

## Education Scrutiny Committee

Meeting to be held on Tuesday, 28 November 2017

Electoral Division affected:  
(All Divisions);

### Attainment of Looked After Children

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

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#### Executive Summary

The attainment of all our looked after children, wherever they are placed, is collated at the end Key Stage 1 (age 7 years) and Key Stage 2 (age 11 years) for primary pupils, and the end of KS4 (age 16 years) for secondary pupils. Those looked after children who have been in care for at least 12 months prior to the end of the key stage assessments are part of a group known as OC2, this is the group for which attainment is compared to other looked after children nationally, and to those pupils who are not looked after. The attainment measures that are collated for looked after children are those that are reported on nationally for all pupils.

#### Recommendation

The Education Scrutiny Committee are requested to:

- i. Note and comment on the report.
- ii. Note and understand the need to support the attainment of looked after children in policy decisions, contact with schools and services at a county wide level.

#### Background and Advice

Attainment measures for all pupils of school age have significantly changed recently both in primary and secondary age groups. This has meant that it is not possible to compare meaningfully, the results in 2017 with those of previous years. However it will be possible to compare the attainment of groups with other groups in 2017 when national data has been published.

**Primary:** National Curriculum Levels have been replaced with sets of age related standards in:

- Reading, Writing, Maths: at end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2, Age 7)
- Reading, Writing, Grammar, punctuation and spelling, Maths: at end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6, Age 11)

**Secondary:** The former 5 A\*- C measure has been replaced with Attainment 8 (a score based on results in 8 subjects). Pupils are also measured by those who reach the equivalent of a C+ in English and Maths. GCSE grades are moving from A-F to 9-1.

Currently GCSE English Language, Literature and Maths are graded from 9-1. There is no precise correlation between these grades and the old A\* - G but in general:

Grade 7+ equates with A+  
Grade 4 equates with C  
Grade 1 equates with G+

A number of other GCSE subjects will move to the 1-9 grading system in 2018, with all subjects moving to this system in 2019.

### **Looked After Children**

The national results for looked after children are not published by the Department for Education until February or March 2018. Until then the results we have obtained for our children are not yet validated and we are unable to compare our performance with other local authorities.

In addition we are not able to access the results of our Children Looked After (CLA) who are placed in out of county schools through national data bases, but have to request this information directly from the schools. Some schools are reluctant to provide this information and so we have a small number of pupils at KS1 and 2 who we are still pursuing information for. However the Lancashire Virtual School has recently appointed an additional team member whose roles includes tracking and support for pupils placed out of Lancashire and this has already helped strengthen the working relationships between Lancashire and schools outside of the county.

Lancashire are also taking part in a pilot scheme, implemented through the National College of Educational Research (NCER) to produce a wider range of CLA attainment data available sooner. It is hoped this may be accessible before the end of December 2017.

#### **Key messages:**

- Lancashire reflects the national picture of the majority of looked after children achieving lower attainment in comparison to those who are not looked after.
- Children who have been looked after for short periods often do less well than those who have been looked after for longer periods.
- Children who are looked after for longer periods often do better than children in need.
- Research shows that the greatest impact on attainment for looked after children is linked to the number of changes of school, home placements and social workers.
- The looked after children cohort has a larger % of special educational needs, emotional, behavioural issues and mental health issues than those of non-

looked after children. This also impacts on educational progress and attainment.

Summary of actions to support the progress and attainment of children looked after:

- All our CLA are tracked each term for learning progress, attendance, well-being, behaviour, and any risk of exclusion.
- Personal Education Plans are reviewed every term and all are graded for quality by the Virtual School. Advice fed back to schools on how to improve planning when required.
- Virtual School Team Members offer support/advice to schools Social Workers/carers for pupils who are not thriving in school, identified through tracking, Personal Education Plan reviews and direct contact by school, carer or Social Worker.
- Use of additional funding (Pupil Premium Grant+) to target particular needs of individual children.
- Focus on specific skills/subject for wider groups i.e. Reading at KS1 in 2015/16, and Primary Maths 2016-17.
- Virtual School training for Designated Teachers, Social Workers, carers.
- Career Advice and Support provided for all CLA in year 11 through service commissioned by School Forum and delivered by Wellbeing Prevention and Early Help (WPEH) team.
- Liaison between range of key services - Virtual School, Children's Social Care, WPEH, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and health colleagues.

## **Consultations**

N/A

## **Implications**

Educational attainment is one of the keys to future success and progression. Pupils who do not reach their full potential can be disadvantaged at a time of change and challenge as they prepare to leave care. This can lead to greater proportion of care leavers not being in education, employment or training.

## **Risk management**

Significant numbers of looked after children and care leavers not achieving their educational and employment potential increases risks in a number of areas:

## **Legal, Equality and Cohesion**

Challenges to the local authority regarding the quality of education and support to CLA.

## **Financial**

Inability of care leavers to sustain themselves financially and contribute to local and national finances through council and other taxes. Long term dependence on support and services.

## **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers**

| Paper                     | Date     | Contact/Tel  |
|---------------------------|----------|--------------|
| Appendix- Attainment Data | Nov 2017 | Audrey Swann |

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A