

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	Croydon Council Corporate Parenting Board
DATE OF DECISION	N/A
REPORT TITLE:	Annual Report of the Virtual School 2023/24
CORPORATE DIRECTOR/DIRECTOR:	Stuart Collins, Director of Children’s Services (DCS) Shelley Davies, Director of Education Roisin Madden, Director of Children’s Social Care
LEAD OFFICER:	Sarah Bailey Virtual School Headteacher / Head of Access to Education Service Sarah.Bailey@croydon.gov.uk Shelley Davies, Director of Education Shelley.Davies@croydon.gov.uk
LEAD MEMBER:	Cllr Maria Gatland, Lead member for Children Families and Young People

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1** The Virtual School (VS) in Croydon has a statutory responsibility for ensuring the promotion of Education for all children (2-19) and a corporate parenting responsibility for care leavers (18+) in the care of Croydon.
- 1.2** Also, for the provision of strategic planning; advice, guidance and support for all who are Previously Looked After and Kinship Care or have had a social worker in the last 6 years.
- 1.3** Our team, under the leadership of our Virtual School Head (VSH) focuses on child-centred work with all stakeholders: raising awareness of barriers that may affect learning and aiding professionals to remove them, to ensure best progress and outcomes for every child.
- 1.4** The highlights of the report:
- The Virtual School cohort remains relatively similar overall – slightly more mobile over the year than usual- and ending the year a little smaller than previous years. The characteristics of the cohort in relation to ethnicity,

gender split and the number of UASC students remains similar to previous cohorts. [See section 4.](#)

- Despite the KS2 (Year 6) cohort size being unusually small and increasing numbers of children with complex needs- outcomes were slightly below national for the CLA cohort. This is a continuing of the 3-year trend of improvement back to 2019 levels of attainment. This is particularly pleasing given the higher than average numbers of children with SEND. [See section 6.2.](#)
- KS4 attainment: For the 14 pupils where attainment 8 score can be calculated – the average score is 38 points which is double the national average of 19.1 (2023) for CLA nationally. [See section 7.](#)
- KS5 attainment: 15 students completed a level 3 pathway, and all went on to level 7 courses in Higher education. The pleasing outcomes are as a result of the hard work of these young people. We also received increased funding enabling additional support. [See section 8.](#)
- UASC Provision: All of the students within the first cohort of the provision made 2 or more levels progress in ESOL in 4 months (April to July 2023). All 20 students remained at the Oasis Academy Arena- fully integrated to mainstream or went to known college destinations for further study. The September 2024 cohort is 40 pupils and will be ongoing. [See section 5.](#)
- Statutory School Age (SSA) Personal Education Plan (PEP) completion rate remains above 92% and quality assurance shows 84% of PEPs are good or better as an average over the year. Senior Leaders continue to quality assure PEPs. [See section 11.](#)
- No exclusions of primary age CLA in 2023/24. This represents maintenance of previous trend after a dip last year. This reflects the careful monitoring tracking and intervention by senior Virtual School staff. See Section 10.
- Suspensions down from 74-51 annually, compared to a national 23% increase. [See section 10.](#)
- The number of children looked after with an EHCP has increase (6 new plans) The Virtual School have been able to access funding to support these children. We are planning a part of new “entry to care assessment protocols.

- OFSTED (October 2024) confirmed: “Virtual School has high ambition for all children in the care of Croydon and they are “well-supported” educationally.”

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

For the reasons set out in the report [and its appendices], the Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended:

- 2.1 To agree the report and review the key priorities for the Access to Education Service, which form the foundation for the day-to-day operation of the Virtual School.
- 2.2 To request **an additional £250k funding** via the schools forum. The Schools Forum have agreed £750k to fund the staffing and activity of Virtual School (annually for the last 5 years). We now need this extra budget to support the staffing and operation of our bespoke, 40 place provision for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) and refugee and asylum ESOL children in Croydon.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To review and develop the work of the Virtual School annually, ensuring continued success and impact on improving outcomes for the whole cohort, ultimately improving the education chances for all Children Looked After (CLA) and care leavers in the corporate care of Croydon Council.
- 3.2 To ensure that the following agreed priorities for 2024/25 will continue to improve the success of the cohort under Croydon Virtual School. Annual priorities have been set based on 2023/24 data.

Our priorities are clearly set out in our Virtual School Development Plan and aligned to Access to Education service priorities:

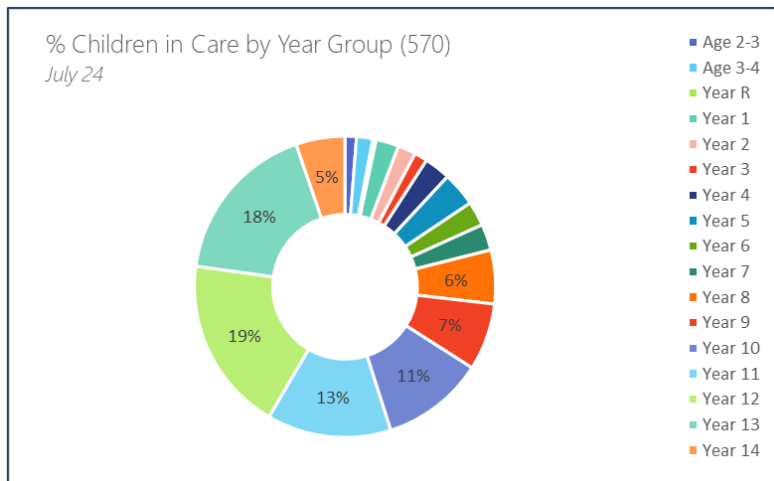
1. Improve outcomes for each cohort of children annually and impact individual progress and attainment - through careful monitoring, intervention, support and challenge of schools and settings and driven by our children’s voices.
2. Reduce Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) numbers in KS5 - through closer work with the NEET Participation team and leaving care and a more strategic reach through Virtual College and adult employment team.
3. Reduce persistent absenteeism in Statutory School Age (SSA) cohort – specifically through assisting schools in Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA) and SEND focussed work.
4. Improve partnership working – specifically the collaboration with carers/Schools/Social Workers (SW) / Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) so that all are informed about and fully involved in education pathways

5. Develop the specific support for our pupils with EHCPs and / or additional needs-see separate action plan.
6. Ensure disproportionality at any level within our dataset for our cohort is reduced through close work and challenge of our schools, training for Designated Teachers (DTs) and other key stakeholders ongoing involvement in development of charter for Inclusion.
7. Ensure Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) cohort, Kinship cohort and all children with SW have better access to specific resources and are supported through their SW and schools.

4 THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL COHORT

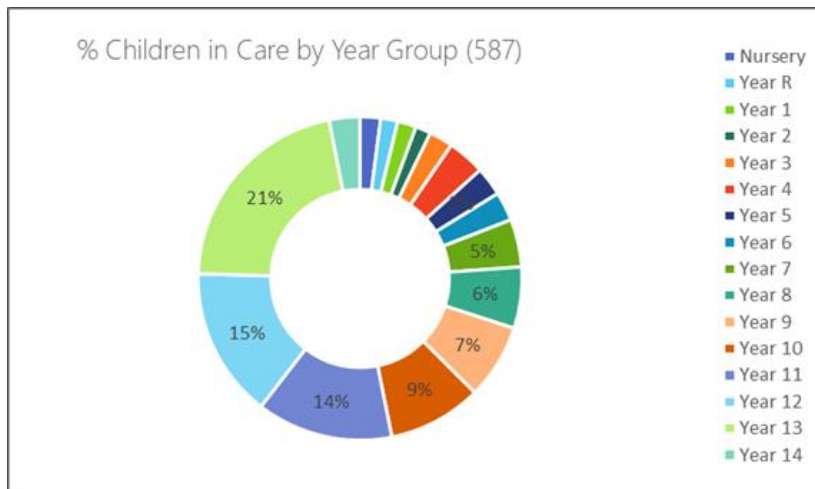
- 4.1 At the end of the academic year 2023/24 the cohort was 570, a reduction of 17 overall on the previous year. However, these figures are only a snapshot of the cohort as it stands on the 31st of July each year.
- 4.2 Our data system eGOV provides us with the daily numbers of children that fall within the remit of the Virtual School. This number fluctuates continually as children enter and leave care. It is a highly mobile population. It is worth noting as per the graphs below that our year 14 cohort of pupils 19 years and over with an EHCP is growing significantly year on year as we extend our support.

Chart 1: CLA Cohort snapshot from 31/07/2024



Source: Virtual School Dashboard 2023/24

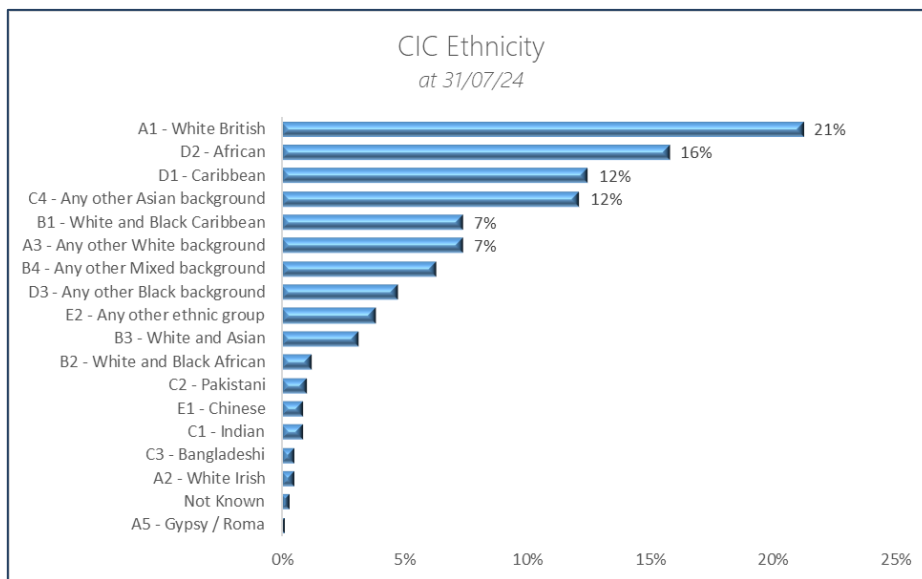
Chart 2: CLA Cohort snapshot from 31/07/2023



Source: Virtual School Dashboard 2022/23

4.3 The ethnic groups represented in the CLA cohort have remained consistent to previous years, with almost quarter identified as White British and the other largest groups being African, Caribbean & Asian. Within these groupings we see the main nationalities also remaining consistent as, Afghan, Albanian, Vietnamese and Eritrean.

Graph 1: Ethnicity of Croydon CLA 2023/24



Source: Virtual School Dashboard 2023/24

Figures have been removed where they fall below 10, where there is a risk the individuals could be identified, this methodology is in line with other Department of Education reporting.

5 THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL STAFFING STRUCTURE

5.1 The Virtual School team consists of 28 roles at present covered by 27 members of staff.

The Virtual School team is fully embedded into the Access to Education service (see leadership organograms in Appendix A). The operational delivery of frontline work has remained consistent for the last three years.

5.1.1 The staffing framework is designed and funded as follows:

- Virtual School Head Teacher (also Head of the Access to Education Service)
- Strategic Lead for Children in Care and care leavers (Virtual School Deputy Head)
- Senior phase leaders x 3 (EYFS – KS3, KS4 and KS5 / Post 16).
- Senior Lead role for KS4 was vacant from May 2023 to September 2024, this 0.75 FTE role has been increased to 1FTE to support the high volume of complex cases. In the interim there were progression opportunities for existing Advisory Teachers to draw on their expertise and take on additional duties to support the team.
- All leadership and management roles at Grade 16 or above (6.75) are funded through the Schools Forum monies as are all IT Costs and systems used in VS.
- Direct contact staff (Advisory Teachers x 12) in each education phase which include specialist teachers for ESOL and a non-teaching Post 16 Adviser who since April 2023 has been working in a UASC role at the provision (See below).
- Interim Provision has been set up at Oasis Academy Arena to support Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and ESOL from April to July 2024 for 20 students. It is managed by the UASC Office Manager, two Interim Strategic Leads for the Interim Provision and Education Adviser. This has now doubled to 40 place provision. Students are full-time and fully integrated into Academy life and receive daily bespoke intervention for ESOL for up to 12 weeks after arrival. All students who are CLA/UASC in or out of Croydon are offered places here first and as a priority.
- All teaching and direct contact posts with statutory school age pupils are funded through Pupil Premium Plus Grant. We received Post -16 Section 31 Grant monies in the financial year 2023/24, so our first payment was received in July 2023 and the second payment in November 2023. These monies are covering two Post 16 Advisory Teacher roles and a newly created Post 16-19 worker in the NEET Participation team.

5.1.2 Each Advisory Teacher has a maximum caseload of 65 students. Most operate routinely at approximately 45. This allows for all 3 Personal Education Plans (PEPs) per student to be attended by Virtual School team and for the flux of children and young people who come in and out of care over the year. The annual aim is to maintain relationships with Advisory Teachers over the longest term.

5.1.3 Since 2022 we have received annual Section 31 Grant monies for Virtual School Head additional duties for Children with a Social Worker. This money funds a fulltime post for the Strategic Lead since March 2022 an Attendance Inclusion Officer since September 2024.

6 EARLY YEARS AND PRIMARY ATTAINMENT AND PROGRESS

6.1 Early Years, Foundation Stage Data

As the cohort size is <10 we cannot report pupil data here. We can state that the VS focus has been on securing detailed overviews of the impact of each child's first 1000 days on their development and upskilling school staff to be aware of the impact of early trauma on this vital phase. The early signs as part of GLD measure for the cohort are positive as is the identification and application for EHCPs to best support the children longer term.

6.2 Key Stage 1 (KS1) and Key Stage 2 (KS2) overview

There were 17 children in the entire KS1 cohort at the start of the academic year. 4 children had ceased to be CLA by the Summer Term 2024.

67% of whole cohort had identified SEND. 10/17 children were identified as having Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND). 4 children had an EHCPs in place on entry to care. 2 of these children with EHC plans attended specialist provision, 2 were children with EHC plans in mainstream.

4 children went through the Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) process during the 2023/24 academic year, this process was supported by the Virtual School (Advisory Teachers either assisted school with strengthening the EHCNA or they led on it). All of these plans are now in place.

2 further children received SEND support in school.

6 children were NI101 (40%) which means their results will count in national dataset as they had been in care longer than 1 year.

5 NI101 children were entered for phonics and 1 child was disapplied due to their SEND (14%).

2 children passed the phonics screen test (33%), and 2 children did not pass due to their SEND (33%).

The children will take the test in Year 2 if deemed ready. More time is required for SEND children to attain the expected standard.

Numbers here are statistically small but represent significant individual achievements for these 6 year olds. See tables below..

Table 1: KS1 CLA Year 1 Phonics Results 2023/24

CLA Yr 1 Phonics Results 2023/24	In Care longer than 3 Years at time of exams		In Care between 1 and 3 Years at time of exams		In Care less than 1 Year at time of exams	
	Total	with EHCP	Total	with EHCP	Total	with EHCP
Working At	<5		<5		<5	

Working Towards Target	<5		<5		<5	<5
Disapplied/Significantly Below	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	

Source: Virtual School data

Table 2: KS1 CLA Year 2 Results 2023/24

CLA Yr 2 Results 2023/24	In Care longer than 3 Years at time of exams		In Care between 1 and 3 Years at time of exams		In Care less than 1 Year at time of exams	
	Total	with EHCP	Total	with EHCP	Total	with EHCP
Reading, Writing & Maths			<5		<5	
Reading & Writing						
Reading Only						
Writing Only						
Maths Only						
Did not pass any	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	
Disapplied	<5	<5			<5	<5

Source: Virtual School data

6.2.1 Improving outcomes for Year 1 children in reading and literacy

Virtual School recognise and stress the importance of developing early literacy and outcomes for Y1 as being fundamental to ongoing success. In 2023/24 we:

- Piloted a reading project ‘Storytime’ for children and their carers, sending monthly publications and guidance home to read together.
- Targeted individual tuition/booster sessions during the school holidays.
- Primary trained teachers overseeing the primary cohort.
- Over the Summer Term 2024 capacity was reduced which may have impacted on delivery. The full complement of primary advisors has been in place since October 2024 and targeted weekly work is ongoing with children, carers and schools.

6.2.2 Y2 SATs – End of KS1 Assessments (age 7)

There were 14 children in the entire cohort at the start of the academic year. 3 children ceased to be CLA by the summer term 2024.

10 children were entered for SATs (91%) and 1 child was disapplied due to their SEND (9%).

7/10 were identified as having SEND. 3 children with an EHCPs. 2 children with EHCPs were attending a specialist provision and 1 child with an EHCP was attending a mainstream provision (with additional SEND funding, on top of EHCP funding).

4 children identified as having SEND receive SEND support in school.

- **6/10 children met the expected standards in Reading (60%)**
- **7/10 children met the expected standards in Writing (70%)**
- **5/10 children met the expected standards in Mathematics (50%)**

5 children met the expected standards in all of Reading, Writing and Mathematics. This is a fantastic achievement for these children 3 of whom had significant identified special needs.

6 children counted in the NI101.1 was disapplied due to having special needs. Published results will be based on 5 pupils so these figures can't be shared publicly due to being under 10. This means published figures for VS will not accurately show the actuality of progress and attainment for all the children supported over the year as demonstrated above and below.

6.2.3 This cohort as a whole has achieved the best results of the last 3 years and is aligned with pre-covid performance for the cohort and well above national for CLA, almost aligned with non CLA pupils.

These are fantastic results for our young pupils (age 7) that suggest and reflect Virtual School focus on high ambition for these pupils and working with schools earlier and more directly to ensure appropriate challenge and opportunity for the most able.

6.2.4 KS2 SATs attainment

Table 3: KS2 attainment

Key Stage 2 results	2024	2023	2022
Number in cohort	14 inc. disapplied SEND 10 exc. disapplied SEND 5 NI101	8 (NI101)	26 (NI101)
% pupils achieving expected standard in Reading/ Writing /Maths combined	3/14 - 21.4% 3/10 - 30.4%	13%	31%
% pupils achieving expected standard in Reading	5/14 - 36% 5/10 - 50%	25%	39%
% pupils achieving expected standard in Writing	4/14 - 29% 4/10 - 40%	38%	42%

% pupils achieving expected standard in Maths	5/14 - 36%	38%	27%
	5/10 - 50%		
% pupils achieving greater depth in one or more areas	2/14 - 14%	0	15%
	2/10 - 20%		

Source: Virtual School data 2023/24

8 of the above 10 children receive SEND support in their mainstream schools. 2 children acquired Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) process heavily supported by Virtual School (where Advisory Teachers either assisted school with strengthening the EHCNA or wrote it themselves).

10/14 children were entered for KS2 SATs (71%), and 4 children were disapplied due to their special needs (29%).

The results above are just below national CLA average (37% combined.) But considering the very high prevalence of SEND these results represent fantastic individual outcomes- especially the 2 students achieving “greater depth” despite complex SEND needs. The results also represent an upward 3-year trend and are back at 2019-pre covid levels of attainment. [See Appendix B](#)

6.2.5 Actions taken to ensure continued improvement of KS1 and KS2 outcomes

- The primary advisory teaching team offered personal targeted tuition/booster sessions during the school holidays and supported carers with learning activities at home.
- Primary school trained teachers oversee the primary cohort.
- Termly Pupil Progress Meetings to target children working towards the expected standards and discuss ways to accelerate progress using PPG+
- Identification and support of intervention for SEND needs by VS team (2 plans acquired.)
- Challenge and support of schools around early identification and assessment of SEND including trauma related learning needs.

7 KS4 ATTAINMENT AND PROGRESS

7.1 KS4 cohort

Below is the comparative detail of our Year 11 (GCSE) cohort:

Table 4: Year 11 cohort 2023/24- contextual information

Cohort description	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Total cohort size	76	79	97
No of UASC in whole cohort	28	27	50

No in Croydon Schools in whole cohort	37	36	44
Missing education in whole cohort	12	15	5
Attending a non- mainstream school in whole cohort	31	19	27
Cohort who had been in care for < 1 year at time if exams	37	28	11
Cohort who had been in care for < 2 years at time if exams	48	40	37
Cohort who had been in care for > 5 years at time if exams	27	20	14
Number in whole cohort with SEND EHCP	18	14	17
Number in whole cohort with SEND support	16	14	27
Number entered for Entry Level in whole cohort	4	1	3
Number entered at Level 2 in whole cohort	31	38	49
Number not entered for any exams	27	29	10
Number in Whole cohort entered for 8 eligible subjects	14	28	22

Source: Virtual School data 2023/24

7.2 Key Stage 4 Attainment and Outcomes

Our year 11 cohort this year was similar in make-up to previous years (see the above table). The notable difference was that 37 (more than double previous years' cohorts) had to come into care during the year, meaning Virtual School impact was limited and disruption severe.

The cohort (25) who were entered who were entered for 5 or more GCSE's again achieved above national levels, for similar groups of CLA, for the fourth consecutive year.

Of the 14, 8 young people gained relevant qualifications the average attainment 8 score was 38. This was on a range of 24-64. This is an excellent score, double the national score for the same cohort and represents the focus on support for this group. All students in the group including 9 with school level send support attained above the average 19.1 score.

Table 5: CLA Year 11 Results 2023/24

	GCSE	5+ 9-4EM	5+ 9-4 E or M	5+ 9-1
Full Cohort 76 CLA Yr 11		5.30%	3.90%	17.10%

Students who Took 5 or More GCSE	GCSE	5+ 9-4EM	5+ 9-4 E or M	5+ 9-1
Full Cohort 25 CLA Yr 11		16.00%	12.00%	52.00%

Source: Croydon Virtual School data

As per the annual report each year attainment of each cohort cannot be compared as the complexity of individual student's circumstances impacts significantly on outcomes. Progress measures will be reported once national data sets are confirmed and validated.

7.2.1 Action being taken to improve Key Stage (KS4) outcomes

In October 2024 we appointed a new full time KS4 Lead specifically focussed on attainment and progress tracking and offering challenge to schools. The impact of this will be seen more in 2024/25 cohort.

It's essential to note that while a proportion of this cohort were NEET (12/76) – of these all were new to care during the year. This formed a strong piece of intervention with the involvement of the NEET Participation team and all stakeholders, 79% of the cohort found appropriate college places or destinations. The remainder are receiving ongoing support.

Our team are now tracking children's attainment from KS3 through to GCSE for a more fluid and consistent support of work, this is in conjunction with the Designated Teacher's in schools. There is a focus on attainment and progress in each PEP which is driven through questioning from the advisory team.

31/76 young people also attended schools and settings other than mainstream (special school or alternative provision) where the focus was on ensuring well-being attendance and progress in English and mathematics, ready for access to Level 1/2 college courses.

28/76 of the cohort were UASC young people all of whom accessed the college provisions specifically for ESOL and attained E1, E2 or E3 qualifications ready for progression to Y12.

8 KEY STAGE 5 (KS5) COHORT AND STAFFING OVERVIEW

The Virtual School Post 16 team now consists of 5 members of staff: Senior Post 16 Lead/Careers Advisor and 4 advisory teachers 1 of whom is an ESOL specialist.

They each have up to 43 young people on their caseloads and are expected to ensure they have direct contact with each young person at least once a year.

The team has been able deliver some excellent work over the past year with some of the following:

- Advisory Teacher's offered regular mentoring and direct 1:1 sessions with young people who were finding it difficult to engage in school and this has helped to develop their confidence. The outcome led to two young people

returning to school, one finding a job and one committing to a beauty course financed by SEND.

- Advisory Teacher's taking it in turns weekly to provide guidance and information every Wednesday down at the drop-in service at the Turnaround Centre the number of young people visiting has greatly improved. The team has worked in collaboration with the NEET Participation team to devise programmes to empower our NEET young people when seeking EET.
- Visits and meeting with the local colleges e.g. Croydon, John Ruskin College, Coulsdon, Carshalton, Nescot, East Surrey has improved relationships which have led to PEPs being organised more quickly and smoothly.
- The additional Post 16 funding (£112k) has supported the increased staffing ratio and been very helpful for direct support of students in providing equipment, books and required clothing for construction and performing arts courses. It was also very helpful for students during the issue with Transport for London and providing travel passes for young people to college. We have also been able to issue laptops to some of our cohort which has been really helpful particularly to our UASC young people.
- We recently hosted a careers fair called 'Opportunity Knocks' at Croydon College which aimed to raise aspirations and broaden our young people horizons of opportunities available to them. Over 200 young people attended and were able to visit over 32 exhibitors to gain knowledge about employment offers, educational courses from colleges, apprenticeship advise, training providers opportunities e.g. Prince's Trust, London Learning Consortium. This will enable them to make more informed choices about their next steps.
- An Achievement Award event took place in November 2024 at Croydon College, all our care experienced young people were honoured and awarded with certificates/trophies, they were placed in various categories e.g. 100 % attendance and punctuality, most improved, most creative, Pride of Croydon, great examination results. There were over 140 nominations by social workers, PA's and advisory teachers. Over 70 young people attended with their carers, parents, social workers, they were entertained by three of our care experienced young people performing beautiful tributes in a song.
- The quality assuring of PEPs has hugely improved for the cohort due to training and close monitoring. The AT's have met the target of completion of over 90% of their termly PEP meetings- this aligns to statutory school age cohort.
- The team have been proactive and have attended panel meetings for the resettlement of young people being released from prison and ensuring they have a plan in place to engage them in employment, training or education. We have also been able to make some progress in relation to holding PEPs

in HMP. We have formed good working relationships with the Youth Justice Team (<10) Young people are currently in HMI estate long term.

- Representation at the South London Virtual school forum has been enlightening, we have been able to share good practice and invite other local colleagues to the forum.
- Working closely with the NEET Participation team has been very impactful with the sharing of knowledge and helping to direct our young people into EET outcomes. Attending the EET Panel has helped to improve data being held on our young people.

Table 6: CLA and Care Leavers in education

Yr 13	Cohort	L3	L2	L1	EL	No Results	Not in Education	Total Cohort
All	53	15	3	7	12	16	47	100

Yr 12	Cohort	L3	L2	L1	EL	No Results	Not in Education	Total Cohort
All	71	9	5	9	8	40	42	113

Sources: Croydon Virtual School data

Level 3 attainment (A-Level and equivalent) remains well above national (14%) for the Care Leaver cohort.

8. 2 Action being taken to improve Key Stage 5 (KS5) outcomes

Fully staffed term with smaller cohort sizes (average 45) means much more focussed work ongoing. This is supported by national funding awarded for the year and the net year so far. Also, a named worker for NEET CLA in Post 16 cohort was appointed in December 2023 to further the targeted work in employment increase, the impact of this is that 33 number of CLA NEETs have found employment or training over the year 2023/24.

9 ATTENDANCE, PERSISTENT ABSENCE AND EXCLUSIONS

9.1 How the Virtual School collect and record attendance data.

Data is currently collected and recorded online in ePEP by eGOV system which is funded through the School Forum. This is a “one stop” data system that we have been using since September 2021. Data is transposed and directly migrated from the schools’ registration system to ePEP. Currently 95% of data is collected in this way, the rest is ascertained manually through PEPs and calls to schools.

Attendance remains a key focus area for 2024/25 as whilst our statistics are improving for the cohort annually, they remain significantly below national for Persistent Absence when compared to other CLA cohorts. Much of this is due to the high numbers of KS4 children entering care with very complex school

histories. Each child must have their attendance looked at on an individual basis, for our YP a 75% attendance may represent a huge improvement but will still show in published statistics as Persistently Absent (below 90% overall). Ensuring that our children and young people have good school attendance and removing any barriers to attending is a key priority.

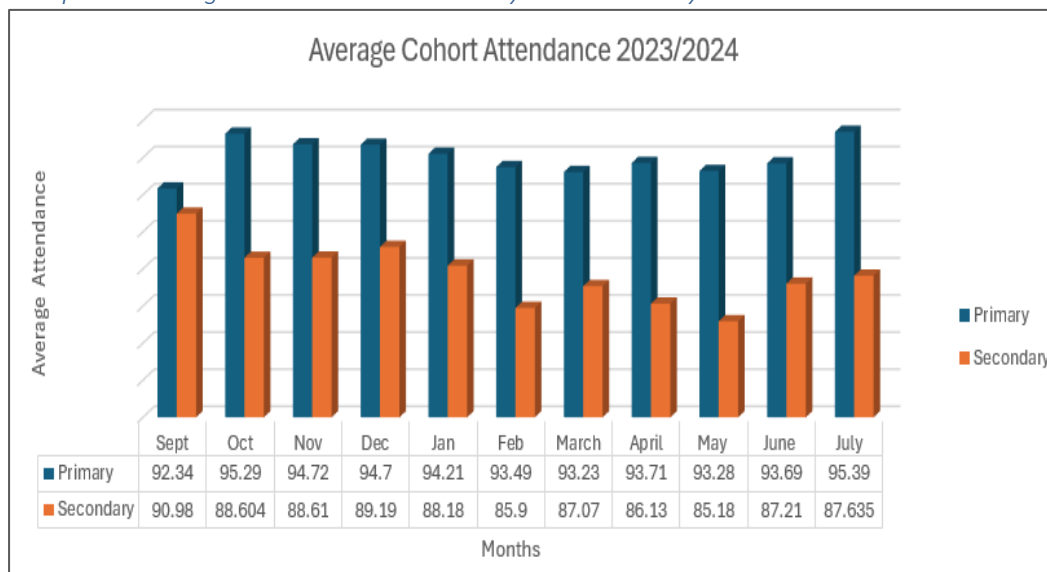
9.1.1 Summary of intervention to improve attendance.

Pupils' attendance is now monitored daily, weekly and termly through ePEP checks and a RAG system created for each Year Group. This overview is circulated to Social Workers and Advisory Teachers monthly and a meeting held with a focus on attendance, exclusions and persistent absences. Information is also acted on throughout, especially when there are concerns raised in, e.g. PEP meetings, Team Around Family meetings, Annual Reviews, Reintegration meetings and any other forum that might require our input to attendance. Carers and educational placements are called to corroborate information between services. Direct calls are made with educational placements with uncollected data and getting the weekly attendance data for our cohort uploaded to the system is of the highest priority. Educational placements are constantly reminded that this is a sharing this data is statutory duty under the role of the Designated Teacher and that working together/collaboration is key to improving attendance.

Nominated school attendance officers now have direct access to the ePEP attendance module which allows them to enter weekly attendance information for each pupil, details pupils' (by year group) average attendance (%). The calculation is on collected data only.

SSA Education Placement Attendance

Graph 2 - Average Attendance SSA Primary and Secondary Cohorts



Source: data collected by the Virtual School using Liquid Logic CRS and ePEP

Table 7: Overall Attendance as a Percentage (cumulative)

		Autumn 2023/24				Spring 2023/24			Summer 2023/24			
	YEAR	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24
Total	All CLA	90.01	88.75	87.45	86.30	84.20	82.63	85.48	84.14	83.32	84.20	86.45

Source: Attendance Collection Dashboard, ePEP / Attendance Overall for Collected Data Only

This data ([See Appendix C](#) for more detailed example) enables the Virtual School to identify where attendance collection/ attendance at school is causing concern and action appropriately.

We regularly scrutinise collated data. To counteract potential recording errors, we challenge schools who are not regularly submitting data, the Virtual School is directly connected with the eGOV's dedicated Attendance Officer, and we regularly cross-check school attendance officer's details.

Maintaining the robustness of this data collection will continue to be a focus for 2024/25 academic year. Every worker has access to this, and it is shared with social worker and supervising social workers in regular updates. Focussed professionals meeting are held, multi-agency, to discuss where concerns arise.

9.3 Persistent Absence

Pupils are identified as a persistent absentee if they miss 10% or more of their possible sessions. 10% of sessions translates to around 7 days of absence across the autumn term¹.

In July 2024, the following numbers were classified as persistent absentees:

Table 8: Persistent Absence 2023/24

570 cohort	No.	%
Below 90%	143	25
Below 85%	111	19
Below 80%	96	16
Below 75%	86	15

Current strategies and considerations:

- The Virtual School Strategic Lead as part of the Attendance Strategy identifies attendance patterns weekly through E-PEP and is the initial point of contact regarding educational placements and updates.
- Our advisory teams and their corresponding Senior Lead then track and identify where a pupil is struggling and then support the school to intervene and ensure improvements with social care colleagues and networks involved.
- A half termly report is sent to Social Care Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Virtual School Senior Leadership Team

- Weekly Complex Need Care Panels are attended by Virtual School SLT and information fed back to the team regarding attendance issues and provision in place.
- Higher emphasis placed on attendance with higher scrutiny of PEPs including termly moderation.
- Actions and correspondence with schools entered on Children's Record System (data sharing with Social Services).
- Information passed to Strategic Lead for Children with Social Workers with regards to young people who have had a status change to Children In Need (CIN) and Child Protection (CP) for continuity of monitoring.
- An action plan via the PEP targets is in place for each child with persistence absences.
- Reasons for persistent absence within the CLA cohort are many, complex and varied, e.g., a 70% attendance rate is universally considered low, but for many CLA this could represent significant increase and improvement.
- Each child's journey is unique and must be supported carefully through discussion at the PEP and close work with schools, Social Workers and carers.
- Emphasis is now on the quality of data received and E-PEP will be utilised more with the use of the Wonde system that will begin in the Spring term 24-25, this will make attendance for all data live and increase the emphasis on pro-activity by our teams.

10 Permanent Exclusions and Suspensions

It is to be noted that suspensions and exclusions of Croydon CLA in schools in and out of borough are **significantly lower** than for the same cohort nationally and in statistical neighbouring boroughs. This represents positive intervention and focus of the team with schools at the earliest stages of behavioural needs emerging.

10.1 Permanent Exclusions in primary pupils. No exclusions during 2023/24 compare to 0.06 rate nationally. Any CLA primary aged pupils at risk of exclusion have assessments undertaken by our Education Psychologist and are referred as early as possible to the Croydon Primary Forum, if they are Croydon based. The Virtual School also collaborates with the Localities SEND support team to access funding advice on support within educational placements. With the out of borough schools, we visit to assess need and look at what additional support is needed and assist with EHNCA applications if required.

10.2 Permanent Exclusions in secondary pupils. 2 permanent exclusions during 2023-2024 (an increase on the previous year's figure of 1).

Following Virtual School intervention, 3 potential permanent exclusions were avoided (before Headteacher decision stage). In 2 of the cases, EHCPs have been secured via support and recommendation from Croydon Virtual School.

10.3 Suspensions for all pupils totalled 74 during 2022/23 – and only 51 in 2023-24 which considering a national 23% rise is exceptional.

This reduction is in part due to Advisory Teachers having better knowledge of their streamlined caseloads, thus able to challenge and advise schools and stakeholders around their strategies to reduce negative behaviours within the school community and with that promote a positive learning ethos.

Practice example: The Educational Psychologist has a drop-in session for ATs with SWs to present cases at risk of exclusion. With our In-borough Schools the Localities team now covers both Primary and Secondary cohort which was not the case in the previous years mentioned above.

Table 9: No. of suspensions issued to CLA in Croydon 2023-2024

	2023/24			2022/23		2021/22	
School location	*Number of Croydon CLA receiving 1 or more suspensions	Total number of days suspension issued to Croydon CLA	Number of Croydon CLA receiving 1 or more suspensions	Total number of days suspension issued to Croydon CLA	*Number of Croydon CLA receiving 1 or more suspensions	Total number of days suspension issued to Croydon CLA	
In-borough	14	25	23	40	13	21	
Out of borough	20	26	19	34	14	24	
TOTAL	34	51	42	74	27	45	

*Number of suspensions= Number of sessions. *Source: data collected by the Virtual School using Liquid Logic CRS and ePEP*

The data shows the suspensions data remains relatively aligned with previous years considering a national increase in this area.

11 PERSONAL EDUCATION PLANS (PEPS)

11.1 PEP essentials / overview:

Every statutory school age child who is looked after must have a personal education plan (PEP). This is a document, written and evaluated by education and social work professionals that sets out the plan for monitoring and supporting the child’s educational progress over the academic year. This is a statutory duty for children’s social care. In Virtual School we request that PEPs are completed and reviewed 3 x yearly, at least once per term, for all pupils to give a more accurate view or progress.

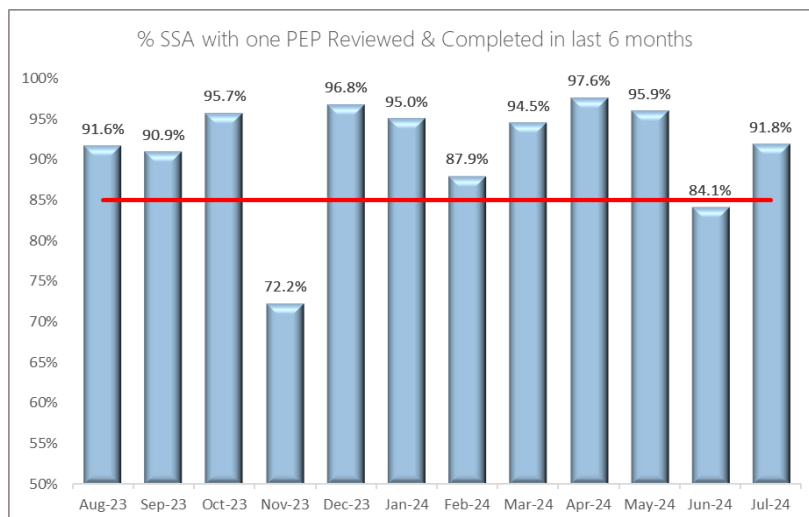
11.2 PEP completion rate for Statutory School Age

The percentage of SSA children and young people with one PEP that had been reviewed and completed in the last 6 months at the end of summer term 2024 was 91.8% a slight reduction of 2.2% over the previous year however, performance remains strong and above target.

Personal Education Plan (PEPs) completions are above target for most months of this academic year with the exception of November 2023 and June 24 when the figures dropped to 72.2% and 84.1% respectively. The reduction in the number of PEPs in November can be attributed to the end of summer term and the 6-week summer holiday falling within the reporting period during which PEP meetings do not take place. In June the reporting period covers the spring half term & end of term holidays.

Performance in this measure will never be at 100% as there are always new to care young people on any given day who are within their statutory period of 20 days for initiation, and this is a Social Care key indicator which is reported on a 6-month rolling period.

Graph 3: Key Performance Indicator CLA 13 - %SSA with one PEP reviewed & completed in last 6 months.



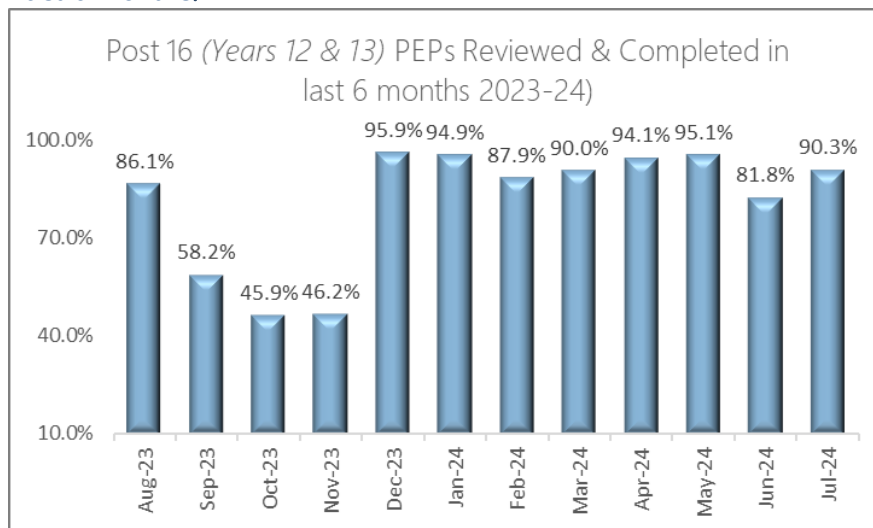
Source ePEP: Key Performance Indicator CLA.13% of Statutory School Age Children with one Personal Education Plan (PEP) reviewed & completed within the last six months.

11.3 PEP completion rate for Post 16.

The percentage of post 16 young people with one PEP that had been reviewed and completed in the last 6 months at the end of summer term 2024 was 90.3% which is a reduction of 8.3% over the same period in the previous year. There is no target set for this KPI and despite the reduction performance remains strong.

Post 16 Personal Education Plans (PEPs) maintain high percentages in every month in this academic year, apart from September to November 2023 when the figures dropped to 45.9%, at their lowest. We can attribute a fall in the percentage during November to the end of summer term and the 6-week summer holiday falling within the reporting period where PEP meetings do not take place. During this same period the Post 16 Team was not staffed to capacity and the recruitment process was underway.

Graph 4: % Post 16 Young People with one PEP reviewed & completed in last 6 months.



Source ePEP: VS Report 4 - % of Post 16 CLA (Years 12 & 13) with one Personal Education Plan (PEP) reviewed & completed within the last six months. There is no target set for this data as this is not a Corporate Key Indicator.

Performance will never be at 100% as there are always new to care young people on any given day who are within their statutory period of 20 days for initiation, and this is a Social Care key indicator which is reported on a 6-month rolling period.

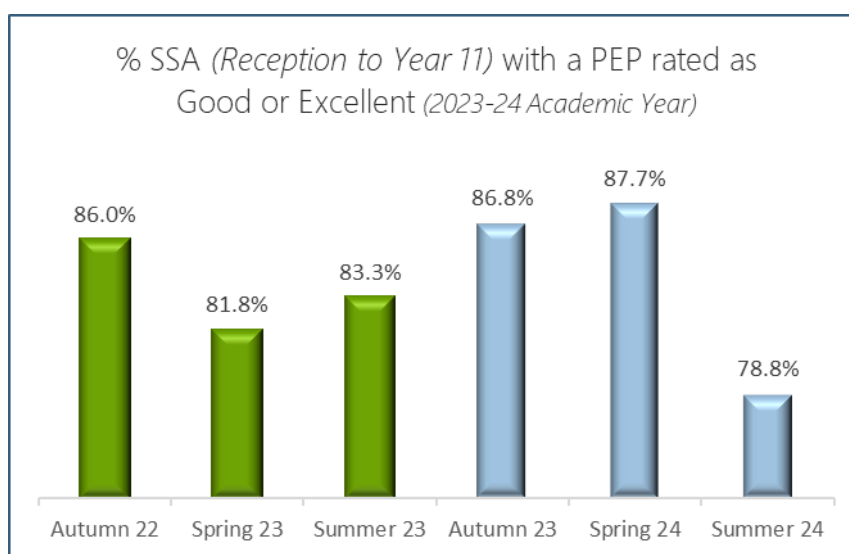
11.4 PEP Quality Assurance: How the VS quality assures PEP content

PEP documents are quality assured against four RAG ratings, Excellent, Good, Requires Improvement & Deferred. The rating awarded is based on the completeness of the PEP information, a record of any actions plans and support for our young people and most importantly that the document has captured the young person's voice.

A quality assurance framework tailored to each type of PEP document has been created to provide guidance to Advisory Teachers on what should be considered at each level before the RAG rating is awarded. The quality assurance page is part of the PEP document. In addition to rating each part of PEP against the framework there is an overall rating, and the Advisory Teacher add comments on why they have rated the PEP at a certain level, for example where a PEP has exceeded expectations or where a PEP has not met expectations and improvements can be made going forward.

At the end of each term the Virtual School Senior Lead Officers and data team take part in a random 10% audit exercise to sense check the RAG ratings that have awarded. This enables us to explore areas for improvement which can lead to system updates and knowledge sharing within the team.

Graph 5: % SSA pupils with a PEP reviewed & rated as good or excellent by term.

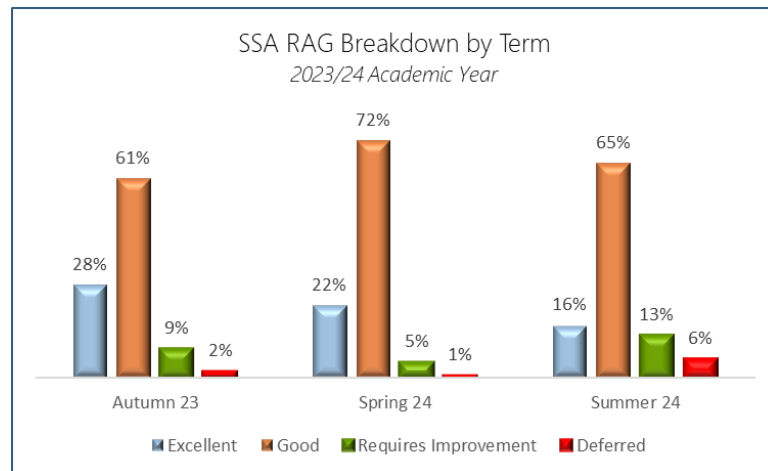


Source: ePEP – VS Report 3 % of Statutory School Age Children with a Personal Education Plan (PEP) reviewed and rated as good or excellent.

At summer term 2024 78.8 percent of SSA PEPs were rated good or excellent through the Virtual School quality assurance process. This is a reduction of 4.5% from the same term in the previous year. This could be attributed to the greater and more accurate use of the 'Requires Improvement' RAG rating where schools and colleges are challenged about their process. OFSTED (Oct 2024)

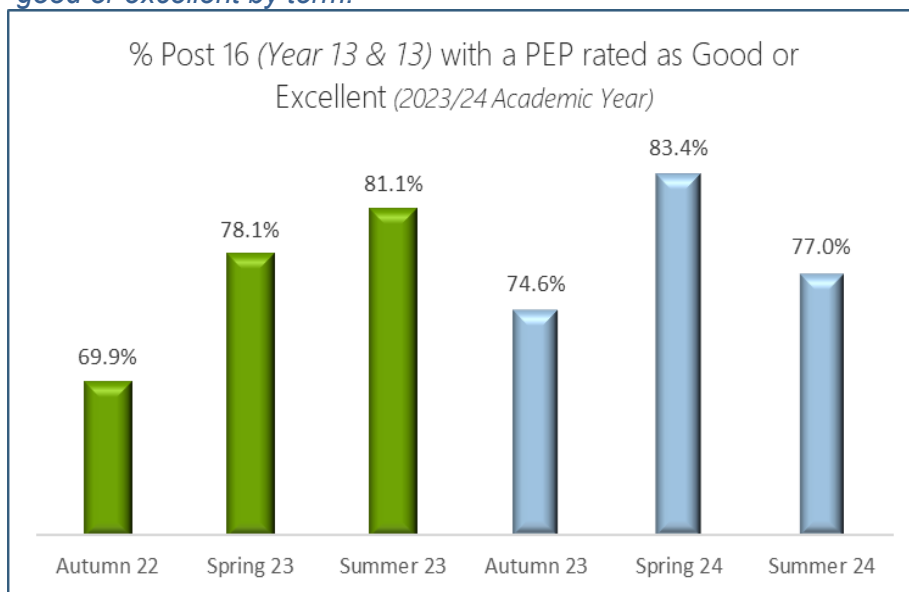
commended the rigour of our QA processes and verified judgements on a sample of PEPs.

Graph 6: % SSA PEPs RAG rating breakdown



Source: ePEP – VS Report 3 - % of Statutory School Age Children with a Personal Education Plan (PEP) Reviewed by RAG status.

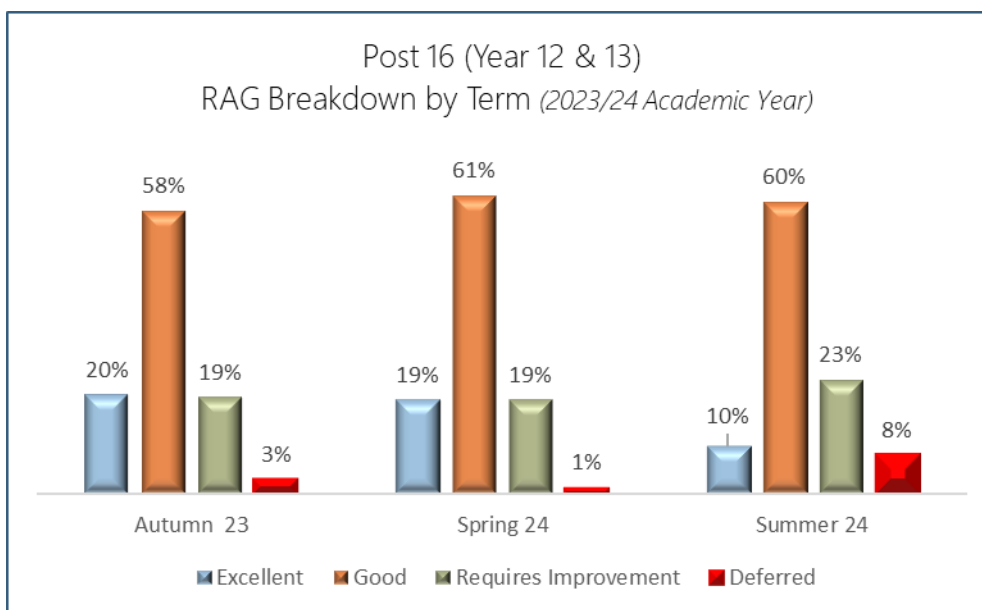
Graph 7: % Post 16 Young People with a PEP reviewed and rated as good or excellent by term.



Source: ePEP – VS Report 3 % of Post 16 Young People with a Personal Education Plan (PEP) reviewed and rated as good or excellent.

At the end of summer term 2024 the percentage of post 16 PEPs quality assured with a rating of good or excellent was 77.0%.

Graph 8: % Post 16 RAG rating breakdown



Source: ePEP – VS Report 3 - % of Post 16 Young People with a Personal Education Plan (PEP) Reviewed by RAG status.

Quality Assurance will continue to be a focal point for next academic year, where Virtual School workers will work in partnership with CSC and staff in schools to improve the standard of PEPs. We are keen to ensure that our criteria for outstanding is 'the degree to which professional support and its culmination in the PEP document, supports the young person'. This is judged by Advisory Teachers and reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team.

11.5 PEP Quality Assurance Audit

At the end of each term, we create a report of all completed PEPs within the term, and this covers Statutory School Aged (SSA) children & Post 16 (Year 12 & 13).

This report is used to complete an audit on 10% of our SSA and 10% of our Post 16 PEPs to determine if we agree with the RAG rating awarded by our Advisory Teachers and Education Advisers.

The 10% of PEPs are chosen at random and divided between our Senior Leadership Team & Data Team for review.

Each person completes a review of the PEP document and the Quality Assurance RAG rating page to determine whether they agree with the rating given. This is recorded on a spreadsheet and our Business Systems Officer collates the feedback and summarises the responses on a dashboard which shows off the original ratings, how many were agreed with, how many would have been upgraded and how many we consider should have been downgraded.

Once the Advisory Teacher / Education Advisers have awarded their RAG rating and signed off the PEP it cannot be changed however, the purpose of the audit

it to identify strengths and weaknesses in the PEPs and provide team training opportunities to improve PEP quality on an ongoing basis.

Table 10: SSA (Autumn 2023, Spring & Summer 2024)

Post 16 (Autumn 2023, Spring & Summer 2024)

Statutory School Age - Autumn 2023		
RAG Rating	RAG	Audit RAG
Excellent PEP	11	9
Good PEP	14	15
Requires Improvement	2	3
Deferred	0	0

Post 16 - Autumn 2023		
RAG Rating	RAG	Audit RAG
Excellent PEP	6	3
Good PEP	11	10
Requires Improvement	2	5
Deferred	0	1

Statutory School Age - Spring 2024		
RAG Rating	RAG	Audit RAG
Excellent PEP	6	4
Good PEP	23	20
Requires Improvement	0	5
Deferred	0	0

Post 16 - Spring 2024		
RAG Rating	RAG	Audit RAG
Excellent PEP	5	3
Good PEP	13	9
Requires Improvement	1	7
Deferred	0	0

Statutory School Age - Summer 2024		
RAG Rating	RAG	Audit RAG
Excellent PEP	6	4
Good PEP	22	20
Requires Improvement	3	7
Deferred	0	0

Post 16 - Summer 2024		
RAG Rating	RAG	Audit RAG
Excellent PEP	5	3
Good PEP	12	13
Requires Improvement	4	5
Deferred	0	0

Source: PEP Quality Assurance Audit Dashboard, ePEP

11.6 Deferred PEPs:

A PEP is typically deferred if the document does not meet the minimum standards set out in the quality assurance framework. This would typically be where no information has been recorded, there are no aspirational targets set for the young person, there is no record of their voice and no evidence that a PEP meeting took place.

The percentage of SSA PEPs awarded a rating of 'Deferred' over the last academic year has remained low. Comparing the figures for 2024 with the same terms in 2023 we can report a slight movement in deferred PEPs reported at +1% for autumn term, 5% for spring term & +3% in summer term.

Post 16 PEPs are showing a mixed trend when compared with the same term last year reporting at 1% for autumn term, 2% for spring term & 6% for summer term. Please see graphs 7 & 9 above for detail.

11.7 PEP developments:

The Virtual School PEP system has been the subject of various new developments throughout the 2023/24 academic year to keep the information we collect tailored and relevant for our young people. These changes include:

- Automatic email of VS Case Notes to professionals once completed
- New Role created: NEET Caseworker (Care Experienced 16-19)

- Updated the SEND/EHCP page
- Updated the EYFS progress & attainment page
- Exclusion data added to attendance collection page
- Social Worker Actions comments field added to the PEP meeting template

12 PUPIL PREMIUM PLUS POLICY

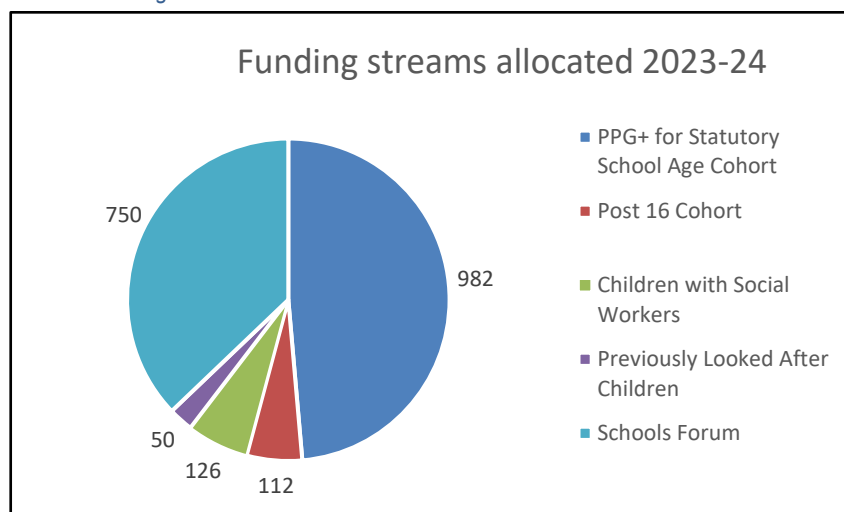
12.1 2023/24 Funding Streams

The funding - 2023/24 we received:

- £982K PPG+ for Statutory School Age Cohort
- £112K for the Post 16 Cohort
- £126K for the wider cohort of “All Children with Social Workers”
- £50K for Previously Looked After Children
- £750K from Schools Forum clawback monies

Total funding - £2,020,000.00

Chart 3: Funding streams allocated 2023/24



All funding as represented here was fully spent in 2023/24 financial year.
[See Appendix E](#)

13 EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING SUPPORT IN THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL & THE VIRTUAL COLLEGE

13.1 EET support available in the Virtual School and college.

Every young person aged 16/17 or 18 in the Virtual School has access to a named worker who can support with careers planning and advice, personal support and next steps guidance. Where young people are NEET they automatically receive the allocation of our dedicated NEET worker since December 2023.

15 students were awarded A level results of Summer 2024, and all went on to Higher Education. Some excellent sets of results including one student achieving two A's, a B and C and another student achieving and a student with a EHCP achieving his three A Level equivalent national diploma in Business.

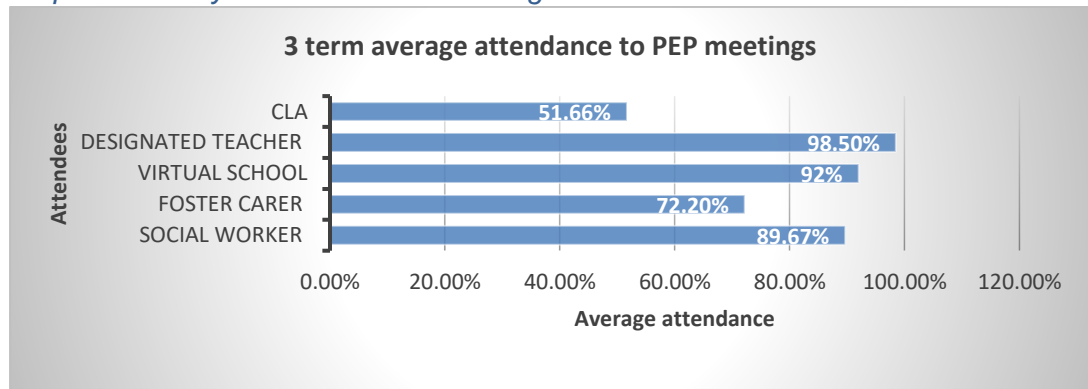
13.2 Partnership working and training offered.

For further details on the training and development for Virtual School, [see Appendix D.](#)

14 KEY CHALLENGES AND NEXT STEPS FOR THE NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR

14.1 PEP Meeting Attendance by young people

Graph 10: Yearly PEP attendance average



Source: eGOV, ePEP

Context

The lowest attendance figure is shown with our care experienced young people at 51.66%, there are various reasons that can impact this attendance.

- Meeting clashes with the school timetable
- Views in some cases are gathered before/after the PEP meeting.

14.2 Virtual School actions:

- Meet with foster carers to get their views on increasing attendance and current barriers faced.
- PEP presentations to be done with key shareholders including IRO service and SEND department.
- Strategic Lead to link to half termly Attendance meeting with Service Managers
- Increase pupil participation by at least 10%.
- Clear definition regarding pupil attendance and hearing pupil's voice by arranging out of PEP meeting with the pupil as an example.
- Increased interaction between ATs/EAs and home to build a cumulative narrative.

14.3 Improving Quality Assurance and governance of:

- PEPS overall.
- Educational Placements- quality assurance visits.

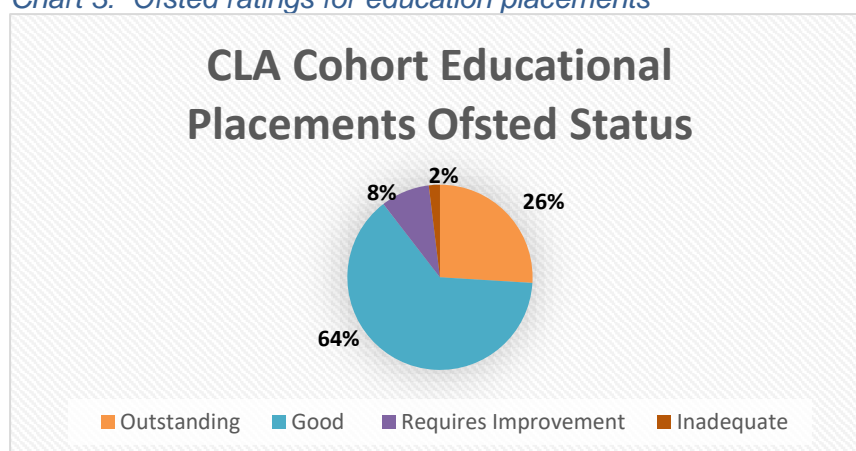
14.3.1 Steps to be taken to ensure this happens:

A termly 10% PEP QA audit by SLT and Data team to ensure quality of PEPs.

- Quality assurance sheet
- PEP adjustments to be made to make them more bespoke and accessible for the range of status in our cohort. This will include:
 - a new Quality Assurance page in the handbook with a description of the grading process.
 - a development for September 2025 of a quorate VS governing body-meeting 3 x yearly.

Ofsted Rating for SSA education placements

Chart 3: Ofsted ratings for education placements



Source: data collected by the Virtual School using Liquid Logic CRS and ePEP

Commentary on RAG rated education provisions:

- Outstanding: 67 CLA attend placements
- Good: 164 CLA attend placements
- Requires Improvement: 22 CLA attend placements.
- Inadequate: 5 attended placements over course of 23-24, this had reduced to 0 by Sept 24.

The Senior Leadership team have agreed to have a particular focus on enabling Advisory Teachers in their teams to strengthen their challenges back to school regarding aspects such as:

- Attendance including exclusions and Admissions
- Attainment
- Use of PPG+

Social Workers and Independent Reviewing Officers will be included in this process.

15 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

None.

16 CONSULTATION

None.

17 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

17.1 Achieve good customer service and operational delivery

17.2 Practice good governance.

18 IMPLICATIONS

18.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Yes. The report will be presented to the Schools Forum for the annual allocation of clawback funds for the Virtual School. Request is for an additional £250,000, growth funding to fund the ongoing 40 place ESOL provision at Oasis Arena.

18.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

18.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

None.

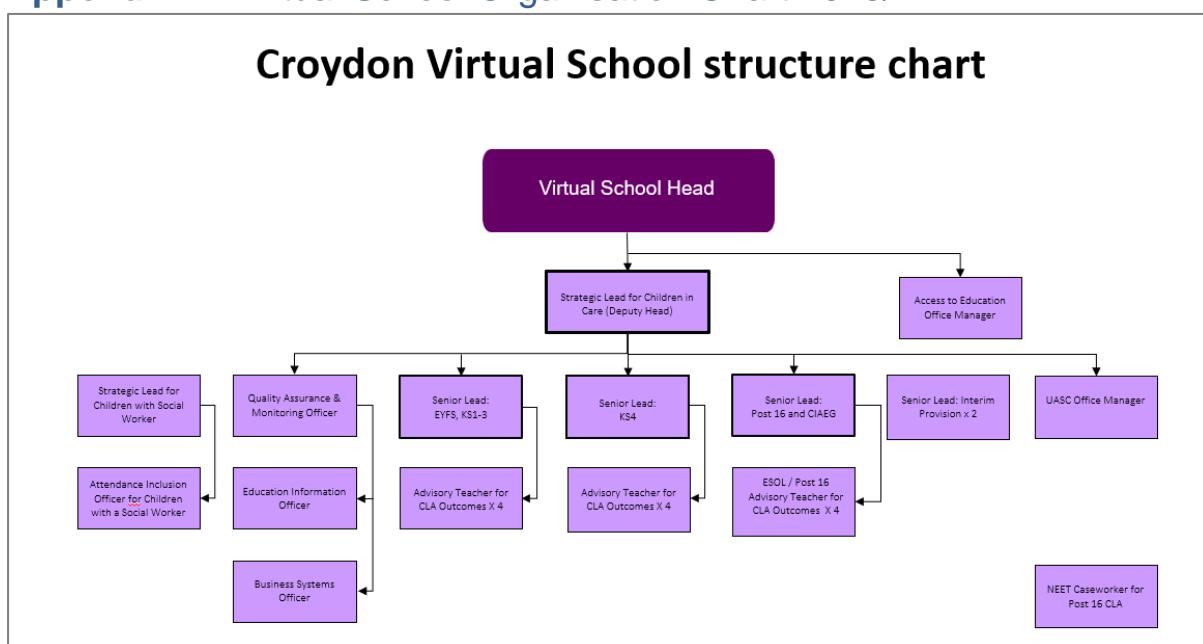
19 APPENDICES

- Appendix A – Virtual School Organisation Chart
- Appendix B – KS2 CLA Year 6 Results 2023/24
- Appendix C: Termly attendance
- Appendix D: Virtual School training and development 2023/24
- Appendix E: Virtual School planned use of Pupil Premium Plus 2023/24
- Appendix F: Extracts from statutory guidance and key links

20 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Appendices

Appendix A: Virtual School Organisation Chart 2023/24



Source: Virtual School data

Appendix B: KS2 CLA Year 6 Results 2023/24

CLA Yr 6 Results 2023/24	In Care longer than 3 Years at time of exams		In Care between 1 and 3 Years at time of exams		In Care less than 1 Year at time of exams	
	Total	with EHCP	Total	with EHCP	Total	with EHCP
Reading, Writing & Maths	1		2			
Reading & Writing	1					
Reading Only			1			
Writing Only						

Maths Only			3		
Did Not Pass Any	1		1	1	1
Disapplied	4	4			

Source: Virtual School data

Appendix C: Termly attendance 2023/24

		Autumn 2023/24				Spring 2023/24			Summer 2023/24			
	YEAR	Sep-2023	Oct-2023	Nov-2023	Dec-2023	Jan-2024	Feb-2024	Mar-2024	Apr-2024	May-2024	Jun-2024	Jul-2024
Primary School	Year R	69.70	92.70	90.36	92.64	93.74	94.14	95.01	96.42	95.62	94.68	99.00
	Year 1	98.27	98.40	96.79	96.83	94.99	94.64	92.45	92.54	91.41	91.91	92.94
	Year 2	95.96	95.77	96.80	95.06	94.81	90.20	89.01	91.90	90.02	93.06	93.49
	Year 3	97.86	97.70	96.32	96.67	97.11	97.27	96.34	95.27	95.78	95.75	96.03
	Year 4	94.58	94.16	93.64	94.15	94.87	95.69	95.71	95.80	95.94	96.00	96.02
	Year 5	96.75	96.23	95.97	94.79	94.45	93.65	94.63	94.46	94.27	94.08	94.15
	Year 6	93.61	92.08	93.17	92.82	89.55	88.86	93.76	89.62	89.97	90.36	96.08
Sub Total	Primary	95.21	95.25	95.16	94.77	94.08	93.31	93.72	93.33	92.96	93.46	94.82
Secondary School	Year 7	97.37	95.98	95.71	95.05	94.72	95.32	95.29	95.56	93.19	95.72	90.85
	Year 8	92.89	90.38	92.39	91.66	91.02	91.95	92.59	91.98	91.62	91.79	90.26
	Year 9	93.84	93.88	94.64	93.81	93.91	89.34	91.34	91.35	91.23	90.84	94.26
	Year 10	87.39	83.91	84.59	84.82	82.29	79.96	80.63	77.91	76.29	78.82	75.17
	Year 11	83.43	81.49	75.69	80.62	78.97	72.91	75.48	73.86	73.59	78.89	-
Sub Total	Secondary	89.23	87.26	88.21	87.58	86.20	83.10	84.46	82.92	82.05	84.47	85.19
Total	SSA	91.31	89.91	90.58	90.02	88.80	86.38	87.46	86.30	85.48	87.23	88.69

Source: VS CLA Dashboard / Attendance Monitoring (section 3)

Appendix D: Virtual School training and development 2023/24

Topic	About the session	Audience	Delivered
Introduction to ePEP	An overview of the ePEP system and the roles and responsibilities of the professionals.	New Designated Teachers and Social Workers. Internal colleagues new to role.	Ad hoc, ongoing through the year
The Role of a Designated Teacher (Arena)	A bespoke training delivered by the Virtual School team reviewing statutory requirements and specific guidance on Croydon Virtual School processes. (offered via Arena) What does the DT do / the importance of the role / sharing good practice / legal responsibilities of the DT and School.	Designated Teachers and School facing colleagues supporting children with looked after experience	February 2024 September 2024
Virtual School Team Training	Service development meetings have been used to deliver regular training to the virtual school team, in addition to occasional additional dates. Topics covered with the team have included: Children’s voices around trauma, Zones of Regulation, Foster Carer’s discussion, Cross network working- building relationships, Improvement Plan and Personal Education Plans.	Virtual School team	Monthly meeting
KUDOS training	What is KUDOS / how can we use it / what is the best practice in sharing kudos details.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEET Participation Team • Virtual School team, all departments 	February 2024
SharePoint training	What is SharePoint / where can we find it / how can we share resources on SharePoint.	Virtual School team, all departments	February 2024

Appendix E: Virtual School Croydon planned use of Pupil Premium Plus 2023/2024*

Allocation approx. £1.2 million approx

Resource	Cost	Rationale	Evidence of impact
<p>12 x full time Advisory Teachers for cohorts:</p> <p>NCY R-Y9 = 208 NCY Y10 & Y11 = 119 <i>(as at 31/03/23)</i></p> <p>If advisory teachers are under capacity funds will be available for emergency requests</p>	<p>12 x £42,000= £504k</p>	<p>Increases VS permanent capacity to 12 specialist staff.</p> <p>Means every SSA child and school can have an allocated worker who has minimum contact at one PEP per year. QAs all PEPs and provides direct support and training to DT/ foster Carers as needed. ATs will have a cohort of approx 45 young people- also supporting at a child's EHCP or in any SEND needs assessments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLA surveys (complete) • Attainment and progress outcomes for CLA Pupils (2023/24) • Case studies • % High quality PEPs • %PEP completion • OFSTED
<p>Funding Allocated to schools via individual targets- can be on an individual request for resource via ePEP including but not limited to the options below.</p>	<p>Up to the max amount £1500 per pupil.</p> <p>Up to a total amount of approx. £700k of the grant funding for all</p>	<p>Schools have control of funds to spend on specific needs of CLA via individual targets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Via PEPs • Via school surveys
<p>Collaborative intervention support. For young people who might be going through a crisis such as a sudden change of placement or other trauma that affects school attendance and attainment</p>	<p>Case by case basis- as additional funding bids asked for by schools/ Advisory team or SW/or Foster Carers</p>	<p>Pupils at risk of exclusion may be supported with respite places if evidence is there of schools' efforts.</p> <p>Training and offer of staff development program, around inclusive practice schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in permanent exclusions • Testimony from schools • And pupils • Case studies • Re-integration of pupils

Resource	Cost	Rationale	Evidence of impact
Education Psychologist Access for In Borough CLA and SW to CLA	£29,000	(EP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation data. No of YP supported by EP
PCLA advice and guidance (1FTE) for schools	Section 31 grant (to be confirmed)	Specialist role- telephone and face to face advice and guidance to carers, parents and professionals, support with educational placement, progress and attainment.	
ARENA Training Days	£10k	Training and advice in specialist CLA related topics accessible	Staff and pupil feedback
Trauma informed practice introduction to schools	Staffed by ATs as per cost above (or bespoke at cost to schools)	Bespoke packages for staff training days.	Young people report increases in quality of experience at school
The ARC Centre programmes	£8k (Year 2)	Courses and 1;1 support for pupils needing emotional wellbeing through animal care	Individual outcomes in phonics, reading and wellbeing (SDQ)
Online EAL Provision (Flash Academy)	£5,500 (Year 2)	Access to online EAL programme for UASC CLA to support learning English & the move to mainstream education	Young people feel supported in developing their English skills to move to mainstream education
Off The record counselling- for individua and group	£12,000	Access to individual or group counselling in Croydon as required.	Young people have better mental and emotional health
Exceptional circumstances- approved support packages	As needed	For specific cases as need arises	Young people's individual needs are addressed

*****This is intended as a guide spend only- detailed live information will be published to Corporate Parenting panel annually.***

Appendix F: Extracts from statutory guidance and key links

The DfE Conditions of Grant:

“The CLA premium must be managed by the designated virtual school head (VSH) in the local authority that looks after the child and used without delay for the benefit of the looked-after child’s educational needs as described in their personal education plan.

The VSH should ensure there are arrangements in place to discuss how the child will benefit from pupil premium funding with the Designated Teacher or another member of staff in the child’s education setting who best understands their needs. Processes for allocating funds to a child’s education setting should be as simple as possible to avoid delay.”

[The Role of the Designated Teacher for looked after children \(Feb 2018\)](#)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683561/The_designated_teacher_for_looked-after_and_previously_looked-after_children.pdf

41. *For children looked-after, PPG+ funding is managed by the Virtual School Head (VSH) for the purpose of supporting their educational achievement. The VSH and schools, including the Designated Teacher, should work together to agree how this funding can most effectively be used to improve looked-after children’s attainment. All PEPs should include information about how that looked-after child is benefitting from the use of PPG+ funding to improve their attainment.*
42. For previously looked-after children, PPG+ funding is managed by the child’s school. The amount a school receives is based on the number of eligible children recorded in the school’s annual January School Census return to the Department for Education.
43. *For both looked-after and previously looked-after children PPG+ is not a personal budget for individual children. The VSH and school manage their PPG+ allocation for the benefit of their cohort of looked-after or previously looked-after children and according to children’s needs.*