
REPORT FOR: CABINET

Date of Meeting:	19 November 2015
Subject:	Harrow Virtual School
Key Decision:	No
Responsible Officer:	Chris Spencer, Corporate Director of People
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Simon Brown, Portfolio Holder for Children, Schools and Young People
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	No, as the Recommendation is for noting
Wards affected:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix - Recommendation from the Corporate Parenting Panel meeting held on 20 October 2015

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out:

- a) An overview of the Performance and Standards of Children Looked After (CLA) by Year Group and End of Key Stage
- b) An analysis of attendance and exclusions
- c) An overview of the work of the Virtual School
- d) Development priorities for the Virtual School for 2015-16

Recommendations:

Cabinet members are requested to:

- note the performance of, and standards being achieved, by our CLA, and in particular the weak performance of CLA at Key Stage 4
- note and comment on, as appropriate, the work of the Virtual School and the strategies used to improve CLA outcomes
- note the proposal for strengthening the structure of the Harrow Virtual School

Section 2 – Report

2. Introduction

2. Virtual Schools nationally have a pivotal role in improving the educational outcomes for CLA in their areas. The role of the Harrow Virtual School is to:

- champion the educational needs of CLA, wherever they are being educated by supporting, scrutinising and challenging key partners in their education
- drive up standards of CLA educational achievement in order to improve their life chances and overall outcomes
- ensure high quality and timely Personal Education and Pathway Plans (PEPs and PPs)
- monitor and track the attainment, progress, attendance and engagement of every pupil in the school
- develop strategies and approaches that accelerate the progress of CLA, raising their standards of attainment and thereby closing the achievement gap between them and their peers
- disseminate good practice, by raising the level of awareness amongst schools, social work teams and carers regarding the importance of good attendance, potential barriers to learning and pupil engagement with the wider curriculum
- raise aspirations for all CLA and Care Leavers; so they are aware of their choices regarding further and higher education, apprenticeship opportunities and routes to gainful employment

2.1 Reflecting our high ambitions and aspirations for all our CLA, our policy is that they are placed in good or outstanding schools. Where this may not be possible, due to extenuating circumstances, pupils will be placed in 'Requiring Improvement' schools with the capacity to improve rapidly. These decisions are always made having undertaken a thorough analysis of the school's ability to meet the child's educational, social and emotional needs. Harrow CLA are never placed in 'Inadequate' schools. Overall 84% of CLA are in 'Good' or 'Outstanding schools'. CLA that are placed in Harrow and CLA who are educated in

other Local Authorities attend 88% and 80%, 'Good' or better schools, respectively

- 2.2 As at July 2015 the Harrow Virtual School roll was a total of 145 pupils. Of these 93 are of statutory school age (Reception - Year 11) and 52 Post-16 students (Years 12 and 13). The table below shows the distribution of our statutory aged cohort by phase educated within and outside of Harrow Local Authority.

Phase	Number of CLA attend Harrow Schools or Provisions	Number of CLA attend schools or provisions in other authorities	Total By Phase
Early Years (Reception)	1	2	3
Key Stage One	7	5	12
Key Stage Two	8	14	22
Key Stage Three	15	8	23
Key Stage Four	20	13	33
Total (All)	51	42	93

- 2.3 Every effort is made by the Council as Corporate Parents for CLA to be kept within the local authority. Some circumstances however warrant pupils having to live and attend schools outside Harrow. As at July 2015 only 55% of CLA were educated within Harrow. To ensure high quality provision for our CLA attending schools outside Harrow, the Virtual School staff attend at least one Personal Education Plan (PEP) meeting for every such pupil. This ensures that our high ambitions and aspirations are reflected in the support and challenge we provide to schools and to local authorities which have a child looked after by Harrow and for whom Harrow is the Corporate Parent.
- 2.4 Following a period of instability and interim arrangements, the Local Authority has been able to appoint a high calibre and experienced Virtual Headteacher who commenced in her post on 1 July 2015. Working within HSIP, she has already identified key areas for improvement including the need to realign and strengthen the current Virtual School. Processes for monitoring, tracking pupil progress and achievement need to be strengthened further. This will be achieved by ensuring targeted and focussed support is in place for individual pupils. (See Section 'Development Priorities').

3. CLA Performance and Standards

Overview of progress by year group

3.1 As well as end of Key Stage performance, the Virtual School gathers data on the performance of CLA in each year group. There is considerable variation in numbers across year groups and this affects the validity of the percentage analysis for some year groups. The analysis below provides a summary statement as well as tabulated data on the progress and attainment of CLA in each year group.

The data below is based on 86 pupils monitored and tracked at the end of the Spring Term 2015.

3.2 Year 1 - 2 Pupils

Subject	% Pupils making good or better progress	% Pupils on track for a level 2b at the end of Key Stage 1
Reading	100% (2/2 pupils)	100% (2/2 pupils)
Writing	100% (2/2 pupils)	100% (2/2 pupils)
Maths	100% (2/2 pupils)	100% (2/2 pupils)

All students are expected to make good or better progress at the end of Key Stage 1. This cohort is also expected to meet their end of Key Stage Target. There are no pupils with Statements for Special Educational Needs (SEN).

3.3 Year 2 - 6 Pupils

Subject	% Pupils making good or better progress	% Pupils on track for a level 2b at the end of Key Stage 1
Reading	50% (3/6 pupils)	50% (3/6 pupils)
Writing	50% (3/6 pupils)	50% (3/6 pupils)
Maths	50% (3/6 pupils)	66% (4/6 pupils)

Fifty percent of pupils are making good or better progress in Reading, Writing and Maths. However, 66% are expected to achieve a level 2b in Maths at the end of Key Stage 1. Specific interventions have been in place to prevent pupil regression. There are 2 pupils with Statements for SEN in this group. See Section 3.2 for a more detailed end of Key Stage analysis.

3.4 Year 3 - 1 Pupil

Subject	% Pupils making good or better progress	% Pupils on track for a level 4b at the end of Key Stage 2
Reading	100% (1/1 pupil)	100% (1/1 pupil)
Writing	100% (1/1 pupil)	100% (1/1 pupil)
Maths	100% (1/1 pupil)	100% (1/1 pupil)

This pupil is making good or better progress and is expected to meet their end of Key Stage target. This pupil does not have a Statement for SEN.

3.5 Year 4 - 10 Pupils

Subject	% Pupils making good or better progress	% Pupils on track for a level 4b at the end of Key Stage 2
Reading	40% (4/10 pupils)	60% (6/10 pupils)
Writing	70% (7/10 pupils)	30% (3/10 pupils)
Maths	60% (6/10 pupils)	50% (5/10 pupils)

Seventy percent of pupils are making good or better progress in Writing despite low baseline assessments. 60% of pupils are on track to achieve age related expectations in Reading and similarly, 50% for Writing.

One child has a Statement for SEN.

3.6 Year 5 - 3 Pupils

Subject	% Pupils making good or better progress	% Pupils on track for a level 4b at the end of Key Stage 2
Reading	100% (3/3 pupils)	66% (2/3 pupils)
Writing	100% (3/3 pupils)	66% (2/3 pupils)
Maths	100% (3/3 pupils)	66% (2/3 pupils)

All pupils are making good or outstanding progress. Two pupils are expected to achieve a Level 4b at the end of Key Stage 2. One child has a Statement for SEN and is currently not on track to meet end of Key Stage expectations.

This will affect next year's (Statutory Assessment Test) SATs figures. Every pupil is worth 33%.

3.7 Year 6 - 10 Pupils

Subject	% Pupils making good or better progress	% Pupils on track for a level 4b at the end of Key Stage 2
Reading	50% (5/10 pupils)	80% (8/10 pupils)
Writing	70% (7/10 pupils)	70% (7/10 pupils)
Maths	50% (5/10 pupils)	80% (8/10 pupils)

Fifty percent of pupils are making good or better progress in Reading and Mathematics. These pupils are expected to sustain good attainment levels, with a prediction that 80% of pupils will achieve a Level 4b in the aforementioned subjects. Similarly, it is predicted that 70% of pupils will achieve age-related expectations in Writing. There are no children with Statements for SEN in this group.

Pupils who obtain a Level 3 in their SATs will be supported by targeted intervention to achieve a Level 4 by the end of Year 7. See Section 3.2 for a detailed analysis of Key Stage 2 results.

3.8 Year 7 - 6 Pupils

Subject	% Pupils making good or better progress	% Pupils on track for a level 5/6 at the end of Key Stage 3
English	33% (2/6 pupils)	50% (3/6 pupils)
Maths	66% (4/6 pupils)	66% (4/6 pupils)

One third of pupils are making good or better progress in English and half the students are expected to achieve age-related expectations at the end of Key Stage 3. In Maths, two-thirds of students are expected to achieve a Level 5/6 by the end of Key Stage 3.

There is one pupil with a Statement for SEN.

3.9 Year 8 - 6 Pupils

Subject	% Pupils making good or better progress	% Pupils on track for a level 5/6 at the end of Key Stage 3
English	50% (3/6 pupils)	50% (3/6 pupils)
Maths	50% (3/6 pupils)	50% (3/6 pupils)

In English and Maths, half the students are expected to achieve age-related expectations at the end of Key Stage 3. Fifty percent are also making good or better progress across both subjects.

There are two pupils with Statements for SEN.

3.10 Year 9 - 10 Pupils

Subject	% Pupils making good or better progress	% Pupils on track for a level 5/6 at the end of Key Stage 3
English	No previous data	30% (3/10 pupils)
Maths	No previous data	30% (3/10 pupils)

Thirty percent of students are expected to achieve age-related expectations at the end of Key Stage 3.

More stringent monitoring in terms of previous data needs to be in place in order to measure and track progress. Pupils are working below age related expectations in English and Maths. There are 4 pupils with Statements for SEN.

3.11 Year 10 - 16 Pupils

Subject	% Pupils making good or better progress	% Pupils on track for 5 or more GCSEs (A*-C)
5 A*-C GCSEs Including English and Maths	No previous data	31% (5/16 pupils)
Any GCSE subject or equivalent combination	No previous data	38% (6/16 pupils)

Thirty-one percent of pupils are expected to meet standards for end of Key Stage Four. Whilst this compares well with national averages for CLA, our ambition is for a higher percentage to achieve better outcomes.

More stringent monitoring in terms of previous data needs to be in place in order to measure and track progress. There are 3 pupils with Statements for SEN and 4 pupils that are Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC).

This cohort's performance is expected to be higher than the current Year 11 Group.

3.12 Year 11 - 15 Pupils

Subject	% Pupils making good or better progress	% Pupils on track for 5 or more GCSEs (A*-C)
5 A*-C GCSEs Including English and Maths	No previous data	0% (0/15 pupils)
Any GCSE subject or equivalent combination	No previous data	7% (1/15pupils)

Only seven percent of pupils are working at age related expectations i.e. grades A-C or equivalent, across a range of subjects at GCSE.

More stringent monitoring in terms of previous data needs to be in place in order to measure and track progress. There are 5 pupils with Statements for SEN and 3 pupils that are UASC.

This group will be supported to obtain GCSE (or equivalent) qualifications in Maths and English at their Post- 16 provision.

Standards achieved at the end of Key Stages 1, 2 and 4 Summer 2015.

3.13 The Virtual School collects test data for all CLA. An analysis is subsequently conducted in line with Department for Education (DfE) measures. The DfE monitors and tracks CLA who have been in

care a year or more as on 31st March 2015. This data is collected and published nationally.

- 3.14 However, Harrow's cohort numbers are too low i.e. the denominator is less than or equal to 10, to make an analytical judgement in terms of a year-on-year comparison of progressive achievement. Data is therefore not published by the DfE for Local Authorities with low cohort numbers. Whilst DfE provides statistical neighbour and national CLA data comparison, such information does not exist for Harrow and other similar authorities.
- 3.15 Due to the fluid nature of the cohort, numbers have fluctuated since the Spring Term. Therefore some variability may exist in the total cohort numbers presented under overview of progress and the numbers presented under standards achieved.

Key Stage One

- 3.16 There were 7 pupils in Year 2 at the end of the last academic year. Three pupils have been in care for more than a year. One child has a Statement for SEN. Each pupil in the DfE Group represents **33%**.
- 3.17 33% (1/3) pupils achieved a Level 2 or above in their assessments for Reading and Writing. This is lower than last year's figure of 100%. 66% (2/3) pupils, as predicted, achieved a Level 2 or above in Maths.

Key Stage Two

- 3.18 There were 10 pupils in Year 6 at the end of last academic year. Six pupils have been in care for more than a year. There are no pupils with a Statement for SEN in this cohort. Each pupil represents **16.6%**.
- 3.19 83% (5/6 pupils) achieved a Level 4 or above in Reading with one pupil scoring a Level 5. This result is lower than last year's figures at 100%. 83% (5/6 pupils) met or exceeded their target based on their Key Stage 1 result.
- 3.20 50% (3/6 pupils) achieved a Level 4 or above for their Writing with one pupil scoring a Level 5. This result is lower than last year's figures of 68%. 83% (5/6 pupils) met or exceeded their target level based on their Key Stage 1 result.
- 3.21 83% (5/6 pupils) achieved a Level 4 or above for their Mathematics. This is higher than last year's figures at 66%. 83% (5/6 pupils) met or exceeded their target level based on their Key Stage 1 result.

Key Stage Four

- 3.22 As of July 2015 there were 17 Year 11 students on roll. Five students have a Statement for SEN and two students were in a Young Offenders Institute (YOI). Seven students sat between one and nine

GCSE subjects and of this group four pupils have been in care for 1 year or longer. These four students are the cohort that the DfE monitors.

- 3.23 75% (3/4) of pupils achieved at least 1 GCSE A*-C with the maximum number of three GCSEs awarded to one student.
- 3.24 100% (4/4) pupils achieved 5 or more GCSEs grades A*-G. However, these results do not reflect the end of Key Stage 4 government measures, with no pupils achieving 5 GCSEs A*-C including English and Maths.
- 3.25 Year 11 Students who did not achieve a GCSE in English or Maths have been directed to Maths and English courses, or their equivalent in their Post-16 provision
- 3.26 Harrow Virtual School has put in place stringent monitoring systems to review the attainment and achievement for all pupils looked after, particularly in Key Stage 4. A Summer Tuition programme was offered to all Year 11 students, but only 2 pupils took this up. Interventions, namely 1:1 tuition has been offered to children looked after in Years 5, 6, 10 and 11, which will be reviewed periodically.

4. Post 16 (Key Stage 5).Education, Employment and Training

- 4.1 Two recent government guidelines are in place, which steers good practice around the education of CLA in Years 12 and 13. These being
- The 2014 'Promoting the Educational Outcomes of Looked After Children' which outlines the importance of all regular education reviews via PEPs or Pathway Plans
 - The September 2013 legislation - 'Raising the Age of Participation' also states that all pupils must remain in education or training until the end of Year 13.
- 4.2 Harrow Virtual School undertakes its statutory role in monitoring the needs of this group, and where necessary will scrutinise and challenge education plans with key professionals to ensure they support pupils in achieving the highest standards. The Virtual School also works in partnerships with other Stakeholders by initiating strategic timely interventions to avoid pupils becoming 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' (NEET).
- 4.3 As of September 2015, there are 52 pupils in Key Stage 5. 21% (11/52 pupils) are 'Not Participating in Education, Employment or Training' (NEET). This is not satisfactory as national averages for 16-18 year olds is 15.7%.
- 4.4 In order to address this, the Virtual School undertakes regular visits to educational placements where CLA at Post-16 are placed. The

purpose of these visits is to ensure that the best educational outcomes for CLA are achieved by supporting, challenging and scrutinising where necessary, systems or practices which may work against the achievement of CLA. Academic and attendance review meetings are held by the Virtual School, once a term, to ensure pupils are making good progress and their engagement is sustained.

5. Attendance

- 5.1 The absence rates for CLA are high and this is a significant area of concern. Attendance for 2014/2015 was only 76%. Unauthorised absences were 4.8% and authorised absences were 9.4% The LA commissions a company, Welfare Call, to monitor the attendance and exclusions of students within the Virtual School. Welfare Call contacts schools daily to ensure that student attendance is tracked closely. The Virtual School Education Welfare Officer (EWO) receives and responds to this information and provides early intervention to prevent situations escalating.
- 5.2 Detailed analysis of attendance patterns for the 92 statutory aged CLA shows:
 - 57 children with 95% or better attendance (i.e. fewer than 3.5 days absence);
 - 22 children with attendance of 87% or less (i.e. more than 10.5 days absence);
 - 6 children between 87%-95%
 - 1 child is currently not on roll at a school but is receiving home tuition whilst his care plan is reviewed. The Virtual School is monitoring this arrangement very closely.
- 5.3 Poor attendance centres on young people in Years 9 10 and 11. Many of these young people will either have entrenched issues with school attendance or will be experiencing acute disaffection.
- 5.4 The DfE published attendance data for CLA is based on those children who have been in care for more than a year. This means that the DfE published data may present a more positive attendance profile because any child looked after for less than a year is not included in the calculation.
- 5.5 The DfE has also identified those CLA being absent for more than 25 days over one academic year as particularly vulnerable and monitors this for all local authorities. In Harrow, student absent for a 25+ days over the last academic year was 23% and related to 22 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 22 students is:

5.6 Systematic and rigorous analysis by the Virtual School of the reasons for absence has identified a range of reasons why individual CLA attendance rates are poor. The following are some examples (see 5.7 and 5.8):

5.7 Year 10 - 4 pupils

Three pupils refused to attend school and one of these is a young carer who often truanted from school to be with his ill parent. The fourth pupil is an Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker and there was a 4 week gap from coming on the Virtual School roll to sourcing a school. All of the above students are being worked with to have plans in place to address the problems.

5.8 Year 11 - 10 pupils

There are a number of issues which has affected school attendance, which include - absconding from placement, truanting from school, refusing to attend school, exclusions and gaps between school moves. Again, interventions were put in place to support participation and engagement with learning.

6. Exclusions

6.1 There were 2 permanent exclusions in 2014/15, one of which is being challenged by the VHT. Fixed term exclusions were issued to 11 students. 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 is required so that these exclusions are minimised as they remain a contributory factor in their disengagement from education.

6.2 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.

7. Quality of Provision

7.1 Student Progress meetings are held every term. Individual pupil progress and achievement is discussed, alongside their attendance and punctuality as well as key strengths and areas to develop. The outcomes of these meetings then inform the termly visits and contacts with schools and other establishments where CLA are placed. This is an important aspect of the role of the Virtual School in challenging educational establishments to ensure that CLA have access to high quality educational provision.

- 7.2 In addition to the support and challenge to schools and educational establishments where CLA are placed, the Virtual School facilitates a range of bespoke and enrichment provision. This is intended to ensure that, where required, a personalised programme of support is on offer. Some examples are given below (7.3 – 7.6).
- 7.3 One-to-one tuition has been organised for students on a need led basis and organised and agreed at the PEP meetings. Winchmore Tutors and Regent College have provided this additional tuition and their impact are 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.
- 7.4 Last year the Virtual School provided a weekly homework club at the Wealdstone Centre which was attended by six secondary students. The Virtual School also organised a camping trip for eight students over two days, a Drama Workshop and Theatre Trip for 11 students to Matilda and a home economics session for seven students. A BBQ and archery evening was attended by six 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. We have distributed books through the Letterbox scheme to 11 specifically targeted students to improve their reading outcomes.
- 7.5 In order to raise aspirations we have joined with the tri-boroughs (Kensington and Chelsea, Westminster and Hammersmith and Fulham) to visit three universities, The School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), Goldsmiths and Kingston. Seven students participated with this project.
- 7.6 As part of the celebration of success for the students in the Virtual School attended and facilitated in the annual celebration events.

8. Pupil Premium

- 8.1 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.
- 8.2 A Pupil Premium allocation is made to every CLA of statutory school age. Every school with a CLA receives £1500 per student upon receipt of a personalised action plan of how the fund is going to be utilised. The Virtual School holds back £400 to support the Virtual School in making central provision for students who may need additional interventions and personalised support. Schools are asked to account for the spend in terms of pupil progress and educational outcomes.

This must be included in the PEP report which is quality assured by the Virtual Headteacher.

- 8.3 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.
- 8.4 Where Pupil Premium is being used effectively to support identified needs of individual CLA, there is evidence of positive impact.

9. Personal Education Plans (PEPS) and Pathway Plans

- 9.1 The timeliness of the completion of PEPs is of concern. At the end of the Summer Term only 61% of PEPs were in place. This is unsatisfactory. Strategies however are now deployed to address this pressing issue, with the anticipation that there will facilitate a sharp rise in the number of PEP returns. Our target for October 2015 is at least 80% completed on time, and by the end of December the target is 95%.
- 9.2 All PEPs are recorded on Frameworki (electronic social care record). 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', more focused upon educational outcomes and the adults involved held more accountable.
- 9.3 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.
- 9.4 Pathway Plans for Post-16s. All Pathway Plans are recorded on Frameworki. At the end of the academic year, 77% of Pathway Plans were in place. 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.

10. Staff Development and Training

- 10.1 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.
- 10.2 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. Feedback through evaluations has been extremely positive and informed future planning.
- 10.3 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 valuations has been extremely positive and informed future planning.
- 10.4 Training for carers has included supporting learning at home, special educational needs, understanding nation 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 has been extremely positive and informed future planning.
- 10.5 The Headteacher will receive support through attendance at the termly Pan London Virtual Headteacher Conference as well as the annual National Headteachers Conference

11. Strengthening the Virtual School Structures

- 11.1 Historically the Harrow Virtual School has had three key posts. These are: the Virtual Headteacher, a PEP Coordinator, and an Educational Welfare Officer.
- 11.2 Targeted support for individual Children Looked After has been provided through a range of external agency provision. This is not wholly cost effective and it is difficult to assess the impact of the provision on improved outcomes for the CLA in receipt of additional targeted support.
- 11.3 The need for the Virtual School to include qualified teachers within its structure has become apparent over the past eighteen months. To secure this there is a need for a review of the current staffing arrangements in order to maximise the impact of the Virtual School on securing improved outcomes for Children Looked After particularly in

the secondary sector. Some work on this has commenced and over the coming academic year there will be a need to review and refine the current Virtual School structure.

12. Development Priorities

To:

- Raise the overall performance of CLA, particularly at Key Stage 4 by closer tracking, monitoring and early intervention
- Improve attendance rates of all CLA by targeted support and intervention for individual pupils
- Reduce the number of fixed-term and permanent exclusions by monitoring behaviours, developing individual behaviour plans and strengthened partnerships with schools
- Significantly improve the quality and quantity of PEP returns
- Raise the profile of the Virtual School across the Local Authority, to improve communication systems between the Virtual school and other services
- Review and strengthen the Virtual School staffing structure to maximise its impact on improving outcomes for CLA. This to be achieved within current Virtual Schools budget and any funding secured through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).
- Increase training for all key stakeholders around the educational needs of CLA and factors which may affect engagement
- Reduce the number of CLA becoming NEET by
 - early identification of pupils 'at risk' and a having in place robust intervention strategies
 - working closely with partner agencies

Legal Implications

The Virtual School Headteacher has a statutory responsibility to the LA Authority and the DfE for monitoring all the education of CLA and Care Leavers regardless of where they are placed. Schools leading on their education may be scrutinised, challenged and supported to improve outcomes for this vulnerable group.

Financial Implications

The budget for the Virtual School in 2015-16 is £196k. In addition to this, there is an estimated contribution from the Pupil Premium grant of approx. £36k as set out in section 8.

The Virtual School Headteacher is accountable for the spend of the Pupil Premium Grant and has a statutory responsibility to ensure that it is used to improve educational outcomes for CLA.

Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

The weak performance of particular underachieving groups is a concern and the Local Authority through the Harrow School Improvement Partnership has established a 'Closing the Gap' strategy to ensure that all groups achieve in line with the high standards of achievement in Harrow. The strategy is focussed on supporting and challenging individual schools to improve the quality of their provision, so that all groups achieve well against their peers.

Council Priorities

The Council's vision:

Working Together to Make a Difference for Harrow

This report provides information on the performance of underachieving groups, and as such is focused on making a difference for the vulnerable. Educational performance and standards are critical in making a difference to the life chances and aspirations of families and communities. A well educated and skilled workforce secured through quality educational provision in Harrow, contributes significantly to local businesses and industry, within and beyond Harrow.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name Jo Frost	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 11 September 2015		
Name: Sarah Wilson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 9 November 2015		

Ward Councillors notified:	NO, The information contained in this report affect all Wards
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EqIA carried out:	NO
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This report is for information only. There is no decision to be made which would have an impact on the Council's Equality, Policies and Procedures. There are however, equality implications in respect of raising achievement of some ethnic minority groups, for children with SEND and those on free school meals.

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

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Background Papers: None.

Call-In Waived by the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

NOT APPLICABLE

[Call-in does not apply as the Recommendations are for noting only]