

Cabinet Committee for Performance Improvement

Meeting to be held on 4 February 2015

Electoral Division affected All

Achievement of Looked After Children in Lancashire

(Appendices 'A' and 'B' refer)

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Executive Summary

The report provides information on the attainment, progress and achievements of Lancashire Children Looked After (CLA) in 2014. The findings are based on the unvalidated data released by the Department for Education (DfE) along with local authority information on CLA. The data shows that there are improvements in achievement at the end of Key Stage 2 but achievement for CLA remains well below that of other pupils in Lancashire. At the end of Key Stage 4 the information indicates that levels of attainment fell in 2013 and are very low when compared with other pupils. A recovery plan has been developed and is being implemented to help raise standards of achievement for CLA pupils in the secondary phase and particularly at the end of Key Stage 4.

Recommendation

The Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement is asked to note and comment upon the report and the recovery plan set out at Appendix 'B'.

Background and Advice

There are currently over 1,600 children in the care of Lancashire with around 900 in primary and secondary schools up to the age of 16 years. These pupils are placed in about 300 schools across Lancashire with over 120 pupils attending schools outside the County.

Although the exact figure varies from year to year, a high proportion of CLA have special educational needs. Around two thirds of the CLA in Year 11 in 2014 had special educational needs with half of these having a statement of special educational need (SEN).

Educational performance of Children Looked After at the end of Key Stage 2

The performance of Children Looked After (CLA) in the end of Key Stage 2 assessments in 2014 is set out in Appendix 'A' at Table 1 and the main points are as follows:

- There is an improving trend in the proportion of CLA who have reached or exceeded the expected level of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics (Level 4) over the past 3 years.
- The attainment in Lancashire is in line with the national average for CLA in mathematics but it remains below the national average in reading and writing.
- The increase in the proportion of pupils reaching or exceeding the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics (Level 4) has been better than the rate of increase nationally and the gap in attainment is closing.
- The attainment of CLA remains well over 20% below the average for children who are not Looked After and is an area for improvement.

Additional information from the OfSTED Raiseonline evaluation report for Lancashire indicates that the attainment of CLA is below the average for similar pupils but that the proportion making expected progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 is just below average in mathematics and above average in reading and writing.

Educational performance of Children Looked After at the end of Key Stage 4

The performance of CLA at the end of Key Stage 4 in 2014 is set out in Table 2 at Appendix 'A'. This shows two sets of information for 2014 as changes have been made by the DfE in the reporting arrangements for examinations and some qualifications which have previously counted towards the students' attainment have been disallowed. This needs to be recognised, therefore, when looking at trends and making a comparison with previous years. The main points are set out below:

- There is a declining trend in the attainment of CLA at the end of Key Stage 4 in Lancashire over the past 3 years as there has been nationally.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 in Lancashire has consistently been below the national average for CLA.
- Under the new arrangements for reporting examination performance the proportion of CLA gaining 5 or more good GCSEs in Lancashire has fallen but is similar to the national average.
- The attainment of CLA remains very low when compared with the average for children who are not Looked After and is therefore a key issue for improvement.

Additional information from the OfSTED Raiseonline report for Lancashire indicates that the attainment of CLA is below average for similar pupils and that the proportion making expected progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 is just below average in English but well below average in mathematics.

Lancashire's own records also show that:

- The great majority of Year 11 pupils have made good academic, educational, social and emotional progress in relation to their baseline and circumstances, and are moving on to further education or training.
- 69% of the Y11 pupils had one or more qualifications with some having gained qualifications equivalent to a GCSE.
- Many CLA gained significant vocational qualifications. 88% of Y11 CLA attained the qualifications required to move into training or attend further education in September 2014, with many of these having SEN.

- At September 2014, only 2.8% of CLA in Y11 were not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).

Key areas for improvement

The following areas have been identified as priorities for development and they have been incorporated into a recovery plan, set out at Appendix 'B'.

- Developing the monitoring of progress towards individual targets for children through the Education Provision Maps and attendance at Personal Education Plan (PEP) review meetings where appropriate.
- Developing the monitoring of the social, emotional and behavioural achievements for individual children.
- Strengthening the partnership with Children's Social Care so that pupils' social, emotional and academic needs are met effectively.
- The clear targeting of individual CLA educational needs, and allocation of CLA Pupil Premium and Personal Education Plan Support Allowance (PEPSA) funding via CLA Educational Provision Maps and PEPs completed by schools and social workers.
- Further raising the profile of CLA amongst all services and stakeholders.
- Effective transition so that CLA settle well in new schools.
- The placement of CLA in good or better schools wherever possible and appropriate.
- Identifying and providing appropriate support for CLA with complex needs, i.e. Attachment, Emotional, Social and Behavioural difficulties.
- Targeted Support for CLA in Mathematics.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

Risk management

No significant risks have been identified in relation to the proposals contained in this report.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Tel
Outcomes for Children Looked After by Local Authorities	10 December 2014	Jonathan Hewitt, Directorate for Children and Young People, (01772) 531663