Cumbria Virtual School
Annual Report 2019 to 2020

Executive Summary

I am pleased to present my first Annual Report for Cumbria's Virtual School. This report is presented to the Virtual School Governing Body and the Corporate Parenting Board to outline the activity of the Virtual School and the educational outcomes of CLA in Cumbria in the academic year 2019 to 2020. It reflects on achievements and identifies areas of development to achieve the best outcomes for CLA.

This has been a very strange year with schools closing just before the Easter holidays and almost half the school year taking place either in school hubs or by learning at home. For children who were home learning we realised that having a laptop was really important and we delivered over 200 laptops to our children and young people between March and July. We also heard from families that having online tuition would be useful and we were able to provide that up to, and including, the summer holidays for some of our CLA.

What we did as our immediate reaction to COVID -19
- £750 per CLA was paid to schools from PP+ grant to help them provide learning resources, online learning and tutors for CLA learning at home
- Virtual school staff worked closely with social workers to ascertain which pupils were the most vulnerable and should be offered a place in the school hubs
- Virtual School staff worked with Social Workers to identify which CLA most needed DFE (free) laptops , eligibility forms were completed and VS staff delivered digital devices to CLA out of county in order that they could engage in online learning
- £50 payments were made to carers to buy resources for CLA learning at home (mostly printer cartridges)
- Virtual School staff started to deliver training online and a long term strategy for this became part of the VS Action Plan
- Learning resources for CLA were put on the VS website and also promoted through the VS twitter account
- An animation was developed for new designated teachers and social workers to explain "What is a PEP?", as face to face PEP training was postponed, and a YouTube channel was developed to promote this
- PEP meetings took place via TEAMs as did EHCP reviews and CLA review meetings

Covid Case Study Written by a Virtual School Inclusion Officer

Prior to coming into Care, our Year 4 child had been permanently excluded from his mainstream primary school and was attending a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU). In February, our child moved care placement and it was felt that he was now ready for reintegration into a mainstream primary school. A place was secured by the virtual school at a local primary and transition was going well, until lockdown struck. His new school closed and being at home all day made his new foster placement unstable. It was likewise yet another upheaval for our child. The VS responded quickly and a full-time

place in the local Hub was sourced to ease pressure at home and give his day more structure. However, it soon became evident that he was struggling to cope with yet another transition.

The Virtual School therefore funded a full time 1:1 Teaching Assistant throughout lockdown to support our child at the Hub. The Teaching Assistant was already familiar to him from his new primary and supported him to navigate social situations and better manage his emotional regulation. The Virtual School also secured a government laptop to support learning at home.

Our child is now back at his mainstream primary and is thriving. Our child has developed a close relationship with this Teaching Assistant, who provides a much-needed positive male role model in his life. He is engaging well at school: enjoying his learning and developing his emotional resilience. His care placement is currently stable. Our input made a fragile new foster placement more stable and enabled our child to continue his learning in a mainstream environment

The data given within this report will not be as detailed as in previous years due to the lack of testing in primary schools in the summer term and the data given, is as yet, not validated. In the report which follows, I explain the context of our Children Looked After population; the profile of the Virtual School Roll; the types of education provided; the educational achievements of the cohort; data on exclusions and attendance; the use of the Virtual School budget; the main areas of focus as a Virtual School over this year, and the plans and priorities of the Virtual School for the year ahead.

The Virtual School Structure

The Virtual School encompasses CLA of statutory school age and care leavers up to the age of 18 if they are in or return to education. The Virtual School is located within the Learning Improvement Service (LIS) and line managed by the Senior Manager of this team. The structure of the Virtual School Team is below:

The Core Virtual School Team consists of:

- 1 x Virtual School Head teacher (full time)
- 1 x Deputy head teacher (full time as of 1 November 2020)
- 3 x Business Support
- 3.6 FTE Achievement Teachers
- 3.5 FTE Inclusion Officers
- 3 x Positive Engagement Officers (shared role with Children Social Care)

Cumbria's Virtual School Role

The role of the Virtual Head teacher has been statutory since 2014, and the overarching aim of the role is to ensure that every child looked after is receiving an appropriate education at a suitable setting and achieving their potential. The Virtual Head Teacher monitors the cohort as if it were a single school; provides support, challenge and training to schools; works closely with and provides training for children's social workers and other professionals and oversees the Pupil Premium Plus Grant for schools. The Virtual Head Teacher's current statutory responsibility is to monitor looked after children and previously looked after children of school age, and our funding and our virtual school roll, covers this age group. The role has been extended to promote the education of previously looked after children and this has led to the appointment of a Deputy Head teacher

within Cumbria's Virtual School in 2020. For students on our Virtual School Roll, we maintain up-to-date records of their education provision, attendance and attainment, as well as oversee the Pupil Premium Plus spending and quality assure the Personal Education Plans, liaising closely with Social Workers and other Local Authority Services such as Admissions and the Inclusion Teams.

Between us, we:
- Monitor admissions, attendance, attainment, exclusions, Personal Education Plans and Pupil Premium Plus Grant, the appropriateness of education provision, and act where there are concerns.
- Provide a wide range of support, information, advice and training for schools, social workers, carers and other professionals – proactively and in response to demand
- Work very closely with Designated Teachers and Head teachers and with social workers for all Our Children to ensure that emerging issues regarding education are raised and dealt via a casework approach.
- Provide more intensive multi-agency work with those requiring additional support – if the school place is at risk
- Hold Head Teachers and Designated Teachers to account for CLA's achievement, attendance, exclusions, and Pupil Premium Plus grant spending.
- Provide support and advice to parents and schools for children who are adopted or have a special guardianship order or child arrangement order (previously looked after).

Previously Looked After Children
The Virtual School continued to support Previously looked after children throughout Cumbria by attending adoption consultation meetings, providing training to school staff on Attachment, trauma and learning as well as responding to individual requests of support. The appointment of the deputy headteacher will allow the virtual school to further develop the way in which it provides support and advice to promote the learning of previously looked after children. Plans for development in 2020/2021 include virtual school staff being involved in education question and answer sessions, consultations, joint training with virtual school staff and adoption support team, support for adoption social workers. Additional support and training will be developed for carers of those children who have special guardianship orders.

Profile of the Virtual School

As of 17 November 2020, we have 738 children looked after in Cumbria. 481 are of statutory school age.

There are 322 LA maintained, academies, PRUs and special schools in Cumbria; 136 of these schools currently have children looked after from Cumbria on roll (42%). There are 34 pupils attending Cumbrian Independent schools, 2 pupils out of provision and 99 schools out of county have CLAs from Cumbria on their school roll.

Cumbria's Virtual School roll (snapshot 17.11.2020)

Primary Phase		
Reception	=	21
Year 1	=	19
Year 2	=	27

Year 3	=	24
Year 4	=	31
Year 5	=	30
Year 6	=	32
Total	=	184
Secondary Phase		
Year 7	=	48
Year 8	=	50
Year 9	=	55
Year 10	=	76
Year 11	=	68
Total	=	297
Total Statutory school age	=	481
Post 16		
Year 12	=	65
Year 13	=	51
Total	=	116
Total all key stages	=	597

CLA by type of provision (snapshot 17.11.2020)

	Total CLA	Cumbria						Outside Cumbria				
		Mainstream school	PRU	Special school	Specialist provision	Out of provision	Total	Mainstream school	PRU	Special school	Specialist provision	Total
Foundation Stage/KS1	67	57			1		58	8		1		9
Key Stage 2	117	78		1	2		81	29			7	36
Key Stage 3	153	79	3	5	16		103	43		2	5	50
Key Stage 4	144	68	1	7	22	2	100	39		1	4	44
TOTAL	481	282	4	13	41	2	342	119		4	16	139

CLA with Education, Health and Care Plans
Currently 30% of statutory school age CLA have an Education, Health and Care plan, broken down as follows:

NB by Primary Need

	Total with an EHCP	Breakdown of CLAs in each SEN category*													
		Autistic spectrum disorder	BESD	Hearing impairment	Visual Impairment	Multi-sensory impairment	Moderate learning difficulties	Physical Disability	Physical & Medical disability	Profound & multiple learning	Severe learning difficulty	Specific Learning Difficulty	Speech, language & comm.	Social, Emotional and mental	Other (eg under assessment etc.)
EYFS/ KS1	24	2							2	1	3		5	11	
KS 2	30	2							1		6		3	18	
KS 3	50	2			1						3	1	9	34	
KS 4	43	5		1				1			8		2	26	
Total	147	11		1	1			1	3	1	20	1	19	89	

CLA with SEN support
Currently 29% of statutory school age CLA receive SEN support (K):

	Total with SEN support
EYFS/ KS1	14
KS 2	47
KS 3	47
KS 4	31
Total	139

SEND Case Study Written by a Virtual School Inclusion Officer

I've just been to the EHCP review for one of our CLA, what a lovely meeting. In September I attended the PEP for him and he was doing an hour a week at Switched2's Barrow classroom they use for outreach. The CLA was too anxious to attend the main school and they were only managing to get him to engage with any learning for an hour max. Andy and his team have worked hard to build up a relationship with him and this has paid off as he is now in the main school fulltime and is really buying into it, after hardly speaking, they now can't stop him talking! In the meeting the grandad expressed how previously all he could see for his grandson's future was him getting involved in drugs and getting nowhere in life, he now feels that there is a positive future for him.

Just thought I'd share that with you. We need more people like Andy!

Gender
Of CLA of statutory school age there are 289 males and 192 females.

Key Stage	Male	Female	Total
EYFS	11	10	21
1	29	17	46

2	65	52	117
3	94	59	153
4	90	54	144
Total	289	192	481

Ethnicity

Ethnicity	
ASIAOTHER	3
BLOTHER	1
BLKAFR	2
MIXED	11
WBRITISH	461
WOTHER	1
OTHER	2
Grand Total	481

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC)

Cumbria have received 11 this academic year and all but one have been placed in schools in Greater Manchester. We pride ourselves on our work with these young people at a critical time in their lives.

UASC Case Study Written by Virtual School Inclusion Officer

12 November 2020. On a positive note I have had a lovely report about M placed at school in North Cumbria.

School staff say M is delightful, polite and a pleasure to have in school, he is charming everyone. M is loving school, up and ready and feeling proud of the uniform. The TA supporting him has signed up for a TESOL course so she can teach ESOL as he has inspired her and she enjoys working with him.

M is going into school every morning now and staying over lunchtime will start next week so he will have nearly a full day every day with ESOL every afternoon 2-3pmThe nicest news is that M is loving school and is now happy to stay in Cumbria. His carers have found a Kurdish Sorani community and M is meeting with them.

School is now putting in an extra 6 hours 1:1 support for the increase in timetable   School have done a sterling job here with M it's fantastic.

A lovely and positive meeting and story to end the week

CLA attending schools that are graded good or better by OFSTED

Currently 86.7% of CLA attend good or outstanding schools, with 93.6% being primary schools and 82.4% being secondary. For those schools not in these categories the VS Team ensures that there is evidence that the school is providing high quality support for the child and that they are making good progress at the school.

% of CLA attending Good/Oustanding Schools

Legend: ● Cumbria CLA all schools % ◆ Placed in Cumbria schools %
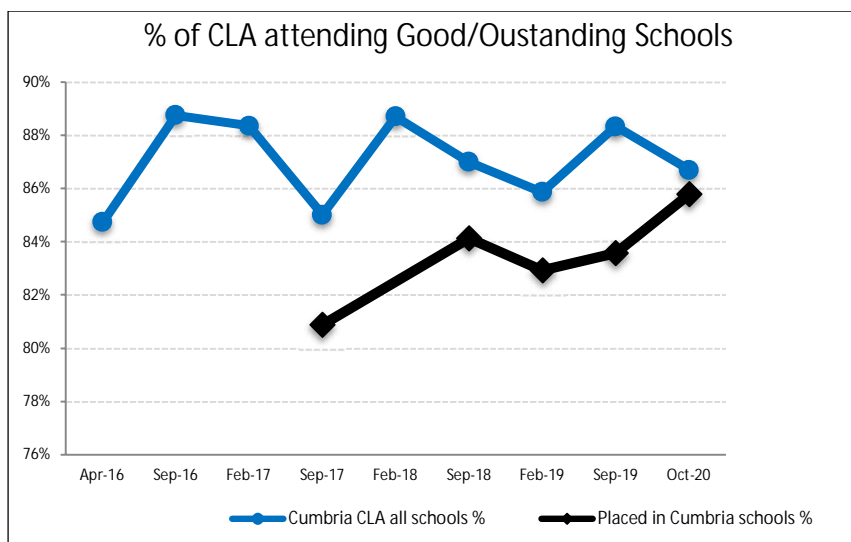
Attainment Summary

All data reported is indicative of the results obtained but not all data has been received at this point. Please note, that these results are not validated.

Primary results

The summary for primary children is based on the end of year predictions collected by Welfare Call at the end of the autumn term because primary school pupils did not take the normal tests and therefore are not required to report their end of Key Stage data this year.

For Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), out of the 15 children in the cohort we were given target data for 7 and all were expected to meet early learning goals in 11 of the key areas. Areas where not all the children were at the expected point were

Communication and language-	Understanding
	Speaking
Physical development-	Moving and handling
	Health and self-care
Mathematics-	Numbers
	Shape, space and measure

(Data was not collected for 8 of the 15 children so it's very difficult to assess the percentage of this cohort who would meet Early Learning Goals [ELG]).

For End of KS1 (Yr2 pupils), out of 19 children in the cohort we have end of year targets for 15 pupils. For those 15 pupils the percentage who were expected to meet or exceed age related expectations were:

Area	Percentage of 15 pupils (not whole cohort)
Reading	86.67%
Writing	100%
Speaking and Listening	86.67%

| Maths | 93.33% |
| Science | 93.33% |

For End of KS2 (Yr6 pupils) – out of 48 children in the cohort we have end of year targets for 36 pupils. For those 36 pupils the percentage who were expected to meet or exceed age related expectations at the end of the school year were

Area	Percentage of 36 pupils (not whole cohort)
Reading	100%
Writing	100%
Grammar, Spelling and Punctuation	100%
Maths	97.22%

This only represents the school predictions at the beginning of the school year, not the final level of achievement at the end of the year.

KS4 results

All GCSE grades have been awarded using teacher assessments and as such cannot be reasonably compared to previous year's data. Whilst it is acknowledged that for many of our young people the way in which grades were awarded may have been beneficial, because many of our young people appear to underperform in the stressful situation of an exam hall, there are other young people who have moved placement during the last 12 months and so for whom there was insufficient evidence/ knowledge for accurate teacher assessments to be made.

Looking just at the young people who were in care on results day (52)

Achieved Level 5 or above in		Achieved Level 4 or above in	
Maths	17%	Maths	27%
English Lang and/or Lit	15%	English Lang and/or Lit	33%
Maths and English	11.5%	Maths and English	23%

Data is usually reported using the 12month+ cohort (56 young people but at the moment data has only been collected for 35 young people)

Achieved Level 5 or above in		Achieved Level 4 or above in	
Maths	14.3%	Maths	21.4%
English Lang and/or Lit	12.5%	English Lang and/or Lit	23.2%
Maths and English	10.7%	Maths and English	17.9%

5 young people achieved the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) qualification for which they need to study Maths, English, Science, a foreign language and a humanities subject. It is noticeable that very few young people reported qualifications in a modern foreign language, this could be a challenge point for schools moving forward

50% of young people achieved at least 1 GCSE

42.9% of the cohort had an EHCP and 28.6% had SEN support

There is insufficient data at this point to calculate Attainment8 and Progress8 scores across the cohort. Moving forward the VS would like to use Progress8 scores to compare KS4 attainment to KS2 data and predicted grades to ensure schools have aspirational targets for our young people.

Key Stage 4 Case Study

One young person came into care in the summer term of year 10 having hardly attended school at all during his secondary years. He had a very negative attitude towards learning which was partly due to the huge gaps, but also due to some learning difficulties. He was taken on roll at a local secondary school, who put together a bespoke programme, involving some vocational studies. He has left year 11 with some functional skills qualifications in maths and English, a GCSE in Photography and qualifications in Food Technology and Science. He has so impressed the employer at his vocational placement that he has stayed there for year 12 and is doing an apprenticeship with them.

KS5 results

Results for KS5 have been more difficult to collate this year. Some colleges are not willing to release exam results for students without their prior agreement and others have yet to respond to the VS. For the 35 young people in years 12 and 13, 12 have passed the course they were studying and 11 have progressed to the next year of study in further education. There were 2 young people who completed their A level studies and they have progressed to higher education studying Architecture and Business Management.

Progression into Employment or Training

Table 1 Destinations of Children Looked After October 2020

DfE Academic 16 and 17 years [Current Y12 and Y13] 107 Designated CLA Young People in total	Current Destination/Status	Number in total cohort	% of total cohort
	GFE College	51	48%
	Employment and Training	10	9%
	VI form College	1	1%
	School VI Form	12	11%
	Special School	4	4%
	School/College Outside Cumbria	2	2%
	Not in Education Employment or Training	27	25%
	TOTAL	107	100%

Data Source: Inspira October 2020

Table 2 NEET Status of Children Looked After October 2020

DfE Academic Years 16 and 17	NEET Status	Number in NEET cohort	% in NEET cohort
	Custodial Sentence	3	11%

| [Current Y12 and Y13]	NEET Not Available [e.g. pregnancy/illness]	4	15%
There are 27 Designated CLA Young People in total who are currently NEET	Actively Seeking/Engaging	7	26%
	Struggling to engage/refusing support	8	30%
	Personal issues e.g. accommodation/moving in and out of county	4	14%
	Unable to contact	1	4%
	TOTAL	27	100%

Data Source: Inspira October 2020

Additional actions to ameliorate emerging NEET:

- Inspira and service teams will continue to work with young people to support them into re-engagement/EET; this year the National Careers Service is offering additional careers support and this is also delivered through Inspira.
- The Learning Improvement Service and Inspira are working with Post 16 providers to develop 'roll on – roll off' provision to meet the anticipated extra NEETs - there are fewer apprenticeships this year due to employers and work placement challenges.
- The Education and Skills Directorate is scoping Traineeship delivery as a wider delivery partner, and potential provider. Traineeships will offer a bridge between NEET and Apprenticeships.
- The county is scoping a commitment to KickStart, a DWP additional support scheme linking unemployed young people on benefits to emerging job vacancies.
- The Child and Family Support partners are developing a pilot to reduce/prevent NEET, targeted at supporting our most vulnerable learners 11-19. Early days but will address some of the key social and emotional challenges presented through COVID.

CLA School Attendance

The performance since September 2020 shows an improvement compared to previous months. However, figures prior to September 2020 were provided by Welfare Call, and must be treated with a degree of caution.
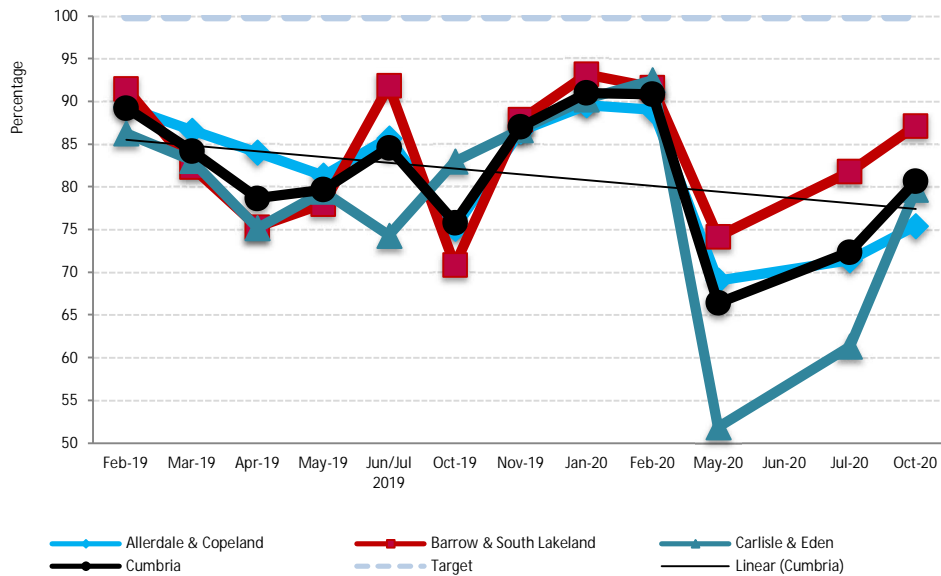
Cumulative CLA Attendance
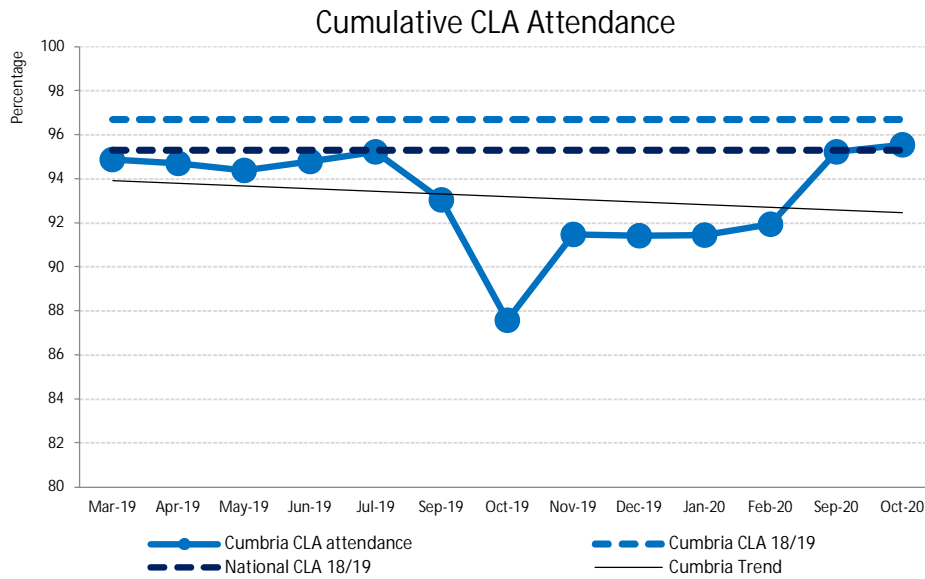
CLA School Moves 2019 to 2020

The graph below shows the number of school moves over the period of time that this report covers. The enormous increase in September is due to the number of home placement break downs during the summer period, possibly due to the pressures of COVID.
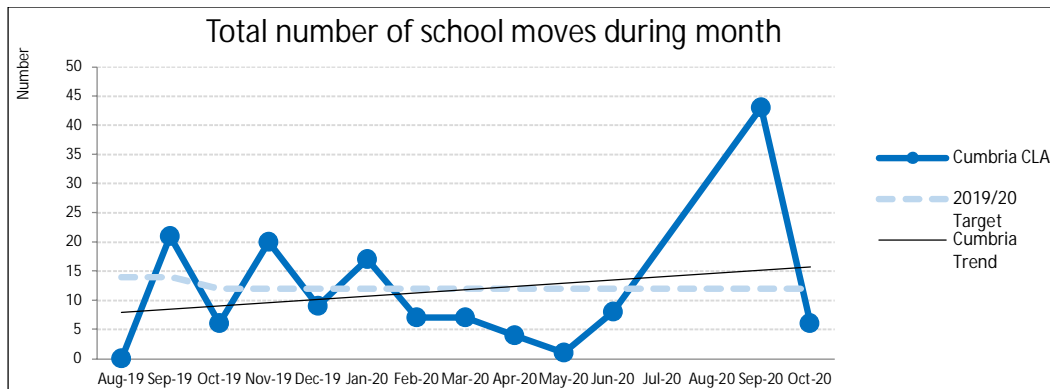
Percentage of CLA with an up to date PEP

The percentage of CLA with an up to date PEP fluctuated throughout the year and declined from a pre covid percentage of over 90% to during lockdown figure of 72%. Since schools returned in September, we have gradually seen this figure increase once more.

Legend: Allerdale & Copeland · Barrow & South Lakeland · Carlisle & Eden · Cumbria · Target · Linear (Cumbria)

E-PEP

Throughout 2019/2020 work has been carried out by Virtual school staff on developing the current PEP document and scrutinising the processes involved at each stage from PEP creation to PEP completion. During the academic year 2020/2021 the virtual school team will be working to develop a unique Cumbrian ePEP system ready for operation in 2021/2020.

Key Priorities for the Academic Year 2020 to 2021

What Needs to Change?

Area for Improvement	Planned Response Summary	Reference in detailed plan
Raise the profile and visibility of the virtual school in order that CLA, elected members, carers, officers, schools and partners understand the scope and nature of its activities and statutory responsibilities including that of previously looked after children	There is an increased knowledge of the role of the virtual school and its responsibility towards CLA and previously looked after children	VS1
Raise the educational attainment of CLA in order that they reach their full potential	Pupils make at least expected progress across the curriculum	VS2
Ensure the stability of school placements, and that all CLA receive their full curriculum entitlement to education and learning	CLA receive their entitlement to full time education and receive support which positively impacts on their academic progress. To support schools to reduce the number of fixed term and prevent permanent exclusions for CLA.	VS3

Ensure CLA make good progress in their education and social and personal development by robustly monitor the impact of PP+ spending Improve PEP completion rates at KS5	The quality of the PEP will improve to cover the full range of education and development needs (Care planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations, 2010 and Promoting the Education of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children 2018). An ePEP will be developed to increase completion rates and improve quality assurance	VS4
The virtual school's role in the professional development of designated teachers, teachers, head teachers and governors will be better defined, through a more coherent, systematic and strategic training programme	The Virtual School will continue to deliver training on a face to face basis where possible, but will also develop online training for when this is not possible	VS5
Virtual School to be more involved in developing and delivering training courses for carers (SGO carers and adoptive parents)	The Virtual School will have a planned programme of training for carers, SGO families and adoptive parents	VS6
Review the capacity of the virtual school to plan, support and monitor the service provided to care leavers thereby ensuring that a greater proportion gain positive destinations of further or higher education, training or employment	There is a consistent approach to the level and quality of support received by Care Leavers they achieve good outcomes. The Virtual School's capacity is increased so that post 16 planning does not leave young people vulnerable, including the appointment of 3 positive engagement officers and a deputy head teacher	VS7

Finally, Praise for the Virtual School

As Headteacher and Pastoral leader of a Lancashire Primary school that has had the privilege to have worked with the V family and foster carers for over six years. May we today, as the youngest child leaves our school to begin the next stage of his educational journey, marking an end to our involvement have the following put on record:

We would like to thank whole heartedly Cumbria virtual school in particular T and F for their support and commitment consistently over the years in helping us to ensure that these children received what they so rightly deserved to ensure their 'whole round' development within our school and for totally understanding their individual needs. Also for providing guidance and support to us personally during some very tricky, emotional and traumatic days. Their efforts have been truly appreciated and greatly valued; they are a true 'child centred' and caring credit to your team.

It is not often I get to do this however I wish to pass on a most sincere compliment regarding one of your colleagues, D. My name is R and I manage a children's home in Heysham. Three months ago a young person came to live with us. He is extremely vulnerable and has had a particularly difficult start in life. I attempted to get him into Lancaster and Morecambe College however following several meetings, his placement was rejected. Yesterday this decision was overturned. D played an enormous role in this and has consistently gone above and beyond to help. Her sheer tenacity and willingness to fight for someone she has never met must be commended. Throughout the whole process, D has been a source of strength and Knowledge. Her sense of humour has kept us going at every setback.

D is a diamond. Thank you for taking the time to read this and please pass this on to whoever you wish.

K has been successful in finding a school place for E. The staff at the home where is moving to were really thankful/impressed how quickly K had secured the place and had involved them throughout. They also said they have never had a child who has had a school place secured before they even arrived at the home.

Jane Fallon

Virtual School Head

November 2020