

# AfC Virtual School

'Together we can achieve!'

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Report compiled by  
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# Annual Report for AfC Virtual School 2019/20

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## Executive Summary

**AfC Virtual School** was established in January 2016 to champion the education of children looked after by Richmond and Kingston local authorities. As of 1 October 2017 the Virtual School was restructured to include the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. AfC Virtual School has ten guiding mission statements which are led by members of the school leadership team. This report provides commentary and evaluation of impact with regard to activities in our school during 2019-20 and identifies areas for improvement for 2020-21.

### **AfC Virtual School Progress and Attainment Outcomes**

There were no KS1 or KS2 results in 2020 due to COVID. Richmond achieved Attainment 8 34.2, Kingston 34.5 and RBWM 29.4 all of which compare favourably with the looked after National Average of 21.4. 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. Richmond, Kingston and RBWM entered more children for the English Baccalaureate than the National for looked after children and the average points score closed the gap with data for non-looked after and looked after children nationally. An analysis of sub-cohorts shows that girls did better than boys, children were not disadvantaged academically by being placed out of borough and coming into care sooner positively impacted on GCSE outcomes. Those children who experienced stability in KS4 had a significantly higher chance of being entered for examinations. 83% of students with KS4 stability were entered for examinations compared with 21% of those who moved school during KS4. 71% of students not entered for GCSEs had SEND. Students who attended an Outstanding school had a higher chance of achieving at GCSE than those in a Good or Requires Improvement School.

### **AfC Virtual School additional outcomes by local authority**

#### **Richmond Outcomes**

Due to COVID 19 we were not able to collect attendance in the usual way. AfC Virtual School contacted schools and carers weekly and internal attendance reports were collated. Attendance was positive and higher than national for children with a social worker. The long established trend of zero Permanent Exclusions continued in 2020 and 8.1% of looked after children in Richmond received 1 or more Fixed Term Exclusions which is improved as compared with the 2016 figure of 9.8% and closes the gap with looked after peers nationally at 11.7%.

**AfC Virtual School** is responsible for ensuring high quality educational provision for the students in our care. In 2020 92.4% of pupils attended a Good or Outstanding school which is a 15.4% improvement on 2016 and closes the gap with the national percentage for looked after peers at 83% and all pupils at 86%.

We promote the importance of school stability with partner agencies and AfC Virtual School outreach professionals provide interventions to support school engagement. Achieving educational stability is an ongoing area for development requiring close partnership working with schools, social workers, fostering and commissioning. Two year stability had dropped from 89% in 2018 to 70% in 2019 and has started to rise

this year to 72%. The Children's Commissioner Stability Index shows 2 year placement stability rates are 52.9% showing that schools are maintained through placement breakdown.

Personal Education Plan (PEP) completion rates were 100% for 2019-20 with quality rated at 83.8% Good+.

### **Kingston Outcomes**

Due to COVID 19 we were not able to collect attendance in the usual way. AfC Virtual School contacted schools and carers weekly and internal attendance reports were collated. Attendance was positive and higher than national for children with a social worker. The long established trend of zero Permanent Exclusions continued in 2020 and 8.6% of looked after children in Kingston received 1 or more Fixed Term Exclusions which is improved as compared with the 2017 figure of 13% and closes the gap with looked after peers nationally which was at 11.7%.

**AfC Virtual School** is responsible for ensuring high quality educational provision for the students in our care. In 2020 87% of pupils attended a Good or Outstanding school, with a further 5.2% awaiting an Ofsted grading which is expected to be Good. Two year stability has improved this year at 78%. The Children's Commissioner Stability Index shows 2 year placement stability rates for Kingston are 53.9% showing that schools are maintained through placement breakdown.

Personal Education Plan (PEP) completion rates were 100% for 2019-20 with quality ratings at **89.1%** Good+.

### **Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Outcomes**

Due to COVID 19 we were not able to collect attendance in the usual way. AfC Virtual School contacted schools and carers weekly and internal attendance reports were collated. Attendance was positive and higher than national for children with a social worker. The long established trend of zero Permanent Exclusions continued in 2020 and 11.4% of looked after children in The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead received 1 or more Fixed Term Exclusions which is improved as compared with the 2017 figure of 14.5% but is raised from 2019. We are in line with looked after peers nationally however, this is an area for ongoing improvement and it is hoped that our Attachment Aware Schools Award will support inclusive practice in our schools.

**AfC Virtual School** is responsible for ensuring high quality educational provision for the students in our care. In 2020 94.4% of pupils attended a Good or Outstanding school. Two year stability has decreased slightly this year at 71%. The Children's Commissioner Stability Index shows 2 year placement stability rates for RBWM are 46.7% showing that schools are maintained through placement breakdown.

Personal Education Plan (PEP) performance for statutory school age students have improved from Autumn 2017 where completion rates were 59% for Statutory School Age and 15% for Post 16 students. In 2019-20 completion was strong at 98.9% and quality was 93.3% Good+ overall. 94.4% of students attended a Good or Outstanding School which closes the gap with looked after and non-looked after peers.

## **Whole School Developments**

This year has been dominated by our response to COVID. We were keen that COVID would not be a deficit year for our children or for our school. During the Summer Term we have developed an action plan for a new Virtual College approach and recruited an Assistant Headteacher to lead this provision.

Additionally, the Headteacher and Lead Educational Psychologist devised an Attachment Aware Schools Award and 44 schools were recruited as delegates for a year long programme launching in September 2020.

In the Autumn Term 2019 we won 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.

# 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 2019-20; 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 2020.

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.

## 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'.

The 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 students' 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.

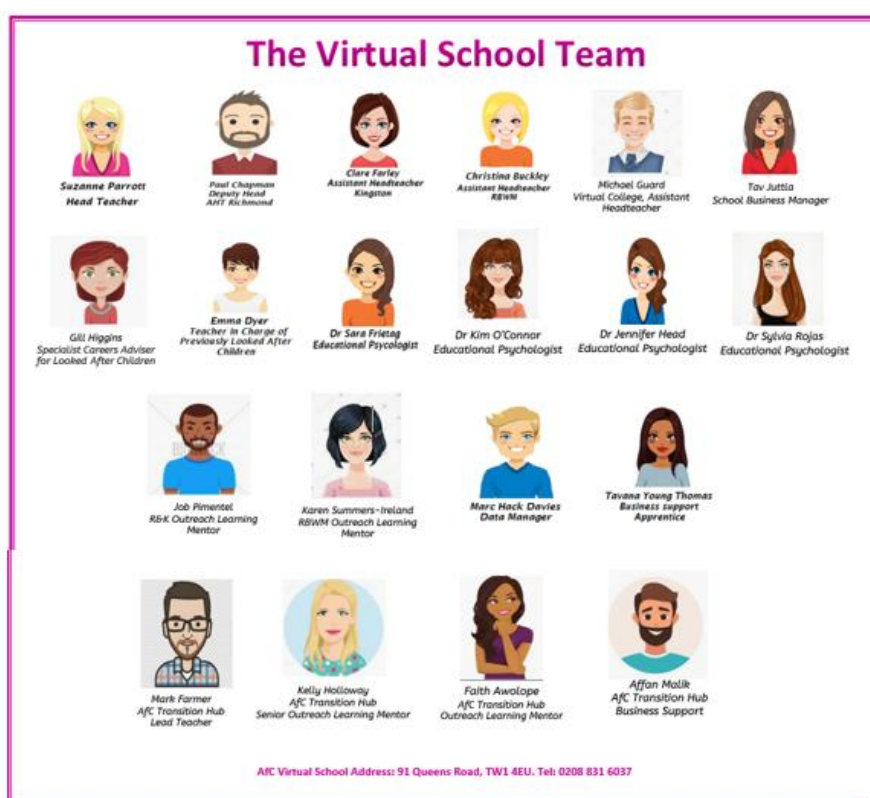
## Staffing structure of AfC Virtual School

AfC Virtual School is led by the Virtual School 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 and Windsor & Maidenhead cohorts.

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.

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 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.

Pupil Premium Plus funds have been used to engage a Pupil Premium project worker to source, project-manage and evaluate the impact of strategic projects commissioned to raise attainment and support wellbeing.



## 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

	2018	2019	2020
Number of pupils Richmond	8 38% SEND	6 33% SEND	9 56% SEND
Number of pupils Kingston	13 54% SEND	11 63% SEND	8 75% SEND
Number of pupils RBWM	9 33% SEND	8 38% SEND	7 57% SEND
<b>Average attainment 8</b>			
Richmond CLA	27.2	47.8	34.2
Kingston CLA	31.3	31.6	34.5
RBWM CLA	34.9	29.3	29.4
National CLA	18.8	19.1	21.4
All National	46.5	44.6	50.2

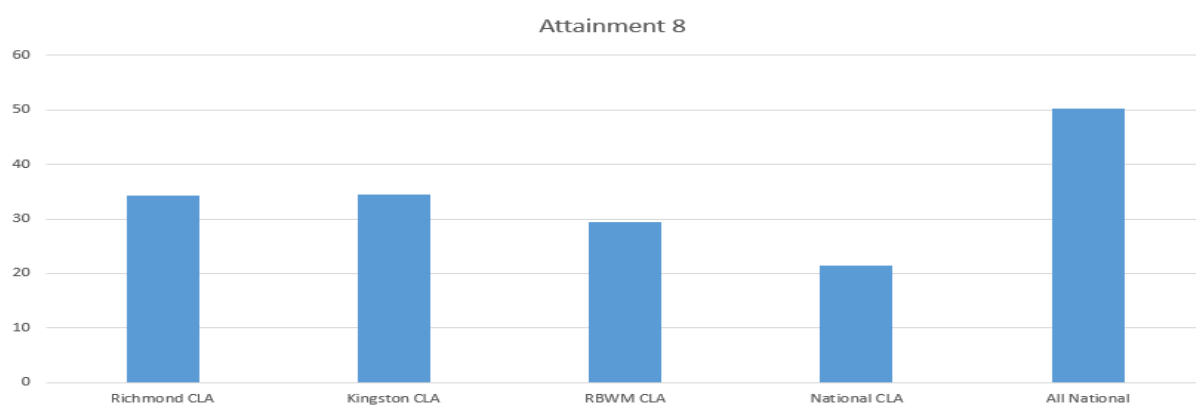
2020 Attainment 8	With SEND	Without SEND	All CLA Cohort
Richmond CLA	31.6	37.5	34.2
Kingston CLA	34.8	33.5	34.5
RBWM CLA	24.3	36.3	29.4
National CLA		30.8	21.4
All National	27.6 (2019)	49.9 (2019)	50.2

% Entering EBACC	2018	2019	2020
Richmond CLA	50	20	33
Kingston CLA	23	12.5	25
RBWM CLA	55.6	50	14
National CLA	8.3	9	10.2
All National	35	35	39.8

Av. Point Score EBACC	2018	2019	2020
Richmond CLA	6	14	23.7
Kingston CLA	3	9.1	19.7
RBWM CLA	10	8	18.7
National CLA	4.8	1.52	1.7
All National	13.4	3.84	4.4

	2018 Grade 4+	2019 Grade 4+	2020 Grade 4+	2020 Grade 5+
Richmond CLA	13	75	44	11
Kingston CLA	8	25	50	37.5
RBWM CLA	33	50	43	14
National CLA	17.5	7.2*		10.9
All National	43	39.5*		49.9

\* grade 5



## Comment and analysis on Key Stage 4 progress and attainment

### **Richmond**

The KS4 (OC2) cohort in Richmond comprised of 13 students, around double the previous year. Of these, 9 were entered for GCSE examinations. Of the 4 students who were omitted from the results, 1 was due to his disability and placement in a special school. 1 was an Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC), 1 was missing from care for the whole academic year and 1 was not entered for exams.

The Average Attainment 8 score for Richmond was 34.2 which is significantly above the National average for Looked After Children of 21.4. Looking at students without SEND the Attainment 8 figure increases to 37.5. 33% of students of the cohort of 9 were entered for the EBACC compared with 10.2% of looked after. 44% of Year 11s achieved English and Maths grade 4 and 11% achieved grade 5 or above compared with 10.9% looked after peers nationally.

### **Kingston CLA**

The KS4 (OC2) cohort in Kingston had 14 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. 8 students had an EHCP and attended specialist provisions due to their special educational needs and they were not entered for exams. 1 attended an alternative provision and sat functional skills exams.

The Average Attainment 8 score for Kingston was 34.5 which is substantially above the National average for Looked After Children of 21.4. 25% of students of the cohort of 8 were entered for the EBACC compared with 10.2% of looked after pupils nationally. 50% of Year 11s achieved English and Maths grade 4 and 11% achieved grade 5 or above compared with 10.9% looked after peers nationally.

### **Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead**

The KS4 (OC2) cohort in RBWM had 12 students who had been in the care of the local authority for more than one year (OC2) of whom eight were entered for GCSE examinations. 3 students had an EHCP, 2 students were in secure provision during Year 11 and 1 attended an alternative provision. 1 student was placed back a year at KS3 so was not eligible to sit exams.

The year 11 cohort achieved an Average Attainment 8 of 29.4 comparing positively with their national peers at 21.4. Looking at students without SEND the Attainment 8 figure increases to 36.3. 14% of the eligible cohort were entered for EBACC compared with 10.2% nationally. The EBACC average point score was 18.7 as compared with children looked after nationally where it was 1.7. 43% of Year 11s achieved English and Maths grade 4 and 14% achieved grade 5 or above compared with 10.9% looked after peers nationally.

## Interrogation and analysis of KS4 results 2019-2020

We have looked at 7 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 looks at the 38 OC2 children from AfC Virtual School who completed KS4 in 2019-20. 14 of those children were “disapplied” from results as they were unable to take exams in Spring 2020 due to a range of reasons from being in secure accommodation, EAL needs, and SEND challenges.

### Key Question 1 – Do girls achieve better than boys?

*Of the 24 children entered for exams*

	Number	Average Attainment 8 Score	Achieved English and Maths Grade 4+	Achieved English and Maths Grade 5+	Average Maths grade	Average English Language grade
MALE	14	25.2	21%	7%	3.5	3.5
FEMALE	10	43.2	80%	40%	4.8	5

**CONCLUSION** – girls generally achieve much higher than boys

### Key Question 2 – Is ethnicity a factor in achievement?

*Of the 24 children entered for exams*

9 were “White British”

15 were divided between 12 different ethnicity categories

	Number	Average Attainment 8 Score	Achieved English and Maths at grade 4+	Achieved English and Maths at grade 5+
White British	9	19.1	11%	0%
Not White British	15	41.2	67%	33%

**CONCLUSION** – non white British achieve much higher than White British

**Key Question 3 – does being IN or OUT of borough for school impact on results?**

*Of the 24 children entered for exams*

	Number	Average Attainment 8 Score	Achieved English and Maths at grade 4+	Achieved English and Maths at grade 5+
IN Borough	9	33.8	33%	22%
OUT of borough	15	32.4	53%	20%

**CONCLUSION** – no significant difference in results whether a child is IN or OUT of borough

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

*For the purpose of this question, school stability relates to moves during KS4*

We already know from previous data studies that children in long term care who remain in stable schools that are rated Good or better are more likely to achieve higher results. This is born out in the data set above. Of the 24 children entered for exams 83% (20) of these children had no moves at all. Significantly, of the 14 children who were not entered for any exams, 79% had one or more move in KS4

**CONCLUSION**– decreased stability impacts on children's opportunities to take a qualification.

### **Key Question 5 – Does SEND make a difference to attainment?**

*Of the 24 children entered for exams*

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Average Attainment 8 Score</b>
No SEND	9	36.2
SEND	15	30.9
All Cohort	24	32.9

More significantly, of the 14 children who were not entered for any exams, 71% of these had identified SEND

**CONCLUSION** – having SEND is not shown to make a significant difference to attainment, but it does make a child more likely to be dis-applied and not achieve and qualification

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

*For the purpose of this question, figures include those in care since the beginning of Y7 – the whole of KS3 and 4. Of the 24 children entered for exams*

11 were in care for the whole of KS3 & 4 & achieved on average Attainment 8 of 38.2

13 were not in care for the whole of KS3 & 4 & achieved on average an Attainment 8 of 28.5

**CONCLUSION** – being in care for longer is associated with improved attainment.

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

*Of the 24 children entered for exams*

10 were in Outstanding Schools, and out of these 60% achieved English and Maths at Grade 4 or above and 30% achieved English and Maths at Grade 5 and above

11 were in Good schools and out of these 45% achieved English and Maths at Grade 4 or above and 18% achieved English and Maths at Grade 5 and above

3 were in Requires Improvement schools but one was missing and in secure, one was in a special school and one had ESOL. Would being in a better rated school have been likely to make a difference to outcomes for these 3 students? We cannot be certain.

**CONCLUSION** – being in an Outstanding school is more likely to lead to better attainment

## Progress and attainment at Key Stage 5

### Analysis of Key stage 5 outcomes

Historic OC2 achievement of A-Levels and other qualifications

Area	Year	A – Level	Other qualifications including BTEC (any level), GCSE, Functional Skills and ESOL
Richmond	2018	0%	21%
	2019	0%	52%
Kingston	2018	13%	43%
	2019	7%	41%
RBWM	2018	22%	77%
	2019	7%	47%

OC2 Achievement of A Level or L3 qualification 2020\*

	Percentage (inc. UASC)	Percentage (exec. UASC)
Richmond	12.9%	25%
Kingston	8.3%	11%
RBWM	16%	22%

*\*Recording methodology changed from previous years and BTEC Level 3s are now included alongside A-Levels.*

## Comment and analysis of Key Stage 5 outcomes

### Richmond

In 2020 there were 31 Year 13 looked after children who had been in care for a year or more in the Richmond cohort of the Virtual School. 77% (24) of these students were entered for and passed exams. These ranged from ESOL qualifications to GCSE and Functional Skills.

PEP completion figures for Post 16 were 100% a significant improvement on last year. This was an improvement target from last year.

NEET figures for Y12 - 13s in Richmond remained well below the national average but went up slightly from 18.9% at the end of August 2019 to 20%. However, this represents an improvement trend since July 2016 where NEETs were recorded at 30%.

### Kingston

In 2020 there were 24 Year 13 looked after children who had been in care for a year or more in the Kingston cohort of the Virtual School. 11 students 46% were UASC's of these

73% gained an ESOL qualification 18% were NEET and 9% were in prison. 25% held EHCP's for complex learning difficulties and were attending specialist provisions. Of the remaining 7 29% completed A levels and gained places at university, 29% were completing apprenticeships 14% attained a level 2 qualification at college and gained a place on a level 3 and course 29% were NEET.

PEP completion figures for Post 16 remained consistently high with 100% completion rates across all three terms. The quality of Post 16 PEPs has also improved across the year from 75% to 90%.

NEET figures for Y12 - 13s in Kingston were 20.5% this is slightly raised from last year and is mostly due to COVID which has impacted on the cohort. This figure compares positively with the national average of 39%

### **Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead**

In 2020 there were 25 Year 13 looked after children who had been in care for a year or more in the RBWM cohort of AfC Virtual School. Sixteen of these students were entered for and passed exams (54%) . These ranged from ESOL qualifications for four 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 and 98% in summer 2020. This showed continued improvements since summer 2018 where completion was 65%.

NEET figures for Y12 - 13s in the OC2 RBWM cohort rose from 18.9 % in spring 2020 to 28.9% at the end of August 2020 and to 30.2% for the whole cohort. COVID and subsequent lockdowns impacted significantly on access to work opportunities.

## **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?**

This was a different year for reporting results due to the National COVID-19 Pandemic. We have monitored pupil progress via termly PEPs and student's home learning through weekly phone calls to carers and schools and provided training, laptops, funding and resources to support progress and mental health at this challenging time.

The KS4 the average Attainment 8 for AfC Virtual School was 31.4; ten points above the statistics for National peers at 21.4 The percentage of pupils across AfC Virtual School cohorts achieving English & Maths 4+ was 45.8% in 2020 improved from 44% in 2019 which compares favourably with the National CLA average 2018 of 17.5%. Those achieving English and Maths 5+ were above the national in all cohort areas with particular significance in the Kingston cohort. Average points score for the English Baccalaureate closed the gap with



looked after national and all pupil national outcomes.

AfC VS looked after students with SEND achieved average Attainment 8 of 30.9 raised from 2019's 28.7. This exceeds the National Attainment 8 figure for all students with SEND of 27.6.

The analysis of KS4 results shows that there was no significant difference regarding outcomes if you are placed out of borough. This is testament to the quality of support given to all pupils wherever they are placed. 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. It is interesting to note that girls do better in KS4 than boys and non-white young people perform higher than white children. This is something to consider in the year ahead.

School stability has a dramatic impact on outcomes at KS4 with 83% of those entered for examinations having no school move in KS4. 79% of those we were not able to enter for exams had school instability in KS4. Next year we plan to focus on stability with a range of initiatives including the Attachment Aware Schools Award, branding the 2020-21 'The Year of Stability'.

In the latter part of the year we have been planning for the opening of AfC Virtual College due for September 2020. This will aim to support increased access to higher education and reduce NEETs. AfC Virtual School's Headteacher chairs a monthly meeting with Leaving Care and the 14-19 Team to monitor students who are underachieving or at risk and identify action plans to support them. PEP meetings continue to be delivered three times a year whether a young person is placed in or out of borough.

**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 ensure students in all years groups are achieving and progressing.

Each of the three local authorities has a Deputy or Assistant Headteacher, an Outreach Learning Mentor and an Educational Psychologist.

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. 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. This role has been developed to include specific transition activities from early years through to university to support engagement, improve attendance, reduce exclusions and raise attainment.

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 similar way to a physical school. Performance is a running item at team performance meetings where outcomes are challenged and appropriate interventions discussed.

#### **Were the Areas for Development set in the 2018-19 Annual Report met?**

<b>Development Area set for 2019-20</b>	<b>What were the outcomes?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure efficient data sourcing and tracking for all cohorts across the year; with effective use of Learning and Progress Meetings to set individual targets, commission interventions and monitor progress.</li> </ul>	Partially Met  Mountain documents is populated; progress is monitored. Due to Covid interventions have been on hold. Further development needed for Pupil on the Page document and target setting.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further development of the 'Mountains' document with full prior data, clear targets and defined interventions, or 'Streams', scheduled to target pupil needs.</li> </ul>	As above.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit a Careers Advisor for looked after children to further raise standards at KS5 promoting greater take up of A level and University through improved information and access to open days.</li> </ul>	Met  Business Case to be submitted to develop this offer due to success.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan to extend AfC Virtual School and develop AfC Colleges for each local authority area with a focus on improvement KS5 outcomes and further reduce students not in education, employment or training.</li> </ul>	Met  Assistant Headteacher recruited and Development Plan in place.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen the 'zero moves in KS4' approach to improve two year school stability and raise outcomes for looked after children.</li> </ul>	Partially Met  Greater links made between outcomes and stability. Support from Director of Social Care line managing AfC Virtual school. Year of Stability of to be launched 2020-21.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater analysis of attendance and exclusion for KS5 and in general by Key Stages to understand and impact on any negative trends and raise outcomes.</li> </ul>	Met  COVID has impacted on this but detailed spreadsheets and weekly analysis reports outline attendance by area, school phase and year group. Detailed support for each young person provided with 70% school based learning achieved against National for vulnerable children of 50%.

### What are the key areas for improvement for 2020-21?

We are ambitious for our young people and having high aspirations for their achievement and progress is the first of our mission statements and central to all we do. The areas for improvement for Mission Statement One in 2020-21 are:

- Meet the needs of students as they return to school post lock down.
- Provide dedicated support for boys to achieve
- Improve the stability of education
- Raise the achievement of White British children through bespoke support
- Ensure consistent, accurate data gathering for the tracker, PEPs and Reports
- Ensure a programme of 'Mountain Streams' (Intervention) is in place.
- Make readily available 'Pupil on a Page' key information and targets to share with key professionals.
- Develop a Virtual College Approach to reduce NEETs and raise aspirations
- Develop the Careers Support available to our children.

## Performance Area 2: Attendance and Exclusions

National Data	2017	2018	2019	2020
% National Absence for Looked After Children	4.3	4.5	4.7	5%*
% National Absence for All Children	4.7	4.8	4.7	5.5%*
% National Persistent Absence for Looked After Children	10.0	10.6	10.9	12.5%*
% National Persistent Absence for All Children	10.8	11.2	10.9	13.4%*
% National Looked After Children with one or more fixed term exclusion	11.8	11.7	11.4	
% National All Children with one or more fixed term exclusion	2.3	2.3	2.6	
% National Looked After Children with permanent exclusion	0.1	0.05	0.1	
% National All Children with permanent exclusion	0.1	0.1	0.1	

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

Local Data	Richmond			Kingston			RBWM		
	2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020
Percentage with one or more fixed term exclusion	8.1	4.8	8.1	5.4	6.1	8.6	14	10.8	9.1
Percentage with permanent exclusion	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

### Comment and analysis on attendance and exclusions

Due to Covid and school closure, absence was recorded in a different way for the summer term, so is difficult to compare to previous years. Carers and Schools were contacted weekly to get an update on engagement and attendance. A spreadsheet was kept to record whether a young person was at home / in school or part time, sharing their time between home and school. The targeted year groups Yr1, 6 and 10 all returned to school at the end of the summer term.

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 Board on a monthly basis with pupil level breakdowns provided to raise awareness of the students behind the statistics. Attendance is

rewarded at the annual Celebration of Achievement Awards as part of the Education section led by AfC Virtual School.

### **Richmond**

We are pleased to continue the trend of zero Permanent Exclusions. The percentage of Fixed Term Exclusions, at (8.1%) is significantly less than that for children looked after nationally (11.7%).

### **Kingston**

We are pleased to continue the trend of zero Permanent Exclusions. The percentage of Fixed Term Exclusions, has continued to decline through this last term (8.6%) and is significantly less than that for children looked after nationally (11.7%). This figure could have been affected by the fact that some children were not attending school during the Covid 19 period.

### **Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead**

We are pleased to continue the trend of zero Permanent Exclusions. The percentage of Fixed Term Exclusions, at 9.1% is below that for children looked after nationally (11.7%). Two children who received Fixed Term Exclusions had specialist placements secured for the autumn term 2020, due to the high level of support needed.

## **Evaluation of Performance Area 2: Attendance and exclusions**

### **How good is the attendance of children looked after?**

**Background:** Average absence in 2019 was 4.7% for all children nationally and for children looked after. Across AfC Virtual School cohorts we achieved better attendance than for national peers. Additionally, in Richmond persistent absence reduced by 3.4% from 2017 to 5.7%. Kingston's persistent absence has seen a year on year improvement trend and reduced significantly to 9.6% compared with 27% in 2016. In Windsor and Maidenhead persistent absence reduced considerably to 6.7% in 2019 from 17.3% in 2017 when AfC Virtual School took over leadership of looked after children's education. These improvements are due to daily absence monitoring; half termly 'Deep Dive' Attendance analysis, termly attendance rewards and effective case management.

**Context for 2019-20:** Due to COVID 19 we have not been able to monitor absence in line with usual expectations. This is because Welfare Cloud was unavailable and we relied on weekly phone calls to monitor home and school based attendance. Figures given were a good, if informal, indication of engagement in learning. Data reports from the Summer Term 2020 show a higher than national average school based attendance. COVID documents and reports are available on request.

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.

**Taking the performance of all three cohorts into consideration 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?

**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 the 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. Due to COVID all students received an award in the Summer Term for successfully overcoming challenges during the pandemic.
- 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.
  - Virtual School Educational Psychologists provide targeted work with schools to support our students with Education, Health and Care Plans.
  - AfC Virtual School assistant 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.

## What are the key areas for improvement?

**Were the Areas for Development set in the 2018-19 Annual Report met?**

Development Area set for 2019-20	What were the outcomes?
Further reduce Persistent Absence in Kingston	Due to COVID not able to measure this for 2019-20
Provide Key Stage Analysis of attendance and exclusion trends to share and trigger appropriate intervention	Analysis of Attendance on weekly basis during COVID by year group and phase.
Identify key causes of absence, raise awareness and support improvements	Deep Dives into Attendance continued and weekly phone calls to support COVID in the Summer Term
Work closely with SEND colleagues to ensure prompt sourcing of provision	AfC Virtual School and colleagues in SEND work closely together but this is an area that can be developed even further.
Work with Social Care partners to ensure links between school moves, school attendance & outcomes are understood and collaborative action taken to improve educational stability.	Sharing evidence at training from REES centre studies highlights links between school stability and outcomes. Plans for next year include Attachment Aware Schools Award and Year of Stability.

### **What are the Areas for Development for 2020-21?**

- Support School Attendance during COVID with above National outcomes
- Support return to 'new normal' through PEPs, training and case work
- Monitor average absence and persistent absence so we see a return to usual high standards that are below National CLA percentages.
- Support School Moves Sign Off to reduce School moves, particularly in KS4 with an impact on NEET levels and access to college.

## Performance Area 3: School Provision and Pupil Characteristics

Number of students in AfC Virtual School, 31 July 2020

	2017/2018			2018/2019			2019/2020		
	LBR	RBK	RBWM	LBR	RBK	RBWM	LBR	RBK	RBWM
Early years	2	3	3	5	10	3	3	5	7
Statutory school age	64	84	81	60	77	81	72	77	75
Post-16	52	51	37	64	62	44	62	60	43
Total	118	138	121	129	149	128	137	142	125
% R-11 with SSEN/EHC	30	30	16	56	47	24	53	51	43
-% of national population with SSEN/EHCP	14.6	14.6	14.6	15	15	15	15.3	15.3	15.3

### Two Year School Stability

	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020
Richmond	89%	70%	72%
Kingston	76%	76%	78%
RBWM	86%	73%	71%

### 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

		2017/18			2018/19			2019/20		
		In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Statutory school age	Richmond	18	46	64	24	39	63	26	48	74
	Kingston	30	54	84	34	49	83	31	50	81
	RBWM	46	35	81	38	45	83	41	36	77
Mainstream	Richmond	17	29	46	16	22	38	20	26	46
	Kingston	23	39	62	21	34	55	21	37	58
	RBWM	33	26	59	36	32	68	37	27	64
Special school	Richmond	0	15	15	0	14	14	0	15	15
	Kingston	4	15	19	6	11	17	4	12	16
	RBWM	9	8	17	1	7	8	1	7	8
Alternative provision	Richmond	0	2	2	0	3	3	0	7	7
	Kingston	2	0	2	1	4	5	2	1	3
	RBWM	1	1	2	0	6	6	0	2	2
NOR	Richmond	1	0	1	4	0	4	6	0	6
	Kingston	1	0	1	3	0	3	4	0	4
	RBWM	3	0	3	1	0	1	3	0	3

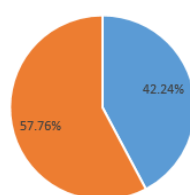
**SEND, UASC three year trend.**

		2017/18			2018/19			2019/20		
		In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
SSEN/EHCP	Richmond	4	15	19	12	23	35	12	27	39
	Kingston	6	19	25	11	28	39	10	31	41
	RBWM	6	6	12	9	13	22	18	17	35
UASC in college	Richmond	1	24	25	1	21	22	1	28	29
	Kingston	5	29	34	6	17	23	6	16	22
	RBWM	0	5	5	1	8	9	0	8	8
% of UASC in all key stages including Key Stage 5	Richmond	10	30	40	14	31	45	6	34	40
	Kingston	8	30	38	16	23	39	18	23	41
	RBWM	2	6	8	3	10	13	0	9	9

**School provision grading**

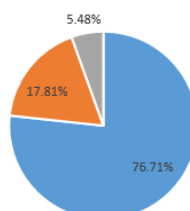
			% Good or Better	% RI	% Awaiting grading	% Other
2017/2018	Richmond	In	88.24		11.76	
		Out	93.48	6.52		
		Total	92.06	4.76	3.18	
	Kingston	In	100			
		Out	92.59	7.41		
		Total	95.12	4.88		
	RBWM	In	93.02	4.65	2.33	
		Out	88.57		11.43	
		Total	91.03	2.56	6.41	
2018/2019	Richmond	In	87.5	12.5		
		Out	94.9	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	

In/Out Borough Provision SSA



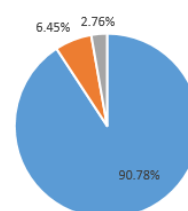
■ In ■ Out

Provision Type SSA



■ Mainstream ■ Special School ■ Alt. Prov.

OFSTED Grade SSA



■ Good ■ RI ■ Awaiting

## Comment and analysis of Performance Area 3

There have not been any notable changes in the size of the AfC Virtual School statutory school age cohort over the last two years. School stability has increased in Richmond and Kingston, but slightly decreased in RBWM. Out of a total cohort of statutory school age children of 232, 61 young people (26%) have experienced a school move in the last 2 years.

Looking at the 61 students who moved schools the highest proportion were in KS4:

EYFS = 4 (7%)  
 KS1 = 3 (5%)  
 KS2 = 13 (21%)  
 KS3 = 14 (23%)  
 KS4 = 27 (44%)

Whereas if we consider school moves in relation to cohort size the greatest percentage of school moves occur in EYFS. All of these moves were to prospective adoptive parents or long term carers.

EYFS -4/11 = 36%  
 KS1 - 3/21 = 14%  
 KS2 -13/43 = 30%  
 KS3 14/ 59= 24%  
 KS4 27/98 = 28%

39% of the young people who experienced a move have an EHCP all of these moves were due to moving from mainstream to a specialist placement or that the school placement closed or was no longer able to meet the young person's needs.

Other common trends were moves to an alternative provision, placement breakdown, CSE risks, moving to secure accommodation and a school move 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. During this

academic year many schools were providing online learning, and therefore were able to support young people until they started their new provision.

Links with SEN have also improved this year to promote timely moves, without drift. A thorough deep dive of the year 11 cohort and school moves was analysed at AfC Virtual School's Senior Leadership meeting to see what lessons could be learnt.

No young people were placed in Requires Improvement schools this academic year. There are 14 young people in Requires Improvement schools, 6 in Kingston, 4 in RBWM, 4 in Richmond. 11 of these 14 schools are in borough and 3 are out of borough 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 they have remained in their schools and Risk assessments are in place. 6 of these young people are in Yr6 and Yr11 and will be moving to new good + provisions in September. There are 5 young people in schools awaiting grades that were previously good.

At the end of the summer term there was a higher number than usual children not on roll. Richmond 6 Kingston 4 RBWM 3, a total of 13. Of the 13 children not on roll, 4 (31%) were Yr 11 UASC's who had arrived late in the year and due to COVID remained in specialist hubs or were studying online; 5 (38%) had an EHCP and specialist provisions were being sourced but due to COVID were unable to start; 3 (23%) were complex cases where due to COVID admissions were delayed and 1 (8%) was long term missing. For all young people a programme of education was offered online. 8 (62%) of the 13 were Yr 6 and 11 and had natural transition placements for September.

## 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 the 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 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 SEN. Evidence shows that AfC Virtual School secures high quality education for the majority of its pupils with the percentage of pupils in 'Good' or 'Outstanding' schools improving across school. Investment in TLC Live, an online tuition service, offers the opportunity of rapid provision of education where students are out of school. Within the Virtual School there is an emphasis on sourcing high quality schools and rigorously pursuing a start date within days of a pupil being out of education.

Where students are without a school place, this is generally due to an emergency move or entering care without an existing provision. Through embedded strategies, multi-agency training and challenges to performance at regular Virtual School meetings, our expectation is to ensure all students are accessing full time, Department for Education registered, high quality education.

## What are the key areas for improvement?

**Were the Areas for Development set in the 2018-19 Annual Report met?**

Development Area set for 2019-20	What were the outcomes?
To continue the Education Board meetings in RBWM with a key focus of raising awareness of stability and strategies to reduce school moves.	These continued and there has been strong feedback from managers regarding the visibility of AfC Virtual School and a raised awareness of education in decision making.
To establish a similar forum in Richmond and Kingston to improve educational stability further.	This was not achieved.
To develop a Joint Protocol with colleagues in SEND, Social Care and the Virtual School to minimize educational drift regarding EHCP pupils.	This is in progress

## What are the areas for improvement for 2020-21?

Target: Promote an education stability culture and improve school two year stability aiming for 85% by 2021.

- Embed the Two AD Sign Off to authorise school moves
- Ensure that data accurately represents the Ofsted Ratings of schools
- Ensure that students are not out of school between school moves and that school moves happen with the agreement of the Virtual School Headteacher and planned well in advance with well matched transition support.

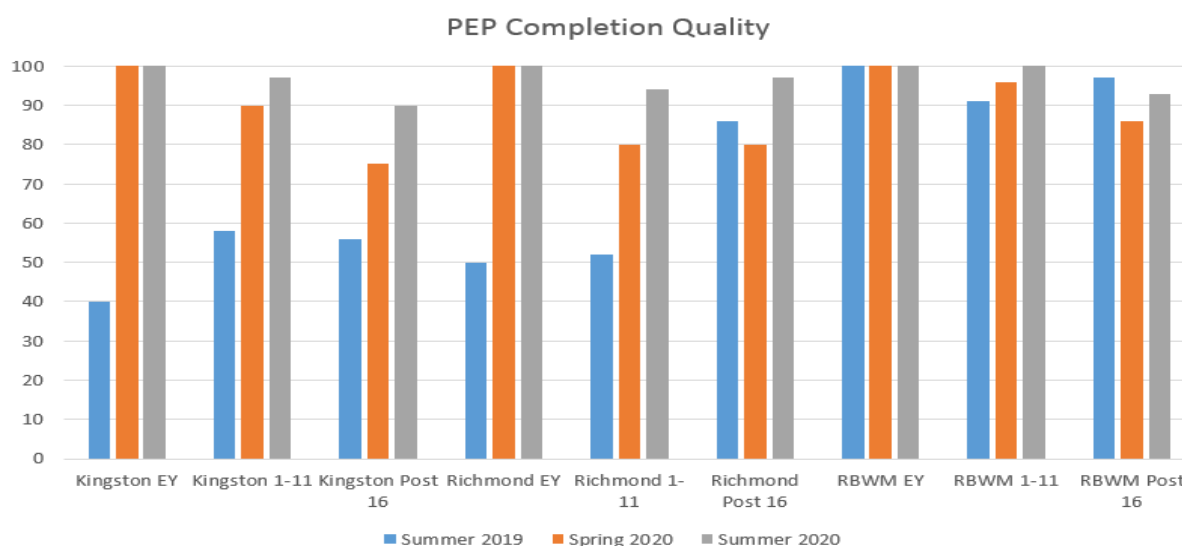
- Documentation is in place and monitored for Risk Assessments and Reduced Timetables.
- Outstanding provision is prioritised and if that is not available Good. Requires Improvement schools are only chosen with the permission of the Headteacher and the need for this is rare.
- UASC students in KS4 and below are promptly admitted into statutory schools with support packages in place including the Transition Hub for Year 10.
- AfC Transition Hub is understood by all members of AfC Virtual School and College and used effectively to support new into care.
- Improve the understanding of placing a new into care out of area and disrupting their education through an enforced school move.

## Performance Area 4: Personal Education Plans

RICHMOND									
	2017/18			2018/19			2019/20		
	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Early Years	100%	100%	100%	100%	75%	80%	100%	100%	100%
Statutory Sch. age	98%	91%	97%	90%	77%	91%	100%	100%	100%
Post-16	90%	79%	98%	86%	67%	47%	100%	100%	100%

KINGSTON									
	2017/18			2018/19			2019/20		
	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Early Years	86%	67%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Statutory Sch age	99%	91%	100%	98%	100%	97%	100%	100%	100%
Post-16	94%	92%	100%	91%	92%	100%	100%	100%	100%

RBWM									
	2017/18			2018/19			2019/20		
	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Early Years	86%	100%	100%	67%	100%	100%	83%	100%	100%
Statutory Sch age	59%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	97%	100%	100%
Post-16	15%	53%	65%	89%	93%	100%	100%	100%	98%

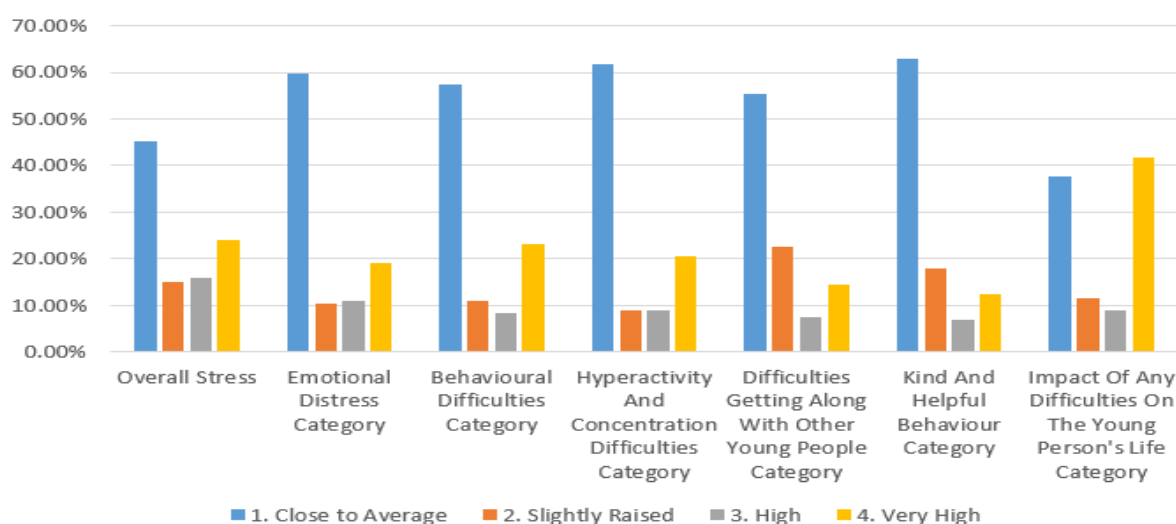


## Annual Total PEP Completion and Quality ratings 2019-20

	Completion Total and Percentage	Average Annual Quality Rating Percentage
Richmond	376 of 376 /100%	83.8% Good+
Kingston	395 of 395 / 100%	89.1% Good+
RBWM	358 of 362/ 98.9%	93.3% Good+
<b>Total</b>	<b>1129 of 1133/ 99.6%</b>	<b>88.7% Good+</b>

## SDQ – Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire

During academic year 2019/2020 the Virtual School piloted the SDQ data collection exercise. A total of 224 questionnaires were sent out with 146 returned. The following figures are based on the returned questionnaires. There are six areas which contribute to an overall impact on life:



The aspiration is for the carer, student and school SDQs to be on the same system so that data can be triangulated and professionals can have a clearer understanding of need. We look forward to developing this approach in 2020-21.



## Comment and analysis of Personal Education Plans

The PEP process in AfC Virtual School is managed through an electronic system administered by Welfare Call. Kingston and Richmond have been using this system for 3 years and it was introduced to Windsor and Maidenhead in the Spring term of 2018.

2019-20 completion rates exceeded, the target of 90% in all cohorts for Kingston, RBWM and Richmond.

### PEP Completion

#### Early Years

**Kingston** has reported 100% completion in the Summer of 2020. This matches their performance in the previous term and at this point in 2019.

**Richmond** has reported 100% completion in the Summer of 2020. This matches their performance in the previous term and is a 20% improvement on Summer 2019 when 80% was recorded.

**RBWM** has reported 100% completion in the Summer of 2020. This matches their performance in the previous term and at this point in 2019.

#### Statutory School Age

**Kingston** reported a completion rate of 100% in Summer 2020. This matches their performance in the previous term and a 3% rise on Summer 2019 when they recorded 97%

**Richmond** reported a completion rate of 100%. This matches their performance last term and is a 9% increase on Summer 2019 when they recorded 91%.

**RBWM** has reported 100% completion in the Summer of 2020. This matches their performance in the previous term and at this point in 2019.

#### Post 16

**Kingston** has reported 100% completion in the Summer of 2020. This matches their performance in the previous term and at this point in 2019.

**Richmond** has reported a completion 100%. This matches their performance last term and is a substantial increase of 53% on Summer 2019 when they recorded 47% completion rate. Summer 2019 represented a drop in performance due to staffing transition in that term.

**RBWM** has reported 98% completion in the Summer of 2020. This is a small decrease in the previous term and at this point in 2019

## PEP Quality

AfC Virtual School uses Quality Assurance criteria which is shared with partners in order to improve standards.

### Early Years

**Kingston** reported that 100% of their PEPs were of Good or Outstanding Quality. This matches their performance in the previous term when they also recorded 100%. This is a considerable improvement on Summer 2019 where only 40% of their PEPs were recorded as good or outstanding.

**Richmond** reported that 100% of their PEPs were of Good or Outstanding Quality. This matches their performance in the previous term when they also recorded 100%. This is a considerable improvement on Summer 2019 when only 55% of their PEPs were recorded as good or outstanding.

**RBWM** reported that 100% of their PEPs were of good or outstanding quality. This maintains the standard set in Summer 2019 and Spring 2020 when 100% was recorded also.

### Statutory School age

**Kingston** reported that 97% of their PEPs were of Good or Outstanding Quality in summer 2020. This represents an improvement on the Spring Term when they recorded 90% and a on Spring 2019 when they recorded 58%

**Richmond** reported that 94% of their completed PEPs were of Good or Outstanding quality. This is an improvement on last term when they reported 80% of Good or Outstanding quality. This is a considerable improvement on Summer 2019 when 52% was recorded.

**RBWM** reported 100% of their completed PEPs were of Good or Outstanding quality. This an increase on last term when 96% was reported and an increase on Summer 2019 when 91%

### Post 16

**Kingston** reported 90% of their completed PEPs were of Good or Outstanding quality. This is an improvement on Spring 2020 when 75% was recorded. It is also an improvement on Summer 2019 when 56% was recorded.

**Richmond** reported 97% of their completed PEPs were of Good or Outstanding quality. This is an improvement on last term where 80% was recorded. It was also an improvement Summer 2019 when 86% was recorded.

**RBWM** reported 93% of their completed PEPs were of Good or Outstanding quality. This is an improvement on Spring 2020 when we recorded 86% but a drop on Summer 2020 when 97% was recorded.

## 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 provide training for Designated Teachers to chair PEP meetings empowering colleagues to drive forward improvements in their schools. Social Workers are given training via formal conferences and can access 1:1 PEP training from the Virtual School at any time. We provide three face to face PEP meetings a year and continue with PEP meetings until the end of Year 13. AfC Virtual School's PEP Quality Assurance Criteria ensures that expected standards of completion are shared.

We have introduced Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires which are recorded in PEPs to support our responsibility to monitor mental health in school. It is pleasing that these plans went ahead in the Summer Term despite COVID 19.

2019-20 represents a year of strong practice both in completion rates and quality standards.

- All but one of our eligible pupils had up to date peps at the end of the year with an average across the school of 99.6% completion rate.
- All but one of our cohorts has reported that the quality of PEPs had improved since last year with 88.7% quality rating over the whole school.

Young people transitioning schools are closely monitored to ensure that the Designated Teacher from the new school/college is invited to the Summer PEP to provide a successful and positive move. AfC Virtual School attends all PEPs for those young people transitioning or taking key exams. During COVID the Virtual School have been able to attend more PEP's due to the online nature and this has helped ensure quality.

The focus for next year is timely PEP's ensuring that all new into care PEPs take place and are audited within 20 days

**PEP completion rate is Outstanding and quality is Good and improving.**

### 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 PEPs?

#### **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.

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.

### What are the key areas for improvement?

#### Were the Areas for Development set in the 2018-19 Annual Report met?

Development Area set for 2019-20	What were the outcomes?
To complete PEPs by Half Term of each term	Not Met partially due to COVID
To embed a system for SDQs and impact on pupil wellbeing	Met. This has been introduced but there is further work to be done to embed and increase submissions.
To ensure Welfare Call PEP templates are fully populated and kept up-to-date.	Partially Met: In most cases PEP quality is improving and where PEP data is missing it is challenged by Virtual School SLT.
To deliver PEP training to all new social workers as part of their induction	Partially Met. A system to be set up to ensure all new SWs are routinely trained by the Data Manager in the VS and area lead.
To ensure PEP figures are produced weekly and shared with VS SLT for monitoring	Generally Met
Ensure 85% of Pupil Premium Impact sections are completed through effective quality assurance and training.	Not met to this level. An area for focus next year.

#### What are the areas for improvement for 2020-21?

**Target: 98% PEP Completion. 90%+ Good or Outstanding PEPs.**

- To complete PEPs by Half Term of each 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 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 quickly adapt our training offer from the summer term. 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 ePEP 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 informal and formal training. During the Summer Term and 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 school governors raising awareness of barriers to learning and highlighting strategies to meet looked after children's educational needs.

In addition we have extended our provision to offer mental health and school transition support during COVID and registered 44 schools for our 'Attachment Attachment Aware Schools Award' launching September 2020-21. This includes collaboration with the Education Psychology Services in Operational Area 1 and 2. AfC Virtual School has included inspirational guest speakers in our training offer including Jazz Ampaw-Farr at the Pan London Virtual Schools Conference we organised in Covent Garden in November 2019.

Colleagues from AfC Virtual School are encouraged to attend Continuing Professional Development which has included School Leadership Conferences and training on therapeutic interventions.

We know from our feedback that the quality of training provided by AfC Virtual School is very good. With the planned 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 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	Guest speakers	Comments	Feedback
<i>DT New/Refresher Conference</i>	<i>17th September 2019</i>	<i>Dr Catherine Carroll</i>	<i>Thank you very much for a very well structured and informative day. All the Virtual School staff were friendly, approachable and supportive – Thank you! AC Very informative and useful. Much more to know and understand than I realised! ---SP Very useful training and support shared- thank you!</i>	<i>98% Good/Excellent</i>
<i>Attachment Training</i>	<i>27<sup>th</sup> September 2019</i>	<i>VS</i>	<i>I'm new to role, I will take back a lot of today's training to incorporate all teachers. It was interesting and well delivered. A really interesting course, really good advice training given-many thanks! FH Very useful training with lots of useful strategies to use! --- CA Really helpful training, great format - Thanks! - CP It was new to me so a perfect amount. Lots of useful strategies and now have a superb understanding!! ---RB I'd love my whole staff to hear this. – LB</i>	<i>9% Good/Excellent</i>

Conference for Foster Carers and their Supervising Social Workers Understanding How to Support Learning - Primary	1st October 2019 RBWM 11th October 2019 R and K	VS	Very good training. Will recommend to Foster Carers and Social Workers. AP I learnt lots about how to improve learning. CS Really helpful day, as previously. Good to have up to date info. RS Good information and training and good to make links with the Virtual School. TM I look forward to supporting my child + share in an improved way! --- TH	95% Very Good/Excellent
Social Worker Training Understanding How Best to Support the Education of Looked After Children	23rd and 30th June 2020	The Care Leavers  VS Area Leads	This was a useful refresher of the excellent whole day statutory training I did in June last year. I thought Karylle was a very good speaker. I am new to RBWM and this has helped me to understand the format of the PEP meeting and what needs to be done in preparation. Developed my understanding of the role of a PEP and the processes behind the meeting. I am clearer on educational responsibilities. This will support me in attending and participating in PEPS. I also have better understanding of the new exam grading system. The guest speaker shared how important knowledge on best ways to continue supporting young people in care.	90% Very Good/Excellent
DT Year 6 to 7 Transition Training INVITATION ONLY	23.6.20, 29.6.20 and 1.7.20	VS EPs and Area Leads	Did a great job of linking up schools whilst in lock down worked well today. I found it really useful in regards to think about how to plan for transition from year 6 to year 7. I found the pairing up very valuable especially in this current time. Great, very informative and interesting. Lovely idea to plan in a meeting with the secondary/primary counterpart. Thank you. Not only very informative but a great opportunity to discuss transition with all relevant parties involved. Really useful. Class teacher also attended and felt this would have been great training for when they first received our pupil. Very informative and useful.	97% Very Good/Excellent

## What are the key areas for improvement?

### Were the Areas for Development set in the 2018-19 Annual Report met?

Development Area set for 2019-20	What were the outcomes?
Embed the collection of post training feedback from delegates to further assess the impact of our training.	Data collected but not yet routine.
Triangulate the impact of training on student outcomes by closer examination of pupil data in relation to delegate attendance of AfC Virtual School training.	Not yet met
Further refine administrative processes to enable advance booking of courses by delegates and increase attendance.	Met. Partially due to work in this area and partially due to COVID delegate attendance was very positive particularly in Summer 2020.
Develop Pod Casts to extend reach of training	Not Met however, reach of training has been extended through on line offer due to COVID.
Explore training as an income generation source.	Not Met although income generation system was explored with Pan London Conference.

### What are the areas for improvement for 2020-21?

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

- Develop the Attachment Aware Schools Offer
- 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.



## 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 used to finance a variety of strategic projects run directly by AfC Virtual School and to support in-school interventions decided by the designated teacher and monitored by AfC Virtual School's Headteacher via the PEP process.

In 2019-20 we received additional funding from the Youth Endowment Foundation of £750,000 to open a Transition Hub in AfC Virtual School and Barnet Virtual School. There are more details of this exciting project discussed in Mission Statement 9.

AfC Virtual School's Headteacher delegates £300 funding, per student, each term to schools with children in care to Richmond, Kingston or 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 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. 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. one to one tuition.

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

AfC Virtual School Pupil Premium Plus accounts balanced at the end of the financial year 2019-20. 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 challenge and support for all mission statement areas and there are annual meetings with the Link Governor for Pupil Premium.

**We are providing a 'Good' 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?

### Strategic Projects

The Virtual School uses Pupil Premium funding to impact on attainment for a variety of strategic projects. 'The 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.

- £191,991 was Delegated to Schools through routine or additional funding requests;
- £57,494 was dedicated to Tuition;
- £161,678 was dedicated to Staffing: Educational Psychologists, Outreach, Pupil Premium management;
- £42,030 was dedicated to Welfare Cloud to support PEPs, Attendance and Data;
- £15,811 was dedicated to Training and CPD;
- £64,070 Additional Funding was given to schools to support provision during COVID-19;
- £76,978 funding supported projects: Achievement for All, Equine Therapy, Letterbox, Radio Aspire Youth (RAY), Fast Tomato, Aim Higher, Flash Academy, Chromebooks, Literature;
- £1,748 was spent on Summer Activities Week;
- Total Received: **£611,800**;
- Total Spent: **£611,800**.

### Examples Include:

**TLC Live, Winchmore & Fleet Tutors:** 1:1 tuition has strong evidence of impact as cited in the Education Endowment Foundation.

*Student 1 is on track to attain a 6+ in both English GCSEs, which has been significantly supported by his additional tuition.*

*Student 2 has shown Improved progress and confidence in Maths and Physics, and has been able to identify any learning needs in the lead up to examinations.*

*Student 3 is progressing well with KS2 Science & Maths with TLC tuition.*

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

*Student 3 has appeared cooperative throughout all sessions. She gives a clear warning when her attention trails off, giving the team an opportunity to redirect her attention so there is no 'crash'.*

*By continually engaging her we avoid "melt-downs". As she engages and trusts more, we are confident we can address some further issues of uncertainty, anger and confusion.*

**Letterbox Parcels:** Distributed to foster homes in all three 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. Comments include:

*'Firstly, I would like to say thank you so much, I absolutely love to get the parcels and am always excited to see what books I will receive each month'.*

*Letterbox increased enjoyment in 'reading for pleasure' and to helped my young person engage in the reading process with fun stories that he can retell over and over.*

*'The girls get very excited receiving the colourful parcels through the post'.*

**AfC Virtual School Website:** has been successfully developed and is in place, providing additional support to our partners. The website is updated regularly to ensure colleagues are informed of AfC Virtual School's developments, services and resources to support looked after children. The website was launched in January 2017 and within two terms had 4,500 hits showing that it is a recognized source of support.

**Pupil Premium Project Manager:** who has developed a research-based approach to projects which are systematically evaluated through feedback forms. The impact of Delegated funding is monitored through PEP scrutiny.

**Welfare Call PEPs and Attendance Monitoring:** to improve PEP quality and reduce absence. This strategic use of funding has seen absence decline 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.

**Fast Tomato Online Careers Advice** - As a Virtual School, we have invested in Fast Tomato's 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.

*'Great, very informative and interesting.*

*Lovely idea to plan in a meeting with the secondary/primary counterpart. Thank you'.*

*'I found it really useful in regards to thinking about how to plan for transition from year 6 to year 7'.*

*'I found the pairing up very valuable especially in this current time'*

*'Was very good, really helpful for carer's'.*

*'It made me think even more about the importance of the voice of the child and the importance of matching in placements but not necessarily for perhaps assumed reasons.*

*The key issue of identity and the role of this is providing support to foster carers.*

*'This will support me in attending and participating in PEPS.*

*I also have a better understanding of the new grading system'.*

*'It was good to hear more about how PEPs are structured as it has been some time since I attended one and good to look at how this supports transitions in education, especially as my team work a lot in regards to child's education transition'.*

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

*"She loved the activities, particularly the cookie decorating! I wasn't sure how she would find it virtually because she's a bit unsure with new people initially BUT she loved it".*

*"Thank you so much, it really helped break up the day for her".*

*"She really enjoyed engaging with these activities and has asked if there are going to be any more soon! I have said that I will ask for you to keep in touch so she can hopefully join again when similar activities are arranged!*

*Thanks again for organising these activities, they have been brilliant!"*

*"She joined in a variety of activities and had fun. Obviously being virtual has limitations but staff did a great job. She liked the story telling, decorating biscuits and drama".*

*"I think you and your staff did an amazing job in difficult circumstances, thank you. The girls love getting things in the post so your 3 parcels were very exciting. Well done, please pass on our appreciation for organising the activities and making them as fun as possible online"*

*"Thank-you so much for organising and setting up the sessions, He has really loved it and it has been nice for him to do something different. With all the craziness of home schooling he really enjoyed actually sitting and learning something different and new - from someone other than me"*

**Radio Aspire Youth (RAY):** AfC Virtual School has a fully working 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.

**AC Education:** Online programme which combines one or more short courses with a range of web-links and downloadable resources to support users in their work. We have used these for staff Professional Development and to induct new staff into the Virtual School.

**Achievement for All - Achieving Wellbeing (CLA) Programme:** The Achieving Wellbeing programme for looked after children runs across one year and comprises nine half day coaching visits for Designated Teachers, supported by online learning portal 'The Bubble'. This programme specifically targets the improved wellbeing and attainment of looked after and potentially previously looked after children.

**Educational Psychologists:** We have invested educational psychologists with specialist knowledge of looked after children. This has enriched our training and support offer to partners.

## Pupil Premium delegated to schools - Examples of Pupil Impact

- £182,556 was delegated to schools to support individual school based additionality and
- £9,435 was allocated through the Additional Funding Forms to schools requiring supplementary funding.

*'He is able to respond to an auditory alert, shows greater ability to move intentionally by following his OT/Physio targets and experiences an immersive storytelling experience through performing arts, using lights/sound, props music and poetry. Physical skills developed by the support of the physiotherapist'.*

*'He achieved a C grade in his Exam for English as a second language, this will allow him to access college and undertake level 1/2 course and is working toward his target grade in Maths'.*

*'Her emotional literacy was really developing, she was more confident with how to express how she was feeling; facial expressions etc; improved confidence in class'.*

*'The horse riding lessons have improved her confidence, and she is now attending Nescot college to study Animal Care'.*

*'He can pick things up and develop a good pencil grip. Increased reading skills, which will help him with every skill as he grows older. Increases socialising and joining in with other children'.*

*'Now reading a lot more and able to analyse text and understand bigger moral questions, Gaining independence and problem solving'.*

*'His interaction with the music teacher is constantly improving his physical movement too ie: he will often attempt to dance in his wheelchair for certain songs and encouragement of use of his right arm is always attempted by staff'.*

*'She attended Wizard Workshop and took part in the new sporting activities offered and especially enjoyed badminton club, her hand eye coordination skills really improved and she is becoming more confident in the sport and has improved. Attending the gardening club has helped her be more responsible and she has enjoyed teaching the little children some of the skills she is confident with'.*

*'She was very enthusiastic before every session and keen to learn new things or share her achievements (how the fruits or vegetables have developed over time)'.*

*'Achieved Grade 6 in Maths'.*

*'Has improved her reading and writing levels, and is more settled at school and seems happier to discuss her feelings'.*

## What are the Key Areas for Development?

Were the Areas for Development set in the 2018-19 Annual Report met?

Development Area set for 2019-20	What were the outcomes?
Maintain focus on monitoring impact at pupil and project level with 85%+ Impact sections completed on PEPs	Impact sections completed but not to that level.
Continue to use Pupil Premium funding to recruit additional staffing where this will positively impact on pupil outcomes	Met e.g. Recruitment of School Business Manager and Assistant Headteacher AfC Virtual College.
Invest further in Achieving for All to support Designated teacher development in support of pupil wellbeing	Met. Report available on request.
Invest in Attachment aware interventions	Funding dedicated to the Attachment Aware Schools Award and 44 schools signed up.
Ensure robust financial processes are maintained.	Positive transition to new School Business Manager with improvements in account management evident.

## What are the areas for improvement for 2020-21?

- 95% of ePEPs have fully completed Pupil Premium Plus Impact sections.
- Maximize engagement by pupils in strategic projects run by the Virtual School.
- Use funding to develop the Attachment Aware Schools Award Programme
- Use funding to develop the Virtual College approach
- Consider and take action regarding options for extending the work of AfC Transition Hub past July 2021.
- Continue improvements made in effective tracking of finance
- Ensure termly Pupil level impact reports are written
- Be responsive to COVID situation with regard to Summer School considering blended learning

## 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, support colleagues and where necessary champion change. AfC Virtual School's Headteacher 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 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 SPARK in the Education Directorate and the 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.

AfC Virtual School's Headteacher is Chair for the Pan-London network meetings, and participates in the South East Virtual Headteachers Network, the Extended National Association of Virtual School Headteacher's board 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 children are often placed out of borough and are supported by the strong links AfC Virtual School maintains across the virtual school national community.

AfC Virtual School Headteacher 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 Virtual School Headteacher is accountable to monthly Social Care Performance Boards.

In June 2016 we appointed a Performance Analysis Manager to enable the Virtual School to become the local authorities' key resource on looked after children's data. We have significantly improved data collection systems, designed and populated the AfC Virtual

School pupil progress tracker and applied rigorous standards. The AfC Virtual School Administrator 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 Aim Higher, St Mary's University London and Barnet Virtual School, participating in research in the Transition Hub.

**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 2018-19 Annual Report met?**

Development Area set for 2019-20	What were the outcomes?
Embed systems to improve delegate attendance of training.	Met through effective data cleansing which needs to be continued annually. Additionally, all out of borough carers should be invited to training.
Continue to apply rigorous standards of data collection and quality.	Met. This is a considerable task and effective systems, a thorough approach and use of PEP data has enabled progress in this area.
Host the Pan London 2019-20 Virtual Schools Conference. Successfully evaluated.	Met. Successful event, well attended and reviewed.
Host the Celebration of Achievement Awards for looked after children with positive engagement across all year groups and involving a wide range of partners.	Met. Successful event well attended, with positive feedback especially from the senior event.



### **What are the areas for improvement for 2020-21?**

- Ensure that contact lists are kept full up to date with changes in SWs and DTs in particular
- Use the Contact list database as the “go to” place for targeted emails and contact for those who can attend training
- Expand the recording of our contacts with partners to ensure that these are documented for impact.
- Relaunch an appropriate media initiative including the use of Twitter and the Radio Station and develop Podcasts to further extend our training offer.

## 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;
- mediation is offered between parents and schools;
- attendance of EHCP meetings to advise about attachment awareness;
- collaboration with professionals in areas including post-adoption support, SEN and admissions and, pre-covid, visits to several schools to support transitions into the school or between phases.

During 2019-20 the Lead for Previously Looked after Children liaised with schools to ensure that vulnerable children were offered places. In more than one case, this had a very positive effect on the mental health of the child and the whole family. In November 2019, the Lead teacher presented to the National Association of Virtual School Headteacher's Pan London conference about her role and how AfC Virtual School supports previously looked-after children.

The lead for Previously Looked After Children also researches and compiles a newsletter for DTs that she distributes every half term. During the first lockdown, these communications were doubled to ensure that information was being shared. Additionally, the lead teacher researched, wrote and compiled a suite of resources for an online learning offer for children and young people who were not able to attend school during the pandemic. All information was also added to the website and the website was regularly updated to highlight the most important information at the time.

The Previously Looked After lead works very closely with Adopt London South and regularly advises social workers and takes cases from them. A talk was delivered to Adopt Thames Valley parents and professionals in October 2019 and close links are also maintained with this service. There is regular collaboration with Adoption UK professionals and AfC Lead for Previously Looked After Children presented at one of their webinars.

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.

The lead teacher is involved in training events, presenting at several of the Designated Teacher events and keeping DTs up to date with the latest developments either in person or online if this is not possible. The Lead teacher has recorded four training podcasts for Radio Aspire Youth and is scheduled to be an Attachment Aware Schools Award coach for AfC Virtual School in 2019-20

The Lead teacher supports 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 for Previously Looked After Children is developing research into therapeutic spaces for care-experienced children in partnership with AfC Virtual School's senior Educational Psychologist. This project will be researched in AfC schools in 2019-2020, with four case study schools being visited. The study has implications for the way in which therapeutic interventions are delivered in schools not only in AfC but across the UK.

**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 1**

#### **Summary of query**

Request for help and support received by email from adoptive parents of an 8 year old child who was not coping at home and showing violence towards her younger sister. Parents also reported that they had a difficult relationship with the school and poor communication with them. Parents were both struggling with the situation and mother reported that she was at breaking point.

#### **AfC Virtual School involvement**

The Previously Looked After (PLAC) Lead contacted the school to start to mend communications with the parents and to find out more about the child in school. She attended 10 regular meetings with school staff, a psychologist, a social worker, an ALS worker and parents and ensured that the child's emotional and psychological needs were being met in school.

#### **Impact of AfC Virtual School involvement**

The parents felt supported. The school had believed that the child was doing well and that problems were only occurring at home but after some investigation prompted by the PLAC lead, it became apparent that the child was masking very difficult feelings and was experiencing bullying. ELSA work began as well as mediation with children and the child started to settle better into school and was not 'exploding' when she came home. Her sleep problems started to improve; a therapist was found. Parents reported fewer difficult situations between the child and her sister. The sister was also given ELSA support in school

and her needs more closely attended to. The Designated Teacher (DT), who had not previously been aware of the child's attachment needs, became involved, along with the SENCo. The relationship between parents and school started to heal as the child's holistic needs at school were being met and communication between parents and school became regular and positive. Social care provided a series of therapy sessions for both children.

## **Previously Looked After Children: Case Study 2**

### **Summary of query**

The parent worried that the young person would be 'triggered' by having to do GCSE mock exams, as they had been having panic attacks and walked out of exams when they felt they couldn't cope. The young person had a very traumatic early life and the parent felt that this was a result of post-traumatic stress.

### **AfC Virtual School involvement**

After a consultation with the parent, who was extremely worried that her son's potential would not be reflected in his exam results due to these panic attacks, the PLAC Lead contacted the DT at the school to ask whether any special arrangements could be put into place. Although DT was originally unsure why this would be needed, a conversation about attachment and trauma resulted in them being convinced that the young person should be allocated a special room; time to take a break if needed and also to have a conversation with them about how well they were doing. The Lead teacher also encouraged the DT to find a mentor for the young person in a subject in which they excelled, which they did.

### **Impact of AfC Virtual School involvement**

The young person was given more time and special arrangements for exams; a closer relationship with a trusted teacher also gave them confidence. The DT was able to tell the young person and their family that they would be offered a place in the VI form and that they were doing very well academically. Parent also related that her own mental health had improved and that she felt 'listened to' by the PLAC lead and this had a positive impact on the whole family. DT understood that there might be reasons, other than SEN, why young people may need special arrangements in exams and attachment/trauma can play a part in diminishing the educational outcomes of young people even when they are academically gifted.

## What are the key areas for improvement?

### Were the Areas for Development set in the 2018-19 Annual Report met?

Development Area set for 2019-20	What were the outcomes?
Evaluate dataset and compile a report to address general themes across the tri-borough. Share this learning with relevant partners to impact on improvements in local authority support of previously looked after children's education.	Met and can be developed going forward.
Further raise the profile of the Previously Looked After element to the work of the Virtual School in collaboration with the Virtual School Headteacher and through reports and presentations to AfC Virtual School Governors, Performance Board, School Improvement Forum, SEND PQI and partner training events.	Partially Met through presentations at DT training and to SEND. Could be developed further in 2020-21.
Continue to offer effective support and guidance to schools, parents and professionals and maintain strong communications through the website and newsletters.	Met. Well thought of and effective support provided.

### What are the areas for improvement for 2020-21?

- Provide support for children, parents and schools during COVID
- Publish and present findings on research into school based therapies
- Extend training offer for Previously Looked After parents
- Effectively promote the Adopter Hub resources
- Attend Adopt South and West Thames meetings

## Performance Area 9: 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 The Richmond Upon Thames School. There, a team of five staff (Lead Teacher, Senior Learning Mentor, Outreach Mentor, Educational Psychologist (part time) and 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, the 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.

**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 children looked after and care leavers?

- 40% of young people who were new into care (NiC) in school years 7 to 9 were referred to and engaged with the Transition Hub services. The remaining 60% were not eligible for a number of reasons such as the young person attending a specialist provision for severely disabled young people.
- Of the young people who have completed their KS4 transition, 85% of Richmond young people gained Education, employment and training places (40/47), In Kingston, this figure was 82% (48/59) and 89% (23/25) in RBWM.
- Staff were able to adapt the programme to meet the Covid context successfully through maintaining visits and support with stakeholders using a 'virtual' approach. This included the continuation over holiday activities to ensure young people remained engaged with the Transition Hub staff.
- All students who had exit interviews had increased their attendance during their time in the Transition Hub or remained at 100%.
- Students improved their behaviour with no new exclusions at their mainstream school since joining the Transition Hub and they settled in very well.
- All students with exit interviews have improved their 'journey planner' scores and all students had no concerns. 1 out of 3 students have completely moved to the no concern zone while the risk score has reduced for all other students.
- All students scored a higher mark on their PASS Surveys including the following categories, Confidence in Learning, Attitude towards learning, Prepared for learning.
- All learning mentors mentioned that there was significant improvement in students' confidence and that the students have gained many transferable skills from their time in the hub.

## **Transition Hub: Case Study 1**

### **Summary of Referral**

The Young Person was in Year 8 when she first went into care in the spring term during lock down. She had not been attending her mainstream secondary school for some time and was at first very reluctant to engage with any professionals, including the hub team.

### **AfC Virtual School Transition Hub involvement**

In collaboration with her carer, the Outreach Learning Mentor, over lock down quietly and sensitively began a remote dialogue with her through her carer. This included, for example, finding out about interests for example, the theatre and so the Transition Hub team sent a theatrical makeup kit to her and the Outreach Learning Mentor sent photos of herself using a similar kit. This was all done through the carer as the young person, at this stage, was refusing to engage with any professional. When lockdown restrictions were lifted, the mentor was able to make home visits to speak with the carer at the door. Eventually, through 'sensitive persistence' and 'always turning up' the young person asked to meet with the mentor. Over the summer holidays, the mentor was able to work with the young person and her carer to support her transition to a new school specialist placement. In addition, the Transition Hub team has also arranged for the young person to take a theatrical make up course over four Saturdays at a local college in the autumn term.

### **Impact of AfC Virtual School Transition Hub Involvement**

The young person has started her new school in September, is settled and has 100% attendance.

## **Transition Hub: Case Study 2**

### **Summary of Referral**

When this young person began at the hub during lockdown in Year 9, she was very unhappy in school and her attendance rate was very low (14%). In addition, she had lost all confidence in her academic ability, especially as she had fallen behind in her learning compared with her peers. This became the priority for the Transition Hub team and the young person's carer.

### **AfC Virtual School Transition Hub involvement**

The motivation for the young person was a physics test sent home by the school during lockdown. She wanted to revise for this test and reached out to the Transition Hub team for help. Throughout May to September, she received online tutoring in English and maths and science from the hub team. In addition, she was supported with subscriptions for resources in GCSE science.

### **Impact of AfC Virtual School Transition Hub Involvement**

The young person wanted to go back to school in September, as she was able to see the progress she had made academically. Her first lesson when she went back to school, luckily was a physics class! This young person is now making progress in school and her attendance rate is 55%; an improvement of 31%.

### **Selected quotes from stakeholder feedback:**

*"After being a carer for 20 years, this is the best support I've ever seen out of all the young people I've cared for. I wish there was this kind of support for my other young people". (Carer)*

*"I feel more confident within myself and I have enjoyed and am thankful for the Hub's support in helping my english." (Student)*

*"Thank you for all the times you listened to me nag. I really appreciated your help with trying to get my young person an education. I know you put a lot of time and energy into trying to organise things for her" - (Carer)*

### **What are the areas for improvement for 2020-21?**

- Continue to develop staff skills in relation to outreach support
- Continue to adapt the programme to COVID restrictions
- Support the Transition Hub staff in the return to the 'new normal'
- Meet the needs of the evaluators



## Performance Area 10: AfC Virtual College

### Comment

AfC Virtual College is being 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, and will open in September 2020. A new Assistant Headteacher has been appointed to lead this area. There will be a fuller entry against this mission statement in the 2021 Annual Report once the College has opened.

AfC Virtual College will generate an ethos of proactive and preventative support which will be supported by the following initiatives:

- **Pathways to Success:** Different pathways will be created to support each young person based on their current context. They will be designed to ensure no one is 'left behind' and have well matched education, employment, and wider cultural capital opportunities.
- **Mentoring Programme:** we will be looking to establish a partnership to provide care leavers with mentors.
- University talk series and other '**cultural capital**' initiatives.
- **NEET meetings:** Undertaken every 6 weeks, the meetings, which are attended by department leads of each key service, meet to discuss strategies and assign SMART targets to support each individual NEET young person.
- **Executive Board meetings:** A forum, including AfC Virtual College, alongside local councillors, university deans, business leaders and other members of the local community will be convened to champion opportunities for care leavers and aspire to an attachment aware community.

## 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 SEND**

- The 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 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 SEND / ensure appropriate support is in place to close the gap.
- 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, SENCo (if different from the Designated Teacher) Headteacher, Learning Mentor, Classroom Teacher, Virtual School Educational Psychologist. SDQs are embedded into the PEP process.
- The PEP form includes a 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 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 SEND (e.g. independent provision or alternative provision), or a young person is not in an education provision (e.g. in work or training, NEET or not on a school role), 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. The 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 SEND. These include half termly meetings between AfC Virtual School and 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.
- Where the young person is located out of borough, AfC Virtual School contacts the Local Authority in which the young person is placed, to identify and progress involvement of appropriate services.
- 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 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 and 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.

## SEND Attainment 8 2020

Richmond	Kingston	RBWM	AfC	National All Pupils with SEND
31.6	34.8	24.3	30.9	27.6

## EHCP Characteristics 2020

	Richmond	Kingston	RBWM
Attending Good+School SSA	96.4%	87%	100%
NEET (KS5 and above only)	20%	9.1%	40%
Not on Roll	4.5%	0%	0%
Less than 25 hours SSA	0%	0%	0%
Fixed Term Exclusions SSA	12.9%	8.3%	15%

# Glossary

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