



**Report for:
INFORMATION**

Item Number: 9

Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	NO (If yes state which paragraph of the Access to Information Rules, the exemption relates)
Title	Report on the Education of Looked After Children
Responsible Officer(s)	Judith Finlay, Executive Director, Children, Adults and Public Health Carolyn Fair, Director Children & Families Julie Lewis, Director, Ealing Learning Partnership
Author(s)	Bridie McDonagh, Head Teacher, Ealing Virtual School, Ealing Looked After Children Ext 6648, Direct Line 0208 825 6648
Portfolio(s)	Yvonne Johnson, Cabinet Member, Schools and Children's Services
For Consideration By	Corporate Parent Committee
Date to be Considered	18 th March 2021
Implementation Date if Not Called In	
Affected Wards	All Wards
Area Committees	
Keywords/Index	Ealing Virtual School tracking of Year 11 Looked After Children, updates Early Years, Key Stage 1 & 2, Post 16 care leavers ETE.

Purpose of Report:

- a) To inform Members of the overall education programme and progress on targets for Looked After Children in Year 11 and Year 6 to ensure improved outcomes.
- b) To update members on the progress and general position of the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 & 2 and Post 16.

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Members are invited to note this report and identify any additional information they would like to receive.

2. Reason for Decision and Options Considered

- 2.1 At this time of the school year, the focus is on each looked after child and care leaver achieving the best possible results at the end of the key stage. This year has been dominated by the COVID context and since January 21, the country has been in lockdown and schools closed except to vulnerable children and children of key workers. For our CLA and care leavers, this continues to have an impact on learning and access to education and as for all their peers, on arrangements for national exams and end of key stage assessments. However, the virtual school team continue to prioritise end of key stage attainment, currently through teacher assessment and to focus on

progress measures to ensure looked after children and young people have the appropriate support and intervention to achieve national expectations. National measures for KS4 include English and maths Grade 5 and above and Grade 4 and above. Progress 8 and Attainment 8 are collated and reported to Corporate Parent at a later date but it is likely that these measures will not be published again this summer 21. This report includes 5 GCSEs at grades 1-4 including English and maths as although no longer a national indicator, it remains an important target wherever possible and at the end of Key Stage 2, the national standardised score of 100 or above in English and maths. The GCSE grades will be Centre Assessed Grades (CAG) again this year and the KS1 and 2 will be teacher assessments.

- 2.2** The next report will update members on education programmes covering the school holiday period (February half term and Easter) and activities undertaken by the virtual school and funded by the John Lyon Charity and other funding sources.

3. Key Implications

Key Stage 4 (KS4)

There are currently 33 year 11 students considerably fewer than last year (42, young people) and also fewer than in 2018, 37 young people.

Overall, 14 students (42%) are being educated in borough (13, 31% last year). Of these, thirteen young people (93%) are in mainstream schools (10, 77% last year). One young person (7%) is in a special school (1, 8% last year).

Nineteen of the 33 year 11 students (58%) are being educated out-borough (29, 69% last year). Twelve of these young people (63%) are in mainstream schools (12, 41% last year). Two young people (11%) attend special schools (6, 21% last year). Four (21%) young people are educated in alternative provisions (6, 21% last year). Three (10%) young people are educated in secure units 2, 11% last year).

One student residing out of borough is currently waiting for an education placement. This student has very complex needs involving missing episodes and refusal to engage with professionals. This student has also suffered a placement breakdown during Year 11 which has left her temporarily without a school place. Efforts continue to be made to engage this student with appropriate support and advice, and it is anticipated that they will be enrolled in a suitable post-16 education programme.

Summary data for Year 11 students:

42%	(14/33)	educated in-borough
58%	(19/33)	educated out-of-borough
76%	(25/33)	mainstream school
12%	(4/33)	alternative provision
9%	(3/33)	special school
3%	(1/33)	currently being placed
12%	(4/33)	with an EHC Plan

Summer 2021– Target grades as at March 2021:

4+	English	24/33	(73%)
4+	Maths	21/33	(64%)
4+	English and maths	20/33	(61%)
5+	English and maths	11/33	(33%)

5+ A*-C (or 9-4) GCSEs inc E&M	18/33	(55%)
1+ GCSEs	25/33	(76%)
Students with SEN taking non-GCSE qualifications	1/33	(3%)
Students without SEN taking non-GCSE qualification	1/33	(3%)
Students at risk of not gaining any qualifications	6/33	(18%)

The student with SEN that is taking qualifications other than GCSEs is completing a Basic Skills Study Programme (as above).

Of the 6 students at risk of not gaining any qualifications, one is currently awaiting placement, as above. Three are on roll with Alternative Provisions where they are demonstrating limited engagement, and the remaining two are partially or completely school refusing despite the best efforts of the virtual school team, schools and social workers.

Last year (2020) students achieved:

4+	English	13/42	(31%)
4+	Maths	10/42	(24%)
4+	English and maths	8/42	(19%)
5+	English and maths	4/42	(10%)

5+ A*-C (or 9-4) including English & maths	7/42	(17%)
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Students taking ESOL/Foundation/

Basic Skills Study Programmes	7/42	(20%)
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Students who did not sit examinations or gain any accreditation 12/42 (27%)

As always, there may be additional students to this cohort between now and the submission of Centre Assessed Grades this summer, 21. This is likely to impact on the current cohort attainment figure, due to the longer impact of home life and the upheaval of entering care at a late stage. This year 11 cohort have experienced unprecedented education upheaval through year 10 due to COVID but most have engaged well with home learning through the lockdowns and will achieve CAGs as above.

The type of alternative provision available varies across authorities and councils but all authorities have their own provision and will also have approved local providers commissioned to ensure the educational needs of all students are met. The target group for each provider leads the content of the programmes that they offer. Often there is a degree of flexibility so a bespoke educational package can be devised.

Ealing students both in and out borough, have access to a range of academic and vocational programmes run or commissioned by the authority in which they live. These include special schools, FE colleges offering KS4 courses

and residential schools with an education provision as part of their holistic programme.

The work of the virtual school has taken different forms over the last 12 months due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Actions taken to improve the outcomes for the cohort during this time have included:

- Regular check-ins via telephone, email and video call to assist learning and provide emotional support
- Leading on identifying students without adequate access to online learning and resolving this as rapidly as possible, whether this is due to the absence of laptops, internet, work-space or schools not providing sufficient assistance
- Organising virtual enrichment programmes to enhance engagement and support emotional wellbeing and personal development
- Organising virtual tuition for a number of students
- Providing advice and support to social workers, carers and schools on strategies for promoting effective home learning and emotional support

This cohort, and others, have previously benefitted from the work of the virtual school which, before Covid 19, included:

- Targeted interventions by virtual school team aimed at ensuring students at risk of falling short of national benchmarks are supported.
- Progress-tracking through PEPs, appropriate SMART targets set.
- Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) used effectively to maximise impact and support the target setting process for students.
- Weekly 1:1 and small group tuition at the Horizons Centre for those able to get there. This is replaced by online tuition options such as the Harrow school initiative.
- One-to-one tuition at school or at home, funded through the PPG.
- Rigorous and systematic monitoring of attendance, with immediate 'actions' to improve as notified by the daily dashboard.
- Intensive and early preventative work with all stakeholders when a student is struggling to sustain their school /education place; this has included managed moves for students where alternative provision can offer more intensive levels of support.
- Half term activities organised to support the curriculum
- An increasing range of enrichment activities organised to support the curriculum and develop confidence in learning.

Interventions continue for each student until the process of assessment for Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs) is completed. The virtual school KS4 and Post 16 teachers have begun transition meetings attended also by the virtual school head teacher to track and monitor pathways for all Year 11 into Post 16. Last year, this strategy helped to direct most students into ETE, with only 6 students being NEET in Year 12 from the cohort in September 20. After the CAGs are released, work on Post 16 pathways and transition planning will continue for all students.

NB Numbers per year group are statistically small; therefore each young person's individual performance has a bigger impact on the results than would be the case in a mainstream school, for example

Brief Overview of Year 10

Education Provision	Total in cohort – 32 (34 last year)	
	Number	% of total
In-borough	12	38%
Out-borough	20	62%
Mainstream	24	75%
Alternative provision	1	3%
Secure	0	0%
Special	6	19%
Currently waiting to be placed	1	3%

Early Years 0 - 5 years

There are currently 36 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage – ten less than last year (46).

LAC in Early Years	Feb 21	Feb 20	Feb 19	Feb 18	Feb 17	Feb 16
Reception (rising 5)	4	5	4	3	4	9
Nursery 2 (rising 4)	3	4	4	8	3	5
Nursery 1 (rising 3 in academic year)	5	5	2	6	4	7
Rising 2	5	16	8	3	8	2
Rising 1	19	16	16	17	14	11
Total	36	46	34	37	33	38

Reception

There are four children in Reception (one less than last year). Three children attend a school in Ealing and the other one attends in Windsor. None of the five children are expected to make a Good Level of Development (GLD) in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile statutory assessment in July 2021.

The reasons why are varied; one child attends a special school and has an EHCP and moderate learning difficulties, so is not able to access the usual curriculum. Another has significant speech and language difficulties, which has impacted on their learning and development. One child has a high level of social, emotional and mental health difficulties and knows that they are moving soon, so can often feel unsafe and this impacts on their ability to concentrate and learn. The other has recently had many changes and moved home and school.

All children are given extra support, where they are below 'expected level' in the prime areas of learning Communication and Language CLL, Physical Development (PD) and Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

All four children have special educational needs (SEN). Three out of four (75%) are on SEN Support – two for social, emotional and mental health and one for speech and language. One child has an EHC Plan.

Nursery Two - (turning age 4 this academic year)

There are three children in this cohort.

One of the three children (66%) is at the expected level in all of the prime areas of learning. One child is at expected level in CLL and PD, but below in PSE. The third child is working towards in PD and PSE but below in CLL. This child has speech and language intervention and traits of autism, hence the nursery applied for an EHC Plan which has been agreed. Now this child will have the support needed starting Reception in September. Only one out of these three children have SEN.

Two of the three nursery children (67%) attend a setting in Ealing and the other is in Brent.

Nursery One- (turning three this academic year)

There are five children, but only two attend Nursery and have had PEPs. The virtual school teacher is supporting the carers and social workers in finding a place in a good local nursery or children's centre.

One of the two children is at the expected level in all prime areas of learning. The other child has many additional needs and is working below expected level in all prime areas of learning. This child's nursery is currently gathering the evidence to submit a request for statutory assessment as this child will require support for additional needs. One child is in Nottingham and the other in Hillingdon.

Key Stage 1 (year 1 and year 2, 7 years old)

Year 1

There are four children in year 1 (two less than last year).

One of the four children (25%) is at expected levels in reading, writing and maths. Two children are below in all three subjects but they are making either 'working towards expected' or expected progress.

The fourth child is 'working towards expected' in all subjects in both attainment and progress.

Three out of four children (75%) have additional needs at SEN support level.

Three attend school in Ealing and one in Brent.

Year 2

In year 2, at the end of KS1, there are five children (8, last year).

Three of the five children (60%) are at expected level in reading, writing and maths. They are also making expected progress in all subjects. The other two children (40%) are below in all subjects in attainment and 'working towards expected' in progress. Both of these children have additional needs

and have had lots of recent changes in their lives. One of these two children is very likely to require an EHC plan due to the level of support needed. Chronologically this child is year 4 but is placed two years behind due to significant and complex needs.

Two of the five children (40%) have special educational needs. Two attend a school in the Ealing. The others are in Windsor, Hounslow and Essex.

The virtual school has continued to monitor and ensure that this cohort of early years and KS1 children are attending nursery and school where possible. All but one of the nursery aged children have attended on site during lockdown and all of the 9 children in the KS1 cohort have attended school. The virtual school have also been liaising closely with the early years' team to make sure that the early years' pupil premium is paid and accounted for.

Key Stage 2 (End of KS, 11 years old)

There are twelve children in year 6 (15 last year). Eight of these children (67%) have special educational needs and one has been highlighted as requiring a statutory assessment. Two of the twelve children, (17%) have EHC plans, which is fewer than last year (5/15, 33%). Of these eight children, one is attending a specialist school for his cognitive, learning and SEMH needs, the other seven children attend mainstream schools. Since the start of the academic year, 2/12 children (17%) have been in care for less than a year, compared to last year, (7/15 47%). This year, there are fewer children, 5/12 (42%) who are residing out of Ealing, last year (11/15 children, 73%).

Due to the third countrywide lockdown, the KS2 national standardised tests have been cancelled for this academic year. Through this time, the virtual school has refocused their work to virtual platforms, with continued support and to monitor the progress and to ensure that all year 6 children that are looked after (CLA) have good access to online lessons and that, wherever possible, children are encouraged to attend school. The virtual school's support of these twelve year 6 children has included: telephone calls to carers and individuals, looking closely at the provision of support and advising around their engagement, accessing online tuition, reviewing home learning resources/websites and having additional meetings. The virtual school has worked closely with social workers and schools to successfully transition two children with their in-year change of school placement. Both children have settled in well and are happy in their new school environments.

All year 6 children are continually encouraged to participate in virtual enrichment activities and additional online tuition to support their learning. Use of the pupil premium grant (PPG) and PEP meetings remain a particular focus of the virtual school, where virtual meetings are held to monitor and support year 6 required individual needs, especially at this delicate time. Usually, Spring Term PEPs are review and monitoring PEPs, schools review targets and plans and these PEPs do not require a meeting. However, many more Spring PEPs this term have been meeting based as an additional support mechanism during COVID.

Four out of 12 children (33%) have so far signed up for the reading and philosophy foundation group. The monthly reading club has started, one session has taken place, next sessions are scheduled and the 6 weeks philosophy group will begin shortly. During these sessions, the children will be sharing their experiences with other CLA children across four boroughs,

exploring a variety of books together and taking part in philosophical discussions.

The transition needs of this cohort are especially significant and the virtual school encourages the attendance of key professionals and high schools' representatives at PEP meetings to discuss and plan for their transition to high school. All children have had transition discussions during their PEP meetings.

Summary of Year 6 attainment

Reading Attainment 20/21

GDS	2/12 (17%)
EXP	4/12 (33%)
WTE	2/12 (17%)
BELOW	4/12 (33%)

Writing Attainment 20/21

GDS	0/12
EXP	4/12 (33%)
WTE	2/12 (17%)
BELOW	6/12 (50%)

SPAG Attainment 20/21

GDS	2/12 (17%)
EXP	2/12 (17%)
WTE	2/12 (17%)
BELOW	6/12 (50%)

Maths Attainment 20/21

GDS	0/12
EXP	4/12 (33%)
WTE	2/12 (17%)
BELOW	6/12 (50%)

The table above illustrates the number of children that are below the year 6 age related expected standards in reading, writing, SPAG and their maths attainment. In reading, 4/12 children, (33%) are below Age Related Expectations (ARE) in their reading skills. This is due to a mixture of SEN; social, emotional health and learning needs. To support this identified group, the virtual school plan to set up further reading interventions, to help close this reading attainment gap. In this cohort, two children have EHC plans and one child attends a specialist school. Additionally, one child's Ealing school has recently submitted a request for statutory assessment.

The attainment data above has been taken from schools' current teacher assessments; all schools concerned have reiterated that the children have done remarkably well adjusting to online learning platforms and smaller bubble classes. All twelve children (100%) have attended school regularly during this lockdown and only 2/12 (17%) children have had Covid-related absences. This is a great success, especially given the benefits of consistent school attendance for CLA and in particular, the learning needs of the current year 6 cohort.

The PPG is being closely targeted and monitored to ensure that pupils are receiving appropriate 1:1 online tuition support in school/home as appropriate, as well as a range of other online supportive interventions, that aim to maximise the impact of the PPG funding for the whole cohort.

Post 16

University

There are 47 young people, 17% of care leavers currently studying at university. This has increased since the last report submitted.

At the start of the academic year there were 43 students at university. Forty-two of these young people are still studying at university. One student has taken a break in their studies from their first degree and is considering completing their final third year in the future. One other first-degree student is considering in taking a break due to personal reasons and plans to return study from September 2021 and this will be confirmed by the end of February 2021.

In addition to our current first year students, another five first-year student started a higher education course during this academic year. Therefore, we now have 47 young people studying at university. However, there are also five students that are to retake examinations from their first semester examinations; interventions are in place to ensure these students are prepared for their summer retake examinations.

Seven young people (13 last year with first degrees) are expected to graduate this summer with first degrees and a further three students (3 last year) are expected to graduate in post graduate courses in the Autumn 2021. Our third year graduate cohort is smaller in number compared to the previous year; this is due to the smaller group in this cohort that started university.

So far two young people have indicated that they are planning to start a Masters' Degree starting in September 2021. A further 11 young people are expected to start university in their first year Autumn 2021.

Year 13 students

There are currently 66 young people in year 13. Of these, 51 young people (77%) are in education training and employment (ETE). 49 are in education (74%), 2 are in training (3%), there are none currently in employment and 14 (21%) are not in education training or employment (NEET) and 1 student (2%) tbc.

Of the 14 students that are NEET, eight students came in to care during year 12 and 13. Social workers are completing 'missing PEP' meetings with their young people that are NEET, outlining action points with targeted support and interventions in place to motivate and re-engage these young people in ETE.

The situation across Years 12 and 13 remains similar to previous years in that the majority of looked after young people choose to study in FE colleges. Several of our young people are study at West London College where there is a full-time mentor for children looked after and dedicated support for CLA especially around admissions. West Thames, Richmond, Harrow and Uxbridge College continue to be popular with our young people.

Year 13 overall ETE is 77% (51/66).

Overall, in terms of the routes young people follow, several young people follow BTEC qualifications over three years demonstrating a strong commitment to education and a determination to succeed. In year 13, eight students are following Level 3 qualifications and four of these students are taking A Levels.

66 STUDENTS Y13	FEB-21
ETE	51/ 66 = 77%
Education	49/66 = 74%
Employment	0/66 = 0%
Training	2/66 = 3%
NEET	14/66 = 21%
tbc	1/66 = 2%

Year 12 students

There are currently 56 young people in Year 12, i.e. those who took GCSEs in the summer of 2020. Of these, 45 young people (80%) are in ETE. Of these 45, 80% (45) are in education, following the similar trend to other young people in that they are taking a wide range of practical subjects. The majority of year 12 students are on Level 1, Level 2 courses and eight are on L3 courses. Of these eight, four are studying A Levels, two studying for T Levels and two studying for BTECs. Eleven students are NEET (20%) and there are no students currently on training programmes /courses. Of the 11 students that are currently NEET in year 12, six young people were in year 11 and 3 of these young people did not sit GCSEs in summer 2020. One student achieved Maths (4) and one other student achieved English (5) at GCSE level in summer 2020.

Year 12 overall ETE is 45 (80%).

45 STUDENTS Y12	FEB-21
ETE	45/56 = 80%
Education	45/56 = 80%
Employment	0/56 = 0%
Training	0/56 = 0%
NEET	11/56 = 20%

3.1 February Half Term Activities

February Half Term Activities will be included in the next report to Corporate Parent.

3.2 Other Reports

None

4. Financial

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5. Legal

The Children and Families Act 2014 amends section 22 of the Children Act 1989 to require every local authority in England to appoint an officer employed by the authority, or another authority, to make sure that its duty to promote the educational achievement of its looked after children is properly discharged.

6. Value For Money

The cost and effectiveness of these arrangements are monitored and reviewed regularly.

7. Risk Management

None

8. Community Safety

Delivering better outcomes for Looked After Children

9. Links to Strategic Objectives

The work of the Virtual School links to the Corporate Strategy. Targets to improve attainment are set within the wider objective of creating a great place for every child and young person to grow up.

10. Equalities and Community Cohesion

Equality Impact is consistently reviewed and evaluated in terms of service delivery. The virtual school analyses the educational performance of all Ealing's Looked after children in terms of ethnicity so that underachieving students and groups can be targeted. These groups are prioritised for the holiday activities, interventions and targeted to attend the Study Support sessions after school. There is ongoing monitoring of progress to improve academic achievement. All the activities of the Virtual School are consistently monitored to ensure ongoing achievement of outcomes.

11. Staffing/Workforce and Accommodation implications:

None

12. Property and Assets

None

13. Any other implications

None

14. Consultation

As indicated further in report.

15. Timetable for Implementation

16. Appendices

One included

17. Background Information

Consultation

Name of consultee	Department	Date sent to consultee	Date response received from consultee	Comments appear in report para:
Internal				
Julian Bell Yvonne Johnson Judith Finlay Julie Lewis Carolyn Fair Bridie McDonagh				

Director	Executive Director
Lawyer	Director of Legal Services
Finance Officer	Finance Officer
Councillor	Yvonne Johnson
External	
A N Other	Voluntary organisation
Police etc	

Report History

Decision type:	Urgency item?
For information	No [Yes if it is a general or special urgency key decision, which was not included in the Forward Plan with at least one months' notice] If yes, set out the reasons both why the item was not included and a decision cannot be deferred.

Authorised by member:	Cabinet member:	Date drafted:	Report deadline:	Date report sent:
07/03/2021		05/03/2021	09/03/2021	07/09/2021

Report no.:	Report author and contact for queries:
	First and surname, job title
	Bridie McDonagh, Head Teacher, Ealing Virtual School, Looked After Children