



Virtual School Head's Report 2023-24 Summary

Virtual School

Supporting Children in Care and Care Leavers

Working in partnership with young people, educational settings, carers and wider professionals to ensure care experienced young people fulfil their educational potential.

- Changing the narrative
- Unlocking potential
- Nurturing futures

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Purpose of the Report

This report is all about celebrating your achievements and understanding the challenges Care Experienced young people experience in education. The Virtual School team and your Education Officers are here to make sure you have the best chance to succeed in both education and work. We believe that by working together, schools and services can support you to have every opportunity to do well and succeed, both in your studies and in life. We want to make sure more of you are in school or have jobs, and that you do well in your studies.

We want every child in care and those who have left care to have the same chances to succeed as everyone else. Together, we'll help you become strong and confident individuals, ready to face the future, make a positive difference in the world, and achieve your dreams.



Successes

- ✓ The attendance at school of Care Experienced young people has improved significantly, and fewer children are missing a lot of school. This is excellent because it means young people are accessing more opportunities to learn and achieve.
- ✓ Most of you are now attending schools that are rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding'. We have a plan to support those who are not receiving full-time education, and we monitor this every week to ensure you are doing well.
- ✓ We also value your input about your education and use your ideas to set goals. A larger number of you are attending your PEP meetings and sharing your views about education with your schools and Virtual School Education Officers.
- ✓ An increasing number of you are taking important exams like GCSEs, and many of you are achieving higher grades in English and Maths.
- ✓ We keep track of your progress so we can help you set ambitious goals and achieve them.
- ✓ Many of you are moving on to further education, jobs, or training after school, and many of you are continuing with these paths.
- ✓ For those of you in Years 12 and 13, more of you are now in education, jobs, or training, which is fantastic! Some of you who were not in school or working before are now reengaging.
- ✓ Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and Care Leavers are also making great progress, with a large proportion of you in education, jobs, or training.
- ✓ Finally, the teachers who help you with your Personal Education Plans are doing an excellent job, and the majority of these plans are being completed to a high standard.

Here's what we are working on to help you succeed:

- **Attendance and Success in School:** We are continuing to focus on improving attendance and making sure you do well in school because regular attendance helps you learn effectively and achieve more.
- **Providing Timely Support:** We are enhancing how we monitor your progression and attendance to provide schools and colleges with the right help at the right time to ensure you get the support you need.
- **Timetables and Engagement:** We are working with schools to lessen the use of reduced timetables, removal from college roll and suspensions to support you to continue your education or training without interruptions.
- **Access to Learning:** We are working to reduce the number of children not enrolled in school and those missing out on education by collaborating with schools, colleges and education teams to ensure everyone has access to learning.
- **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND):** We are working with our SEND team to ensure that young people with SEND are prioritised for assessments, transition planning and consultations. This will prevent delays to securing education for you when you move care placement or transition to a new school.
- **Effective use of Alternative Provision (AP):** We will focus on ensuring you are accessing the most appropriate education to support you. We want all alternative education to be delivered in or alongside schools so you can benefit from a supportive school environment.
- **Empowering Care Leavers:** We are developing more programmes to create pathways to education and jobs, helping you find opportunities that match your interests and skills. We're developing more opportunities such as drop-in sessions and direct contact from the Virtual School Education Officers to provide consistent and positive support directly to young people to ensure you have someone to guide and encourage you.
- **Training for Education Professionals:** We are expanding training for schools to support them to better meet your needs, ensuring teachers are equipped to help you succeed.
- **Changing the Narrative:** We are making sure all language used in documents and records is trauma-informed and young person-centred. We're training schools and professionals to write directly to you in a supportive way, so you feel understood and valued.
- **Reducing Involvement with Youth Justice:** We are implementing targeted educational interventions and support systems to reduce the likelihood of children in care becoming involved with the Youth Justice System, helping you stay on a positive path.

