avenue for challenging situations where pupils may be missing out on education due to offsite provision or reduced timetables when deemed inappropriate.
- **Mandatory Attendance Targets on PEPs** - The setting of attendance targets on the PEP is now a mandatory practice. When attendance falls below 95%, this strategic measure maintains high expectations and ensures that DTs and all professionals engaged with the young person are aligned in understanding the critical role attendance plays in reducing vulnerability and enhancing overall outcomes. This approach facilitates the dual emphasis on both challenging and supporting absence.

This comprehensive attendance monitoring system and process reaffirms the Virtual School's commitment to maintaining high standards and promoting positive educational outcomes for Children in Care. The strategic use of real-time data not only facilitates immediate intervention but also underscores the significance of attendance in the holistic development of everyone under our care.

The VSH has very high expectations and standards relating to school attendance, and this can be evidenced through our past performance compared to other local authorities.



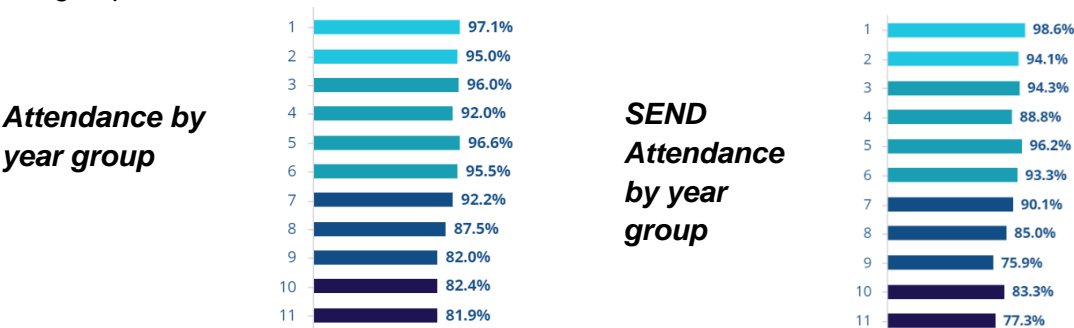
The attendance figure of 88.75% represents attendance of statutory school age pupils across the academic year. This continues a 4-year improving trend.

For CIC that have been in care for 12 months, at the time of data collection, the attendance rate was 90.90%.

The average attendance for CIC, age 16-17, attending Further Education provisions was 85%. For 2022-23, attendance concerns were regarding UASC who were awaiting age assessment or unable to enrol at a Further Education provision due to set enrolment dates and transfer back to BCP mid academic year. Alternative education provision was

commissioned and funded through the Post 16 PPG+ grant but resulted in a period out of education impacting on attendance data.

The data below represents attendance percentages for all CIC and CIC with SEND across various year groups and reveals that:



- Attendance rates for both CIC and CIC with SEND decrease as students progress through the higher year groups.
- The attendance rates for CIC with SEND are consistently lower than those for CIC across most year groups.
- Year 8 and Year 9 exhibit lower attendance rates, especially for CIC with SEND. This has highlighted a critical period where Virtual School Education Officers should encourage focus in PEP targets and use of PPG+ funding on supporting additional support and targeted interventions to maintain or improve attendance.
- Yearly variations highlight the need for individualised support plans that consider the unique circumstances of each child, adapting strategies to promote consistent attendance - this is particularly important for this CIC with SEND. The Virtual School will continue to develop collaboration with the SEND team and Mental Health in Schools Team (MSHT) to address specific barriers and challenges faced by this group. The DFE guidance, released in September 2022, *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* has highlighted the need for professionals to work together to improve children’s school attendance and in doing so all schools will have an Attendance Officer allocated to them to discuss attendance in their school. The Virtual School team will work closely with the BCP Attendance Team to ensure that CIC, PLAC and children with a social worker are prioritised when officers meet with schools.

Stability in Education

The average attendance of pupils with AT LEAST one school move in 2022-23 was 71% compared to pupils with no changes in provision having on average 83% attendance.

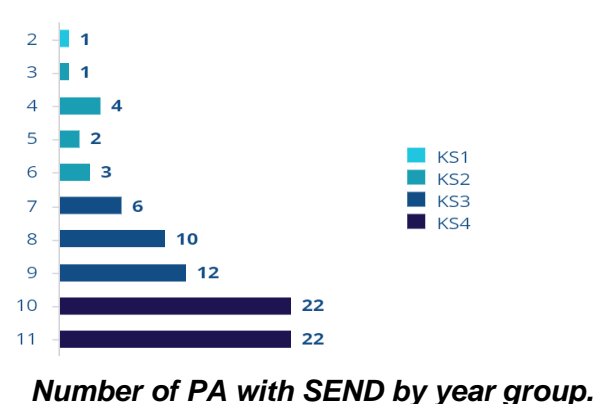
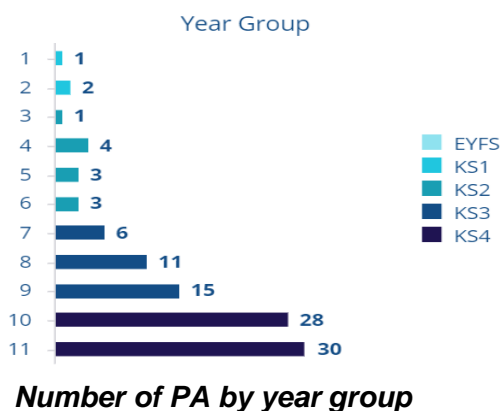
Involving the VS in strategic arrangements to promote stability have had a positive impact on permanence planning. There is representation from the VS at various meetings with children’s social care and senior managers to monitor stability and plan appropriately to ensure education placements are a priority factor in achieving positive long- term outcomes for children in care. The Virtual School is represented at the Children’s Social Care weekly Placement Review Panel and contribute to Placement approval forms. **100% of received Placement Approval Forms have been completed by VS managers.** These contributions enable the VS to link the SW with SEND to reduce drift and delay in beginning consultations and transfer processes for young people with EHCPs and reduce absence from education.

Mid-year school moves have dropped as an impact of effective integrated working between the VS, CSC and SEND. We achieved good quality planning for pupils moving schools through involvement in the early placement planning stages and provided regular training and updates for foster carers regarding the impact of mid-year moves and importance of stability at KS4.

Where school moves have taken place, we liaise with both receiving and previous schools and social care professionals to ensure that joint meetings take place, new schools both understand and can meet the needs of children, listen to pupil voice and that appropriate support is in place from the first day in the new provision.

Persistent Absence

32% of all CIC (104 SSA pupils) had attendance that was below 90%, this is known as persistent absenteeism. **For CIC who have been in care for over 12 months, persistent absence is 24.59% (60 out of 244).**



From the full number of 104 children who were persistently absent:

- 24 had been in care less than 12 months this academic year.
- 4 are UASC.
- 37 out of 106 attended 2 or more provisions (35%) – average number of education provisions attended since entering care was 1.4.
- 32 received suspensions from their schools missing a total of 290 days in 2022/23, on average missing 7% of school sessions due to suspension.

Other contributing factors were school refusal, sufficiency for children with SEND, illness, medicals and instances of unauthorised absences that are addressed as these arise.

Key Stage 4 exhibits an overrepresentation of children identified as Persistent Absentees, with a notable connection to entry into care in KS4, difficulty with reengaging with school environment following the pandemic and existing Foster Placement and SEND sufficiency concerns—a prevalent national issue. To address this, intensive efforts are underway to reverse this trend and enhance access to education for this specific group.

Key initiatives to reduce persistent absence across all Key Stages include:

- **Clear training and guidelines** – Flowcharts and DT training for dissemination to all education staff with guidance to reduce and support pupils exhibiting persistent absence.
- **Additional Tuition and Funding** - All children in this group were provided with supplementary tuition to support their preparation for exams.
- **Integrated Support Approach** - Utilisation of the Inclusion Re-Integration team, additional Individual Advice and Guidance (IAG) from a qualified Virtual School Officer and targeted funding to facilitate a holistic support approach to addressing attendance challenges.
- **Prompt Statutory Assessments for SEN** - Initiating statutory assessments for SEND at the earliest signs of potential improvement in engagement, consequently positively impacting attendance.
- **Enhanced SW support and Improved Joint Planning** - Increased support for Social Workers and comprehensive input to Placement Approval forms has facilitated improved joint planning and resulted in timely applications for children necessitating a school move due to placement changes.
- **Mental Health Consultations** - Organised fortnightly consultations with the Mental Health in Schools Team for named cases, allowing for informal discussions and the identification of support strategies to enhance overall planning.

Sudden absence

Less obvious patterns of absences can easily escape notice. Sudden absences, which may initially seem attributed to common reasons like illness or family bereavement, could also indicate more concerning issues such as the onset of school refusal, especially when unexplained. While most sudden absences are typically clarified upon the child's return to school, the Virtual School remains vigilant in identifying unexplained patterns and reports them weekly to VSEOs for thorough investigation.

Permanent Exclusion and Suspension

For the fourth consecutive year, there have been no permanent exclusions for BCP CIC.

Wherever possible we encourage schools to avoid suspensions. 50 SSA school age pupils out of the CIC cohort have experienced at least one suspension during the year and there have been a total of 93 suspensions issued. This equates to 15.1% of the SSA cohort.



Analysis indicates that the highest incidence of suspensions was for Year 10 pupils and the main primary reason was for persistent disruptive behaviour. It is concerning that 78% of suspensions were for young people with SEND. Out of the 18 CIC identified as having EHCPs, 5 were undergoing assessment at the time of suspension and all subsequently all received agreement for an EHCP to support their learning needs.

There were some incidences this academic year of some new into care having a suspension both before and after becoming looked after. The data only reflects suspensions issued to young people after entering care. This behaviour could have been communicating a more significant need relating to their home life and then responding when becoming looked after. The Virtual School work with schools to reduce suspensions, however, some of our pupils are participating in activities that would warrant the need for suspension. We have managed to negotiate alternatives to suspension and permanent exclusion and planned clear actions to continue to reduce suspensions through measures such as:

- **Monitoring and Support** - During weekly team meetings children who have had suspensions are discussed as well as in half termly case supervision, giving oversight and priority to these children, and ensuring that Virtual School staff actions and support to schools and young people is robust.
- **Bespoke Exclusion Prevention Programme** – The Virtual School commissioned a bespoke exclusion prevention programme to support schools, carers and young people. The outcomes of the Thrive Programme in 2022/23 resulted in reducing suspensions for 4 out of the 5 YP at risk of perm ex. Four pupils have shown increased attendance and engagement with school and are no longer at risk of perm ex.
- **Immediate Action Plans** – Timely meetings following suspension and attendance at reintegration meetings facilitate planning, support, training and agree use of PPG to avoid cycles of suspensions and promote sustained, positive reengagement and support.
- **Short term Alternative Provision** - Use of alternative provision to support reintegration and transition back into the education provision.
- **Conference** - The first Designated Teachers Conference was held face-to-face in October 2022 with an inspirational keynote address by Louise Bomber and Ian Hunkin. The focus of the training for DTs, social care and educational professionals was developing focused on Inclusive and Trauma Informed support in all schools and reducing suspensions Evidence based training and strategy suggestions were provided by Trafalgar School who support avoiding all suspensions and permanent exclusions across their trust.

Children Missing Out on Education

Year Group	No. of CIC identified as PMOE July 23	
1	1	<p>In 2022-23, there were no CIC missing education (CME). All young people received an offer of at least 10 hours of provision even if they were Not on Roll (NOR) at a registered school/ placement.</p> <p>Various circumstances may lead to children or young people not accessing a full-time offer in the usual way (comparable to peers in the same education provision) - Pupils Missing Out on Education (PMOE):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a child/young person is new into care, their placement may hinder attendance at their existing school. • Emergency placement changes, occurring with less than 28 days' notice, necessitate sourcing new educational provision. • Proximity issues with a new placement may prevent attendance at the existing school, prompting efforts by the Virtual School to maintain educational continuity until a new provision is secured. • Children leaving secure or residential care with on-site education may experience disruptions. • Children with SEND may face difficulty finding specialised provision matching their EHCP-identified needs in BCP and in other LAs or must wait a school consultation process before a new school is named on the EHCP. • There is drift in funding agreements regarding securing ongoing education placements. • Risk of permanent exclusion may lead to the arrangement of new education provision for the child/young person.
2	1	
3	0	
4	0	
5	1	
6	1	
7	4	
8	5	
9	4	
10	8	
Total	24	

To ensure comprehensive monitoring of young people not enrolled in full-time education at a registered establishment and to promote equality, the Virtual School has implemented the following measures:

- **Weekly monitoring data systems** - track those Not on Roll, Pupils Missing out on Education, individuals on part-time timetables, school refusers, and those with severe absence. This approach, praised by Ofsted, ensures close monitoring of all young people not receiving full-time provision in the same manner as their peers, including oversight of those attending full-time Alternative Provision (AP). This has resulted in an increase in CIC identified as PMOE across the academic year due to a change in monitoring criteria for a sharper focus on all vulnerable learners to avoid marginalisation.
- **Additional tuition** - Ensured that all children without a school placement have received or been offered tuition in core subjects.
- **Assessments** - Facilitated and funded Education Psychology referrals and Speech and Language assessments as required.
- **Regular Reviews** - In specific cases, time-limited part-time timetables will be agreed to address issues such as medical conditions or support the acclimatisation of pupils with significant needs to the school and its routines. Regular reviews every four weeks, involving school, social care, carers, and other professionals, aim to facilitate a timely transition to full-time provision.
- **Online Offer** - Provided an online offer for CIC unable to attend a school provision from Day 1, incorporating platforms such as Lexia (Reading), Maths Whizz, and Schools Online (English and Maths).
- **Access to Technology** - Provision of laptops both centrally purchased and through school issued funding.

9. UASC

The Virtual School supported 46 UASC who arrived in BCP in 2022-23. In total, there were 88 UASCs that included 42 previously placed young people. Of the 88 UASC, 17 were of SSA and 71 in Year 12 and 13. This increase from 2021 reflects the 34% national increase.

Cohort	Number of UASCs	In Borough	Out of Borough
SSA	17	76%	24%
16-17	38	74%	26%
Year 13 (18+)	33	76%	24%

Across all cohorts, there is a consistent trend with the majority of UASC being placed in borough, showing a preference for local placements. The higher percentage of in-borough placements supports a focus on leveraging local resources and support networks for the successful integration of UASC into the community. For all the young people placed either in or out of BCP, the focus was on accessing education quickly. The challenges to this were:

- Many UASC young people who were in year 12 and 13 were unable to access local college courses due to missing September intake dates and courses no longer running at time of arrival in BCP/ Southampton and / or changes to care placements mid-year.

The Virtual School executed several strategic initiatives to promptly engage all UASC (regardless of legal status) in education with minimal delay to foster language skills development through both face-to-face and online provision. These included:

- **Provision of Laptops** - Laptops have been provided to facilitate educational engagement for UASC, ensuring equitable access to resources for those participating in educational activities.
- **Collaborative 12-week Course** - In partnership with Bournemouth Churches Housing Association (BCHA), the Virtual School designed a 12-week course. This comprehensive programme, offered 9 hours of weekly engagement, encompassing English and Maths English for Speaker of Other Languages (ESOL) tuition, well-being sessions, support for future college enrolment, and life skills development. Additional enrichment activities including cultural visits, a gardening project, a football day, and cooking, have been incorporated to ensure holistic engagement for all UASC within BCP.
- **Tailored Programme for UASC in Out-of-Area Placements** - A bespoke programme with BeFluent in Southampton has been developed and commissioned specifically for UASC young people who were not able to access college provision in out-of-area placements. This initiative addresses the unique educational and transitional needs of UASC in alternative settings.
- **Establishment of a UASC Football Team** - A UASC football team has been established, providing students with a sense of belonging and pride. This ongoing initiative serves to integrate UASC into the local community, fostering community connections, and supporting the pursuit of their goals and aspirations.
- **Training for Secondary and College Provisions** – The Virtual School commissioned International Rescue to provide Healing Classrooms training. The sessions provided case studies, discussion and good practice-sharing activities on how to best support refugee students in schools and colleges.

These multifaceted efforts underscore the Virtual School's commitment to providing comprehensive support to UASC, ensuring not only educational engagement but also holistic well-being. The initiatives described here reflect our dedication to fostering a supportive and enriching environment for UASC as they navigate their education and employment journeys.

10. PEPs

The aim of all PEPs is to capture their experiences, as well as evaluating their educational progress and personal development.

	Number of PEPs that are QA as Red	% PEPs that are QA as Green
Total number of PEPs rated as Green	376/482	79%
Social worker completion/ met standard	416 PEPs	86% 62% of Red PEPs are due to SW incompleteness
DT incompleteness/ not met standard	442 PEPs	92% 38% of Red PEPs are due to DT incompleteness

The Virtual School team has achieved significant progress in elevating the standard and effectiveness of PEPs completed by DTs. 92% of PEPs received a green rating for DT completion - an improvement from 88% in 2021-22.

In 2022-23, incompleteness of PEPs by social care contributed to 14% of PEPs being quality assured as 'Red'.

Further analysis of Quality Assurance (QA) data of DT contribution

	2021-22		2022-23	
	Number of PEPs that are QA as Red	% PEPs that are QA as Red	Number of PEPs that are QA as Red	% PEPs that are QA as Red
No Pupil Voice	25	22%	18	17%
No Targets/ not met standard	22	20%	4	4%
No teacher feedback	26	23%	22	21%

Comparison of the quality assurance (QA) status of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) in the academic years 2021-22 and 2022-23

The analysis reveals the following:

- **Pupil Voice** - In 2022-23, the % of PEPs with inadequate Pupil Voice decreased to 17% of the total. This suggests an improvement in incorporating pupil voice following training and use of focused tools by DTs.
- **Targets** - In 2022-23, following DT training on setting Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time Specific (SMART) targets and focus on using Pupil Voice and teacher feedback in PEP meetings to collaboratively set targets, the number of PEPs QA as having inadequate targets significantly reduced to 4 PEPs, constituting only 4% of the total. This demonstrates a substantial improvement in setting targets that are aspirational and meet the expected standard.

- **Teacher Feedback** - In 2022-23, this number decreased to 22 PEPs, accounting for 21% of the total. Although there is a reduction, a considerable percentage of PEPs still lack teacher feedback, indicating an area for ongoing improvement. This needs to be particularly focused on contributions from tutors in the local Further Education providers as 50% of the PEPs completed at Post 16 lacked the required standard of feedback from tutors.

In the Ofsted Monitoring Visit 3, the inspectors acknowledged that, *'The positive acknowledgement of children's successes in the PEP meetings is a strength of the PEPs. EYFS PEPs were highlighted a positive starting from 2.5 years.* The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) team have identified that PEPs are used as a tool for immediate detailed access to provision and support for CIC in education.

Key accomplishments and initiatives include:

- **Comprehensive Attendance at PEPs** - Ensuring the active participation of a Virtual School team member in 100% of all PEPs, underscoring our commitment to the individualised educational planning for each child in care.
- **Improved PEP Quality and Contribution** - Effective training for DT, focusing on improving the quality of contributions, target setting, and effective use of data, coupled with a robust Quality Assurance system, has resulted in a notable increase in green and amber-rated PEPs throughout the academic year.
- **A new QA system** - Mandates DTs to input comprehensive information into PEPs, promoting accountability and enhancing the quality through discussions in PEP meetings.
- **Process** - Rigorous quality review processes categorise PEPs as inadequate, requires improvement, or good. Feedback and required improvements are outlined, fostering continuous improvement.
- **Redesigned ePEP for Enhanced Data Recording** - The ePEP system, employed for recording Personal Education Plans, has been redesigned to provide more comprehensive data on progress, attainment, SEND, and mental health.
- **Elevated PEP Quality through Independent QA** - An increase in the number of high-quality PEPs has been achieved through independent QA, leveraging trend analysis and identifying areas for improvement.
- **Increased Management Oversight of PEP QA** - Enhanced systems have been instituted to provide a heightened level of management oversight of PEP QA, ensuring continuous improvement and adherence to standards.
- **Timely Completion of PEPs** - Successfully completing three PEPs per year for all children and young people within the required timescales.
- **Enhanced Case Supervision Arrangements** - Implementation of new case supervision arrangements on a more regular half-termly basis, prioritising the focus on the most vulnerable pupils to ensure targeted support.
- **Incorporation of Pupil Voice** - A heightened emphasis on including Pupil Voice in PEPs, with subsequent targets linked to their voices, ensuring a child-centred approach.
- **Management Oversight and Data Analysis** - Enhanced management oversight and data analysis of attainment and progress data, displaying improved utilisation of data for effective target setting and informed decision-making.
- **Training for Social Care Colleagues** – An offer of training for social care colleagues and Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSW) to improve PEP completion and understanding of education.

12. Ensuring young people achieve the best they can

Developing expertise in the Virtual School – Recruitment of qualified staff has enabled the VS team to improve the monitoring and timely support for our most vulnerable children. Each member of the team holds a focus/ responsibility to develop practise and expertise within the team including analysis and response to data, alternative provision, inclusion and SEND, apprenticeships and careers support, EYFS, NEET engagement, Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC), mental health and UASC support.

Training team - Weekly team meetings now contain CPD training to develop knowledge and experience in role to enable support and constructive challenge to schools and professionals supporting YP in care. Examples of training in 2022-23 included:

- Paediatric referrals
- Graduated Response
- Sexualised Behaviours
- Facilitating collaborative relationships to support CIC in education.
- Relational Policies
- Attachment and trauma informed update training
- Mental Health in schools

The aim is to enable supportive and solution focused working to support colleagues to focus on child centred practice.

Transitions - Transition guidance was issued to all schools, for use each term throughout the academic year, to prepare young people for transitions in the normal rounds. This supports and ensures that the knowledge of young people and their needs is understood by receiving provisions upon their arrival and required funding is used. This will support a positive transition for young people through achieving stability, appropriate support and strategies used by all staff that they have previously accessed/ experienced.

Online provision and access to technology - The provision of laptops and online programmes in English, Maths and Reading enables immediate access to education regardless of geographical location, allowing children to continue their education even if they move out of BCP LA awaiting admission to new schools. It also provides access to additional tuition for CIC not achieving expected outcomes.

DT audit - We have created a self-assessment/audit tool akin to the one employed by Designated Safeguarding Leads in schools. This tool aids DTs in recognising areas of practice that may necessitate improvement. It establishes clear connections to statutory guidance and the obligatory duties of DTs, as well as recommended practices. Additionally, it facilitates discussions with Headteachers regarding allocated time for role responsibilities, decision-making authority, and acknowledgment of contributions to school improvement.

DT Networks and training – Half termly networks and training is provided to DTs and supporting education staff in pre-schools and nurseries, schools, colleges and alternative provision providers. Training is focused on reflecting on practice, developing understanding, knowledge and pedagogy for supporting CIC and Care Leavers and providing opportunities to collaborate and share expertise. Training offers in 2022-23 included: Developing Relational Policies, Trauma Informed Practice - Whole School Approach, Pupil Voice and Relational Language.

Governor Training - Governor training for Children in Care is a critical component in ensuring that school governors are well-equipped to understand and address the unique needs and challenges faced by CIC within the educational setting. This includes understanding the legal framework, awareness of the educational challenges, clarifying the role of governors in relation to advocating for, monitoring CIC, and ensuring they review policies and practice to ensure they specifically address the needs of CIC.

13. VS Conference - 'Creating an Environment for Success in Schools'

The BCP Virtual School hosted the first conference for Education Professionals entitled 'Creating an Environment for Success in Schools' focused on developing Inclusive and Trauma Informed support in all schools and reducing suspensions. The conference was attended by 102 individuals from 78 establishments, including schools, alternative providers, early years providers and BCP colleagues.

The agenda included keynote speakers:

- **Louise Bomber** (Teacher, therapist, trainer/ author specialising in attachment and trauma) - Developmental trauma, challenges for schools, behaviour as a communication, physical impact of trauma on our bodies, dysregulation and the importance of relational policies rather than behaviour policies along with resources for schools.
- **Claire Copeland** (Headteacher at Trafalgar School, Plymouth) – 'Why we don't exclude, relationships are key.'
- **Ian Hunkin** (Director of South-Central Teaching School Hub) – Embedding Trauma informed approaches in our schools, neuroscience, feeling safe, impact of trauma, PACE, window of tolerance, self-regulation.

Four young people from Twynham School presented on the Innovation Project, an inclusive project part funded by PPG+ focused on raising aspiration, improving attendance and engagement and developing social skills. The young people asked challenging questions to professionals such as, 'Do you know I don't just have a school and homework timetable to follow?' and 'Do you know I spend a lot of time at school telling lies to my peers and trying not to stand out so I can fit in?'

Feedback from Attendees

Great speakers. Good to receive links to follow up theory and some immediate take aways.

Really inspiring day!



The fact you invited young people in care to speak to us was very powerful, thank you.

Great keynotes – pitched well and informative. Looking forward to the follow up sessions from the Virtual School

Ensuring young people feel the best they can and have access to opportunities:



Jamie's Farm - integrates elements of Farming, Family, Therapy, and Legacy to craft a 5-day residential programme. During the 2022-23, we successfully facilitated two cohorts comprising young individuals spanning from Primary pupils to Post 16 UASC. This experience has had positive outcomes for the participants, fostering a distinctive and supportive atmosphere that enhances emotional, physical, and social well-being. The interaction with animals and immersion in nature not only fosters trust-building and enhances self-esteem but supports them to develop essential life skills such as cooking and self-care.

Moreover, the structured routine and responsibility inherent in farm activities contribute significantly to a sense of purpose and stability for these individuals. This newfound stability, in turn, translates into improved engagement with educational pursuits and interactions with professionals upon their return.

University visits - Ten young people, including Year 10 and 11 students, attended a university experience day at Bath University and 7 students, including 4 UASC attended Bristol university. The day included a bespoke tour, a question-and-answer session, and interactive lectures led by Care Experienced ambassadors.

Cooking - In the summer term, the Virtual School invited young people to take part in an online cookery programme run by Leith's Kitchen. This was an enjoyable and practical way to not only engage in cooking a meal but to also develop independence, social skills and life skills such as shopping, healthy eating and budgeting. The taste testers have reported that the results were delicious and there are certainly some budding chefs out there.



UASC Football team - A UASC football team has been established, providing students with a sense of belonging and pride. This ongoing initiative serves to integrate UASC into the local community, fostering community connections, and supporting the pursuit of their goals and aspirations. Several UASC community days were held at FTY Lab to foster team skills and opportunities to meet.



Military Preparation College – The Virtual School continue to facilitate visits to engagement days at the Military Preparation College based in Totton (MPCT) for CIC aged 15-21. The main purpose is for young people to experience the offer including development of their fitness, achieve qualifications, engage in team building activities and skills for future employment with a focus on the military or public services.

Music Summer Project – This fun, music making opportunity in collaboration with Absolute Music was funded for young people aged 11-19 that provided an inclusive safe place for freedom of expression. Music connects the head and the heart, it exercises a part of the brain nothing else does, it helps to develop creativity, improve concentration, build self-esteem, and combat isolation.

14. Educational Outcomes

In response to Ofsted recommendations and as part of ongoing enhancements, we implemented a new system for tracking and analysing termly progress and attainment. This system enables swift intervention and more frequent challenges to under-achievement compared to the previous termly PEPs. The introduction of this system facilitates effective communication with provisions, allowing the team to provide timely support and interventions. Notably, 100% of PEPs for young people enrolled at a provision included attainment data during all terms of 2022-23.

As new children come into care the team collect previous attainment data to support the knowledge and learning journey of that child. Each child's individual statutory data journey is plotted as a year group cohort and used to inform strategic decisions, and individual focus for each child.

Eligible - This definition has been used in statutory guidance because at least 12 months is considered an appropriate length of time to gauge the possible association of being looked after on educational attainment. Evidence suggests that children who are in care, for more than 12 months at the end of March before assessments occur, perform better than children new to care.

EYFSP – Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

BCP Virtual School value the importance of the Early Years, and so fund the additional 15 hours for pre-school in the year before a child starts school to support their school readiness if they are behind their peers in development. 50% of those with additional hours funded achieved 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). We get to know our pre-school children using the Early Years PEP from the age of 2.5 years. We are aware from an early age if additional support is needed when children transition to Reception and Year 1.

	Total # children	Met GLD	
		#	%
BCP CIC	18	8	44.5
BCP CIC (for 12 months)	6	3	50

50% of CIC who have been in care for 12 months at the time the data is collected reached GLD. There are no national comparisons for CIC. Out of the 10 children that did not reach GLD, 3 CIC had EHCPs awaiting specialist provision, 4 CIC had SEND (1 EHCP) and 3 CIC had entered care in the Spring term and had previously low attendance.

Due to the experiences of CIC who enter care when young, the Virtual School supports education provisions to focus on development in securing all Prime Early Learning Goals (Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional and Physical Development). It is recognised that achievement in these areas provides a secure foundation to have the skills for lifelong learning and forming positive relationships. Data on achievement of all the Prime Learning Goals will inform future planning and support from September 2023.

Support for CIC to achieve GLD at the end of Reception remains a focus for the Virtual School particularly for CIC with SEND. National GLD for all children with EHCPs is 3.8%. PPG+ funding is used for daily pre teaching, additional reading and Catch-Up Phonics programmes and if young people do not meet GLD, this is continued into Year 1 to accelerate progress.

Year One Phonics

Phonics Year 1 % passed	2021/22	2022/23
All CIC	58%	77%
Eligible CIC	75%	80%

Out of the 15 CIC, one was exempt from the phonics test due to SEND. Among the remaining 14, 10 achieved the required standard, accounting for 77% of those who participated in the assessment. Among the five eligible children in care who took the phonics test, four met the required standard, resulting in an 80% success rate.

Year Two Phonics

In year two 3 children were required to retake the phonics test, 1 was disapplied while the two who retook the test did not achieve the required standard. 77% of children commenced Key Stage 2 having attained the phonics standard.

Key Stage Results

There has been an improvement in the number of pupils following their age-related curriculum, attributed to the intensive focus on getting pupils back on track and by using additional grant funding effectively. The Virtual School was able to use a new one-off Recovery Premium and a School Led Tutoring Grant (SLTG) to make sure that pupils who needed it received extra tuition and support.

Key Stage 1 SATs

One child was exempted from the assessment (in care for less than 12 months+). Out of thirteen children assessed last year, one was reported to be working at a greater depth in any area.

	% met Reading		% met Writing		% met Maths		% met RWM	
	21-22	22-23	21-22	22-23	21-22	22-23	21-22	22-23
All CIC	40%	46%	27%	46%	33%	46%	27%	31%
Eligible CIC	33%	38%	17%	57%	17%	43%	17%	25%
National Eligible	44%		33%		43%		29%	

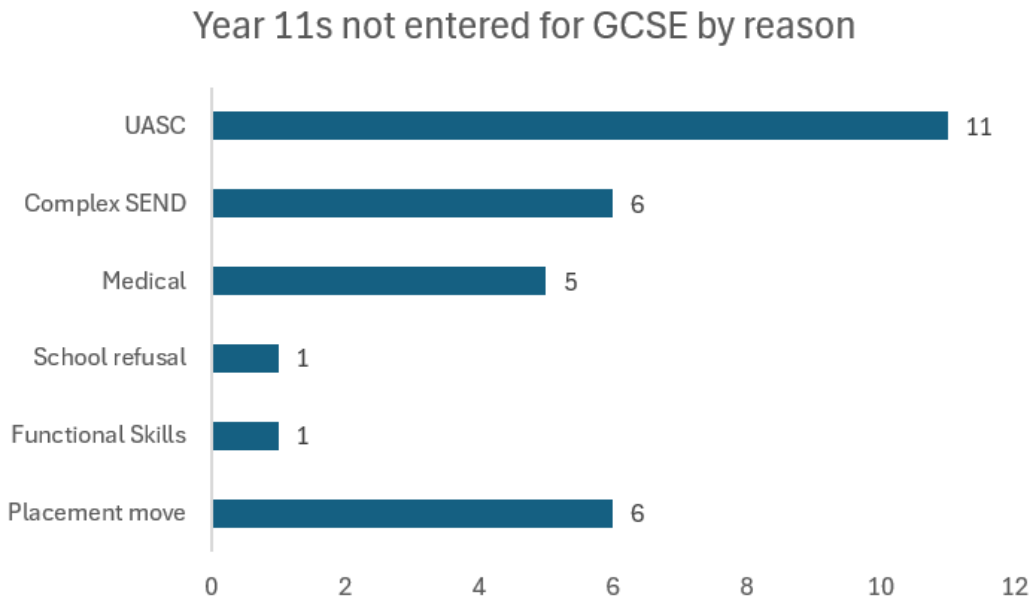
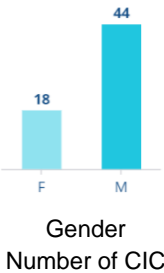
Key Stage 2 SATS

Out of the 22 children in Year 6, one child did not take the tests as they were residing in Ireland. Among the cohort, 9 children, representing 50%, were placed in specialist provision. Among the 19 children with available data (excluding the one in Ireland and two disapplied from SATs), 4 children achieved greater depth in reading, and 2 children were recorded at P levels.

	% met Reading		% met Writing		% met Maths		% met RWM	
	21-22	22-23	21-22	22-23	21-22	22-23	21-22	22-23
All CIC	60%	65%	30%	55%	40%	45%	30%	35%
Eligible CIC	57%	75%	29%	63%	43%	56%	29%	38%
National Eligible	52%		42%		44%		31%	

15. Year 11 Cohort Overview

- In 2022-23, there were 62 CIC in Year 11 with 44 boys and 18 girls.
- Average attendance was 81.88% and 9 (14.5%) CIC had suspensions from school.
- 1 CIC (0.15%) was not attending school due to educational school-based avoidance compared to 12 in the previous year.
- 21 CIC (34%) had an EHCP.
- 34 CIC (54.8%) were educated within BCP, 28 CIC (45.2%) outside BCP.
- 13 CIC (20%) were UASC and 2 achieved GCSE outcomes.
- 32 CIC (52%) were entered for a GCSE qualification, representing a positive increase from the previous year of 22 CIC (49%). However, the specific numbers compared to last year show that due to a larger cohort the 3% increase relates to an increase of 10 extra students taking GCSEs.
- 30 CIC (48%) did not take GCSE's and 1 of the 30 took functional skills exams. The other 29 (of which 11 were UASC) did not take any other qualifications. Amongst the reasons for this:



- Instability in care provision affected GCSE outcomes:
 - 28% (18/65) of pupils entered care at the beginning of Year 11 and 13% (8/62) entered care after April 2022 during the exam testing period.
 - Last year's Year 11 cohort had been in care for an average of 44.36 months.
 - 8% (5/62) of Year 11 pupils had 2 or more education placement moves during 2022-23, indicating a reduction from 38% in 2021-22. All care placement moves involved moving to another local authority.
- All young people had an offer of alternative provision to access functional skills in English and Maths. Additionally, 15% (10) were NOR and accessing alternative provision and alternative qualifications.

KS4 GCSE Outcomes

	2021/22				2022/23		
	All LAC	Eligible	Not Eligible		All LAC	Eligible	Not Eligible
% that took GCSES	49%	60%	35%		52%	59%	42%
4+ Eng OR Maths	27%	44%	5%		28%	37%	11%
4+ Eng AND Maths	11%	20%	0%		18%	24%	5%
5+ Eng OR Maths	16%	28%	0%		17%	22%	11%
5+ Eng AND Maths	7%	12%	0%		10%	15%	5%
National 5+ Eng and Maths		11%	8%				

There are positive trends in the achievements of young people, particularly in Grade 5+ in both Maths and English.

Number of young people achieving Grade 5 or above in both English and Maths - In 2021-22, there was a slight increase by 2% to 12% on the previous year and in 2022-23, there has been a further improvement to 15%.

Number of young people achieving Grade 4+ in both English and Maths - There was an increase in the percentage of young people achieving Grade 4+ in both subjects from 12% in 2018-19 to 20% in 2021-22, further rising to 24% in 2022-23.

However, analysis shows that the decrease in the number of young people achieving Grade 4 or 5+ in either Maths or English is because of under achievement in Maths compared to predicted outcomes throughout KS4. As a result, Maths is a focus for KS4 in 2023-24 in PEP meetings, funding allocation for tuition, review of teacher assessment for outcomes and online offer of Schools Online.

Supporting the Transition of Year 11s to Post 16 Education

Over the past year, our focus has been on strengthening relationships with social workers and Personal Advisors (PAs), improving attendance, and providing robust support for educational planning—including Personal Education Plans and Pathway Plans—to aid CIC in Further Education (FE) and engage all young people in employment, education, and training (EET), aligning with the ‘Duty to Participate’.

	2021-22 Year 11 graduating cohort destination	2022-23 Year 11 graduating cohort
	September 2022 (beginning Year 12)	September 2023 (beginning Year 12)
EET	76% (34 CIC)	79% (48 CIC)

The overall number of Year 11 graduates in 2022-23 in EET in Year 12 had improved from the previous academic year 2021-22 demonstrating a positive trend in their engagement with education, employment, or training opportunities at Post 16. These changes could be attributed to various factors such as the targeted interventions both in KS4 and Post 16 implemented by the Virtual School:

- **Careers / Information and Advice Guidance** - Assigned a qualified Level 6 Careers Lead to enhance focus in this area, particularly for those not enrolled in an education provision. Implemented an in-house support program for students from Year 8, delivering careers information, advice, and guidance to assist them in crafting a career pathway and ensuring clarity on the steps needed to achieve their career aspirations.
- **Work Experience** - Fostered strong connections with both in-house and external employers to expand work experience opportunities for our young people.
- **University Programme** - Enhanced access to university courses by organising visits to open days and creating university experience opportunities with local Southwest/Southeast Universities – including two overnight visits for Years 10-12.
- **Early SEND consultations and supported transition** - Provided special attention at an early stage to students with an EHCP, enabling the sharing of detailed information with prospective colleges and ensuring the correct support is in place.
- **A Level transition support** - A particular focus is on the A' level contingent, with the Virtual School focusing in Year 11 PEPs on allocating PPG+ funding to provide support to facilitate the academic transition from level 2 to level 3 education.

16. Post 16 CIC and Care Leavers - Year 12 and 13

	Year 12	Year 13
Level 1	23%	8%
Level 2	23%	20%
Level 3	17%	8%
ESOL	23%	46%
Entry level	6%	4%
Specialist	8%	8%

Levels of study distribution
in Years 12 and 13 in 2022/23

KS5 Outcomes	
Entry Level 1	2
Entry Level 2	1
Entry Level 3	4
Diploma	3
Level 1	4
Level 2	5
Level 3	7
Apprenticeship	1

Qualifications achieved at KS5

NEET targeted support – Years 12 and 13

A significant accomplishment from our collective efforts in the past academic year is the reduction of young people Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET) in Years 12 and 13 from 26% in September 22 to 20% in July 23. Moreover, the number of young people reengaging increased from 8% to 12%.

Between the period of December 22 and June 23, we reduced UASC NEET from 46% in December 22 to 10% in June 23.

For the second consecutive year, the Virtual School has provided comprehensive summer term transition support and planning for Year 11, 12, and 13. This includes targeted interventions for Year 11 CIC identified as at risk of NEET, attendance of Post 16 case officers at all summer PEP meetings for Year 11, a post-GCSE/A Level results drop-in day and individual telephone calls to discuss next steps for those transitioning to Post 16 following the receipt of results.

Our strategic use of PPG+ Post 16 Pilot funding has addressed transition challenges and barriers experienced by Year 12 and 13 students. Funding has supported mentors for transition and ongoing engagement, the development of essential skills through tuition, identification of learning needs through assessments and access to bespoke courses with local providers/ employers. This targeted approach has significantly reduced the number of students removed from the roll at Bournemouth and Poole College at Day 43. In 21-22, there were 16 students removed and in 22-23, only 3 were removed.

We delivered on our improvement plan priority to improve attendance by commissioning Welfare Call to collect daily attendance for Year 12 and 13 students. Attendance data is analysed in weekly meetings between colleges and VSEOs to identify and implement timely action plans for individuals with attendance below 70%. The Virtual School is promptly informed of all concerns that trigger the disciplinary process and actively participate in meetings to avoid removal/ drop out.

Our commitment to the development of a 16-18 Learning Offer that supports achievement of Level 2 outcomes in English and Maths has seen our collaboration with the NEET team to commission a bespoke Skills and Learning Offer.

As a rapid response to young people were at risk of leaving EET, weekly reviews between Lead for Post 16 and VSEOs with multi agency partners where required, enable swift response with good quality planning and support to offer alternative EET opportunities when appropriate.

17. Care Leavers

BCP Virtual School plays a crucial role in supporting Care Leavers by providing a range of services and resources tailored to meet their unique needs. As part of our extension to support Care Leavers, we have employed a Lead for Post 16 and Care Leavers to develop monitoring, analysis and engagement.

Some of the offers that BCP Virtual School provides for Care Leavers include:

- **Education Support** – The Virtual School offers support in navigating educational pathways, including assistance with college and university applications. Care leavers may receive additional academic support, such as tutoring or resources, to help them achieve outcomes.

This has been provided by:

- **Extension of the Virtual School Care Leaver Offer** – Offer extended to include Year 14 Care Leavers – individuals are allocated to a Virtual School Education Officer to maintain stability and oversight. This will impact on the Caseload numbers of VSEOs.
- **EET Plans** - The Virtual School Education Officers (VSEOs) conduct at least two individual meetings per academic year with Care Leavers to create a focused Education, Employment, and Training (EET) plan. This plan aims to provide support for maintaining or reengaging in employment, education, or training. The EET plan then informs the Pathway Plan, enhancing the quality of Pathway Plans managed by PAs through improved insights and strategies.
- **Mentoring and Guidance** – Provides Care Leavers with weekly access to assigned VSEOs who offer guidance on academic and employment matters based at the Hub and in the local college.
- **Career/ Employment Advice** - Supported Care Leavers to explore career options, training and employment opportunities and make informed decisions about their future.
- **Financial Assistance** – Facilitated access to grants and bursaries to support costs associated with education such as tuition fees, access to technology and books/ resources.
- **Access to Technology** - Ensured that care leavers have access to necessary technology, such as laptops, for their educational use.
- **SEND Support** – Supported Care Leavers with SEND by completing transition planning at a critical phase, working collaboratively with SEND Case Officers, facilitating access to specialist services and providing accessible information and advice to ensure they can make informed decisions about their future.
- **Upskilling Professionals** - The Virtual School have developed a training programme for Personal Assistants and colleges/ school staff regarding employability, education information and wellbeing support to improve the service Care Leaver's receive from all professionals.

These services collectively contribute to empowering care leavers, fostering their educational attainment, and supporting their overall well-being as they navigate the transition to independent adulthood.

Higher education

The Virtual School supports our young people as they leave care and head off to university. This is in the form of IT resources and considerations regarding their tuition costs as they leave Year 13. There were 7 care leavers at university in the academic year 2022-2023.

18. Pupil Premium Plus Grant Funding

In 2022-2023 our total Pupil Premium Plus Grant (PPG+) funding was £783,250

The amount allocated to schools was £410745, 52% of the total grant. The amount centrally retained was £372505, 48% of the total grant. Within the centrally retained portion 32% was used to support staffing costs and £16% was spent directly on support for pupils.

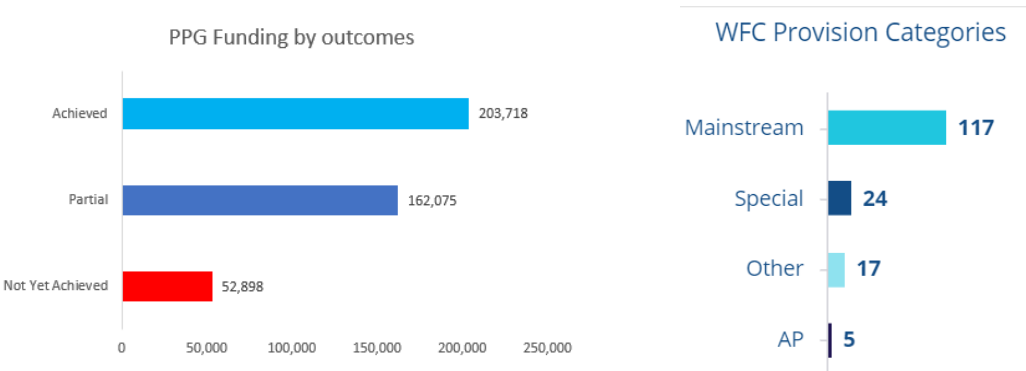
In September 2021, the BCP Virtual School was successful in bidding for £146k funding from the DfE for Pupil Premium plus funding for the post 16 cohort of young people. This was targeted at improving outcomes for CIC in years 12 and 13. In 2022 this pilot was extended for another year. From April 2023 this grant became a universal grant for all Virtual Schools, albeit much reduced, due to the success of the pilot.

The main use of PPG+ (52%) was allocated directly to schools to fund intervention work and support delivered directly through school and identified through individual PEPs. The remaining funds have been used to provide support for children which is above and over what is offered as part of the usual school curriculum/ offer. These may include attending alternative provision sessions, as part of bespoke timetable packages for children who require additional support within mainstream school such as specialist support (counselling), mentoring, forest schools and therapy. Funds were also allocated to schools to support CIC to prepare for transition. Provision of tuition is a focus for KS4 children with the aim of ensuring that children were supported regarding increasing their skills and knowledge before the exams/assessments and to support improving their preparation and confidence.

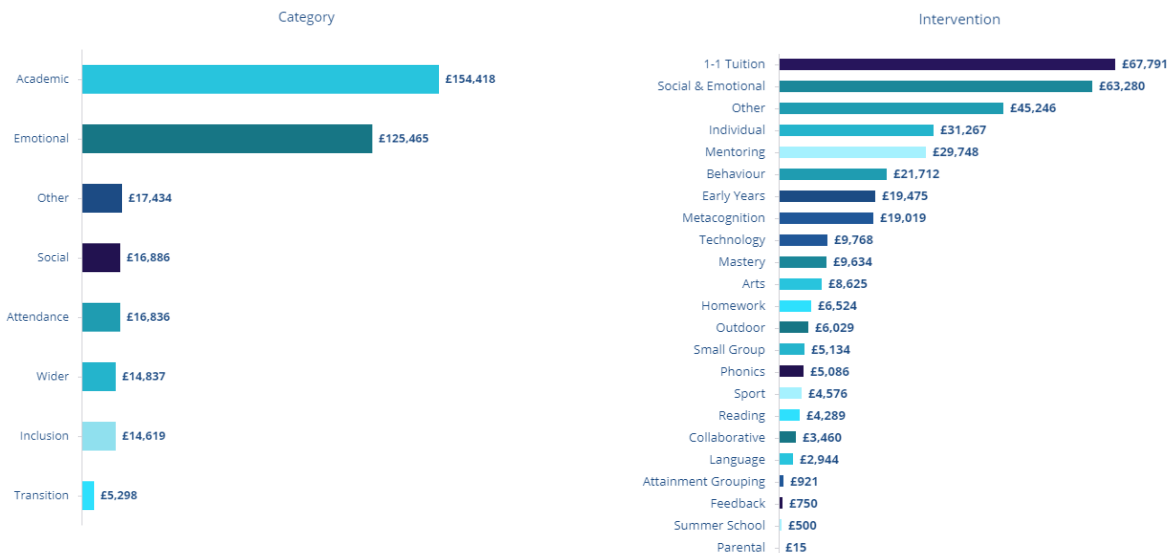
School age children in care and Post 16 children are allocated pupil premium when a PEP is returned with a funding request form which outlines how this would be spent and the intended outcomes and, in some cases, funding was allocated to children outside this age range if the need was evident. For example, supporting a post-16 young person not in education to access support to develop employability skills, achieve basic academic qualifications and transition into education and training environments.

In most cases funding is transferred to the school, but in some cases, funding is used centrally, for example purchase of resources, commissioning of programmes and assessments.

Analysis of targets and impact of PPG+ spend by education provisions and the Virtual School shows that most of the funding is allocated to mainstream provisions for academic and emotional intervention and support. This is focused on improving attendance, engagement and academic outcomes through tuition, pastoral support and access to opportunities to raise aspiration and develop wellbeing.



The impact of funding shows that 42% of targets were achieved within a term and a further 39% of targets were partially met in a term. The improved impact is related to the Increased quality of targets on PEPs identified in PEP QA and regular analysis of allocated funds and centrally retained spend.



Examples of use of funding not allocated to schools are:

- Support Post 16 providers to put in place intervention and support to maintain and improve engagement and attendance.
- Development of Post 16 programmes focused on reengagement and reducing NEET.
- Development of programmes to engage UASCs who are unable to access college programmes at time of arrival.
- Provision of online licences for Lexia and Schools Online.
- School readiness funding for 3–4-year-olds.
- Attendance monitoring, ePEP systems and analytics with Welfare Cloud.
- Jamie's Farm Residential
- Annual Virtual School Conference
- Holiday activities with local providers
- Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist and therapeutic assessments
- Access to Technology – provision of laptops
- Staffing - Virtual School teachers and Post 16 Education Officers
- SEND Officer supporting CIC placed outside BCP LA
- Crisis funding and provision for children with complex needs
- Bespoke permanent exclusion prevention programme to support education provisions, carers and young people.
- Training for DT, schools and professionals including attachment and trauma informed practice.
- Educational visits such as University Visits

19. Priorities

These are detailed in the Virtual School Improvement Plan which is reviewed and updated at the start of every academic term. Priorities are identified and actions are detailed which form the basis of the Virtual School's work across the academic year. The aim is to promote the raising of educational outcomes for all our Children in Care. This is reported and monitored through the BCP Governance structure for Children's Services.

Improve attendance:

- Mitigate persistent absenteeism through collaborative efforts with the Inclusion and SEND service, schools, and caregivers. Maintain a dedicated emphasis on targeted casework, data analysis, and early intervention to prevent CIC and CIC with SEND from experiencing gaps in their education.
- Guarantee that all students maintain a full-time timetable and implement rigorous monitoring and reviews of the provided educational provision.
- Collaborate with social care and various partners to actively contribute to and enhance systems for planning stability in placement/school transitions.
- Diminish the frequency of suspensions through proactive measures.

Continue improvements in attainment and progress:

- Use strategic oversight and analysis to identify strategies to accelerate progress for cohorts and support VSEOs and DTs/ teachers to implement interventions and support for individual CIC.
- Amplify focus on Post 16 aspirations through additional IAG provision and commission programme of 14+ provision to engage and inspire and reduce Risk of NEET in Year 12.
- Formulate a comprehensive Careers Support Plan to provide access and opportunities across all cohorts, spanning from Primary to Year 13, ensuring sustained engagement in the learning process.
- Use of PPG to facilitate additional Maths support to raise attainment at Grade 5+ in English or Maths and monitor progress and attainment through PEPs.

Improve Quality of PEPs:

- Enhance and elevate the quality of Social Worker attendance and contributions to PEPs enhance planning for stability and engagement in education and improve the overall quality and impact on outcomes for all CIC. Maintain oversight and prioritise completion of PEPs, working collaboratively with social care managers to ensure collaboration between schools and wider professionals.
- Support schools and colleges to implement strategies to create a more inclusive and supportive educational experience for children in care, ensuring that their voices are heard and respected.

Increase EET for Post 16 CIC and Care Leavers

- Introduce an extended and enhanced Care Leaver Offer to prolong consistent communication and meetings with individuals aged 18-21
- Expand programmes, and work experience opportunities to facilitate reengagement of NEETs.
- Boost the enrolment of care leavers in universities by creating avenues for them to explore Higher Education opportunities.
- Prioritise training initiatives that enhance understanding of the Care Leavers' experience and address their specific needs in educational and training.

Training and support for wider professionals

- Develop further training opportunities for all stakeholders with a focus on producing a training program for carers training.
- Embed DT audit tool.
- Establish a DT mentor role to facilitate the development of DT practices and offer support.
- Conduct training sessions on emotion coaching and relational policies tailored for DTs and staff.
- Strengthen collaboration with the Youth Justice Service and formulate joint provisions for CIC supported by this service.
- Take the lead in advancing the education of children with a social worker by creating accessible guidance and resources for Designated Safeguarding Leads and children's social workers.

Appendix A: Useful References and Acronyms

Promoting the education of children with a social worker – Virtual School Head role extension

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/994028/Promoting_the_education_of_children_with_a_social_worker.pdf

Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after

children: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-children>

Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after

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

Pupil premium: virtual school heads' responsibilities <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pupil-premium-virtual-school-heads-responsibilities>

CIC	Child/ Children in Care	NOR	Not on Roll
VS	Virtual School	EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
VSH	Virtual School Head	SLT	Senior Leadership Team
CIN	Child in Need	PA	Personal Assistant
CP	Child Protection	AP	Alternative Provision
CLA	Child Looked After	RI	Requires Improvement
DT	Designated Teacher	IAG	Independent Advice and Guidance
PEP	Personal Education Plan	PPG+	Pupi Premium Grant +
SEND	Special Educational Needs	PMOE	Pupil Missing out on Education
LA	Local Authority	CME	Child Missing Education
BCP	Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole	GLD	Good Learning Development
UASC	Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Child	ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
SSA	Statutory School Age	CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
EHCP	Education Health Care Plan	QA	Quality Assurance
EHENA	Education Health Care Needs Assessment	KS	Key Stage
MSHT	Mental Health in Schools Team	EET	Education, Employment and Training
VSEO	Virtual School Education Officer	NEET	Not in Education, Employment and Training
ASC	Autistic Spectrum Condition	SEMH	Social, Emotional and Mental Health
MLD	Moderate Learning Difficulty	PLAC	Previously Looked After Child