



# Looked After Children

## Annual Report of the work of the Virtual School

September 2016 – August 2017

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## Role of the Virtual School

The role of the Virtual School is to promote the educational achievement of children looked after, whether educated in Bracknell Forest or placed out of authority, through having high aspirations and working to close the attainment gap between them and their peers. There is a requirement to maintain an up to date roll and have robust procedures in place to monitor the attendance and educational progress.

In Bracknell Forest, attendance and progress is monitored through a commissioned service 'Welfare Call'. There is a requirement to inform head teachers that they have a child on roll that is looked after by the Local Authority. In addition the Virtual School should ensure that each child has an up to date, effective and high quality Personal Education Plan (PEP) that focuses on education outcomes.

In addition to fulfilling their educational potential and increasing life chances through academic achievement; it is a priority for young people leaving care to be positive and contributing members of their communities.

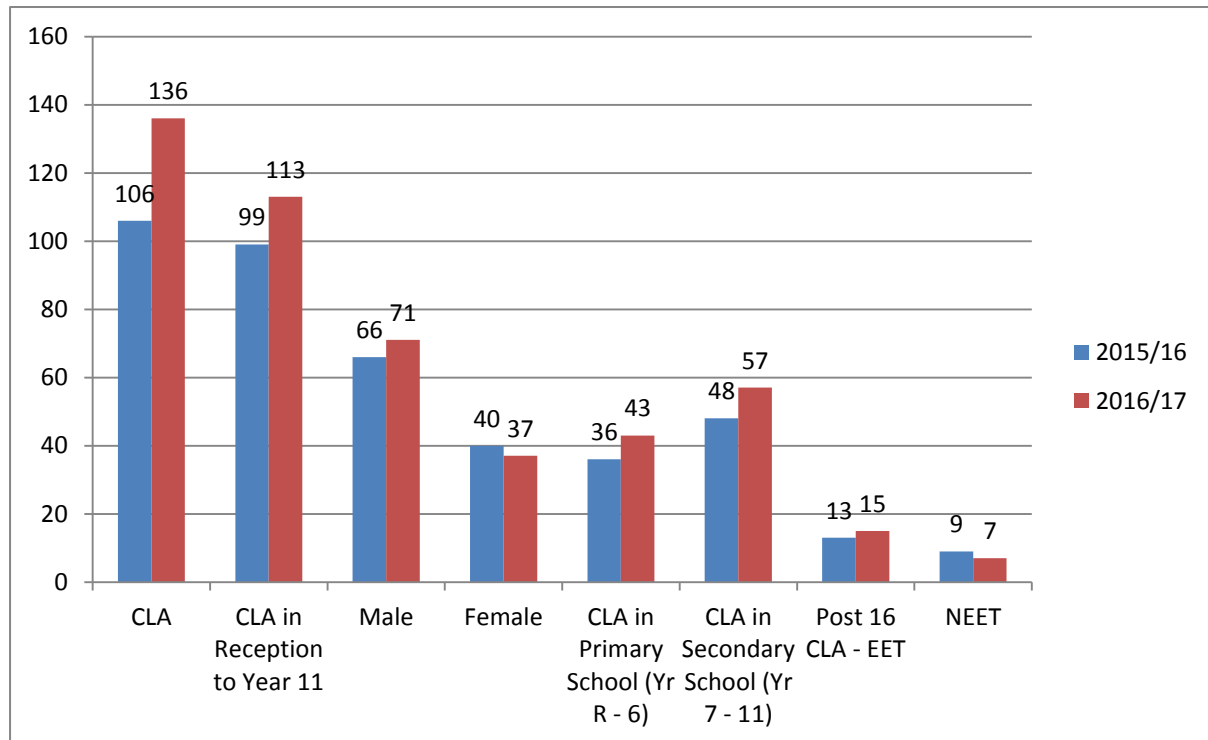
At the end of the 2016/17 academic year, there were 136 children looked after from Reception to Year 13 on Bracknell Forest Virtual School roll. These children attend 63 schools, 37 of which are in other Local Authorities. The attendance data collected by Welfare Call allows us to take individual and urgent action where attendance becomes an issue and to use data to better plan intervention, to identify risk factors and to be pro-active in tackling poor engagement before patterns become ingrained.

In accordance with changes previously introduced by the DfE regarding the administration of Pupil Premium funding for children looked after, the Conditions of Grant state that Pupil Premium for children in care must be managed by the Virtual School Head. This means that Bracknell Forest Virtual School is responsible for monitoring and auditing the use of this funding and ensuring that the money makes a real difference to the individual children in the cohort.

As a Virtual School, we continuously seek to develop an in-depth understanding of the child's educational needs and challenges, advise on, secure and maintain best possible education provision according to these needs, raise awareness of attachment issues and barriers to learning with schools and providers through termly Designated Teacher forums, coordinate, chair and process Personal Education Planning (PEP) meetings and documentation, arrange access to additional resources to raise attainment and progress, and develop interests and provide additional one to one advice, guidance and support for engagement in education, training and employment.

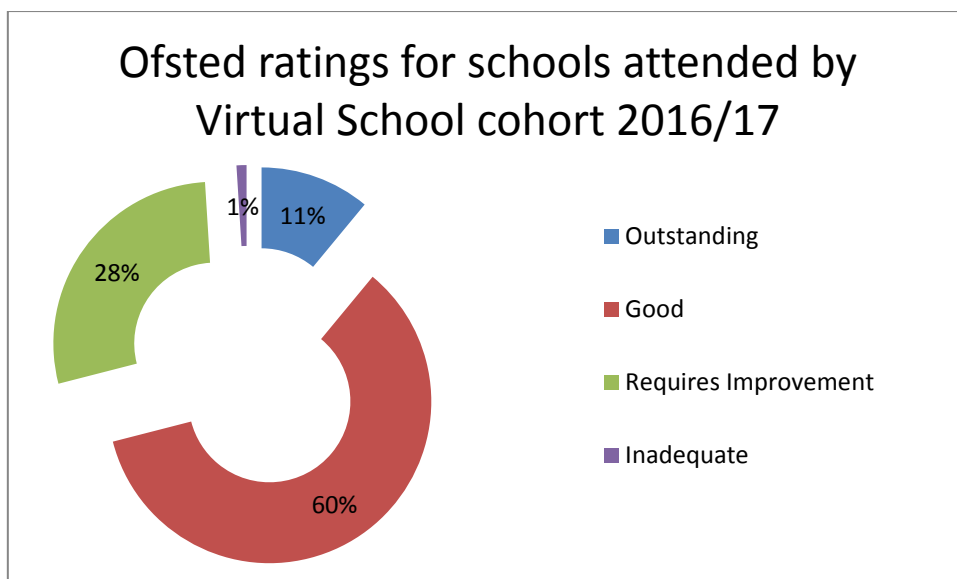
## Virtual School Roll

The number of looked after children increased once more during this academic year with the number of children looked after from Reception to year 11 of compulsory school age increasing by around 14%. Bracknell Forest looked after children attend 63 schools in 20 different local authorities. Exactly half of Bracknell Forest's children looked after attended schools in the borough.

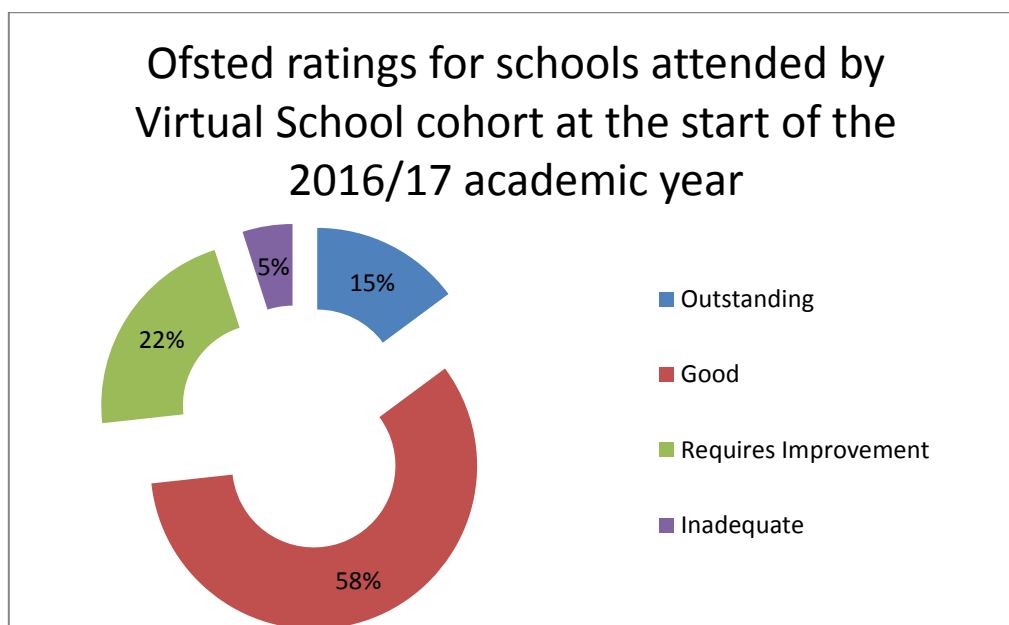


## Ofsted Ratings

The statutory guidance 'Promoting the Educational Achievement of looked after children' states that schools judged by Ofsted to be 'good' or 'outstanding' should be prioritised for looked after children in need of a new school and that, unless there are exceptional, evidence-based reasons, children looked after should never be placed in a school judged to be 'inadequate'. The majority of Bracknell Forest's children looked after (71%) attend 'good' or 'outstanding' schools.



This is however a decrease of 3% from the same period last year. One of the contributing factors to this are the number of children looked after attending local primary schools where their Ofsted grading was judged to be no longer Good following an inspection. This is in addition to the in-year movement which in some cases was essential and in the best interest of the young person as well as children coming into care during the year where they stayed on at the same school as following PEP meetings, they were considered to meet their needs.

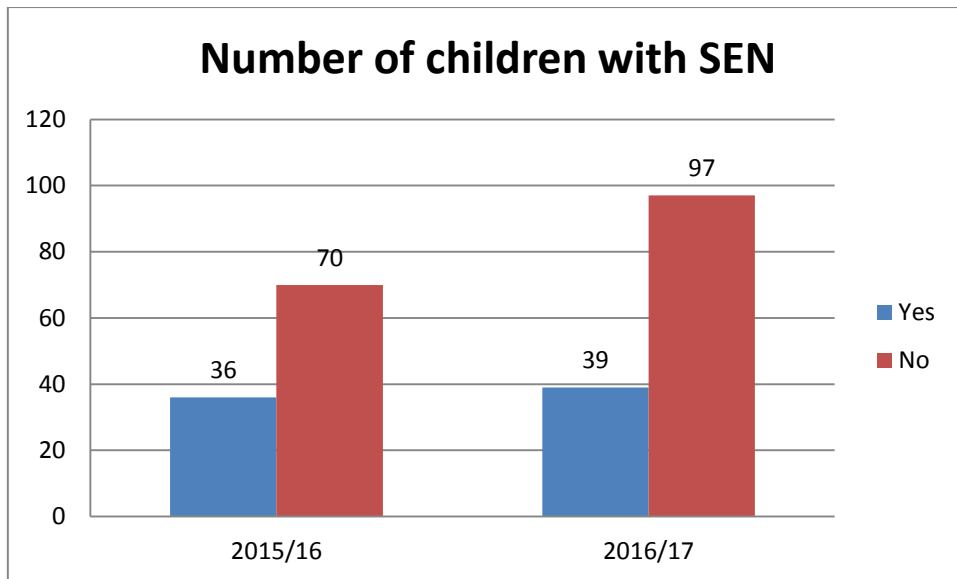


When children are placed at a school before a judgement which is less than 'good' is made consideration must always be made by the Virtual School as to whether a fall in Ofsted grading would justify disrupting a child's education with a school move.

#### **Special Educational Needs**

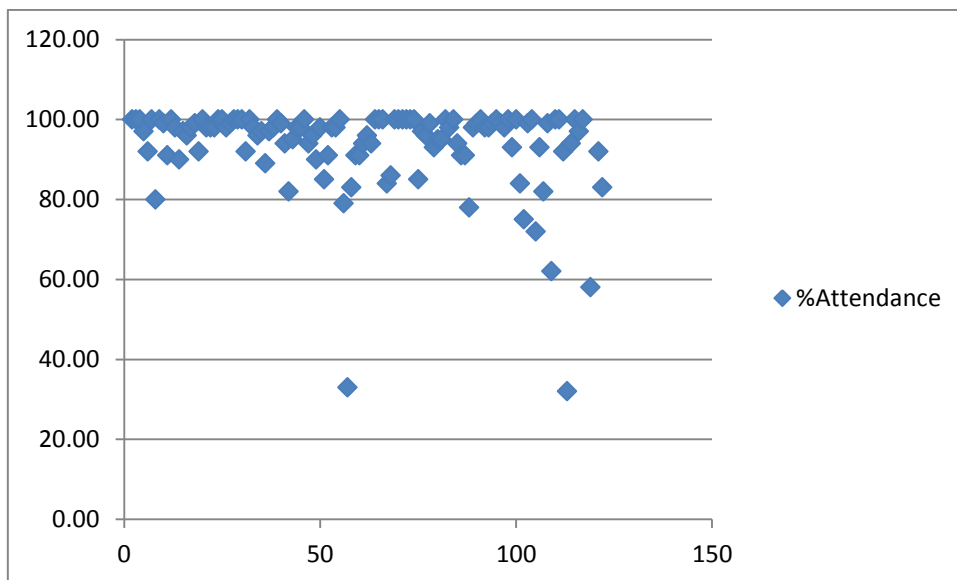
At the end of the 2016/17 academic year, there were 39 pupils with an Education, Health, Care plan. This is around 28% of the total cohort. This reflects a 5% decrease for the cohort from the previous year. It is essential that there are robust arrangements in place to ensure

that any undiagnosed special educational needs are addressed through the SEND framework as soon as possible and this will be a key task for the Virtual School.



### Attendance

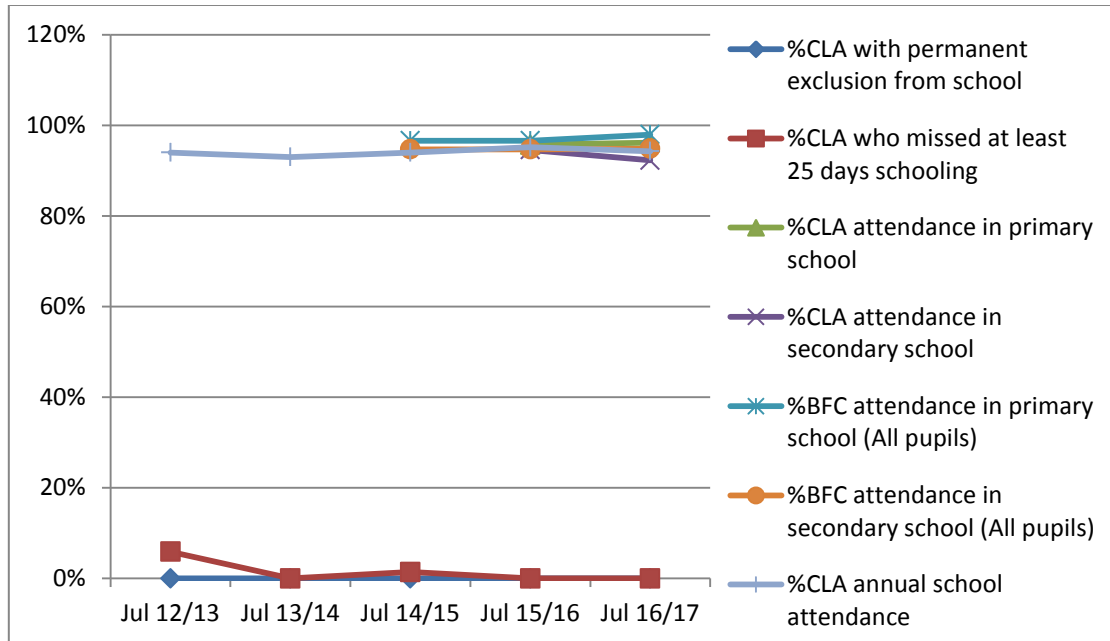
Bracknell Forest Virtual School has commissioned the services of Welfare Call to monitor the attendance of Children Looked After. They call each school every day to ensure we have a pro-active approach to improving the attendance of our looked after children.



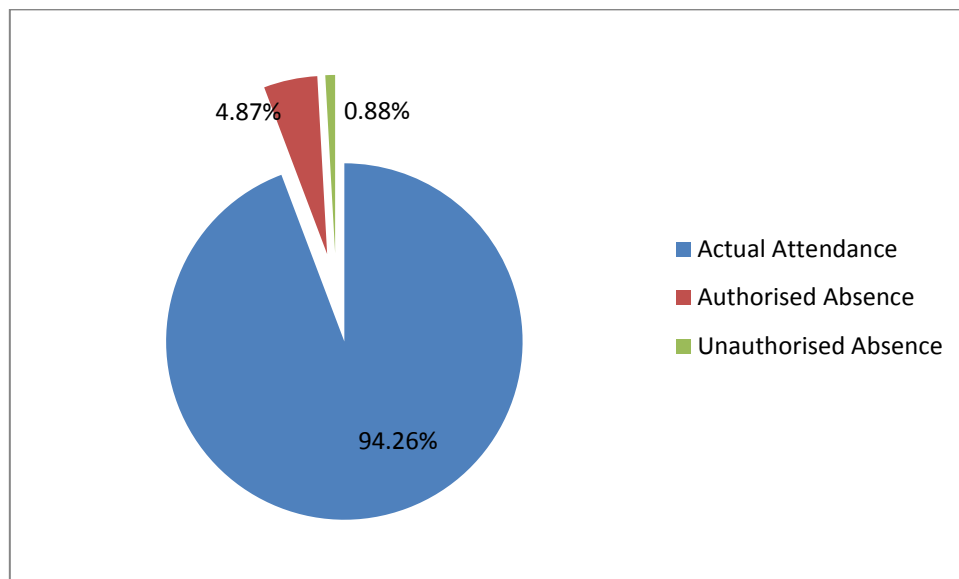
There were two pupils with significant absenteeism and a range of strategies were put in place with limited success. They have now left formal education and have secured full time employment in the family business. There were 14 pupils whose attendance fell below 85%. In all cases, this was also combined with a lack of engagement with their education and behaviour for a period of time across the academic year. This is clearly of great concern and

tackling this absenteeism is a key priority for the Virtual School. Working closely with social care to support schools in having a better understanding of the needs of children looked after will be one of the key areas of consideration. The Virtual School works closely with the Education Welfare Service to ensure those pupils with poor attendance are not only offered the support and interventions they need to address this but more importantly, the risk factors are identified much earlier for future poor attendance and work pro-actively to prevent this.

Trends noted for the past three years reflect a continuously high rate of attendance for LAC in line with their peers. This can be noted in the rate of attendance of 94.26% of the total Bracknell Forest school population during 2016/17 and is analysed to be in line with their peers across the borough:



A further area of interest is the information on the remaining 5.74%. This is made up of:

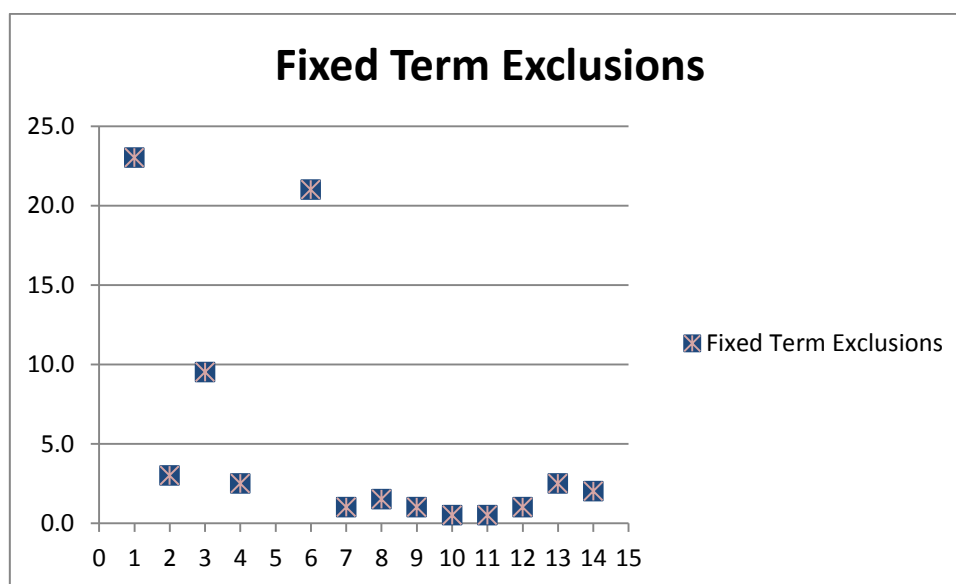


Foster carers are aware of the processes related to term time absence. A significant proportion of the unauthorised absence is also linked to those who had either an average

attendance figure lower than 85% and/or a fixed term exclusion. As raised previously, this continues to remain an area of priority for the Virtual School.

## Exclusions

The statutory guidance 'Promoting the Educational Achievement of looked after children' states that "head teachers should, as far as possible, avoid excluding any looked after child". Fourteen looked after children have recorded fixed term exclusions in the 2016/17 academic year, losing a total of 76 school days. The chart below shows the number of days lost to fixed term exclusions for each of the identified pupil (numbers 1 – 14 represent each of the children in this cohort).



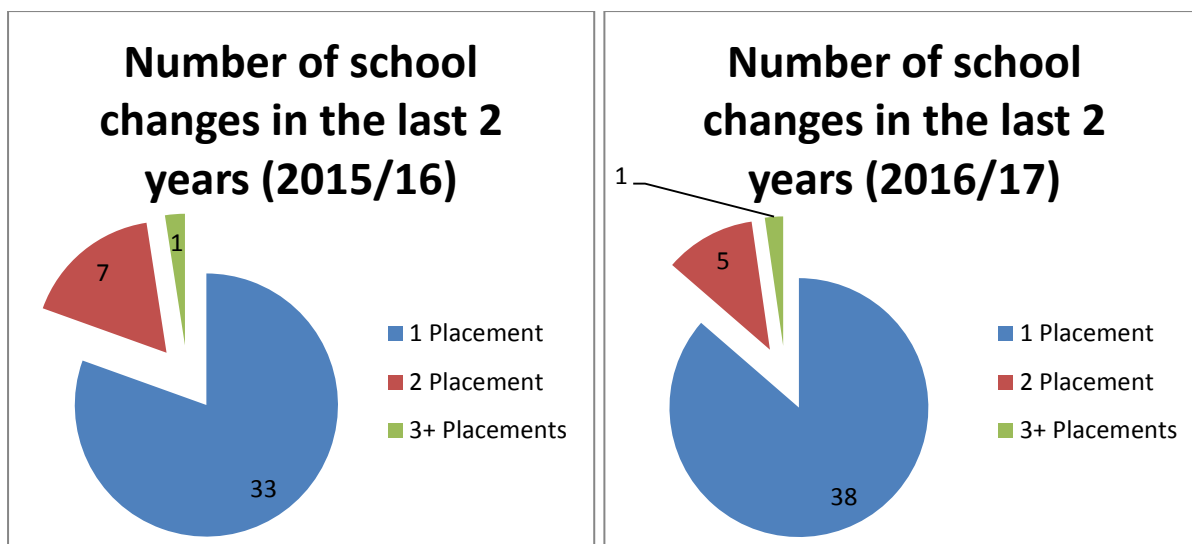
No Children Looked After was permanently excluded during the 2016/17 academic year. However, there were three who had a higher than average fixed term exclusion incidence than the cohort. Two of these were in year 11 and one was in year 9. The young person in year 9 is now in a more settled school placement, whilst the two who were in year 11 have made positive starts to their post-16 placements.

There were various reasons behind each of these incidents. A member of the Virtual School and the child's social worker was always present at the reintegration meetings at school to not only advocate for the young person but also to support the school to ensure they had the resources to meet their needs.

## Achieving Stability

Underpinning all aspects of the Virtual School's work is a commitment to minimising disruptions to learning so that children looked after achieve the stability they need to learn and flourish. Research is clear that disruption to school placements can have a detrimental effect on any child's education and it has been identified as a contributing factor to the attainment gap between looked after children and their peers. In Bracknell Forest, every effort is made to maintain education placements even when a child may move home. We track the number of schools a child has attended each year.





The Virtual School supports Children’s Social Care where a new school place is to be secured. Where possible, we look to minimise moves especially during Key Stage 4. Once a notification from the social worker has been received, the Virtual School generally takes on the responsibility to identify suitable schools by liaising with Admission Teams in Bracknell Forest and other local authorities, searching against information held by Ofsted and having discussions with foster carers about their local knowledge of schools.

### Personal Education Plans

There have been a couple of key opportunities to review the effectiveness of PEPs this year. During the Ofsted inspection in April – May 2017, the inspector noted *‘The school’s creative and tenacious work leads to good attainment for the majority of children. High-quality personal education plans (PEPs) reflect this aspirational yet realistic ambition and are well understood by the children, and there is good engagement from relevant partners at reviews’*.

The report further added *‘The quality is excellent. PEPs consistently include the views of children and their carers, inform plans and lead to improved outcomes. The pupil premium grant is used well, successfully enhancing the educational outcomes of children in care, for example by the purchase of music lessons, therapeutic horse-riding sessions and one-to-one mathematics tuition, enabling children to pursue career options and develop their skills’*.

Although this reflects a position of strength of the Virtual School, it also builds on the quality assurance process we have developed over the past year in relation to PEPs. The key questions we ask are:

- Is there detailed information about the young person’s engagement with learning, social engagement, strengths and interests?
- Analysis of need – is there sufficient information of the young person’s barriers to achievement?
- What is currently in place – is there a clear link between analysis of need, strengths and actions taken by the school/setting/college?
- Future Planning – are actions linked to stated areas of interest?

- Are the outcomes linked to analysis of need? Are they aspirational and relevant? Do actions match the outcomes? Is it clear how the impact is being measured?
- Spend details of the Pupil Premium that are linked to targets
- Pupil voice clearly portrays young person's views
- PEP sent within advised timescales

This line of enquiry was also reflected in the PEP audit that was completed by Mazar's in June – July 2017. A number of recommendations were made to strengthen current practices around PEPs which are currently being developed and implemented by the Virtual School.

At the end of the 2016/17 academic year, approximately 95% of Bracknell Forest's children looked after had an upto date PEP in place whereas 84% (38 out of 45) of PEPs were completed within 20 days of a child or young person becoming looked after. These measures are robustly reviewed each quarter by DMT as is the context behind what measures are being taken to further improve performance in these areas.

One of the main obstacles to achieving a 100% outcome on both measures is the collective capacity of the Virtual School, Children's Social Care and schools – it has not always been possible to coordinate a feasible date within required timeframes. 5 out of the 7 PEPs that were completed for children who became looked after were done within 8 days after the 20 day window. A closer liaison between the social worker who initiates the PEP meeting, the Virtual School who coordinates it, the IRO, schools and foster carers is expected to provide a better understanding of how to overcome these challenges.

### **Pupil Premium**

The Conditions of Grant for Pupil Premium Plus published in March 2014 stated that the funding should be managed by Virtual School Heads from April 2014.

At the end of March 2017, approximately £147k had been allocated to schools against plans they had submitted. This was from a total allocation of £167k where £20k was allocated to the Educational Psychology Service to account for the resource we commission.

Transfer of the LAC Pupil Premium Grant is made in two instalments at two specific junctures in the financial year. The first payment is made at the end of Autumn Term to account for the most recent Summer and the current Autumn Term (hence includes payments for two terms). There are concerns that if the money is paid as a lump sum then it excludes those children who may become eligible later in the term. Similarly there may be LAC who change education placements after payment of the grant. It is not possible to pay the grant twice for any looked after child. Therefore, we make payments to settings that a LAC attends at the start of each term. This practice has been shared at the regional Virtual School Heads meeting and has been adopted by a number of other Virtual Schools as a result of being cited as good practice.

The focus of the Pupil Premium for looked after children is on the following areas:

- Academic achievement and progress – clear outcomes and actions.
- Wider achievement – in an area in which the child is gifted and talented.
- Attendance.
- Inclusion – by reducing internal and external exclusion.
- Resilience training, social skills and therapeutic work.

- Transition into the next key stage and/or a new learning provider.

Increasingly, more examples of the effective use of pupil premium are being reported. Some of these include:

- Additional support in school that will build self-esteem, confidence, resilience or learning skills. Examples of this have been nurture group provision and therapeutic support.
- Aspiration raising activities often outside of school to support engagement with learning in school.
- Extra learning resources over and above what the school provides for all children.
- Alternative education packages.

These case studies reflect examples of impact in relation to the effective use of the Pupil Premium:

<b>Objective:</b>	For C to feel she has an appropriate space to express her emotions and feel safe to do so within the school environment
<b>Actions:</b>	Learning Mentor support (1 hour weekly) Nurture group sessions (1 hour weekly)
<b>Impact:</b>	At the following terms PEP, it was noted that C was expressing her emotions appropriately both at home and at school and this was reflected in a reduction in the number of calls that were made home from school. C was also more positive towards receiving support in completing her class and home work which meant that she had been able to meet expectations set by the class teacher.
<b>Objective:</b>	G to be able to demonstrate a greater confidence in completing Maths tasks independently
<b>Actions:</b>	Small group maths intervention (3 times a week) Foster carer to observe the home tutor and repeat the same strategies Foster carer to ensure G does My Maths at home 2 x a week
<b>Impact:</b>	G moved from working below the expected standard (Nov' 16) to meeting the expected standard (Mar' 17).
<b>Objective:</b>	L to achieve qualifications she needs for the college course she has chosen
<b>Actions:</b>	Small group cognition training with DT to include revision techniques and additional revision resources Learning Mentor to meet twice a week to review revision timetable Learning Mentor to communicate with foster carer once a fortnight regarding progress 1:1 maths tuition once a week
<b>Impact:</b>	4 grades between 9 – 4 and successful transfer to college

## Attainment

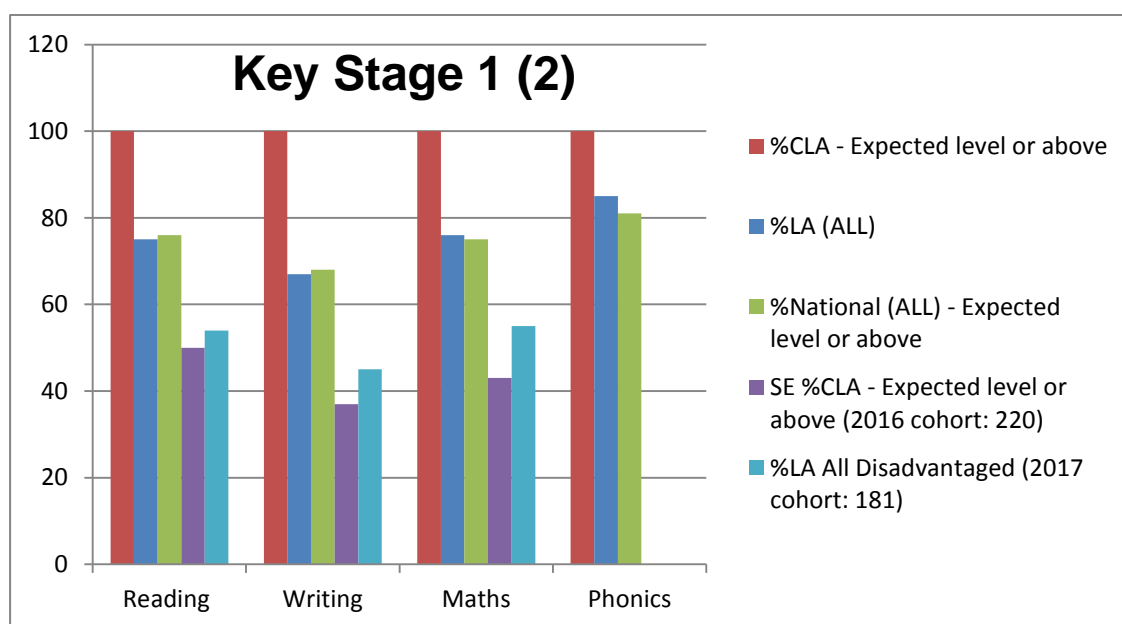
The numbers in each cohort are often very small, therefore the outcomes for one or two children can have a significant impact on results expressed as a percentage. Care should be applied when analysing and comparing the results, which are based on small numbers of children.

## Early Years

There were no Bracknell Forest CLA who attempted National Assessments at this level for 2016/17.

## Key Stage 1

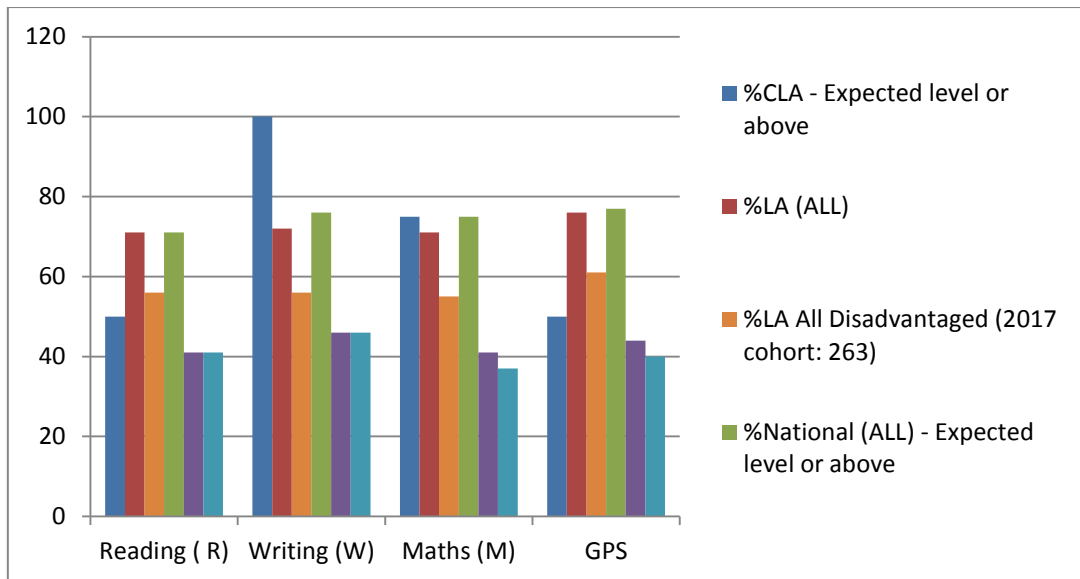
There were 2 CLA in the cohort who attempted National Assessments at this level for 2016/17. Comparing the performance of our small cohort against that of their peers across the borough presents a largely positive outcome where performance is above that of the LA average across assessed areas – including analysing performance against all groups of disadvantaged children.



*Note: we are currently awaiting national CLA data for 2017.*

## Key Stage 2

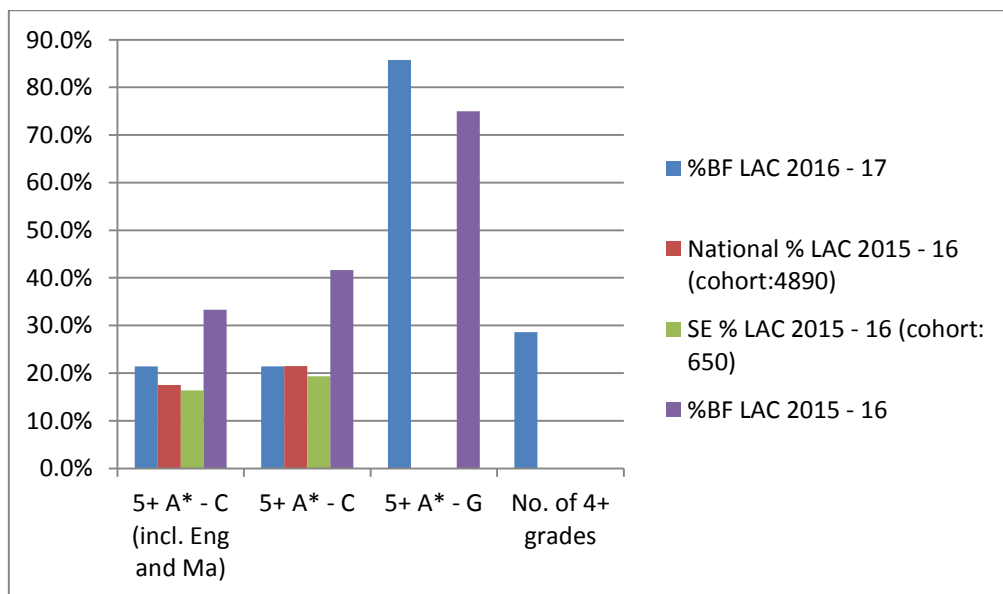
There were 4 CLA in the cohort eligible for tests and teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2016/17. The main threshold measures at Key Stage 2 are the percentage of children working at the Expected Standard or at Greater Depth across each assessed area. The average attendance figure for all four was at least 98%. The proportion of children attaining at least the expected standard across Reading, Writing and Maths was higher than both the national and regional average based on 2016 figures.



Note: we are currently awaiting national data for 2017.

### Key Stage 4

There were 14 CLA in the cohort that attempted GCSE and equivalent examinations at the end of Key Stage 4 in 2016/17, compared with 6 in 2015/16 and 12 in 2014/15. There are a wide range of performance measures at GCSE. The outcomes for this group were broadly in line with national benchmarks observed in 2016 for this cohort. There are no national figures to compare the performance of this cohort against the new measure of the number of grades between 4 and 9 at this stage.

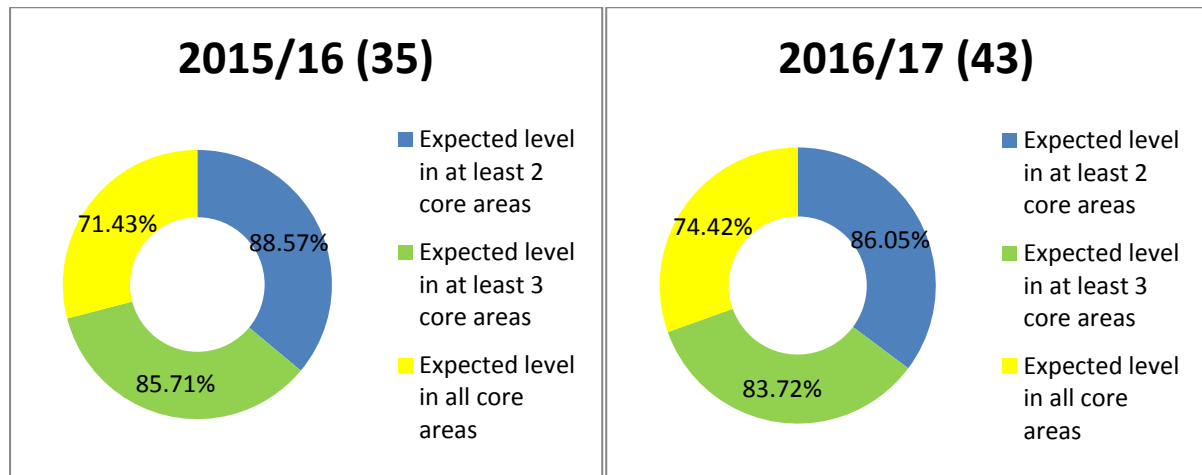


All 14 from this group have progressed onto a range of different post 16 destinations from September 2017. These include Health and Childcare, Health and Social Care (apprenticeship), Hospitality, Animal Management, Joinery, Public Services and Business and Law amongst others.

## Tracking Progress

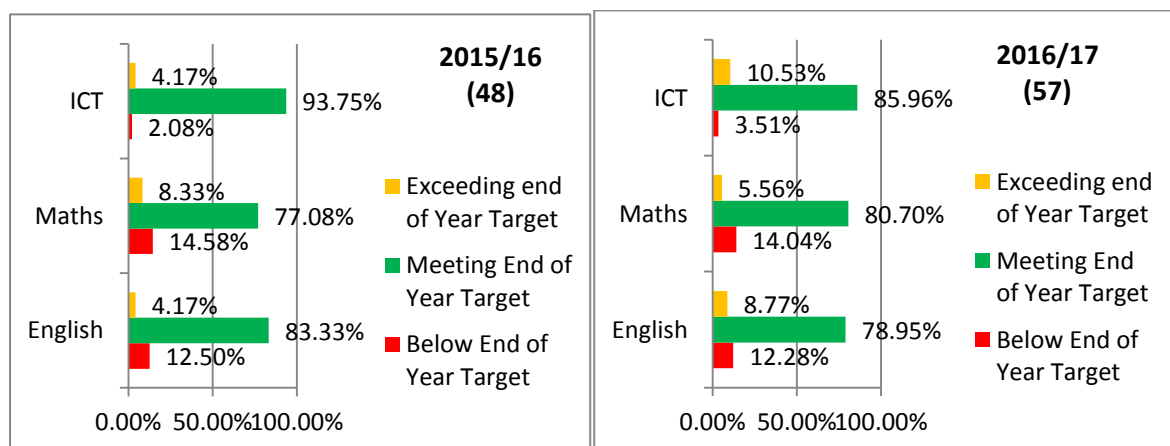
**Phonics:** The percentage of children looked after in Year 1 phonics reaching the required standard was 75% from a cohort of 4. All 4 children attended Bracknell Forest schools.

**Primary:** 29 out of the 43 children looked after in this cohort attended a Bracknell Forest school. Pupil progress is tracked termly across four core areas: Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening and Mathematics. Outcomes recorded were broadly similar to those from the previous academic year (cohort: 35) where a marginally higher proportion was recorded for children looked after who achieved at least the expected level across all core areas:



## Secondary:

31 out of the 57 children looked after in this cohort (i.e. Year 7 – 11) attended a Bracknell Forest school. An increase in the proportion of children looked after either meeting or exceeding their end of year targets were noted across English, Maths and Science for 2016/17 in comparison to the previous year:



## Training

The Virtual School provides training to designated teachers, foster carers, social workers and other professionals across the year. During 2016/17, this offer was reviewed and training programme with five emerging themes was delivered. These were:

**Supporting Learning and the Development of Self Esteem:** The course covered areas such as what we mean by 'learning' and 'education' and the skills children need to do well at school. It also focused on understanding self esteem and how to create a climate in which children can flourish.

**Supporting Children's Learning and Working with Schools:** We explored the education system and covered recent developments and changes to the curriculum. Developing various learning styles and ways in which a child's learning style can be supported to promote positive learning habits were also shared.

**Promoting Emotional Literacy:** This course looked at feelings and supporting children to manage their feelings positively. It also explored anger and the cycle of arousal in anger to avoid angry outbursts.

**Supporting Children Through The Adolescent Years:** Adolescence is a time of significant social, cognitive and physical change. Attendees considered the critical tasks of adolescent development, as young people navigate their way towards adulthood.

**Raising Aspirations for Teens and Beyond:** With so many options available for young people post 16 it can be difficult to decide what is best. Foster carers were given an overview through the various choices on offer looking at Careers Information, Advice and Guidance on work, training and apprenticeships to accessing Further & Higher Education and support to ensure that the child they are supporting avoids becoming NEET.

A total of 40 attendees participated in these sessions which was a positive observation given that it was delivered over the end of the Spring and early Summer Term. These were predominantly foster carers and designated teachers with attendance from social care.

Evaluations were generally positive (36 out of 40 noted the content of the sessions, it's relevance and effectiveness to supporting them in their roles as 'high'). Additionally, attendees liked the opportunity to have an open conversation from different perspectives as well as critical reflective practice. Professionals from different areas were able to see why others '*behaved as they do in certain situations*' as one comment stated. Attendees appreciated sharing in the expertise of the different team members who delivered the courses which provided a '*variety of style and teaching methods*'. They all agreed that the courses would be of benefit for all professionals and would recommend the training to others.

The plan for 2017/18 is to reflect on these evaluations and to build on the partnerships we made during this period to incorporate the objectives of the service.

### **Designated Teachers**

Designated Teachers' Forums are key in establishing a Virtual School approach in Bracknell Forest and these forums are held on a termly basis. The aim of these forums is to:

- Provide information to designated teachers about their role
- Provide specific training to designated teachers on issues relating to children in care
- Provide an opportunity for designated teachers to discuss and share strategies and initiatives aimed at improving the support to children looked after.

Members of the Virtual School are involved in a number of different intervention programmes across the year. These are usually specific to either primary or secondary schools. However,

they are always transferrable in content. Some of the agenda items from these forums over the 2016/17 year have included:

- Planning and demonstrating the impact of the Pupil Premium for children looked after
- 'Do you know training' by SiLSiP
- Proposed changes from the Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Understanding of factors behind behaviour

## Work Experience

The advantage of the set up of our Virtual School has continued over 2016/17 where we have been able to maintain our partnership with local agencies that offer work experience. These are bespoke and limited number of opportunities available specifically for our children looked after who are at least 12 years old. We to offer a lighter touch support package for Year 7 students that develops into more intensive and tailored support for students in Years 8 and 9 and can be extended into Key Stage 4 as required.

A total of 17 CLA benefitted from this offer in various forms. Some of these experiences have been captured to reflect the impact this has had on them as individuals as well as aided their life chances:

Child	Year	Number of hours	Career Aspirations	Outcomes Achieved
A	7	6	A wasn't sure about what he wanted to do when we started the project. He had plans to either become a footballer or a Maths teacher	A is not 100% sure about what he wants to do when he leaves school but he has more knowledge of his options. Engaging with a member of staff from Bracknell Town Football club significantly helped A improve his motivation and his engagement improved as they went on. He is also able to have a better understanding of how he can manage his passion for football as well as remain focused on his studies.
B	9	10	Working with people/children in some capacity	Improved behaviour and aspirations. B has a sense of achievement helping others and working with strong female role models in a local primary school. Due to B's social and emotional challenges she tends to feel that she can't achieve things and had a 'can't be asked' attitude. This has been improved through her work experience and she is more confident in recognising what she needs to focus on.

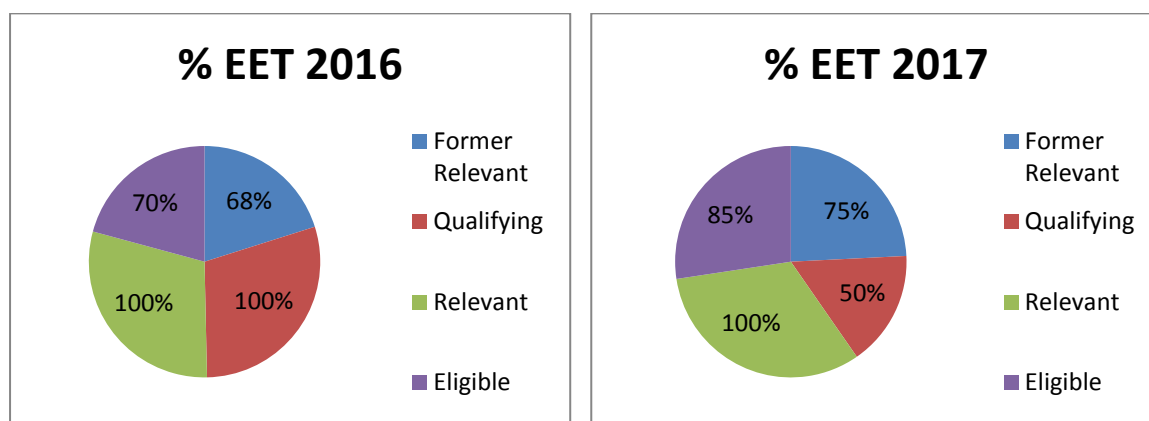


<b>C</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	Actress or criminal investigator	Two separate volunteering weekends and a week long work placement at a radio studio. Impressive conduct throughout and an invitation to return whenever able to do so. Possible plans for a summer role in 2018.
<b>D</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	IT, role in a bank	Wyevale garden centre-initial placement to improve confidence before block week placement. Provided back office support. The experience gained was used to contact Oracle Computer Corporation who have offer a block week placement.

### Young People Aged over 16 and Care Leavers

The Virtual School has an Education Support Officer who focuses particularly on supporting children looked after from Year 11 through to post 16. Recognising the good practice on PEPs for CLA from Year R to 11, this has been adapted to develop a participation plan for 16 to 18 year olds which is being used from September 2017. These have been developed in partnership with social workers and young people to ensure they are appropriate and will achieve a positive outcome.

The impact of the increased focused approach when working with children looked after at post 16 and care leavers has been the increase in the proportion of young people in education and training.



This performance equates to a proportion of 78% of children looked after and care leavers being in either education, employment or training (EET) at the end of August 2017 compared with 71% for the same cohort 12 months ago.

Each individual young person receives support and guidance towards their desired destination. For those young people moving on to university, the Virtual School has continued to remain involved at each step of the process. This has included working on the UCAS form and Personal Statement, applying for student finance and attending Open Days.

Working with one young person in particular to obtain the GCSE maths grade that she needed to get into university, she commented: *'had it not been for Mark, I would not have*

*gone on to higher education at all. If some of my friends could have got the same support from their Virtual Schools then I'm sure I would have had more of them at university with me'.*

Other areas of notable achievement in this area over the past year include:

- One care leaver achieved a distinction in his BTEC Business Studies enabling him to secure a place at university.
- One care leaver who had spent the past three years attending a pupil referral unit succeeded in gaining a place on a Foundation Degree.
- A further five young people moved onto higher education in September 2017. This is in addition to the four who remain at university, bringing the total to nine. This equates to 18% of the eligible cohort – a significant statistic given the historical low national outcomes.
- Two young people graduated in 2016/17 with degrees in Business Management and Computing.
- One young person successfully completed the third of her four year degree at university in Bangkok. She continued to obtain excellent grades in this time, recording a 97% for one assignment. In addition to this, she also a five week work placement in Sri Lanka during the summer holidays, where she was teaching English to local primary school aged pupils.
- One care leaver was supported to retake her GCSE English and Maths. The significant point to note is that due to her age (21) she did not have to do this but her personal drive meant that she was motivated to achieve these. Whilst studying motor mechanics, she obtained the highest mark in the whole college in passing her maths and also achieved a grade 5 for English. This young person is now featured on the front cover of the 2017-18 prospectus for her college.

The impact of the work of the Virtual School was also noted by Ofsted during their SIF inspection. The inspector commented: Care leavers receive excellent support from the virtual school's education, employment and training team (EET) to help them to find and sustain purposeful work or training.

### **Learning & Behaviour Coordinator**

The Learning & Behaviour coordinator is an essential member of the Virtual School. The focus of this role is to help to increase emotional resilience and problem solving skills with a strong focus on developing relationships and understanding the causes of children's behaviour using a combination of attachment and social learning theory. This work involves supporting young people with positive activities, independent living, physical and mental health, thinking skills and social support and working closely alongside carers, teacher's, tutors, social workers, youth offending team case managers, birth family and CAMHS. A proportion of the role is spent working with young people who have disengaged from education, who are at risk of school exclusion or who are long term NEET. Many have issues around emotional behavioural difficulties, high risk of placement breakdown and risk of offending.

The impact of this role can be observed from these brief case studies and comments from the young person involved:

- 1) H was struggling with managing expectations in school and home. Discussing the case with the Virtual Schools attached Educational Psychologist, it was determined that childhood trauma meant she had a core belief of rejection which led to behaviour

that could be perceived as seeking attention for support. H was considered to be capable of achieving at least 4 grades between 4 and 9 in her GCSE's.

The strategies used with H helped her to better understand her behaviour as well as for the school to recognise trends that unsettle her. The main opportunity created was to consistently recognise 'significant moments' and to appropriately reward these (as she was in Year 11). This was delivered in school between Nov '16 and May '17 where each session lasted for 2 hours each week.

H successfully attempted 7 GCSE's and secured at least a grade 4 in 4 of her subjects. Following a change in placement over the summer holidays, H secured a place at her local sixth form school and has made a successful start. She describes her experiences from this programme as '*educational*'.

- 2) K has a significant history of child hood trauma around domestic violence, neglect, parental substance misuse, criminality and emotional abuse. Her challenges were further enhanced through the loss of her dad and granddad. At school, teachers have set K targets around at least grade 4/5 in the subjects she is studying.

When K was first supported in year 10, she was refusing to attend school. Understanding her situation before meeting, a positive relationship was established with K which enabled work to be completed around her anger and ability to solve problems. It became clear that situations which K feels are unfair are triggers. Over a period of two terms, K's engagement with professionals improved, she made a full return to school and a decrease in behaviour incidents was noted. K reflects on her experiences from this period as '*life changing*'.

- 3) T has a diagnosis of AD/HD and ODD and was previously educated in a secure unit. T was enrolled at a PRU following a change in placement however his engagement with staff there and education in general rapidly broke down. T was NEET for a period of time at the start of the 2016/17 academic year. The lack of available opportunities combined with his previous challenges were proving to be a difficult situation for him to cope with.

Working with the SEN team, T's EHCP was updated to reflect his current needs. This enabled other professionals to have a better understanding of his needs and direct available resources more accurately. Understanding his capacity to engage, sessions were adapted so that these were more interactive and over a shorter period of time. Venues were also important that supported these plans. Careers guidance sessions suggested that T was interested in a career in construction. A work placement was secured with a local partner where the employer commented on T's attitude to the role as 'excellent'. Thriving from this confidence, applications were made to local colleges over the summer term (2017). He started a 1 year construction course in September 2017 (following a few initial challenges in settling in). T is now keen to start an apprenticeship as soon as possible and potential providers have been contacted. T commented on his experience over this time as '*he was always there when I needed him*'.

## **Celebrating Achievement**

Recognising and rewarding success is a key element of the drive to improve educational attainment as well as raise aspirations in general. We continue to arrange and hold an annual awards event to recognise and celebrate the achievements and contributions of young people in care. This is proven to be an effective source of motivation both for the young people and their foster carers as it gives all those involved a good opportunity to

reflect on the positive experiences of the past 12 months and share these with others in a similar situation to them.

## Virtual School Service Development Objectives 2017 – 2018

CYPL Vision and behaviours	Outcomes – the impact we want to have
<p>“Working together towards a better future for all children and young people”</p>	<p>To drive up improvements in the educational progress and attainment of all children looked after by Bracknell Forest, supporting them to thrive in learning and empower them to be active citizens who are proud to succeed.</p>
Our Priorities for 2017/18	How we will measure success
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Review and refine current policies relevant to the Virtual School and the education of Children Looked After and Care Leavers to ensure these are robust and in line with legislative requirements.</li> <li>2) All Children Looked After to have a robust and timely Personal Education Plan in place.</li> <li>3) Explore the potential advantages of an ePEP system.</li> <li>4) Work in partnership with others (both internally and externally) to support learning and develop new pathways for children looked after and care leavers to progress onto such as apprenticeships.</li> <li>5) Develop the ethos of improvement as set out in the Learning Improvement Strategy to drive forward improved outcomes for children looked after and care leavers.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Develop a central collection of policies specific to the work of the Virtual School which are shared with relevant stakeholders.</li> <li>2) Process of arranging PEPs to be reviewed together with the documentation used.</li> <li>3) PEPs are distributed within 5 days following the meeting. The Virtual School works more closely with Children’s Social Care to achieve 100% of PEPs completed within statutory timeframes in partnership with schools.</li> <li>4) The current training programme is developed and delivered to include aspects related to children who are adopted or have a special guardianship order as set out in the Children and Social Work Act 2017.</li> <li>5) Increase in the proportion of children looked after attending schools that are Good or better leading to a higher proportion of the cohort making at least the expected level of progress.</li> </ol>
What will drive our work	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ We will involve children and young people when developing policies and practices.</li> <li>➤ We will work in partnership with others to ensure we are providing the best possible opportunities to our children and young people to thrive and succeed.</li> <li>➤ We will make the best use of available resources.</li> </ul>	