

VIRTUAL HEADTEACHERS REPORT

Harrow 2014-15

1 - Context

1.1 The role of Harrow Virtual School is to raise the attainment and outcomes of Harrow's Children Looked After (CLA). The Virtual School do this by challenging and supporting the school's, as well as providing a support service to a number of stakeholders in order to ensure that all Harrow CLA's and Care Leavers receive a high standard of education and are involved in appropriate educational activities. The Virtual School focus their work on raising aspirations of the young people and relevant professionals so that they can reach their potential and move forward into further and higher education and gainful employment. There are currently 89 CLAs from Reception to Year 11 and 54 Post 16 Care Leavers.

1.2 Harrow's Virtual School has been in existence with a substantive headteacher, since 2011 but subsequently experienced a period of inconsistent and weak leadership which meant that systems did not exist for the collection and analysis of data, action planning and measuring impact. However, in the last year the Local Authority (LA) has established a robust leadership team, established with shared virtual headteacher arrangements. This has ensured a strengthened leadership of primary, secondary and post-16 phases. In addition, the Harrow School Improvement Partnership (HSIP) has been commissioned to provide support and challenge to the Virtual School so that the school is functioning in a similar manner to a Good or Outstanding mainstream school. The school is now in a strong position, with robust systems and processes embedded, to ensure best possible outcomes for CLA/Care Leavers and provide the capacity to improve.

1.3 Current Staffing in Virtual School

There are two acting headteachers, Jane Munroe point 4 (HSIP Curriculum Consultant) who has responsibility for Early Years/Primary/Secondary and Tina Henley point 2 (Deputy Head Whitmore School) who has responsibility for Secondary/Post 16. There is a full time Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) responsible for attendance, punctuality and exclusions and a full time PEP co-ordinator with a social work background, who is responsible for the monitoring, tracking and reviewing of all PEPs.

1.4 Audit June 2014

In June 2014, which was a year after the establishment of the new arrangements a Lead School Ofsted Inspector was commissioned to evaluate Harrow's Virtual School in order to assess how well the Virtual School is meeting its primary aims and objectives
To evaluate the progress the school has made in developing the systems and processes needed to improve outcomes for Harrow's looked after children (see section 9.1)

2 - Student Outcomes

* Note that DfE indicators are standardised by including only CLA who have been looked after for more than one year

2.1 – In general, Children Looked After's attainment has demonstrated outstanding progress and attainment in KS1 with 100% of all children meeting or exceeding national expectations. At KS2, the progress of 75% of students meets and exceeds national expectations in all

areas. At KS4 (GCSE) results were down on last year in all areas, however, all of the students are now engaged in higher education. All students are tracked and monitored with robust systems in place to analyse data. This forms the basis of rigorous student progress meetings when each child is discussed, in terms of academic progress and attainment and attendance and emotional wellbeing. Subsequently, schools are contacted and support offered to accelerate progress to Narrow the Gap.

2.2 Early Years Attainment. The cohort is 4. One achieved a good level of development in all areas. The others showed an established level of development in all areas except self-confidence, self-awareness and making relationships which require further action.

2.3 Key Stage 1. The cohort is 4. All four children (100%) have attained age related expectations for reading, writing and maths with three children (75%) having exceeded national expectations in Reading and Maths and one (25%) in writing. None of the students have SEND.

2.4 Key Stage 2. The cohort is 4. One student has a Statement of Education Needs. Of the other three children, all (100%) have achieved national expectations in Reading, two (66%) have achieved national expectations in Writing and Maths. A success this year has been that all of our students have a high school place from the beginning of term in September and have completed the transition programmes (workshops days).

2.5 Key Stage 3. The school systems include both National Curriculum and transition to GCSE's within Year 9. Regular assessment, tracking of progress and termly reports indicate some promising results predicted at the end of Key Stage 4. Of the 12 students currently in Year 9, 3 are in special schools and 1 is predicted to achieve 5 A* to C for GCSE.

2.5 Key Stage 4. The cohort in Year 11 is 25. Of these 13 (52%) have been in care less than a year including 7 (28%) who have been in care since April. 10 (40%) are UASC. Of the 25 students, 15 were entered for GCSE, 3 were entered for ESOL qualifications, 4 were not entered for any qualifications and 2 (8%) have a Statement of Educational needs and one was in custody. There are an additional 2 students who are working in Year 10. Of the 15 students entered for GCSE's, 13 (87%) achieved at least 1 GCSE grade A* - G. 7 (47%) students obtained at least 5 GCSE grades A* - G and 1 (7%) achieved at least 5 A* - C. Students passed a range of other certificates and diplomas including BTEC in Science, Sport and Health and Social Care. Of the 10 students not entered for GCSE's, 3 (30%) achieved ESOL entry qualification, 2 were in Special Schools achieved entry level qualifications and 3 arrived in the UK too late to be entered. One student is in custody and one student in a Brent school was not entered due to the school's decision.

2.6 The Virtual School has identified the need of an Advisory Teacher to target and support Years 9 and 10 CLA when pupils generally can become disaffected and school placements can break down which affects GCSE progression and examination performance. Schools report that all CLA engage better with their education and all the above Year 11 pupils are enrolled in college or 6th form or in an apprenticeship

3 Attendance

3.1 Attendance for 2013/14 was 90.79%. Unauthorised absences were 2.65% and authorised absence were 6.43%. The LA commissions a company, Welfare Call to monitor

the attendance and exclusions of students within the Virtual School. Welfare Call contacts school's daily to ensure that Students' attendance is tracked closely. The Virtual School EWO receives and reacts to this information, so provides early intervention to prevent situations escalating.

3.2 There were no permanent exclusions in 2013/14. Fixed term exclusions were issued to 15 students (17%), 14 of these were at secondary schools for a total of 81 days and 1 was at primary school for a total of 3 days. The impact of fixed term exclusions on absence levels is a significant factor in attendance and is carefully tracked and monitored by the Virtual School. A continued effort to support students and schools so that these exclusions are minimised as they remain a contributory factor in the disengagement from education.

3.3 Where there is a risk of exclusion the Virtual School works closely with the schools to prevent this. Early intervention work is required and schools have been asked to contact the Virtual School as soon as any signs are detected which may lead to a downward spiral in behaviour. Transitions (managed moves or change of placement) are carefully planned and monitored to ensure best outcomes in the new educational setting.

3.4 Current performance:

89 children of statutory school age

53 children with 95% or better attendance (i.e. fewer than 3.5 days absence)

13 children with attendance of 87% or less (i.e. more than 10.5 days absence)

1 child is without a school. This is because of constantly moving to between family members who live in different areas (the young person has a statement of Special Educational Needs). Last year 33% of the Y10 cohort was not in a school placement but at the start of 2014-15 this figure has reduced to 12.5%

3.5 Analysis.

Poor attendance centres on young people in Year 10 and 11. Many of these young people will either have entrenched issues with school attendance or will be experiencing acute disaffection. It is also noted that 1 of the young people in year 11 experienced 25 days of absence because of examination preparation (one student prior to examination preparation had attendance of 96.5).

3.6 25 + Days absence.

The current measure published by the DfE relates to those children with 25 days or more absence for any reason in a 12 month period. The below information evidences the number of students missing from education from 25 + days:

Number of CLA of statutory school age up to July 2014	89
Number of CLA missing 25+ days	11
% of CLA missing an average of 25+ days (Not all in care for the whole of the academic year.)	12.35%
Harrow Target	12%

3.7 Analysis of 25 + Days absence

Student absent for a 25+ days over the academic year was 12.35% and are related to 11 students. All students within this cohort were tracked, monitored and supported by a dedicated CLA Education Welfare Officer working together with the allocated Social Worker, Carer, Designated Teacher and student. A breakdown of the individual circumstances of the 11 students is;

KS3

3 were KS3 pupils (1 in Year 8, and 2 in Year 9). 1 had a 3 day exclusion and has been struggling with engagement in school, the other absences are authorised illness. Of the 2 year 9 students, 1 attends a special school (out of borough) and has been school refusing, the other student has also been attending an out of borough school and has been school refusing in addition to several fixed term exclusions.

KS4

8 (23%) of the students were KS4 pupils (3 in Year 10, and 5 in Year 11)

In Year 10: 1 student was placed in a Young Offenders Institute, 1 student is a school refuser who has suffered significant emotional difficulties following her permanent exclusion and the death of her mother. Home tuition and a private college have been sourced to engage her back into education. 1 student from a traveller back ground is statemented and has regularly absconded from placements.

In Year 11: 1 student from a traveller background has engaged with home tuition and sat his GCSE English, 1 was a school refuser and when he did attend he had a number of fixed term exclusions. He achieved 5 A* to C GCSE's. 1 of the young people were preparing for exams (see 3.5) and 1 attends an out of borough special school displaying challenging behaviours. 1 is an unaccompanied asylum seeker arriving in July 2013 and it was 5 weeks before a school could be identified and a start date agreed.

4 POST 16

4.1 The Year 12 cohort is 26 of which 15 are in college, 3 are in special residential schools, one is in a school sixth form and 7 are NEET, two are in employment. The Year 13 cohort is 37 of which 18 are in college, 2 is in a special residential school, one is in a sixth form and 5 are NEET, 4 are in employment, two are full time mothers, and two are in custody. The Virtual School currently has 5 students who have progressed into University at Post 18.

4.2 The Virtual school tracks and monitors all students in Year 12 and 13 since September 2013. Educational placements are regularly visited and challenging conversations are held with the designated staff to ensure best outcomes for the students. Academic and attendance review meetings are held once a term within the virtual school.

4.3 Since last October there has been an increase in EET and a decrease in NEET young people. The team and career advisor continue to work hard to ensure better outcomes for young people.

4.4 A multi-agency panel has been established to individually review all young people who are NEET. The panel is chaired by the Service Manager for Care Leavers and membership comprises Team manager and Senior Practitioner from Leaving Care/UASC, Psychiatrist from Morning Lane, Senior Practitioner from Access to Resources, Career Adviser seconded from CFBT and linked to the Virtual School, Ignite, Independent Reviewing Officer and the Youth Development Team.

5 QUALITY OF PROVISION

5.1 90% of the students in the Virtual School (Reception to Year11) attend Good/Outstanding schools. The progress and emotional wellbeing of the 10% who do not attend Good/Outstanding schools is being closely tracked and monitored.

5.2 There are 19 different primary schools in which the students attend. Of these 17 (89%) have been visited by the Virtual School Headteachers at least once during the year. Of the two that were not visited by the Virtual Headteacher, one child resides in Canada and the other school was visited by the PEP co-ordinator. There are 28 different secondary schools in which the students attend. Of these 26 (90%) have been visited by the Virtual School Headteachers at least once during the year. One further was visited by the PEP co-ordinator the remaining special school will be visited in the Autumn term 2104.

5.3 Student Progress meetings. Each term, student progress and attainment is reviewed at the Virtual School Student Progress meetings. Each individual student's academic progress and achievement is discussed, alongside their attendance and punctuality, key strengths and areas to develop. The outcomes of these meetings then inform the termly visits to the Harrow schools as action points.

5.4 Other provision.

One to one tuition has been organised for students on a needs led basis and organised and agreed at the PEP meetings. Winchmore Tutors and Regent College have provided this additional tuition and their impact is closely monitored by the virtual school through the termly student progress meeting as well as PEP reviews. The provision of Winchmore Tutors has also been beneficial to at least 2 students who were not engaged in full time education. One has now enrolled in higher education and the other took a GCSE examination and has applied to further education.

5.5 The Virtual School provides a weekly homework club at the Wealdstone Centre which has been attended by 6 secondary students. We have distributed books through the Letterbox scheme to 11 specifically targeted students to improve their reading outcomes.

5.6 Enrichment Activities. The Virtual school is dedicated to building resilience in our CLA cohort and have engaged with the Participation officer in Harrow Children's services. The Virtual School has organised a camping trip for 8 students over 2 days, a Drama Workshop and Theatre Trip for 11 students to Matilda and a home economics session for 7 students. The BBQ and archery evening was attended by 6 students and carers and the Who Cares Trust newsletters were distributed to all CLA and Care leavers tri-annually. The funding of all of these additional enrichment activities are provided through the John Lyon Trust.

5.7 In order to raise aspirations we have joined with the tri-boroughs (Kensington and Chelsea, Westminster and Hammersmith and Fulham) to visit three universities (SOAS, Goldsmiths and Kingston) at which 7 students attended.

5.8 As part of the celebration of success for the students in the Virtual School, the annual Celebration event took place in February. This was well attended and facilitated by students from the Virtual School.

5.9 Educational Champions who were Senior Staff within the LA were appointed in September 2013 for Year 11 students. They supported the Virtual School in tracking and monitoring the progression of the students as well as their emotional wellbeing. This met with limited success due to the capacity of the LA officers.

6 Enhanced Pupil Premium

6.1 The pupil premium has increased in April 2014 from £900 to £1,900 per student per year. This is now called Enhanced Pupil Premium. Schools are asked at PEP meetings how the enhanced pupil premium is being used and its impact on attainment and this is recorded on the PEP document. The Virtual school is responsible for distributing and monitoring the impact and outcomes of enhanced pupil premium. A robust and effective system was put in place in April 2014 for the allocation of funds which is needs driven for each student.

6.2 The Virtual School ensures that enhanced Pupil Premium must be used to improve outcomes for children in the following areas: Academic achievement and progress, wider achievement e.g. in an area in which the child is gifted and talented, attendance and punctuality, Inclusion [by reducing internal and external exclusion], social and emotional skills, transition into the next key stage and/or a new learning provider.

7 PEPS and Pathway Plans

7.1 PEPs. All PEPs are recorded on Framework i. At the end of the academic year, 100% of students have PEPs of which 75% are in timescale compared to 50% the end of the previous year. The PEP co-ordinator is working towards a 95% completion rate. Sample PEPs are quality assured every term by the Virtual Headteacher with the outcomes being fed back to the individual stakeholders. As a direct result of this process, the targets on the action plans have become 'smarter', focused upon educational outcomes and the adults involved held more accountable.

7.2 Recognising the vital part that PEPs play in ensuring the educational attainment of our students, the Virtual School instigated a review and remodelling of our PEP form and systems involving all stakeholders. This led to more effective and robust action plans which targeted the individual needs of the student and effective strategies to overcome barriers to learning.

7.3 Pathway Plans. All Pathway Plans are recorded on Framework i. At the end of the academic year, 100% of young people have Pathway Plans of which 83% are in timescales. Sample Pathway Plans are quality assured every term by the Virtual Headteacher with the outcomes being fed back to the individual stakeholders. As a direct result of this process, the targets on the action plans have been thoroughly completed and educational provisions are now being directly involved in the Pathway meetings with professionals involved held more accountable.

7.4 From the Quality Assurance processes implemented by the Virtual School, we can report that trends for both PEPs and Pathway Plans are significantly improving which will impact on student outcomes, attainment and emotional wellbeing.

8 Staff Development and Training

8.1 A main focus for the Virtual School over the past year has been to support schools, social workers and carers to improve their knowledge of the educational issues that relate to Children Looked After and thereby improve their ability to have an effect on improving outcomes.

8.2 Training for schools includes one designated teachers meeting a term (3 annually) and the CLA conference which is Multi agency. Themes have included, resilience, mindfulness, attachment disorder, the new PEP, the language of social care and positive and proactive multi-agency working. In total 48 designated teachers have attended these training opportunities. Feedback through evaluations have been extremely positive and have informed future planning.

8.3 Training for social work teams has included understanding of student performance and progress data, how to run effective PEP meetings, one to one coaching with individual workers, the new Children's Act 2014 and understanding the new enhanced pupil premium. In total there were 171 social workers that attended this training. Feedback through evaluations have been extremely positive and have informed future planning.

8.4 Training for carers has included supporting learning at home, special educational needs, understanding national progress and attainment data, the importance of good punctuality and attendance and a proactive approach to the new PEPs. 56 carers have attended these training opportunities. Feedback through evaluations have been extremely positive and have informed future planning.

8.5 The acting Virtual Headteacher's receive support through attendance at the Pan London Virtual Headteacher meetings which take place on a termly basis.

9 Leadership and Management

9.1 An external audit by a lead Ofsted inspector was carried out in June 2014. The following Key Findings were highlighted:

- A clear strategic direction has been set for the school, underpinned by measurable targets and priorities rooted in the strong ambition to create a culture of continuous improvement.
- The two acting virtual headteachers work very effectively together using the limited pot of resources available to bring about the best possible outcomes for Harrow's looked after children.
- Much effort has been put into establishing fit for purpose systems and structures and utilising the expertise of the small team.
- Action planning is detailed and thorough with a clear evaluation of termly progress.
- Attainment and progress tracking systems have improved significantly. Tracking data shows that most pupils from YR to Year 6 are making at least the expected progress over time.
- The tracking of Post-16 CLA students has also improved.
- Transition arrangements are more effective.
- Pupil progress review meetings have provided the small team with an appropriate forum to interrogate the data for every student, including attainment, progress, attendance and persistent absence.

- Considerable progress has been made in refining Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and making them fit for purpose.
- Quality assurance of the Pathway Plans for Post-16 students has been thorough, including RAG rating for different strands of the plan.
- The virtual headteachers work closely with the designated teachers and provide regular updates and training for social workers and foster carers.

9.2 There have been no complaints this academic year reported to the Virtual School.

9.3 The robust processes and systems that have been implemented over the last year will take time to embed and therefore impact on to student outcomes. Our current Year 10 cohort (16 students) has been especially affected by the previous weak leadership and lack of monitoring and support, so individual students have been disadvantaged as a direct result. Evidence of this include two students are at risk of permanent exclusion, 5 students are not engaged with full time education including two children who are missing from education. The management and leadership are now working hard to fully engage, support and rectify these situations to ensure that the outcomes and needs for this year group are being met.

9.4 The leadership and management is key in promoting the improvements within the context of the Virtual School which is meeting the needs of our diverse population enabling all learners to overcome specific barriers to learning. This is being achieved through rigorous implementation of well-focused improvement plans which are based on robust self-evaluation.

9.5 The Virtual Headteachers are continually in pursuit of excellence in all of the schools' attended by the student cohorts. This is demonstrated by an uncompromising and highly successful drive to strongly improve the highest levels of achievement and personal development for all students over a sustained period of time.

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