

Corporate Parenting Panel Agenda



To: Councillor Alisa Flemming (Chair)

Councillors Shafi Khan, Janet Campbell, Bernadette Khan, Jerry Fitzpatrick, Maria Gatland and Helen Redfern

Virtual School: Shelley Davies, Angela Griffiths, Sarah Bailey;
LAC Nurse/Doctor: Dr Julia Simpson, Dr Simon Wilkinson, Dr Sue Goode, Dr Lyn Glover;
EMPIRE: Young People and Council Staff
Care Leaver Representative; Ashleigh Searle
Foster Carer Representatives: Angela Christmas, Manny Kwamin and Martin William (Chair of Foster Carers Association);
Health Commissioners: Fiona Simmons, Michelle Quinn, Amanda Tuke and Connie Ikhifa

A meeting of the **Corporate Parenting Panel** which you are hereby summoned to attend, will be held on **Thursday, 5 September 2019** at **5.00 pm** in **F10, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX**

JACQUELINE HARRIS BAKER
Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer
London Borough of Croydon
Bernard Weatherill House
8 Mint Walk, Croydon CR0 1EA

Michelle Ossei-Gerning
020 8726 6000 x84246
michelle.gerning@croydon.gov.uk
www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings
Wednesday, 28 August 2019

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting.
If you require any assistance, please contact the person detailed above, on the righthand side.

N.B This meeting will be paperless. The agenda can be accessed online at www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings

AGENDA – PART A

1. Apologies for absence

To receive any apologies for absence from any members of the Panel.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting (Pages 5 - 12)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 3 July 2019 as an accurate record.

3. Disclosures of interest

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct and the statutory provisions of the Localism Act, Members and co-opted Members of the Council are reminded that it is a requirement to register disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs) and gifts and hospitality to the value of which exceeds £50 or multiple gifts and/or instances of hospitality with a cumulative value of £50 or more when received from a single donor within a rolling twelve month period. In addition, Members and co-opted Members are reminded that unless their disclosable pecuniary interest is registered on the register of interests or is the subject of a pending notification to the Monitoring Officer, they are required to disclose those disclosable pecuniary interests at the meeting. This should be done by completing the Disclosure of Interest form and handing it to the Democratic Services representative at the start of the meeting. The Chair will then invite Members to make their disclosure orally at the commencement of Agenda item 3. Completed disclosure forms will be provided to the Monitoring Officer for inclusion on the Register of Members' Interests.

4. Urgent Business (if any)

To receive notice of any business not on the agenda which in the opinion of the Chair, by reason of special circumstances, be considered as a matter of urgency.

5. Update on actions agreed at previous meeting(s)

6. Children in Care Performance Scorecard (Pages 13 - 18)

The Children in Care Performance Scorecard of July 2019 is attached.

7. Exam Results, Exclusion and SEN (Pages 19 - 24)

This report provides a summary of 2018/19 education performance by Children Looked After (CLA), with specific focus on examination results, exclusions and SEN.

8. The Independent Visitor Service and Learning Mentor Volunteer Scheme (Pages 25 - 28)

The Independent Visitor Service and Learning Mentor Volunteer Scheme report is attached.

9. Youth Engagement Summer Activities Update (Pages 29 - 32)

The Youth Engagement Summer Activities Update report is attached.

10. Annual Report of Virtual School (includes update on Mentoring and Careers guidance for Looked After Children and Care Leavers) (Pages 33 - 46)

This report is in response to the panel's request for an overview of the work of the Virtual school in relation to educational outcomes for children and young people in the care of Croydon.

11. How has the Panel helped Children in Care today?

For the panel to consider how its work at the meeting will improve services for children in care.

12. Work Programme (Pages 47 - 48)

To consider and approve the Panel's work programme for the municipal year 2018/19.

13. Exclusion of the Press and Public

The following motion is to be moved and seconded where it is proposed to exclude the press and public from the remainder of a meeting:

"That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within those paragraphs indicated in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended."

This page is intentionally left blank

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 2

Corporate Parenting Panel

Meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel held on Wednesday, 3 July 2019 at 5.00 pm in F10,
Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Shafi Khan, Janet Campbell, Bernadette Khan, Jerry Fitzpatrick and Maria Gatland

Co-optee Members

Foster Carers: Angela Christmas, Manny Kwamin and Martin Williams

Virtual School: Shelley Davies and Sarah Bailey

Care Leaver: Ashleigh Searle

Also

Present: Nick Pendry (Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care)
Vanessa Strang (Head of Corporate Parenting)
Jennifer Wade (Head of School Place Planning and Admissions, Commissioning and Procurement)
Adam Fearon-Stanley (Independent Reviewing Officer Service Manager)
Dionne Sang (Consultant Practitioner, Early Help and Children's Social Care)

Apologies: Councillors Alisa Flemming, Bernadette Khan and Helen Redfern

PART A

23/19 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 6 March 2019 were agreed as an accurate record.

24/19 Disclosures of interest

There were none.

25/19 Urgent Business (if any)

There was none.

26/19 Update on actions agreed at previous meeting(s)

There was no update on actions agreed at the previous meeting.

27/19 Children in Care Performance Scorecard

The Head of Corporate Parenting spoke of the performance scorecard and shared with the Panel that since the last meeting there had been improvements in key areas.

Children Services was aiming to set higher aspirations for the Looked After Children, in particularly around the foster carers annual reviews and child visits. The area of difficulty fell within the personal education plans (PEPs) and the initial health assessments.

The Panel heard that staff had made progress in addressing concerns within the service for significant improvement. For example, the initial health assessment was to be channelled through the Health and Wellbeing Strategy Board, and although there was more work to be completed, to have improvement within the social work practice was the target.

Officers shared that one area of improvement had been reviewing of health assessments, which was the initial stage when a child comes into contact with Children's Services. This was a key priority for the service to achieve a better outcome. It was also important that the service assessed issues very early to avoid drift and delay. The improvement in this area was due to the growing number of staff in the service. Officers noted that improvements being achieved had not reflected in the report presented, as there had not been an update since May.

The Panel welcomed the changes, which had been ongoing. There was pleasure taken in the improvements within the service specifically with the PEPs and health assessments. Credit was awarded to the Virtual School Service which had worked hard to achieve a better service performance. Conversely, the Panel raised concerns about indicators that needed improvement.

Further discussion from the Panel highlighted the statutory obligation for pathway plans that was not being met and that more work was to be done to reach targets as 18% of care leavers were eligible for a pathway plan. Pathway plans for children were required at the age of 16 years and 3 months, which had been amended from previous months. Pathway plans were not the same as care plans.

Officers informed the Panel that the service had been working hard on improving figures and had seen an improvement with figures over 85%, which had been their target.

In response to questions from Members of the Panel in relation to the standard and quality of PEPs, officers informed that they had undertaken a social worker survey, and the feedback received highlighted that their relationship with the Education team had strengthened and improved immensely. This was demonstrated by the the service working better together

in completing PEPs. This had proven very helpful for the service, and had helped support the services' processes and their journey of improvement.

In response to questions from Members of the Panel concerning the quality assurance of pathway plans, officers highlighted that the process had several layers. These included the social worker co-producing the plan with their young person before a team manager would review it. Pathway plans were formally reviewed at the young person's six-monthly review and each update or change in a child's life was also reviewed. Officers shared that the service was introducing an audit programme, which would also be another layer of quality assurance. The auditing programme would see two types of auditing, one from an external independent reviewer and another from an internal audit within the service. This was to get a greater understanding of how things could improve.

Comments from the Co-optee Members of the Panel shared that from their experience, young people did not understand the importance of a pathway plan as it was not very clear, and was seen as more of a "tick box exercise". Consequently, more exposure was encouraged around pathway plans for young people to understand why and what the information was for them and how it would relate to their future. Life stories would also help the young person to see what their life would look like. Officers informed that the service was developing a care leaver's forum, which was proposed to commence in September. This would be used to develop a new design for the Croydon pathway plan making it a user friendly and meaningful document.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to note the Children's Performance Dashboard.

28/19 Independent Reviewing Service Annual Report

The Independent Reviewing Officer Service Manager spoke to the report and shared with the Panel that the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Service had worked very hard over the year with higher demands and service improvements. The service achieved 87% of its 95% target.

Officers informed that the service had been working with their Camden partners, having had four sessions to date. These addressed the way in which management, supervision, connection and resolutions within the service could be improved.

Officers shared that there were challenges that the service experienced throughout the year, and the recruitment of new staff, which affected capacity, saw that improvements within the service were being achieved.

The Panel heard that the service had made progress over the year in encouraging a better relationship between social workers and IROs, which started in August last year. The IRO Service had developed better relationships by setting up monthly workshops for new staff and service expectations in working together had been set.

Other highlights saw Looked After Children (LAC) Reviews reviewed. These were at a stage where in the last six months the IRO Service had been more effective, this included who the reports were distributed to and the regularity of the LAC Reviews.

Officers further highlighted that there was to be a launch of an App for children following consultation and that EMPIRE was involved with the consultation. The Panel heard that the App was proposed to be launched and trialled in September and this was an exciting development and an alternative way for social workers to work with their young person with their LAC Reviews. The App was also seen as a much wider function to feed into other meetings such as Child Protection Conferences, Child in Need Meetings, Personal Education Plan Meetings and Family Group Conferences.

Members of the Panel discussed the work of the IRO Service and how it was quality assured. Officers informed that the service was working with colleagues to resolve any concerns that had been raised, including understanding the IRO role and talking to staff, which also helped the service work together and gain a better outcome.

Officers informed that overall the service had improved.

Members of the Panel welcomed the great analysis of the report, which was more positive from last year. Members also welcomed the positive comments from foster carers.

In response to questions from the Panel on the attendance of a looked after child's birth family at the reviews, officers informed that the service was mindful of the sensitivity of various cases; and following feedback from the IRO survey, birth parents had been happy with the quality of service provided to their children.

In response to questions from the Panel regarding the interaction between a child and their IRO, officers highlighted that the interaction should give a child the opportunity to address their concern. The interaction was quality assured as managers had oversight during supervision., This was another way to acknowledge any concerns raised. Further, there was an expectation that the IRO would meet with the young person before any LAC Review. This meeting would help to strengthen their relationship. Co-optee Members highlighted that the IRO does visit children and that they were seeing positive changes.

In response to questions from the Panel on the timeframe of LAC Reviews, officers clarified that a copy of the decisions from a LAC Review would be sent out by the service administrator and should be received within five working days, followed by the full minutes within twenty to thirty working days.

In response to questions from the Panel relating to a bespoke App rather than different Apps, officers informed this had been reviewed and effectively did

not work. It was highlighted that young people were positive about the use of the Mind of My Own (MOMO) App although there were still teething problems. Panel Members suggested for the App to be more user friendly as there were concerns about the appropriateness of some animation or graphics as well as its effectiveness, when logged into the App.

Officers clarified that there were two types of MOMO: *MOMO1* was aimed at children aged eight and above; and *MOMO Express* was designed for children with learning disability to cater for different levels of understanding. MOMO itself was not an approach for translation and that further support would come from their social worker. Further questions from Panel Members drew concerns about the challenges a young person could face with not having access to a mobile phone or a language barrier, and also whether there were other safeguarding concerns. Officers confirmed that the App had cost £28,000 for the year and was accessible on any device. Panel Members heard that every child would be able to have their own account as all communication was to be channelled to a central point and sent to the social work team. Therefore, there would be an oversight of the App. Officers further informed that the App was not to replace communication, it was seen as an opportunity to engage with the children in a different way.

In response to questions from the Panel relating to scrutinising staff and colleagues, officers shared that being an IRO included understanding the position and role in working with social workers and team managers. This would have a big impact on how staff and colleagues would respond to a situation and determine what was best for the child. The service was on an improvement journey as communication was better throughout the service.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to note the Independent Reviewing Service Annual Report.

At 6:23pm the Panel adjourned the meeting for a short break

At 6:32pm the Panel reconvened the meeting.

29/19 Update on South London Commissioning Programme

The Head of Commissioning and Procurement introduced the report to the Panel and summarised that the focus of commissioning had always been around the young person. The South London Commissioning Programme (SLCP) was comprised of twelve boroughs. Croydon had been privileged to host two active projects that looked at placements for children with special needs including value for money, and secondly, the quality assurance of how providers ensured a consistent service. In addition to the projects, there was also joint commissioning for residential placements and fostering agency.

The Panel heard that the highlights of the SLCP included the increased placements that were provided for looked after children. This was a result of good planning and better sufficiency. Officers had been transparent in what

the borough needed and what they wanted in partnership going forward as they worked closely with their providers.

Officers informed that the Light Joint Commissioning Framework was to be launched in March 2020, and with the collective spend in the region this would make a huge difference to Croydon.

At 6:44pm Councillor Janet Campbell attended the meeting

The service was focusing on Looked After Children having heard the 'voice of a child'. There was now a PAN London Commission group where the SLCP would be developed and it was agreed for this programme to run further for another year.

The Chair acknowledged the service's great work, which was evidenced.

With questions from the Panel relating to the achievements of the SLCP to date and how the investment was quantified, officers informed that the programme started with SEND funding, and the £1.7 million grant funding from Education was given for growth.

With questions from the Panel relating to the concerns of moving a child mid-placement, officers informed that a social worker's decision of where a child should be placed would have oversight from Children's Services. To add, officers highlighted that the SLCP underwent a review looking at a cohort of thirty-seven (4%) of looked after children in placements, and saw that the children were all in the right placements. Therefore, the decision-making would always be based around the child's need and how the service could assess their need. Further, the Panel heard that there was an internal mechanism should there be a need for a child to move placements mid-placement, and a discussion to establish whether the move was required would take place. The Panel learned that the decision-making would always remain within Children's Social Care. Key performance indicators highlighted how settled and stable children were in placements and the service found that they needed to improve stability.

With further questions from the Panel relating to residential placements and the difference between in-house and the commissioning service, officers confirmed that all residential placements were made through independent fostering agencies. Officers informed that providing placements from in-house was a lot cheaper than using the commissioning service but it was not always a cheaper option. Finding placements through the commissioning service often had social workers not knowing who the details of the third party. Finding placements in-house was always a first port of call before the service extended their search using the commissioning service that provided residential placements elsewhere and out of borough. For children with multiple complex needs, the service was fortunate to have a different number of other placements to cater for all. Officers informed Panel Members that their number one priority would be to place Croydon's looked after children with the borough's foster carers. As part of the community and working in

partnership, it was for exceptional circumstances that a child would be placed outside of the borough.

The advantages of joint commissioning were that local authorities would be able to share concerns very quickly regarding any provider or residential home. Having the information-sharing forum was seen as a positive development.

The funding element within the report set out the Croydon spend and the collective spend over the twelve boroughs. The aim was to reduce current spending.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to note the progress that had been made so far in relation to the South London Commissioning Programme.

30/19 Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report 2018/19

The Head of Corporate Parenting spoke to the annual report of the Corporate Parenting Panel for the year 2018/19. This annual report would be the first of the kind for this Panel. The report summarised the work the Panel had achieved and provided further background to the Looked after Children Services and the Leaving Care Team.

Officers shared the highlights of the year:

- That the priorities set by the Panel had been implemented and achieved;
- EMPIRE was born and their engagement as a group had grown(the involvement of EMPIRE members in Panel meetings was also an achievement);
- There had been two reviews of the fostering service

In response to questions, Panel Members were informed that this report was drafted in accordance with the Constitution and needed to go to Full Council for consideration.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to approve the Corporate Parenting Draft Annual Report 2018/19.

31/19 How has the Panel helped Children in Care today?

The Panel highlighted the following accomplishments and discussed changes to help Children in Care. This included:

- Looking at education for children looked after, their aspirations and how the service were supporting children going for higher education.
- Following up on the comments and issues made by the young person and EMIPRE representatives.

- Comments were made about making sure EMPIRE representatives were invited and prepared for Panel meetings going forward as their absence was noted and missed.
- Comments were made pertaining to education attainment, which should be an ambition/aspiration that all should have for the young children.
- Comments were made for an extended invitation for designated teachers to attend Panel meetings.
- Panel Members would like to see responsibility in challenging more to achieve better outcomes for the young children.

Unanimous comments were shared regarding the way in which all services communicate with each other, to show stability and teamwork within all services in supporting looked after children.

32/19 Exclusion of the Press and Public

This was not required.

The meeting ended at 7:49pm

Signed:

.....

Date:

.....



OUR
FOCUS

Childrens Performance Dashboard

JULY 2019

Produced by
Performance Intelligence and Data Quality Team



CROYDON
www.croydon.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 8

REPORT TO:	Corporate Parenting Panel 5th September 2019
SUBJECT:	The Independent Visitor Service and Learning Mentor Volunteer Scheme
LEAD OFFICER:	Nick Pendry Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care
CABINET MEMBER:	Cllr Alisa Flemming Cabinet Member - Children, Young People & Learners
WARDS:	All
CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT/AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON:	
FINANCIAL IMPACT None.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

None.

2. Independent Visitor Service and Learning Mentor Volunteer Scheme

- 2.1 Croydon Children's Services are expanding the one to one work they do with children using volunteers.
- 2.2 The Learner Mentor service is a new scheme seeking prospective mentors from within the Council to work with 25 young people aged 14 to 16 who are learning in mainstream schools.
- 2.3 The Learning mentoring scheme in Virtual school was set up for two key reasons. One, at the direct request of a number of CLA young people in academic year 9 (through the Children in Care Council and our visits to schools) who told us they felt they needed non-school based support and someone independent but with relevant skills, to take an interest in and assist with their studies and career progression.
- 2.4 It was also identified through PEPS, that there were a small but clearly identifiable group of Y10 and Y11 students who were felt to be slightly coasting and when discussing with these students what may support them, a carefully designed academic mentoring programme was felt to be the best solution.
- 2.5 The ambition of the scheme is for volunteers to use their own experiences of education to guide a young person through the challenges of studying and

- preparing for exams. Exploring interests and future life choices are also a key part of the mentor/mentee relationship.
- 2.6 Mentors will be expected to commit for six months, offering an hour of their time per week to meet with their assigned young person.
- 2.7 The mentoring services have begun their recruitment of volunteers and plan to start working with young people as the new term starts in September. The scheme is run by Kathryn Kashyap in the Virtual School team.
- 2.8 The Independent Visitor Service has a legal definition and function defined by the Children Act 1989 and subsequent amendments. It forms part of the child and young person's care plan and is often recommended by the Independent Reviewing Officer as a key part of the support package for Looked After Children and Young People. The Independent Visitor can support the young person to share and be heard in receiving the full care and support they are entitled to. The nature of the relationship means that Young People often trust their Independent Visitor with concerns and needs that they may not share with professionals and Carers. The Independent nature of the role, and the fact it is being done without payment, is important for our young people who often feel surrounded by people who are being paid to care for them.
- 2.9 The Independent Visitor service in the council has been operating within the Quality Assurance service of Children's Social Care for over ten years. There are currently three dedicated Independent Visitor Co-ordinators who train and support over 80 volunteers at present and we plan to increase the number of volunteers to over 100 by the end of October.
- 2.10 Independent Visitors support the social and emotional development of children and young people through building a long term supportive relationship which allows them to develop trust in a caring adult.
- 2.11 Due to the nature of the Independent Visitor relationship it can be used in many different ways depending on the child or young person's needs and interests. It also changes over the lifetime of the relationship as the young person grows and their needs change.
- Currently 80 young people are matched with a volunteer – this is approximately 10% of Looked After Children in Croydon. The national average is 3.2%.
 - The team has expanded to grow the service and reach even more young people.
 - 12.5% of matches are over 4 years old and 60% of matches
 - 30% are over 2 years old and a further 25% are over a year old.
- 2.12 The following case studies demonstrate some of these aspects of the Independent Visitor Relationship.

Long term

- 2.13 A key part of what we try and achieve with Independent Visitors is longevity and stability. Looked after children go through the disruption and distress of coming into care and sometimes then have a succession of carers, social workers and

other professionals in their life. Having an adult who is there throughout and sees them grow, achieve and change, supporting them irrespective of their challenges, is key to the role and its impact.

- 2.14 One of our matches began when the young person was 8, and they are now 15 and still see each other regularly. The Independent Visitor has been there through a great deal of change; moving to secondary school, placement changes, multiple changes of social worker, moves out of Croydon, being reintroduced to family. They now meet, going for a meal and a catch up, and the young person is able to share his achievements and ups and downs with someone who has been there to see his whole story in care.

Placement changes

- 2.15 One of our young people who has a match which began in 2014 has left five placements in that time due to escalations in his behaviour and mental health needs. He is currently placed in West London after two specialist residential placements broke down. His Independent Visitor has stuck with him throughout from the age of 10 until he was 16. Despite being rejected a number of times as the young person went through periods of rejecting all support the relationship is still valued. Recently after another 'bump in the road', I checked in to set up a meeting and got this response from his carer - "spoke to J about this this evening and he stated that he is keen to have contact with [the Independent Visitor], as he has known him longer than pretty much all the other professionals in his life."

Modelling behaviour – cultural and gender connection

- 2.16 DM was matched to R as he had recently come into care at the age of 9 having been through a great deal of trauma pre-separation. His carer had done great work with him and his brothers, but the IRO and Social Worker felt he needed a male from his cultural background who could model positive behaviour and help him re-establish trust with adult males.
- 2.17 We identified a cultural match, and a person who could manage his behaviours without cutting him off from fun and positivity. They immediately hit it off, getting out locally, playing football in the park, keeping a 'savings pot' so they can save towards a big day out at Thorpe Park, talking about school, home, feelings, and hopes. Even when R has had a difficult week at school his IV is still there for him to give him space and time to offload. Here's a quote from the IV - "On the way back home I asked R what his favourite part of the day had been, and he said he liked it all, but the main thing was that we'd had fun together."

Speaking out via the Independent Visitor

- 2.18 L recently went out with her Independent Visitor and told her that she was very unhappy in her placement and felt concerned that she couldn't talk to anyone else about the issues she was having. The Independent Visitor spoke to the Independent Visitor co-ordinator who then talked to the social worker and IRO who are now aware of the issues and can begin to deal with the concerns. L

still trusts her Independent Visitor and understands that people can help her if she tells them what she is thinking and experiencing.

3. CONSULTATION

N/A

4. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

N/A

5. COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SOLICITOR AND MONITORING OFFICER

N/A

6. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

N/A

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT

N/A

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

N/A

9. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

N/A

CONTACT OFFICER: Karen Massey: Quality Assurance Manager, 4th Floor,
Zone C, BWH, 0208 726 6000 ext 66386

REPORT TO:	Corporate Parenting Panel 5th September 2019
SUBJECT:	Youth Engagement Summer Activities Programme Update
LEAD OFFICER:	Nick Pendry, Director of Early Help and Children’s Social Care
CABINET MEMBER:	Cllr Alisa Flemming Cabinet Member - Children, Young People & Learners
WARDS:	All
CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT/AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON:	
FINANCIAL IMPACT None.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

None.

2. DETAIL OF YOUR REPORT

2.1 *Summer youth engagement offer*

2.2 The Youth Engagement Team summer offer was 72 sessions over the summer for young people 8-18 covering locality detached & outreach across the borough and bookable projects and activities from 1-3 days duration. We had really strong communication and publicity this year through the Young Croydon website and social media. We are really pleased with the take up from colleagues in CSC and EH supporting young people they are working with to book onto activities.

2.3 There was a dedicated Youth Voice day for organisations to bring young people they are working with together with the Youth Engagement Team supported groups (locality youth forums, young mayor and deputy, CYAC and Empire). There will be a debate chaired by the young mayor and a consultation session on the Local Plan with the Planning department.

2.4 The Young Mayors careers event on 21st August at BoxPark; for all young people who may want to consider their education, training and career options whether they are waiting for exam results or not. Speakers and providers picked by the young mayor and deputy.

- 2.5 *Summer youth engagement targeted offer*
- 2.6 The Youth Engagement Team also offered 9 additional targeted sessions over the summer for looked after young people, children and young people living in temporary accommodation along London Road and those vulnerable to having a poor transition from primary to secondary school.
- 2.7 There were 4 trips for looked after young people including groups from the UASC young people taking part in the summer school; the aim for next year is to have a wider range of trips and activities for LAC young people in addition to the universal summer offer that they can access. On Fri 9th August 34 LAC young people went to Thorpe Park together.
- 2.8 There were 2 trips for young people who have taken part in the Safe & Well project; encouraging good transition from primary to secondary school and signposting to other support services, these were in partnership with Go Wild Croydon who run a Forest School.
- 2.9 There were 3 play and youth sessions for children and young people living in temporary accommodation blocks Sycamore, Windsor and Concord, these were in partnership with PlayPlace Innov8 CiC who deliver play sessions for children under 8 yrs. old and signpost parents to community services in their area.
- 2.10 *Summer offer from voluntary and community organisations*
- 2.11 There has also been a wide summer offer from voluntary and community organisations for young people across the borough, over 30 different one off events and projects have been highlighted to the Youth Engagement Team. They were collated and circulated on this link <https://bit.ly/2LLS4lo>
- 2.12 Good Wolf People drama project has been running for a number of months; they have been working with young people who are looked after to create a play based on the lived experience of young people in Croydon. There will be performances in Croydon in Sep and they are currently showing the play at the Edinburgh Festival (to rave reviews).
- 2.13 *Summer Offer for UASC children*
- 2.14 Over the last 5 weeks, up to 80 young people aged 15-19 from across Croydon, have attended the Friends Meeting House daily for our Summermix UASC School. They have taken part in English language lessons and Maths lessons every morning, attempting to earn themselves AQA accreditations and then participated in a wide range of activities each afternoon including Arts, music, drama, mechanics and cooking. They've been out on trips to the cinema and around London and a small group even spent a week on Jamie's Farm in Herefordshire. The programme has been an unstinting success with attendance surpassing expectations.
- 2.15 The project has been made possible by a successful bid from the Controlling Migration Fund in collaboration with Virtual School. Detailed evaluations will follow. One young person told us, "these are not just my new friends but my family now."

2.13 *Planning for autumn term*

2.14 STAR Awards nominations will be coming out at the end of August for nominations from social workers, virtual school personal advisors, foster carers, teachers, keyworkers and other professionals and family members to nominate young people who are looked after and have succeed this year across a range of categories. Last year over 150 looked after young people were recognised on the night and we would love that to increase this year.

2.15 The Takeover Challenge is happening again on 21st November which we have had good representation from looked after young people in previous years. Young people get a chance to 'take over' Director roles/jobs and work with Heads of Services and other senior leaders to consult and plan for work that may have an impact on young people. These young people are excited to work with the council (and other Croydon based businesses and organisations) and bring a wealth of lived experience from Croydon, local communities and interactions with services every day.

3. CONSULTATION

N/A

4. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

N/A

5. COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SOLICITOR AND MONITORING OFFICER

N/A

6. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

N/A

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT

N/A

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

N/A

9. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

N/A

CONTACT OFFICER: *Emily Collinsbeare, Youth Engagement Team Manager, 4th Floor, Zone C, BWH, 0208 726 6000 ext 66386*

This page is intentionally left blank

REPORT TO:	Corporate Parenting Panel 5th September 2019
SUBJECT:	Virtual School Annual report
LEAD OFFICER:	Robert Henderson, Executive Director Children, Families and Education Department
CABINET MEMBER:	Alisa Flemming, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Learning
WARDS:	ALL
CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT:	
<p>A caring city: Provide safer, high quality, integrated healthcare and social care services close to home with a focus on maternity, children and young people, and mental health services.</p> <p>Corporate Parenting.</p>	
FINANCIAL IMPACT	
No financial considerations.	
FORWARD PLAN KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO: N/A	

1.	RECOMMENDATION
	Corporate Parenting Panel to note the annual report from the Virtual school.

- 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**
- 2.1 The corporate parenting responsibilities of local authorities include having a duty under section 22(3)(a) of the Children Act 1989 to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children they look after, including eligible children and those placed for adoption, regardless of whether they are placed in or out of authority or the type of placement. This includes the promotion of the child’s physical, emotional and mental health and acting on any early signs of health issues.
- 2.2 This report is in response to the panel’s request for an overview of the work of the Virtual school in relation to educational outcomes for children and young people in the care of Croydon. 2019-20 examination results and data analysis will form a separate paper to be written by the end of September 2019-20. This is a qualitative summary and information update.

3. THE CROYDON CLA COHORT 2018-2019 (Overall Numbers and Demographics)

- 3.1 In the academic year Sept 2018- July 2019, **611** children and young people were in care (CLA) continually for the whole 12 months. Virtual school works on behalf of all children and young people of 'educational age' which means ages 2-19 in school years, nursery to Year 13.
- 3.2 A total of **919** children and young people were in care the end of the academic year on **July 19th 2019**.
- 3.3 There were **574** statutory school age children (reception year- Year 11 age 4-16) in care at **July 19th 2019**.
- 3.4 During 2018-2019 a total of **55%** of children and young people attended schools in borough and **45%** were placed in schools out of borough. This shifted slightly from a 50:50% split last year.
- 3.5 In September 2018-19, **692** children and young people were placed in the care of # Croydon. This rose to **930** by end of July 2019. This means that an additional 238 children and young people came into care between September 2018 and July 2019, a **34%** increase. This is significantly greater than the cohort increase of 19% over last academic year. (A full breakdown of the increases in respective cohorts is provided in the table below.)
- 3.6 **257** CLA between 2 and 19 years old were recorded as having SEND needs in July 2019. This was **27%** of the cohort at the end of the academic year (919). Of these, **129 (14%)** had an EHCP, **128 (14%)** were classified by schools as receiving SEND support. Of the total number of in care at the end of the academic year, **71 (13.2%)** attended special schools
- 3.7 At the end of July 2018-19, the total number of children and young people in care (930) was made up of **626** males (67%) compared to 304 females. (23%)
- 3.8 At end of academic year 2019, **535 (57.5%)** children and young people were recorded as indigenous or 'local' compared to **395 (42.5%)** UASC (Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children)
- 3.9 UASC young people represent **25** nationalities. The majority of our UASC are from 4 countries, Albania (16%), Afghanistan (15%), Vietnam (11%) and Eritrea (5%). (Please see the full ethnic breakdown of the CLA cohort for 2017-2018 below). They range from 11-18 years of age on arrival.

Table 3.1: Cohort Breakdown (based on 930 pupils 2-19yrs)

Cohort Breakdown	Beginning of the academic year September 2018	End of the academic Year July 2019	Percentage increase of CLAs + ↑
Nursery Age	10	26	160%
Primary Age (KS1-KS2)	130	160	23%
Secondary Age (KS3-KS4)	238	410	72%
Post 16 Age (KS5)	314	334	6%
	692	930	34%

4. School Ofsted Ratings

- 4.1 At the end of 2018/19, 81.7% of statutory school age CLA attended schools rated by Ofsted as 'Outstanding' or 'Good'. Compared to 78.1% the previous year.
- 4.2 The Ofsted rating of a school where the child moves in-year is an increasing priority for Croydon and there is now a dedicated section in the e-PEP to monitor school moves more closely.

Table 3.4: School Ofsted Rating

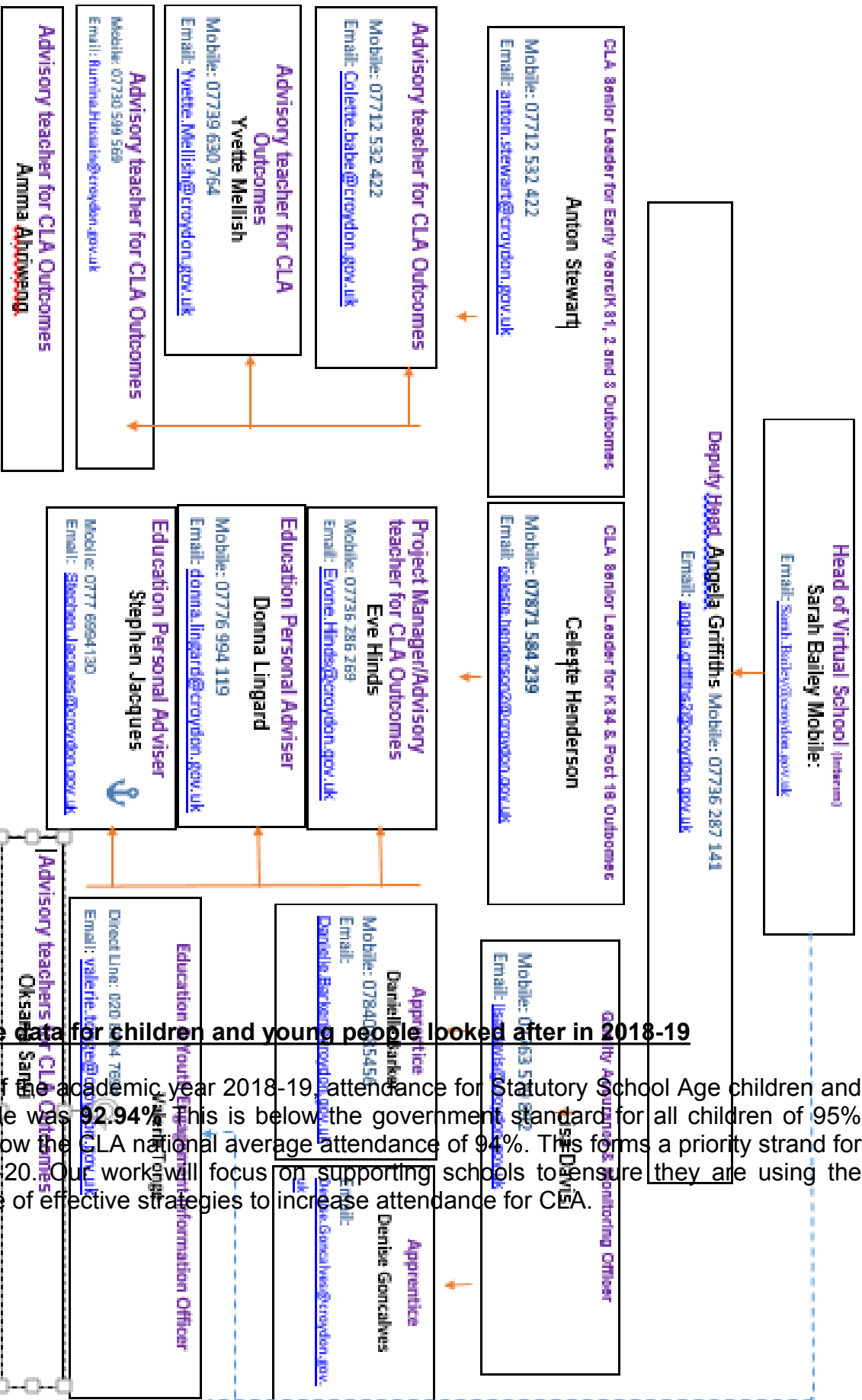
	Number
In schools with Ofsted Good or better rating	361
In schools with Ofsted RI rating	79
In schools with Ofsted Inadequate rating	4
In schools where no Ofsted rating was recorded	68 (not yet rated)
Statutory school age not in education	58

- 4.3 Where possible, children are placed in schools rated 'good' or better. However, if a child comes into care while in a school rated less than good, or if a school's rating is altered following OFSTED, it may be inappropriate to move their school place simply on the basis of the Ofsted rating of their current school. In these instances, risk assessments take place. There were 4 schools rated I at the end of the 2018-19. These schools are a priority for VS risk assessments in 2019-20. Advisory teachers and the senior team carry out visits to assess the suitability of provision. In the case of 'I' schools, the VSH would risk assess.

5. Staffing, Structure and capacity in the Virtual school

- 5.1 At the end of July Virtual school has 22 FTE members of staff and 2 part time members. This includes 3 apprentices. This is an increase of 6 on January when the Headteacher was recruited. It breaks down into 7 advisory teachers (will be 8 following recruitment in August), 2 education advisers, 4 Senior Leaders including a Deputy headteacher and a Headteacher, an information officer, a business support role, 3 apprentices (1 data, 1 PR and media, 1 IT and finance) and 2 temporary part time roles: 1 mentoring project lead and 1 Careers, information, employment, advice and guidance project lead. A full map is overleaf.
- 5.2 The increased capacity has been funded through re-direction of Pupil Premium Funding, to enable the Virtual School to actively monitor every statutory school age child through an advisory teacher attached to the child. Advisory teachers have cohorts of up to 60 pupils to monitor, attend and support PEP completion and report on from Sept 2019, which should enable much clearer mapping of progress and attainment as well as pastoral wellbeing.

Virtual School Structure 2019



Attendance data for children and young people looked after in 2018-19

At the end of the academic year 2018-19, attendance for Statutory School Age children and young people was **92.94%**. This is below the government standard for all children of 95% and also below the CLA national average attendance of 94%. This forms a priority strand for VS in 2019-20. Our work will focus on supporting schools to ensure they are using the widest range of effective strategies to increase attendance for CLA.

YEAR	Autumn 2018/19				Spring 18/19			Summer 18/19			
	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19
Primary	96.80	97.00	97.05	96.60	97.52	97.49	97.23	96.78	94.93	96.61	96.53
Year 7	97.90	98.55	98.52	97.64	97.72	98.11	97.80	97.94	97.82	97.62	96.92
Year 8	95.99	94.45	92.89	91.80	93.21	93.06	93.54	96.40	89.79	89.66	89.85
Year 9	96.05	94.20	90.89	90.43	91.85	92.11	92.05	92.71	89.75	87.91	91.06
Year 10	94.38	94.19	94.23	92.92	94.81	94.28	93.73	92.94	88.84	88.20	87.13
Year 11	87.45	88.13	90.58	92.34	92.95	92.77	93.17	92.24	87.63	89.15	-
Secondary	92.86	92.57	92.81	92.86	93.83	93.69	93.74	93.60	89.58	89.74	90.33
SSA	94.36	94.21	94.37	94.18	95.02	94.93	94.88	94.64	91.23	91.87	92.94
Year 12	87.04	85.89	87.46	86.20	86.75	87.91	85.94	84.63	81.78	80.92	79.67
Year 13	80.52	80.03	78.49	78.27	78.35	78.82	76.25	74.54	71.13	71.71	71.59
Post 16	83.68	82.88	82.75	82.00	82.37	83.04	81.10	79.27	76.45	76.32	75.63
All CLA	90.45	90.17	90.39	90.47	92.24	91.81	94.70	89.65	87.37	87.81	87.79

Orange indicates that from April 2019 onwards, we established a much more accurate picture of attendance. Prior to this date figures, reported had only covered 55% of CLA in schools. We now have data for 75% and are working to ensure this is 100% by the end of Sept 2019

6. Exclusions

Permanent exclusions

- 6.1 There were no permanent exclusions of statutory school age Croydon CLA during the 2018/19 academic year, which is the same as 2017/18. Helping schools avoid permanent exclusion has been a top priority for VS in the last six months.
- 6.2 Two permanent exclusions were issued by schools to Croydon CLA during 2018/19 (one primary age & one secondary age), which were subsequently rescinded following the intervention of the Virtual School.
- 6.3 A further three Croydon CLA were at risk of permanent exclusion, but these never proceeded to permanent exclusion following the intervention of the Virtual School.

Fixed term exclusions

- 6.4 A total of 59 Croydon CLA received a total of 106 fixed term exclusions during the 2018/19 academic year. This represents 10.3% of Croydon's CLA cohort of 569. This is broadly in line with the data for 2017/18 when a total of 53 Croydon CLA received a total of 101 fixed term exclusions, which represented 10.5% of an eligible cohort of 501.
- 6.5 Broken down by those Croydon CLA in 2018/19 who are educated in Croydon and those who are educated in other local authority areas the figures are as follows:

School location	2017/18		2018/19	
	No. of Croydon CLA receiving 1 or more FPEX	No. of FPEX issued to Croydon CLA	No. of Croydon CLA receiving 1 or more FPEX	No. of FPEX issued to Croydon CLA
Croydon school	27	40	35	59
Out of LA	26	61	24	48

school				
--------	--	--	--	--

Broken by age and/or type of school the figures are as follows:

Type of school	2017/18		2018/19	
	No. of Croydon CLA receiving 1 or more FPEX	No. of FPEX issued to Croydon CLA	No. of Croydon CLA receiving 1 or more FPEX	No. of FPEX issued to Croydon CLA
Mainstream primary	6	8	9	21
Mainstream secondary	24	44	32	58
Special	11	23	6	7
PRU/AP	12	26	12	20

6.6 The Virtual school focus between January and July 18-19 was on avoiding permanent exclusions and in training staff in high risk establishments to work in ways that will have longer term effects on reducing the need for permanent exclusion. The impact of this should be seen in 2019-20 figures as the training is in its infancy and needs a longer period to be effective.

7. Personal Education Plan-completion and quality assurance

7.1 Every statutory school age child who is looked after must have a personal education plan. This is a document, written and evaluated by professionals from education and social work that set out the plan for monitoring and supporting the child's educational progress over the academic year. The plan must be reviewed at least every 6 months. This is a statutory duty.

7.2 An action plan was written in October 2018 to try and increase the number of PEPs that were effective and quality assured by the Virtual school team.

7.3 The % Statutory School age children and young people with a PEP that had been reviewed by virtual school in October 2018 was **17%**.

7.4 At 1 August 2019 **86.6%** of children and young people had a quality assured PEP.

7.5 **98.9%** of children and YP had a PEP meeting held by professionals in the last 6 month period.

7.6 Of these – **709** were rated good and **98** rated excellent through the VS quality assurance process. This will continue to be a focal point for next academic year, where VS workers will help to improve the standard of PEPs.

7.7 This dramatic increase has been due to a shift way of working and the increase of staffing capacity in virtual school as well as a wealth of training, awareness raising and improved communication with children's services teams and designated teachers schools. This remains a clear focus for next academic year.

8 The Virtual School Interim Provisions (VSIPs) for UASC .

- 8.1 Building on the establishment work that took place in 2017-18, the VSIP went from strength to strength in 2018-19.
- 8.2 It was renamed by the young people as Croydon town College. The provision offers a full curriculum complement and intensive ESOL as well as school readiness and preparation for understanding how schools and education in the UK work. There are 20 places and the school was full throughout the year with a waiting list.
- 8.3 128 young people from 28 countries passed through the provision for periods of time averaging 8 weeks. These young people, aged between 11 and 16, are now all successfully integrated into mainstream schools in Croydon or their local borough. Whilst priority is given to Croydon CLA, other boroughs are very keen to utilise the facility. We have had placements of CLA from Merton, Lambeth, Kent, Southwark and Surrey this year.
- 8.4 We focused our attention on newly arrived UASC of compulsory school age awaiting school places. Through close work with admissions we were usually able to have a child in our provision or a suitable school within two weeks of their arrival at the Home Office.
- 8.5 The success of provision was recognised when we had a ministerial visit from the then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Education, Nadhim Zahawi in January 2019.
- 8.6 As the result of a successful CMF bid for £130,546 (for 2018/19), we were able to expand this provision to support newly-arrived UASC aged 16+ who were awaiting an appropriate full-time education placement.

9. Croydon Town College Provision for UASC new arrivals

- 9.1 From April 2019, as part of a pilot project to assess need and suitability, 13 UASC from Croydon and neighbouring boroughs aged 16+, were able to attend lessons daily where they were able to gain accreditation and qualification in English and maths.
- 9.2 They also had access to weekly wellbeing sessions delivered by a counsellor from Off The Record.
- 9.3 We hope to replicate this model further next academic year, funded through CMF, by locating a similar provision for post 16 UASC on the St Andrews site alongside our Croydon Town school.

10. Summer School for UASC in Croydon

- 10.1 On the 29th July the doors opened for SummerMix 2019, our summer school for UASC living in Croydon.
- 10.2 115 young people between the ages of 15 and 19 have signed up and attended the classes and/or activities on offer daily, namely English, maths, sports, cooking, music, arts, IT and money management. There are sessions in mechanics and employability skills as well as AQA Entry level 1/2 qualifications in ESOL and Maths.

All young people's English language levels were assessed as part of an initial sign up day.

- 10.3 Those attending SummerMix will also have direct access to a CIAEG Officer, ensuring that they will be able to secure appropriate education placements for September 2019.
- 10.4 They have also taken part in trips to various places e.g. Kew Gardens and Thorpe Park.
- 10.5 This is the second year for SummerMix, also funded from a successful CMF bid of £130,000. We have seen growth in participation from approx. 45 daily last year to well over 100 daily this year.
- 10.6 Jenny Molloy, care experienced person and author of Hackney's child, also worked directly with the young people on a number of days. This was an excellent opportunity for the young people to work with adults who have been through the UK Care system.

11. Careers, information, employment, advice and guidance (CIAEG) support

- 11.1 In February 2019 when the newly appointed VSH heard from members of the CIC council, CIAEG was a key area that all the young people mentioned they felt needed more work.
- 11.2 As a direct result of this, we designed a temporary role (initially) funded from PPG to assess the picture of CIAEG across Croydon schools. We were lucky enough to secure a Level 7 trained Careers Professional who is working 3 days a week between July and December creating a full audit for Virtual school and the LA of provision for our school age young people. The recommendations from this work will form the basis of our further planning and development in this area which remains a priority for us in 2019-20.

12. Mentoring project and mentoring database

- 12.1 Also in direct response to requests from young people and their carers, we developed and recruited a temporary Mentoring Project Lead role from pupil premium. The remit here is two fold: one to design a bespoke mentoring programme from scratch that specifically relates to the academic and educational needs of our children and young people. Two, to audit and develop a database of all mentoring services that our Croydon CLA might access; local and more national. This is with the aim of every Croydon CLA having the option of an appropriate mentor should they wish to use it by Sept 2020. We've also collaborated internally with other council departments and colleagues to ensure our service is bespoke and not a duplication. We are advocating the use of independent visitors and refugee network mentors among 42 organisations as well as our own scheme.
- 12.2 Our project START mentoring has been designed specifically to target young people in Year 10, who are in school, for the year that they prepare for their examinations. We have so far recruited **12** Learning Mentors, fully trained, and they will be matched and ready to start, with identified mentees in Sept. The mentors have been recruited from within and externally to the council and are from a range of backgrounds and needs, and **5** are already booked onto training for October. The project, in its infancy, aims to work with 5% of the statutory school age cohort this

academic year. Evaluation of the project's impact will be in December and the roll out anticipated over Jan – July will reach up to 25% of the cohort.

13. SUMMARY OF KEY SUPPORT, ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

Virtual school interventions and support for the education of our looked after children with achievements:

- 13.1 Funding and organisation of the Letterbox book club scheme- all EYFS and KS1 primary school-aged children receive fiction books as gifts termly. This year 101 parcels have been sent to 41 children and their families to encourage reading together. We have received several letters of thanks from children and foster carers telling us how this has positively impacted on their lives.
- 13.2 One to one tuition over the academic year in English and Maths has been arranged for 36 looked after pupils in year 10 and Y11 identified as underachieving. The impact of this will be evaluated when academic results are in this September.
- 13.3 Additional 'booster' 1:1 tuition to specifically support children in Year 6 and Year 11 with targeted preparation for SATs and GCSEs. This benefited 12 Y6 pupils and 29 Y11 pupils. Results will be evaluated when in for September.
- 13.4 Exam Ready' booster sessions for KS2 children preparing for SATs and KS4 young people preparing for GCSEs run by 'Fix Up' charity held in may half term. Evaluations showed that all the young people felt the sessions had supported their learning and would impact on their outcomes.
- 13.5 Work collaboratively with other agencies supporting children and young people e.g. school admission application submissions (both in borough and out of borough), EHCP needs assessment request submissions, residential home education provision quality assurance visits, mentoring and counselling for young people. An example of Advisory teacher effectiveness is in the targeted work with schools who historically have had a poor record of completing PEPS. In one case a school that had 8 pupils with all the Autumn and some Spring PEPs deferred, now has a 100% of completed PEPs that has been rated Good and has just secured an outstanding set of results in KS2 SATS for those pupils (Data to follow in Sept results analysis).
- 13.6 Attendance at SEN panel meetings and compiling the submission for a needs assessment to be progressed. There has been a significant reduction in SEND transfer in the past year especially with Year 6 to 7 cohort. There is only 1 pending case which is a significant increase from 4 at this time last year
- 13.7. Providing pupils with an online resource to support reading, writing and mathematics piloted with 35 KS2, KS4 and UASC CLAs. This was continued throughout the year and feedback from schools, carers and children was overwhelmingly positive; as a result a new programme using Britannica will be purchased and made available for all schools from Sept 2019. Britannica will evaluate Usage data and assist VS in monitoring effectiveness.
- 13.8 Aim Higher University trips for looked after children and care leavers and Post 16 Conference. 19 Y7/8/9 pupils benefitted from visiting Universities and looking at the

education system and pathways to HE. Evaluations of the project will be added when received from the organisation in Sept/October.

- 13.9 4 Jamie's Farm residential visits were run by Virtual School for primary, Secondary and UASC cohorts took place over the academic year. Jamie's Farm acts as a catalyst for change, enabling disadvantaged young people to thrive academically, socially and emotionally. This is done through a unique residential experience and rigorous follow-up programme, combining farming, family and therapy. Each trip has a full evaluation which highlights the impact on the young person's wellbeing. 36 young people benefitted through the VS and a further 84 CLA young people accessed these trips through their schools funded by Pupil Premium Grant.
- 13.10 Primary to secondary 'transition' workshops were delivered in May in partnership between VS staff and Croydon Music Arts which included information on how to handle change, making new friends, organisation skills and support with confidence building. These were attended by all the y6 cohort of children and young people. Evaluations were overwhelmingly positive with young people making comments such as *'It was so good, I enjoyed that I could play instruments and also do Art and Drama and think about secondary school. It helped a lot'* the final performance was attended by more than 30 foster carers and played to a rapt audience.
- 13.11 Our Educational Psychologist and her team have directly worked with 41 cases this academic year and consulted with VS staff on almost 80 cases over the year. This input has proved vital for workers in being able to support schools with EHCP applications. She has also attended PEP meetings, SEND panel meetings and compiling the submission for a needs assessment to be progressed. The impact of this work will be assessed in Sept/October.
- 13.12 All pupils who are UASC receive an English/home language dictionary on arrival.
- 13.13 The Virtual School commissioned 'Achievement for All' to deliver the Achieving Well-Being Programme for 10 schools to build capacity amongst staff to acquire the skills, knowledge and tools to support vulnerable children, especially CLA, and to improve their emotional wellbeing and success within the classroom which will lead to improved attainment and attendance and reduce exclusions. The evaluation of the project is attached in the appendices.
- 13.14 29 pupils participated across 4 schools. After one year on the programme, attainment data shows that **70% were working at or above the expected standard in English and 63% were working at or above the expected standard in maths.** The proportion of students working one year or more below the standard reduced in both areas.
- 13.15 **Accelerated progress has been made in English:** across the whole cohort of 29 children, an average of **19.6 months progress** has been made over the 12-month period.
- 13.16 **Accelerated progress has been made in maths:** across the whole cohort of 29 children, **an average of at 18.7 months progress** has been made over the 12-month period.
- 13.17 VS Senior Leadership are in weekly attendance at key cross service meetings including: Fair Access Panel and Missing Monday meetings and Weekly Care Panel. This has led to a much more timely identification of cases to target and improved

advocacy on behalf of educational perspective when discussing placements and proposed moves.

- 13.18 Continued participation in wider multi agency networks including the South London & Surrey Post 16 VS/DMS network to share good practice and build stronger working relationships with colleges and other virtual schools.
- 13.19 Initiation of post 16 VS network by Croydon VS – building professional links with neighbouring virtual schools
- 13.20 Playing an active role in the Aim Higher Working Party for LAC – opening up opportunities for our young people to access specialised programmes for LAC considering higher education.

14. Key Challenges 2017/18:

Access to Education

- 14.1 **Persistent absence rates in our** internally collected data remain a concern. Children Looked After are still high at 22%, and 34% for post 16. This is an area of focus that continues to be a priority for the Virtual School.
- 14.2 Croydon Children Looked After **who do not have a full time school offer**. An ongoing focus area will be working closely with admissions and schools to reduce the wait time for children and Young People without a school place, accessing a part-time timetable or being educated offsite.
- 14.3 **Narrowing the achievement gap:** We will present this data and analysis in detail once results from examinations are in in September 2019.
- 14.4. **Children not in education and post 16 NEETs:** weekly tracking of our children and young people out of education, employment or training has helped us to identify children and young people not accessing education in much more time focused way.
- 14.5 This is working well across statutory school age (only 26 YP were MIE at the end of the academic year and 12 of these were newly arrived)
- 14.6 At Post 16, however, the challenge is more significant. VS is drawing up plans with other key services in the council to create a NEET reduction team who will have this focus and work systematically on these cases. The entrenched post 16 NEETs are most challenging as many of these YP have been disengaged from education for several years and a creative approach to reengagement in employment or training is needed.
- 14.7 The rising number of CLA into care inevitably impacts as cohorts have to increase. Capacity cannot increase exponentially with rising numbers so the strategic nature of VS work becomes key.

15. VIRTUAL SCHOOL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT 2018/19

15.1 To fulfil its training and development role, members of the Croydon Virtual School staff team have taken part in and/or led a series of training events to particularly support the introduction of e-PEP.

15.2 *Designated Teacher Drop in Sessions (Surgeries)*
Individual training for new Designated Teachers, as required, on the role of the DT, how e-PEP works, the 'PEP' and how Children Looked After should be supported in school.

15.3 New starter compulsory EPEP training for all Children's Services workers.

15.4 Termly Designated Teacher 'Arena'- we commission AC training to create bespoke training at the request of our designated teachers.

15.5 *Training covered this year has included:*

- I. Ongoing e-PEP (system) training – has reached 137 Social Workers so far.
- II. Trauma informed practice training, 'The impact of trauma on vulnerable children and CLAs'
- III. Attachment Awareness Training – run by Lisa Cherry, attended by 36 DTs. Feedback was exceptional.
- IV. 'What does a good e-PEP look like?' including 'Writing good SMART targets'.
- V. Closing the gap for CLA learners: working effectively with CLA in schools- by Penny Todd. (attended by 28 Designated Teachers)

15.6 *Bespoke training for social workers, schools and other organisations*

15.7 During 2018-19 a range of training was provided at the request of individual schools and other groups. This included:

- I. Training for school teams including teachers and senior practitioners in schools across Primary, Secondary and Post 16 providers
- II. e-PEP system training
- III. Trauma informed practice training for staff (part 1) - delivered to 100 staff at Saffron Valley Collegiate.
- IV. The Virtual School team, co-locating across the social care teams, throughout the week, to support with more general enquiries around e-PEP and or children in young people in education.
- V. Social Worker training (particularly induction of newly qualified staff on regular Tuesday afternoon sessions)
- VI. Individual and small group training for Designated Teachers and other school staff working with CLAs

- 15.8 *Partnership working both external and internal:*
- 15.9 Continued engagement with the National Association of Virtual School Heads at regional and national level.
- 15.10 Virtual School participation in various local authority strategy groups – including; *Corporate Parenting Panel, Missing Mondays, Fair Access Panel, Fostering Panel, LAC Managers Meetings, YOS resettlement Panel.*
- 15.11 Increased ‘cross-border’ working’ with neighbouring Virtual Schools. The challenge here is to meet the needs of Croydon children placed in care out of authority and to support the virtual schools of other authorities that have CLA attending Croydon schools.
- 15.12 The Virtual School has attended the SEN SAG panel and Social Care MARP panel as well as many placement planning meetings (for children moving out of borough). This enables the Virtual School to participate and contribute to key decision making processes and plan for effective and smooth school transitions.
- 15.3 The Virtual School continues to play a key role in the South London and South East Post 16 Virtual School and DMS network. This network brings together local colleges and post 16 Virtual school representatives to improve the collaborative work across the region between colleges and virtual schools to improve the overall outcomes for post 16 students. This has built stronger links with local virtual schools and colleges leading to an improved sharing of data and good practice to support our young people.

16. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 16.1 There are no financial considerations arising from this report.

17. COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SOLICITOR AND MONITORING OFFICER

- 17.1 There are no legal implications of this report.

18. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 18.1 There are no human resources implications of this report.

19. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 19.1 This report is not proposing a change in policy or service.

20. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 20.1 There are no environmental implications of this report.

21 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

21.1 There are no crime and disorder implications of this report.

CONTACT OFFICER:

Shelley Davies, Interim Director of Education, 4th floor, Zone E, BWH, 0208 726 6000 ext 88414.

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT

None.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.

Corporate Parenting Panel Work Programme 2019/20

Meeting date	Wed 3 July 19	Thurs 5 Sept	Wed 13 Nov	Wed 15 Jan 20	Wed 4 Mar	Thurs 30 Apr
Theme	SUFFICIENCY	EDUCATION	HEALTH	ADOPTION	FOSTERING	
Item	Terms of Reference	Exam Results Exclusion SEN	IHAs	Annual Report of Adoption Service and Panel (inc. plans/update of regional adoption agency)	Annual Report of Fostering Service and Panel	Annual Report of Corporate Parenting Panel
Officer						
Item	Residential Care (Part B paper – 37 children)	Mentoring and Careers guidance for LAC an CL	RHAs	Statement of Purpose	Statement of Purpose	CIC Performance Scorecard
Officer						
Item	Update on the South Commissioning Programme	Difference between Mentoring and IV work	CAMHS	CIC Performance Scorecard	Recruitment and Deregistration	
Officer						
Item	IRO Annual Report	Engagement Achievement (inc. complaints and leaving opportunities)	CIC Performance Scorecard		Review of Fostering Services	
Officer						
Item	Annual Report of Corporate Parenting	Annual Report of Virtual School			Escalation Policy for Foster Carers	
Officer						
Item	CIC Performance Scorecard	CIC Performance Scorecard			CIC Performance Scorecard	
Officer						

This page is intentionally left blank