

Subject:	Education of Children in Care Results – Interim Report		
Date of Meeting:	13 November 2017		
Report of:	Executive Director Families Children & Learning		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This paper provides a summary of Brighton and Hove's Children in Care's educational progress and attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, 4 and 5 for the academic year 2016/17.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the contents of the report are noted.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 It is important to note that the way schools and education are judged by Ofsted focuses very much on progress children have made. This, combined with changes to national assessment, means that results have to be viewed differently. It is also important to note that these results are subject to further validation and some re-marks. We also await further information on how to analyse the results from the DfE. A full self-evaluation of the Virtual School will be available at the end of the autumn term 2017.

- 3.2 It is standard DfE practice to report results for children who have been in care for 12 months or more on 31st March 2017. They are often referred to as 'the VS 903 cohort'. However, it is important to realise that the Virtual School also has significant impact with a cohort of children who have come into care after 31st March 2016.

4.0 KEY STAGE 2 (age 11)

- 4.1 The expectation is that children at age 11 achieve age related expectation in Reading, Writing and Mathematics (RWM) – The old Level 4 and above. (*Where results are referred to in the prose as '334' this means they achieved a Level 3 for Reading, Level 3 for Writing and a Level 4 for Maths. These are the old levels that are no longer in use since 2015*)

4.2 To give an idea of how the new testing from 2016 onwards may be affecting overall results, in 2016 the percentage nationally achieving RWM dropped from 80% to 53%. This has seen some increase in 2017, with the national RWM now standing at 61%.

4.3 There were 16 children in the cohort so one child is equivalent to 6.25%

4.4 This table looks at the percentage of the cohort achieving the expected standard in each assessment:

	Reading	Writing	Maths	RW&M	Grammar Punctuation & Spelling
	Test	Teacher Assessment	Test	-	Test
VS 903	50.0%	50.0%	37.5%	37.5%	56.3%
B&H all	76.4%	77.1%	74.5%	63.2%	77.1%
National all 2017	71%	76%	75%	61%	77%
CiC National 2016	41%	46%	41%	25%	44%

National averages for Children in Care not yet available for 2017.

4.5 Teacher assessments at Key Stage 2, % achieving age related expectations:

KS2 TA	Reading	Writing	Maths	Science
VS 903	50.0%	50.0%	43.8%	50.0%

4.6 Comment

- Attainment is a lot stronger than in 2016 but, as detailed below, the progress has been very similar.
- There is significant evidence for the vast majority of children that demonstrates that their progress can be considered good.
- Attainment in RWM at Key Stage 2 in 2017 is above the Children in Care national average 2016. The national average for the current year is not yet available.
- Teacher assessments are positive and on the whole, progress of children in their teacher assessments is as predicted.

4.7 Progress

Progress of our children in care, from the starting points when they came into Key stage 1, should be viewed as good.

- Three children had severe learning difficulties. This meant their progress was extremely poor which impacts negatively on the progress figure average.

- Children in Care scored 1.1 marks fewer in their Reading scaled score at Key Stage 2 than children of a comparable standard at Key Stage 2. They scored 1.7 fewer marks in writing on average. However, the margin of error stated by Raise (DfE data system) means that they progressed as well as all children did nationally in reading and writing. It is important to realise that this calculation is including children with moderate and severe learning difficulties at special schools. These scores are similar to progress levels achieved by the Virtual School in 2016, when progress was -1.7 for Reading and -1.5 for Writing.
- The Mathematics score of -4.8 is below the national average progress. This does follow a pattern of poorer attainment and achievement in Maths across Brighton, and is similar to the progress score achieved by the Virtual School in 2016 (-4.6)
- The Virtual School is above national floor targets for all subjects. This should be viewed as a positive - as under previous systems, Virtual Schools could rarely be put above floor targets that were based on attainment. A floor target is a target set by the DfE for all mainstream schools.

4.8 Primary Case Studies

Student A

A is in Y3. He became looked after in Feb 2016 due to mum's mental health issues and domestic violence in the home. A achieved a very low score at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Of the 17 Early Years goals, he only reached age related expectations (ARE) in two areas.

The mother of A and did not contest the case when proceedings were started and did not want contact with him. This made him very vulnerable emotionally and he was often tearful and angry at home and at school.

A was placed with an experienced and nurturing foster carer and attended Primary School where he received a great package of support, including Every Child A Reader (ECaR), Play Therapy and 1:1 tuition with VS tutor, funded by pupil premium as well as Learning Mentor support and he really began to catch up.

A achieved very close to age related expectation at KS1. Missing out by a few marks but this represents a significant catching up since Early Years results.

A is now placed with an adopter and is doing well. He loves his new school and has settled in and made friends quickly. The emotional and learning support he received in Brighton has stood him in good stead and he is now making accelerated progress.

Student B

Student B is now in Y1. He became looked at a similar time to starting reception.

After being removed from parents his behaviour in school was affected, and he was unable to manage his emotions. He was tearful and distracted, and hyper-vigilant. This was affecting his ability to focus and learn.

Pupil premium plus paid for play therapy and counselling. B responded really well to this. He also has a Learning Mentor that was agreed by the Virtual School who acts as key adult. His behaviour has now settled.

B achieved a Good Level of Development at the end of the EYFS.

Student C

Student C is currently in Y7. He has been looked after since July 2009 and has been in a stable long-term placement for the last 6 years.

C was making good progress in reading and writing in Y5 but behind in Maths. A Maths tutor was put in to work 1:1 with C, funded by Pupil Premium Plus, and this had a really significant impact on progress. School described him as “soaring” in Maths following this intervention. C requested the Maths tuition to continue and it has followed him through Y6 and across the transition to her secondary school.

C had some friendship problems in Y5 and identified herself as having anger issues. Art Therapy was commissioned, funded by the Virtual School and C responded very well. He has continued to see the therapist and this has really helped with the transition to secondary school.

C achieved the expected levels in all subjects including the Maths at the end of Y6 and has made a successful transition to Y7 where he continues to make excellent progress. His attendance is 100%.

5.0 Key Stage 4 (age 16)

5.1 At the end of Year 11 children take their GCSE exams. It is standard DfE practice to report results for children who have been in care for 12 months or more on 31st March 2017, a group known as the 903 cohort.

In 2017, the grading system for English, Maths and a few other subjects changed from an alphabetical system (A*-G) to a numerical system (9-1), with 9 being the highest grade and 1 being the lowest grade. This has caused a change in the Attainment 8 scores, meaning that the score for 2017 is not comparable with 2016.

The first table below shows results for 2017, with the results for 2016 below. The column ‘2017 Mainstream’ has been included to illustrate significantly better results in mainstream if we separated them from the disproportionately high numbers amongst this cohort attending special schools, independent specialist providers or other alternative provision, *with 51.6% of the cohort not attending mainstream settings*. This compares to 38.5% of the cohort in 2016:

14 of the children in the cohort attended education outside of Brighton & Hove, with 15 attended settings inside the local authority

<i>KS4 Results for 903 Cohort</i>				
	2017 All 903	2017 Mainstream	B&H 2017	National 2017
Cohort	31	15	2208	-
4 or above in English	19.4%	40.0%	78.0%	69.9% (Lang) 72.5% (Lit)
4 or above in Maths	12.9%	26.7%	72.1%	70.7%
4 or above in Eng & Maths	9.7%	20.0%	67.0%	TBC
Attainment 8	TBC	TBC	4.8	TBC
Progress	All Progress data TBC			

	2016 All 903	2016 Mainstream
Cohort	39	24
A*-C in English	30.8%	50%
A*-C in Maths	15.4%	29.2%
A*-C in Eng & Maths	12.8%	25.0%
Attainment 8	2.0 (F)	3.15 (E)

5.2 Comment

- In 2016/17 19.4% of Brighton & Hove Children in Care (children looked after continuously for 12 months from 1 April 2016) achieved a grade of 4 or above in English, and 12.9% achieved a grade of 4 or above in Mathematics. This attainment is low and significantly below Brighton & Hove averages. However, we currently have no national average for Children in Care to compare with.
- Of the 31 children in the Virtual School 903 cohort, 16 came into Care during Secondary School, of which 9 came into care in Year 9 or later. *This means that 29% of the cohort came into care when they had already begun their studying for GCSEs.* These 9 children did not achieve 4 or above in English or Maths at GCSE.
- Progress scores in English and Maths, as well as Progress 8 scores, are not yet available for the Virtual School and will be calculated in November 2017.

5.3 Secondary Case studies

Case Study 1

A has an EHC Plan for Social Emotional and Mental Health. His Key Stage 2 results were 'Below/Level 3/Below' (B= working below the level of the test) for reading writing and maths.

A struggled emotionally at school with personal issues and at times this was reflected in his behaviour. The Virtual School met regularly with school to ensure that exclusions were kept to a minimum and attendance remained high. School ensured that A had a full timetable, had regular mentoring support and additional 1:1 support where possible. In addition, the Virtual School arranged for him to have after school 1:1 maths tuition.

During Key Stage 4, A achieved an Audio Active Bronze Award, a Music Level 1 BTEC and completed a Level 1 Motor Vehicle day release course at City College. A also undertook regular work experience at a construction company and took the EDLC (European Driving Licence Certificate). A took a number of Functional Skills certificates and achieved Food Tech Entry Level 3, Functional Skills English Level 3, Functional Skills ICT Level 3, Maths Entry Level 3.

A was entered for GCSEs in English, Maths, Science and ICT certificate (worth 2 GCSEs). A engaged with revision at school and out of school and as a result achieved the following grades in his GCSEs: ICT Level 1 Pass, GCSE Maths 2, GCSE English Language 2, Biology F. A met school and Virtual School to discuss Post 16 options. A engaged with this support and has a place at Northbrook College on a Level 1 Games Design Course.

Overall, A has made good progress in Key Stage 4 and has achieved a number of qualifications.

Case Study 2

B's Key Stage 2 results were Level 3/34. Prior to going into care, B had very low attendance and had made no progress. Consequently he had big gaps in his learning. He rarely engaged in school activities and was socially isolated. In Year 9, B went into care and no sooner had this happened, his attendance dramatically improved, as did his attitude to learning and behaviour. He joined the school football club and was offered and attended a school trip abroad, supported by the Virtual School. B was also given an award at the Virtual School Children in Care Award Ceremony which further boosted his self-esteem.

B received 1:1 tuition from the Virtual School and a laptop to support with English and Maths catch up. B was placed in small class groups and exam concessions were applied for. B was allocated a reader, extra time and a scribe for all his exams. The Virtual School and school agreed B would benefit from being monitored by teaching assistants in all lessons which was put in place.

B worked hard towards his GCSEs, attending Easter Holidays revision classes and willingly engaging with the school's Year 11 extended days. He made great progress, improving on his mock exam grades and achieved the following: English Language 3 (being assessed for a re-mark), English Literature 2, Maths 3 (being assessed for a re-mark), Science F, ICT F and Art C

B engaged well with careers support and has a place on a Level 2 Sports Course at Brighton Met College. He was also put forward for the National Citizenship Scheme

which took place in the summer holidays. Overall, B has made great progress not only academically but also socially. His attendance at school in Year 11 was excellent. B is now on the right pathway to a positive future.

Case Study 3

C achieved Level 545 in Key Stage 2. He attended the same Brighton and Hove secondary school for the duration of his secondary school career, was very settled and had excellent behaviour and attitude to learning. The Virtual School supported C with 1:1 Tuition for English throughout Key Stage 4. C engaged in this support and worked hard at school and independently at home. C made excellent progress in his GCSEs and obtained a grade 5 in both English and Maths. He also obtained a further 7 strong GCSE's. C had 98.9% attendance at school. C has recently started A levels at 6th form college.

6.0 Post 16 (KS5) Attainments

- 6.1 The range and complexity of qualifications young people can take at KS5 is far greater than at KS4. Analysis of results is consequently more difficult.
- 6.2 There are **33 care leavers** either beginning their first year or continuing study in their second or third year at University in 2017/8.
- 6.3 There are 42 young people in the Key Stage 5 903 cohort for the academic year 2016/17. Eight of these young people achieved five A*-C including English and Mathematics at GCSE, which equates to 19.0% of the cohort.

The below figures are provisional and have been collected directly from young people, carers or social workers.

- 6.4 Of the cohort of 42:
 - 5 have completed studies at Level 3, with a further 2 continuing a Level 3 course.
 - 15 young people have completed courses to the standard of Level 2.
 - 7 young people have studied a Level 1 course in post 16 education.
 - 1 young person is studying at pre-entry level
- 6.5 Outcomes for the cohort are also monitored. These include:
 - A young person is going to Brighton University to study Nursing
 - A young person is going to Richmond University to study Fashion and Business
 - 5 young people will be studying an apprenticeship.
 - 7 young people will be going to Brighton Met, 2 will be going to Chichester College and 1 to DV8 and Plumpton College

- 5 young people will be in employment
- 10 young people are NEET. A significant number of these young people have either Physical or Mental Health issues. These issues range from attachment problems to drugs issues. Work is being done to make sure this cohort have the best support in order to help them with their individual concerns followed by support to help them into employment, education or training when ready. This support comes from the collaborative work of the Virtual School, the social worker, NHS, Department of Work and Pensions, Probation, Youth Offending Service and other professionals. For one particular young person external funding was successfully acquired to purchase a laptop which assisted creative writing and applying for work as well as easing their mental health through organising and charting thought patterns. Through co-working with the Social Worker the Virtual school build relationships with these young people moving forward with individual plans that include work experience, part time study or employment.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Results may vary significantly from year to year due to changes in small cohorts. Cohorts from one year to the next can vary immensely and can have a very different composition. This will always make it difficult to compare year on year. The only way to really understand a year group is to review the list of the entire cohort and look at individual achievements and challenges. This is also the only accurate way to understand use of the pupil premium plus and its impact. This is done within the Virtual School steering group
- 7.2 There is evidence to demonstrate that Children in Care are making progress. There are particular highlights: those who are going to University, the progress made by those with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities and the progress that a variety of individuals have made. However, as always, there is still significant work for the Virtual School to do and there is a clear plan moving forward.
- 7.3 The Virtual School have major changes ahead and are appointing a new Lead to accelerate children's progress and close attainment gaps. This is in order to:
1. Fully understand how changes to testing have affected our children in care by completing Deep Dive Reviews.
 2. Use Deep dive reviews to challenge progress, attendance and any exclusions of all children in September, October and November.
 3. Set up school improvement visits with schools with large numbers of CiC to challenge progress of our cohort between October and February.
 4. Complete an equality impact assessment with a focus on Personal Education Plan (PEP) compliance.
 5. Ensure there has been sufficient training for all social workers and foster carers on recent developments in education and current priorities.

6. Further ensure our pupil premium plus spend is based on evidence based interventions and matched to the child's exact needs.
7. Continue and expand the attachment aware Brighton initiative working mainly with schools.
8. Ensure through the PEP system that the child voice is heard and their aspirations are understood.
9. Maths improvement is a thread that will be prioritised in actions 1, 2, 3 and 6. A maths tutor has been recruited to further enhance this

8. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

8.1 Financial Implications:

There are no direct financial implications from the recommendations of this report. The budget for the virtual school in 2017/18 is £0.403m with additional pupil premium available of £0.652m

Finance Officer Consulted: Name David Ellis

Date: 03/10/17

Legal Implications:

- 8.2 The report relates to the educational progress and attainment of children in care, for whom the council has a corporate and statutory responsibility. Statutory guidance makes clear that the council has a shared responsibility to act as effective and caring corporate parents for looked after children, with key roles in improving their educational attainment.

Lawyer Consulted: Natasha Watson Date: 05/10/2017

