

# Virtual School Headteacher Report 2021



Virtual School Rotherham  
Belong, believe, achieve

Virtual School Team  
Looked After Children and Young People  
November 2021

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## 1. Our Vision

Rotherham Virtual School will work together, with all partners, to ensure we are the team of champions our young people deserve. Providing support and encouragement to all our young people so that they:

- experience stability and feel safe, cared for, valued, supported and trusted as part of our wider Rotherham Family
- are confident, have a strong sense of identity and are empowered to be independent to enjoy learning and have fun
- achieve well both academically and socially and reach their full potential
- Above all, we want our young people to be proud of who they are, who they are becoming and to own their story.

## 2. Introduction

Rotherham's Looked After Children have risen to the academic, social and emotional challenges through the second year of the Covid 19 Pandemic. Our children have shown commitment to learning, flexibility, an openness to change and resilience. The Virtual School, and wider team supporting our children, have maintained the quality of the support in place. Our team of advisers, Designated teachers, Social Workers, health professionals and carers remain the backbone of the child-centred approach and have provided a stable base and solid encouragement for our young people to build from. The Covid pandemic has given us an opportunity to develop and further build on the strong relationships of the team around the child.

This academic year, Virtual School has continued to provide a high level of support to all stakeholders to meet the needs of all our learners. COVID has impacted on the way the Virtual School functions and we have maintained virtual meetings. Rigorous tracking and monitoring of our learners continued, as good quality, termly PEP meetings have been maintained throughout the pandemic. Virtual School have provided ongoing support and challenge to education settings to meet the academic and emotional health needs of our learners during national lockdowns, self-isolation and on return to setting. The move to remote working increased capacity within the team and provided opportunity for the advisers to offer a higher level of support to schools, and other stakeholders, to ensure the best provision is in place for our learners.

The Virtual School Covid recovery plan ensured training and development opportunities to professionals supporting our learners. Designated teachers and Virtual School education advisers accessed training on COVID recovery and the impact it has had on our children. The Virtual School education psychology service and speech, language and communication therapists developed a planning tool and social stories that have been used with students to support them in understanding their return to school. The Virtual School education psychology service established consultation groups for Designated teachers to support with regular sharing of best practise and advice and guidance on providing bespoke interventions for complex cases.

Personal Education Plans (PEPs) continued through lockdown, but this academic year have been expanded to include all our children and young people aged from 0-18. Virtual School advisers continued to monitor termly progress and attainment and ensure plans focussed on supporting young people as they returned to setting. PEPs focussed on COVID recovery with planning around

supporting emotional health and managing social learning alongside a clear focus on educational attainment and gap analysis to support catch up on any missed learning opportunities.

Throughout COVID and the return to settings, the Virtual School offer to education, Social Care and carers has continued to grow and develop. Virtual School has maintained the delivery of all its services including:

- Termly PEP meetings
- Support for additional education meetings
- Speech language and communication (SALT) training
- SALT assessment (in and out of authority)
- Creative mentoring
- Solution focussed staff meetings
- ELSA support
- Trauma informed training
- VSEPS bespoke support to education settings
- Previously LAC (PLAC) advice and guidance to professionals
- Attendance at Local Authority panels
- Staff training
- Designated Teacher network meetings
- Attendance monitoring
- Pupil progress tracking

Additional support has been provided including:

- 0-2 Personal Development Plan
- VSEPS Designated Teacher consultation groups
- Reading intervention
- New into care package for 5-11 year olds
- EYFS DT network
- Post 16 Jump the Gap intervention
- Tiny Tots College

With PEPS continuing virtually, the Virtual School have increased capacity to offer wider support to professionals, providing swifter access to provision and an enhanced offer for young people with SEND and those on part time timetables. The Virtual School team worked closely with Designated Teachers to develop the ePEP to support more focussed meetings and improve the clarity of recording. This has been received well by all stakeholders and builds on the progress that was made with the ePEP last year. As part of a wider CYPS focus on part time timetables, Virtual School have updated the ePEP to provide greater support and monitoring of young people who access part time timetables. In the summer term, Virtual School introduced and promoted fortnightly review meetings for all those on part time timetables to support swift return to full time provision.

Links with RMBC Education Health and Care Assessment Team have continued to improve, with a fortnightly SEND tracker supporting strong communication links and a focus on swift response to changes in placement for learners with SEND. The number of children on the SEND tracker decreased throughout the year as these learners were placed in provision. The improving links with the RMBC SEND team were noted in the local area SEND inspection July 2021:

*“There are strong relationships between the virtual headteachers, the learning disabilities team and social care practitioners regarding children and young people looked after. Practitioners work cooperatively, such as with children 6 and young people’s foster carers, to ensure that the voices of children and young people looked after are heard and acted on.”*

Exclusions remained a focus of the Virtual school. Data comparison is complex as this academic year was significantly different from previous years due to the impact of COVID, phased return to school, bubble closures and self-isolation. There were, however, fewer exclusions and fewer days lost to exclusion than in previous years, when schools were fully operational.

This year’s attainment report will be different as there was no formal assessment of primary learners, although teacher assessment has been provided, by schools, to support attainment and progress analysis. As with last year, Year 11 students did not sit GCSE exams. GCSE grades were issued based on centre assessment. This year the assessments were based on the grade the learner was performing at, compared to the previous year where they were based on what teachers believed a student would have achieved, had they sat their exams.

The national picture improved for all learners achieving a GCSE grade 4+ in Maths and English by approx. 1%. The unvalidated data for Rotherham Virtual School’s class of 2020-21 maintained similar outcomes to last year:

- 35.3% of the DfE cohort attending mainstream schools achieved the GCSE grade 4 pass rate.
- 28% of our young people achieved the GCSE grade 4 pass rate in English and Maths. 32% of them achieved GCSE grade 4+ in English with 36% achieved grade 4+ in Maths.
- 40% of them achieved one of either English or Maths at grade 4+
- Over half of the cohort - 56% achieved English and Math’s at grade 3+
- This continues an improving trend for Y11 over the last four years.

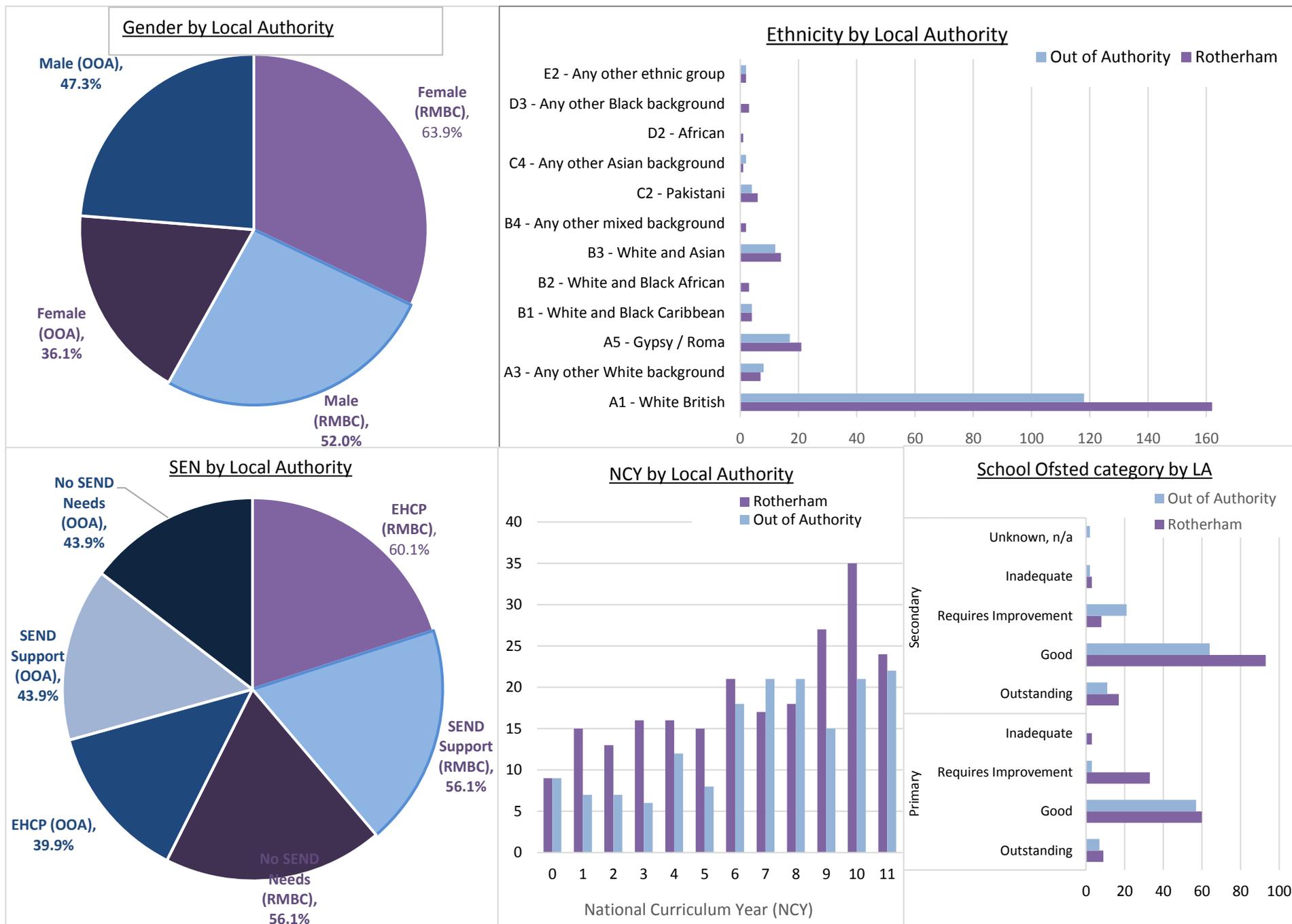
In another year dominated by COVID, with additional lockdowns and schools using ‘bubbles’ to maintain face-to-face education, our staff and learners continue to show how resilient they are, successfully navigating the complex challenges they all had to face. We remain immensely proud of our children and young people, they are a credit to Rotherham. They have worked through significant challenges and overcome many obstacles. The teams of professionals that work alongside our children have shown the lengths they will go to in supporting our young people. School staff, Social workers, foster carers and residential staff alongside health colleagues and many others have been an inspiration in providing a firm base for learning and have ensured high quality communication is in place to strengthen the network around each one of our learners. This has meant our children are equipped with the skills and supported to use them so they can reach their full potential.

As we move into a new academic year, there are several new challenges and developments we are excited to embark on:

- The Virtual Headteachers have been given additional responsibility to promote the education of all children who have, or have had, a Social worker.
- Rotherham Virtual school was successful in its bid to develop the Post 16 Pupil premium pilot and have developed several intervention strategies to support Post 16 learners.
- VSEPS and VSSALT have enhanced the training offer available to professionals.
- Development and delivery of the Parents as Experts training offer.
- Enhanced training offer for EYFS - sensory and complex trauma
- Enhanced training offer for Post 16 providers

We build on the foundation of a strong model, underpinned by high quality multi-agency partnerships and an ethos of high support, high challenge. We are excited and humbled to support our young people as they grow and develop on their journey as learners.

### 3. Demographics for School Aged LAC in Rotherham (July 2021)





## Educational Outcomes 2020-21

### Early Years - Rotherham LAC Early Education Funding Take-up (EEF)

The virtual school team work together to ensure that the social workers of any children eligible for an EEF placement are aware of the entitlement and support is given where necessary to assist them in taking-up an EEF placement. All places for children, both in and out of authority (OOA), are monitored to ensure the settings are judged by Ofsted to be good or better. The team also ensures that the children have a PEP in place.

This process, in recent years, has led to a significant increase in the level of take-up. However, in Spring 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic impacted the number of children attending provisions. As COVID has affected the attendance of children, we will work closely with schools to ensure this year's cohort (20/21) will remain on target to achieve GLD.

Our Rotherham LAC 2,3- & 4-year-olds taking up an EEF place in both November 2020 and November 2021 is 100%.

All Rotherham LAC 2,3 & 4 year olds taking up an EEF place 2020-2021							
Autumn Term 2020	No. LAC	LAC in EEF Place	%age	Autumn Term 2021	No. LAC	LAC in EEF Place	%age
November 2020 2 year olds	18	18	100%	November 2021 2 year olds	10	10	100%
November 2020 3 year olds	17	17	100%	November 2021 3 year olds	18	18	100%
November 2020 4 year olds	20	20	100%	November 2021 4 year olds	19	19	100%

**November 2020** - 2-Year-olds – 2 of these children were accessing adoption bonding but had an allocated early years provision identified.

3-year-olds – 1 of these children were accessing adoption bonding but had an allocated early years provision identified.

**November 2021** - 2-year-olds – 1 of these children were accessing adoption bonding but had an allocated early years provision identified.

### Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The expected level to achieve at the end of EYFS (reception aged child) is achieving a 'good level of development' (GLD). A pupil is defined as achieving a GLD if they achieve at least the expected level for all eight goals within the three prime areas of learning: communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development, and in all four of the literacy and mathematics goals.

Due to the Covid pandemic, Ministers have decided it will not be mandatory to complete the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) assessment in 2021 but instead will be asking schools to make 'best endeavours' to undertake it. This is in recognition of the additional pressures and uncertainties that teachers are facing during this challenging time.

The EYFS predicted results below were provided by the education settings as a prediction for eighteen LAC child's at the end of the summer term 2021.

When these predictive results were submitted into the Team this Summer, settings recorded children's outcomes on either the existing EYFSP profile or opted to use the new DfE 2021 benchmarking EYFS module, which is now mandatory for all EY's settings to use from September 2021.

The information below shows both frameworks combined to report the outcomes in children's achievements for the 'Good Level of Development'- GLD areas.

Full cohort for DfE cohort	EYFS- Achieving GLD	
7	3	42.90%

- There are seven pupils in the DfE EYFS cohort, and each pupil equates to 14.3%
- Three of the seven children in the cohort achieved GLD-(3/7) 42.9%
- There are two boys and five girls; none of the boys achieved GLD, 3/5 girls achieved GLD.
- Four of the seven children are registered with none-SEN needs, two children have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and one child is identified as having SEN Support.
- The child who is identified as SEN support achieved the GLD measure and the other two children who achieved GLD has none identified SEN needs.
- Four of the seven children are identified as being Educated in Rotherham at the point of January 2020 Census, with one of these children achieving the GLD measure.
- Three of the seven children are identified as accessing their Education out of the borough, with two of these achieving the GLD measure.

From the seven children's results, five children's outcomes were based on the existing EYFSP profile and two children's results were on the new 2021 EYFS module.

Two children on the new 2021 benchmarking EYFS module shows the following characteristics:

- One child is a boy, one child is girl
- The girl achieved GLD , the boy did not.
- Both are recorded as having no SEN Needs
- Both are recorded as Educated in Rotherham

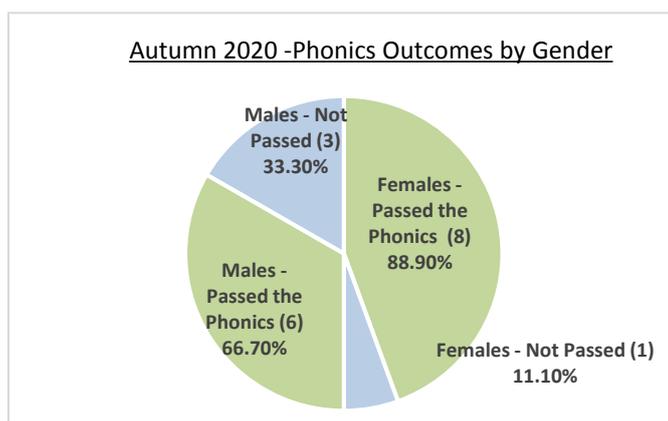
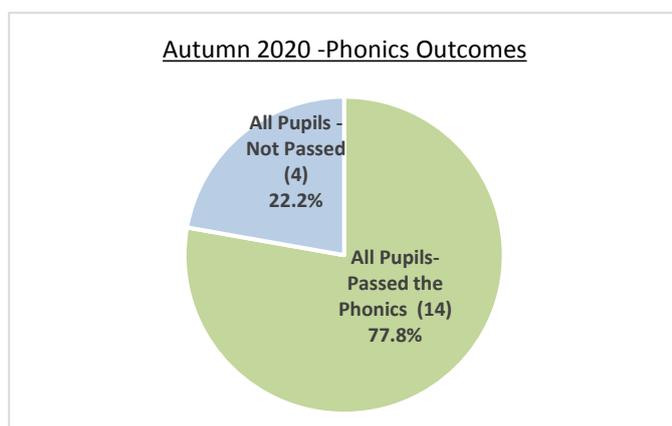
Five children on the existing EYFS profile shows the following characteristics: -

- One child is a boy, four children are girls
- Two of the five children achieved GLD - 40% .
- The two children achieving GLD are girls and both attending OOA schools, one recorded as SEN support and the other as none SEND needs.
- From the overall five children , two children are record as having EHCP'S, one child is recorded as SEN Support and two children recorded as having no identified SEN Needs.
- Two children are recorded as Educated in Rotherham and three children educated out of the borough.
- Two of the four girls achieved GLD , the one boy did not.

## Key Stage 1 Phonics Screening

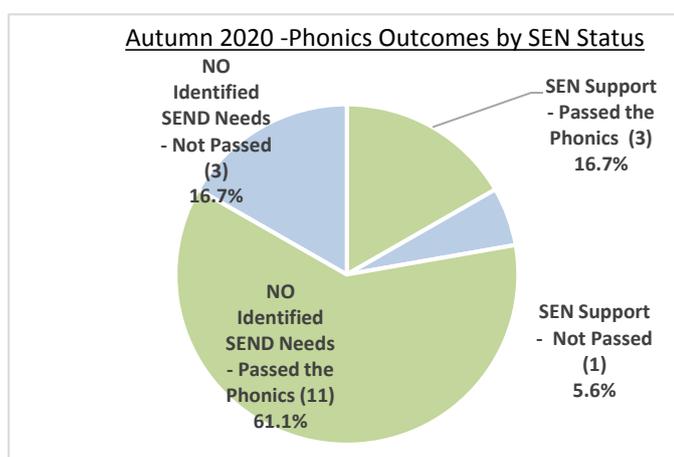
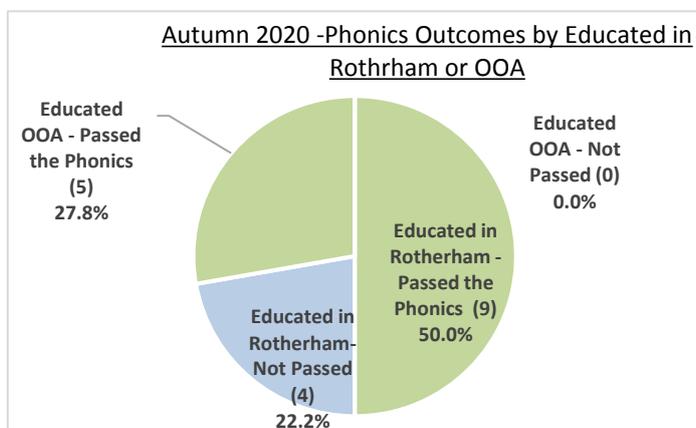
With the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in a national lockdown and school closures happening, the DfE announced there would be no Phonics screenings checks taking place in the Summer 2019. However, cancellation of the phonics screening check in the June meant that incoming year 2 pupils in the academic year 2019/2020 did not take the test. The DfE later announced that it would be statutory for schools to administer a past version of the phonics screening check to year 2 pupils in the Autumn term 2020. This check was due to be administered by schools in the second half of that term.

The Virtual School collected outcomes for this 2020 Autumn Phonics checks and the following graphs provides the achievements by the eighteen children in the cohort.



Overall, 77.8% of the children in the cohort passed the Phonics check in the 2020 Autumn Term.

The eighteen children consist of nine females and nine males, showing 88.9% of females achieved the pass level and 66.7% of males passed. The gap between girls and boys is at 22.2%



Thirteen pupils were educated in the borough (at the time of the 2020 Phonics Autumn check) and this reports 50.0% of them achieved the Phonics pass mark.

Five children were educated out of the borough (at the time of the 2020 Phonics Autumn Check) and all five children passed.

There were four pupils identified with SEN support showing 75% achieved passing the phonics check. Fourteen children had no identified SEND needs recorded with 78.6% of them passed the phonics check.

## Year 2 Autumn Term Phonic screening 2021 (Released Data Jan 2022)

Due to government directive the Y1 Phonics screening was not undertaken again in the Summer term 2021 and children were screened again in the 2021 Autumn term between October and December. The results from this phonics screening are recorded as below:

DfE LAC COHORT	Pass/not achieved		Gender		Educated in ....		SEN Status		
	PASS	NOT ACHIEVED	MALE	FEMALE	RMBC	OOA	E	K	N
19	14	5	5/9	8/9	7/10	6/8	1/1	2/5	11/14
	74%	26%	56%	89%	70%	75%	100%	40%	79%

## Key Stage 1 (KS1) Teacher Assessments

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in national lockdowns and school closures, no KS1 assessments took place in summer 2021 as per DfE guidance. Consequently, there is no national validated KS1 assessment data available for 2020-2021. Virtual School have therefore used unofficial teacher assessment data collected in July 2021 to determine KS1 progress and attainment of Rotherham LAC.

KS1 predicted TA results were collected for 20 Y2 LAC in July 2021. All Predictive Teacher assessment results were imported into our LA Attainment system (Nexus) and matched against the latest annual CLA 903 Statuary return. This provided information for our KS1 Virtual schools (VS) DfE official cohort (CLA 12+ months). This showed 13 children from the overall twenty were matched to the 903 return. Therefore, the below table shows the 13 children's cohort characteristics information as our KS1 DfE CLA official cohort.

## Virtual Schools (VS) DfE LAC Cohort: Cohort Characteristics

DfE LAC COHORT	Gender		Ethnicity		Educated in ....		SEN Status		
	MALE	FEMALE	WBRI	WROM	RMBC	OOA	E	K SEN support	N
13	5	8	12	1	6	7	2	4	7
%	38.4%	61.6%	92.3%	7.7%	46.2%	53.8%	15.4%	30.8%	53.8%

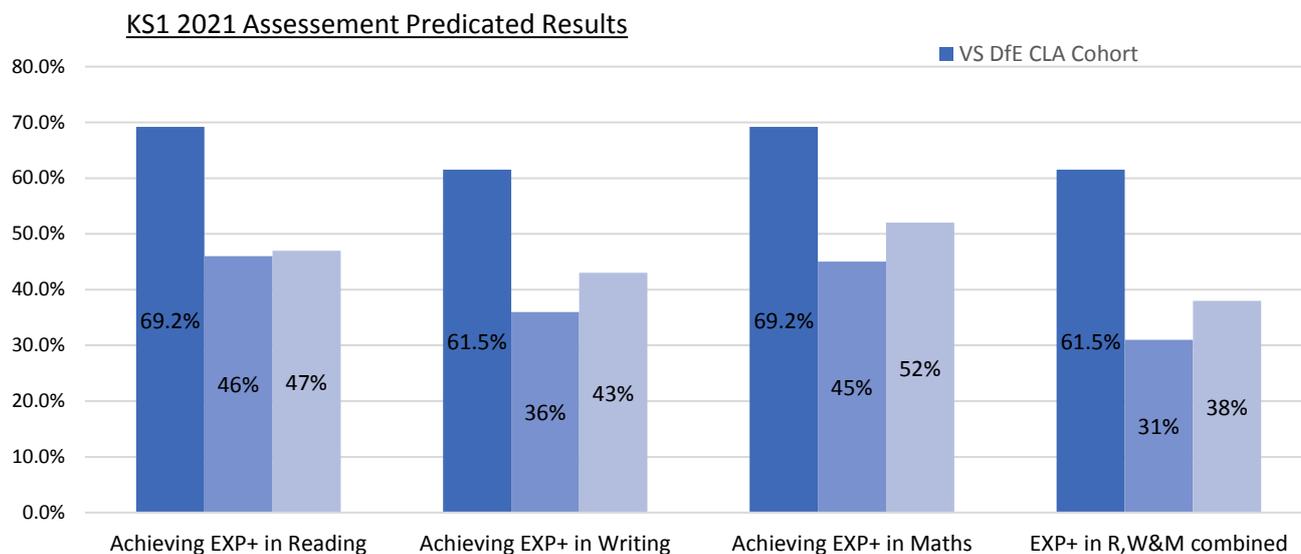
There are 13 pupils in the KS1 VS DfE official cohort and each pupil equates to 13%.

KS1 Predicted 2021 results	Cohort	Achieving EXP+ in Reading	Achieving EXP+ in Writing	Achieving EXP+ in Maths	Achieving EXP+ in R,W&M combined
<b>Excluding EHCP</b>					
VS DfE CLA Cohort	11	81.8%	72.7%	81.8%	72.7%
National LAC (Provisional)	230*	46%	36%	45%	31%
Yorkshire & the Humber (CLA) (Provisional)	60*	47%	43%	52%	38%

2021 KS1 predicted TA outcome result for our KS1 DfE LAC cohort is below: -

KS1 Predicted 2021 results	Cohort	Achieving EXP+ in Reading	Achieving EXP+ in Writing	Achieving EXP+ in Maths	Achieving EXP+ in R,W&M combined
VS DfE CLA Cohort	13	69.2%	61.5%	69.2%	61.5%
National LAC (Provisional)	230*	46%	36%	45%	31%
Yorkshire & the Humber (CLA) (Provisional)	60*	47%	43%	52%	38%

2021 Predictive achievements for LAC children in all subjects are above the provisional emerging LAC National average and above the provisional emerging regional LAC Yorkshire and Humber CLA position.

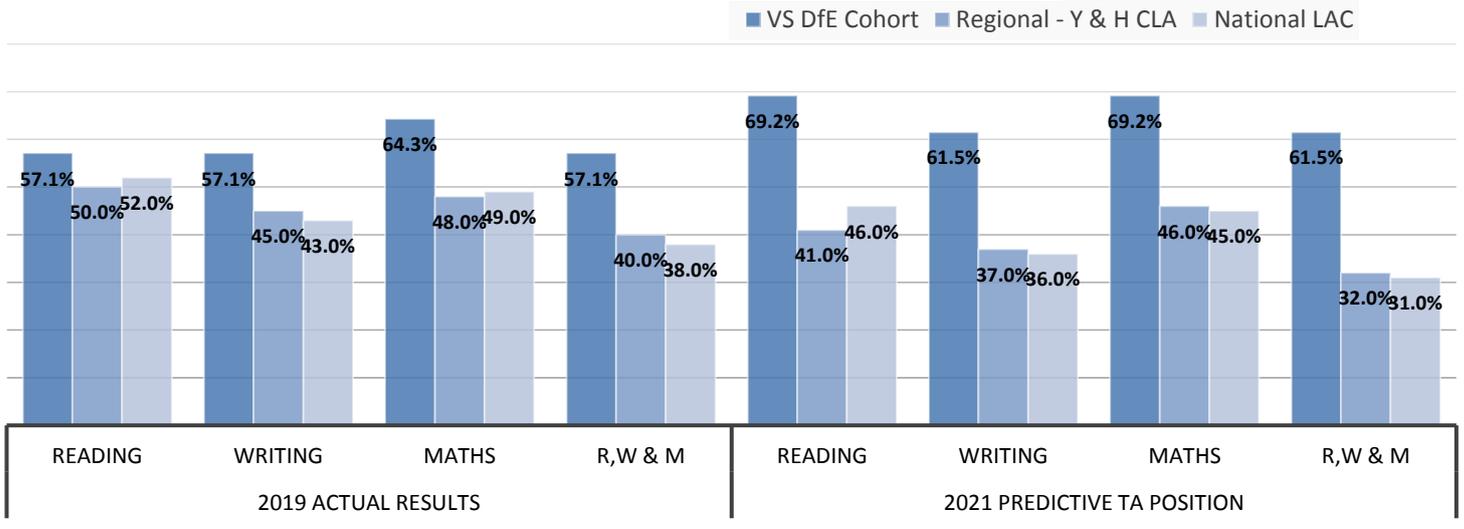


\*However, it's important to note that the Provisional National and Provisional Yorkshire & the Humber regional averages are only based on those Authorities that have imported their LAC results into the NEXUS system as this is optional for 2021. Therefore comparisons to both these groups are not full cohorts – for example KS1 CLA National is based on 60 authorities out of 151 (39% ), KS1 CLA regional Y&H is based on 10 out of 15 authorities (68%).

2021 achievements show to be 23.2% above provisional national levels in reading, 25.5% above in writing, 24.2% above in maths and 30.5% above in combined R,W&M .

Key stage one teacher assessment results in 2021 show that Reading, Writing and also the Reading, writing and mathematics (R,W&M) combined subjects for children achieving the expected standard (EXS+) has increased by 4.1% from the 2019 KS1 CLA outcomes. The graph below shows the comparisons from the 2019 actual KS1 results for LAC children against the 2021 predictive outcomes on LAC children.

**KS1 Outcomes - 2019 actual outcomes v 2021 Predictive TA outcomes for LAC**



The 13 children in the DfE VS cohort consists of 5 boys and 8 girls, showing that; 40% of boys achieved the EXS+ in R,W&M combined , with 75% of girls achieved the EXS+ in R,W&M combined. The gap between boys and girls is at 35%.

7 pupils were educated in the borough and 42.9% achieved the EXS+ in R, W&M combined. 7 were educated outside the borough and 71.4% achieved the EXS+ in R, W&M combined.

The percentage of pupils identified with SEN support and achieving EXS+ in R,W&M combined was 66%.

There are 2 pupils identified as being on a EHCP and the predictive teacher assessment outcome was record as working in the emerging standards through all KS1 subjects.

## Key Stage 2 (KS2) SATs

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in national lockdowns and school closures, no KS2 assessments took place in summer 2021 as per DfE guidance. Consequently, there is no national validated KS2 assessment data available for 2020-2021. Virtual School have used unofficial teacher assessment data collected in July 2021 to determine KS1 progress and attainment of Rotherham LAC.

KS2 predicted TA results were collected for 40 Year 6 LAC in July 2021. All Predictive Teacher assessment results were imported into our local authority attainment system (Nexus) and matched against the latest annual DfE LAC 903 Statutory return. This provided information for our KS2 VS DfE cohort (CLA 12+ months) . This showed 37 children from the overall 40 were matched to the 903 return. The table below shows the 37 children's cohort characteristics information as our KS2 VS DfE LAC cohort.

### VS DfE CLA Cohort: Cohort Characteristics

DfE LAC COHORT	Gender		Ethnicity						Educated in ....		SEN Status		
	M	F	WBRI	MWAS	MWBC	WEUR	WROM	WOTW	RMBC	OOA	E	K	N
37	22	15	25	3	3	1	4	1	18	19	17	13	7
%	59.5%	40.5%	67.6%	8.1%	8.1%	2.7%	10.8%	2.7%	48.6%	51.4%	45.9%	35.1%	18.9%

There are 37 pupils in the KS2 VS DfE cohort and each pupil equates to 2.7%

From the 37 pupils in the DfE cohort,

- 31 (83.7%) are identified as having SEND needs
- 17 of the 31 children (45.9%) were in receipt of an EHCP
- 10 (27%) of children were attending a specialist provision over last academic year.

There are 380 sessions in an academic school year for each child.

Overall, 1008 sessions were missed by the DfE Y6 cohort due to COVID 19 over last academic year

- 356 sessions due to self-isolation
- 251 sessions due to shielding
- 401 due to bubble closures.

From the 37 pupils in the DfE cohort: -

- 12 (32.4%) of children have experienced 3 or more placement moves since become LAC
- 10.8% (4/37) of these children experienced 9 or more placement moves since becoming LAC

2021 KS2 predicted TA outcome result for the DfE LAC cohort is below: -

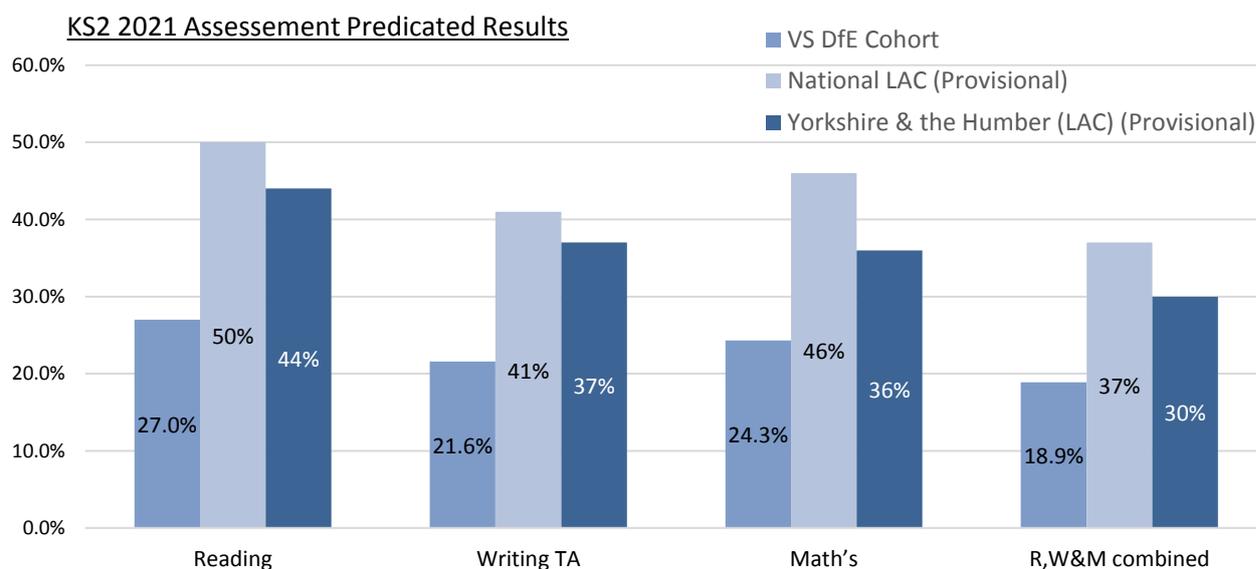
Key Stage 2	Number	Achieving the Expected Standard + in.....			
		Reading	Writing TA	Math's	R,W&M combined
VS DfE Cohort	37	27.0%	21.6%	24.3%	18.9%
National LAC (Provisional)	420*	50%	41%	46%	37%
Yorkshire & the Humber (LAC) (Provisional)	110*	44%	37%	36%	30%

Key Stage 2	Number	Achieving the Expected Standard + in.....			
		Reading	Writing TA	Math's	R,W&M combined
<b>Excluding EHCP</b>					
VS DfE Cohort - Excluding EHCP	20	35% (7/20)	35% (7/20)	35% (7/20)	30% (6/20)
National LAC (Provisional) - Excluding EHCP	-	54%	48%	51%	40%
Yorkshire & the Humber (LAC) (Provisional) - Excluding EHCP	-	51%	45%	46%	37%

2021 KS2 Predictive results supplied by education settings for these LAC children are showing to be below the provisional emerging LAC national and LAC regional picture.

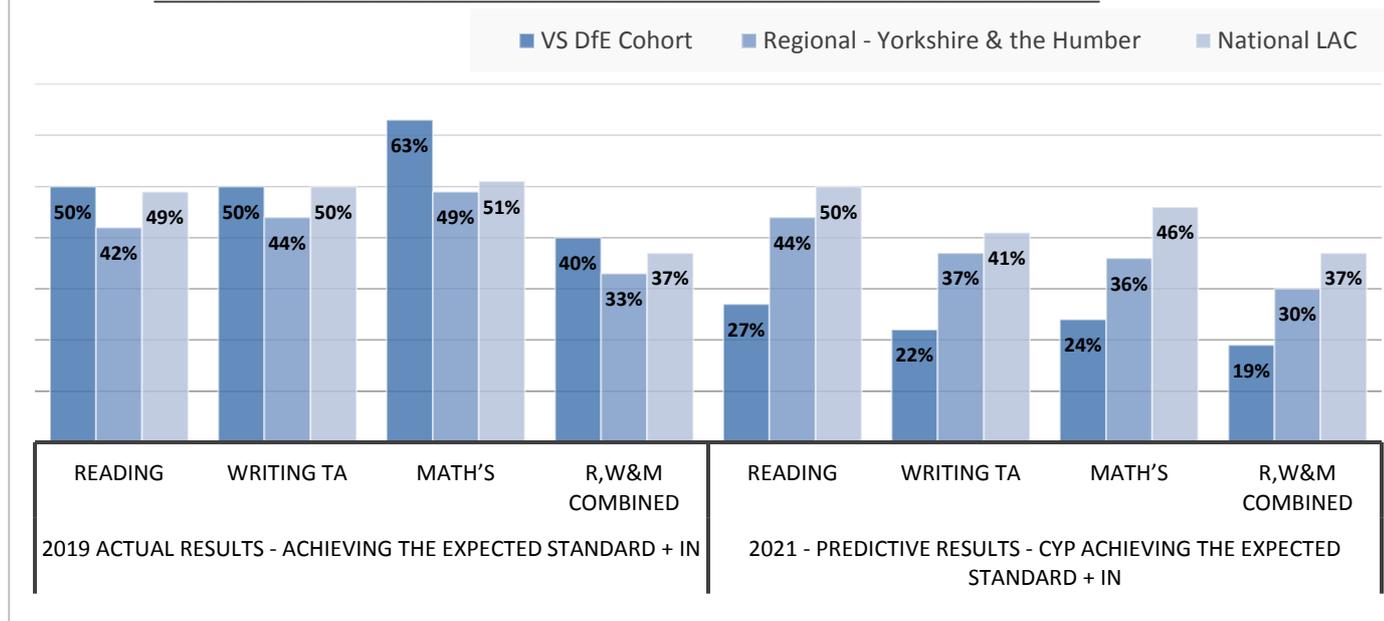
- 7 of the Rotherham LAC achieved the EXS in reading, writing and maths combined. 1 of these children held an EHCP.
  - 3 of the Rotherham LAC achieved GDS in reading. 1 of these children held an EHCP.
  - 7 children achieved EXS in reading, 2 of these held an EHCP.
  - 8 children achieved EXS in maths, 1 of these held an EHCP.
  - 9 children achieved EXS in writing, 2 of these held an EHCP.
- 
- 7 (18.9%) of Rotherham LAC pupils achieved the EXS in Reading, Writing and Maths combined
  - 7 (27%) achieved the EXS in Reading
  - 10 (24.3%) achieved the EXS in Maths
  - 9 (21.6%) achieved the EXS in Writing (8/37)

\*However, it's important to note that the Provisional National and Provisional Yorkshire & the Humber regional averages are only based on those Authorities that have imported their LAC results into the NEXUS system as this is optional for 2021. Therefore comparisons to both these groups are not full cohorts – for example KS2 CLA National is based on 67 authorities out of 151 (44%), KS2 CLA regional Y&H is based on 12 out of 15 authorities (80%).



The table below shows the Virtual School KS2 Actual results in 2019 compared to the 2021 predictive results. This also includes the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard compared to both Yorkshire and Humber (LAC) region and the National average (LAC) that are available.

### KS2 Outcomes - 2019 actual outcomes v 2021 Predictive TA outcomes for LAC



There were twenty two boys and fifteen girls in the KS2 cohort; 13.6% of boys achieved the EXS+ in R,W&M combined (3/22) and 31.3% of girls achieved the EXS+ in R,W&M combined (5/16)

The percentage of pupils identified with SEN support and achieving EXS+ in R,W&M combined was at 12.5% (2/16). However, 18.8% of them achieved the EXS+ in Reading (3/16) and 25% of them achieved the EXS+ in Math's (4/16).

The percentage of pupils with a EHCP and achieving the EXS+ in R,W&M combined was at 6.7% (1/15), however 13.3% of them achieved the EXS+ in Reading (2/15), where there were 6.7% of them achieved the EXS+ in both Writing and Math's (1/15).

At the collection of the KS2 predictive results In July, there were nineteen children educated in the borough and 5.3% achieved the EXS+ in R,W&M combined (1/19). 21.1% of this cohort achieved the EXS+ in Reading (4/19), 10.5% of them achieved the EXS+ in in Math's (2/19) and 10.5% of them achieved the EXS+ in Writing (2/19). There were nineteen children educated outside of the borough and six of these achieved the EXS+ in R,W&M combined – 31.6%. 15.8% of this cohort achieved the EXS+ in Reading (3/19), 31.6% of them achieved the EXS+ in both Writing and Math's subjects (6/19).

## Key Stage 4 GCSE Exams

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Year 11 students did not sit GCSE exams. GCSE grades were issued based on centre assessment. This year the assessments were based on the grade the learner was performing at, compared to the previous year where they were based on what teachers believed a student would have achieved, had they sat their exams.

Results have been requested directly from the schools and this has allowed analysis of the Y11 cohort.

There were 46 LAC children in the 2021 year 11 cohort;

- 40 (87%) of the 46 children fall into the DfE cohort (LAC for 12 months).
- 17(37%) of the 46 children fall into the DfE cohort and attended a mainstream provision.

However, on results day we only received back in 29 actual KS4 results from settings but the virtual school team were updated with verbal information on another 11 children after results day, making KS4 results known for 40 children from the possible 46 in the cohort.

For the 40 children in the DFE cohort, we received back 25 children's actual KS4 results and had a verbal update on an additional 9 children's results. However, as we use the DFE cohort information to import into our NEXUS system and this matches to the LAC 903 stat return, this cohort can only be summarised from the 25 pupils where we actual received and imported in their KS4 result files into the system.

The following table below shows the outcomes on both cohort groups: -

KEYSTAGE 4- 2021 RESULTS		
Subjects	% of the DfE cohort (25)	% of the total cohort results received in (40)
English and Maths grade 4+	28.0%	17.5%
English only grade 4+	32.0%	22.5%
Maths only grade 4+	36.0%	22.5%
Achieving one of either English or Maths at grade 4+	40.0%	27.50%
Achieving English and Math's at grade 3+	56.0%	27.5%
Achieving at least one GCSE passes/equivalent (grades 1-9)	100.0%	35.0%

**2021 KS4 - % achievements of the DfE LAC cohort (25)**

Achievement Category	Percentage
Achieving at least one GCSE passes/equivalent (grades 1-9)	100.0%
Achieving English and Maths at 3+	56.0%
Achieving one of either English or Maths at 4+	40.0%
Maths only L4+	36.0%
English only L4+	32.0%
English and Maths L4+	28.0%

Due to Covid-19, the Year 11 GCSE grades were once again based on centre assessed grades made by subject teachers.

Nationally, there was an uplift of approximately 1% in GCSE overall grade 4 pass rate (76.9% in 2021 compared with 75.9% in 2020).

The table below shows the performance difference on the DfE cohort from last year's performance to this year. Please note there are less pupils in the DfE cohort this year than last year due the fact we haven't received full KS4 results back. Please bear this in mind when looking over this information as a comparison.

Subjects	2021 % achievements of the DfE cohort (25)	2020 - % achievements of the DfE cohort (40)	Difference between each year
English & Maths grade 4+	28.0%	17.5%	10.5%+
English only grade 4+	32.0%	5.0%	27%+
Maths only grade 4+	36.0%	2.5%	33.5%+
Achieving at least 1 GCSE passes/equivalent (grades 1-9)	100.0%	65.0%	35.0%

All performance outcomes on the KS4 DfE cohort (25) for Rotherham's Virtual School has seen an increase in this year's performance: -

Pupils achieving grade 4+ English and Maths combined shows on increase by 10.5% this year, English outcomes of pupils achieving 4+ shows an increase of 27%, Maths's outcomes of pupils achieving grades 4+ shows an increase of 33.5% and achievements of pupils getting at least 1 GCSE pass / equivalent level shows an increase by 35% from previous year.

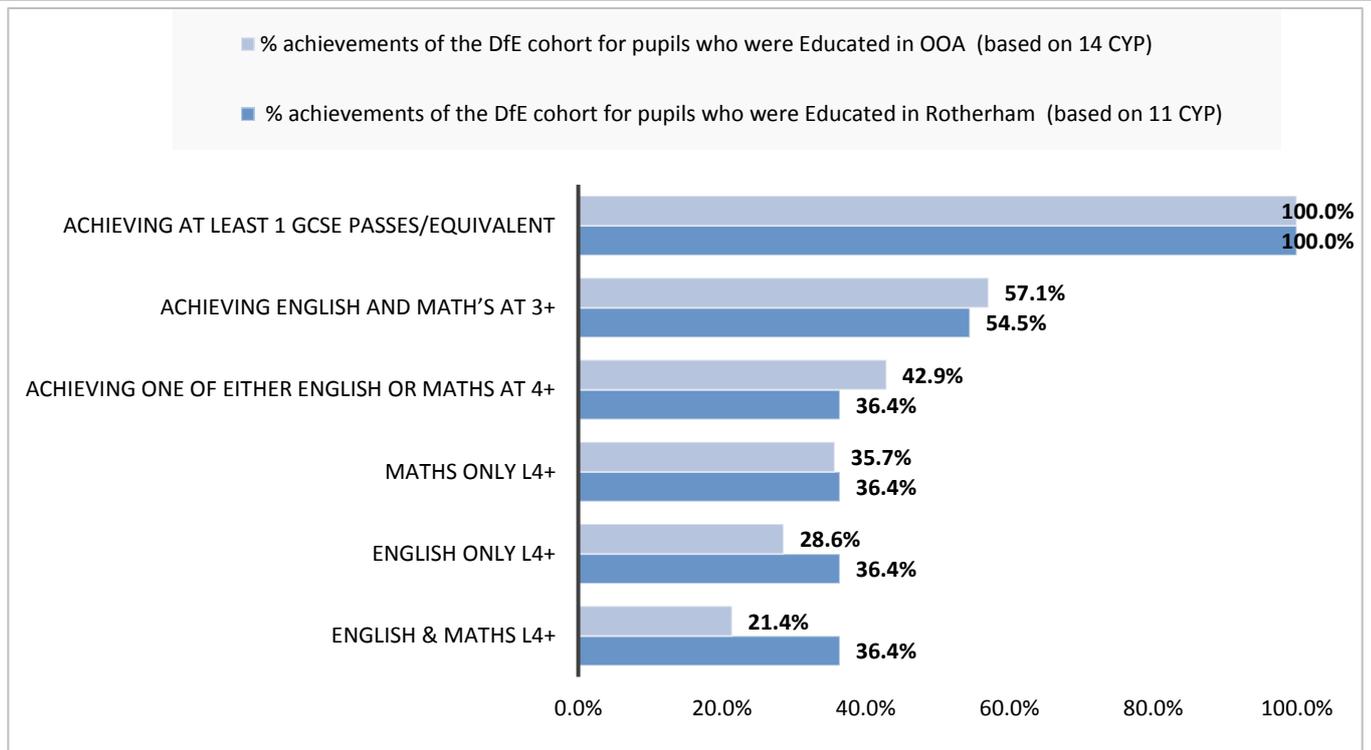
As we use the DfE cohort information to Import into our NEXUS system and this matches to the latest LAC 903 stat return - we gain access to additional report in the system that shows further KS4 measures. We can look to compare these measures to the emerging CLA regional and CLA National averages as below. However, it's important to note that these Provisional National and Provisional Yorkshire & the Humber regional averages are only based on those Authorities that have imported their LAC results into the NEXUS system as this is optional for 2021. Therefore comparisons to both these groups are not full cohorts – for example KS4 CLA National average is based on 74 authorities out of 151 (49%), KS4 CLA regional Y&H is based on 12 out of 15 authorities (80%).

Subjects	% of ROTHERHAM LAC DfE cohort (25)	% of Y&H REGIONAL LAC DfE cohort	% of NATIONAL LAC DfE cohort
English and Maths L4+	25.0%	24.0%	44.0%
Achieving at least one GCSE passes/equivalent (grades 1-9)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Ebacc 9-4	4%	9%	7%
Attainment 8- average score	25.9	26	32.5

Over the last two years KS4 assessments were based on the grade the learner was performing at, compared to the previous year where the assessments were based on the grade, they believed a student would have achieved had they sat their exams this year.

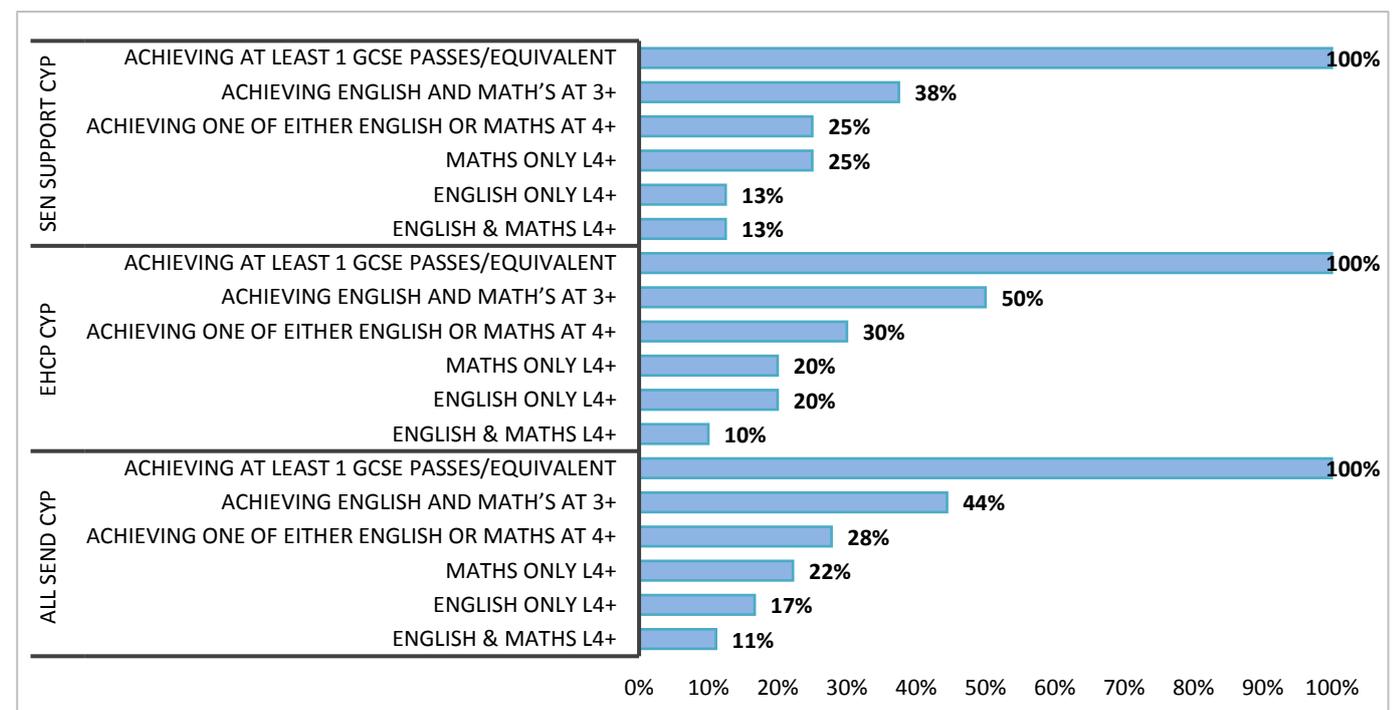
The graph below shows the DfE cohort split down further by if pupils attended an Education Provision within Rotherham or pupils attended an Education provision out of authority (OOA) at the time of the KS4 results. The greater percentage of learners achieving GCSE grade 4 in English and Maths in authority is likely to be as a result of the difference in cohort characteristics particularly the percentage of those learners in mainstream. Of

the 11 educated in Rotherham, 82%% were educated in mainstream settings, whereas of the 14 educated OOA, only 57% were educated in mainstream settings.



From the twenty-five pupils in the KS4 DfE cohort, eighteen of them were identified as having SEND needs - which equates to 72% of the cohort. 40% (10/25) of the cohort had an EHCP in place and 32% (8/25) were identified as having SEN support.

The graph below shows the outcomes achieved on these SEND groups: -

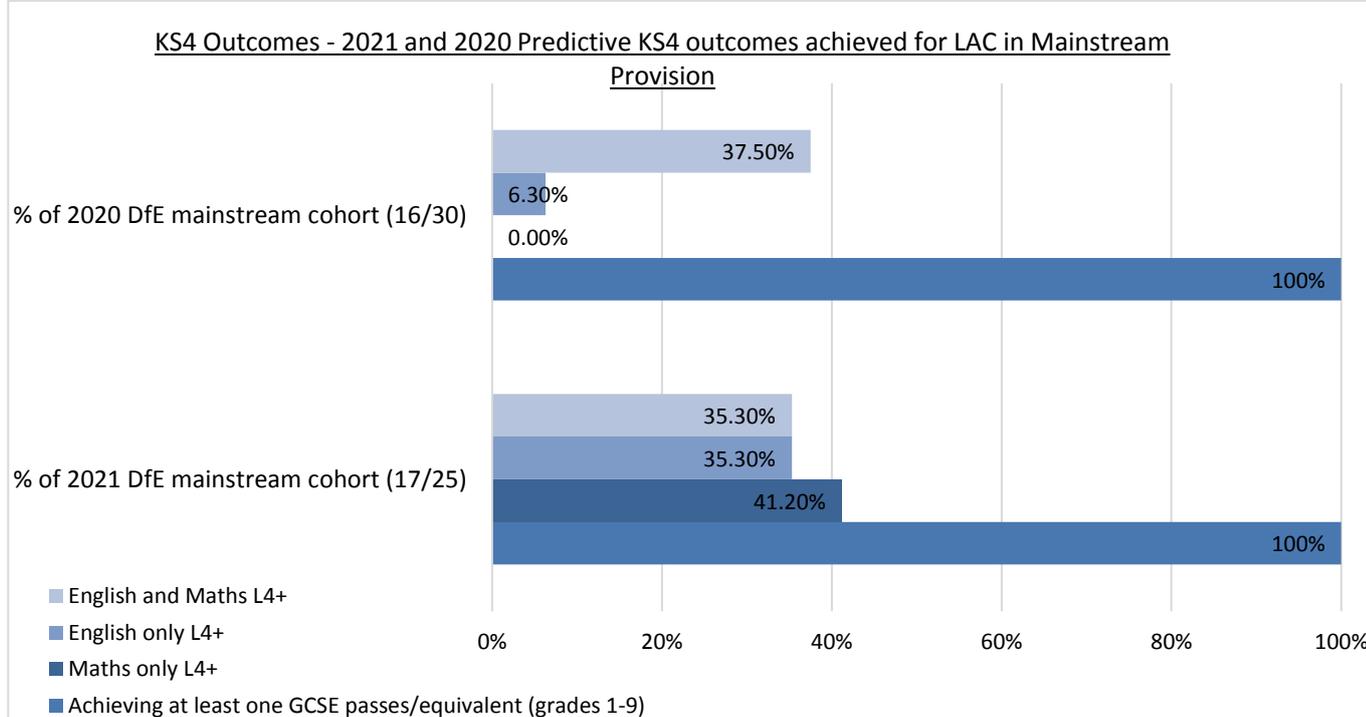


The mainstream only KS4 cohort below focusses on those Year 11's within the DfE cohort of 25 who attended a mainstream setting. 17 pupils of the 25 (68%) children fall into the DfE cohort and attended a mainstream provision. The table below shows their KS4 performance – this is also shown by pupils who attended mainstream in Rotherham and pupils who attended mainstream in Out of authority (OOA).

<b>2021 DfE Cohort by Mainstream Provision</b>			
Subjects	% of DfE mainstream cohort (17/25)	% of DfE mainstream cohort attending mainstream settings in Rotherham (9/17) 52.9%	% of DfE mainstream cohort attending mainstream in OOA (8/17) 47.1%
English and Maths L4+	35.3%	44.4%	25.0%
English only L4+	35.3%	44.4%	25.0%
Maths only L4+	41.2%	44.4%	37.5%
Achieving one of either English or Maths at 4+	41.2%	44.4%	37.5%
Achieving English and Math's at 3+	58.8%	66.7%	50.0%
Achieving at least one GCSE passes/equivalent	100%	100%	100%

The below table provides the mainstream only cohort compares to last year's 2020 LAC mainstream cohorts to show a comparison to this cohort group's outcomes: -

<b>2021 and 2020 DfE Cohort by Mainstream Provision</b>		
Subjects	% of 2021 DfE mainstream cohort (17/25)	% of 2020 DfE mainstream cohort (16/30)
English and Maths L4+	35.30%	37.50%
English only L4+	35.30%	6.30%
Maths only L4+	41.20%	0.00%
Achieving one of either English or Maths at 4+	41.20%	-
Achieving English and Math's at 3+	58.80%	-
Achieving at least one GCSE passes/equivalent (grades 1-9)	100%	100%

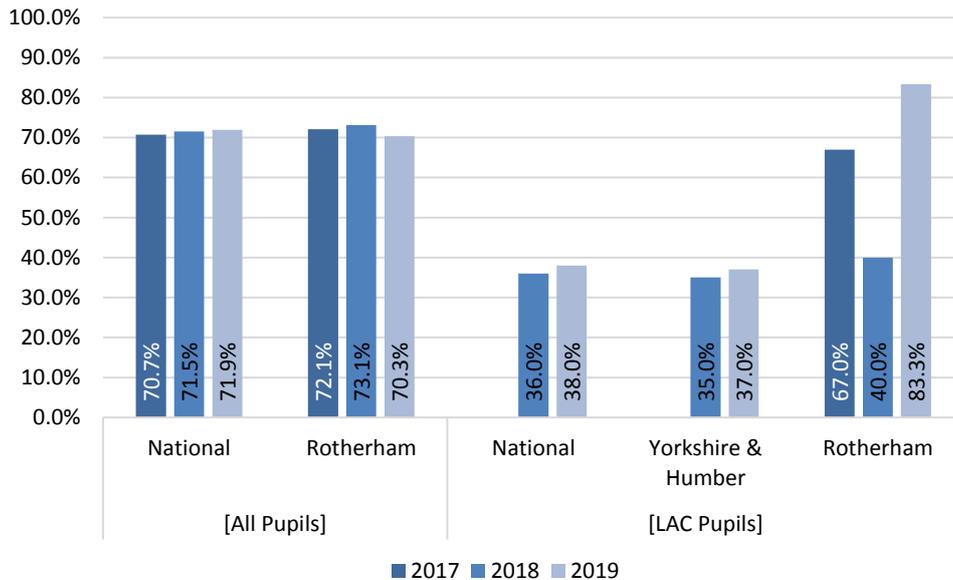


## 4. Rotherham educational outcome comparison 2017-19 (National, Yorkshire & Humber)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in national lockdown and school closures, no assessments took place and Year 11 students did not sit any GCSE exams as per DfE guidance. Consequently, there is no national validated data available for 2019-2020, therefore the below data is shared to view and is based on the most recent actual outcomes data which is from the previous academic years 2018-19.

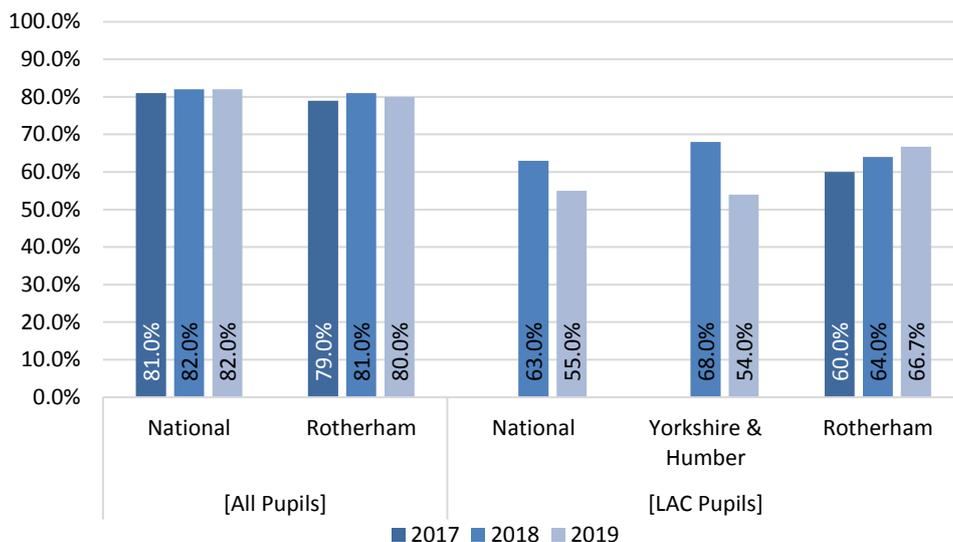
### Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) – Good Level of Development

Educational Outcomes for LA LAC compared with all pupils in the LA and with National LAC and all pupils nationally.



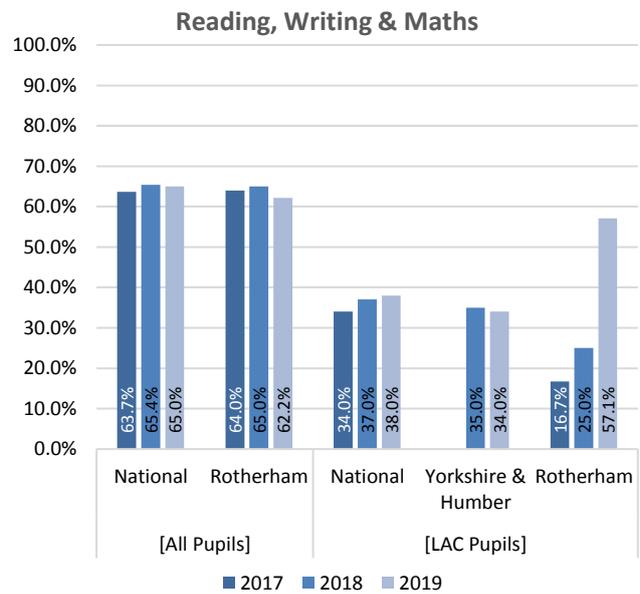
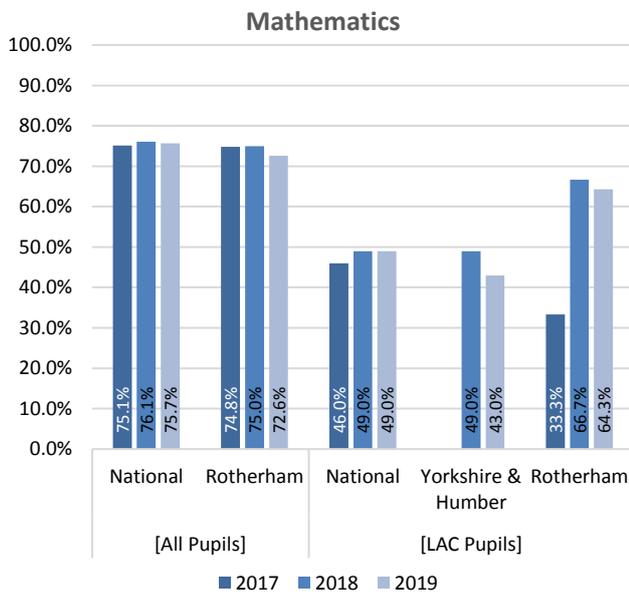
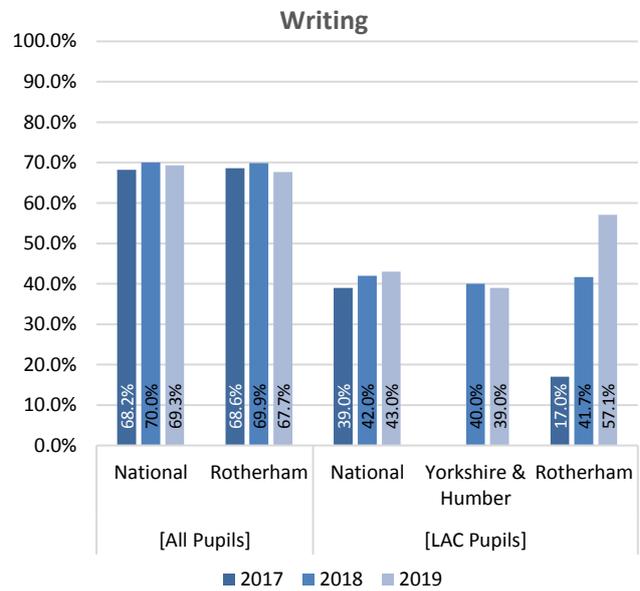
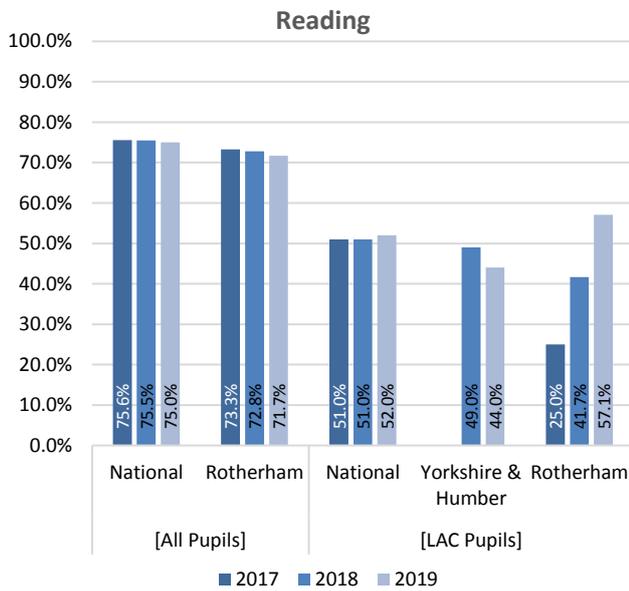
### Year 1 Phonics Screening

Educational Outcomes for LA LAC compared with all pupils in the LA and with National LAC and all pupils nationally.



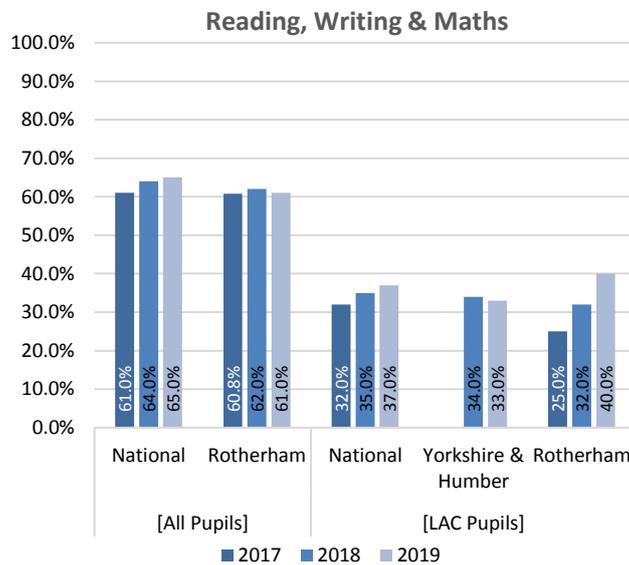
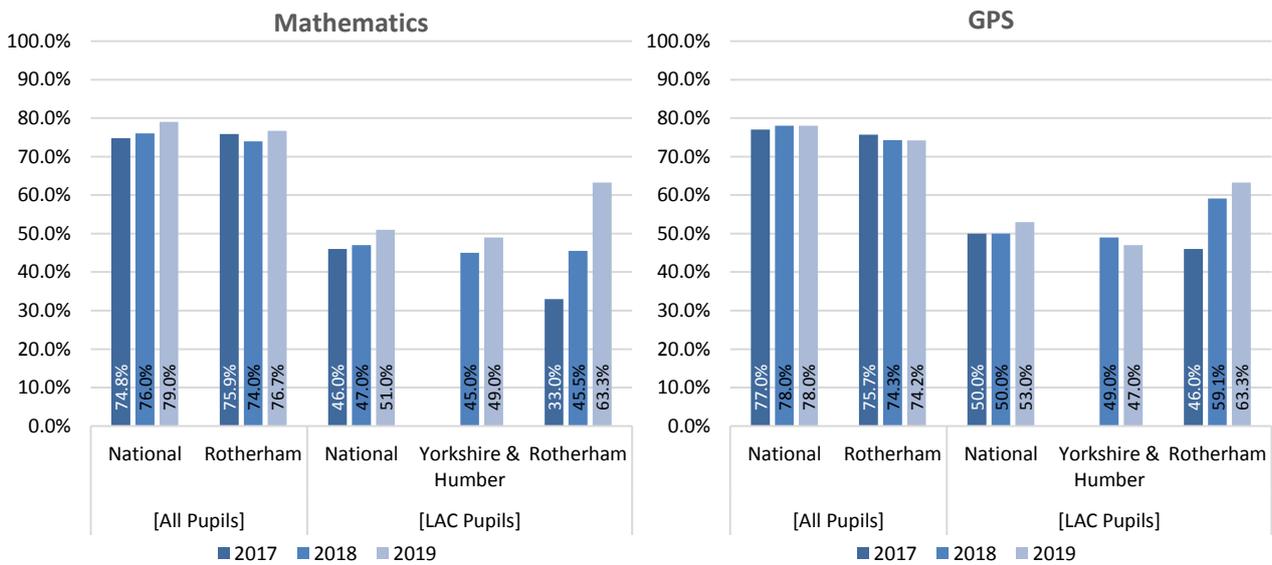
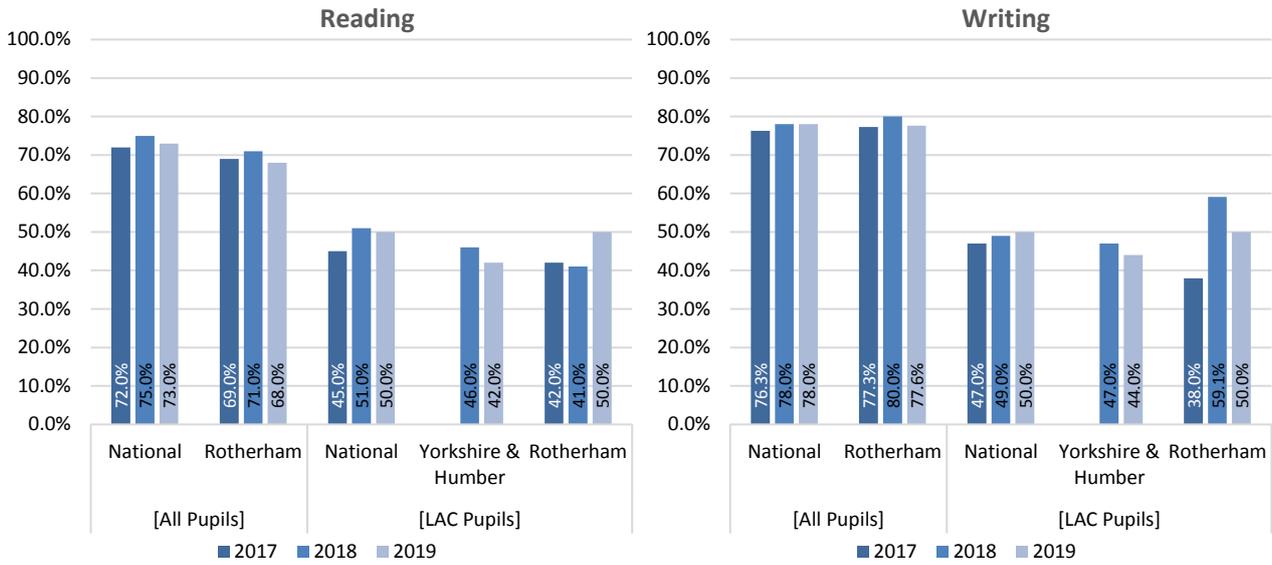
## Key Stage 1 Assessments

Educational Outcomes for LA LAC compared with all pupils in the LA and with National LAC and all pupils nationally.



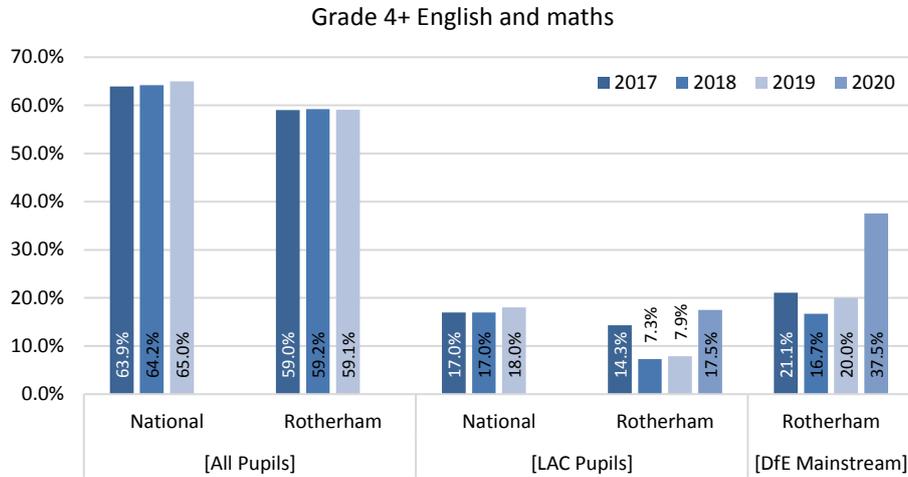
## Key Stage 2 Assessments

Educational Outcomes for LA LAC compared with all pupils in the LA and with National LAC and all pupils nationally.

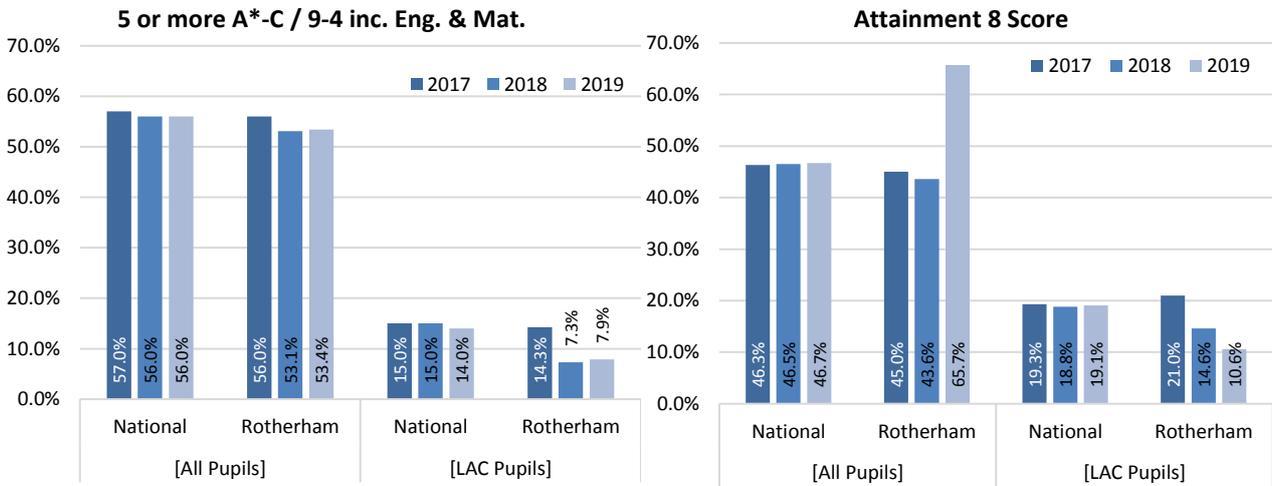


## Key Stage 4 GCSEs

Educational Outcomes for RMBC LAC (12 Months LAC) compared with all pupils in RMBC and with national LAC and all pupils nationally.



GCSE results this year illustrate a continuation of an improving three-year trend. This year, the increase was greater as a result of our young people benefitting from the decision to use centre assessed grades.



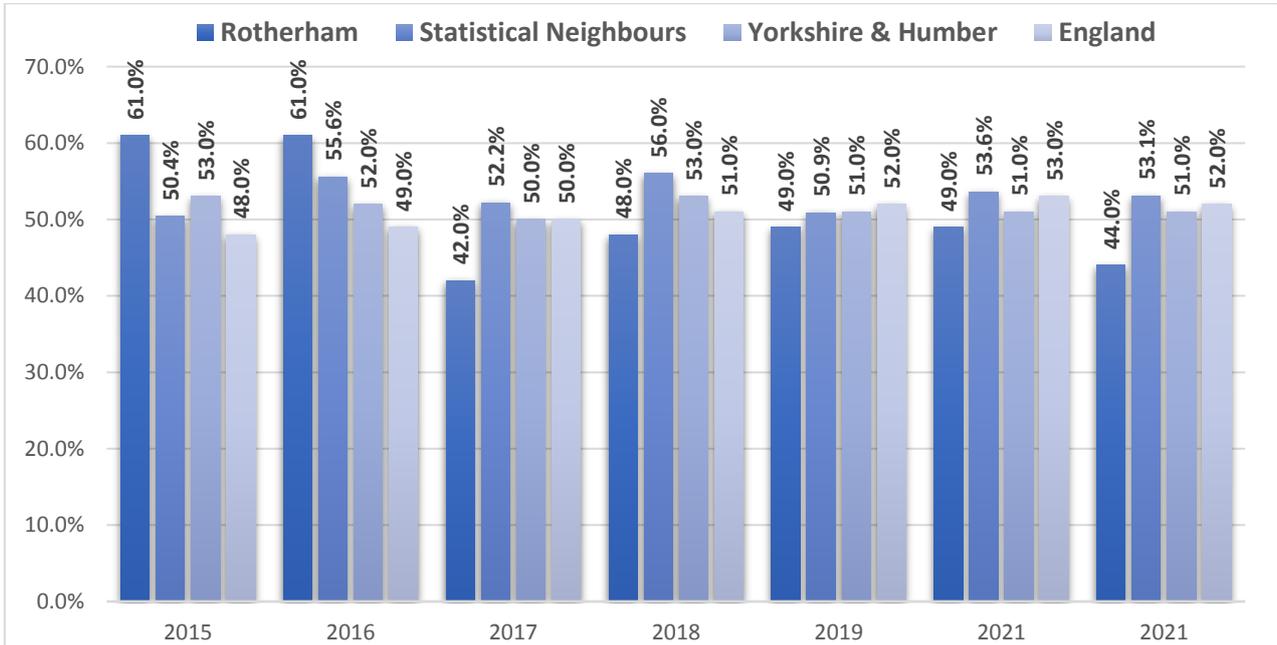
## Progress 8

			2017	2018	2019	
Progress 8 Score	All Pupils	National	-0.03	-0.02	-0.03	
		Rotherham	0.06	-0.09	-0.14	
	LAC Pupils	National	-1.17	-1.24	-1.28	
		Rotherham	-1.06	-1.62	-1.54	

Progress 8 Score has improved for the Rotherham LAC cohort in 2019 (up by +0.08 from 2018) and this is also above (+0.12) the National CLA which is at -1.28.

## 5. Education, Employment or Training (EET)

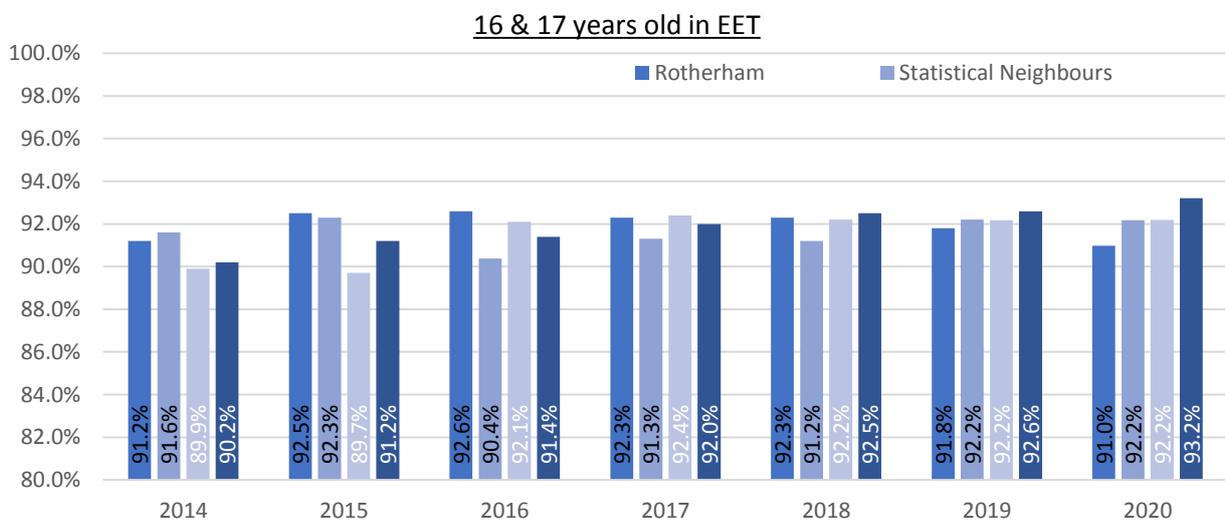
### Care Leavers (19yrs, 20yrs & 21yrs) in Education, Employment or Training



Between 2015 and 2016, Rotherham has consistently outperformed national, regional, and statistical neighbour comparators. 2017 performance for Rotherham reports at 42% which is a 19% decrease from the 2016 position. This is an 8% gap behind the national of 50%. 2018 performance shows Rotherham at 48% which has improved by 6% from the previous year, however this is still 3% behind the latest national. 2019 performance for Rotherham is 1% improved from 2018 but this is 2% behind national.

2020 performance continues at 49% for Rotherham, with Stat neighbours and national being at 53%. The provisional 2021 performance shows a 5% drop for Rotherham reported at 44%, the national average is slightly reduced at 52% and our stat neighbours reported at 53%. This is an 8% gap for Rotherham behind the provisional national of 52%.

### 16- & 17-year olds in Education, Employment or Training

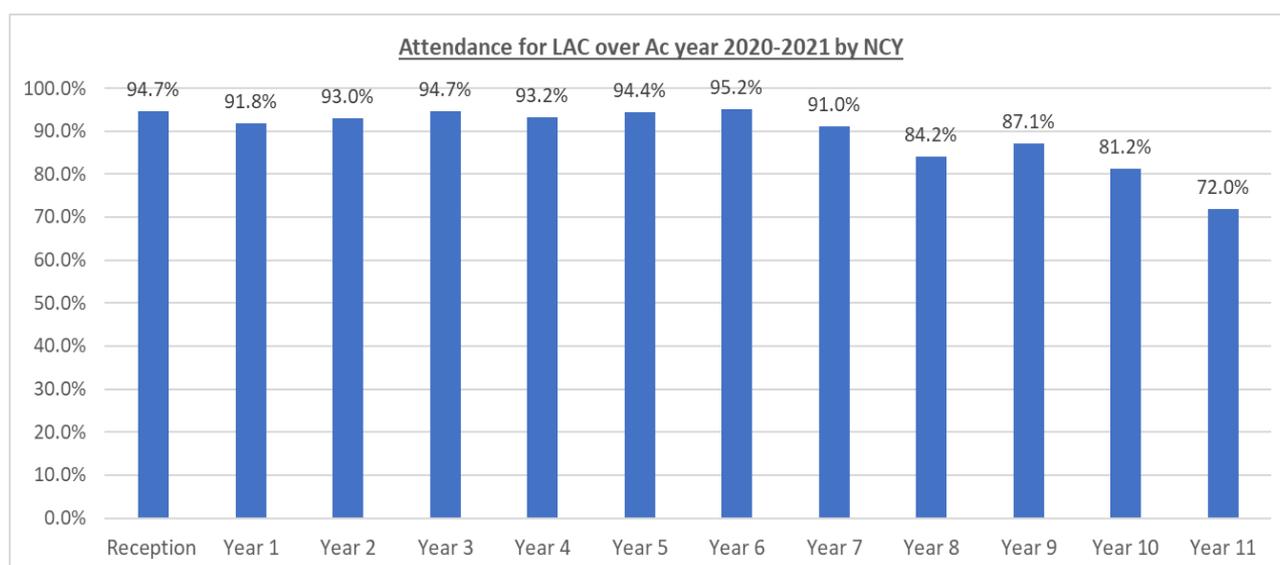


The change from the previous year is -0.78 and the Rotherham latest national rank is 134.

## 6. Attendance Data academic year 2020-21.

Overall attendance - 89.37%

School Attendance for LAC - Academic year 2020-21	
Reception	94.7%
Year 1	91.8%
Year 2	93.0%
Year 3	94.7%
Year 4	93.2%
Year 5	94.4%
Year 6	95.2%
Year 7	91.0%
Year 8	84.2%
Year 9	87.1%
Year 10	81.2%
Year 11	72.0%



### Narrative:

The overall attendance figures for this academic year have been significantly affected by the COVID 19 pandemic. In January 2021, in line with government guidance and as part of the national lockdown, schools were closed to most learners and only remained open for vulnerable learners and children of keyworkers. Looked after children were expected to attend their school during lockdown, whilst other learners were working from home. Rotherham Local Authority agreed, after careful consideration of individual needs and contexts, that some Looked After Children could work from home. The Looked after children who engaged in working from home, were marked as an authorised absent with those who were not engaging in learning marked as an unauthorised absent.

Rotherham Virtual School had a percentage of learners who were marked as authorised absent during the national lockdown, despite engaging in the virtual learning activities, provided by their school everyday. This has resulted in an overall attendance figure that is lower than it would have been had the children been marked as present or a different working from home code been used.

**Attendance data analysis:**

**Table A: Data including those marked absent due to COVID lockdown**

School Attendance for LAC - academic year 2020-21	Number of CYP	% of CYP
Good Attendance +95%	251	56.40%
Concern Attendance 90-95%	45	10.10%
Persistent Absence -90%	149	33.48%

**Table B: Data adjusted for those who were engaging in learning:**

School Attendance for LAC - academic year 2020-21	Number of CYP	% of CYP
Good Attendance +95%	368	82.70%
Concern Attendance 90-95%	30	6.74%
Persistent Absence -90%	47	10.56%

**Table C: Data including those marked absent due to COVID lockdown**

	Good Attendance +95%	Concern Attendance 90-95%	Persistent Absence -90%
Foundation Stage	75.0%	10.7%	14.3%
Key Stage 1	68.2%	7.4%	24.1%
Key Stage 2	70.0%	11.5%	18.5%
Key Stage 3	54.3%	6.2%	39.5%
Key Stage 4	30.8%	14.4%	54.8%

**Table D: Data adjusted for those who were engaging in learning:**

	Good Attendance +95%	Concern Attendance 90-95%	Persistent Absence -90%
Foundation Stage	89.3%	7.1%	3.6%
Key Stage 1	90.7%	3.7%	5.6%
Key Stage 2	89.2%	6.2%	4.6%
Key Stage 3	83.7%	4.7%	11.6%
Key Stage 4	67.3%	11.5%	21.2%

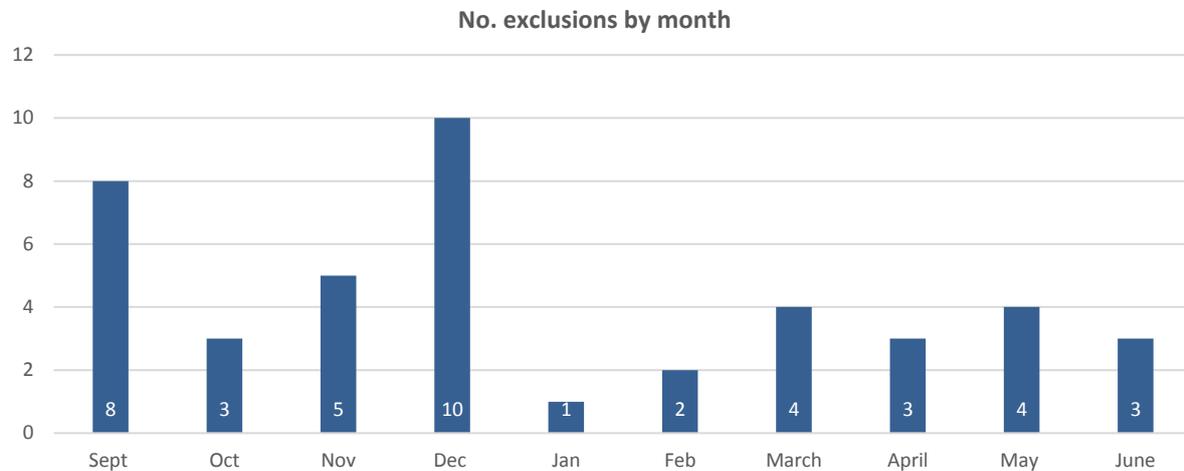
**Narrative:**

The adjusted persistent absence figure is an improvement on the last pre-covid attendance data academic year 2018-19 and is in line with the previous three years attendance data. The breakdown by key stages is comparable with previous data sets.

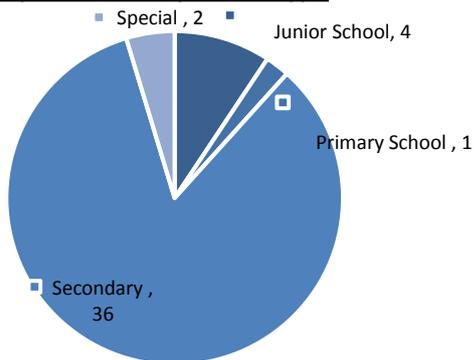
## 7. Exclusions

### LAC Exclusions 2020/21 Academic Year (local data)

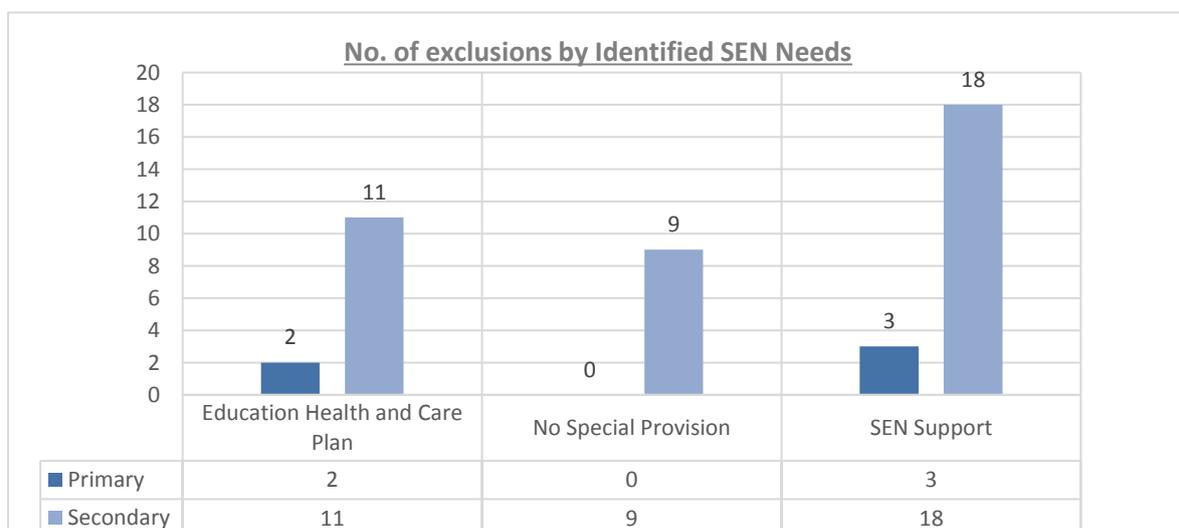
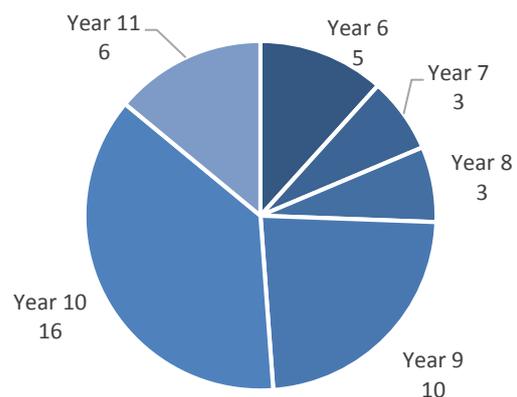
There were 43 exclusions (based on 21 pupils) in the 2020-21 academic year equating to 72 school days. All were for fixed term exclusions.



#### No. days excluded by school type



#### No. days excluded by NCY



In the first two terms of this academic year, there was an increase in the use of fixed term exclusion.

There was a significant increase in fixed term exclusion in December, this increase mirrored the pattern seen in previous years and is reflected both locally and nationally for non-LAC.

79% of learners who had a fixed term exclusion had some form of SEND needs - 30.2% having an EHCP and 48.8% having some SEN Needs.

There were non-Permanent exclusions issued on LAC over last academic year.

### Exclusions 2014-19 (DfE Cohort)

% of children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months with at least one fixed term exclusion from school. A fixed period exclusion refers to a pupil who is excluded from a school but remains on the register of the school because they are expected to return when the exclusion period is completed.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Rotherham</b>	10.6%	11.8%	13.1%	15.1%	11.3%	10.5%
<b>Yorkshire and The Humber</b>	10.3%	10.4%	11.4%	11.8%	11.6%	11.3%
<b>Statistical Neighbours</b>	9.4%	10.4%	11.7%	13.7%	12.9%	11.0%
<b>England</b>	10.7%	10.5%	12.7%	11.5%	11.3%	11.4%

**Note:** Exclusions data in the table above is collected two years in arrears, so the latest DfE exclusions data available is from the academic year 2018/19.

## 8. Appendix 1: Virtual School Development Plan – Academic year 2021-22

Priority	What are we worried about?	What we are doing about it.
Exclusions	<p>Exclusions remain a concern since return to school this September 2021, including learners with EHCPs and in specialist settings. This mirrored an increase in exclusions across the authority.</p> <p>We are worried that if the exclusion rate remains high, the impact on learners will be significant through missed learning opportunities adding to the impact of missed learning through COVID.</p> <p>Clear concern around the level of exclusions amongst those learners with SEND.</p>	<p>The Virtual School continues to provide a wide variety of supportive interventions and training opportunities to schools, with the aim to prevent exclusions.</p> <p>When a child is threatened with exclusion, the Virtual School supports multi-agency planning meetings to reduce the risk of exclusion.</p> <p>Virtual School work closely with the strategic lead for inclusion to support collective ownership across RMBC, ensuring LAC are a coherent and distinct cohort within strategic inclusion discussions.</p> <p>EHCP focus within the PEP meeting to ensure the needs of the young people as outlined in the EHCP are included within PEP planning (See below).</p>
Attainment and progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have significant concerns about the impact of missed learning on pupil outcomes. Particularly EYFS, KS2 and KS4.</li> <li>• For those in year groups where they will be formally assessed in the next two academic years, the impact of missed learning on cohort data is likely to be significant.</li> <li>• With a move back to terminal assessment at GCSE the impact of missed learning on cohort data may be exaggerated, when compared to the previous two years, where learners were assessed using centre assessed grading.</li> <li>• The impact of COVID on the emotional health and well-being of our learners and their teachers could have a negative impact on attainment and progress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PEP meetings continue to support the professional dialogue of the team around the child with a key focus on attainment and progress.</li> <li>• PEP meetings identify gaps in learning and areas for development. Plans are put in place with SMART targets to work towards closing these gaps and accelerating progress.</li> <li>• Where needed, additional, bespoke intervention and targeted support will be included in the learner’s plan to meet the individual needs.</li> <li>• Virtual School and eGOV are developing a data analysis dashboard to support cohort analysis of attainment, progress, and emotional health. This will allow the deep-dive analysis of individual cohorts and trends to support wider intervention.</li> <li>• Data analysis will form the basis of a more detailed Virtual School termly report. The report will be used to inform planning and systems change, where necessary, to develop and improve the work of the Virtual School to improve pupil outcomes.</li> </ul>

Emotional Health and Well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are concerned about the impact of COVID and full return to school.</li> <li>• Coping with the rapid changes during COVID and subsequent adaptations to the 'new normal' in school will have had, and continue to have, a lasting impact on the emotional health and well-being on most of our learners.</li> <li>• Capacity/sufficiency of educational provision and adults/staff to provide emotionally available, empathic care to meet the needs of our learners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employ a flexible our approach to continually assess and meet the needs of our schools, carers and most importantly our children.</li> <li>• PEP meetings and regular contact with schools, Social workers and carers ensures the team around the child can respond to changes in emotional health.</li> <li>• We will continue to develop the offer available through VSEA, VSEPS, VSSALT and links with Health.</li> <li>• Additional training opportunities will be developed and provided as required.</li> </ul>
COVID recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are concerned that the impact of COVID on our learners has not yet been fully understood.</li> <li>• How best to use the recovery funding and PP+ to support recovery.</li> <li>• Recovery for both emotional health and well-being and academic catch up of missed learning.</li> <li>• Potential for further COVID outbreaks that could impact on education.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PEP meeting focussed discussions include gap analysis to support appropriate intervention.</li> <li>• Continue to develop and deliver training to support schools in managing the impact of COVID on emotional health and well-being, academic attainment and speech, language and communication.</li> <li>• Utilise the COVID recovery and school led tuition funding to provide additional tuition support through schools providing or commissioning catch up tuition.</li> <li>• Utilise COVID recovery premium and PP+ to support catch up interventions, within school, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Emotional health support through additional keyworker hours.</li> <li>▪ Personalised tuition support delivered by schoolteachers, with a focus on core subjects.</li> <li>▪ Targeted support to year groups with formal assessment in the next two academic years.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## 9. Appendix 2: Virtual School Team 2019-20 Organisation Chart

**Virtual School  
Rotherham  
Headteachers  
Tina Hohn  
(Primary & EYs)  
and  
Pete Douglas  
(Secondary & Post 16)**

Key -  
Members of the VSR  
Senior Leadership Team



## 10. Appendix 3: 0- 2 years LAC Plan

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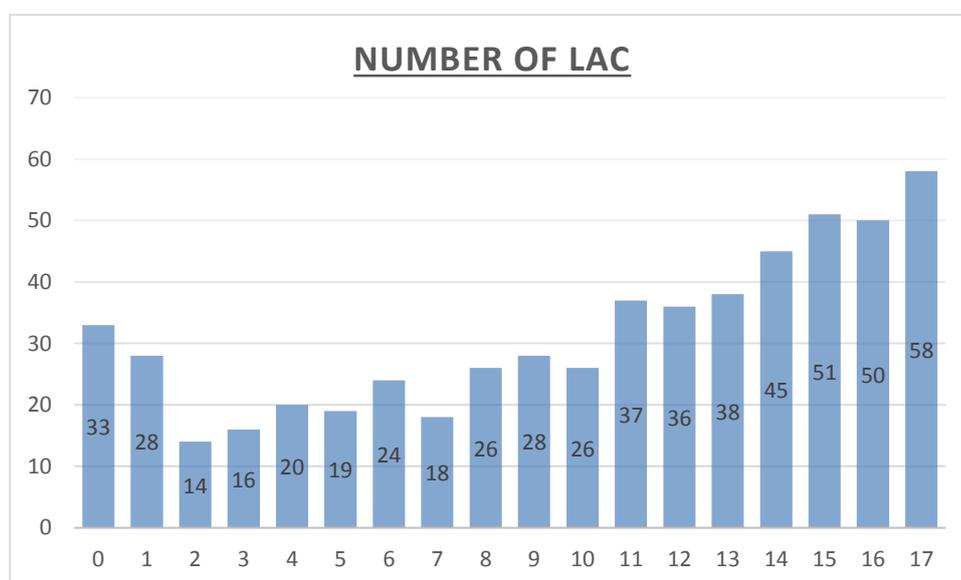
**How has Virtual School's 0-2 plan impacted upon Rotherham's Looked After Children's early experiences and outcomes?**



## How has Virtual School's 0-2 plan impacted upon Rotherham's Looked After Children's early experiences and outcomes?

Virtual School strive to guarantee that all Rotherham Looked After Children feel happy, safe, valued, loved and grow to achieve their full potential, as any good parent would want for their children. Virtual Schools Advisers completed extensive research into the effects of neglect and abuse from pre-natal to early childhood to identify possible barriers for learning and development and to support children and their carers to develop their individual learning pathway plan.

In 2012, the average number of Looked After Children in Rotherham stood at 380. Fast forward to this present day, where that number has significantly risen to 567 Looked After Children in our care, a 67% increase. The chart below shows the age breakdown of our Looked After Children in Rotherham. Whilst most children who are currently in care are aged between 13 -18 years, there is an increasing number of babies between the age of 0-2 who are becoming looked after and this number is rising year on year. This is the reasons Virtual School Rotherham have adapted our previous offer of supporting the learning journeys of Looked After Children from the age of 2 years (and eligible for Early Educational Funding) to now engaging from birth.



From the term after a child's second birthday, they will receive Early Education Funding. This means they can enroll within an Early Years provision and access 15 funded hours each week. Virtual School work collaboratively with the identified setting, the social worker and carers/ parents to support the child's individual learning journey. Historically seeking provisions that met children's specific needs with very little shared information was challenging and some children's needs were not being met in the identified settings. We are now able to regularly share information around children's development with IROs, Social Workers, health professionals, parents, and carers. This enables us to monitor and track against children's developmental milestones and apply for early years provisions in a timely manner. At present, only 7% of LAC aged 0-2 attend an Early Years setting and therefore Virtual School are able to offer the same individualised level of support to those children not yet accessing nursery provision.

For those children (aged 0-2 years) who are not attending a child care setting, Virtual School Rotherham work closely with the child's carers and their social worker to offer advice, guidance and identify any

early gaps and barriers within their development. Advisers have worked with carers/parents on an individual basis and provided them with bespoke activities and ideas that are age and stage appropriate for the child within their care. Advisers signpost carers to the Families Information Service (FIS) within their local authority to apply for Early Education Funding (EEF) and share information of local opportunities and community groups. VSA have signposted carers to local children's centres within and outside Rotherham dependent on the location of the child and their foster family. This ensures that children out of authority are receiving the same high level of support as those living within the borough. VSA also support with children's transitions supporting the carer and the setting to ensure that information is shared in a timely manner. Early Years Designated Teacher Network meetings are also being held regularly to support settings with the Looked after Children within their care. These network meetings have covered aspects such as trauma, brain development, attachment and the role that corporate parents hold when supporting looked after children.

From previous discussions with children's carers, we recognised some carers received little or no training in relation to child development and early life experiences during their induction and training. Supporting our carers and parents in providing positive early life experiences and stimulating opportunities is one of the reasons why Virtual School began working with other services and sought further training opportunities to allow these to be delivered virtually to carers during the COVID 19 pandemic. As part of the 0-2 training package, we have so far rolled out 2 cohorts of the Tiny Tot's College in affiliation with Affinity 2020 and a third cohort is currently being planned to involve carers and children as part of a shared activity morning. The workshops included the importance of early reading, early mathematics, communication and language, role play and mark making. Anna Whitehead (Virtual Schools Adviser) and Karen Davies (Educational Psychologist) have completed training for 'Parent's are Experts' which was delivered by Manor and Castle Trust in Sheffield. Anna and Karen have also gone onto completing the training for trainers course and this will be delivered to a range of services including settings, parents/carers, IRO's, Social Workers, health professionals and services that support children on the edge of care.

The 0-2 plan has been fully operational since January 2021, during this time Virtual Schools Advisers have regularly attended LAC reviews and shared this information via our EPEP system. Virtual School Rotherham have worked together with professionals from Portage, Health, Educational Psychologists, Social Workers and Independent Reviewing Officers. Advisers have supported parents/carers to identify local community groups to ensure children are experiencing a range of high quality experiences that will promote their development. In May 2021, one of the full time Virtual Schools Advisers began maternity leave. 2 members of the Early Years Inclusion Team joined Virtual Schools for 2 days a week to continue to develop the 0-2 plan. Their knowledge and expertise have been imperative to continuing tracking and monitoring children's development. However, the cover has only managed to support 2 out of the 5 working days, this has meant that the 0-2 plan has not managed to sustain the rigor and drive we initially planned. The support provided by Virtual Schools Advisors is regular and consistent and foster carers have given recent feedback to say that they have found the experience of having an adviser both positive but also helpful to aid their professional development.

#### Case Study – KA 1 year old

K is a one year old boy who is delayed within his development, roughly around 4 months. He is unable to walk unaided and his communication and language is delayed with most words being unrecognisable. The VSA has been in regular contact with K's grandmother, who is caring for him, by attending LAC reviews and telephone conversations. VSA has worked closely alongside Social Care and the LAC nurse to offer support to grandmother to find community groups within her local area and to support K's development. VSA has recommended activities and ideas to build positive interactions between herself and K and to support his language and communication skills. These recommended activities have been delivered through activity sheets, assessment and guidance documents and links to support websites

e.g. speech and language activities, whilst grandmother awaits the speech and language initial assessments. VSA has also supported and discussed healthy meals and snacks as K is on the top centile for his weight, this was previously off the scale. VSA reports things are moving in the right direction, K is becoming more mobile and is engaging in some of the recommended activities. VSA is currently supporting grandmother to apply for Early Education Funding (EEF) to enable K to access 15 funded hours the term after his second birthday. Working in partnership with grandma and social care a setting has been identified within the local area that has a good or outstanding Ofsted rating and grandmother reports she is feeling more confident to support K's needs. Historically VSA would have had very limited information around K and his delayed development, by regularly updating, monitoring and tracking K's development VSA have been able to identify a setting they are confident can meet K's needs until he starts full time school.

## 11. Appendix 4: Post 16 Pupil Premium Pilot Proposal

### **Rotherham Post 16 Pupil Premium Plus pilot proposal**

Rotherham Virtual School were successful in their bid to be one of the 30 Local Authorities chosen by the DfE to be part of the post 16 pupil premium plus pilot.

The information below outlines the current plan for the rest of the financial year.

#### **Background:**

Rotherham Virtual School has excellent working relationship with local and wider P16 provisions including specialist settings for Post 16 with an EHCP.

Virtual School Rotherham currently support high quality termly PEPs.

For five years, we have employed a Post 16 education adviser with experience in FE to manage PEP meetings and provide high levels of support and challenge to the team around our young people.

We have developed solid links with P16 providers and have good attendance at our Designated Teacher network meetings

This academic year, 2020-21, we partnered with a charitable organisation to deliver a pilot project – ‘Jump the Gap’ for Post 16 NEETs – despite complications through COVID 19, 3/8 of our post 16 young people in education, employment or training long term successfully move on to employment or education.

We meet regularly with social workers and the leaving Care team to support planning around our cohort of NEETs. This ensures accountability and that clear plans are in place for all learners working back towards EET.

Through close working with Social Care and Leaving Care, we have developed the skill set, knowledge and understanding of the FE world. This has resulted in swifter response and better communication from social workers and personal advisers to issues relating to education for our learners.

Building on the strong foundation we would seek to utilise the funding to:

- 1) Develop the training model and a closer network support model for P16

Support additional interventions through SMART targets and clear and focussed PEP meeting plans, providing greater accountability and buy in from Post 16 provision to close gaps, improve attendance, engagement and attainment across the cohort.

#### **The Plan**

The Rotherham Virtual School pilot would be broken into three key areas:

- 1) Providing specific funding to support interventions with three providers:
  - a) Rotherham local FE college which has the largest percentage of our learners.
  - b) Rotherham based specialist setting for learners with an EHCP who struggle to access education, employment or training.
  - c) A charitable organisation working with our post 16 learners who are not in education, employment and training.
- 2) Improving the interventions available to post 16 provisions to improve learner attendance, engagement and attainment. Achieved through funding interventions linked to SMART targets set in termly PEP meetings.

- 3) Develop the Post 16 designated teacher network to support training and sharing of good practice to both designated teachers and tutor staff in post 16 settings.

The interventions with the local college and specialist setting will provide additional hours for all our learners attending those settings to receive mentoring support. The key adult, provided for all our learners, will develop meaningful, supportive relationships. The aim of this intervention is to support our learners ongoing emotional health needs, help them manage the transition towards independence and provide a swift response to any unmet need or attendance issue that could create a barrier to learning.

The NEET project will focus on utilising a narrative approach alongside life story work to support learners in reframing and renegotiating their relationship with their past, present and future. With the support of a keyworker, who will work with attendees over 15 weeks, the young person will develop a personal action plan towards an onward destination in education or employment with the overall aim of becoming economically active.

- i) To raise the profile of Looked after children and care leavers in FE, Virtual School Rotherham will:
  - o Continue to develop the training and support offer to FE designated staff.
  - o Virtual School education psychology service will support colleges in completing a training and knowledge audit to assess need.
  - o Deliver bespoke training to include specialist training to college tutors around attachment needs of older learners, trauma informed practice and other specific interventions including emotion coaching.
  - o Where possible, Virtual School will seek to make core attachment training part of mandatory training delivery for P16 providers
  - o Through involving tutors in the PEP process alongside the designated teacher, tutors will deepen their understanding of learner needs, build a holistic view of the young person and realise the importance of building meaningful, supportive relationships with our learners.
  - o Continue to develop and grow the Post 16 Designated teacher network to support sharing of good practice and staff development with clear focus on FE learners' specific needs.
  - o With our learners and the support of our LAC Council, develop a post 16 promise/charter to be signed by post 16 providers on understanding, supporting and working with our learners.
  - o Utilise the PP+ to build on the strong foundation of a high quality Post 16 PEP with excellent relationships between the Post 16 team and FE providers.

- PP+ will enable intervention plans that can include additional support currently unavailable due to resource requirements. This will include emotional health support and academic tuition to support specific catch up in subjects.
- ii) To improve the attendance of looked after children and care leavers in FE, Virtual School will:
- In our largest provider, provide additional funding, and training support, to enable emotional health mentors to be employed to support engagement in learning and thus improve attendance. These mentors will have dedicated time to build supportive relationship with our learners and become a key point of contact for them.
  - For those learners that live in semi, or full, independence, mentors will provide vital emotional support to ensure they are encouraged to arrive on time and engage in learning. Mentors will provide encouragement and space for our learners when issues arise that might otherwise lead to non-attendance.
  - Utilise the PP+ to provide additional study skills support, particularly in English and Maths. Our learners have lower attendance in these areas over their chosen course. This will provide our learners with more time to focus on their main study area and increase enjoyment at college and thus support attendance.
  - Provide intensive support through tuition to those learners who were borderline GCSE grade 4 in English and Maths. Where possible, this support will be provided in advance of November resits. Providing the opportunity of a successful pass and the ability to focus on main study area will improve engagement and attendance
  - Through training and involvement in PEP meetings, increase staff understanding of the emotional well-being needs of our learners. This will be the foundation of supportive, emotionally available relationships with our young people. Our learners regularly highlight key relationships with adults as the main stability factor within education and as such investing in relationships will provide greater stability for our learners, acting as a 'pull factor' and improving attendance.
- iii) To better support the delivery of PEP at FE, Virtual School will:
- Utilise the additional funding to support and develop the interventions available to the well established Post 16 PEP system.
  - Learners, and the colleges that support them, will benefit from the ability to access resources currently unavailable to them. This will increase the suite of resources that can be used to meet student need and support impact and improving outcomes
  - The requirement to illustrate the impact of the funding provided to support colleges and our learners in achieving SMART targets, will foster greater accountability.

- The ability to plan interventions that will have greater impact will improve the depth and quality of discussions in the PEP meetings, leading to more detailed plans and greater understanding of college staff in how they can meet the needs of their looked after learners.

Quality assurance processes already in place will support the sharing of good practice through the Post 16 designated teacher network meetings to continue to improve the overall quality of PEPs across the cohort.

**Costings:** Rotherham Virtual School has been allocated £90,000 Post 16 Pupil Premium Plus, the indicative budget is outlined below:

<b>Costing type (From the list above – to select Resources, Activities, Funding to provider, Other)</b>	<b>Type of intervention (Create an additional line for each type of intervention)</b>	<b>Estimated number of pupils to be supported</b>	<b>Estimated number of days</b>	<b>Cost of intervention (To include day rate or salary of posts)</b>	<b>Estimated total cost</b>
Funding to provider (Local FE college)	Emotional health mentor/key adult	20	1 x FTE	£18,000	£18,000
Funding to Provider (specialist provision)	Additional support for learners EHCP	6-8	0.5 FTE	£7,000	£7,000
Funding to Provider (Charitable organisation)	Mentoring support for NEET	6	0.5 days per week x 15 weeks	Contribution of £900 per YP	£5,400
Activities (training delivered by EPS and SALTC and adviser)	Contribution to training and Post 16 support network	65+	12 days	£3,000	£3,000
Funding to provider	Bespoke intervention for each learner, applied for through SMART targets in the PEP	95+		Contribution towards college based intervention - average of £300 per pupil per term	£56,600
<b>Assumptions (optional)</b>	In calculating the number of students that will access termly pupil premium, we have assumed that not all students will require specific funded interventions each term and as learners turn 18 they have to opt in to Virtual School support as such we will not be providing termly funding for all Y13 students for both terms.				
<b>Total B</b>					<b>90,000</b>

## **Monitoring:**

Virtual School Rotherham will ensure that the funding is being used effectively through:

Close monitoring of the impact of specific interventions with senior leaders within the provision. Termly update meetings will be held with Virtual Head, Post 16 advisers and the SLT of the providers.

Termly impact reports will be provided to the Virtual School by each pilot project to ensure progress is being made and early identification of any further need.

The improved training offer will be monitored through the virtual School education psychology service audit tool.

Training will be evaluated by participants and analysis of this will be used to continue to adapt and develop the training offer.

The Funding provided to settings through SMART targets in PEPs will be reviewed as part of the termly PEP process. Targets have success criteria built in and these will be reviewed against the funding provided at the following terms PEPs. Virtual School advisers attend all PEPs to ensure rigorous reviews are completed.

Virtual School Rotherham ePEP is used to collect and monitor attendance, attainment, and progress data. Specific group, termly data analysis would support collection of evidence of impact for specific interventions.

The analysis would be shared, and findings cascaded to providers through Virtual School training and the Post 16 designated teacher network meetings.

To evidence how the pilot has supported the Virtual School in raising the profile of learners, Virtual School would utilise data from:

- 1) Attendance at training and training course feedback.
- 2) LAC governor training for P16 providers.
- 3) Sign up and examples of successful implementation of the Post 16 Charter.

To evidence improving attendance, Virtual School would utilise

- 1) Attendance data and compare against similar cohorts.
- 2) NEET figures improving against annual figures and monthly improvements being seen earlier in the academic year.

To evidence that settings have been supported to deliver higher quality PEPs, Virtual School Rotherham would use the PEP quality assurance process to illustrate:

- 1) Increasing overall quality of PEPs with a focus on the depth and quality of recording and discussion.
- 2) Clearer focus on the detailed academic and emotional health needs of the young person
- 3) Appropriate interventions to meet the assessed needs of the young person. Linked to assessed need in the PEP.

- 4) Innovative use of the pupil premium funding to meet need and close the attainment gap.
- 5) Increase in the attendance and involvement of our young people in their PEPs.

## 12. Appendix 5: Supporting Emotional Health Wellbeing

### Virtual School Educational Psychologist 2020 – 2021

#### Virtual School Head Teachers Report

##### **Background:**

This report covers the academic year from September 2020 until August 2021. During that time education, as well as every other aspect of life, in the UK continued to be affected by COVID -19 pandemic. Within education, social bubbles continued to be enforced, high absence levels for staff and pupils impacted on attendance, home learning and home working similarly impacted on engagement and attendance.

The Virtual School EP response to the COVID pandemic included creating and collating a range of resources and training opportunities for staff in schools (i.e., liaising with the Educational Psychology Service in Rotherham to create virtual training for staff in schools, creating documents and resources around supporting staff and pupils to manage anxiety, promoting wellbeing of young people, and supporting the transition back into education).

The Virtual School EPs also liaised with various members of school staff to support individual young people (i.e., liaising with ELSAs, Designated Teachers and Virtual School Education Advisors).

Although Creative Mentors were unable to work directly with children and young people, we worked with Grimm and Co and their Creative Mentors to create distance learning packages which continue to be available online.

Virtual School EPs assisted in collecting attendance data on behalf of the wider virtual school.

We also took the opportunity to access additional CPD and training opportunities (i.e., mindfulness and Diploma in Trauma Informed Practice)

During 2020 – 2021 the Virtual School Educational Psychology Team has experienced several staff changes. Kat Thorn (Specialist LAC EP) moved to Kirklees EP service November 2020. A new colleague Chris Dawson (Specialist LAC EP) joined the team in March 2021. This lack of consistency and staff changes meant that future planning was difficult and planned developments could not be completed.

From September 2021, Rotherham Virtual School has seconded one full time equivalent (FTE) Educational Psychologist (EP) post from the Rotherham Educational Psychology Service. This role is now shared between three EPs: Dr. Karen Davies (two days), Chris Dawson (two days) and Dr. Rubia Rizwan (one day).

From the outset the main aim of this EP role was to deliver a project to develop Attachment Friendly Schools in Rotherham. In addition to delivering training and development to local services and foster carers; the VS EP could be asked to undertake some individual case work in some limited and extenuating circumstances. Over time the role has developed and changed as different interventions, models of working and priorities have emerged. This document seeks to explore how the role has changed and future directions.

##### **The Virtual School EP job description states five objectives:**

- *To work closely with colleagues in the Virtual School for LAC to develop and deliver training modules and practical strategies for educational settings around key emotional and learning/cognitive issues most relevant to LAC.*

- *To work closely with colleagues in the Virtual School to develop and deliver training modules for carers and social workers to improve their understanding of how best to support learning and emotional wellbeing i.e. to enhance the home-learning environment (HLE).*
- *To provide consultation and assessment around individual children/young people or situations.*
- *To liaise closely with settings, carers, and colleagues to facilitate joined-up approaches.*
- *To ensure that safeguarding and high ethical standards are at the heart of all EPS activities.*

***Objective 1: To work closely with colleagues in the Virtual School for LAC to develop and deliver training modules and practical strategies for educational settings around key emotional and learning/cognitive issues most relevant to LAC.***

Previous training and development had focused on supporting schools to become Attachment Aware settings. In response to increasing interest around Trauma Informed Practice, additional training and development was arranged for the Virtual School Educational Psychologists. The 10-day Diploma by Trauma Informed Schools was completed between June 2020 and Jan 2021. The aim was to incorporate this knowledge and understanding into a new Attachment Aware and Trauma Informed Settings program. Sadly, due to changes in staffing this was placed on hold and a different model was developed.

The new model of training and development has been called a Core Training approach. The aim of Core training is to provide high quality training which is available to a wide audience and which seeks to provide a basic understanding of the core issues related to supporting Looked After Children and Young people.

In response to the COVID pandemic, we have sought to move training modules online. This was a decision we have weighted up many times and remain uncertain about. The nature of the training, often involving issues and topics which provoke an emotional response, means that training is enhanced when it is delivered face to face. However, we recognise that training cannot be placed on hold indefinitely and therefore we are seeking to adapt training for virtual delivery.

In addition, we have sought to develop additional training sessions which reflect key issues highlighted through the Virtual School Senior Leadership Team. For example, issues around criminal justice and LAC, child development and anti-racism.

The new Core training modules will be delivered from the Autumn Term 2021. During the Spring and Summer 2021 we adapted and planned the following online sessions. These sessions are 2 – 3 hours in length. The target audience will be Designated Teachers in the first instance and then Social Workers, Foster Carers, and other key stakeholders. We will aim to deliver these sessions once per term or three times a year. The initial aim is to ensure that all Designated teachers, working with Rotherham LAC, will be able to access high quality training and development which is relevant and useful to their role. We also hope to widen access to all Social Workers and Foster Carers in the coming months.

The Core Training Model includes sessions related to:

- Attachment
- Trauma (Introduction)
- Trauma (Extended)
- Emotion Coaching
- Emotion Coaching (supervision session)
- Criminalisation of LAC and Restorative Justice
- Child Development and SEND support in schools
- Narrative Approaches to supporting LAC
- ACES and Resilience
- Anti-Racism and LAC

**Objective 2: To work closely with colleagues in the Virtual School to develop and deliver training modules for carers and social workers to improve their understanding of how best to support learning and emotional wellbeing i.e., to enhance the home-learning environment (HLE).**

During the Spring and Summer 2021, we worked on developing new training modules for the Core Training program. Specific sessions have been designed to support a wider range of interests supporting both learning and emotional wellbeing. Key sessions include:

- Child Development and SEND – which explores issues around child development and SEND support within schools, it also touches on home learning environments.
- Anti-Racism and LAC
- Narrative Approaches and supporting LAC

**Objective 3: To provide consultation and assessment around individual children/young people or situations.**

During the year 2020 – 2021, Virtual School, Educational Psychologists we were able to offer a higher level of individual casework and consultation. This included:

Primary and Early Years Cases	Secondary and Post 16 Cases
10	8

Virtual School, Educational Psychology casework included:

- Solution Focused Staff Meetings (approx. 4 completed)
- EP consultations (approx. 8 completed)
- Education Health and Care Plan reports (approx. 4 completed)
- Annual Review reports (approx. 3 completed)

*Please note: these figures are approximate, due to staff changes it is difficult to ascertain exact dates for activities.*

If there are concerns around a specific young person within the setting, the EP could undertake:

- Consultation and EP assessment
- Solution Focused Staff Meeting (recommended for a transition to a new setting – two hours)
- *Multi-agency intervention - whole staff meeting designed to elicit empathy and understanding for the young person and then complete person-centred planning*
- Solution Circle (one hour)
- *A quick and effective strategy which uses Solution Focused problem-solving techniques to generate strategies around managing a difficulty or challenge*
- PATH (three hours)
- *Multi-Agency and person-centred strategy designed to elicit a plan based on individual wishes, needs and strengths*
- Multi-Element Plans (three hours – full day)
- *Focuses on understanding and planning for specific behaviours which are causing concern*
- Follow up consultation (face to face or via telephone)
- *1:1 contact with the VS EP to support problem solving as well as signposting to other services, interventions, or support systems*
- Literature and recommended reading
- *Resources can be sent to the school via e-mail which staff can refer to for support*

**Objective 4: To liaise closely with settings, carers, and colleagues to facilitate joined-up approaches.**

Creative Mentoring continues to be an important intervention for the Rotherham Virtual School. Educational Psychologist, on behalf of the Virtual School, liaise with a local Literacy Charity Grimm & Co to deliver programs of support. The main area of support, Creative Mentoring is funded by the Virtual School. Creative Mentoring seeks to support LAC (between the ages of 5 – 18 years) by matching them with a Creative Mentor who can provide opportunities to engage in a range of motivating and engaging activities based on areas of interest to the young person. By listening to young people, recognising, and celebrating their areas of interest and providing for their creative needs, it is hoped that this will in turn develop their resilience and wellbeing. Creative Mentoring is not a short-term intervention, Creative Mentors work with young people for between 1 – 2 years and in some cases even longer. The Virtual School Educational Psychologists supporting the matching process and provide training and ongoing supervision to the Creative Mentors.

This year, the Virtual School Educational Psychologists have also liaised with Grimm & Co around a new project. Recognising the need to provide additional support post Lockdown, the Virtual School Educational Psychologists have linked up with Grimm & Co (a local Charity) to deliver a charity funded project Journeys and Daydreams which focuses on supporting the emotional wellbeing of Children in Care in Years 5.

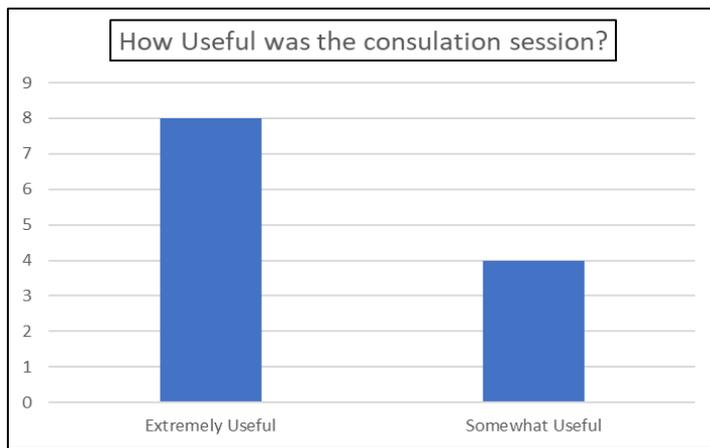
Virtual School Educational Psychologists support the Virtual School team by providing individual consultation with the on complex cases.

Virtual school Educational Psychologists support the ongoing supervision and development of Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs). ELSAs are trained teaching assistants working within schools and settings who work with children and young people with SEMH needs

During the Summer Term 2021, the Virtual school educational Psychologists have trialed online consultation support groups for Designated Teachers (DT's) around complex SEMH. This group is open to all DTs from a range of school settings; nurseries to post 16 providers. The initial 4-week project that ran throughout June 2021. The evaluation of these sessions will be used to inform future planning of consultation groups for the next academic year. The feedback from the groups indicated that teachers found these sessions useful but would prefer the groups to be 'themed' according to school settings i.e., early years, primary, secondary and post 16. The feedback also indicated that staff felt supported by the group focus.

Key questions from the feedback included:





### *Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance*

The Virtual School Educational Psychologists are collaborating with a working group within the EPS on Emotional Based Non-attendance. The group are planning to provide advice and guidance like the West Sussex model which clearly delineates a graduated response to non-attendance and informs school staff how to support young people with SEMH to attend school. The Virtual school Educational Psychologist are developing a specific section on anxiety related non-attendance and the LAC child to raise awareness about anxiety related non-attendance and the LAC child – how a LAC child’s journey through the care system might mean that school transitions are particularly sensitive and need careful planning and management.

*The Virtual School EPs continue to liaise with colleagues within regional and national groups. This includes:*

- Regional LAC EP Network which brings together specialist EPs from across South Yorkshire
- Emotion Coaching UK Network where practitioners engaged in Emotion Coaching can share thoughts and ideas around developing practice.
- Attachment Research Community (ARC) a national forum for EPs engaged in developing Attachment Aware and Trauma Informed Practice.

### **Objective 5: To ensure that safeguarding and high ethical standards are at the heart of all EPS activities.**

Following guidance from the British Psychology Society, safeguarding issues need to be considered on an individual basis and encompass many factors. Within peer supervision sessions the Virtual School EPs explore various themes. The priority is that children and young people should be at the heart of all activities. There are many factors which impact and influence the young person and the systems surrounding them. Some of these layers are proximal (parents and peers) and some are distal (professions/organisations), but all exert influence on a child’s life, with different significance at different points in time. There will be factors which render that part of the system vulnerable. These layers interact with each other, which can lead to increased risk or increased resilience. The factors may include child, parents/carers and family, education, peers, community and social, professionals, organisational, governmental/societal. Additional influencing factors may permeate every layer of influence on the child. They are based on themes which appear and reappear in inquiries and are critical determinants of whether a system is safe. They are values and ethics, knowledge and learning, power, culture, resources and finances, attitudes and heuristics, relationships and trust, stress.

**Conclusions:**

Many of us have had plans for 2020 which sadly went unfulfilled and the Virtual School Educational Psychology team was no different. At the start of the academic year of 2020, we had agreed to complete the 10 day Trauma Informed Schools Diploma, which would enable us to update and further develop the Attachment Aware Program into an Attachment and Trauma Informed Schools Programme. However, due to changes in staffing and a move away from the face to face training we instead developed a Core Training model of delivering training and development opportunities to a wide range of key stakeholders and practitioners who support Rotherham's LAC and young people. During the year we have also focused on providing supervision support to our Virtual School Team and our Designated Teachers. We have also focused on individual casework which has supported Rotherham LAC and ensured their needs have been recognised and met.

Next year, we look forward to rolling out the Core Training Model, continuing to support Creative Mentoring, providing Supervision to our Designated Teachers and colleagues in the Virtual School as well as supporting Rotherham LAC. In particular we will be supporting a new project supporting the wellbeing of LAC in Post 16 provision.

### 13. Appendix 6: Speech and Language Therapy

Recent data collected by the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) and ICAN has shown that 63% of children and young people in care have Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN). McCool and Stevens' research in *Identifying speech, language and communication needs among children and young people in residential care* (International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders 2011; 46(6): 665-74) shows high levels of SLCN in children and young people who are in residential care, often unsuspected and much of it severe and long-lasting. The idea that this level of need is often overlooked is particularly concerning. In its factsheet *Supporting looked after children* the RCSLT recommends:

- all individuals taken into care should be screened for SLCN,
- people working with those in care should be trained
  - to be aware of SLCN
  - in basic interaction and communication skills
- direct speech and language therapy should be provided to those who need it

In addition to research carried out by the RCSLT, an Office of National Statistics review found that although there is evidence that reporting of SLCN in looked after children is seriously under-reported, SLCN is still the second most frequently reported difficulty for looked after children (Meltzer *The mental health of young people looked after by local authorities in England*). If both findings in this report are true, then the level of SLCN must indeed be very high in the looked after population.

In 2018, the Virtual School therefore commissioned a part-time post (3 days a week), term time only, for a Speech and Language Therapist (S&LT) which is shared between two experienced highly specialist S&LTs. In 2020 this was increased to 4 days a week. The remit of this post is to:

1. Increase awareness of and skills in speech, language and communication needs across the Virtual School Rotherham (VSR) team
2. Identifying the needs of individual looked after children in care and when new into care
3. Providing support to core speech and language therapy teams in Rotherham and elsewhere in the country to ensure children are accessing services that meet their communication needs
4. Monitoring provision for looked after children out of area to support identified communication needs
5. Providing training and support for all professionals working with looked after children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN)

The service has been developed over the years since 2018, to include a unique referral process, care pathways, liaison with other professionals / services and decisions made to ensure consistency of assessment, reporting and support between the therapists.

We continue to liaise with the Rotherham core S&LT service to ensure the VSR is aware of looked after children already receiving support for SLCN. We continue to provide support and training to the local service to adapt processes and ensure a greater level of support for looked after children. We continue to deliver training to foster carers and designated teachers and offer support to school staff when seeing children.

## **Training**

The VSR decided to commission additional speech and language therapy time to develop awareness among professionals who work within the LAC population of SLCN. The VSR S&LTs have created bespoke training packages which included typical speech, language and communication development, what SLCN looks like, what support can be provided for SLCN, and the roles and responsibilities of the VSR S&LTs. Additional bespoke training is also provided on request from the VSR, for instance on “Communication Breakdowns and Repairs” for the Virtual School Conference in 2021.

Training also incorporated opportunities to discuss an anonymised report, and to become familiar with the layout and resources of a speech and language therapy programme.

Training for both foster carers and designated teacher has been delivered since 2018. The results for academic years spanning Summer 2018 to Summer 2020 show 91% of questionnaire respondents rated the course as ‘very good’ across 6 metrics, with the remaining 9% rating it as good. Training changed to be delivered virtually during the Covid-19 lockdowns, unfortunately we were not yet able to collect feedback during this period as questionnaires were not returned. This academic year, we are asking delegates to complete a Survey Monkey feedback form while still on the virtual call, to make sure feedback continues to be given.

Training has also been provided on a less formal basis to the core NHS S&LT service in Rotherham, the administration team for this service and the VSR secondary team. Informal training and support with specific programmes and resources is provided in school on an as-and-when basis for school staff working directly with individual young people.

In addition, during the 2019 – 2020 academic year, training packages were developed and delivered for LAC nursing and Social Care. Training has been delivered twice to LAC nursing, including one occasion where paediatricians and nurses from local services close to Rotherham were also invited, so that Rotherham LAC nursing could showcase their joint working with the LAC S&LT service.

### **Implications:**

- Training has been well received
- Trainees have reported feeling more confident about identifying and supporting SLCN
- Some professional groups have not yet received training although they have been identified as potential beneficiaries

### **Recommendations:**

- The foster carer and designated teacher training will continue to run next academic year
- Liaison and training with other services including LAC nurses and Social Care to continue
- Informal training for schools will continue
- For virtual training packages, ensure feedback questionnaire is completed while attendees are still on the call

## **SLCN assessment of looked after children**

In the academic year 2020 -2021 The leads of the Virtual School Rotherham decided that alongside the cohorts of those young people new into care and/or those whose schools raise concerns about the SLCN, focus should be on “transition years”: Y5, Y6, Y7 and Y10. The results below deal with these 6 cohorts individually before looking at the outcomes overall.

The CLEAR is a phonological screen assessing the speech sounds of English in developmental order, in all places in a word in which that sound occurs (i.e. at the beginning, in the middle, at the end or in a consonant cluster e.g. ‘sp’ in ‘spider’).

### Year 5 Cohort

In the 2020-2021 academic year, 24 children in this year group were identified. By the end of the academic year (Aug 2021), 4 had been referred and of these 4 had been assessed. Referrals were completed by the members of the PEP team.

All children completed the same assessment: the Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals 5<sup>th</sup> edition (CELF-5).

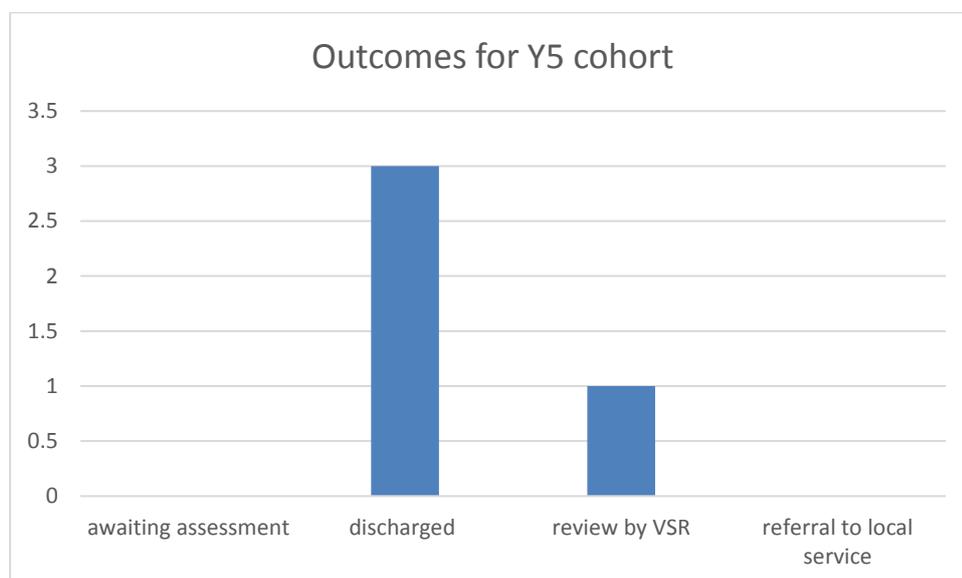
The children who were assessed using the CELF-5 completed 4 subtests, as well as a speech assessment, the CLEAR. The subtests completed in the CELF-5 were Word Classes (assesses vocabulary understanding), Formulated Sentences (assesses ability to create full sentences), Recalling Sentences (assesses memory and recall), and Semantic Relationships (assesses problem solving and the links between concepts and ideas).

### Results:

Following assessment, the children were

- Discharged if their results were age-appropriate (WNL) or in line with their learning in other areas
- Transferred to local services if they required significant levels of intervention and support
- Placed on a review list if their needs could be met by a Speech Therapy programme carried out in school. These programmes and reviews are provided by the VSR Speech Therapists

A graph to show the numbers referred versus numbers assessed has not been included for this cohort as they are the same (4).



It was found that of the four assessed, 3 young people had language skills at the expected level (either age appropriate or in line with learning need). None of the young people assessed in Y10 had a speech sound difficulty.

### Year 6 Cohort

In the 2020-2021 academic year, 39 children in this year group were identified. By the end of the academic year (Aug 2021), 8 had been referred and of these 6 had been assessed. Referrals were completed by the members of the PEP team.

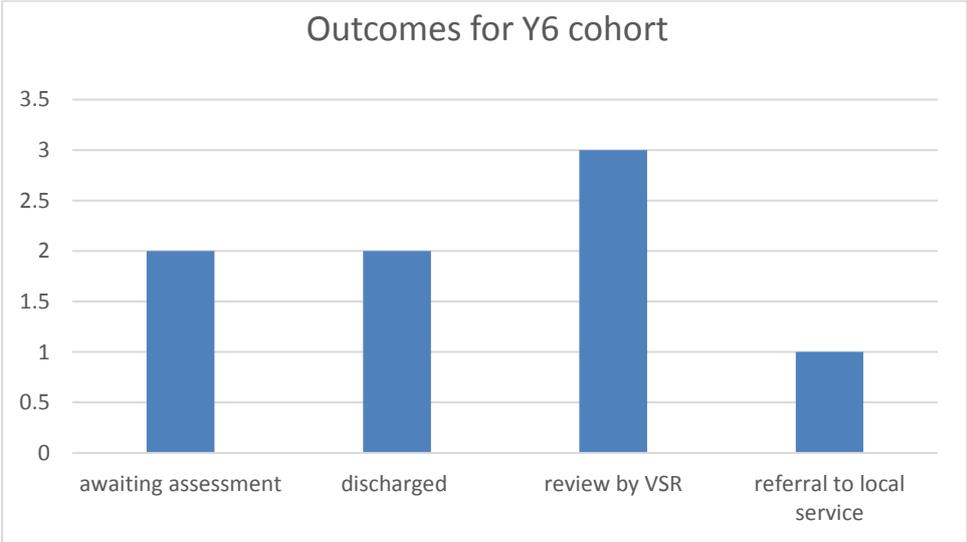
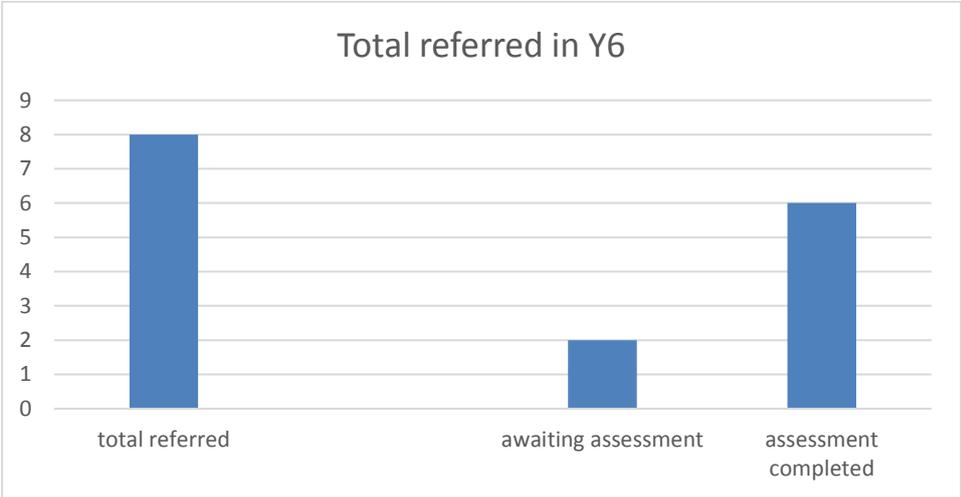
All children completed the same assessment: the Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals 5<sup>th</sup> edition (CELF-5).

The children who were assessed using the CELF-5 completed 4 subtests, as well as a speech assessment, the CLEAR. The subtests completed in the CELF-5 were Word Classes (assesses vocabulary understanding), Formulated Sentences (assesses ability to create full sentences), Recalling Sentences (assesses memory and recall), and Semantic Relationships (assesses problem solving and the links between concepts and ideas).

Results:

Following assessment, the children were

- Discharged if their results were age-appropriate (WNL) or in line with their learning in other areas
- Transferred to local services if they required significant levels of intervention and support
- Placed on a review list if their needs could be met by a Speech Therapy programme carried out in school. These programmes and reviews are provided by the VSR Speech Therapists



It was found that of the six assessed, 2 young people had language skills at the expected level (either age appropriate or in line with learning need). One of the young people assessed in this year group

has a speech sound difficulty due to an uncorrected cleft palate, and their hypernasality of speech cannot be improved without surgical intervention.

**Year 7 Cohort**

In the 2020-2021 academic year, 38 young people in this year group were identified. By the end of the academic year (Aug 2021), none of these young people had been referred to the LAC speech therapy team, despite the year group being a focus for the academic year and repeated reminders.

**Year 10 Cohort**

In the 2020-2021 academic year, 55 children in this year group were identified. By the end of the academic year (Aug 2021), 4 had been referred and of these 3 had been assessed.

All referrals started by members of the PEP team filling out a Secondary Screening Questionnaire was developed. This was partially based on a screen written by ICAN.

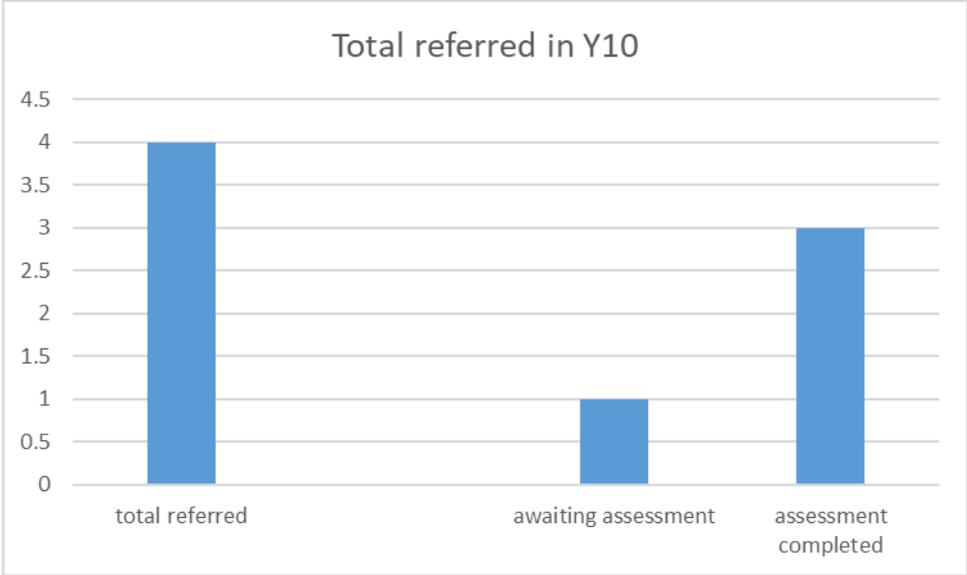
Of the 3 young people assessed, all completed the same assessment: the Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals 5<sup>th</sup> edition (CELF-5).

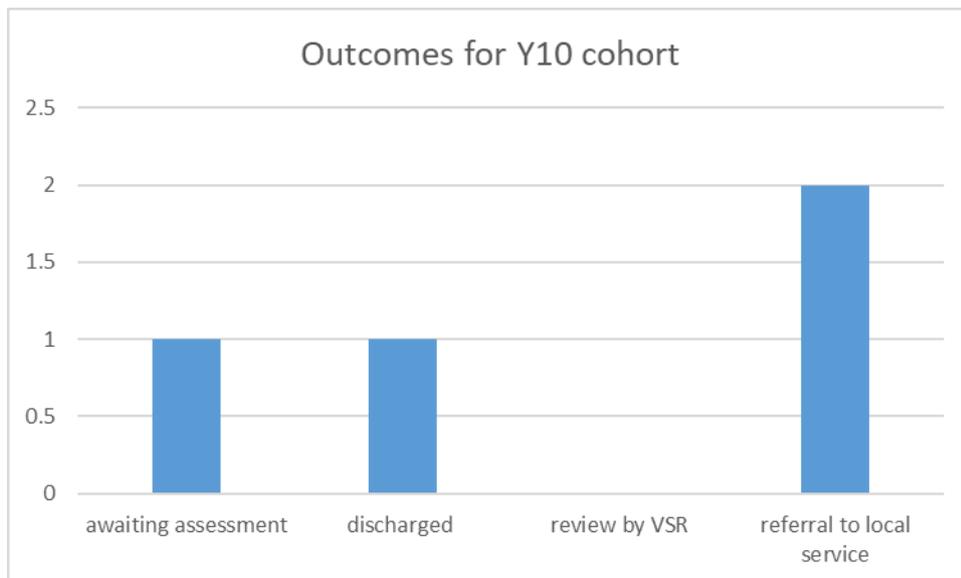
The children who were assessed using the CELF-5 completed 4 subtests, as well as a speech assessment, the CLEAR. The subtests completed in the CELF-5 were Formulated Sentences (assesses ability to create full sentences), Recalling Sentences (assesses memory and recall), Understanding Spoken Paragraphs (assesses ability to retain information, synthesise this with real-world knowledge, and answer questions requiring inference and prediction skills) and Semantic Relationships (assesses problem solving and the links between concepts and ideas).

Results:

Following assessment, the children were:

- Discharged if their results were age-appropriate (WNL) or in line with their learning in other areas
- Transferred to local services if they required significant levels of intervention and support
- Placed on a review list if their needs could be met by a Speech Therapy programme carried out in school. These programmes and reviews are provided by the VSR Speech Therapists





It was found that of the three assessed, one young person had language skills at an age appropriate level. None of the young people assessed in Y10 had a speech sound difficulty.

#### **Cohort Identified with Specific Concerns**

Whenever Education Advisors have specific concerns about a child or young person not in the group being focussed on that academic year, they have been encouraged to refer to the LAC Speech and Language Therapy Service. At the time of writing this report (July 2021), since September 2020, 31 children had been referred and 22 of these have been assessed. **It should be noted that 6 of these children were also part of the target years groups above.** They have been counted in both their year group data and this cohort data, but only counted once for the overall totals below.

The children who were assessed using the CELF-5 completed 4 subtests, as well as a speech assessment, the CLEAR. The subtests completed in the CELF-5 were four of the below list, these were selected based on age and reported ability.

#### 20 young people completed:

- Formulated Sentences (assesses ability to create full sentences)
- Recalling Sentences (assesses memory and recall)

#### 5 young people also completed:

- Word Classes (assesses student's ability to understand the relationship between words, based on function, time and place, or semantic class (e.g. noun, verb or adjective))

#### 1 young person was assessed using:

- Understanding Spoken Paragraphs (assesses ability to retain information, synthesise this with real-world knowledge, and answer questions requiring inference and prediction skills)

#### 9 young people completed:

- Word Structure (assesses ability to apply word structure rules of English (e.g. plural -s, -er to mean 'more', -ed to mean past tense) and to use appropriate pronouns)
- Sentence Comprehension (assesses ability to understand **spoken** sentences as length and complexity increase)
- Semantic Relationships (assesses problem solving and the links between concepts and ideas)

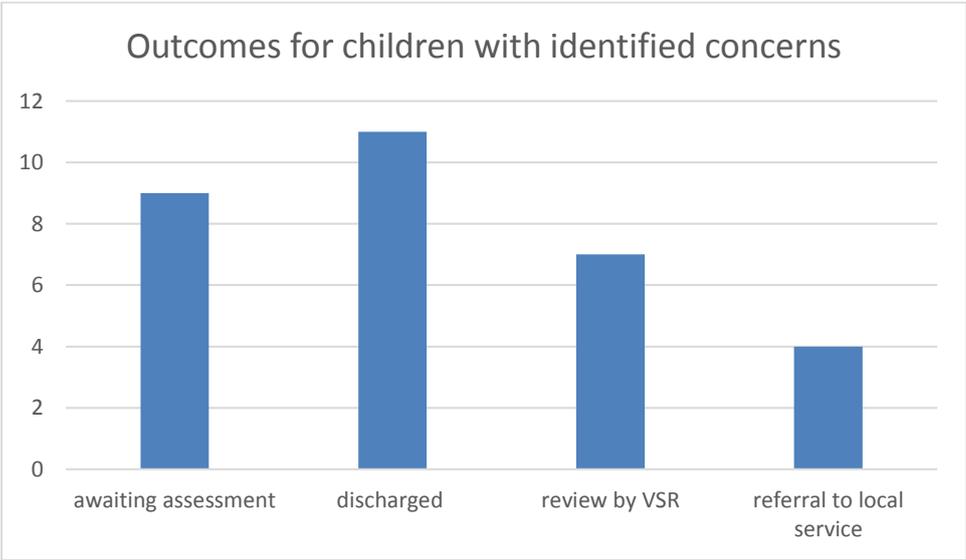
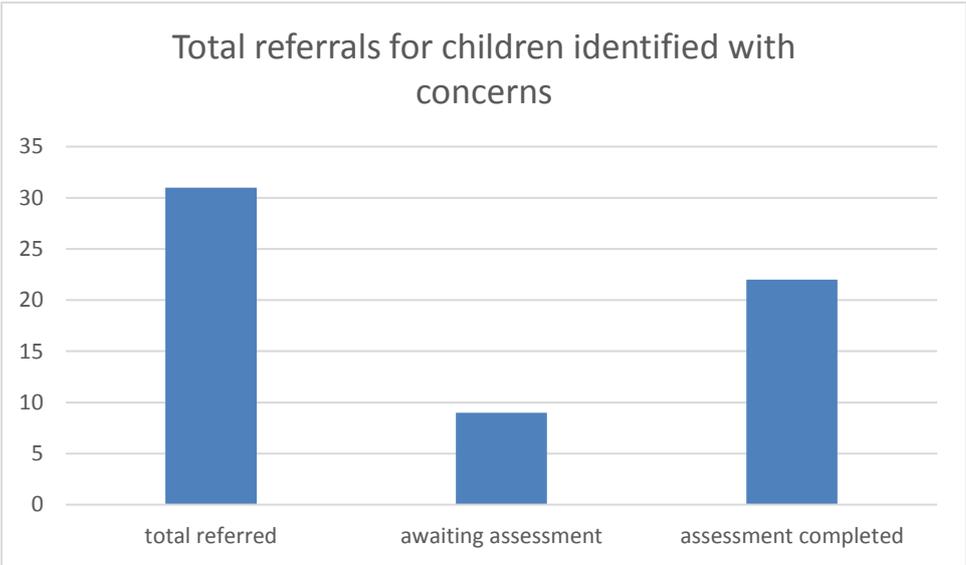
Two of the young people referred with specific concerns about their language in the 2020-2021 academic year required assessment below age related expectations. Both young people were assessed using observation and targeted play, to elicit language samples for later analysis. This assessment is not as thorough as the CELF-5 and does not provide statistically significant information.

However in combination with professional judgment, it provides useful information about the child's abilities and areas in which they need support.

Results:

Following assessment, the children were

- Discharged if their results were age-appropriate
- Transferred to local services if they required significant levels of intervention and support
- Placed on a review list if their needs could be met by a Speech Therapy programme carried out in school. These programmes and reviews are provided by the VSR Speech Therapists



It was found that of the 22 assessed, half (11) person had language skills at an age appropriate level. Three of the young people referred due to specific concerns were found to have a speech sound difficulty.

### **New Into Care (NIC) Cohort**

Although it is hoped that eventually all children who are NIC will be referred automatically, during this academic year the LAC speech therapy service relies on the PEP system (as for target year groups) for NIC children and young people to be referred. At the time of writing this report (July 2021), since September 2020, 14 children had been referred and 12 of these have been assessed. **It should be noted that 3 of these children were also part of the target years groups above.** They have been counted in both their year group data and this cohort data, but only counted once for the overall totals below.

The children who were assessed using the CELF-5 completed 4 subtests, as well as a speech assessment, the CLEAR. The subtests completed in the CELF-5 were four of the below list, these were selected based on age and reported ability.

#### 9 young people completed:

- Formulated Sentences (assesses ability to create full sentences)
- Recalling Sentences (assesses memory and recall)

#### 3 young people also completed:

- Word Classes (assesses student's ability to understand the relationship between words, based on function, time and place, or semantic class (e.g. noun, verb or adjective))
- Semantic Relationships (assesses problem solving and the links between concepts and ideas)

#### 6 young people completed:

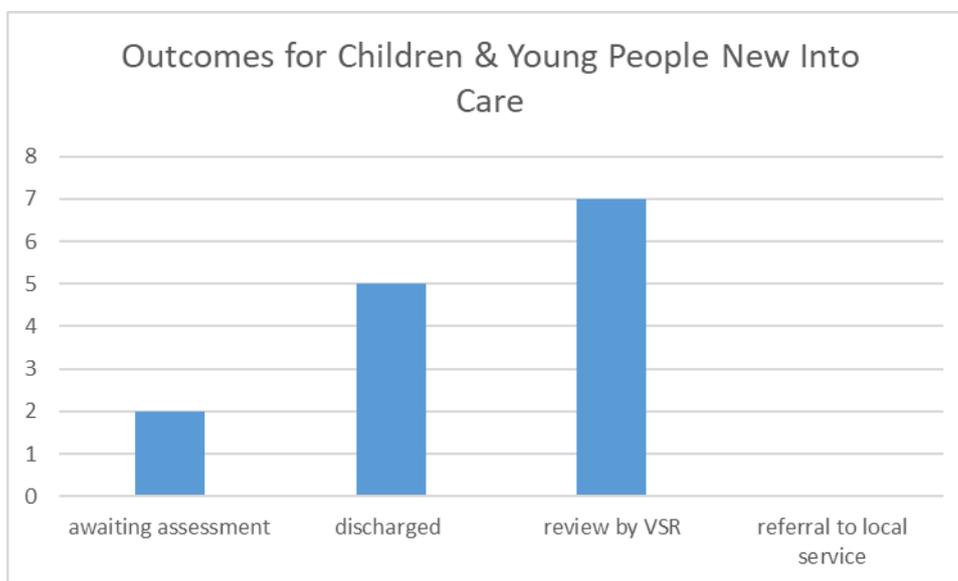
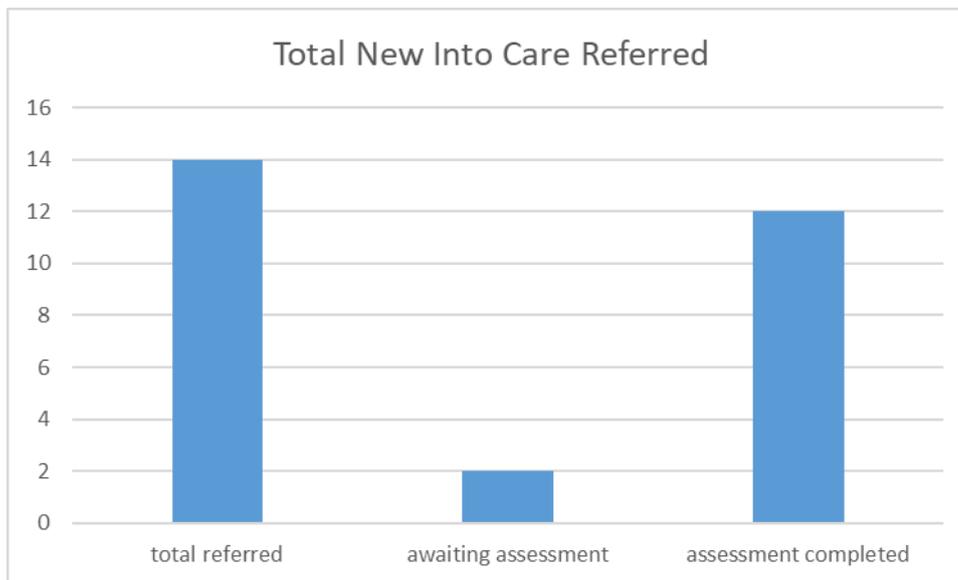
- Word Structure (assesses ability to apply word structure rules of English (e.g. plural –s, -er to mean 'more', -ed to mean past tense) and to use appropriate pronouns)
- Sentence Comprehension (assesses ability to understand **spoken** sentences as length and complexity increase)

Three of the young people referred with specific concerns about their language in the 2020-2021 academic year required assessment below age related expectations. The young people were assessed using a combination of informal assessment, observation and targeted play, to elicit language samples for later analysis. This assessment is not as thorough as the CELF-5 and does not provide statistically significant information. However in combination with professional judgment, it provides useful information about the child's abilities and areas in which they need support.

#### Results:

Following assessment, the children were:

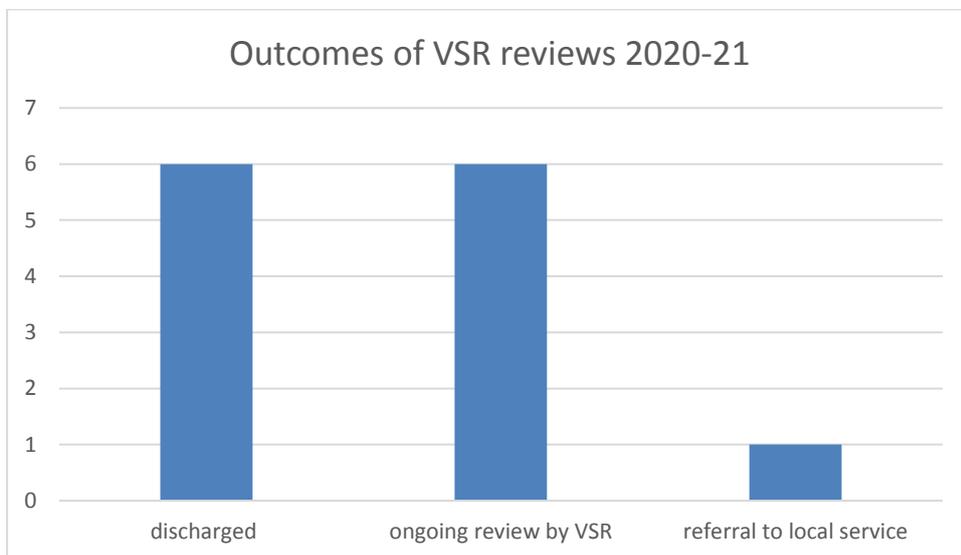
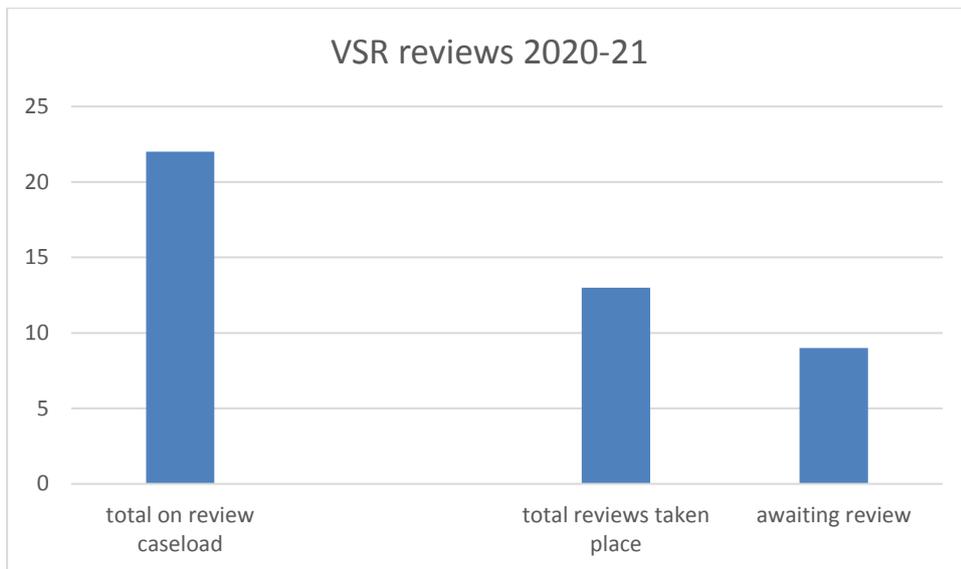
- Discharged if their results were age-appropriate
- Transferred to local services if they required significant levels of intervention and support
- Placed on a review list if their needs could be met by a Speech Therapy programme carried out in school. These programmes and reviews are provided by the VSR Speech Therapists



### Reviews by LAC therapists

In the academic year September 2020-August 2021, 13 children/young people were reviewed at least once to assess their progress on the targets set by one of the LAC SLTs.

By the end of the academic year 6 of these had been discharged. Of these 6, 4 children/young people were discharged as their speech and language skills were now either age appropriate or in line with their learning need. The other 2 had language that was age appropriate with some outstanding memory difficulties for which the memory pack (described above) was issued. 6 of the remaining children/ young people remain on the review list and will continue to receive support in the next school year. The remaining child has been transferred to local services for ongoing support.



#### Evaluation of all cohorts:

These numbers show those children newly referred and assessed between September 2020 and August 2021.

#### Language

Of the 40 young people assessed, 9 were found to have a language delay, and 5 to have a language disorder (this is more severe). This equates to 35% of the cohort, or just over a third of all young people assessed.

In addition, 4 young people had a learning difficulty and their language skills were in line with expectations given this, and 3 young people were classified as 'other' due to SEMH or EAL affecting assessment of their language skills.

These language difficulties may affect:

- SATs, GCSE, A-level and equivalent qualifications
- ongoing learning opportunities
- ceiling of achievement
- literacy development
- outcomes after formal education has finished

- social interactions (from Key Stage 2 onwards, play and social interaction depend much more on language skills than in younger years)

In order to support the children and young people in mitigating the possible effects, they have all either been referred on to local services for ongoing support, or given programmes of work at school that are reviewed at regular intervals by the VSR Speech and Language Therapists.

If these assessments had not been carried out some of these children would have been missed, as other avenues for speech and language therapy assessment are difficult to access despite the potential life-long challenges faced by people with unmet SLCN needs (see introduction).

The number of children (22 young people) who were identified as needing ongoing support does not include those children whose results on the memory skills part of the test were lower than their results in other areas (6 young people). These numbers are being collected across the LAC caseload as a whole to identify if this is a widespread need. At the moment, these young people are being sent a book of strategies to support their memory skills at school and at home. This is also available through the ePep system to Learning Mentors should they want to use these strategies with young people not yet assessed by the VSR Speech and Language Therapy team.

### Speech

Of the 40 young people assessed, 7 were found to have a speech difficulty. This equates to 17.5% of the cohort assessed. Of these young people, 1 was classified as 'other' due to structural difficulties arising from a cleft palate, which cannot be treated without operation.

The other six children were transferred to local services for ongoing support from the core NHS service, or given a programme of work which will be reviewed and updated by the LAC Speech Therapy Service.

### **Recommendations:**

- Continue to provide memory advice for children where this is lowest skill (even when their overall language score is still within age related expectations)
- Continue to collate information about numbers of children for whom memory is the lowest skill
- Continue to support those identified with speech, language and/or communication needs (programme and review from VSR Speech Therapy Service or onward referral to local NHS services)
- Training opportunities could be offered to schools in relation to:
  - Masking/using social skills to hide language difficulties
  - Filling out referral forms correctly
  - Typical speech and language development
  - What to look for if there are suspected speech and/or language needs
- Continue training opportunities offered to Foster Carers and Designated Teachers in relation to:
  - General speech and language development strategies
  - The support available from the VSR Speech Therapy team
  - How being in care can affect children's speech and language development
  - What to look for if there are suspected speech and/or language needs
- Discuss with Virtual School Heads, which cohort in secondary to continue to assess or whether this project should be shelved in favour of a more pressing one
- Continue to prioritise assessment for those children referred with specific concerns, rather than as part of a targeted cohort
- Identify young people who may benefit from joint assessment by Educational Psychology and Speech and Language Therapy and discuss the possibility of a trial

- Discuss with Educational Psychology (and possibly other services including LSS and Portage) training and support for developing language through play for children in care of primary school age and under
- Assess the success of new referral forms for LAC Paediatricians to use at Initial Health Assessment, these came into use in August 2021

### **Summary of recommendations for the next academic year 2019-2020**

- Continue to run existing training packages for foster carers, designated teachers, LAC nurses, and Social Care
- For virtual training packages, ensure feedback questionnaire is completed while attendees are still on the call
- Training opportunities on specific topics could be developed for schools, Foster Carers and Designated Teachers alongside to child-specific informal training
- Discuss with Virtual School Heads, which cohort in secondary to continue to assess or whether this project should be shelved in favour of a more pressing one
- Continue to provide memory advice for children where this is lowest skill (even when their overall language score is still within age related expectations)
- Continue to collate information about numbers of children for whom memory is the lowest skill
- Continue to support those identified with speech, language and/or communication needs (programme and review from VSR Speech Therapy Service or onward referral to local NHS services)
- Continue to prioritise assessment for those children referred with specific concerns, rather than as part of a targeted cohort
- Identify young people who may benefit from joint assessment by Educational Psychology and Speech and Language Therapy and discuss the possibility of a trial
- Discuss with Educational Psychology (and possibly other services including LSS and Portage) training and support for developing language through play for children in care of primary school age and under
- Assess the success of new referral forms for LAC Paediatricians to use at Initial Health Assessment, these came into use in August 2021

- Emily Keefe and Rebecca Whitehouse
  - Speech and Language Therapists

- 10 November 2021

## 14. Appendix 7: Pupil Premium Plus 2021-22

The 2021/22 PPP estimated allocation is £1,055,250 for the financial year.

Estimated PLAC grant funding £53,000 for the financial year

Post 16 Pupil Premium plus pilot funding £90,000

Estimated total income – £1,198,250

- Approximately 50% is centrally retained to fund interventions accessible to all looked after children & young people, in and out of authority.
- The remainder is available for schools to spend to assist in removing barriers, promoting emotional wellbeing, raising expectations and attainment, improving attendance, minimising exclusions and nurturing the talents and interests of children & young people in care.
- The level of school funding is determined as part of the PEP target setting process
- The standard offer to maintained schools and academies is £500 per pupil per term.
- Clearly there are significant differences in the needs of CYP in care and these needs vary over time. As such, the above figure is a notional one and the actual funding can differ from this. Each young person's needs are discussed at termly PEP meetings and appropriate funding agreements arranged to support the young person.

### **Central Retained Funding:**

**Educational Psychology:** three very experienced EPs (one full time equivalent) provide the team with support, advice and guidance. They develop and deliver a bespoke training offer to professionals. They make regular contributions to the Designated Teacher Network meetings, support the ELSA network and provide bespoke advice and guidance to the team around the child for complex cases.

**Speech, Language and Communication:** Two experience SALTs (0.8 FTE) provide screening of speech and language needs, additional assessment, and identification of need. They train professionals who support our learners and support schools in providing speech, language and communication recommendations and onward referrals.

**Virtual School Advisers:** All of the VS advisers are funded through PP+ to ensure that all PEP meetings (0-18 years of age) are attended by a member of the VST. The regularity of the meetings (termly) means that the VST has excellent intelligence on all LAC aged 0-18: those who are making good progress, those who are gifted and talented, those who are underachieving, those who are NEET, those who are particularly vulnerable with poor emotional wellbeing, those for whom attendance is an issue, and those who are at risk of exclusion. VSEAs ensure that there are SMART targets with tailored interventions in place to meet the individual needs of the CYP.

**The Letterbox Club:** designed to inspire a love of reading and engagement with numeracy in children who are looked after from EYFS to Year 7. Across the UK, children are enrolled for the Letterbox Club by local authorities and schools. Each child receives their own colourful parcel of books, maths games, stationery and other high quality materials once every month for six months, from May to October. For many children, it's the first time they have had a letter or a parcel through the post and for some it's the first time they have had books of their own.

**Creative Mentoring:** The Creative Mentoring Programme in collaboration with Grimm and Co is funded through PP+.

**eGOV:** provide the ePEP system and attendance monitoring software. Compliance remains high and the system is constantly developed through feedback from schools, social workers and the VSEAs.

**NCER:** Rotherham is part of the NCER project: The Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS), the National Association of Virtual School Heads (NAVSH), and the National Consortium for Examination Results (NCER) have launched the Children Looked After (CLA) Analysis Project. This project has been jointly funded by the Department for Education, ADCS and 147 individual local authorities. The CLA Analysis Project is a new national system, run by NCER on behalf of local authorities, to measure the educational performance and progress of children and young people whilst in care.

The data allows the Virtual School Heads to write more analytical action plans and annual reports, providing a clear idea of their children's progress from prior attainment, as well as attainment compared with regional and national trends. It ensures the Virtual School Heads can evidence effective use of Pupil Premium Plus funding and provide evidence to the local authority or Ofsted of their effectiveness in improving educational outcomes.

**Complex needs inc. post 16, AP and tuition:** Additional alternative and complementary provision, including one to one tuition for those in receipt of less than 25 hours education. Typically, in order to avoid drift, and to ensure that there is immediate provision for the following categories, one to one tuition is put in place, for a maximum of two weeks to provide time for appropriate provision to be found for those:

- not on roll
- not in education
- where there are safeguarding issues
- in transition between settings, often linked to a placement move
- for those whom more appropriate alternative/complementary provision is being sought

## 15. Appendix 8: The Budget 2020-2021

### Income

Total PPP Income:	1,170,000
Previously LAC Grant:	53,000
<b>Total Income:</b>	<b>1,223,000</b>

### Expenditure

#### Centrally Retained PPP spending 2020-2021

<b>Total</b>	<b>574,500</b>
<small>Rounded to £574000</small>	
<b>Allocation to schools</b>	<b>648,500</b>
<small>Rounded to £649000</small>	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>1,223,000</b>

## 16. Appendix 9: Supporting Post LAC 2019.2020

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 has placed a new responsibility on local authorities and schools to extend their remit to support the education of previously looked after children aged 3-16 and specifically to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children in their area, with effect from 1.9.2018.

- Responsibilities for Virtual Schools for previously LAC outlined in the draft statutory guidance:
- Advice, information and training for:
  - Adoptive parents/PR
  - Social workers and IROs
  - Virtual School Team
  - Early Years (funded) providers
  - Designated Teachers and other school staff
  - School Governors
- Advice and information and training about:
  - Admissions
  - SEN
  - Attendance and Exclusions
  - Behaviour
  - Homework and options
  - Promoting positive activities
  - Encouraging high aspirations
  - Pupil Premium Plus and its effective use
  - The provision of training for schools in mental health and promoting emotional wellbeing
- Working collaboratively with:
  - Schools and Early Years settings
  - Post Adoption Support Team
  - Health, Education, Social care and others
- Current resources (people) available to support parents, guardians, carers and children in RMBC:

Fostering & Adoption Manager	Lindsey Knight
Therapeutic Team	Sara Whittaker
Post SGO social worker	Abi Hall
Post adoption social worker	Julie Link
Post adoption therapeutic intervention worker	Leah Eggington

### The Therapeutic Team

Rotherham's Therapeutic Team is managed by a Clinical Psychologist and consists of both Social Workers and therapists including Art Therapists.

MASH: getting help for a looked after or adopted child

The Looked After and Adopted Children Support and Therapeutic Team can be accessed by contacting the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 01709 823987.

Post adoption support group

This is a support group for adoptive parents and provides opportunities to:

- Meet other adoptive parents of children
- Share experiences of life with their child
- Share and discuss strategies and celebrate success

The group can also help to explore other issues such as:

- Sensory integration
- Education
- Executive functioning
- Trauma
- Sleeping
- Eating/food issues
- The brain
- Attachment
- Pace (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy) parenting principles
- Grandparents
- Looking after yourself
- Triggers from your own childhood

C. Current resources available to support parents, guardians, carers and children in RMBC:

Adoption Support Fund

The Adoption Support Fund (ASF) is a fund established to help pay for essential therapy services for adoptive/SGO families as and when they need it. A Social Worker within the Post Adoption/SGO Support Team will complete an assessment and make an application to the fund on behalf of parents, guardians or carers.

Pupil Premium Plus:

Paid directly into schools. This academic year £2345 per pupil. Pupils must be identified as eligible on the January PLASC. It is held by schools who are accountable for its use through the annual report to the Governing Body. The Virtual School has a PLAC grant of £52,607 p.a. for 1 year.

It has been agreed that:

- VS continues to offer training to carers, parents, schools, governors, social workers and incorporates support for PLAC. The professional development programme will continue to focus on deepening the understanding of professionals who work with LAC and PLAC and improving the quality of the support they receive in overcoming barriers to learning.
- To raise awareness through:
  - SENCO network
  - Headteacher network

- The DT network
- Governor Training
- ELSA network
- AFS network
- To establish systems and processes need to signpost, provide advice and guidance to all relevant parties
- To provide consultancy to the post LAC team
- To attend the post adoption support group/ drop-ins when required
- To provide guidance in making the most effective use of Pupil Premium Plus for LAC and post LAC
- To encourage school capacity building measures such as ELSA
- To produce case studies of good practice
- Duty and Assessment and MASH will require guidance and training to ensure that enquiries are directed appropriately
- Working alongside the Regional Adoption Agency

17. Appendix 10: Improving the life chances of CYP in care diagram

