REPORT TO:	CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL 13th January 2016
AGENDA ITEM:	**7**
SUBJECT:	**VIRTUAL SCHOOL REPORT**
LEAD OFFICER:	**JANE DOYLE, DIRECTOR OF UNIVERSAL PEOPLE SERVICES**
CABINET MEMBER:	**ALISA FLEMMING CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LEARNING**
WARDS:	**ALL**

CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT:

CYPL Service Plan

- Enjoying and Achieving.

CYPL Departmental Plan

- Improve the outcomes for vulnerable and underachieving groups

LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT (LAA) TARGETS:

National indicator 99: % of Children Looked After who have been looked after continuously for 12 months who achieved a level 4 or above in English at Key Stage 2

National indicator 100: % of Children Looked After who have been looked after continuously for 12 months who achieved a level 4 or above in maths at Key Stage 2

National indicator 101: % of Children Looked After have been looked after continuously for 12 months who achieved 5 A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent) at Key Stage 4 (including English and mathematics)

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

The Virtual School is currently fully funded by schools forum through the High Needs DSG block, with the exception of the Virtual School heads post which is funded by the local authority. However, this will change for the 2016/17 financial year with contributions made by early years, main school block and HN DSG.

FORWARD PLAN KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO: Not applicable

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1.   RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1   Members are asked to note the contents of the submitted action plan.

2.   EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1   The purpose of the attached action plan is to provide members with a clear picture of work being undertaken and associated outcomes relating to identified key priorities for the education of CLA. It also seeks to address the current barriers and challenges faced in improving these priorities.

The remainder of this report will provide supporting case studies and information relating to the funding of the VS through High Needs DSG.

3.   DETAIL

3.1   The primary focus for the Virtual School, since I last reported to the Corporate Parenting Panel in January 2015 was to further embed the Virtual School team and consolidate and build on the processes and service offer and delivery established during 13/14 academic year. However, due to departing staff we worked at a reduced capacity for a large percentage of the 14/15 academic year with 2 members of staff leaving post in the autumn term and a further 1 in the spring term. This said and despite a smaller team, the Virtual School were able to maintain and expand its offer to CLA. The attached action plan outlines the impact of the work of the Virtual School across a range of areas and the outcomes achieved by our young people in the 2013/14 academic year. It should be noted that the statistics provided for N1 99, 100 and 101 in this report are provided by schools and as such are unvalidated. The statistical first release SFR 30 is released in mid-December, in which the DfE validated statistics will be available by local authority.

3.2.   In summary, the following are the unvalidated statistics for N1 99,100 and 101.

3.2.1   National Indicator 99: 47% of Children Looked After who have been looked after continuously for 12 months achieved a level 4 or above in English at Key Stage 2 **Did not meet target of 56%**

3.2.2   National Indicator 100: 53% of Children Looked After who have been looked after continuously for 12 months achieved a level 4 or above in maths at Key Stage 2 – **Exceeded target of 51%**

3.2.3   National Indicator 101: 5.8% of Children Looked After have been looked after continuously for 12 months achieved 5 A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent) at Key Stage 4 (including English and mathematics).
Did not meet target of 10.5%.

3.2.4   In order to provide a context to the work of the Virtual School I have included the following case studies which outlines the range of educational support we are able to provide for our children looked after and the outcomes achieved.

OUTCOME OBJECTIVE:	**CLA EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT**	
LEAD OFFICER:	**Lisa Fenaroli**	

Our Aim:

Our Pledge:

We will enable looked after children to achieve their best educational potential by ensuring they attend good schools and receive a range of supports and interventions targeted at their specific needs at the key stages of educational attainment. We will enable looked after children to access the full range of arts, cultural, play, educational, and leisure activities that are important to their social, intellectual, and personal development.

"We will provide you with access to high quality early years provision."
"We will access a place at a good school for you."
"We will help you and support you to achieve at school."
"We will support your access to positive leisure activities including free access to the council's leisure services."
"We will enable you to have a good school attendance record."

Priority	Strategic Actions	Lead Officers	Timescales and Outcomes	Barriers and Challenges
1. 90% of PEPs completed within timescale and reviewed within	1. Ensure that timeliness and quality of PEPs are achieved and monitored	Lisa Fenaroli / Service Delivery Managers	For statutory school age CLA Croydon has a process in place whereby formal PEP meetings are convened every 6 months by the	Case transfer/social worker changes

Failure to submit or delay in |

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timescale			social worker and designated teacher and supported by the VS where capacity allows. The current meeting completion rate is 87%. In order to quality assure the PEP process, the completed document must be sent to the Virtual School for approval and recording. The completion rate for received documents is currently 77%. To address the need to monitor termly, the VS use their termly data tracker as a PEP review and this currently records a return rate in excess of 90%. In order to continue to drive up standards and improve the quality of the documents, the priority of the VS officers and data manager has been and during the 2015/16 academic year will continue to be to RAG rate all PEPs in order to inform any training needs both for social workers and designated teachers.

Considerable work has been undertaken to improve and enhance the EET section of the pathway plan which now qualifies as the Post 16 PEP. Currently | submitting document after the meeting has been convened. This also impacts on quality of the document.

Poor quality documents submitted that are subsequently rejected and not re submitted with the requested amendments

Maintaining the focus on PEPs when improvements are made.

Performance of CWD and CIN service which impact on overall stats |

Priority	Strategic Actions	Lead Officers	Timescales and Outcomes	Barriers and Challenges
			42% of EET sections are completed and quality assured by the VS, with a target for Nov 15 set at 60%. (NB much larger cohort)	
2. Monitor CLA exclusions	1. Identify the pattern and duration of exclusions of CLA from schools to identify examples of good practice where exclusion of CLA is low and develop strategies to reduce exclusions. 2. Work with the school and social worker to ensure any excluded CLA is provided by the school with appropriate work.	Lisa Fenaroli/ Virtual School	With respect to Children Looked After fixed term exclusions, for the 2014/15 academic year, we recorded 4 primary pupils with one or more F/T exclusions (3.9%) which has over halved since 2013/14 (10%), 71 secondary aged pupils recorded one or more F/T exclusion (15.4%). Overall, this is a figure of 13.3% which is in line with the statistic recorded the previous year. However, despite the number of fixed term exclusions remaining high, the VS have been able to prevent all but one permanent exclusion, by working with the schools/provisions to considered alternatives such as managed moves or placement through Fair Access Panel.	Concerns expressed by the young people about their frustration with an academic curriculum that they felt didn't meet their needs and/or expectations. A significant number of this group of young people were hoping to access vocational courses that would allow them to enter into a trade. It should also be noted that some of the issues around engagement and attendance were exacerbated by the fact that some of these young people were also in paid employment. The feedback from the boys and sometimes interpreters, suggest that expectations around education were

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				different in Albania. There also continues to be concerns around the age of some of this cohort as evidenced by their behaviours and attitudes which are resulting in schools following disciplinary processes, but also the number age disputed by the home office.
3. Improve end of KS2 performance outcomes for all CLA in Year 6	1. For 2014/15 56% of all CLA who have been in care for 12 months to achieve a level 4 in English at the end of KS2 2. For 2014/15 51% of all CLA who have been in care for 12 months to achieve a level 4 in maths at the end of KS2 Targets for 2015/16 VS target: 46%, 31% and 38% of Croydon Children Looked After who have been looked after for at least a year are targeted level 4 or	Lisa Fenaroli / Virtual School	The 2014-15 eligible cohort consisted of only 15 children. At the end of Key Stage 2: - 80% achieved a level 4 or above in reading. - 47% achieved a level 4 or above in writing. - 53% achieved a level 4 or above in maths. In reading 53% made expected progress over the key stage and 33% made accelerated progress. Similarly 47% and 33% made expected or accelerated progress in writing and 40% and 30% in maths. On average ¾ of the cohort made	

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	above in reading, writing and maths respectively. (13 in cohort – 6 statement/EHCP with 5 working at p-levels or considerably below age related attainment, 3 ASP).		expected or exceeded progress between key stage 1 and 2.	
4. Improve end of KS4 performance outcomes for all CLA in Year 11	1. For 2014/15 10.5% of all CLA who have been in care for 12 months to achieve 5+ A*-C including English and maths Targets for 2015/16 VS target: 15% of Croydon Children Looked After who have been looked after for at least a year are targeted to achieve 5 A*-C including English and maths. However, only 4 are currently on track. (87 in cohort – 11 statement/EHCP, 19 ASP, 45 UASC – 13 of whom entered care after Sept 14)	Lisa Fenaroli/ Virtual School	The 2014-15 eligible cohort consisted of 86 children. At the end of Key Stage 4: - 5.8% achieved 5+ A*-C inc English and maths. (below target of 10.5%) (3/28 10.7% Local, 2/58 3.4% UASC)	Only 50% of the eligible cohort were sitting 5 or more GCSE's and hence would contribute positively to the statistics. Half the cohort had been in care less than 2 years, with the majority being UASC who entered the UK from a non-English speaking country. Impact of children with SEN on outcomes (22 with statements/EHCP or additional support packages) In addition to the 86 who make up the eligible cohort it is worth highlighting that as a Virtual School we support the

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				entire Yr 11 cohort which equates to 189 learners.
5. Improve outcomes for Post 16 CLA and care leavers	1. Gain consent from CLA/care leavers in education to enable the VS to monitor outcomes and provide support. 2. Ensure that pupils who have moved to a 6th form or FE College have access to appropriate support to maximise their achievement, particularly if they have additional needs. 3. Monitor and improve the attainment and attendance of Post 16 CLA in FE college and 6th form through regular and timely data collection. 4. Ensure that young people aged 16-18 who are not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) have access to appropriate provision, skills, advice and support. 5. Oversee provision and signpost	Lisa Fenaroli/Virtual School/Service Delivery Managers/Leaving care/Youth services	Progress made to gathering consent for those CLA in education. In the previous academic year only 34.5% of forms had been gathered which rose over the course of this year to 82% of the Year 12s in education, 81% of the Year 13s and 83% of the Year 14s. Relationships with learning providers were strengthened and in most instances we received fortnightly attendance figures and copies of progress reports in line with the establishment's reporting cycle. 81% of schools/colleges (84 out of 104) sent us attendance updates throughout the year so we were able to track attendance for 91% of our 16-19 year old consenting learners and 70% of establishments (73/104) provided us with progress	Unifying the support and approach for CLA/Care leavers – lack of funding available post 16, issues with consent to share data. Limited options mid year for Post 16 students to start courses if they are newly arrived or have dropped out of another course

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	opportunities that enhance and improve the education and employability of Croydon's care leavers aged 16-18. 6. To ensure the timeliness and quality of the EET section of the pathway plan is monitored and completion rates improve. 7. Develop a process for gathering KS5 results.		reports giving us fuller data on 79% of consenting students. The Post 16 Personal Advisers continue to undertake casework with young people, providing a variety of EET related support including: advice and guidance; seeking suitable education provision; college applications; securing bursaries; coursework support; study support interventions; advocacy in disciplinary hearings; development of employability skills; assistance with university research and UCAS form writing; interventions to raise attendance; and transition work with Year 11s that are at risk of becoming NEET. The team has now worked on almost 200 cases in total, including sourcing suitable provision and supporting applications for 109 young people Considerable work has been	

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			undertaken to improve and enhance the EET section of the pathway plan which now qualifies as the Post 16 PEP. Currently 42% of EET sections are completed and quality assured by the VS, with a target for Nov 15 set at 60%. (NB much larger cohort)	
6. CLA attendance	1. Oversee and monitor the attendance of CLA 2. Develop strategies to improve attendance and provide support where CLA attendance drops below the 90% threshold.	Lisa Fenaroli/Virtual School Lisa Fenaroli/Virtual School/ Service Delivery Managers	Attendance tracking for statutory school age CLA has been provided by welfare Call since Sept 14, supplementing our own data collection processes, and access to daily information has enabled officers to provide early intervention support. For 14/15 the average attendance was 93.26%, an improvement of 3.29% on the previous year, with an average unauthorised absence of 3.27%, below the yearly target of 4%. For Children Looked After	The issues are solely related to secondary aged Children Looked After and in particular KS4 with only 9 CLA in KS3. Of the 58 students, over half are UASC with a third of the cohort of Albanian origin. Concerns expressed by the young people about their frustration with an academic curriculum that they felt didn't meet their needs and/or expectations. A significant number of this

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			of statutory school age, 13% have attendance below 85% which equates to 58 students. (27 in borough, 31 out of borough). This is a 5% decrease on the previous year.	group of young people were hoping to access vocational courses that would allow them to enter into a trade. It should also be noted that some of the issues around engagement and attendance were exacerbated by the fact that some of these young people were also in paid employment. The feedback from the boys and sometimes interpreters, suggest that expectations were different in Albania. For example there wasn't the same emphasis/expectation around attendance; many would just leave school to work on family farms and the state/agencies wouldn't chase or follow up resulting in the issues that we have around attendance. Poor consistent prior education has also resulted some of these young people having gaps in their learning in their first language.

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				There also continues to be concerns around the age of some of this cohort as evidenced by their behaviours and attitudes which are resulting in schools following disciplinary processes, but also the number age disputed by the home office.
			For the attendance data that is available for 16-19 CLA/care leavers in education, attendance figures drop in Year 14, in comparison to Year 12 and 13. For example in the 2014/15 academic year average attendance in Yr 12: 90%, Yr 13: 89%, Yr 14: 79%.	When Post 16 learner attendance rates were analysed based on living arrangement, it showed that the median level recorded for students in the 'foster care' subset was an 87% attendance rate, whereas on average those living semi-independently only attended 79% of the time.
7. CLA admissions to school	1. Ensure social workers and carers are aware of the correct admission process for LAC (especially midyear and following exclusions)	Lisa Fenaroli/Virtual School/ Service Delivery Managers	The number of CLA without suitable education at any point in the 2014/15 academic year remained on average at 6.3%. In relation to the 163 CLA who	This is impacted by the arrival of UASC with approx. 4 entering the care system per week. We started 2014/15 with 28% (31) more UASC than the previous year and

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	2. Reduce the number of looked after children without education and monitor timescales.	Lisa Fenaroli/Virtual School	required educational placement last academic year, 23% were placed within 20 days, 13% between 21-30 days, 20% between 31-40 days and 15% between 41-80 days. The majority of the remaining 29% (48) were Yr 11 UASC who entered care in June and July and hence work was undertaken by the Virtual School to provide them with a suitable pathway post 16.

These statistics further supported the need for early access to education and hence development of the VS interim provision. The VS UASC Officer and Caseworker have developed a 6 week teaching programme which to date has supported 27 UASC and is delivered every Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning at Winterbourne Youth Hub. The programme supports YP from a variety of backgrounds and abilities and is intended to improve their English and | this figure increased by 104% (150) over the academic year. This increase is almost 4 times that recorded in the previous year. This provides us with an ongoing challenge of accessing suitable education throughout the school year, both in and out of borough.

It is important to note that since the start of the 2015/16 academic year we have been required to place 95 CLA who are without a school place, of which 71 are UASC. We have placed 32 of which half were placed within 20 days. Of the 63 currently without a school place 45 are UASC, 26 of who are still within the 20 day placement timescale, with a further 30 between 21-30 days. The Virtual School continues to actively support placement of these learners |

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			prepare them to enter the English education system. This incorporates the initial assessment which informs the teaching and individualised education plans for each young person and also supports the application process for a school place.	which is a challenge given that half of the out of school UASC are Yr 11 and 50 % are age disputed by the Home Office