

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Corporate Parenting Panel
2.	Date:	10th April, 2014
3.	Title:	Improving the education of LAC placed outside of Rotherham
4.	Directorate:	Safeguarding, Children and Families CYPS

5. Context and background

In February 2014 there were 245 pupils of statutory school age who were looked after by the Local Authority. Of these children and young people, 141 (57.5%) were educated in Rotherham schools, and 104 (42.5%) were educated outside of the LA. In some cohorts around half of the pupils are educated outside of the borough, for example, the current Year 11 (52%). There are generally higher numbers in secondary than in primary. The numbers are continuing to rise; for example in December, 2012 38% of pupils were educated outside of Rotherham. In terms of attainment, the latest outcomes of national tests in 2013 show that:

- **At KS1** there were 16 pupils, with only 4 educated outside of the LA. These pupils achieved higher outcomes at the nationally expected 2B+ than those educated in Rotherham schools (Reading – Rotherham 42%, OoA 50%, Writing - Rotherham 33%, OoA 100%, Mathematics – Rotherham 17%, OoA 100%). However, of the pupils educated outside of Rotherham, only 25% had SEN, compared with 58% of those educated in Rotherham.
- **At KS2** there were 20 pupils in the cohort, 14 educated in Rotherham, and 6 out of authority. A higher percentage of pupils in Rotherham schools achieved Level 4 plus - reading 71% (OoA 33%), writing 57% (OoA 33%), and mathematics 79% (OoA 17%). In terms of pupils making the minimum 2 levels of progress from KS1, in reading 79% of those educated in Rotherham achieved 2 levels of progress, (OoA 33%), in writing 86% (OoA 33%) and mathematics 79% (OoA 17%). In terms of OoA pupils it is concerning that 3 pupils were not entered for SATs; based on KS1 prior data, 2 pupils should have achieved Level 4 and one pupil Level 3.
- **At Key Stage 4** the 17 pupils educated in Rotherham schools performed well at 5 GCSEs A* to C including English and maths, when compared with the 2013 national average for all LAC pupils (35% compared with 16.1%). Of the 8 pupils educated outside of Rotherham, none achieved 5 GCSEs A* to C including English and maths.

- **Current progress.** Pupils not making expected progress, either from the previous key stage or during this school year, are coded as red on the Virtual School tracking system. In Years 10 and 11 there are 3 pupils in Rotherham schools making insufficient progress and 8 in schools outside of the LA.

6. **In summary**, pupils educated in Rotherham generally achieve higher outcomes than those educated outside of the LA. However, every cohort is different, so generalisations do not always provide an accurate picture. For example, in the 2013 Year 11 cohort the pupils placed outside of Rotherham had very complex needs; two were placed in secure units, one in a PRU (Pupil Referral Unit) and one in hospital provision.

7. **Ofsted rating of schools attended by Rotherham LAC pupils (as of March 2014)**

One hypothesis for pupils in Rotherham schools achieving better outcomes could be that these schools have higher Ofsted grades than the schools in which LAC are placed in other LAs. This varies considerably according to year group, as seen in the table below, but overall there is a higher percentage of pupils attending Rotherham schools judged to be good or better, than those outside of the authority.

Year Group	Number in cohort	Number of pupils in outstanding schools	Number good or better	Number – requires improvement	Number - inadequate	% Good or better	% Rotherham Schools good or better	% OoA good or better
Foundation 1	10	2	8	2	0	80%	75%	100%
Year 1	13	2	10	1	2	77%	75%	80%
Year 2	17	4	16	0	1	94%	100%	86%
Year 3	18	2	11	5	2	61%	55%	57%
Year 4	24	2	16	6	2	67%	64%	70%
Year 5	14	1	8	4	2	57%	57%	57%
Year 6	21	1	17	3	1	81%	77%	88%
Year 7	23	3	20	3	0	87%	87%	88%
Year 8	21	4	13	3	5	62%	73%	50%
Year 9	31*	3	21	6	2	72%	76%	67%
Year 10	36	6	24	9	3	67%	83%	33%
Year 11	34*	6	18	9	2	62%	53%	75%
Total	262* - minus 7 - 255	36 14%	182 71%	51 20%	22 9%	71%	73%	64%

*Year 9 – data minus 2 pupils in provision with no Ofsted grade – new school

*Year 11- data minus 5 pupils in provision with no Ofsted grade

8. **Other potential reasons for lower educational outcomes:**

- The Virtual School / Get Real Team and other agencies are not able to provide the same level of support to pupils who are placed outside of the LA,

particularly those at a significant distance.(For example, one to one tuition for English and maths, mentoring for emotional difficulties).

- When children and young people are placed outside of the LA it may be as a result of an emergency situation, where safeguarding is paramount. Suitable education may then be difficult to secure, leading to gaps in educational provision, provision which does not meet the pupil's needs and on occasion pupils having to travel a long way to school.
- Where pupils have SEN, the LA can be reliant upon the services of officers and agencies in other LAs. This can include SEN officers, educational psychologists, CAHMs etc. Services are not always available as the pupil may not be a priority for that LA. Knowledge about what provision may be available in a particular location may be limited.

9. Recommendations

- Placing more pupils in Rotherham, or close to Rotherham, whenever possible. Securing more foster carers for older children would help.
- Education to be given a higher priority by social care when considering placement plans.
- Greater involvement of the VS/GRT when planning/ commissioning educational provision
- Better communication between different agencies within the LA. This has already started with meetings of the Raising Attainment for LAC Group . This group was recently set up to ensure a collective response to overcoming barriers for LAC. The group meets monthly and includes discussions about general issues, but also concerns about particular children and young people who are experiencing significant difficulties in terms of their education. The group consists of Claire Sneath (Virtual Head for LAC); Martin Smith and Helena Szczepkowski (Manager and Deputy Manager of the VS/GRT); Phil Bradley, Service Leader for LAC; Nicola Middleton, Team Manager for LAC; Nicola Humphries (Service Manager for Education Welfare); John Coleman – Principal Case Officer, SEN and Lorraine Lichfield (Strategic Lead, EOTAS, also covering exclusions). Adrian Hobson from Commissioning also joined the group at the last meeting.
- Forging closer working relationships between LAs to provide reciprocal services for Looked After Children, creating a collective responsibility for all LAC, whether they originate in that local authority or are placed there by another LA. Greater involvement of Virtual Headteachers in providing support for other Virtual Heads where difficulties arise in securing support for their pupils. (Links with other Virtual Headteachers in the Yorkshire and Humber region are developing through the termly regional meetings, and also the Peer Improvement Group with Calderdale, Sheffield, Bradford and Kirklees)
- Further development/ restructuring of the Virtual School/ GRT to ensure more focused monitoring of the education of LAC placed in other LAs, including the quality of PEPs, the use and impact of the Pupil Premium and providing challenge where there is

underachievement. (Please see separate report 'Update on the work of the Get Real Team').

10. Finance

- Any financial considerations will link to the capacity of the Virtual School / GRT to carry out additional responsibilities (please see separate report).

Contact Name : Claire Sneath, Virtual Headteacher for LAC
Telephone 07500881654 .E mail claire.sneath@rotherham.gov.