

Report Title:	AfC Virtual School Annual Report 2020-21
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Carroll, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Health and Mental Health
Meeting and Date:	People Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 16 June 2022
Responsible Officer(s):	Lin Ferguson, Director of Children's Social Care and Early Help; Suzanne Parrott, Associate Director, Virtual School
Wards affected:	All

REPORT SUMMARY:

The Annual Report of Achieving for Children's (AfCs) Virtual School (2020/21) (Appendix A) highlights the achievements and progress of students who have been supported by the school during the year and identified areas for further development.

Local authorities have a duty under the Children Act 1989 to safeguard and promote the education of Children in Care wherever they live or are educated. The Children and Families Act 2014 amended the Children Act 1989 to require local authorities in England to appoint a Virtual School Headteacher '*who has the resources, time, training and support needed to discharge the duty effectively*'. A Virtual School Headteacher is the local authorities' lead responsible officer for ensuring that arrangements are in place to improve the educational experiences and outcomes of the authorities' Children in Care and Care Leavers as if they attended a single school.

We know that Children in Care and Care Leavers face significant barriers to achieving good educational outcomes. Narrowing the attainment and progress gap between Children in Care, Care Leavers and their peers; minimising disruption to education and creating a culture of high aspirations are major priorities within Achieving for Children. AfC Virtual School maintains accurate and up-to-date information regarding pupil progress and champions student's rights to educational stability. We do this by providing advice, training and information for social workers, carers and schools; ensuring that each child or young person has an up-to-date education plan and by providing direct early intervention.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That the People Overview and Scrutiny Panel:

i) Notes the Annual Report of Achieving for Children's Virtual School (2020/21), attached as Appendix A

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Options

Table 1: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
<p>Overview and Scrutiny notes the Annual Report of Achieving for Children’s Virtual School (2020/21) attached as Appendix A</p> <p>This is the recommended option</p>	<p>The Annual Report details the progress and achievements of the Virtual School, so that all Members, Officers and partners gain an understanding of how children and young people are benefitting from the service.</p>

Key Highlights from the Virtual School Annual Report 2020/21 (Appendix A)

2.1 Performance outcomes were:

- Attainment 8 42.3% compared with 23.2
- 2Year Stability improved from 71% to 84%
- 95.6% of students attended Good or Outstanding schools
- Average Absence was 3.2% compared with 9.1% nationally for looked after children.
- Persistent Absence was 7% compared with 30.4% Nationally for looked after children.
- Fixed Term Exclusions were 7.3% compared with national average for looked after children of 9.4%
- 99.7% of AfC VS PEPs were completed
- 93.8% of PEPs achieved Good+ rating in QA audit

2.2 Additionally in this year we introduced:

- The Attachment Aware Schools Aware - 9 months training and development across 42 schools
- AfC Virtual College was launched led by a newly recruited Assistant Headteacher and introducing:
 - Educational Pathways for Post 16 students
 - Kingston University Mentoring Programme
 - Enhanced support for NEETs
 - Executive Board approach towards an Attachment Aware Community
- AfC Transition Hub funded by the Youth Endowment Foundation and in collaboration with St Mary’s University and Barnet Virtual School to support new into care.
- Year of Stability- introduction of a Joint AD sign off from Social Care and AfC Virtual School to approve school moves and provide greater scrutiny in this area.

2.3 What’s working well?

- Strong performance vs national indicators
- Reduced NEET KS5 14.9% cf 30.2% 2019 16-25 25% 2020-21 cf 36% 2019-20.
- Transition Hub- Age related expectations 64.8% cohort pre programme 79.8% post
- Transition Hub cohort school attendance- 37.5% pre programme 87.5% post.
- Summer School - ‘My young person absolutely loved this week’ (Carer)
- Previously Looked After ‘Its an amazing service’ (Parent)
- Training ‘Very enjoyable and informative’ (Teacher)

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

3.1 N/A

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

4.1 N/A

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 N/A

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

.6.1 N/A

7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

7.1 N/A

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 There has been no consultation regarding the specific content of this report. However, consultation with stakeholders is embedded within Virtual School practice on an ongoing basis.

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 N/A

10. APPENDICES

10.1 This report is supported by one appendix (A): Annual Report (2020/21) of Achieving for Children's Virtual School [Annual Report 2020-21 AfC Virtual School FINAL.pdf](#)

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

11.1 There are no background documents to this report

12. CONSULTATION – (Mandatory)

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Mandatory: Statutory Officers (or deputies)</i>			
Adele Taylor	Executive Director of Resources/S151 Officer	7.6.22	

Emma Duncan	Deputy Director of Law and Strategy / Monitoring Officer	7.6.22	
<i>Deputies:</i>			
Andrew Vallance	Head of Finance (Deputy S151 Officer)	7.6.22	
Elaine Browne	Head of Law (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	7.6.22	
Karen Shepherd	Head of Governance (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	7.6.22	
<i>Other consultees:</i>			
<i>Directors (where relevant)</i>			
Duncan Sharkey	Chief Executive	7.6.22	
Andrew Durrant	Executive Director of Place	7.6.22	
Kevin McDaniel	Executive Director of Children's Services	7.6.22	
Relevant Cabinet Member(s) consulted	Cabinet Member for: Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Health and Mental Health	7.6.22	

REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
	No	No

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AfC Virtual School

'Together we can achieve!'

Report compiled by
Suzanne Parrott
AfC Virtual School Headteacher



2020-21

Annual Report for AfC Virtual School 2020/21

Executive Summary	3
Overview of AfC Virtual School	5
Performance Area 1: Attainment and Progress	8
Performance Area 2: Attendance and exclusions	15
Performance Area 3: School provision and pupil characteristics	19
Performance Area 4: Personal education plans progress and development	25
Performance Area 5: Training and CPD	29
Performance Area 6: Funding available to the Virtual School.	32
Performance Area 7: Communication and working with others	38
Performance Area 8: Previously Looked After Children	40
Performance Area 9: AfC Transition Hub	44
Performance Area 10 - AfC Virtual College	50
SEND	52
Appendix	55
Glossary	61

Executive Summary

AfC Virtual School Progress and Attainment Outcomes

There were no KS1 or KS2 results in 2020 due to COVID. Richmond achieved Attainment 8 42.3, Kingston 34 and RBWM 34.2 all of which compare favourably with the looked after National Average of 23.2. Children without SEND achieved higher than those with SEND however those with SEND closed the gap with outcomes for non-looked after children with SEND. This suggests that care is a protective factor for children with SEND.

An analysis of sub-cohorts shows that, children were not disadvantaged academically by being placed out of borough and being in care for longer positively impacted on GCSE outcomes. The Average Attainment 8 for students who had been in care since Year 6 was 46.6 whereas the average for those coming into care later in their school career was 28.2. This is in line with 2015 Oxford University/REES centre research findings*. Nationally the Department for Education has extended the duty of Virtual Schools to cover children in need and those with a Child Protection Plan. It is hoped, starting Virtual School involvement pre-care will enable improved attendance and reduced exclusions at this stage with a positive impact on outcomes in care. 96.6% of young people who were able to be entered for examinations had school stability in KS4. This compares with the whole cohort of eligible young people who experienced 85% stability. Education stability is a key component in enabling our children to achieve and to this end we have introduced a school move authorisation form with sign off from Social Care and Virtual School Associate Directors. Two Year School stability in 2021 improved from 78% to 84% in Kingston; 71% to 84% in RBWM and maintained 72% in Richmond.

Students who attended an Outstanding school had a higher chance of achieving at GCSE than those in a Good or Requires Improvement School. The Average Attainment 8 for students at Outstanding schools was 49.2 for Good it was 29.2 and Requires Improvement only 11.3. This supports the AfC Virtual School policy to place in Good and Outstanding schools with 95.5% in Richmond, 95.6% in RBWM and 91.1% in Kingston..

Numbers of Students in Key Stage Five who achieved positive outcomes in A level and Level 3 qualifications generally improved with Richmond showing 57.1% of the cohort up from 25% in 2020; Kingston 25% up from 11% and a slight drop in RBWM from 22% in 2020 to 18.2% in 2021. These positive outcomes are thanks to the development of additional support provided from the newly established AfC Virtual College.

Average Absence in Richmond was 6.4% a rise from 4% pre COVID in 2019. In Kingston Average Absence was 4.5% marginally up from 4.5% in 2019 and in RBWM there was an improvement on pre COVID Average Absence at 3.2% down from 3.7% (2019). The Average Absence for looked After Children in 2021 was 9.1% showing that across the board AfC Virtual School attendance was significantly better than national peers. Persistent Absence figures Nationally for looked after children in 2021 was high at 30.4%, our figures although considerably below National averages for peers, were higher than pre COVID figures in Richmond (20.5%) and Kingston (13.5%). However, in RBWM we saw improvements in Persistent Absence at 7% compared with 6.7% in 2019.

**<http://www.education.ox.ac.uk/research/linking-care-and-educational-data-the-educational-progress-of-looked-after-children-in-england/>*

One or more Fixed Term Exclusions were reduced from 2020 with 7.4% in Richmond, 4.9% in Kingston and 7.3% in RBWM. For both Kingston and RBWM these were the lowest figures in the last three years and compared positively with national averages for looked after children (9.4%). PEP completion and quality remains strong across AfC Virtual School with 99.7% total completion and 93.8% documents quality assured as Good or Outstanding.

Whole School Developments

This year we introduced and developed several key new initiatives all identified to increase school stability:

The Attachment Aware Schools Award

This was devised by the Executive Headteacher and Lead Educational Psychologist and launched in October 2020. The programme includes coaching from Educational Psychologists, regular Designated Teacher training and whole school training for all participating schools in Attachment and Emotion Coaching. An initial Attachment Audit enables schools to identify areas for development and an area is selected as the Whole School Change Project. AfC Virtual School funded membership of the Attachment Research Community for delegate schools. In July 2021 the first Attachment Aware Schools Awards were held showcasing school improvement projects and awarding Attachment Aware Schools Plaques. AfC Virtual School is compiling a report on school outcomes which will be published in 2021-22 along with a booklet of school attachment profiles.

AfC Virtual College

AfC Virtual College was opened in September 2020 offering support for the 16-25 age group. This included mentoring with Kingston University; Education Excellence Pathways; strategies to increase those in Education, Employment and Training and the establishment of Executive Boards to champion an Attachment Aware Community approach. Activities led to a reduction in those not in education employment and training and an increase in examinations taken and students accessing University.

AfC Transition Hub

In the Autumn Term 2019 AfC Virtual School was successful in being awarded a Youth Endowment Foundation bid to research the impact of a Transition Hub on new into care education stability. We recruited and trained five new members of staff and partnered Barnet Virtual School and St Mary's University in this exciting development. Our Transition Hub was established in The Richmond upon Thames School in March 2020 just as we went into lockdown. Staff in the Transition Hub developed a parallel virtual offer to ensure that the provision could continue to support our children. Due to positive results showing reductions in absence and a rise in students achieving age expected attainment we have been given an extension of this research to December 2022 transitioning from the Feasibility Study to an Impact Study.

Year of Stability

2020-21 was our Year of Stability evident in training offered to teams and the introduction of the two associate director sign off which provides an opportunity for multi-agency scrutiny of any planned school move. This has been successful and stability has improved. We are continuing this focus into 2021-22 and planning a young people's Stability Pledge.

Overview of AfC Virtual School

Purpose of the Annual Report

The purpose of the Annual Report is to outline the achievement and progress of pupils within AfC Virtual School in 2020-21; to acknowledge our successes and identify areas for development.

Data contained within this report is for children looked after by Achieving for Children on behalf of Kingston, Richmond and Windsor & Maidenhead local authorities with particular reference to those who have been in care for a year or more as of 31 March 2021.

This report will be presented to the corporate parenting groups in Kingston, Richmond and Windsor and Maidenhead; AfC Virtual School Board of Governors and the Children in Care Councils.

AfC Virtual School operates a distributed leadership approach and this report is a collective achievement from a range of professionals.

Context

Local authorities have a duty under the Children Act 1989 to safeguard and promote the education of children in care wherever they live or are educated. The Children and Families Act 2014 amended the Children Act 1989 to require local authorities in England to appoint a Virtual School Headteacher 'who has the resources, time, training and support needed to discharge the duty effectively'.

A Virtual School Headteacher is the local authorities' lead responsible officer for ensuring that arrangements are in place to improve the educational experiences and outcomes of the authorities' children looked after as if they attended a single school.

Achieving for Children is a social enterprise company created by the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames and the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames to provide their children's services. Since October 2017 this has included the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. In January 2016, Kingston's and Richmond's education services for looked after children were united as one school under the name 'AfC Virtual School' with a further expansion to include the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead in October 2017. AfC Virtual School benefits from working within an organisation where the education of looked after children is seen as a priority.

The role of AfC Virtual School

We know that children looked after and care leavers face significant barriers to achieving good educational outcomes. Narrowing the attainment and progress gap between children looked after, care leavers and their peers; minimising disruption to education and creating a culture of high aspirations are major priorities within Achieving for Children.

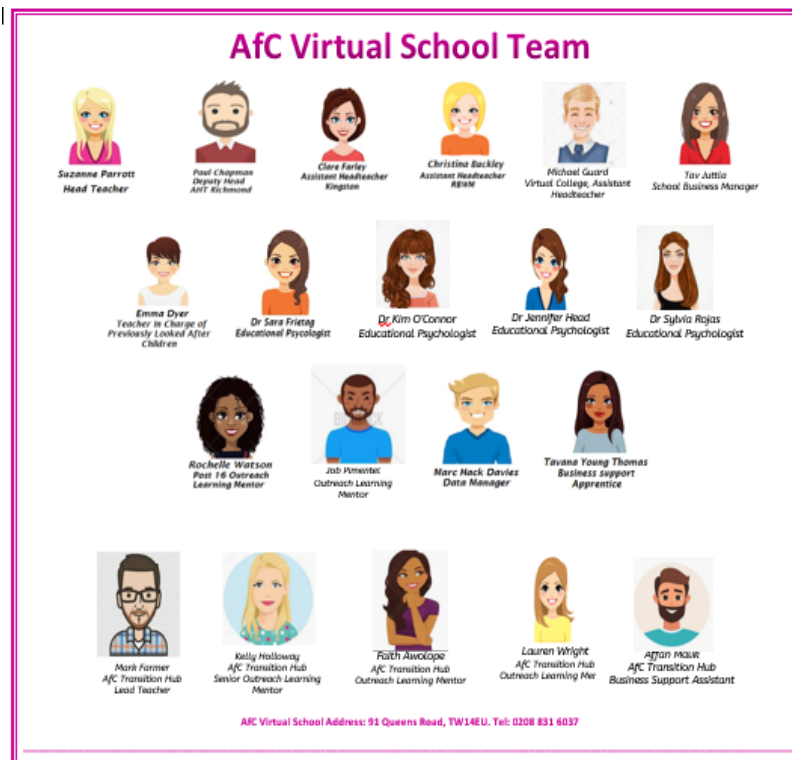
AfC Virtual School maintains accurate and up-to-date information regarding pupil progress and champions student's rights to educational stability. We do this by providing advice, training and information for social workers, carers and schools; ensuring that each child or young person has an up-to-date education plan and by providing direct early intervention.

Staffing structure of AfC Virtual School

AfC Virtual School is led by the Executive Headteacher, with the support of a Deputy Headteacher who has responsibility for the Richmond cohort and with Assistant Headteachers providing day-to-day operational management of Kingston, Windsor & Maidenhead and AfC Virtual College cohorts. A School Business Manager completes the leadership team in AfC Virtual School and oversees financial budgets; organises training events and manages the day to day administration of the school, college and Transition Hub.

AfC Virtual School has a team of Outreach Learning Mentors and Educational Psychologists who provide targeted, time-bonded interventions to meet student needs. The Performance Analysis Manager ensures that statutory requirements around information are met through effective gathering, processing and distribution of data. A team of professionals in AfC Transition Hub provide wrap around support for new into care students promoting ongoing educational stability.

AfC Virtual School is located within the Social Care Directorate and line-managed by the Director of Social Care in RBWM. AfC Virtual School's Executive Headteacher provides strategic leadership and is accountable to a Board of Governors, Corporate Parenting Groups and the Children in Care Councils. The Chair of Governors for AfC Virtual School is the Director of Education in Richmond and Kingston, highlighting the focus on educational attainment and progress. AfC Virtual School works with School Improvement Partners and maintains strong working relationships with agencies across Achieving for Children, especially the looked after and leaving care teams.



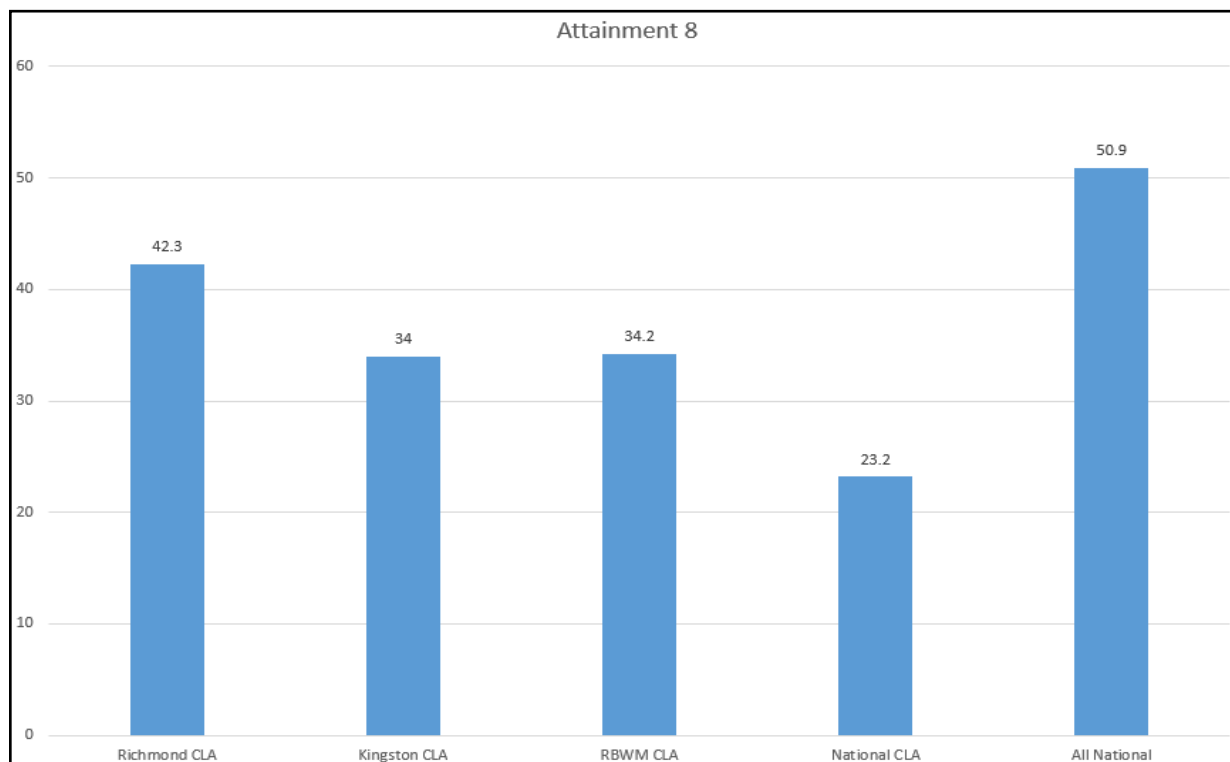
Mission statement

The ten areas of our mission statement are adapted from the 'High Level Responsibilities for Local Authorities' as set out in 'Promoting the Education of Children Looked After' (February 2018). These golden threads are the foundation of our annual reporting, leadership areas and school improvement planning.

- 1. Attainment and progress:** We are committed to closing the attainment and progress gap between children looked after and their peers through tracking of data and provision of interventions. We promote a culture of high aspirations.
- 2. Attendance and exclusions:** We rigorously monitor attendance and exclusions and act promptly to minimise absence and reduce exclusions.
- 3. Educational provision:** We ensure that children looked after have access to a suitable range of high quality education placement options that promote pupils' educational achievement. We champion educational stability and have strategies in place to support transition.
- 4. PEPs:** We have robust systems to ensure up-to-date, effective and high quality electronic PEPs which drive forward improvement.
- 5. Training and CPD:** We structure an annual training programme to meet the needs of those responsible for promoting the educational achievement of children looked after.
- 6. Pupil Premium and funding:** We have systems in place to delegate Pupil Premium Plus to our school placements and AfC Virtual School uses funds imaginatively to raise attainment and improve wellbeing. We routinely monitor the impact of this spending to improve student outcomes.
- 7. Communication and working with others:** We work together with partners to ensure that the educational achievement of children looked after by the authority is seen as a priority by everyone who has responsibilities for promoting their welfare. We regularly update our records so that effective information, reporting and data systems are in place.
- 8. Previously Looked After Children:** We are committed to closing the attainment and progress gap between previously looked after children and their peers through providing comprehensive information and advice to parents, educators and other professionals to promote the educational achievement of this group.
- 9. AfC Transition Hub:** a feasibility study investigating whether adolescents new to care, or who experience a placement breakdown, can experience greater stability in their school and care placements and reduced negative outcomes as a result of wrap-around support.
- 10. AfC Virtual College:** established to create pathways for students from 16-25 promoting an attachment aware community with the result of reducing students not in education, employment or training and raising aspirations.

Performance Area 1: Attainment and progress

Progress and attainment at Key Stage 4



KS4 Outcomes

	2019	2020	2021
Number of pupils Richmond	6 33% SEND	9 56% SEND	8 37.5% SEND
Number of pupils Kingston	11 63% SEND	8 75% SEND	7 85.7% SEND
Number of pupils RBWM	8 38% SEND	7 57% SEND	14 42.9% SEND
Average attainment 8 - (overall)			
Richmond CLA	47.8	34.2	42.3
Kingston CLA	31.6	34.5	34
RBWM CLA	29.3	29.4	34.2
National CLA	19.1	21.4	23.2
All National	44.6	50.2	50.9

2021 Attainment 8	With SEND	Without SEND	All Cohort
Richmond CLA	34.3	50.2	42.3
Kingston CLA	33.5	35.4	34
RBWM CLA	21.1	44	34.2
National CLA	15.4 (2019)	30.8	23.2
All National	30.7	53.7	50.9

% Entering EBACC	2019	2020	2021
Richmond CLA	20	33	12.5
Kingston CLA	12.5	25	0
RBWM CLA	50	14	21.4
National CLA	9	10.2	9.4
All National	35	39.8	38.7

Av. Point Score EBACC	2019	2020	2021
Richmond CLA	14	23.7	40
Kingston CLA	9.1	19.7	0
RBWM CLA	8	18.7	33
National CLA	1.52	1.7	1.8
All National	3.84	4.4	4.5

English and Maths	2019 Grade 4+	2020 Grade 4+	2021 Grade 4+	2020 Grade 5+	2021 Grade 5+
Richmond CLA	75	44	62.5	11	35.7
Kingston CLA	25	50	57.1	37.5	26.8
RBWM CLA	50	43	42.9	14	21.4
National CLA	7.2*			10.9	12.6
All National/*grade 5	39.5*			49.9	51.9

Comment and analysis on Key Stage 4 progress and attainment

Richmond

The Key Stage Four (OC2) cohort in Richmond comprised of 15 students, this is up from 13 the previous year. Of these, 8 were entered for GCSE examinations. The Average Attainment 8 score for Richmond was 42.3 which is an increase on 2020 (34.2) & well above the National average for children looked after of 23.2. Looking at students without Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) the Attainment 8 figure increases to 50.2. 12.5% of students of the cohort were entered for The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) compared with 10.2% of children looked after nationally. 62.5% of Year 11s achieved English and Maths GCSE Grade 4 which is an increase from 2020 (44%). 37.5% achieved English and Maths GCSE Grade 5 which is also an increase on 2020 (11%) and above the national average (10.9%) for children looked after.

Kingston CLA

The Key Stage Four (OC2) cohort in Kingston had 9 students who had been in the care of the local authority for more than one year (OC2) of whom 7 were entered for GCSE examinations. The Average Attainment 8 score for Kingston was 34 (34.5 in 2019) which is substantially above the National average for Looked After Children of 23.2. No students were entered for the The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) compared with 10.2% of looked after pupils nationally. 57.1% of Year 11s achieved English and Maths GCSE Grade 4 and 28.6% achieved English & Maths GCSE Grade 5. This is above the national average of 10.9% for children looked after.

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

The Key Stage Four (OC2) cohort in Windsor & Maidenhead had 16 students who had been in the care of the local authority for more than one year (OC2) of whom 14 were entered for GCSE examinations. The year 11 cohort achieved an Average Attainment 8 of 34.2 comparing positively with their national peers at 23.2. Looking at students without Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) the Attainment 8 figure increases to 44. 21.4% of the eligible cohort were entered for The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) compared with 10.2% nationally. 43% of Year 11s achieved English and Maths GCSE Grade 4 and 21.4% achieved English & Maths GCSE Grade 5. This is above the national average for looked after children attaining Grade 5 of 10.9%.

Progress and attainment at Key Stage 5

Analysis of Key stage 5 outcomes

OC2 Achievement of A Level or L3 qualification*

Area	Year	Percentage (inc. UASC)	Percentage (exec. UASC)
Richmond	2020	12.9%	25%
	2021	33.3%	57.1%
Kingston	2020	8.3%	11%
	2021	13.3%	25%
RBWM	2020	16%	22%
	2021	15.4%	18.2%

Comment and analysis of Key Stage 5 outcomes

Richmond

In 2021 there were 12 Year 13 looked after children who had been in care for a year or more in the Richmond cohort. 84.6% (11) of these students were entered for and passed exams. Exams were selected as appropriate to ability and included ESOL qualifications, GCSE and Functional Skills. Personal Education Plan completion figures for Post 16 were 94% completion for the Autumn Term and 100% in Spring and Summer Terms which maintains the high level of success from the previous year.

NEET figures for Y12 - 13s in Richmond remained well below the national average at 16% in July 2021. This was a slight increase from 15.6% at the end of 2019-20. This represents an improvement trend since July 2016 where NEETs were recorded at 30%.

Kingston

In 2021 there were 24 Year 13 looked after children who had been in care for a year or more in the Kingston cohort of AfC Virtual School. In the Kingston Cohort of AfC Virtual School 75% (15) of these students were entered for and passed exams These ranged from ESOL qualifications, functional skills to GCSE and A Levels. PEP completion figures for Post 16 remained consistently high across the school year. with 100% completion rates across all three terms. Quality of Post 16 PEPs was 87% a slight decline from 90% last year

NEET figures for Y12 - 13s in Kingston as of July 2021 were 20.6% this is slightly raised from the previous year but compares positively with the national average of 28.5%.

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

In 2021 there were 15 Year 13 looked after children who had been in care for a year or more in the RBWM cohort of AfC Virtual School. Ten of these students were entered for and passed exams (67%). These ranged from ESOL qualifications for two students to A Level exams for four students and other entry level/GCSE exams for four students. PEP completion figures for Post 16 were consistently high across the three terms with 100% completion in Autumn and Spring Terms and 98% in Summer 2021.

NEET figures for Y12 - 13s in the OC2 RBWM cohort fell to 14.2% in July 2021 from 35% at the end of 2019-2020. This final figure is half of the national average for CLA.

Evaluation of Performance Area 1, the attainment and progress of children looked after and care leavers

How good is the attainment and progress of children looked after?

The KS4 the Average Attainment 8 for AfC Virtual School was 36.4, 5 points above our average last year and 13.2 points above the statistics for National looked after peers (23.2). The percentage of pupils across AfC Virtual School cohorts achieving English & Maths 4+ was 51.7% up from 45.8% in 2020 which compares favourably with the National CLA average (2018) of 17.5%. Those achieving English and Maths 5+ was 27.6% for AfC Virtual School as compared with 12.6% for looked after national peers.

AfC VS looked after students with SEND achieved average Attainment 8 of 28.8 raised from 2019's 28.7. This is closing the gap with the National Attainment 8 figure for all students with SEND of 30.7 and significantly improves on the National Attainment 8 for looked after children at 15.4%.

Being placed in an Ofsted Outstanding school yields better outcomes for our children than if they are placed in Good schools. We have a policy to place in the highest rated school possible with the vast majority of our children accessing Good or better graded education.

School stability has a dramatic impact on outcomes at KS4. 2020-21 has seen a focus on the Attachment Aware Schools Award, branding the 2020-21 'The Year of Stability'. Of the 29 young people entered for examinations in Year 11 only one had a school move in KS4.

In September 2020 we opened AfC Virtual College promoting increased access to higher education and further reduction of NEETs. There have been reductions overall in 16-25 NEET figures with 23.5% in July 2021 compared with 32% in October 2020. AfC Virtual School KS5 NEET percentages were at 17.4% compared to 28.5% nationally. 17.4% of students in KS5 transitioned to University as compared with 6% nationally for care leavers nationally.

AfC Virtual School Attainment and Progress offer a Good service showing continued improvements and developments during COVID.

What is the evidence of AfC Virtual School's impact on improving the educational

experiences and outcomes of children looked after and care leavers?

AfC Virtual School worked with all students across Year 6 to put in place a range of interventions including one-to-one support, outreach worker visits and pupil premium funded activities. Additionally, AfC Virtual School ensured that a transition package was in place for all students, including designated teachers from secondary school attending the last Year 6 PEP meeting.

AfC Virtual School tracks pupil progress using the school Performance Tracker and Mountains Document which identifies students in ability groups and facilitates targeted interventions. Additionally, we hold Learning and Progress meetings, where professionals discuss each student, examine the interventions around them and set targets to ensure students in all years groups are achieving and progressing.

AfC Virtual School provides challenge, where necessary, to ensure that the educational needs of children in care are not overlooked. AfC Virtual School's expertise and recommendations are respected by other professionals who involve the Virtual School in care planning, attend our training events and are supportive of new initiatives to raise the profile of education. In turn, AfC Virtual School is committed to close working with our valued partners in schools and across Achieving for Children. AfC Virtual School representatives regularly attend professionals meetings to champion the education of children looked after. Where more detailed follow up work the outreach worker provides targeted, time-bonded interventions to assist in closing the gap.

AfC Virtual School Performance Analysis Manager effectively gathers and tracks data around progress and attainment through the Virtual School performance tracker. AfC Virtual School interrogates attainment, progress and attendance data to assess, review and plan interventions in a similar way to a physical school. Performance is a running item at AfC Virtual School's Learning and Progress meetings where outcomes are challenged and appropriate interventions discussed.

Were the Areas for Development set in the 2019-20 Annual Report met?

Development Area set for 2020-21	What were the outcomes?
Meet the needs of students as they return to school post lock down.	Examination results, PEP quality and completion rates and feedback from training suggest that needs are being supported. Attendance is still a concern.
Provide dedicated support for boys to achieve	Boys are supported to achieve with an Average Attainment 8 of 30.1 compared with the national Average Attainment 8 for looked after of 23.2. However, girls in AfC Virtual School achieve better (Average Attainment 8 41.4). Continued support during KS4 and early intervention to address why boys underachieve is ongoing.
Improve stability of education	The 'Year of Stability' with training; new school move authorisation form, Attachment Aware Schools's Award, AfC Transition Hub and AfC Virtual College combine to improve stability. Education Stability is now monitored at monthly PQI. Richmond maintained at 72% 2 year school

Development Area set for 2020-21	What were the outcomes?
	stability while RBWM and Kingston improved significantly to 85%
Raise the achievement of White British children through individualised support	This is still an underachieving area in Kingston and RBWM however White British in Richmond are a high performing group. (see Appendix 1 Interrogation of Results document). It is important, with such small data samples, to not come to snap conclusions. In AfC Virtual School our approach is individualised to meet presenting need.
Ensure consistent, accurate data gathering for the tracker, PEPs and Reports	Keen efforts have been taken to cleanse data and this is an ongoing effort. AfC Virtual School is rich in information and provides a valuable resource.
Ensure a programme of 'Mountain Streams' (Intervention) is in place.	This work has begun and will continue to triangulate specific needs with intervention opportunities.
Make readily available 'Pupil on a Page' key information and targets to share with key professionals.	The system has been created however is not yet embedded in practice.
Develop a 'Virtual College Approach' to reduce NEETs and raise aspirations	AfC Virtual College has made significant strides in the first year with impact already demonstrated in outcomes and feedback.
Develop the Careers Support available to our children.	The learning mentor in AfC Virtual College has been able to offer some support here however, this remains a key target for 2021-22. Additionally, Outreach workers across the school are developing their understanding and use of the careers tool we use in AfC Virtual School.

What are the key areas for improvement for 2021-22?

The areas for improvement for Mission Statement One in 2021-22 are:

- Improve the Attendance of Looked After Children understanding the causes of absence and addressing them with appropriate interventions
- Embed the School Move Authorisation Form; create a Pupil Voice Stability Pledge, develop the Attachment Aware Schools Award and introduce a Stability Symposium.
- Offer a wide range of interventions and extracurricular activities matched to support specific needs.
- Through AfC Virtual College further expand opportunities for Post 16 young people including Careers guidance.

Performance Area 2: Attendance and exclusions

National Data	2018	2019	2020	2021
% National Absence for Looked After Children	4.5	4.7	5%*	9.1
% National Absence for All Children	4.8	4.7	5.5%*	4.6
% National Persistent Absence for Looked After Children	10.6	10.9	12.5%*	30.4
% National Persistent Absence for All Children	11.2	10.9	13.4%*	12.3
% National Looked After Children with one or more fixed term exclusion	11.7	11.4	9.4	
% National All Children with one or more fixed term exclusion	2.3	2.6	2	
% National Looked After Children with permanent exclusion	0.05	0.1	0.05	
% National All Children with permanent exclusion	0.1	0.1	0.06	
% National Looked After NEET 16-18/KS5	28%	28%	28.5%	28.5%
% National Looked After NEET 19-21	39%	39%	40%	40%

* Please note that attendance 2020 indicators are taken from Autumn 2019. The last full term before COVID-19

Local Data	Richmond			Kingston			RBWM		
	2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021
Percentage of absence R-Year 11 (OC2)	4	Covid 19	6.4	4.1	Covid 19	4.5	3.7	Covid 19	3.2
Percentage of pupils with persistent absence (OC2)	5.7	Covid 19	20.5	9.6	Covid 19	13.5	6.7	Covid 19	7
Percentage with one or more fixed term exclusion	4.8	8.1	7.4	6.1	8.6	4.9	10.8	9.1	7.3
Percentage with permanent exclusion	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Percentage 16-18/KS5 Not in Education Employment and Training	18.9%	20%	16%	20.5%	18.6%	20.6%	30.2%	18.2%	14.9%
Percentage 16-25 Not in Education Employment and Training	Not collected	34.2%	23.2%	Not collected	28.1%	27%	Not collected	36%	25%

Comment and analysis on attendance and exclusions

Attendance continues to be closely monitored through daily absence logs and Half termly 'Deep Dive' meetings to further explore patterns of absence and ensure appropriate strategies are in place. Absence data is presented to the Social Care Performance Boards on a monthly basis with pupil level breakdowns provided to raise awareness of the students behind the statistics. Attendance is rewarded termly with Attendance Certificates and at the annual Celebration of Achievement Awards as part of the Education section led by AfC Virtual School.

Richmond

Average Absence in Richmond was 6.4%, a rise from 4% pre COVID in 2019, this is still below the Average Absence for looked After Children in 2021 which was 9.1%. Persistent Absence figures Nationally for looked after children in 2021 were 30.4%. Our figures, although considerably below National averages for peers, were higher than pre COVID in Richmond, at 20.5%, as compared with 5.7% in 2019. The overall NEET figure for those aged 16-25 fell 11% from 34.2% in 2020 to 23.2% by the end of 2021.

Kingston

In Kingston Average Absence was 4.5%, marginally up from 4.1% in 2019 and below the Average Absence for looked After Children in 2021, which was 9.1%. Persistent Absence in Kingston was 13.5%, as compared with 30.4% for national peers, up from 9.6% in 2019. The overall NEET figure was roughly maintained for those aged 16-25 against the previous academic year of 27% compared with 28.1% in 2020.

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

In RBWM there was an improvement on pre COVID Average Absence at 3.2% down from 3.7% (2019) Persistent Absence was at 7% compared with 6.7% in 2019. The overall NEET figure for those aged 16-25 had been reduced by 11% compared to the same point in 2020 from 36% to 25% and reduced by 10% from 24.9% in 2020 to 14.9% for those in KS5 over the same period.

One or more Fixed Term Exclusions were reduced from 2020 in all three local authority areas with 7.4% in Richmond, 4.9% in Kingston and 7.3% in RBWM. For both Kingston and RBWM these were the lowest figures in the last three years and compared positively with national averages for looked after children (9.4%).

Evaluation of Performance Area 2: Attendance and exclusions

How good is the attendance of children looked after?

Across AfC Virtual School cohorts we achieved better attendance than for national peers. Prior to the pandemic, in Richmond persistent absence reduced by 3.4% from 2017 to 5.7% in 2019. Kingston's persistent absence had seen a year on year improvement trend and reduced significantly to 9.6% in 2019 compared with 27% in 2016. In Windsor and

Maidenhead persistent absence had reduced considerably to 6.7% in 2019 from 17.3% in 2017.

In 2021 Average Absence in Richmond rose above pre COVID levels, Kingston maintained and in RBWM there was a reduction in Absence. National looked after absence rose to 9.1% up from 4.5% in 2019.

Persistent Absence both nationally and locally is more of a concern with increased absence in all areas, in particular Richmond.

AfC Virtual School continues a trend of zero permanent exclusion closing the gap with the national data for both looked after and all pupils. All cohorts of AfC Virtual School are improved on National looked after fixed term exclusion statistics.

In all three Local Authorities, NEET figures showed a general improvement trend due to the strengthened strategies in place from the establishment of a virtual college approach.

Taking the performance of all three cohorts into consideration and the context of COVID we evaluate our work to promote attendance and reduce exclusions as 'Good'.

What is the evidence of the virtual schools impact on improving the attendance and exclusion performance of children looked after and care leavers?

It is likely that AfC Virtual School's 'Year of Stability' and the pilot 'School move authorisation form' in RBWM will have provided stability during a difficult period. Additionally, it could be that the introduction of the Attachment Aware Schools Award provided some protection for attendance along with the considerable case level support provided by AfC Virtual School.

AfC Virtual School works collaboratively with partners to ensure that, except in an emergency, all students are attending school and where this is temporarily not possible they have access to one-to-one tuition. Ongoing improvement in Attendance continues to be addressed through a variety of strategies.

- A shared understanding with colleagues in social care of the need to source schools at the same time as care moves and, except in an emergency, for these moves to be planned in advance with AfC Virtual School to avoid absence from education
- AfC Virtual School continues to use Pupil Premium Plus funds to invest in attendance rewards distributed termly to students who improve or excel.
- Students missing education or on reduced timetables are monitored closely with a view to re-engaging in full time, appropriate education without drift. AfC Virtual School liaises with colleagues in SEND to promote timely allocation of schools.
- AfC Virtual School Educational Psychologists provide targeted work with schools to support our students with Education, Health and Care Plans.
- AfC Virtual School Assistant/ Deputy headteachers attend PEPs where attendance is a concern and the outreach worker provides targeted intervention for students at risk of permanent exclusion.
- Through our training of partners we aim to promote strategies and increase understanding in order to further reduce exclusions.

- Individual plans are in place for all students of concern. Key reasons for absence were COVID, school moves and mental health.

What are the key areas for improvement?

Were the Areas for Development set in the 2019-20 Annual Report met?

Development Area set for 2020-21	What were the outcomes?
Support School Attendance during COVID	Attendance has been supported and continues to be a priority
Support return to 'new normal' through PEPs, training and case work	Transition to new normal by supporting colleagues and young people via PEPs, Attachment Aware Schools Award and other training events.
Monitor average absence and persistent absence so we see a return to usual high standards that are below National CLA percentages.	Absence has been monitored and will remain a priority for 2021-22
Support School Moves Sign Off to reduce School moves, particularly in KS4 with an impact on NEET levels and access to college.	School Move Sign Off document embedded in RBWM and agreed for use in Ops 1 from September 2021.

What are the Areas for Development for 2021-22?

- Develop a new Attendance Strategy
- Monitor Persistently Absent students at Children Causing Concern meetings
- Monitor Persistently Absent students using RAG comparing prior data to assess improvement. Share and discuss at Governors meetings.
- Embed the School Authorisation Form across AfC

Performance Area 3: School Provision and Pupil Characteristics

Number of students in AfC Virtual School, 31 July 2021

	2018/2019			2019/2020			2020/2021		
	LBR	RBK	RBWM	LBR	RBK	RBWM	LBR	RBK	RBWM
Early years	5	10	3	3	5	7	8	7	11
Statutory school age	60	77	81	72	77	75	67	78	89
Post-16	64	62	44	62	60	43	64	68	31
Total	129	149	128	137	142	125	139	153	133
% R-11 with SEND/EHC	56	47	24	53	51	43	61.8	49.4	39
-% of national population with SSEN/EHCP	15	15	15	15.3	15.3	15.3	15.6	15.6	15.6

School Stability in a two year period

	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
Richmond	70%	72%	72%
Kingston	76%	78%	84%
RBWM	73%	71%	84%

Children's Commissioner, Stability Index Report, August, 2020 (Placements)

	0 placement moves over 1 year	2+ placement moves over 1 year	0 placement moves over 2 years	3+ placement moves over 2 years
Richmond	67%	13%	52.9%	10%
Kingston	72.9%	9.3%	53.9%	10.1%
RBWM	63.7%	15.3%	46.7%	17.3%

Breakdown of provision and key pupil characteristics: In/Out of borough

		2018/19			2019/20			2020/21		
		In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Statutory school age	Richmond	24	39	63	26	48	74	22	46	68
	Kingston	34	49	83	31	50	81	30	48	78
	RBWM	38	45	83	41	36	77	51	42	93
Mainstream	Richmond	16	22	38	20	26	46	20	24	44
	Kingston	21	34	55	21	37	58	27	32	59
	RBWM	36	32	68	37	27	64	50	29	79
Special school	Richmond	0	14	14	0	15	15	1	19	20
	Kingston	6	11	17	4	12	16	1	16	17
	RBWM	1	7	8	1	7	8	1	9	10
Alternative provision	Richmond	0	3	3	0	7	7	0	3	3
	Kingston	1	4	5	2	1	3	1	0	1
	RBWM	0	6	6	0	2	2	0	4	4
NOR	Richmond	4	0	4	6	0	6	1	0	1
	Kingston	3	0	3	4	0	4	1	0	1
	RBWM	1	0	1	3	0	3	0	0	0

		2018/19			2019/20			2020/21		
EHCP	Richmond	12	23	35	12	27	39	11	31	42
	Kingston	11	28	39	10	31	41	13	27	40

	RBWM	9	13	22	18	17	35	19	18	37
UASC in college	Richmond	1	21	22	1	28	29	2	20	22
	Kingston	6	17	23	6	16	22	5	14	19
	RBWM	1	8	9	0	8	8	0	3	0
% of UASC in all key stages including KS5	Richmond	14	31	45	6	34	40	8	25	33
	Kingston	16	23	39	18	23	41	14	22	36
	RBWM	3	10	13	0	9	9	5	0	5

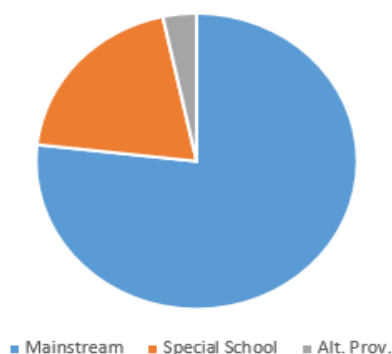
School provision grading

			% Good or Better	% RI	% Awaiting grading
2018/2019	Richmond	In	87.5	12.5	
		Out	94.9	5.1	
		Total	92.7	7.3	
	Kingston	In	88.9	7.4	3.7
		Out	91.3	6.5	2.2
		Total	90.4	6.9	2.7
	RBWM	In	94.6	2.7	2.7
		Out	97.7	2.3	
		Total	96.3	2.5	1.2
2019/2020	Richmond	In	95	5	0
		Out	89.6	8.3	2.1
		Total	92.4	6.1	1.5
	Kingston	In	81.5	11.1	7.4
		Out	90.2	5.9	3.9
		Total	87	7.8	5.2
	RBWM	In	92.1	7.9	0
		Out	97.1	0	2.9
		Total	94.4	4.2	1.4
2020/2021	Richmond	In	95.2	4.8	0
		Out	95.7	4.3	0
		Total	95.5	4.5	0
	Kingston	In	90	10	0
		Out	91.7	6.3	2
		Total	91.1	7.6	1.3
	RBWM	In	92	8	0
		Out	100	0	0
		Total	95.6	4.4	0

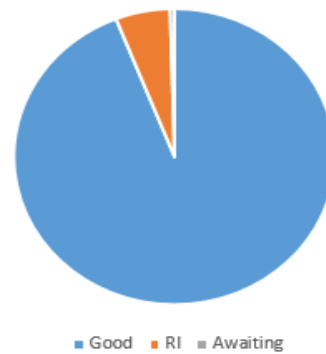
In/Out Borough Provision SSA



Provision Type SSA



OFSTED Grade SSA



Comment and analysis of Performance Area 3

The number of pupils in AfC virtual school has risen by 19 pupils in the last couple of years. School stability has remained the same in Richmond and increased in Kingston and RBWM. Out of a total cohort* of statutory school age children of 260, 47 young people (18%) have experienced a school move in the last 2 years.

**all students including those in care for a year or more and those in care for less than a year*
Looking at the 47 students who moved schools the highest proportion were in KS4:

EYFS	KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4
4.5% (2)	6.5%(3)	30%(14)	21%(10)	38%(18)

Whereas if we consider school moves in relation to cohort size the greatest percentage of school moves occur in KS2. All of these moves were to long term carers.

EYFS	KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4
8%	16%	28%	13.5%	20%

47% (22/47) of the young people who experienced a move have an EHCP. These moves were due to moving from mainstream to a specialist placement or that the school placement closed or were no longer able to meet the young person's needs.

Other common trends were moves to an alternative provision; moves due to placement breakdown or Child Sexual Exploitation risks; moves to secure accommodation and moves when coming into care.

When a school move has happened AfC Virtual School works with the current and new school to provide as smooth a transition as possible. If this means a period out of school AfC Virtual

School ensures that online tuition is available to that young person. Due to COVID, many schools were providing online learning, and therefore were able to support young people until they started their new provision.

Links with SEND have also improved this year to promote timely moves, without drift. A school stability authorisation form has just been piloted in RBWM where all school moves need to be approved at associate director level of the Virtual School and Social Care

No young people were placed in Requires Improvement schools this academic year. There are 11 young people in Requires Improvement schools, 3 in Kingston, 5 in RBWM, 3 in Richmond. 5 of these are in borough schools and 6 are in out of borough schools and all were in these schools when they came into care or the school went into Requires Improvement from a higher grade. For the stability of these young people AfC Virtual School has kept them in their schools and put Risk assessments in place. 7 of these young people are in Yr2, 6 and 11 and will be moving to new good + provisions in September.

At the end of the Summer Term 2021 there were four children not on roll. One each in Richmond and RBWM and two in Kingston. All four were KS4 UASC's who had arrived late in the Summer Term and had school placements arranged for September. For all young people a programme of education was offered online.

Evaluation of Performance Area 3: School provision and pupil characteristics

How well does the virtual school secure appropriate high quality education?

AfC Virtual School works closely with social workers to ensure that very few children miss education because they do not have a school place. When a pupil comes into care AfC Virtual School is informed and supports provision of a school place. The expectation is to find a school place in advance of, or simultaneously with, a placement move. We balance the risk caused by leaving a new into care student in a Requires Improvement School with the importance of educational stability. Where a young person comes into care in a school of a lower Ofsted grading the Virtual School conducts a risk assessment and monitors closely. School provision data is reported monthly to the Performance Board in Social Care and raised at 'Students Causing Concern' meetings with Assistant Headteachers and the Executive Virtual School Headteacher.

AfC Virtual School provides a Good service, securing high quality education for the great majority of its pupils and closing the gap not only with looked after but non-looked after peers. This high standard has been maintained despite significant numbers of out of borough placements requiring more out of borough visits and complex negotiations with out of borough admissions teams.

What is the evidence of the virtual schools impact on improving the educational experiences and outcomes of children looked after and care leavers?

AfC Virtual School has effective partnerships with schools, social workers, admissions teams and SEND. AfC Virtual School secures high quality education for its pupils with the percentage

of pupils in 'Good' or 'Outstanding' schools improved from 2019-20. Investment in TLC Live, an online tuition service, offers the opportunity of rapid provision of education where students are out of school.

The 'Year of Stability' and introduction of the school move authorisation form have seen positive impact on two year stability rates in Kingston and RBWM with Richmond maintaining standards from the previous year.

What are the key areas for improvement?

Were the Areas for Development set in the 2019-20 Annual Report met?

Development Area set for 2020-21	What were the outcomes?
Target: Promote an education stability culture and improve school two year stability aiming for 85% by 2021.	Achieved in RBWM and Kingston. On going area for development.
Embed the Two AD Sign Off to authorise school moves.	Partially met. A consistent approach across the school is aimed for next year.
Ensure that data accurately represents the Ofsted Ratings of schools.	Routinely updated. Ongoing task.
Ensure that students are not out of school between school moves and that school moves happen with the agreement of the Executive Headteacher and planned well in advance with well matched transition support.	New Two AD sign off document is supporting this aim.
Documentation is in place and monitored for Risk Assessments and Reduced Timetables.	This area is effectively monitored by the lead for this area.
Outstanding provision is prioritised and if that is not available Good. Requires Improvement schools are only chosen with the permission of the Headteacher and the need for this is rare.	In 2020-21 all students were placed in Good or better schools. More focus going forward to be given to placing in Outstanding schools. Appropriate strategies are in place where students are in a Requires Improvement School ensuring stability and quality of provision are balanced.
UASC students in KS4 and below are promptly admitted into statutory schools with support packages in place including AfC Transition Hub.	Further development to promote inclusion for KS4 UASC is needed during 2021-22.
AfC Transition Hub is understood by all members of AfC Virtual School and College and used effectively to support new into care.	Further development to raise awareness of AfC Transition Hub is required in 2021-22 including increasing referrals.

What are the areas for improvement for 2021-22?

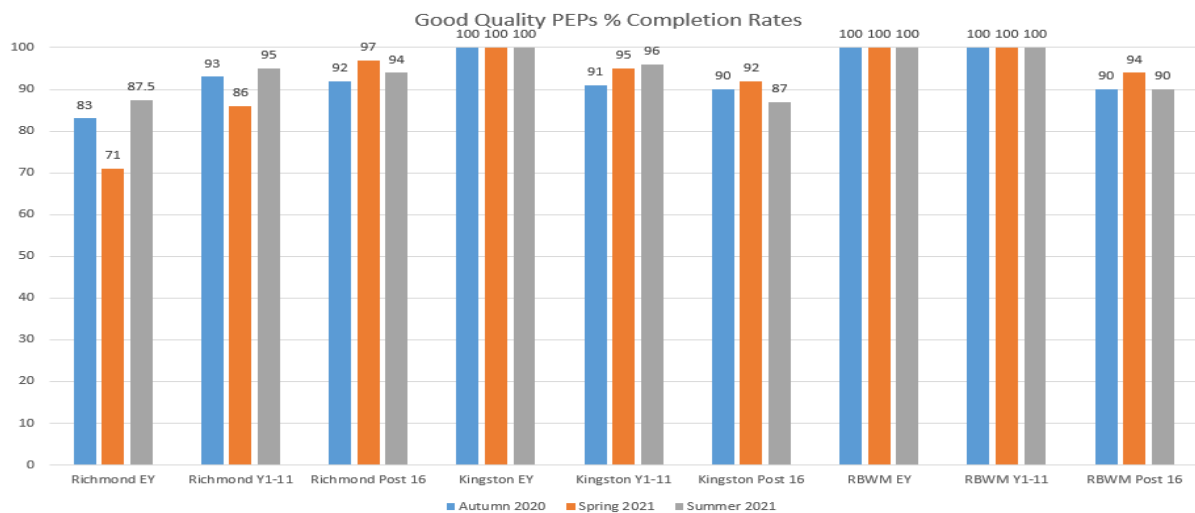
- Embed the school authorisation form across AfC and reduce school moves further
- Create a Stability Pledge with young people
- Plan for a Stability Symposium for Autumn 2022
- Increase placement in Outstanding Schools
- Measure school stability at monthly PQI meetings

Performance Area 4: Personal Education Plans

RICHMOND									
	2018/19			2019/20			2020/2021		
	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Early Years	100%	75%	80%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Statutory Sch. age	90%	77%	91%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%
Post-16	86%	67%	47%	100%	100%	100%	94%	100%	100%

KINGSTON									
	2018/19			2019/20			2020/21		
	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Early Years	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Statutory Sch age	98%	100%	97%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Post-16	91%	92%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

RBWM									
	2018/19			2019/20			2020/2021		
	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Early Years	67%	100%	100%	83%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Statutory Sch age	100%	100%	100%	97%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Post-16	89%	93%	100%	100%	100%	98%	100%	100%	100%

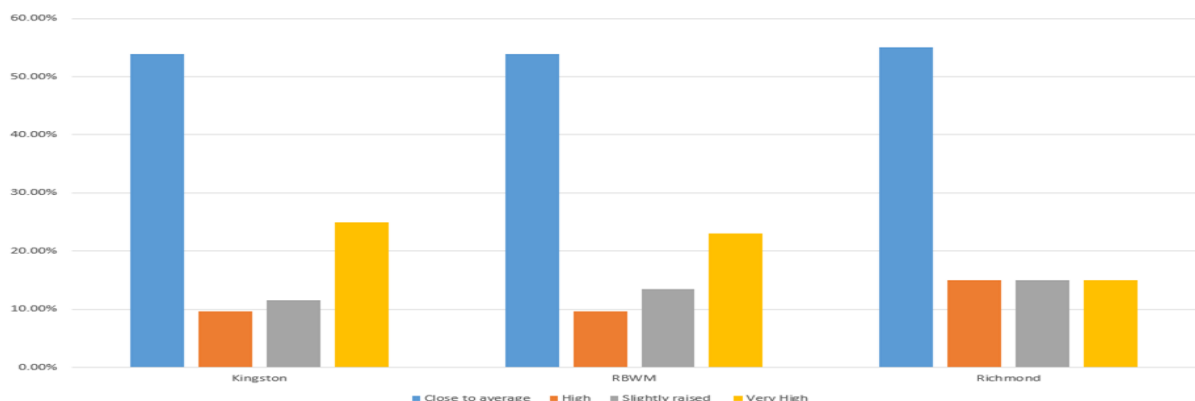


Annual Total PEP Completion and Quality ratings 2020/21

	Completion Total and Percentage	Average Annual Quality Rating Percentage
Richmond	99%	92.1% Good+
Kingston	100%	91.9% Good+
RBWM	100%	97.8% Good+
Total	99.7% (1153/1156)	93.8% Good+

SDQ – Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire

During academic year 2020/2021 the Virtual School piloted the SDQ data collection exercise. A total of 320 questionnaires were sent out with 164 returned. The following figures are based on the returned questionnaires. The chart below reflects the overall impact on life across the three areas:



Carer, student and school SDQ's for Ops 1 are all now being completed on the youth in mind system. There are plans to widen this to Ops 2 social care in 2021-22. Regular meeting with the data team and social care are in place to develop this alongside developing a multi agency system to review all three SDQ's with the emotional health service.

Comment and analysis of Personal Education Plans

The PEP process in AfC Virtual School is managed through an electronic system administered by Welfare Call. In 2020-21 we achieved 99.7% completion rate and 93.8% of PEPs were quality assured by AfC Virtual School senior teachers as being Good or Outstanding.

Kingston and RBWM achieved 100% completion rate across each term whereas there was 94% completion rate in Richmond for Autumn Term Post 16 PEPs and 99% Statutory School Age completion rate in the Summer Term. This represents three PEPs which were not completed within the Term out of a total of 1156 and represents outstanding completion.

The introduction of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) demonstrates a commitment to supporting wellbeing in our schools and through using the shared online platform with social care professionals offers important information sharing opportunities. Further development of this area of PEPs will be explored in 2021-22 to ensure data is effectively acted upon through embedded systems. Additionally, we will be extending the approach to include data collection from RBWM onto the same system.

Evaluation of Performance Area 4: Personal Education Plans

How good is the PEP service for children looked after?

AfC Virtual School values the Personal Education Plan as a 'window to the provision'. We encourage our partners to celebrate pupils' success and we expect to see detailed feedback outlining the progress of our children. We would like to see triangulation of Good PEPS with pupil outcomes to assess the specific impact of our PEPS and are keen to see the voice of the young person resonate even louder in our PEP process.

2020-21 represents a year of strong practice both in outstanding completion rates and good quality standards. **We continue to provide a very Good quality of service in this area.**

What is the evidence of the Virtual School's impact on improving the educational experiences and outcomes of children looked after and care leavers through the completion of ePEPs?

Robust and effective management of the Personal Education Plan process

AfC Virtual School continues to quality assure each PEP to ensure that it is fit for purpose; in particular through following up 'Requires Improvement' PEPs by contacting both Designated Teachers and Social Workers to help them identify areas for improvement. AfC Virtual school continues to take responsibility for the training of partners on a regular basis to ensure that all users of the system are up to date with not only practicalities of the system but also the statutory obligations. It is important that we ensure basic training of PEPs is central to our training whilst delivering the new Attachment Aware Schools Award programme.

PEP completion reports are shared with AfC Virtual School SLT members on a weekly basis.

AfC Virtual School carries out regular audits of PEPs to learn from good practice examples. The Virtual School Headteacher carries out regular sampling of PEPs to ensure consistent standards are applied. The introduction of Quality Assurance Criteria ensures that standards of completion we expect are shared.

What are the key areas for improvement?

Were the Areas for Development set in the 2019-20 Annual Report met?

Development Area set for 2020-21	What were the outcomes?
Target: 98% PEP Completion. 90%+ Good or Outstanding PEPs.	Met
To complete PEPs by Half Term of each term	There is a gradual move in this direction which needs to be more explicit in 2021-22 in order to maximise the usefulness of the PEP during the term and reduce workload pressures on professionals in the last weeks of term.
To embed a system for SDQs and impact on pupil wellbeing. A report on SDQs to be produced and RBWM to be added to the central Ops 1 system.	A report is produced annually and meetings are in place to transition RBWM onto the same system as Richmond and Kingston.
A system to be set up to ensure all new SWs are routinely trained in PEPs by the Data Manager in the VS and area lead.	This is an ongoing priority. The aim is for Deputy/Assistant Headteachers to visit social care team meetings with regular updates which needs to be embedded further in 2021-22.
PEPs to be completed within the 20 day timeframe for new into care	This is being monitored more closely using Welfare Call data and is an ongoing target for 2021-22
95% of Pupil Premium sections of the PEPs to be completed. A system to be arranged by VS SLT with responsibility for these areas.	This section is being completed better and needs to remain a target for 2021-22. Young person's voice is central to the PEP.
Consideration to be given to the Welfare Cloud Analytics with SLT trained and using data to inform pupil progress	Welfare Cloud Analytics is available. More focus is needed on embedding.
Post 16 review of PEP template in line with development of new Virtual College.	Partially Met
Internal PEP audits to take place half-termly, external PEP audits to be explored.	Partially Met

What are the areas for improvement for 2021-22?

Target: 99% PEP Completion. 95%+ Good or Outstanding PEPs.

- To complete PEPs by Half Term of each term
- To embed a system for SDQs to facilitate an impact on pupil wellbeing. A report on SDQs to be produced and RBWM to be added to the central Ops 1 system
- A system to be set up to ensure all new SWs are routinely trained in PEPs by the Data Manager in the VS and area lead.
- PEPs to be completed within the 20 day timeframe for new into care
- 95% of Pupil Premium sections of the PEPs to be completed. A system to be arranged by VS SLT with responsibility for these areas.
- Consideration to be given to the Welfare Cloud Analytics with SLT trained and using data to inform pupil progress
- Post 16 review of PEP template in line with development of new Virtual College.

- Internal PEP audits to take place half-termly, external PEP audits to be explored.

Performance Area 5: Training and CPD

Comment and analysis of training and CPD

Our training programme is planned to run throughout the academic year to include networks, conferences and drop in sessions for all professionals involved with children looked after. One of the main areas of training this year was the Attachment Aware Schools Award - the year-long programme was offered and launched with 44 schools across the three LAs taking part.

Due to the national lockdown, periods of school closure and professionals and young people working from home we had to adapt our training offer. Courses and training were offered remotely and additional sessions were offered allowing us to focus on the needs of the children and schools e.g. additional support for transitioning back to school and supporting children to thrive despite any personal, local or national impact of COVID.

In addition to our foundation programme, the DHT, AHTs and Performance Analysis Manager have provided a range of bespoke training opportunities for social workers and designated teachers particularly in ensuring their skill around PEP completion. Designated Teachers are strongly encouraged to lead whole staff training in their schools to raise awareness of Children Looked After and to disseminate learning from the network meetings. Our Educational Psychologists continue to contribute significantly to training, providing information on Attachment Theory to schools and foster carers.

Evaluation of Performance Area 5: Training and CPD

How good is the quality and impact of training for designated teachers, social workers and carers?

We work closely with partners and offer both informal and formal training. Due to COVID we have adapted our programme and used an on-line platform. There have been benefits with regard to delegate attendance. We have continued our training offer to designated teachers, social workers, foster carers and governors raising awareness of the barriers to learning and highlighting strategies to meet looked after children's educational needs and highlighting the responsibilities of professionals regarding the education of children in care.

In addition we have extended our provision to offer mental health and school transition support during COVID and offered 44 schools our 'Attachment Attachment Aware Schools Award' programme in 2020-21. This includes collaboration with the Education Psychology Services in Operational Area 1 and 2.

Colleagues from the Virtual School are encouraged to attend Continuing Professional Development which has included School Leadership Conferences.

We know from our feedback that the quality of training offered by AfC Virtual School is very good. With the additional Attachment Aware Schools Award, increased attendance due to the online, the efficient planning and well matched content offer we believe that this area of our work is now Outstanding.

What is the evidence of the virtual schools impact on improving the educational experiences and outcomes of children looked after and care leavers?

The delegate feedback forms assist AfC Virtual School in developing training which most effectively addresses partners' needs. Examples of feedback include:

Title of training	Date	Comments	Feedback
DT New/Refresher Conference	30th September 2020	Very informative and useful. Much more to know and understand than I realised!..I am new to the role and I found the presentation very informative.	100% Good/Excellent
Attachment Training	27 th September 2020	I'm new to role, I will take back a lot of today's training to incorporate all teachers. It was really interesting and well delivered. Really useful. A really interesting course, really good advice and training shared. Very useful training with lots of useful strategies to use.	98% Good/Excellent
Conference for Foster Carers and their Supervising Social Workers	23.09.20	This training will help me to support my foster carers better and gave different ideas of ways to engage the children. It was also helpful listening to the other experiences of other foster carers.	98% Very Good/Excellent
Social Worker Training	26.06.21	Really helpful to reaffirm my knowledge. The EHCP process was positive, to understand where to contribute. Frank's section about tools for communication was also informative.	100% Very Good/Excellent
DT Year 6 to 7 Transition Training INVITATION ONLY	21.6.21 and 2.7.21	I found it really useful to think about how to plan for transition from year 6 to year 7. Great, very informative and interesting; a great opportunity to discuss transition with all relevant parties involved. Really useful.	98% Very Good/Excellent

What are the key areas for improvement?

Were the Areas for Development set in the 2020-21 Annual Report met?

Development Area set for 2020-21	What were the outcomes?
Target: 95%+ 'Good' or 'Outstanding' feedback from every training event	Met
Develop the Attachment Aware Schools Offer	Met
Explore training as a method of income generation.	Not Met due to other priorities
Develop Pod Casts using the radio station to extend training to a wider audience.	Partially Met
Triangulate the impact of training on student outcomes through closer examination of pupil data in relation to delegate attendance of AfC Virtual School training.	Not Met
Embed the collection of post training feedback from delegates to further assess the impact of our training.	Partially Met

What are the areas for improvement for 2021-22?

Target: 95%+ 'Good' or 'Outstanding' feedback from every training event

- Explore training as a method of income generation.
- Develop Pod Casts using the radio station to extend training to a wider audience.
- Triangulate the impact of training on student outcomes through closer examination of pupil data in relation to delegate attendance of AfC Virtual School training.
- Embed the collection of post training feedback from delegates to further assess the impact of our training.
- Develop a CPD strategy to better understand the training attended and delivered by AfC Virtual School Staff.

Performance Area 6: Funding available to the Virtual School

Comment and analysis of funding

AfC Virtual School is part funded by the Delegated Schools Grant. These funds are used to support staffing and the administration of AfC Virtual School. Pupil Premium Plus funding is also received by AfC Virtual School from the Department of Education and is used to finance a variety of strategic projects managed and coordinated directly by AfC Virtual School, this funding is used to support in-school interventions decided by the child's Designated Teacher and monitored by AfC Virtual School's Executive Headteacher via the PEP process.

Pupil Premium Plus is designed to benefit the child in care and must be used to enhance and improve their education. The child in care's voice and their specific needs are of paramount importance in considering the use and impact of this money by schools and settings.

For 2019-20 we received our initial funding from the Youth Endowment Foundation to open a Transition Hub in AfC Virtual School and Barnet Virtual School. Subsequently, during the second half of 2021, we received additional funding from the Youth Endowment Foundation to continue with AfC Transition Hub in AfC Virtual School and Barnet Virtual School from September 2021 until the end of December 2021. There are more details available on this project in Mission Statement 9.

AfC Virtual School's Executive Headteacher delegates £300 funding, per student, each term to schools with children in care in either Richmond, Kingston and Windsor and Maidenhead local authorities. Where schools need supplementary funding for students they can access this through completion of an Additional Funding Form, which is processed at weekly AfC Virtual School finance meetings.

A Pupil Premium page in the PEP template enables AfC Virtual School to draw down data and monitor the impact of pupil premium plus on pupil progress and outcomes. Through our Designated Teacher training sessions we highlight the importance of research, for example: by the Education Endowment Foundation, and share which interventions have been identified as being effective in closing gaps in learning e.g. 1:1 tuition, Educational Psychologists etc.

In addition, Pupil Premium Funding has been dedicated to fund a member of staff who works with AfC Virtual School's Executive Headteacher to manage finance, research evidence, source and run strategic projects and to monitor added value. We also use this funding to provide Educational Psychologists and Outreach Workers to support pupil outcomes.

AfC Virtual School Pupil Premium Plus accounts balanced at the end of the financial year 2020-21. There was no surplus or need to return monies to the Department for Education. All funds were spent on supporting the Education of Children in Care. Governance of AfC Virtual School provides accountability and challenge for all mission statement areas and there are annual meetings with the Link Governor for Pupil Premium.

We are providing an 'Outstanding' service in this area.

What is the evidence of the virtual schools impact on improving the educational experiences and outcomes of children looked after and care leavers?

AfC Virtual School Strategic Projects

AfC Virtual School uses Pupil Premium funding to impact on attainment for a variety of strategic projects. A 'Pupil Premium Narrative' annual report is produced to evaluate the impact of strategic projects and inform decisions on the allocation of future funding. This report is available on request.

Strategic Funding Impact examples:

Tuition: Both 1:1 and online tuition has strong evidence of impact as cited in the Education Endowment Foundation. It is found that tuition used strategically and through delegated funding contributes to closing the gaps in learning, this has been especially apparent and evidenced during the coronavirus school closures. We will continue to support our young people with this alternative learning strategy.

Equine Therapy: Research evidence shows that working with horses, combined with equine assisted learning, does make a difference. For example, in Real HorsePower programmes, the company dramatically changed attitudes towards bullying and increased prosocial behaviours in schools.

Letterbox Parcels: Parcels are distributed to foster carer homes and residential placements in all three of our local authorities. PALAC (Institute of Education/University College London) supports this initiative to promote reading and Maths opportunities in the home.

Pupils send back postcards to AfC Virtual School stating the impact of their Letterbox parcels. A couple of comments include:

'I would like to thank the Virtual School for allowing me to receive these book parcels, it's always a nice surprise to see what books I get each month'.

'Our children look forward to receiving the parcels each month'.

AfC Virtual School Website: Our school websites have been successfully developed providing additional support to our partners. The websites are updated regularly to ensure colleagues are informed of AfC Virtual School's developments, services and resources to support Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children.

School Business Manager: Our School Business Manager has developed a research-based approach to projects, which are systematically evaluated through evaluation forms and impact statements. The impact and outcomes of Delegated funding to Schools is monitored termly through PEP scrutiny.

Welfare Call PEPs and Attendance Monitoring: This initiative is supported as it improves PEP quality and reduces absence. This strategic use of funding has seen absence figures decline (pre COVID) and enabled PEP quality and completion to improve.

Flash Academy: Research shows the Flash Academy app accelerates English language

acquisition through curriculum mapped lessons, challenges and games which simultaneously teach and test pupils. Pupils acquire both vocabulary and grammar skills, it also encourages high pupil engagement with a live school leaderboard Independent learning for all skills: speaking, reading, writing and listening.

Morrisby Careers: AfC Virtual School have invested in the Morrisby Careers programme, which is available to all our students and assists in setting goals and supporting them in selecting appropriate training, qualifications and jobs.

Training Programme: Feedback is very strong and delegates report they feel confident to cascade their learning to staff teams in their schools.

*“Well delivered by professionals who are clearly skilled and knowledgeable in this area.
Thank you.*

I found it very useful. Our school thrives on caring for the children and there is no better way to do it than knowing how to do it! Just sincere thanks to the trainers for an excellent training session. Fantastic training. Very helpful and informative. I hope that this is also being undertaken in secondary schools so that this level of support is accessible throughout the child's academic career”.

“A very enjoyable and informative course. It was good to see that everyone can contribute towards a child's adjustment after trauma or attachment issues simply by their daily positive engagements with that child, no matter how small these may be”.

“A great session, and informative. A positive response from staff”

“Very useful. I found this to be very useful and informative training, pitched at a really understandable level. A really useful and stimulating course”.

“Great training, very useful and I hope we can have annual re-visits in this area. Very interesting training so far and a lot of new things learnt”.

Summer Activities Week: Workshops including, music, art, science, broadcasting and drama.

CARERS FEEDBACK

“My young person has really enjoyed the activities and the vibrant atmosphere at Heatham House. Liked the freedom and it being safe place to explore, eg. The skate park”

“Thank you for giving us the opportunity to come to activities, my children are really enjoying it and we would like to continue further activities in the further.”

‘My young person loved all the activities. I felt he responded really well to the Cosmic Martial Arts and the feeling of support and commitment provided. He is quite free spirited and the discipline involved is good for him. It was also good for him to meet children of different ages

and take part in team games. The person running the performing arts session seemed amazing. In fact all the adults I met in the week seemed so caring and skilled. Thank you.

'Thanks AfC Virtual School, for all the organising.'

'My young person has absolutely loved this week. I thought we would struggle to get her to go every day but she has been super keen. Thank you and the team for all your hard work.'

Radio Aspire Youth (RAY): AfC Virtual School has a fully working exciting radio station, which broadcasts shows every week from Wednesday to Sunday at 6:00pm. The aim behind RAY is to promote a sense of belonging for all Richmond, Kingston and Windsor and Maidenhead Looked After Children regardless of where they are educated and offer a platform to champion pupil voice.

Educational Psychologists: AfC Virtual School have invested in educational psychologists with specialist knowledge of looked after children. This strategic intervention has enriched our training offer greatly and provides invaluable support to our children, their carers and schools.

Pupil Premium Delegated Funding to Schools

Examples of Pupil Impact through Delegated Funding to Schools

Pupil 1 has been receiving additional sessions in IT, Numeracy and Literacy, which have further developed his skills and knowledge of G-Suite and basic IT skills, basic numeracy skills and knowledge and basic literacy skills and knowledge.

Pupil 2 received a Sensory Box with his funding and has subsequently benefited from having additional sensory items in the class, As a next step it has been agreed that he will have his own sensory belongings at school. The School SENCo sat with him while they 'shopped' for sensory items that he would like and think would help him, he also chose a special box to store these in.

Pupil 3 has been receiving additional English and Maths online 1:1 tuition plus after school support with higher Maths topics, her projected impact is that in light of these interventions she will obtain a grade 4 in English, and a grade 5 or above in Maths.

Pupil 4 has invested in the Duke of Edinburgh award and GCSE Revision Guides, which has resulted in increased self-esteem and completion of the DoE award to support his college application and he is on track to achieve target grades.

Pupil 5 funding forms part of the schools LAC package and some books have been purchased to help support his reading target, he has engaged well in his Maths and English tuition and improved his grades across all areas and has now been moved up a set - his vocabulary has also improved significantly.

Pupil 6 has fully engaged with music therapy, physical strength building and trips,

outdoor planting and trips and cooking and a Fun food programme weekly, all of these interventions have allowed her to regulate emotions and express herself in musical therapy sessions, and has helped with her well-being, improved her awareness in Health & Safety and tolerance to unfamiliar places and is now also able to explore different cooking ingredients. The extra curricular activity has inspired her interests in food.

Pupil 7 has been assigned a Maths tutor and a Kindle was purchased for him, so that homework can be accessed and IT equipment to support learning, this additional support has improved his current Maths grade, attainment and progress.

Pupil 8 has received additional Maths tuition in a Post Sixteen provision, extra provision for Science and English 1:1's, which has improved her grades to pass.

Pupil 9 has continued Maths tutoring twice a week, and has sat his internal assessments which will be used as part of the evidence that will be used in determining his Centre Assessed Grade for his Maths GCSE. The tutoring will have supported his improvement in his performance in both lessons and the Maths assessments.

Pupil 10's funding has been used to purchase fun mathematical objects - e.g compare bears, new cooking resources such as children's scales etc, and she is now able to compare groups of objects, as well as adding them together and subtracting, count objects and can recognise some numerals to 10.

Pupil 11 has been receiving regular ELSA support which is helping her to understand, then evaluate how she is feeling about things that she can not control, to ask for help when she doesn't understand something, to develop strategies to help her cope when things change or she has new experiences, to continue and develop a relationship with another trusted adult.

Pupil 12 has received 1:1 tuition to help consolidate all of his learning and to achieve MEG grades in KS4 Grades 6-8.

Pupil 13 has been accessing a Phonics and Maths Support Group and Thrive, she has been able to achieve 32 points in her phonics screening and apply this knowledge to her writing, increased fluency in arithmetic calculations and begin to apply them to reasoning questions and to be able to independently approach a task and seek adult support only when required.

Pupil 14 has been taking part in Art Therapy, and this has helped to improve her confidence and encourage her to develop her artistic and creative skills whilst providing her with an opportunity to express her thoughts, worries, wishes and feelings in an age-appropriate way.

Pupil 15 has received support with some Educational books and Switch toys, these interventions have encouraged vocalisation to comment or respond and the Switch toys have encouraged understanding of cause and effect through intentional exploration.

What are the Key Areas for Development?

Were the Areas for Development set in the 2019-20 Annual Report met?

Development Area set for 2020-21	What were the outcomes?
95% of ePEPs have fully completed Pupil Premium Plus Impact sections.	Not Met
Maximise engagement by pupils in strategic projects run by the Virtual School.	Met
Use funding to develop the Attachment Aware Schools Award Programme	Met
Use funding to develop the Virtual College approach	Met
Consider and take action regarding options for extending the work of AfC Transition Hub past July 2021.	Met
Continue improvements made in effective tracking of finance	Met
Ensure termly Pupil level impact reports are written	Met
Be responsive to COVID situation with regard to Summer School considering blended learning	Met

What are the areas for improvement for 2021-22?

- Continue to ensure termly pupil level impact reports are completed
- Continue to improve completion of Pupil Premium Impact section on PEPs
- Plan for Extended Duties
- Plan for AfC Transition Hub exit from research funding
- Ensure AfC Virtual College is effectively resourced

Performance Area 7: Communication and Working with others

Comment and Analysis

AfC Virtual School works collaboratively with a range of professionals within the local authority and across partner schools. AfC Virtual School staff attend meetings widely to advocate for educational stability, advice colleagues and where necessary champion change. The Executive Headteacher of AfC Virtual School attends social care heads of service meetings and contributes education data to the monthly performance management board meetings.

The Deputy and Assistant Headteachers attend Accommodation & Resource Panel, Permanency Planning Meetings and Network Meetings. The Executive Headteacher chairs the Learning and Development sub group for the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Additionally, members of AfC Virtual School attend school improvement meetings hosted by the Education Directorate and the Executive Headteacher attends Headteachers' Conferences and Forums. We benefit from access to a wide range of networking opportunities with local schools.

Located within the Social Care Directorate, the work of AfC Virtual School is embedded within a multi-agency framework. It is through this connected and supportive network that the local authority is best able to raise standards of education of our children looked after.

AfC Virtual School works closely with Foster Carers and provides training to make sure that they are able to support the education of the children in their care. Deputy and Assistant Headteachers maintain regular contact with schools and colleges through training, and by attending meetings to ensure our students are supported to achieve. Additionally, training is provided to school governors responsible for children looked after so they can better support and challenge Designated Teachers in their schools.

AfC Virtual School maintains a website for looked after children and an additional website dedicated to the support of previously looked after children's education. Regular Newsletters are sent to partners to keep them updated and this is further amplified by social media activity e.g. twitter.

The Executive Headteacher of AfC Virtual School attends the Pan-London network meetings, participates in the South East Virtual Headteachers Network and attends the National Association of Virtual School Headteachers' Conferences. This engagement ensures that AfC Virtual School is aware of research, initiatives and developmental strategies that support looked after children's progress. Our out of borough children are supported by the strong links AfC Virtual School maintains across the virtual school national community.

The Executive Headteacher of AfC Virtual School reports to the Corporate Parent groups in Kingston, Richmond and Windsor and Maidenhead and is accountable to the Virtual School Board of Governors. Additionally, the Executive Headteacher of AfC Virtual School is accountable to monthly Social Care Performance Boards.

Our Performance Analysis Manager enables AfC Virtual School to be the local authorities' key resource on looked after children's education data. AfC Virtual School keeps contacts for Social Workers, Designated Teachers, Headteachers and Foster Carers to enable effective

communication regarding training and interventions. A comprehensive schedule of reports ensures colleagues are updated on pupil progress and AfC Virtual School developments.

We further demonstrate our commitment to communication with the development of Radio Aspire Youth (RAY), the first radio station for Children in Care, which we operate with a producer from Radio Jackie and with input from the Children in Care Council. Our aim with RAY is to provide looked after children with a vocal platform and to offer a sense of belonging to any looked after children listening to our programmes.

AfC Virtual School also communicates with external partners to support the outcomes of looked after children such as St Mary’s University London and Barnet Virtual School, who are collaborating in our YEF funded AfC Transition Hub research.

We are providing an Outstanding service in this area.

What is the evidence of the virtual schools impact on improving the educational experiences and outcomes of children looked after and care leavers?

AfC Virtual School is reflective, evaluative and committed to ensuring our work with others has a positive impact on the outcome of our cohorts. The impact of our close partnership working with others can be seen in improved outcomes in attainment, attendance, PEP completion and school provision. We have established high expectations around co-planning care with education and the importance of school stability as a protective factor.

What are the key areas for improvement?

Were the Areas for Development set in the 2019-20 Annual Report met?

Development Area set for 2020-21	What were the outcomes?
Ensure that contact lists are kept full up to date with changes in SWs and DTs in particular	On going task
Use the Contact list database as the “go to” place for targeted emails and contact for those who can attend training	Met
Expand the recording of our contacts with partners to ensure that these are documented for impact.	Partially Met - Development area for 2021-22
Relaunch an appropriate media initiative including the use of Twitter and the Radio Station. Podcasts	Partially Met

What are the areas for improvement for 2021-22?

- Continue to ensure routine updating of contact lists
- Develop the potential of Radio Aspire Youth
- Ensure a routine system for Newsletters, Enews, AfC news bulletins
- Ensure a routine system for updating the Website

Performance Area 8: Previously Looked After Children’s

Comment and Analysis

Since January 2019 we have had a lead teacher in post for previously looked-after children's education to respond to the policy document 'Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children' (Feb 2018) by providing information and advice to parents, schools, designated teachers and other members of the local authority.

The lead for Previously Looked After Children maintains a busy caseload, supporting designated teachers and SENCOs with advice and training across a range of subject areas.

This includes:

- responding to emergency calls from parents about exclusions and admissions across schools in all three boroughs of AfC;
- offering mediation between parents and schools;
- supporting staff across a wide range of schools, both mainstream and private to support Previously Looked After Children;
- working with schools to suggest ways of using funding and ensuring that therapies provided under Pupil Premium Plus are not better funded by Adoption support funding;
- attendance of EHCP and other professionals meetings to represent and advise;
- collaboration with professionals in areas including post-adoption support, SEN and admissions
- working closely with adoption agencies;
- managing subscriptions of parents and DTs to the adopter hub platform and working with them on content;
- as a coach for AfC VS attachment aware schools award 2020-22 and instrumental in bringing several schools directly to the programme.

We support new DTs, especially those who are not aware of funding opportunities for adoptive families, such as the Adoption Support Fund and advise about Pupil Premium Plus. The lead teacher offers problem-solving consultations to DTs and SENCOs who are often unsure of resources available or how to fulfil their role for our vulnerable children.

The Previously Looked After Children lead's work involves targeted direct work to support individuals and generic work across all borough schools. Several of the schools that the Previously Looked After Children lead works with are keen to find ways of supporting those with a Special Guardianship Order, who are not always able to advocate for their children to the same extent as adoptive parents who have been through a rigorous process of selection.

The Previously Looked After Children lead continues to inform schools who are unaware of adoption support funding, bringing at least £7,500 per year for therapies per pupil per annum and has also encouraged all schools to register for the census for Pupil Premium Plus. These interventions bring a considerable amount of funding to families and also can alleviate the burden on schools, who may be using Pupil Premium Plus to fund therapies that can be provided by the Adoption Support Fund. Those with Special Guardianship Orders are rarely aware that this money is available for their children and the Previously Looked After Children lead works closely with the Designated Teacher, Adopt London South and Adopt Thames

Valley to ensure that they are accessing this significant resource.

The lead for Previously Looked After Children also compiles a newsletter for Designated Teachers that she distributes every half term. All information was also added to the website and the website is regularly updated to highlight the most important information at the time e.g. new admissions rules and changes to adoption support funding.

The Previously Looked After lead works very closely with Adopt London South and Adopt Thames Valley and regularly advises their social workers and picks up referrals from them.

The Lead teacher manages all aspects of the partnership with the adopter hub, to which we subscribe, encouraging parents to join, compiling up to date lists of Designated Teachers, liaising with the hub managers about content and attending webinars. She also provides regular emotional support for parents who feel they have nowhere to turn for support with their children when they are in crisis. Feedback from parents shows that they would have no alternative advice and support and feel less alone and more confident in moving forward.

The lead teacher is involved in training events, presenting at several of the Designated Teacher events and keeping Designated Teachers up to date with the latest developments either in person or online if this is not possible. The Lead teacher has recorded five training podcasts for Radio Aspire Youth, one about therapeutic spaces with our senior Educational Psychologist, and has been an Attachment Aware Schools Award coach for AfC Virtual School for 4 schools.

The lead for Previously Looked After Children has developed a ground-breaking research project about therapeutic spaces with schools in collaboration with Dr Sara Freitag, Senior Educational Psychologist. This year the Previously Looked After Children lead brought the Therapeutic spaces project to publication and distribution to all AfC schools. The study has implications for the way in which therapeutic interventions are delivered in schools not only in AfC but across the UK. Training was delivered at a Designated Teacher forum to share the publication and answer questions from delegates. At least 5 schools took on a project about therapeutic spaces as part of the Attachment Aware Schools Award in 2020-1.

We are providing a Good level of service in this area.

What is the evidence of the virtual schools impact on improving the educational experiences and outcomes of previously looked after children?

Previously Looked After Children CASE STUDY 2021 Richmond borough

Background

The Previously Looked After Children lead was contacted in the summer term by a parent who was concerned that they might be about to face adoption breakdown with their adopted son. His birth mother did not want to establish a relationship with him and now has 5 younger children so the likelihood would be that he would be placed in foster care.

The child had attended special school for primary and was about to transition to the same secondary school on a site nearly three miles away. Parents had ticked 'yes' in answer to the question, 'can he walk' box on the SEN transport questionnaire on the understanding that this was a question about mobility and not about whether the child could walk to a school and back - a distance of 2.5 x 2 miles daily. They had been declined SEN transport due to this misunderstanding, despite the fact that one of the child's peers who lived in the same street had been accepted onto the transport scheme to travel to the same secondary school.

Father has worked early shifts for over 20 years in the same job and needed the only family car to reach work. Mother works for the NHS and has no car. Both parents were experiencing severe anxiety about how to cope with challenging behaviours in addition to getting him to school and were considering placing him in a full-time boarding school or returning him to care due to the effect that the transport issue was having on their own mental health and also on their other children. Child experiencing severe anxiety due to not knowing at the end of the summer term if he would be attending school in the autumn, resulting in more stress for family.

Parents appealed because the child would not be able to walk 2.5 miles to school, even with a parent due to autism/attachment needs and a bus/train would be too challenging. The route to school would involve walking along a dual carriageway between Hampton and Richmond upon Thames, something that parents were particularly concerned about because the child had a history of running away when triggered by sensory overload and has no understanding of road safety.

Parents contacted the Previously Looked After lead after the first appeal had failed. Previously Looked After lead contacted the SEN transport team and the Previously Looked After lead was invited to present at the final panel appeal. Previously Looked After lead talked through the child's circumstances with the mother and wrote a statement. At the appeal, she presented the AfC Virtual School view on the case to the appeal panel, highlighting attachment issues that affect the child's ability to travel to school on foot or by public transport, even when accompanied by a known adult.

Father was unable to attend the panel due to stress, mother had difficulties in articulating the situation, except to say that she had not understood the question on the SEN transport form. SEN transport stated that they had made their decision based on the questionnaire filled in by parents.

SEN transport lead made it clear during the hearing that it is not their policy to look at the needs of the child or to read their EHC plan document but only to attend to the boxes ticked on the form. The Previously Looked After lead was able to explain to the panel how the child's attachment and emotional needs would make it impossible for the family to walk with him to school or take public transport safely with him in the absence of a car.

Thanks to good collaboration with our partners in SEN and effective professional challenge, SEN transport was agreed for the child, pressure on parents alleviated and the child was able to start to anticipate the transition to a new school and prepare for the autumn term. Possible adoption breakdown averted.

Feedback from the mother of the young person:

Dear Previously Looked After lead,

I am just emailing to say thank you very much for supporting me on Tuesday... You have been ever so kind and supportive and you really helped, just having somebody to chat to when I wasn't feeling at my best, somebody who gets it but can also give me some even more of an insight as to how my son may be feeling. I will be sure to advise anybody I come across with an adopted or looked after child to make contact with virtual school in the future if they require support. It's an amazing service.

What are the key areas for improvement?

Were the Areas for Development set in the 2019-21 Annual Report met?

Development Area set for 2020-21	What were the outcomes?
Provide support for children, parents and schools during COVID	Met
Publish and present findings on research into school based therapies	Met
Extend training offer for Previously Looked After parents	Partially Met
Effectively promote the Adopter Hub resources	Partially Met
Attend Adopt South and West Thames meeting	Partially Met

What are the areas for improvement for 2021-22?

- More AfC SEND training for the Previously Looked After lead to respond to high volume of queries by parents and schools involving children with EHC plans

- Extend Training offer to address the needs of Adopted and Special Guardianship parent group.
- Develop strategies to encourage previously looked after parents and Designated Teachers to make fuller use of the Adopter Hub resource
- Regularly attend, participate in and share learning from Adopt South and West Thames meetings.
- Continue to offer coaching on the Attachment Aware Schools Award

Performance Area 9: AfC Transition Hub

Comment and Analysis

In October 2019, AfC Virtual School, in collaboration with Barnet Virtual School (delivered by Cambridge Education) and St Mary's University were awarded a research grant, for two years, by the Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) for a **feasibility study** to implement a Transition Hub for children in care aged 11 to 14.

The Transition Hub is part of AfC Virtual School but is based in Turing House School. There, a team of six staff (Lead Teacher, Senior Learning Mentor, two Learning Mentors, Educational Psychologist (part time) and an administrator) enable and support a phased transition for students new to care over a period of six weeks and then with outreach support for another five months. For adolescents who are settled in school, but who experience a change in care placement, AfC Transition Hub offers an outreach programme to support their transition for six months. The approach is based on the principle that a transition is not a one-off event, but an on-going process that requires tailored support before, during and after a move.

Evaluation of Performance Area 9, AfC Transition Hub

We are providing a Good level of service in this area.

- Children and young people are provided academic and pastoral support, through 1-2-1 sessions with Learning Mentors
- Pastoral work with young people is planned and assessed with the support of AfC Transition Hub Educational Psychologists
- Academic work with young people is planned and assessed with the support of the Lead Teacher
- Foster carers are supported in areas of relational stability, such as providing them with strategies to build positive relationships with the children and young people in their care and direct time with our Educational Psychologists
- Learning mentors liaise frequently with social workers, providing support in areas such as placement moves, school visits and commissioning services for young people

- Young people under a section 17 or section 47, after returning home to their parents, are now continuing to receive support from AfC Transition Hub, rather than ending the programme
- Parents of young people assessed as Child In Need and Child Protection are empowered to support their children in their education and wellbeing through regular contact with learning mentors
- AfC Virtual School SLT receive a pupil handover at the end of the programme, providing them with detailed information on each students' progression against set targets

What is the evidence of the virtual schools impact on improving the educational experiences and outcomes of children looked after and care leavers?

- 37.5% of students who completed the programme were working at age related expectation or above before the start of the programme. This increased to 87.5% at the end of the programme
- Attendance increased from 64.8% average attendance before the start of the programme to 79.8% average at the end of the programme
- Average SDQ scores decreased from an average of 14.4 at the start of the programme to 9 at the end of the programme, showing an improvement in pro-social behaviour, emotional symptoms, conduct issues, hyperactivity and peer problems across the cohort.
- The table below shows the impact of the programme on competence, confidence, connection, caring and character, and contribution. There was a decrease in areas of 'high' and 'some' concern and an increase in areas of 'no concern' across the cohort.

Average number of areas of <i>high concern</i> across the cohort		Average number of areas of <i>some concern</i> across the cohort		Average number of areas of <i>no concern</i> across the cohort	
Pre Programme	Post programme	Pre Programme	Post programme	Pre Programme	Post programme
3.8	1.1	3.1	1.8	4.5	9

Transition Hub: Case Study 1

Summary of referral

This young person was referred to AfC Transition Hub in January 2021. She and her siblings had been subject to child protection plans for almost 2 years under categories of emotional and physical abuse. Concerns centred around physical chastisement and the children witnessing significant domestic abuse between parents.

The case had been in proceedings since May 2020. The final hearing was due to be listed and the Local Authority planned to change the care plan to an Interim Care Order based on the parents refusal to engage.

The familial circumstances deteriorated rapidly over a two week period with mother's presentation becoming more concerning and her mother subsequently left the family home in February 2021. She alleged that an incident of physical chastisement by the father against this young person's brother had taken place. An emergency application for an Interim Care Order was made and it was granted on 24.02.2021.

AfC Virtual School Transition Hub involvement

- 6 months of 1 hour weekly academic sessions. These began as virtual sessions due to the lockdown then moved to face-to-face visits in July 2020. These covered maths, English and Science and was a combination of support with current class work, completion of homework and exam revision.
- The learning mentor attended PEPs and professionals meeting to advocate for this young person and kept in regular contact with professionals
- Carried out activities suggested by our Educational Psychologist such as 'self perception as a learner' and 'Facebook for the future'.
- The learning mentor used half terms to hold activities such as a skin care tutorial and t-shirt designing.
- This young person began living a healthy lifestyle and the learning mentor supported this by buying her fruits and congratulating her when she reached her goals.
- This young person opened up to the learning mentor and shared her feelings about the forthcoming court proceedings where her permanent home would be decided. This was understandably a difficult time and the learning mentor was able to keep her designated teacher and foster carer updated with her feelings, which helped them to understand her behaviours.
- The learning mentor bought Christmas presents for this young person, her younger brother - who lived at the same home - and the foster carer.
- The learning mentor and lead teacher took this young person on a trip to London where they visited the Imperial War Museum - buying her a copy of Anne Frank's Diary, Little Portugal, Tate Modern and had lunch at a Portuguese restaurant.
- The learning mentor attended this young person's birthday meal at the Toby Carvery
- The learning mentor had a photobook made from pictures taken during the trip to London for her to keep as a memory of the day out.

- The final visit was a trip to Windsor Castle with the learning mentor and lead teacher.

Impact of AfC Virtual School Transition Hub Involvement

- Attendance increased from 98% to 100%
- There were no exclusions during the programme
- This young person continued to make expected progress and continued to work at age related expectations during the course of the programme
- Scores for competence, confidence, connection, caring and character, and contribution showed improvement in all areas. There was a decrease in areas of 'high' and 'some' concern and an increase in areas of 'no concern' across the cohort.

Transition Hub: Case Study 2

Summary of Referral

This young person was referred to AfC Transition Hub at 15 year old, after arriving in the UK as an Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Minor in 2020.

He was born in Eritrea and was raised by his grandmother after his parents passed away in a car crash in 2005. Records show that he left his village with other young people when the border to Ethiopia was opened.

He has a physical disability resulting in delayed growth. His physical presentation is of a much younger child, between 4-6 years old. The family reported that he was not enrolled in a school due to concerns about bullying, resulting in him not having any formal schooling by the time he arrived in the UK. He is fluent in Tigrinya.

His sister also fled Eritrea, in 2017, and journeyed to the UK. This is recorded to have been a perilous and stressful journey. She first lived with foster carers, but now lives alone and receives support from the leaving care team. She made an application via the Red Cross Family reunification scheme for this young person to travel to the UK. The application was successful and he arrived in the UK on 8th March 2020. The original plan was that he would live with his sister. However, as the time for him to arrive drew closer she reflected and shared that she no longer felt she was capable of looking after him long term.

He stayed with his sister for 2 months and then moved into foster care in June 2020. He currently lives with the same foster carers.

AfC Virtual School Transition Hub involvement

- Commissioned online tutoring through TLC Live tutoring
- Facilitated his enrollment at an education setting appropriate for his needs
- Created a Tigrinya to English school guide to support his transition to formal schooling.
- Supported in the creation of a 1:1 timetable of structured learning to take place at his education setting.
- 6 months of afternoon sessions each day to compliment the 15 hours he spent at his education setting. The learning mentor would recap the morning lesson and provide opportunities to go over any new learning he needed extra support with.
- An hour virtual homework support session each week.
- Half term activities including boxing, art and cooking, all which took place virtually due to lockdown restrictions.
- Purchased a Flash Academy account for ESOL, for this young person to use in his own time, which he engaged with frequently.

Impact of AfC Virtual School Transition Hub Involvement

- As this young person had no formal schooling prior to joining the programme, attendance cannot be compared. However, attendance was 98% at the end of the programme.
- He engaged well both in his education setting and during virtual sessions with learning mentors.
- This young person has successfully transitioned into a mainstream school (part time) and is able to make new friends and be a part of the school community.
- He no longer needs an interpreter and is much more confident in conversations in English.
- This young person has created artwork for the AfC Transition Hub Christmas card, which was sent out to carers & other young people in the cohort, which he was very proud of.
- He reported he has increased confidence and improved English speaking and reading ability.

Selected quotes from stakeholder feedback:

Student

This young person was very positive about the contribution of AfC Transition Hub, saying that it “made education easier”. They said that things were always explained well and they always felt they could ask questions if something was unclear.

Foster Carer

This foster carer felt that the young person had really enjoyed their time working with AfC Transition Hub learning mentors. They commented on the amount of time given to the young person and also that staff had visited her home on several occasions. This foster carer said she felt this had a knock-on effect at school. They said the young person was putting in a lot of effort on academic work and that there had been a very positive phone call from the school to confirm this. They said that the young person had begun to talk in a more positive way about the future, in particular her plans to go to college and to earn lots of money.

Designated Teacher

This designated teacher said that the school appreciated AfC transition Hub involvement on a number of levels. Firstly, they recognised the efforts put in to prepare this young person for starting school, especially given that this was his first school experience anywhere. They were also aware of the positive relationship between the learning mentor and the young person, and that this had proved useful in helping them to settle. Thirdly, there was recognition of the ongoing support that the young person receives, including reinforcement and extension of the work that he undertakes at his education setting.

What are the key areas for improvement?

Were the Areas for Development set in the 2019-20 Annual Report met?

Development Area set for 2020-21	What were the outcomes in 2020-21?
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Continue to develop staff skills in relation to outreach support	All staff completed fortnightly training during Development Meetings held by the project lead, as well as additional training throughout the year in relation to outreach support. The outcomes were that all staff developed their skills in providing bespoke outreach support which resulted in them confidently delivering both academic and pastoral interventions.
Continue to adapt the programme to COVID restrictions	Face-to-face visits were replaced with virtual sessions and ran effectively until face-to-face visits were reinstated in July 2021.
Support the Transition Hub staff in the return to the 'new normal'	Staff were supported with the return to the new normal with Covid specific risk assessments for all visits.
Meet the needs of the evaluators	The needs of the evaluators was met, resulting in AfC Transition Hub being extended to Phase 2 (Outcomes)

What are the areas for improvement for 2021-22?

- Implementation of a sustainability strategy to demonstrate impact of AfC Transition Hub, and secure funding post December 2022.
- Lead teacher to meet with relevant Social Care and education teams to share information on AfC Transition Hub
- Sharing of an animation video across AfC, which explains the purpose of AfC Transition Hub
- Focus groups with stakeholders with feedback used to develop a terms of reference created in a spirit of collaboration for post December 2022

Performance Area 10: AfC Virtual College

Comment and Analysis

AfC Virtual College was launched in September 2020 and has been developed to ensure that young people with a care background, aged 16-25, are provided with the opportunities and assistance required to become independent, confident members of society.

The main aims of AfC Virtual College are to create an ethos of proactive and preventative support in order to promote the numbers of young people in Education, Employment and Training ('EET'), increase attendance at university and provide structures to encourage long-term success at adulthood. To achieve this, the following has been established:

- Pathways to Success: Different pathways have been created to support each young person based on their current context. It has been designed to ensure no one is 'left behind' and have well matched education, employment, and wider cultural capital opportunities.
- KU Aspire Mentoring Programme: Working in partnership with Kingston University, AfC Virtual college have provided 8 year 12 students with a university mentor as part of a 12 week programme which has sought to develop personal skills and understanding of life post key stage 5.
- University talk series: Focussing on supporting young people from the ages of 14 and above, as well as foster carers and key workers, the talks, created in collaboration with a number of universities and the Care Leavers Covenant, are designed to ensure young people and their carers were better equipped to university university applications and the areas of support given to young people with a care background.
- Care Leaver 'NEET' Board: Undertaken every 6 weeks, the meetings, which are attended by department leads of each key service, meet to discuss strategies and SMART targets to support each individual NEET young person.
- Care Leaver Executive Board: A forum, including AfC Virtual College, alongside local councillors, university deans, business leaders and other members of the local community has been convened to champion opportunities for care leavers and aspire to an Attachment Aware Community.
- Skills for Success Workshop: This one day workshop has been designed to support those aged 18-25 with preparing for EET opportunities. This includes CV updates, job/course applications and interview practice. The programme was undertaken twice and supported 10 young people, 7 of whom have since enrolled in courses of job roles.
- 'EET' Training for AfC staff: To ensure all staff are better equipped to support EET opportunities, AfC Virtual College hosted a training session to ensure Personal Advisors and Social Workers had a greater understanding of employment and course application processes in order to support the urgent and preventative ethos of AfC Virtual college.

Evaluation of Performance Area 10, AfC Virtual College

AfC Virtual College has achieved a great deal in its first year of operating and significantly raised awareness of the education and employment needs of the Post 16 group. Feedback from partners including social workers, carers and young people has been positive and they comment on a notable improvement in the support for Education now available for this group. The foundations are now firmly in place to embed and develop in future years.

Even at this early stage it is clear that AfC Virtual College is offering a Good service.

What is the evidence of AfC Virtual School's impact on improving the educational experiences and outcomes of children looked after and care leavers?

Since the creation of AfC Virtual College, NEET figures for Richmond and Kingston have reduced by one third. For the RBWM cohort, NEET numbers have also fallen with the overall percentage for those aged 16-25 who are NEET sitting close to the non-looked after percentage (15.5% compared to 11% for non-looked after).

During an IRO review of services to support young people with education and employment, the report noted that "these audits identified fantastic examples of the outstanding work that the virtual school and college is doing to support these children."

Through the support of AfC Virtual College, numbers attending university sit above the national average for young people with a care background with 17.8% of the RBWM cohort and both 10% respectively for Richmond and Kingston.

What are the key areas for improvement?

What are the areas for improvement for 2021-22?

- To ensure that AfC Virtual College is resourced appropriately to enable growth in the service to care leavers and further reduce NEET figures
- To develop the Pathways to Success model so that it has a wider profile and that all young people understand the educational pathway they are on and receive appropriate support from partners to enable outcomes.
- Increase membership from the Business Community of the Executive Boards and have a clear action plan and measurable outcomes.
- Champion more opportunities for Care Leavers within Achieving for Children to role model an Attachment Aware Community.
- Extend the Mentoring Programme offered by Kingston University to a broader cohort.
- Ensure the AfC Virtual School careers tool is used effectively in work with young people
- Create dedicated training opportunities for Post 16 provision encouraging them, where appropriate, to join the Attachment Aware Schools Award programme.
- Created dedicated attachment aware training opportunities for the business sector

SEND

Identification and support of Children Looked After with Special Educational Needs and Disability

AfC Virtual School working with our partners in Education, Social Care and Health

Identification, monitoring and support of pupils in our care with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND).

- AfC Virtual School promotes multi-agency working across education, health and care to ensure support is in place to meet the needs of young people with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND).
- Attainment and progress is monitored through the Personal Education Plan (PEP). PEP meetings are held termly and a rigorous quality assurance criteria applied.
- If a young person has not been making expected progress, they are discussed at a 'Learning and Progress' meeting at AfC Virtual School, to consider appropriate next steps to identify any Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) / ensure appropriate support is in place to close the gap.
- Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings include AfC Virtual School, Social Worker, Designated Teacher, Foster Carer and young person. The PEP meeting may also include other professionals relevant to the young person e.g. School Nurse, special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator (if different from the Designated Teacher) Headteacher, Learning Mentor, Classroom Teacher, AfC Virtual School Educational Psychologist. Strength & Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQs) are embedded into the PEP process.
- The Personal Education Plan (PEP) form includes a Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) page prompting discussion of any identified SEND needs. This includes whether the young person is identified as receiving SEN Support or having an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), in line with the Code of Practice. The PEP form requires the school placement to provide information about the SEN provision in place to meet the young person's needs e.g. Individual Education Plans, up-to-date EHCP and Annual Review documents, which is reviewed during the PEP quality assurance process.
- Pupil Premium delegated funds are spent on interventions to support wellbeing and to close gaps in learning as identified in PEP targets.
- A young person who presents with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) will typically be assessed and supported by their school, following the SEN Code of Practice and utilising services available in the local offer.
- When an education provision does not have direct access to professionals that can effectively support the process of identifying Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND), or a young person is not in an education provision, AfC Virtual School Educational Psychologists can provide support to understand a young person's SEND, through consultation and possible direct work, as well as guidance regarding SEND school support and where appropriate, the EHCP process. AfC Virtual School Educational Psychologists will liaise with relevant education, health and care professionals to support their assessment and intervention planning.

Multi-agency working

- AfC Virtual School promotes close liaison with relevant professionals regarding children and young people with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND). These include half termly meetings between AfC Virtual School and the SEND Team and attendance by AfC Virtual School at Social Care planning meetings.
- Professionals meetings across education, health and care, are held to ensure that there is efficient information sharing and joint problem solving involving the team around the child.
- Training is provided by AfC Virtual School to partners around the child including Designated Teachers, Foster Carers, Social Workers and School Governors. Due to COVID-19 a considerable online offer has developed.
- Termly Designated Teacher Forums are held to ensure effective information sharing. Designated Teachers access group reflective practice sessions facilitated by Educational Psychologists.

Meeting the Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) needs of young people new into care and those experiencing school moves

- AfC Virtual School expects that all young people new into care receive a PEP within the statutory timescale of 20 days. Please see above for how AfC Virtual School identifies, monitors and meets the SEND needs of young people in care, including those new into care, through the PEP process.
- When a young person is new into care, the AfC Virtual School Deputy or Assistant Headteacher liaises with school professionals to gather prior progress data and assessment information. If the young person has not been making expected progress, they are discussed at a 'Learning and Progress' meeting in AfC Virtual School, to consider appropriate next steps to identify any SEND / ensure appropriate support is in place to close the gap.
- If a young person requires a school move, AfC Virtual School Outreach Learning Mentors visit the young person and carry out a 'Passport' activity to aid effective information sharing and a positive transition into their new school, including information and provision in relation to SEND.
- If a young person is going to move to an out of borough school AfC Virtual School contacts the local Virtual School Headteacher informing them of a new looked after student moving into their area. Information around the school and the local offer is gathered to ensure appropriate provision is available.

Accountability

AfC Virtual School provides annual SEND reports, shares monthly SEND data at Performance Quality and Innovation meetings and presents SEND findings to our Board of Governors and Corporate Parents.

What is the evidence of AfC Virtual School's impact on improving the educational experiences and outcomes of children looked after and care leavers?

SEND Attainment 8 2021

Richmond	Kingston	RBWM	AfC VS	National CLA with SEND	National All Pupils with SEND
34.3	33.5	21.1	28.8	15.4 (2019)	30.7

EHCP Characteristics 2021

	Richmond	Kingston	RBWM	National Benchmark
Attending Good+School SSA	100%	83.3%	100%	80% (Looked After,2019) 86% all schools (2021)
NEET (KS5 and above only)	17.6%	25%	28.6%	28.5% (Looked After)
Not on Roll	0%	0%	0%	n/a
Less than 25 hours SSA	3.2%	8.3%	0%	n/a
Fixed Term Exclusions (Statutory School Age)	9.7%	8.3%	12.5%	11.7% National EHC/10.98 National School Support

What are the key areas for improvement?

Areas for improvement for 2021-22:

- Continue to offer the Attachment Aware Schools Award
- Promote School Stability via the School Move Authorisation Form
- Develop strategies with partners in SEND and social care to avoid drift when sourcing out of borough schools
- Raise the percentage of Good and Outstanding provision for SEND in Kingston
- Improve collaboration with the Preparing for Adulthood team
- Reduce the percentage of NEET with SEND

Appendix 1

Interrogation and analysis of KS4 results 2020-2021

We have looked at 8 key questions to see if there are any lessons to be learned going forwards. It should be noted that statistically the numbers are relatively small, so care must be taken not to draw too strong a conclusion at any point, and suggested conclusions must also be read alongside other studies such as the Rees Centre research* and the Timpson Review**

This report is looking at the 40 OC2 children from AfC Virtual School who completed Key Stage Four in 2020-21. 11 of those children were “dis-applied” from results as they were unable to take exams in Summer 2021 due to a range of reasons from being in secure accommodation, English as an Additional Language (EAL) needs, and Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) challenges.

Key Question 1 – Do girls achieve better than boys?

Of the 29 young people who were entered for exams

Borough	Gender	Number	Average Attainment 8 score 2020-2021
Richmond	Male	4	28.75
	Female	4	55.75
Kingston	Male	4	31.6
	Female	3	27.1
Windsor & Maidenhead	Male	9	30
	Female	5	41.6
TOTAL	Male	17	30.1
	Female	12	41.4
OC2	Total	29	36.4 (2020 = 31.4)
National Average A8	Total		21.4

Conclusion:

In Richmond and Windsor & Maidenhead girls achieve much higher than boys in terms of Attainment 8. In Kingston this is reversed however the sample size is small.

Key Question 2 – Is ethnicity a factor in achievement?

Of the 29 young people who were entered for exams

Borough	Ethnicity	Number	Average Attainment 8 score
Richmond	White British	4	60
	Not White British	4	24.5
Kingston	White British	5	29.65
	Not White British	2	41
Windsor & Maidenhead	White British	9	27
	Not White British	5	36.95
TOTAL	White British	18	30.5
	Not White British	11	34.15
OC2	Total	29	36.4 (2019-2020 = 31.4)
National Average A8	Total		21.4

Conclusion:

In Kingston and RBWM Non White British achieved higher than White British in terms of Attainment 8. In Richmond it was the reverse. It is not possible to draw further concrete conclusions as the numbers are too small

Key Question 3 – is being IN or OUT of borough for school a significant factor in attainment levels?

Of the 29 young people who were entered for exams

Borough	IN or OUT of Borough	Number	Average Attainment 8 score
Richmond	IN	4	42.5
	OUT	4	42.2
Kingston	IN	1	8
	OUT	6	38.3
Windsor & Maidenhead	IN	9	37.7
	OUT	5	27.6

TOTAL	IN	14	29.4
	OUT	15	36
OC2	Total	29	36.4 (2019-2020 = 31.4)

Conclusion:

Overall in AfC Virtual School, children who are classified as Out of Borough performed slightly better than those educated In Borough. Virtual School Headteachers are asked to ensure that children placed out of borough have equal access to services as those within and this requirement is clearly met.

Key Question 4 – Is School Stability a factor in achievement?

Of the **40 OC2 young people** who could have been entered for exams, the following had school moves in Key Stage Four:

Richmond - 4 out of 15 had school moves, 2 of these 4 were dis-applied, **Kingston** - 1 out of 9 had school moves, 0 were dis-applied, **Windsor & Maidenhead** - 1 out of 16 had school moves, 1 was dis-applied.

However, of the **29 OC2 young people** who took exams, the following had school moves in Key Stage Four:

Richmond - 0 out of 8 had a school move **Kingston** - 1 out of 7 had school moves, **Windsor & Maidenhead** - 0 out of 14 had school moves

Conclusion:

The focus on stability over the last couple of years has had a positive impact on outcomes. It has limited the number of school moves in Key Stage Four.

Key Question 5 – Does Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) make a difference to attainment?

Borough	SEND	Number	Average Attainment 8 score
Richmond	YES	3	34.3
	NO	5	50.2
Kingston	YES	6	33.5
	NO	1	35.4
Windsor & Maidenhead	YES	6	21.1
	NO	8	44

TOTAL	YES	15	38.8
	NO	14	44.5
National Average Attainment 8 for Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)			15.4 (2019 CLA SEND) 30.7 (All SEND 2021)
National Average Attainment 8 for non-Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (non-SEND) (all)			53.7

Conclusion:

Having Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) is shown to make a difference to attainment. As a school with a high proportion of Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) students this impacts on overall outcomes. Where looked after without Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) are compared with national outcomes the gap is far reduced. AfC Virtual School average attainment 8 for students without Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) is 44.5 as compares with the National Attainment 8 for all pupils without Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) which is 53.7. AfC Virtual School should continue to identify and support students with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) through the Strength Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) tool; Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings, Educational Psychologist intervention, pupil premium strategies and our training offer.

Key question 6 – Does being in care for longer make higher attainment more likely?

Of the 29 children who were eligible to be entered for exams:

Borough	In Care since Year 6?	Number	Average Attainment 8 score
Richmond	YES	3	57.6
	NO	5	33
Kingston	YES	4	43.8
	NO	3	21
Windsor & Maidenhead	YES	6	38.6

	NO	8	30.7
TOTAL	YES	13	46.6
	NO	16	28.2
OC2	Total		36.4
National Average Attainment 8 for Children Looked After (CLA)			21.4

Conclusion:

Where a young person will inevitably need to come into care those who are brought into care earlier in their school career perform better at GCSE. We have seen a similar pattern when reviewing data around those in Education, Employment and Training (EET). This is in line with 2015 Oxford University/REES centre research findings linking social care activities with educational outcomes. Nationally the Department for Education has extended the duty of Virtual Schools to cover children in need and those with a Child Protection Plan. With greater support pre-care we hope to see improved results if a young person comes into care.

Key question 7 – Does the Ofsted rating of a school affect the achievement?

Of the 29 young people who were entered for exams:

Borough	In Outstanding Schools?	Number	Average Attainment 8 score
Richmond	Outstanding	1	67
	Good	6	39.5
	RI or less	1	34
Kingston	Outstanding	4	39.8
	Good	3	26.25
	RI or less	0	0
Windsor & Maidenhead	Outstanding	6	40.8
	Good	8	24
	RI or less	0	0
TOTAL	Outstanding	11	49.2
	Good	17	29.9

	RI or less	1	11.3
OC2	Total		36.4
National Average Attainment 8 for Children Looked After (CLA)			21.4

Conclusion:

As we found last year, students placed in an Outstanding school achieve better than those in a Good school. In 2021 students in Outstanding provision achieved an average attainment 8 of 49.2 which is 1 point below the national average for all pupils of 50.2. The quality of education has a profound impact on the outcomes for looked after children. Virtual Schools are responsible for the quality of education for looked after children and in AfC Virtual School we only place in Good and Outstanding schools. Partners need to be aware of the significant difference in outcomes for students placed in Good or Requires Improvement schools. Wherever possible we should place our children in Outstanding provision.

Key Question 8 – do school exclusions impact on final results?

It is well documented that school exclusions impact on attainment. Of the 29 students entered for exams:

- **Richmond:** 0 out of 8 had a permanent or fixed-term exclusion
- **Kingston:** 0 out of 7 had a permanent or fixed-term exclusion
- **Windsor & Maidenhead:** 5 out of 14 had a fixed-term exclusion. Their Average Attainment 8 score was 24.8. This compares to an Average Attainment 8 score of 39.3 for the remaining 9 young people who did not have a permanent or fixed-term exclusion.

Conclusion:

Overall, school exclusions are a key factor that can impact on achievement. Grades can be affected and whether or not a child is able to be entered for any exams is also a factor. Further roll out of AfC Virtual School's Attachment Aware Schools Award will, we hope continue to reduce exclusions through providing alternative tools and, where necessary, introducing a differentiated approach to behaviour for learning.

Glossary

A	AfC AHT	Achieving for Children Assistant Headteacher
	AASA	Attachment Aware Schools Award
B		
C	CLA	Child looked after
	CiC	Children in care
D	DfE	Department of Education
E	EHCP	Education health and care plan
	PEP	Electronic personal education plan
	EP	Educational psychologist
	ESOL	English for speakers of other Languages
	EET	Education, Employment or Training
	EBACC	English Baccalaureate
F	Fast Tomato	Careers on line service
G	GCSE	Exams taken in Year 11 in Key Stage 4
H		
I	IoE	Institute of Education
J		
K	KS1, KS2, KS3 , KS4, KS5	Key stages of education in schools
L	LAC	Looked after children
M		
N	NCER	National Consortium for
	NOR	Examination Results Not on
	NEET	Roll Not in Education, Employment or Training
O		
P	PEP	Personal Education Plan
	PA	Persistent absence
Q		
R	RI	'Requires improvement' Ofsted grading
	RWM	Reading, Writing and Maths
S	SC	Social care
	SEND	Special educational needs and disabilities
	SDQ	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
T	TLC Live	Online tuition delivered live by qualified teachers
U	UASC	Unaccompanied asylum seeking child
V	VSH VS	Virtual School Headteacher Virtual School
W	Welfare Cloud	Agency which manages ePEPs and attendance
X		
Y		