

## Corporate Parenting Committee

Wednesday 19 April 2023

2.00 pm

Rooms GO2B and C, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

### Membership

Councillor Jasmine Ali (Chair)  
Councillor Charlie Smith  
Councillor Naima Ali  
Councillor Rachel Bentley  
Councillor Esme Dobson  
Councillor Natasha Ennin  
Councillor Darren Merrill

### Reserves

Councillor Portia Mwangangye  
Councillor Sunny Lambe  
Councillor Kimberly McIntosh  
Councillor Joseph Vambe  
Councillor Irina Von Wiese

### Non-voting co-opted members

Dr Mark Kerr and Rosamond Marshall

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## INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

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### Access to information

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### Contact

Email: [paula.thornton@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:paula.thornton@southwark.gov.uk) or [beverley.olamijulo@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:beverley.olamijulo@southwark.gov.uk)

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Members of the committee are summoned to attend this meeting

**Althea Loderick**

Chief Executive

Date: 11 April 2023



# Corporate Parenting Committee

Wednesday 19 April 2023  
2.00 pm  
Rooms GO2B and C, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

## Order of Business

Item No.	Title	Page No.
	<b>MOBILE PHONES</b>	
	Mobile phones should be turned off or put on silent during the course of the meeting.	
	<b>PART A - OPEN BUSINESS</b>	
1.	<b>APOLOGIES</b>	
	To receive any apologies for absence.	
2.	<b>CONFIRMATION OF VOTING MEMBERS</b>	
	A representative of each political group will confirm the voting members of the committee.	
3.	<b>NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT</b>	
	In special circumstances, an item of business may be added to an agenda within five clear days of the meeting.	
4.	<b>DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS</b>	
	Members to declare any interests and dispensation in respect of any item of business to be considered at this meeting.	
5.	<b>MINUTES</b>	1 - 8
	To approve as a correct record the minutes of the open section of the meeting held on 1 March 2023.	

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
6.	<b>SPEAKERBOX VERBAL UPDATE</b>	
7.	<b>VIRTUAL HEADTEACHER'S ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23 (2.30PM - 2.50PM)</b>	9 - 58
8.	<b>CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS WITH DISABILITIES (2.50PM - 3.10PM)</b>	To follow
9.	<b>SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP (3.10PM - 3.30PM)</b>	To follow
10.	<b>HOUSING DISCUSSION/ACTIONS ARISING FROM COMMITTEE ON 1 MARCH 2023 (3.30PM TO 3.45PM) - VERBAL UPDATE</b>	-
11.	<b>OVERVIEW REPORT OF QUALITY AND SAFETY REVIEWS OF CHILDREN IN CARE WITH DISABILITIES AND COMPLEX HEALTH NEEDS PLACED IN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS REGISTERED AS CHILDREN'S HOMES (3.45PM - 3.50PM)</b>	59 - 63
12.	<b>CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2022-23 (3.50PM TO 3.55PM)</b>	64 - 69

**ANY OTHER OPEN BUSINESS AS NOTIFIED AT THE START OF THE MEETING AND ACCEPTED BY THE CHAIR AS URGENT.**

**EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The following motion should be moved, seconded and approved if the sub-committee wishes to exclude the press and public to deal with reports revealing exempt information:

“That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1-7, Access to Information Procedure rules of the Constitution.”

**PART B - CLOSED BUSINESS**

13. **OVERVIEW REPORT OF QUALITY AND SAFETY REVIEWS OF CHILDREN IN CARE WITH DISABILITIES AND COMPLEX HEALTH NEEDS PLACED IN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS REGISTERED AS CHILDREN'S HOMES (3.55PM - 4.15PM)**

**Item No.**

**Title**

**Page No.**

**ANY OTHER CLOSED BUSINESS AS NOTIFIED AT THE START OF  
THE MEETING AND ACCEPTED BY THE CHAIR AS URGENT.**

Date: 11 April 2023



## Corporate Parenting Committee

MINUTES of the Corporate Parenting Committee held on Wednesday 1 March 2023 at 2.00 pm at 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

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**PRESENT:** Councillor Jasmine Ali (Chair)  
 Councillor Charlie Smith (Vice-Chair)  
 Councillor Naima Ali  
 Councillor Rachel Bentley  
 Councillor Esme Dobson  
 Councillor Natasha Ennin

**NON-VOTING  
 CO-OPTED  
 MEMBERS** Dr Mark Kerr, subject matter expert

**OFFICER  
 SUPPORT:** Alasdair Smith, Director of Children Service  
 Helen Woolgar, Assistant Director – Safeguarding and Care  
 Andrew Fowler, Head of Service: Children In Care and Careleavers  
 Suzanne Green, Programme Lead, Children and Adult's Services  
 Elaine Maxwell-Reid, Head of Service: Permanence and Resources  
 Dr Jenny Taylor, Head of Clinical Service  
 Joy Edwards, Designated Nurse for Looked after Children  
 Dechaun Malcolm, Children's Rights and Participation Officer  
 Young people and representatives from Speakerbox  
 Clare Ryan, Service Manager, Looked after Children, Children and Adult's Services  
 Usha Singh, Virtual Headteacher  
 Cheryl Russell, Director of Resident Services  
 Karen Shaw, Head of Housing Solutions  
 Paula Thornton, Constitutional Officer  
 Poonam Patel, Departmental Coordinator, Children and Adults' Services  
 Beverley Olamijulo, Constitutional Officer

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from:

Dr Stacy John-Legere, designated doctor for looked after children.

**2. CONFIRMATION OF VOTING MEMBERS**

The members listed as present were confirmed as the voting members for the meeting.

**3. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT**

There were none.

**4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**

None were disclosed.

**5. MINUTES****RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2022 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the chair

**6. SPEAKERBOX VERBAL UPDATE**

Dechaun Malcolm, children's rights and participation officer provided a verbal update to the committee. He was present with two young people who had been members of SpeakerBox for 6 years and 9 years respectively.

Dechaun outlined the following:

- Housing – addressing housing complaints and a carers' relationship with their lead workers
- Independent affordable housing and access to advocacy support was difficult
- Complaints: Communication surrounding complaints was a major concern raised by young people

- Lead workers – address issues regarding difficulty with care plan
- Support and plan – Clare Ryan, service manager - looked after children, children's and adults' services works closely with teams to prevent issues from arising and ensuring the necessary training takes place
- SpeakerBox continue to attend a series of event events like coffee mornings etc to bridge the gap
- Also running a creative group and choir that young people were actively involved in
- The young people that are involved in the choir have had an opportunity to perform on stage to perform
- SpeakerBox held their Winter Ball last year and a celebratory event on 25 October 2022 where 60 people attended the event. The young people who were present shared their experiences about the successful celebratory event.

Dechaun relayed feedback to the committee about what the young people had highlighted which were following:

- Continued support to young members of SpeakerBox
- Employment opportunities
- Develop total respect and training opportunities to allow the upskilling of young people
- *"I am..." Campaign film launch* held on 11 April 2023, between 2.00pm – 4.30pm at South London Gallery, 65 Peckham Rd, SE5 (further information provided by Dechaun after the meeting)
- Drama performance
- Showcasing show last summer
- Organised auction – sold items, to fund raise to develop a new SpeakerBox website
- An event – *"I belong here ..."* is a voice of young people for fostering was mentioned at the meeting.
- The young people took part in the 2030 conversations which was well attended and noted advocacy, housing and complaints were matters that needed to be resolved.

### **SpeakerBox - Plans for 2023**

- The council had recruited a second children's rights and participation officer
- The continued partnership with the virtual school
- Learn new skills, shares cultures outreach work – especially for the young people in custody
- More opportunities for training for employment for professional positions

- Provide positive spaces to thrive together.

The chair thanked the young speakers and Dechaun for his verbal update. She agreed to provide House of Commons shop gifts for the above event as part of the auction.

## 7. HOUSING FOR CARE LEAVERS

Cheryl Russell, director of resident services, presented information about housing for care leavers.

The officer provided data on social housing and spoke about policy work relating to the involving which concerning the housing register and homelessness.

It also includes:

- Working with children's services about housing options, dealing mainly with rough sleepers and homelessness
- The various processes include going through the register, where care leavers are categorised as band 2; a second priority housing need which mean being housed with expediency. Due to the current housing crisis in London – this has created a huge challenge with 17,000 on the housing register with only around 800 housing stock available
- Social housing team generally work with those that were in most urgent need
- 106 care leavers were registered in Band 2
- Between November 2021 to October 2022, 66 care leavers were housed in a council flat or housing association that were mostly studio accommodation as studio flats were not being built. These were one bed properties
- The officer explained a number of social homes through the letting scheme had diminished and mentioned the added pressure to develop new builds at the required level that was needed
- The officer referred to ongoing discussions relating to the care leavers group.

### **Pan London Care Leavers Compact:**

#### **Reference in the officer's report and issues highlighted at the meeting**

- London Council's Housing Directors and Heads of Housing Needs have entered conversation with the Association of London Directors of Children's Services and the London Innovation and Improvement Alliance about the housing elements of a proposed Pan London Compact.



- The purpose of the compact would be to create a common agreed offer on a number of fronts from London authorities. The Housing elements focus:
  - Council tax exemption (not a housing area in Southwark)
  - Intentional homelessness exemption
  - Automatic priority need decision up to 25
  - Access to rent deposit schemes
  - Joint housing and children's services protocols in place.

The deposit scheme for care leavers – difficult to sustain especially if young people are not in full-time employment and their housing benefit would not be sufficient to cover the rent.

**Presentation:**

Karen Shaw, head of housing solutions presented this segment:

- Local housing allowance had not changed or been revised since 2020 and the housing allowance falls within discretionary payments
- Difficulty finding emergency housing accommodation for care leavers
- Measured on targets – to provide homes for care leavers in the borough
- The ongoing challenges to get care leavers in suitable accommodation
- Care leavers that are placed outside the borough could be isolated or experience mental health issues especially if they had no family links or connection to the area
- Care leavers living out of the borough – should still receive the same level of support.

**Note:**

The chair proposed that the housing cabinet member, care leavers' officers and director, children and families, develop an action plan on housing for care leavers. This shall be listed for discussion at the committee on 19 April 2023 to address.

**RESOLVED:**

That the data on care leavers, proposed policy developments, and comments regarding the housing elements of the proposed London care leavers compact as presented and outlined in the report be noted.

## 8. INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICERS (IRO) ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

Suzanne Green, programme lead officer, children's and adults' services presented this item.

### Summary:

- The report contained a summary of work completed by Southwark's IRO (Independent Reviewing Officer) service for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022
- It identified the work of the service in fulfilling its statutory remit and highlighted areas for development in relation to the IRO function
- The officer reported that a permanent assistant director was now in place and the proposal was also to appoint a 1.5 IRO officer
- A number of young people were consulted in terms of their care plan
- The social care team did a lot of work in ensuring issues were not escalated
- The work of the IROs was to improve the outcome for children and young people in care – it also meant providing a lot of training in regards to a young person's care plan
- The council's children and families directorate involves working closely with all relevant stakeholders and partners across the sector
- IRO officers: An IRO officer recently recruited would be working around advocacy to meet the needs of young people. This includes 'hard to reach' groups, those with disabilities and young people that were in custody.

### RESOLVED:

That the Independent Review Officers (IRO) Annual report 2021-22 be noted.

## 9. CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER AND CARE LEAVER SUFFICIENCY STRATEGY 2023-2026

Suzanne Green, programme lead officer, and Genette Laws, director of commissioning, presented this item.

### Summary:

The report outlined: That the council has a duty under the Children Act 1989 (Section 22) to provide sufficient placements within the local authority's area, so far as is reasonably practical, to meet the accommodation needs of our children looked after

and care leavers.

- Children between the ages from 10 years and above; 60 percent are from black and ethnic minority groups and a majority were asylum seekers
- The care leavers (60 percent ratio) were in residential care and lived within a 20-mile radius away in accordance with the government guidelines
- There was a reported number of children who were placed in residential care
- The aim was to increase the number of adoptive families and improve the efficiency of the strategy.

The officers responded to questions concerning:

- Information about the special educational needs budget
- 16 plus regulation, commission alliance which involved an accreditation team on the type of support they could offer in regard to residential provision
- The number of black children waiting for adoption.

Alasdair Smith, director, children & families, children's and adults' services agreed to present data to the committee, on the disparity of children based on their ethnicity particularly black and white children – that could be addressed through “Adopt London”.

**Action:**

Noted the committee’s work plan and for officers to provide more detail on the proportionality and what further work could be done, to engage with black led organisations in the area which included early intervention of black looked after children and care leavers.

**RESOLVED**

- That the children in care and care leavers placement sufficiency strategy set out in Appendix 1 be noted.
- That comments concerning the children in care and care leavers placement sufficiency strategy be noted.

**10. OFSTED REPORT UPDATE FOR COMMITTEE**

Alasdair Smith, director, children & families, children's and adults' services provided an update on Southwark’s Ofsted report. He gave a quote from Ofsted which was, “Southwark is a special council”

It was noted that Ofsted met with a number of young people from the borough.

Summary of points highlighted in the Ofsted report:

- Adoption was regarded as strong
- Live story work needed further development
- Fostering recruitment needed further improvement
- Foster carers should be given more training opportunities
- Relaunch of the care service
- Challenges facing permanent foster carers

The chair welcomed the points raised by Ofsted.

## **11. CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE WORKPLAN 2023-24**

### **RESOLVED:**

1. That the workplan as set out in the report be subject to review and agreement with the chair and director of children's services.
2. That the committee reviewed and identified housing for care leavers, as an item for the April committee meeting, as noted in the work plan.

The meeting ended at 4.25pm.

**CHAIR:**

**DATED:**

<b>Item No.</b> 7.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 19 April 2023	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Corporate Parenting Committee
<b>Report title:</b>		Annual Virtual Headteacher's Report 2022-2023	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Director of Education	

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the corporate parenting committee note the Virtual Headteacher's Report for Southwark looked after children.
2. That the corporate parenting committee feedback any comments on Southwark looked after children's education for consideration by the Virtual School Headteacher.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. As the corporate parent for Southwark's looked after children, Southwark Council has a responsibility to ensure that the children within our care have the best possible chance of accomplishing high educational achievements.
4. The role of the Virtual School Headteacher is to ensure that the educational achievement of children looked after by the authority is seen as a priority by everyone who has responsibilities for promoting their welfare. This includes ensuring that all have access to the best education provision, monitoring children's progress and ensuring swift action is taken in time of change and crisis to meet the child's educational needs.
5. Statutory guidance on 'Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children' (Department for Education, 2018) requires Virtual School Headteachers to produce an annual report and to report regularly on the attainment, progress and school attendance of looked-after children through the authority's corporate parenting structures.
6. The Virtual Headteacher's report outlines the educational progress, attainment and attendance of Southwark's children in care in the 2021-22 school year. The report indicates key priorities for the Virtual School and provides an overview of pupil premium looked after children (LAC) spend.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

5. The Virtual Headteacher's report is attached as Appendix 1.
6. Please find a highlights Virtual School Headteacher's Report 2021-22 in Appendix 2 of the report.

### **Policy framework implications**

7. The Borough Plan has a commitment to '*give young people the best opportunities in life*'. The Virtual School report demonstrates working with and for children and across a multitude of stakeholders and professionals to achieve this commitment.

### **Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts**

#### **Community impact statement**

8. This education of looked after children is an important aspect of their care, and the work described in the report is expected to make an impact on the future life chances and opportunities for this part of the community.
9. The decision to note this report has been judged to have no or a very small impact on local people and communities.

#### **Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement**

10. This report encompasses educational services provided to all children and young people in care of LB Southwark and includes details of the ethnic breakdown of this cohort as well as their Special Educational Needs.
11. The Council is committed to providing fair and just services, addressing inequality. The provision of good and effective education services to looked after children is an important way that the council and its partners demonstrate commitment to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people

#### **Health impact statement**

12. This paper considers the education of children and young people in care of LB Southwark. Good education outcomes are closely correlated with positive health and well-being.

#### **Climate change implications**

13. There are no overt implications regarding climate change.

### Resource implications

14. There are no resource implications of this report, which is provided for information.

### Legal implications

15. There are no additional legal implications at this time.

### Financial implications

16. This paper is for information only. There are no financial implications attached

### Consultation

17. The annual report includes case studies which aim to reflect the direct experiences of children and young people in care of LB Southwark

### SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

#### Assistant Chief Executive – Governance and Assurance

18. A concurrent was not applicable for this report.

#### Strategic Director of Finance

19. A concurrent was not applicable for this report.

#### Other officers

20. None.

### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Equalities Act 2010	Education Directorate, Children and Adult Services, 4 <sup>th</sup> floor, 160 Tooley Street, SE1 2QH	Usha Singh 020 7525 54076 07548712129
<b>Link:</b> <a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents</a>		
Council Assembly, 25 November 2020 – Item 6.1 – Appendix A Refresh of the Council Plan: Borough Plan	Education Directorate, Children and Adult Services, 4 <sup>th</sup> floor, 160 Tooley Street, SE1 2QH	Usha Singh 020 7525 54076 07548712129

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
<b>Link:</b> <a href="https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s92006/Appendix%20A%20Southwarks%20Borough%20Plan%202020.pdf">https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s92006/Appendix%20A%20Southwarks%20Borough%20Plan%202020.pdf</a>		
Department of Education: SEND	Education Directorate, Children and Adult Services, 4 <sup>th</sup> floor, 160 Tooley Street, SE1 2QH	Usha Singh 020 7525 54076 07548712129
<b>Link:</b> <a href="https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/special-educational-needs-disabilities">https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/special-educational-needs-disabilities</a>		
The Health Inequalities Framework 2020	Education Directorate, Children and Adult Services, 4 <sup>th</sup> floor, 160 Tooley Street, SE1 2QH	Usha Singh 020 7525 54076 07548712129
<b>Link:</b> <a href="https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s90726/Appendix%201.pdf">https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s90726/Appendix%201.pdf</a>		
Climate Change Strategy	Education Directorate, Children and Adult Services, 4 <sup>th</sup> floor, 160 Tooley Street, SE1 2QH	Usha Singh 020 7525 54076 07548712129
<b>Link:</b> <a href="https://www.southwark.gov.uk/environment/climate-emergency/reaching-net-zero/our-plan-for-net-zero">https://www.southwark.gov.uk/environment/climate-emergency/reaching-net-zero/our-plan-for-net-zero</a>		
Southwark Stands Together	Education Directorate, Children and Adult Services, 4 <sup>th</sup> floor, 160 Tooley Street, SE1 2QH	Usha Singh 020 7525 54076 07548712129
<b>Link:</b> <a href="https://www.southwark.gov.uk/engagement-and-consultations/southwark-stands-together">https://www.southwark.gov.uk/engagement-and-consultations/southwark-stands-together</a>		



**APPENDICES**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Title</b>
Appendix 1	Virtual Headteacher's report 2021-22
Appendix 2	Highlights Virtual Headteacher's report 2021-22

**AUDIT TRAIL**

<b>Lead Officer</b>	David Quirke-Thornton, Strategic Director of Children and Adult Services	
<b>Report Author</b>	Usha Singh, Virtual School Headteacher	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	11 April 2023	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments sought</b>	<b>Comments included</b>
Assistant Chief Executive – Governance and Assurance	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	No	No
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>		11 April 2023

# Southwark Virtual School Annual Headteacher's Report Academic year 2021-2022



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# 1. Preface

1.1. Summer 2022 saw the return of a full exam series in all four UK nations. For England, regulator Ofqual announced that [grading in 2022 will again be more generous than it was pre-pandemic](#), but that grades are expected to fall at a mid-point between those in 2019 and 2021. In future, the plan is for grades to revert to a more normal distribution. As such, 2022 has been described as a ‘transition year’.

[Coronavirus: GCSEs, A Levels and equivalents in 2022 - House of Commons Library \(parliament.uk\)](#)

1.2. Due to cancellation of the 2 previous year’s series of exams students, the traditional mechanism to measure progress using a year to year comparison, is still not possible. This includes attainment, attendance, exclusions and progress.

*The changes to the way GCSE grades have been awarded over the last two years (with CAGs and TAGs replacing exams) mean pupil attainment data should not be directly compared to pupil attainment data from previous years for the purposes of measuring year on year changes in pupil performance.*

[Key stage 4 performance – GOV.UK](#)

# 2. Introduction

2.1. This report is based on LA-held pupil information and results from schools for 2022. The data in this report is constantly updated from first issue until all national data becomes available.

2.2. This report presents an overview of the activities and impact of Southwark Virtual School to advocate for the Local Authority’s looked-after children to ensure high aspirations and the best possible outcomes for each young person..

2.3. The report also identifies areas of future development to achieve improved outcomes for Southwark’s looked after children. We want all looked after children to achieve the best they can and promote success into adulthood, whatever age they came into our care.

2.4. The report highlights the multidisciplinary nature of the work – we are supported by the Education and Social Care directorates, our looked after children, carers, parents, school leadership groups, Social Care colleagues and other professionals. We plan with a view to achieve clear academic and vocational pathways into education, employment and training. We aim to minimise disruptions along the way.

## 3. A Changing Education Landscape

3.1. From September 2021, the role of the Virtual School Head was extended to include all children who have or have had a social worker including children in need (CIN), and those subject to child protection plans (CPP). All local authorities received grant funding under section 31 of the Education Act 2022 to deliver this extended Virtual School Head role until 31 March 2022. The objectives were to ensure that there would be a local champion for children with a social worker (CWSW) in each Virtual School which would increase the profile of this cohort of children and young people in school. The aim was also to promote their educational needs in children's social care and to provide strategic leadership in order, 'to create a culture of high aspirations that helps all children with a social worker to make educational progress'.

3.2. From October 2021, the Government introduced a pilot in 30 local authorities to support 16-18 year old children looked after and care leavers in general Further Education (FE) Colleges through the extension of the pupil premium plus (PP+) funding to post 16 young people. The funding was allocated to 30 pilot local authorities for six months until 31 March 2022. The proposed outcome of the pilot were to raise the profile of children in care and care leavers in FE by strengthening close working relationships, improve their attendance, better support the delivery of Personal Education Plans, Pathway Plans and to identify models of good practice.

3.3. The Rees Centre at Oxford University was commissioned to undertake an evaluation of the first six months of the VSH role extension and the PP+ post-16 pilot and set out their key findings in a research report published in December 2022 [Evaluation of the virtual school heads extension and the pupil premium plus post-16 pilot - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/research-data-and-analysis/publications/evaluation-of-the-virtual-school-heads-extension-and-the-pupil-premium-plus-post-16-pilot)

The following recommendations were made for Virtual School Heads:

- Regional VSHs to develop greater consistency in PEP formats and to share models of good practice
- VSHs to continue their training and work with social workers on understanding the protective value of post-16 education to CLA and CLs
- Virtual Schools to provide more guidance for foster carers on the support available at post-16
- VSHs to document evidence on local progress towards achieving outcomes identified in the Theory of Change for the programme

3.4. The report includes key recommendations for the DfE and for Virtual School Heads and local authorities. For the extended role, these include:

- To ensure professionals working with CWSW minimise disruption to lessons times
- Local authorities should ensure there is appropriate governance in place to support and scrutinise the work of the VSH in relation to their extended duties
- Regional VSH groups to share models of good practice and share with Ofsted
- VSHs to prioritise understanding the protective value of education for CWSW
- VSHs to document evidence on local progress towards achieving outcomes identified in the Theory of Change for the programme.

## 4. Promoting the Education of Children with a Social Worker

4.1. From September 2021, the role of Virtual Schools across the country was extended to include taking a 'strategic leadership role in promoting the educational outcomes of the cohort of children with a Social Worker and those who have previously had a Social Worker.

['Virtual school head role extension to children with a social worker'](#)

4.2. The Virtual School aims to narrow the gap for some of the most vulnerable children in our local authority. Previously, this was mainly children looked after and those on a special guardianship order but now includes all the children on a child protection plan or a child in need.

4.3. The Virtual School Headteacher will work to:

- make visible the disadvantages that children with a social worker can experience, enhancing partnerships between education settings and local authorities to help all agencies hold high aspirations for these children
- promote practice that supports children's engagement in education, recognising that attending an education setting can be a protective factor to keep children safe
- level up children's outcomes and narrow the attainment gap so every child can reach their potential. This will include helping to make sure that children with a social worker benefit from support to recover from the impact of COVID-19
- identify the needs of children and young people eligible for the service
- support and advise key professionals to help children make progress, including through increasing their confidence in using evidence-based interventions

**4.4. What is in scope of the extended Virtual School Head role:**

As strategic leaders who champion children with a social worker, Virtual School Heads should create a culture of high aspirations and drive improved outcomes. They will:

- enhance partnerships between education settings and the local authority
- identify the cohort's needs and intervene to overcome barriers to poor educational outcomes and ensure pupils reach their potential
- support and advise key professionals to help children make progress, including through increasing their confidence in using evidence-based interventions

**4.5. Defining the cohort of children with a social worker:**

'Children with a Social Worker' (CWSW) includes all children who have been assessed as needing or previously needing a Social Worker within the past 6 years due to safeguarding and/or welfare reasons. It includes all children aged 0 to 18 across all education settings subject to a CiN plan or a Child Protection plan. Southwark current CWSW cohort includes CIN 878 children and CPP 235 children.

## 5. Southwark's Children in Care Population

5.1. Southwark's Children in Care population is constantly changing as children move in and out of the Care System. The data represents the current picture of Southwark CLA statutory school age cohort.

5.2. At the time of this report, 394 students were recorded on the roll of Southwark Virtual School. 259 children are statutory school age and 135 in Key Stage 5. Recorded 170 females 224 males.

5.3. Of the statutory school age cohort, it is reported that boys remain a larger proportion of the Southwark looked after cohort. Locally 54, nationally 56%.

	Total LAC	Male	%	Female	%
Yr R	8	3	1%	5	2%
Yr 1	9	4	2%	5	2%
Yr 2	7	5	2%	2	1%
Yr 3	3	0	0%	3	1%
Yr 4	10	2	1%	8	3%
Yr 5	17	7	3%	10	4%
Yr 6	12	8	3%	4	2%
Yr 7	22	15	6%	7	3%
Yr 8	28	11	4%	17	7%
Yr 9	35	24	9%	11	4%
Yr 10	51	30	12%	21	8%
Yr 11	57	30	12%	27	10%
Total	259	139	54%	120	46%

5.4. Nationally, the number of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) increased to 1.49 million pupils, representing 16.5% of all pupils. The proportion of pupils with SEN had been decreasing since 2010 (21.1%), however it has increased for the last 5 years.

[Special educational needs publication June 2022 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

5.5. In Southwark, the proportion of Southwark's statutory school age looked after children

- with **special educational needs** is **43% (112)** compared to 12.6% nationally.
- with an **EHCP** is **32% (84)** compared to 4% nationally

[Special educational needs in England. Explore education statistics GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/special-educational-needs-in-england)

5.6. The geographic spread of Southwark Virtual School pupils remains similar to previous years. 72% of children looked after are placed outside of Southwark.

5.7. 75% (193 children) of Southwark statutory school age CLA are in Secondary education, which is unchanged from last year's cohort data. Up 3%



Table 2: Special Education Needs / In and Out of Borough by					
	Total CLA	EHCP	SEN Support	In Borough	Out Borough
Yr R	8	1	0	5	3
Yr 1	9	1	0	3	6
Yr 2	7	1	0	4	3
Yr 3	3	0	0	3	0
Yr 4	10	2	2	2	8
Yr 5	17	3	2	6	11
Yr 6	12	3	0	1	11
Yr 7	22	10	3	6	16
Yr 8	28	16	1	7	21
Yr 9	35	13	6	11	24
Yr 10	51	14	9	13	38
Yr 11	57	20	5	12	45
Total	259	84	28	73	186

5.8. The ethnicity of Southwark's Children looked after cohort, while in contrast to the national cohort, remains more or less in line with our statistical neighbours and reflects similarities of the demographics of Southwark's resident population and of Inner-City London.

5.9. Nationally, Children of White ethnicity account for 75% of children, 10% were Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups, 7% Black, African, Caribbean or Black British, 4% were Asian or Asian British, 3% other ethnicities and ethnicity was not known or not yet recorded for 1% [Children looked after in England including adoptions, Explore education statistics GOV.UK](#)

Table 3: Southwark's Cohort Breakdown by Ethnicity		
Ethnicity	Number	%
Asian/Asian British/Any other Asian Background	6	2%
Asian/Asian British/Bangladeshi	1	0%
Asian/Asian British/Indian	1	0%
Asian/Asian British/Pakistani	1	0%
Black/Black British/African	60	23%
Black/Black British/Any other Black background	22	8%
Black/Black British/Caribbean	25	10%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups/Any other Mixed background	28	11%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups/White and Asian	1	0%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups/White and Black African	7	3%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups/White and Black Caribbean	27	10%
Not disclosed	3	1%
Other Ethnic Groups/Any other ethnic group	10	4%
White/Any other White Background	8	3%
White/British	58	22%
White/Irish	1	0%



## 6. Inspection of Southwark local authority children's services

6.1. Southwark Children's Services were inspected by Ofsted between 26 and 30 September 2022. The Inspection found that children who need help, protection and care continue to receive good services and have their lives improved by frontline staff, leaders and managers working effectively to safeguard and support them.



[50198438 \(ofsted.gov.uk\)](https://www.ofsted.gov.uk/50198438)

6.2. The published report included a good judgment on the experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers. The key findings for children in care included:

- Permanency planning is understood well and for most children long-term plans are secured quickly
- Children's care plans are strong, reflecting their needs accurately.
- Foster carers receive good-quality training and development opportunities that help them meet the needs of the children they care for.
- Children in care have a strong voice and influence within the local authority.
- Foster carers receive good-quality training and development opportunities that help them meet the needs of the children they care for.

6.3. Specifically in relation to Virtual School outcomes the report found that:

- The Virtual School and partners work well together to ensure that children in care receive the educational support they need to succeed. Individual children are making strong academic progress.
- Older children are being helped and supported into higher education, training and employment opportunities, as appropriate to their needs.
- Children's personal education plans capture their experiences, as well as evaluating their educational progress and personal development.
- Senior managers and staff have ensured that children and young people continue to be safeguarded.
- The best possible decisions are being made about children's care and education.

The report also identified the need for the virtual school to continue to strengthen work on the small group of young people who are persistently absent to ensure they access education on a regular basis. This has remained a key priority for the virtual school and social care and we continue to work in partnership to drive forward improvement in this area with targeted casework, data analysis, early intervention and regular multi-agency panels to agree priority actions.

## 7. Ofsted Ratings of Schools in which we place Southwark's looked after children

7.1. Southwark Virtual School strives to ensure that CLA are placed in schools that are good or outstanding. Children in schools rated as "Outstanding" are half as likely to experience a mid-year school move compared to children in schools rated "Inadequate". Children only attend 'Requires Improvement' schools in exceptional circumstances, for example when a previously Good school has a poor inspection outcome but it is considered in best interests of the child for them to remain there.

7.2. The Table below reflects the distribution of Southwark looked after children by Ofsted ratings of the education provision they attend. 3% (8 children) attend provision that is in requires improvement which is down from 5% last year.

- 1 child was placed in a good school prior to the Ofsted inspection that saw the school move to inadequate status.
- 4 children were already attending the Requires Improvement Provisions prior to coming into Care
- 1 child with an EHCP was placed in a school that after consultation was deemed as the only school that could meet the Special Education Needs.
- 2 children were placed in a good school prior to the Ofsted inspection that saw the school move to Requires Improvement status.

	Number	%
Outstanding	56	22%
Good	130	50%
Requires Improvement	7	3%
Inadequate	1	0%
No Grade (new schools / academy converters /NSP)	65	25%

7.3. Some children are attending schools that do not have an Ofsted outcome – these are either academy converters not yet inspected since conversion or new schools.

## 8. Attendance

*'...even before the pandemic, there is a group of children who struggle to attend school regularly and who have fallen through the gaps in our education system. Coming out of the pandemic, this group has only gotten bigger...'*

Rachel De Souza Children's Commissioner - [Voices of England's Missing Children](#)

On a National level,

*'In Autumn 2021, the number of children persistently absent more than doubled compared to 2018/19, almost 1 in 4 children were persistently absent from school compared to around 1 in 9 in 2018/19.'*

[Voices of England's Missing Children](#)

8.1. In Southwark, persistent absence is currently 23% (59 Children) down from 28% (81 children) reported in the last academic year.

8.2. Recorded 51% (30) Girls 49% (29) boys.

Table 5 : Actual Percentage Attendance in the Persistent Absentee Cohort	
%	Pupils
0% - attendance Includes children who recently came into care and no school place	3
1% - 29%	8
30% - 49%	3
50% - 59%	16
60% - 69%	7
70% - 79%	8
80% - 89%	14

8.3. 22 children with SEN appear on the list of persistent absentees.

Table 6 : SEND profile of the Persistent Absentee Cohort			
	EHCP	SEN support	Total SEND
Total	22	4	18

8.4. Key stage 4 is over represented with 34 children recorded as Persistent Absentees.

- Attendance in this group is largely due to school refusal that relates to post pandemic effects and also SEN sufficiency issues which is a current concern across many Local Authorities. Intensive work is taking place to turn this around and improve access to education for this groups.
- All children in this group were offered additional tuition and exceptionally funded tuition to work towards the exam. Exam centres are arranged accordingly so children can sit exams.
- 3 children are Unaccompanied Asylums seeking children. 1 arrived in the country this academic year.

Table 7: Actual Percentage Attendance in the Persistent Absentee Cohort	
%	Pupils
Yr R to Yr 6	11
Year 7	2
Year 8	5
Year 9	7
Year 10	15
Year 11	19
Total	59

8.5. From the full number of 59 children who were persistently absent,

- 15% (9) new to care in this academic year.
- 5% (3) are Unaccompanied Asylums seeking children – 1 arrived in the country this academic year.
- 54% (32) had one or more placement change.
- 15% (9) received suspensions from their schools.
- Other contributing factors were school refusals, sufficiency for children with SEN, illness, medicals and instances of unauthorised absences that are addressed as these arise.

#### 8.6. How Attendance is Monitored:

- The Virtual School commissions an external attendance monitoring service that provide daily information.
- Each day live attendance information is collected and this is shared with the Virtual School.
- We get alerts when children are taken off roll, suspended and permanently excluded.
- The Virtual School monitors daily patterns, exclusions and queries that arise from missed attendance, this is forwarded to Social Workers and Education Advisors for immediate follow up.
- Project Officers also contact schools directly when we spot that the attendance codes they are using does not match the feedback from Education Advisors and Social workers.



#### 8.7. How we respond to persistent absenteeism

- We commission the services of an attendance monitoring service for daily monitoring. This includes daily phone calls rather than electronic collection methods so we have live up to date details of the reasons for absences.
- Tuition is available to ensure that we avoid gaps in learning.
- Transition funding is offered to school where in year admissions take place to ensure attendance is supported and the education placement works.
- We advocate for children when there are suspensions and risk of to permanent exclusion with significant success and find solutions with schools.

- We secure education at the point of a placement change as quickly as we possibly can in order to offer stability of care placements.
- We report findings to the Care team and hold a monthly attendance panel with Social Workers present. The Education Advisors and Social workers hold impressive knowledge of reasons for absence but also suggested approaches to improve attendance.
- We offer Education Psychology, Speech and language, mentors and coaches which is funded through the Virtual School Pupil Premium Plus.
- We trigger statutory assessments for SEN when we can spot signs that this can improve engagement and in return attendance.
- Together with Colleagues in Care we arrange transportation for children who cannot easily make their way to school be it for distance reasons or undiagnosed SEN.
- For year 11 children who are refusing school and cannot be swayed to attend, we plan ahead with Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) so we have the best outcomes for successful transition into adulthood. We secure exam centres and work toward children sitting their exams.
- Ensure the school is aware of care status, early years trauma and that school is attachment aware
- We offer strategy meetings with the wider multiagency network and involve the support of Foster Carers.
- Over the past year, all our schools were offered Pupil Premium Plus to support Education attainment and attendance, from our Persistent Absentee list 10 children had an Education Psychology assessment, exceptional payments to support attendance was paid to 6 schools who employed additional staff to support children, Speech and language Support was also offered to all school and 6 children accessed this. Additional Tuition offer - 483 hours of additional tuition was provided to our persistent absentees.

#### **8.8. Not just persistent absentees**

- There are at times less obvious patterns can easily go unnoticed. Sudden absences, for example, may well be due to illness, or a bereavement in the family, but they could also be more concerning reasons, particularly if they are unexplained.
- In the vast majority of cases, sudden absences are explained when the child returns to school but the Virtual School is vigilant of unexplained patterns.

## 9. Children Missing Education

### Definition of Children Missing Education

*“Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.”*

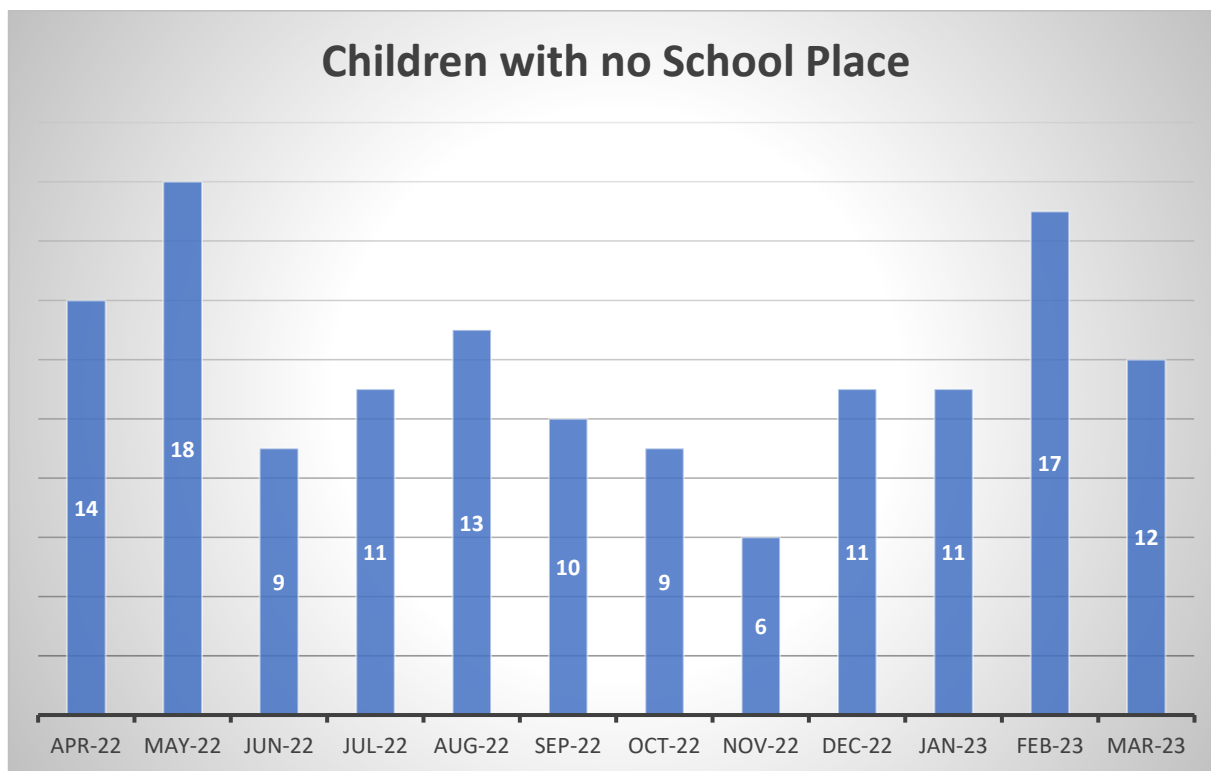
*[Children Missing Education, Statutory guidance for local authorities](#)*

- 9.1. Southwark Virtual School strives to ensure that looked after children are in education. Schools are the safest place for children to be and through partnership work with key professions, instances where children are out of education are addressed swiftly to ensure that education placements are secured without delay.
- 9.2. Southwark Virtual School applies the term Children Missing Education to all children with no school place even when they are receiving tuition. There is also a strong focus on children who are reported as risk of CME.
- 9.3. The Virtual School holds a **Children Missing Education Panel every week** of the academic year as well as during school holidays with the aim that there is weekly follow up on actions taken to secure education and that children are placed in education.
- 9.4. Records of discussions and actions as well as the follow up is recorded weekly and informs the planning in the week that follows.

**CME panel members are:** Virtual School Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher – Chair, All Education Advisors (EAs).

- 9.5. Some reasons children or young people may be missing education:
  - The child/young person may be new into care and due to where the child/young person is placed, they are not able to attend their existing school [Southwark Council tries to ensure continuity of educational placement wherever possible]
  - The child moves placement as an emergency [for example, if a care setting gives less than 28 days' notice] and new education provision needs to be sourced.
  - Prior to coming into care, the child was electively home educated
  - Proximity of new placement means the child cannot attend their existing school. The Virtual School tries to ensure continuity of educational placement wherever possible
  - The child may leave secure or residential care which has education on site.
  - The child may have SEN needs and the network may be unable to source specialist provision that can meet the needs as identified on the EHCP.
  - The child/young person may be permanently excluded and new education provision is being arranged.
  - The child/young person may be placed in an area which lacks alternative provision options and mainstream may not be the best place to meet educational needs.

9.6. The Graph below plots the number of children with no school place recorded from April 22 to March 23. The children who are recorded as missing education can change each month as school places are secured and as children enter the care system without a school place.



9.7. There are currently 12 children with no school place confirmed. 9 children have an EHCP and 1 has SEN Support.

9.8. All children who do not have a school place have tuition in place or have been offered tuition. Education Psychology referrals and Speech and Language assessments have been completed where these are required.

9.9. There is clear evidence of this number increasing as we progress into the academic year.

9.10. The largest contributing factor delaying school placement is SEN sufficiency across the country. Virtual School and care colleagues are working with SEN team across the country to address this.

9.11. The increase in number of children coming into Care and the increasing complexity of securing placement is an area that is felt nationally.

9.12. Education has been secured or expected in the weeks ahead for 3 children with tuition currently in place:

- 1 child is confirmed to be starting school in an appropriate specialist setting.
- 2 children who are new to care have an in year application in progress and we are awaiting confirmation of a named school and a start date.

9.13. Of the remaining 9 children there is active advocacy from Virtual School and Social care Colleagues to secure education. Tuition is in place.

- 1 child recently left a secure long term placement in hospital.
- 1 child recently left a residential and education placement.
- 1 is in a residential placement which has recently broken down and given notice.
- 1 child has just had long term Care placement confirmed and an in year admission is in progress.
- 3 children have complex SEN, including 1 with complex disabilities. Consultations have returned unanimous responses of schools declaring that they cannot meet need. Local Authority of residence are engaging to name schools.
- 2 children with EHCPs have been provided with education options but have refused to engage. Alternatives are being sought. IAG is in place and we are planning ahead to promote engagement in KS5.

#### 9.14. **Children at Risk of CME**

Southwark Virtual School also monitors looked after children considered at risk of CME as part of the weekly CME panel. In these instances, Social Care and Education services work together so that there is a planned correlation between placement and educational needs. These are the circumstances we consider a child to be at risk:

- The child will be moving school or there is a change of care placement in the near future.
- The child is at risk of a permanent exclusion (PEX).
- The child has an EHCP and there is a school consultation process before a new school is named on the EHCP.
- There is drift in funding agreements regarding securing ongoing education placements.

#### 9.15. **Escalation Process**

Education Advisors and Social Workers escalate education placement planning to the Virtual School Headteacher in the following circumstances:

- Where a child does not have an EHCP and remains unplaced beyond reasonable timelines
- Where a child has an EHCP and remains unplaced beyond statutory timelines
- Where there is a risk that the child is at risk of Children Missing Education,
- Where there is gap in education while school provision is being finalised and tuition is requested during the waiting period.



## 10. Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

10.1. An unaccompanied asylum-seeking child (UASC) is an individual under 18, who has applied for asylum in his/her own right, is separated from both parents and is not being cared for by an adult who by law or custom has responsibility to do so.

10.2. The number of Southwark looked after children who were unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in increasing this academic year.

2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Year to date
41	53	51	44	53	49	54

10.3. An increase in the numbers of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children aged 16 years and over in Southwark is above national trends. 92% of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are aged 16+.

10.4. All Unaccompanied Minors receive a Personal Education Plan within 10 working days of coming into Care. During these meetings, education history and past achievements are recorded, alongside interests, strengths and home location. Any barriers to learning are also noted including potential additional support.

10.5. The VS take into account levels of spoken English and pastoral care needs alongside daily travelling distance to a local college. This information gathering informs decision making around sourcing suitable education provision.



10.6. ESOL is delivered in most FE Colleges in London.

10.7. **Challenges** – Since July 2021 the intake of Unaccompanied Minors has increased across London LA's. This has put a strain on FE College resources due to high demand for spaces. The additional challenge presented has been that of age dispute and discrepancies between home office and Southwark data. Some colleges have been reluctant to admit those whose age or identity are disputed.

10.8. **Successes** – The Southwark Virtual School through regular consultation with main providers have been instrumental in influencing decisions to increase ESOL capacity in FE Colleges. The result being that in most cases we are able to place new Unaccompanied Minors in education within 14 days of completing a PEP.

10.9. Follow up/review PEPs have documented positive feedback from teaching staff and evidenced that the majority of our ESOL students are keen to learn and do not present challenging behaviour.

# 11. Pupil Premium Plus

- 11.1. The Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) is grant funding from the DfE to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and to close the gap with their peers.
- 11.2. Funding rates for the pupil premium in the financial year 2022 to 2023 will increase in line with the latest inflation forecasts. Rates for 2022 to 2023 will be:
- Looked-after children: £2,410 increase of £65
  - Children who have ceased to be looked-after: £2,410 increase of £65
- 11.3. Over the past academic year, Southwark Virtual School was able to target specialist resources to ensure that educational needs were still met even though schools were closed. Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) was devolved to schools to ensure that schools have the right resources to meet pupils' needs. This included purchasing laptops and increasing the tuition offer for online learning.
- 11.4. Southwark Virtual School ran a very Successful Summer tuition programme over the school holidays. It was a great success with 35 children (stat school age and KS5) who took up the opportunity to access additional tuition over the summer. Between them, they accessed 594 hours of tuition funded from the Virtual School COVID recovery Grant and Pupil Premium funding.
- 
- 11.5. There is definitely an appetite for additional tuition over holidays and the voice of our children in Care is made clear through their participation. The feedback we have received has been excellent. The Virtual school will create more opportunities for children to access tuition during school holidays throughout the year.
- 11.6. The Virtual School traditionally utilises retained funding for the following:
- **Exceptional needs funding** to support children's attainment and social/mental health well-being by topping up allocations as required by schools.
  - **Education Psychologist** support dedicated to the Virtual School to support learning difficulties and early identification of statutory assessments.
  - **Speech and Language Therapy Service - Unlocking Language**  
Many looked after children have unidentified speech, language and communication needs. These include difficulties both understanding language (making sense of what people say) and using language (words and sentences). Looked after children are more likely to start school with limited language and more likely to have communication needs as they progress through education. Where this is not identified and supported we see increase in episodes of offending behaviour and growing gaps in education.
- 

Having our very own SALT service that you can refer children to, means you have a direct referral route and Southwark's looked after children can access this service without the long waiting periods felt through other referral routes. Strengthening communication skills supports relationship building, educational attainment and ultimately future life chances.

Our Speech and language service offers both direct work with our most vulnerable looked after children and training to Southwark networks around children.

**Targeted input** included joint target setting, implementation of targets/strategies support, parent and educator coaching, training for specific staff groups, reviews of young people's progress towards targets across settings, support for staff by providing strategies to support students communication, providing reports to support referrals submission, and liaison with the wider Multidisciplinary Team (MDT), MDT meeting input, and support of parents and carers to encourage carryover of skills within the home and community environment.

**Specialist input included:** 1:1 therapy and assessment sessions with students online, writing assessment and progress reports, and giving students carryover strategies to use in their daily lives beyond sessions.

- **Fixed Term resourcing** with the employment of 5 Specialist Education Advisors, 1 Project Officer and 1 Information Advice and Guidance officers.
- **Supplementary Home Tuition** for pupils in full time education with a focus on English and maths to support academic achievement.
- **Exam support** to all looked after children through offer of 30 hours of additional tuition.
- **Interim Alternative Provision:** home tuition as part of a temporary transition provision for children who are between care placements, persistent absentees (school refusers) and other circumstances where this support is needed.
- **Online learning programme** to secure swift access to education for pupils without a school place due to care placement changes and those pupils who are placed in remote areas of the country where 1:1 tuition cannot be reserved.
- **Nacro Training** - NACRO are a social justice charity supporting disadvantaged young people and adults with education, employment and housing through support, information, guidance and advocacy. The Virtual School funded a one-day training session facilitated by NACRO to promote the understanding of how Education Advisors can better advocate for and support looked after children when securing education. This is particularly relevant for children and young people who may have criminal convictions and/or cautions acting as barriers to access opportunities. Given the relevance, the Virtual School saw this as an opportunity to strengthen our partnership with the Youth Offending Service and Alternative Provision Team. Colleagues from both agencies attended, engaged and participated with the Virtual School in this interactive session, providing excellent feedback. Education Advisors in particular, found it useful to understand what type of information education provisions/employers can request, what and how relevant information can be declared and from what point such information is considered spent and where/when there is no obligation to disclose. The training was insightful, empowering, and

relevant and has strengthened the Virtual School's position in advocating for our most disadvantaged children and young people.

[www.nacro.org](http://www.nacro.org)

- **Digital resource** –targeted curriculum related software to complement learning and to mitigate for changes in placements or missed schooling.

- **Letterbox Literacy**

Targeted resources for primary aged pupils targeted. Packages delivered to children are equipped with reading and writing material as well as stationery.



- **Storytime** - Storytime is a story magazine and a social enterprise - supporting families and reluctant readers with accessible reading material. Storytime supplies magazines to our primary-aged looked after children. The magazine format works well for reluctant readers who might not pick up a book and gets accessible reading material into the hands of these young people, delivering significant improvements in reading enjoyment and time spent reading.

Each edition has 8 highly illustrated short stories suitable with fairy tales, new and classic stories, awesome animals, inspirational children, myths, legends, tales from other cultures, puzzles, games, a My Mind Matters section and more

The recent cost of living issues, coming so soon after the lockdowns, have disproportionately impacted the literacy and learning of the most vulnerable young people in society, including looked after children.

Getting a bright colourful envelope with their name on it each month, filled with accessible, fun short-stories makes such a difference – the envelope creates a sense of ownership, the monthly deliveries create anticipation and become habit forming, and the accessible magazine format is accessible for primary age children.

- **Power2** has been working with Southwark Virtual School to support their looked after children and children in need through the Teens and Toddlers programme and Power2 Rediscover programme. Power2 programme facilitators work intensively with students to support them with the challenges, they may be facing. Students on both programmes complete the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale to track improvements in their wellbeing. Students referred to the Power2 Rediscover programme complete the Outcome Star – Young Persons Star- to plot their areas of development at programme start and work towards those goals throughout the programme.

**Power2 Rediscover** is a 10-week programme for children and young people with poor mental health and wellbeing, struggling with their confidence and self-esteem, exhibiting distressed behaviour, disengaged from school and learning, and who may also be at risk of school exclusion.

**Teens and Toddlers** is a 16-week programme for children and young people aged 12-17 struggling with their confidence, self-esteem, exhibiting distressed behaviour, disengaged from school and learning, and who may also be at risk of school exclusion. Secondary-aged students become a mentor and role model to a child in a local nursery, spending a morning or afternoon a week supporting their learning and development. They also take part in reflective group learning sessions which include

therapeutic coaching to boost their self-confidence and raise their aspirations. On completion of the programme students achieve a nationally-recognised NCFE Level 1 qualification in Interpersonal Skills, which they receive at an annual graduation ceremony

**School feedback:** Students' attendance has improved, and detentions are quite low with high achievement points. The programme supports students to show more confidence, talk more to year team about issues that are bothering them and more able to advocate for themselves in a respectful and productive manner.

**Student feedback:**

- I felt comfortable about saying anything without feeling judged, and that it's helped with my communication skills and confidence.
- The sessions really made me think about how important certain topics are.
- I liked it all I got to speak about my feelings.
- Being able to set goals for myself etc.
- I've realised a lot about myself.



# 12.Southwark Virtual School Christmas Project 2022

12.1. The Virtual Held a Christmas Project and received beautiful entries.

**Southwark Virtual School  
Creativity Project**

Southwark Virtual School has organised an activity for all our young people.  
To enter all you have to do is choose a topic and email your entry to us.

**Every entry will receive a £20 voucher**

- Your handmade Christmas cards
- Drawings
- Painting
- Poems
- Essays
- Short stories
- You can also do some baking and send us pictures of the treats

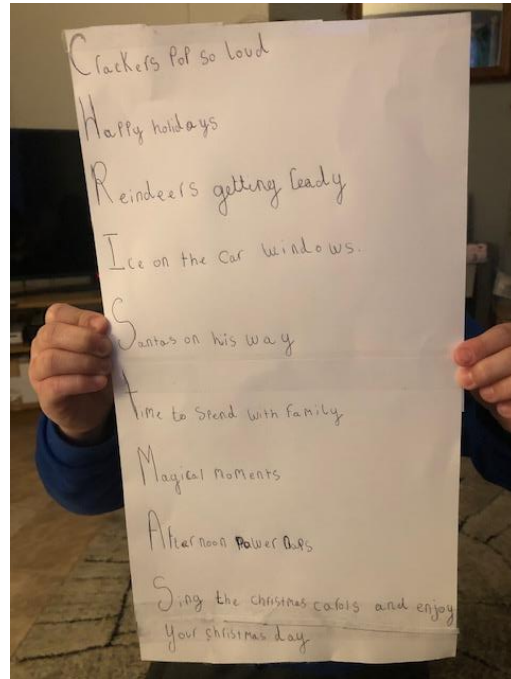
Choose one of the following topics below:

- The Festive Season
- About Me
- The Lionesses win Euro 2022
- The Premier League 2022
- Freestyle: A topic of your choice.

Send your entries to [LACeducation@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:LACeducation@southwark.gov.uk)  
We look forward to receiving all of your responses  
All entries will receive a £20 Love to shop Voucher

**Closing date:  
15 December 2022**

**Southwark Virtual School** 



Message from Foster carer: 'our young Lady has been making dinner for the family and encouraging healthy eating, the theme is the family can have burgers if homemade and with a side salad is doing food tech at school and wanted to enter the burgers for the School Christmas Activity.

Ps we have eaten for dinner and were delicious.'

From the school designated teacher,  
'Our Year 8 student has made this lovely  
picture of a snowman.'



Message from school:

'He worked hard and is very proud of his  
work.'



## 13. Supplementary and Interim Tuition

13.1. The table below shows how Pupil premium was used to supplement education for our 2022 cohort. This is apart from funding devolved to schools where the school put tuition in place directly.

13.2. The Virtual School always places additional focus on all children taking examinations to give children every opportunity to do their very best. Supporting children when they need this most has proven to be an excellent strategy yielding good results.

Table 9 : SHT/AP interim							
	Pupils	EHCP	%	SEN	%	Cost per NCY	Hours
Yr R	0	0	0%	0	0%	£ -	
Yr 1	0	0	0%	0	0%	£ -	
Yr 2	1	1	1%	0	0%	£ 463.00	10
Yr 3	1	0	0%	0	0%	£ 540.00	12
Yr 4	3	0	0%	0	0%	£ 882.00	19
Yr 5	4	1	1%	0	0%	£ 1,973.25	43
Yr 6	2	1	1%	0	0%	£ 1,408.50	31
Yr 7	4	0	0%	0	0%	£ 740.25	16
Yr 8	4	2	1%	1	1%	£ 2,223.00	49
Yr 9	16	1	1%	2	1%	£ 8,739.00	191
Yr 10	11	4	3%	1	1%	£ 5,483.25	120
Yr 11	34	2	1%	9	6%	£ 39,735.00	859
Yr 12	40	8	5%	5	3%	£ 22,605.75	277
Yr 13	32	1	1%	3	2%	£ 17,167.50	380
<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>21</b>		<b>21</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>£ 101,960.50</b>	<b>2007</b>

13.3. Interim Alternative Provision was put in place in instances while children were awaiting a school place. AP interim was offered to a significant higher group of children than represented in the table below but the costs for this was picked up by the SEN team as the children were on an EHCP.

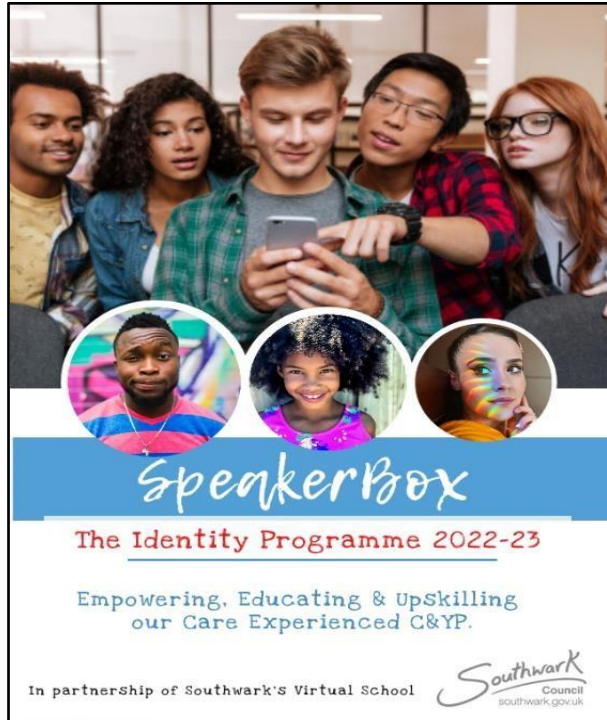
Table 14: AP interim							
	Pupils	EHCP	%	SEN	%	Cost per NCY	Hours
Yr 5	1	1	7%				
Yr 6							
Yr 7	1	1	7%			£ 425.25	9
Yr 8	1	1	7%				
Yr 9	5	2	13%	1	7%	£ 3,321.00	72
Yr 10							
Yr 11	7		47%	1	7%	£ 6,394.50	139
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>£ 10,140.75</b>	<b>220</b>



## 14. SpeakerBox & Virtual School Partnership

SpeakerBox is Southwark's Children in Care Council (CiCC)

14.1. The summer on 2022 gave birth to a new exciting partnership between The Virtual School and SpeakerBox,. The Virtual School wanted to expand its reach whilst providing fresh approaches in upskilling our care experienced C&YP, and SpeakerBox required additional funding to run new innovative events in view of improving engagement and increasing SpeakerBox's membership. The Virtual School contributed to the SpeakerBox activity fund and in return, the Children's Rights Service organised and facilitated a series of fresh events that would educate, upskill, and inspire Southwark's care experienced Children and Young People.



14.2. From 01/04/22 – 31/08/22 there were 444 recorded episodes, which represented the occasions where Children and Young People engaged with the SpeakerBox service. This was reflective of events, workshops, advocacy support, Young people facilitating training, consultations, Young People sitting on interview panels, and contacting the service to access advice and information. The recorded 444 episodes is a 25% increase from the summer of 2017, (the service's previous highest recorded engagement to date) where there were previously 346-recorded episodes. The Virtual School were instrumental in making this additional engagement, not only possible, but a success. Please refer to the synopsis (below) of activities that the Virtual School funded.

### 14.3. **SpeakerBox Identity Project**

During the spring of 2022, SpeakerBox felt that it was important for care experienced C&YP to embrace every part of themselves, and wherever possible, be supported in celebrating their true identity. During the summer of 2022, SpeakerBox commenced developing their "I Am..." identity campaign.

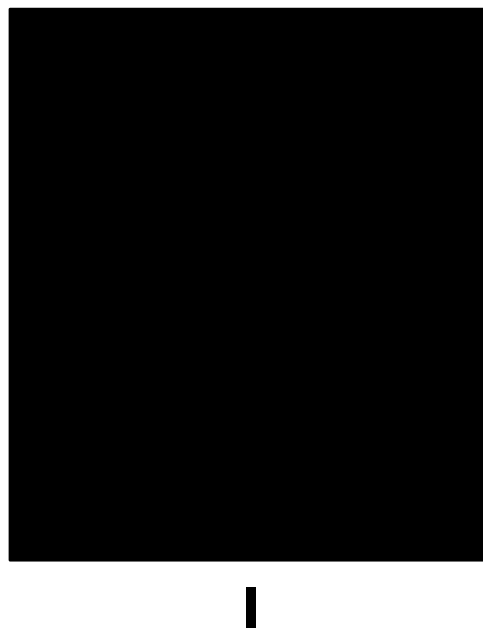
#### 14.4. SpeakerBox Summer Art Club (with SuperSmashers)

12 children (aged 13 years and below) engaged with the "SpeakerBox Art Project". The project's focus was on identity, which encouraged the children to explore the importance of their own identity and personal traits. SpeakerBox and SuperSmashers encouraged the young participants to create their own planets and they had the autonomy to create their own superheroes. This encouraged the young participants to consider which personal identity traits they wanted to include in the building of their own superheroes. Please look at the images below of some of the wonderful creations some of our C&YP made.



#### 14.5. SpeakerBox Summer Theatre Project (with London Bubble)

In August, 12 young people (aged between 13 -25 years) engaged with the "Identity Film Project". The idea was to create a short film that would help educate, remind and inform all social work professionals and foster carers of the importance of celebrating identity. This project also enabled the young participants to develop new skills in making films. SpeakerBox intends on presenting the final edited film at the launch of the Identity Campaign in early 2023. SpeakerBox plans on using the film as a training tool to inform social care practice. Through participation several young people would now like to pursue careers and further training in film and television. One young person now would like to start their own YouTube channel. One care leaver has obtained further experience as a filmmaker and now as work he can now include in his portfolio. Please see the image below taken from the workshop.



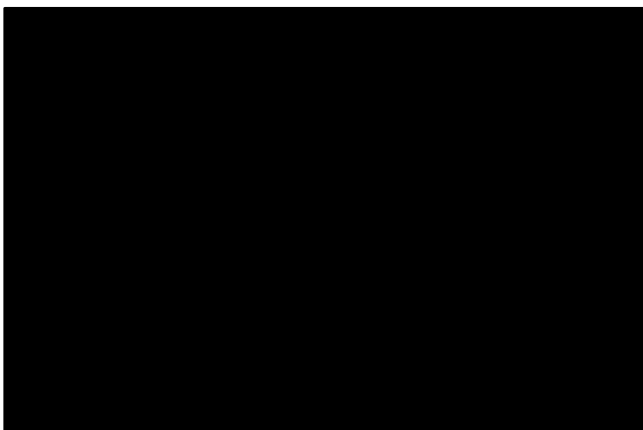
#### 14.6. SpeakerBox Summer Theatre Project (with London Bubble)

From the 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> August 14 young people (aged between 12 -21 years) were a part of the drama workshop at London Bubble Theatre. The group of young people were supported in developing a dramatic piece that explored the theme of identity and the multiple challenges these may have on a young person, particularly those with care experience. The dramatic piece touched upon sexuality, gender, race and culture. The young members of SpeakerBox performed their final piece to 19 Southwark council professionals and foster carers, and the general feedback was extremely positive. Overall, since engaging with the programme, some of the new participants have noticeably grown in confidence, developed new trusting friendships and some have a new desire to attend future drama classes. Please see the image below taken from the drama workshop.



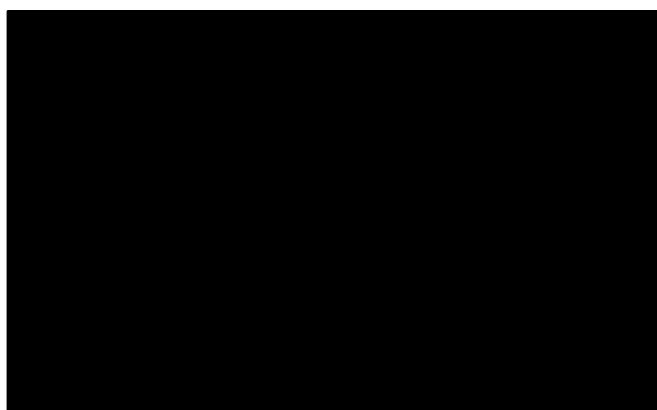
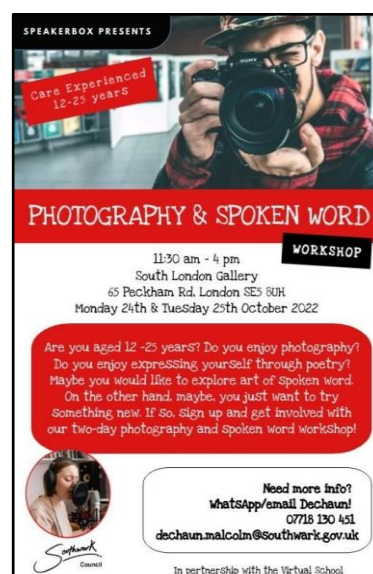
#### 14.7. SpeakerBox Let's Get Active' fitness programme

SpeakerBox introduced 'Let's Get Active' which was a fitness programme ran in partnership with a semi-professional basketball Player. 15 children and young people (aged 12-17 years) attended the programme. Not only did this programme give SpeakerBox young members the opportunity to train, test fitness and play a series of basketball exercises, but it also encouraged the young participants to work effectively as a team and exercised the importance of working effectively together and team work. Please see the image below taken from the fitness programme.



## 14.8. SpeakerBox Photography & spoken Word Workshop at The South London Gallery

On 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> October, the theme of identity continued, and 22 young people engaged on our photography and spoken word workshop. Most of those young people who had signed up to the programme were initially interested in photography, and one care leaver, in particular, was currently studying photography at college. This, for some of the young participants, was the first opportunity working with professional cameras and an industry standard photographer. The second part of the workshop focused on developing expressions and feelings through the art of spoken word. Young people were encouraged to introduce themselves to the world through this medium, and by the end of the workshop, they were able to place their creative pieces over music. SpeakerBox plans to launch the final photographic art pieces and spoken words at their campaign launch during the early part of 2023.



Thank you!

SpeakerBox and the Children's Rights service would like to take this opportunity to thank the Virtual School for their contributions to the service. Their input has not only increased engagement and SpeakerBox membership, but it has also made it possible to raise aspirations for some of our Children and Young People.

We thank you.



## 15. Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

15.1. Moving to an Electronic PEP format has been a Priority of the Virtual School over the past year. The Virtual School is pleased to share that this has now been achieved and all Personal education Planning is now taking place as an ePEP.

15.2. ePEP is an electronic PEP system that will ensure:

- Children have their **education progress** electronically tracked, monitored and recorded so the story of their education journey is never lost and moves with the child when placements change and also when we have turnaround in staffing.
- The **'Voice of the Child'** is clearly evident throughout the PEP process;
- Completing the **PEP document is a shared task** and not left to only the social worker. Schools Designated teachers and Virtual Schools Advisors all have a chance to contribute to different sections on the ePEP;
- With every new PEP window you will have a **prepopulated PEP document** ready and historical information all on the same platform;
- The reporting of **student progress** provides accurate and up-to-date live data;
- There is immediate access to **attainment and attendance data**;
- There is more effective **targeting of the resources**;
- You can see how **Pupil Premium Plus** is used and outcomes;
- The PEP process is better **coordinated and delivered**;
- Schools can **directly store important documents** that follows the child through each change of placement and is never lost.

15.3. The Personal Education Plan or PEP is a record of how professionals around the child looked after will support their educational outcomes and achievement. It is developed and reviewed termly with the designated teacher, young person, social worker, carer and Virtual School. A PEP should be started within 10 days of a child becoming looked after, and their plan must be in place by their first review. PEP documents include:

- Strengths and achievements
- Views of the student
- SMART academic targets
- Current and target attainment data

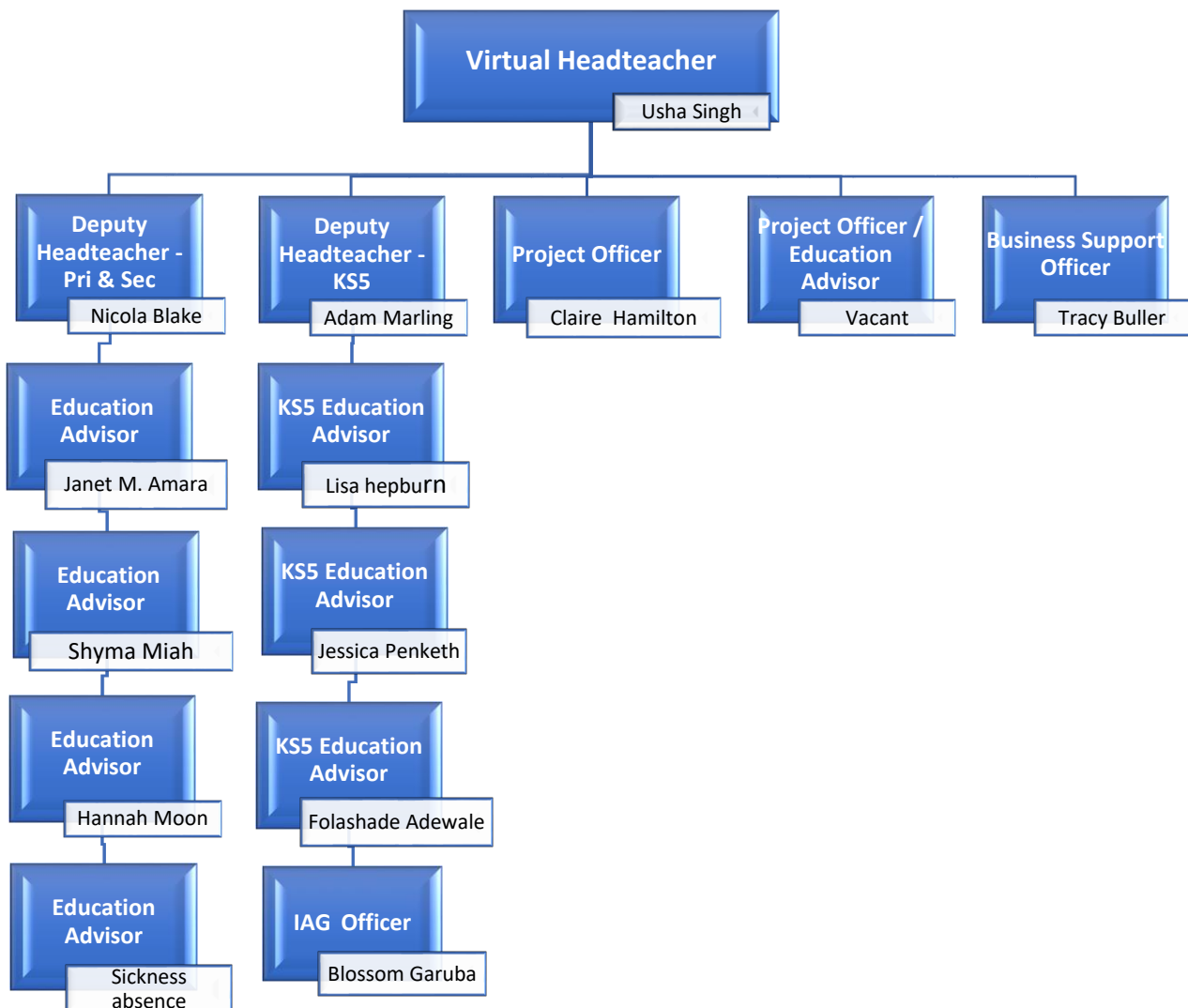
15.4. PEPs are a key driver in ensuring our pupils receive good quality education provision that is suited to their needs. PEPs are a holistic tool to improve attainment and engagement.

15.5. In the current education climate all Southwark PEPs are taking place remotely. The number of PEP meetings taking place has increased with more professionals within the network able to join meeting remotely. We are set to transition to in person PEPs as soon as this is possible.

15.6. Southwark Personal Education Plan (PEP) performance during the last cycle of PEPs was reported as 74%. The target remains 100%.

## 16.Virtual School – Staff Structure

- 16.1. The Virtual School in Southwark forms part of the Education Access and Statutory Services division in Children's and Adults' Services.
- 16.2. The structure of the Virtual School provides a focus on specialist provision at statutory school age and post 16 with more targeted leadership in both sides of the Virtual School.
- 16.3. The outcomes achieved in this year are due, in part, to the effort, persistence and expertise of Virtual School officers, working closely with schools, carers, other local authorities and social workers. The work put in by these post holders, such as developing a strong working together ethos with the multi-disciplinary team and both internal and external networks directly impacts on the good outcomes of the Virtual School.



## 17. Key stage 4

17.1. Summer 2022 saw the return of a full exam series in all four UK nations. For England, regulator Ofqual has announced that [grading in 2022 will again be more generous than it was pre-pandemic](#), but that grades are expected to fall at a mid-point between those in 2019 and 2021. In future, the plan is for grades to revert to a more normal distribution. As such, 2022 has been described as a ‘transition year’.

[Coronavirus: GCSEs, A Levels and equivalents in 2022 - House of Commons Library \(parliament.uk\)](#)

### 17.2. **Southwark’s 2021-2022 Year 11 Cohort Information**

Southwark’s 2021-2022 Year 11 cohort comprised 72 children 24 children were in Care for 12 months or less (SSDA903).

- 46% of the cohort are recorded as female and 54% male. The last reported London and National data shows a smaller female population at 42% and 47% female respectively.
- 39% of the cohort are recorded as having SEN. 25% with an EHCP and 14% SEN support.
- 28% were educated in the borough compared to the last reported figure London 42% and 66% nationally.

Table 10: 21-22 Yr11 cohort		
Gender		
Male	39	54%
Female	33	46%
SEN/EHCP		
SEN Support	10	14%
EHCP	18	25%
Total SEN	28	39%
IN/OUT borough		
In borough	20	28%
Out of borough	52	72%

17.3. There are a group of children that were not entered in the exam. Amongst the reasons for this:

Table 11: Children not entered in GCSE Exams	
UASC / ESOL – Early learners of English	13 (12 New to care)
Missing from care	2
Secure Centre	1
Complex SEND	7
Medical/ illness	2
School refuser	1
Awaiting results	6
Functional Skills, Entry level exam	2
Total	34

#### 17.4. **Ethnicity**

Table 12: Ethnicity Breakdown		
	Number	%
Asian/Asian British/Bangladeshi	1	1%
Asian/Asian British/ Any other Asian background	4	6%
Asian/Asian British/Pakistani	1	1%
Black/Black British/African	13	18%
Black/Black British/Caribbean	16	22%
Black/Black British/ Any other Black background	4	6%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups/ Any other Mixed background	6	8%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups/ White and Black African	2	3%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups/ White and Black Caribbean	2	3%
Other ethnic groups/ Any other ethnic groups	10	14%
Not disclosed	2	3%
White/British	7	10%
White/Any other white background	4	6%

17.5. Southwark's 2021-2022 Year 11 cohort comprised 72 children

- 41 children were in the 12 month plus - SSDA903 cohort
- 31 children were in Care for 12 months or less.

17.6. 12 Months+ in Care - This definition has been used in statutory guidance because 12 months is considered an appropriate length of time to gauge the possible association of being looked after on educational attainment. Evidence suggests that children who are in care for more than 12 months perform better than children new to care.

17.7. 54% of the cohort was female and 46% male. This is significantly different from the cohort last year at 29% and 71% respectively and is closer to London and National data which shows which was last reported at 42% and 47% female respectively.

17.8. 58% of children in this cohort were recorded as having SEN compared to 53% children from the previous Southwark cohort. 34% had an EHCP and 24% had SEN support.

Table 13: 2021-2022 Year 11 - 12 Month Plus Cohort		
Gender		
Male	19	46% (71% last year)
Female	22	54% (29% last year)
SEN/EHCP		
SEN Support	9	24%
EHCP	14	34%
Total SEN	24	58%



17.9. 32% were educated in the borough compared to 20% of the previous Southwark cohort. Last reported London and National figures for children educated in borough are 42% and 66% nationally.

Table 14: IN/OUT borough		
In borough	13	32%
Out of borough	28	68%

#### 17.10. **Virtual School Offer– Use of Pupil premium Grant**

All Southwark Virtual School Year 11 students receive enhanced support in their GCSE year so that they are well supported to secure good grades.

#### 17.11. **Attendance year 11 – 2022 Cohort**

The year group with the highest number of persistently absent children is the 2022 academic year was the year 11 group. 58% of the GCSE cohort (42 Children) were recorded as persistent absentees before the exams.

17.12. There were no permanent exclusion recorded.

17.13. The rise in persistent absence in this group is largely attributed to embedded behaviours following a period of lockdown where there was no requirement to attend school. The 2022 GCSE cohort is the first group to write formal GCSE exams and followed 2 years of teacher assessed grades.

17.14. A larger than usual group of school refusers emerged in this year group and views of the importance of exams was variable across the group.

*‘...even before the pandemic, there is a group of children who struggle to attend school regularly and who have fallen through the gaps in our education system. Coming out of the pandemic, this group has only gotten bigger...’*

[\*Voices of England's Missing Children\*](#)

17.15. Of the 42 children:

- Gender is recorded as 18 girls and 24 boys.
- 18 children have SEN with 13 are on an EHCP and 5 SEN Support
- 17 children were new to care in this academic year and their attendance data is not captured prior to the care episode.
- 9 children had no school place
  - 7 of this group were new to care.
  - 2 of this group have EHCPs and placement changes affected attendance.
- 12 children are Unaccompanied Asylums seeking children - 10 arrived in the country this academic year. There is no attendance data prior to the care episode.

17.16. Other reasons for persistent absence included

- School refusal
- Suspensions
- Change of care placements
- Illness / medical

17.17. All children in this group were offered additional tuition.

17.18. **Attainment information**

The data below offer a summary of attainment for Southwark Virtual School looked after children (CLA) cohort as well our looked after children who are 12 months or more in care. A direct comparison should not be made with the Covid years as those results are based on Teacher assessed grades.

17.19. **12 Month plus Cohort – 41 Student**

Southwark's 2022 CLA cohort achieving a pass (9-4) and a strong pass (9-5) in both English and Maths - for our 12 months plus is plotted in the table below.

- While English outcomes appear to be in line with outcomes from last year, the outcomes for Maths in standard pass 9-4 has dropped. This is likely a COVID effect where missed maths and science tuition

Level	2019	2020	2021	2022
English Standard, 9-4	24%	26%	34%	34%
English Strong, 9-5	15%	17%	20%	22%
Maths Standard, 9-4	21%	34%	34%	22%
Maths Strong, 9-5	9%	11%	24%	20%

17.20. Southwark's 2022 CLA English and Maths results for our 12 months plus cohort is plotted against the outcome from previous years in the table below.

	2019	2020	2021	2022
Standard, 9-4			34%	20%
Strong, 9-5	6.5	11	17%	17%

17.21. **Attainment whole cohort: 72 students** (38 children took GCSEs)

17.22. Southwark's 2022 CLA English and Maths for the full cohort is plotted on the tables below.

	2020	2021	2022
English Standard, 9-4	32%	27%	47%
English Strong, 9-5	26%	16%	17%
Maths Standard, 9-4	13%	27%	17%
Maths Strong, 9-5	7%	20%	15%

17.23. Southwark's 2022 CLA cohort achieving a pass (9-4) and a strong pass (9-5) in both English and Maths - for the full cohort is plotted in the table below.

	2019	2020	2022
Standard, 9-4		22%	14%
Strong, 9-5	10%	15%	11%

17.24. Southwark's 2022 CLA cohort achieving a Grade 1-9 in English and Maths - for the full cohort is plotted in the table below

	Number of children	%
English	34	47%
Maths	31	43%

## 18. The Transition process from Yr 11 to 12

- 18.1. Successful Transitions from KS4 to KS5 are the result of joined up working between Virtual School Key stage 4 Team, Key Stage 5 Team and Social Workers. These teams networks work together with children, foster carers and education providers to secure transition to KS5.
- 18.2. Throughout the academic year, the Virtual school in house Information, Advice and Guidance officer meets with children in year 11 and together with education network children are guided to understand the option that lay ahead.
- 18.3. Once children make informed decisions the teams in Education and care are ready to support transition to this next phase.
- 18.4. Handover meetings are scheduled for the end of each academic year and detailed information is shared to ensure continuity of support as students enter a new phase in their education.
- 18.5. Transition arrangements ensure that our students are progressing to:
- an appropriate level and
  - to subjects that they have a genuine interest in.
- 18.6. Secondary phase Virtual School Education Advisors work together with the year 11 Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) officer to plan for life after GCSE. A contingency plan is put in place based on GCSE results.
- 18.7. Special consideration at this early stage is given to students with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) so that we are able to share detailed information with prospective colleges and the correct support is put in place. The second group of particular interest is the A' level contingent. The Virtual School put early support plans in place so that these students can make the academic jump from level 2 education to level 3.

### **Case Study Year 11 student**

Student A has had significant Early years Trauma. Virtual School Education Advisor (EA) began working with Student A in Yr 11 when Student A was going through care proceedings and trauma. Student A has been a long time school refuser and struggled to remain at big inner city comprehensive. Student A was diagnosed with speech, language and communication needs, meeting the profile for dyslexia, and was eligible for exam access arrangements and extra time. Student A felt very negatively about school; other learners; his teachers and personally also.

- Education Advisor arranged for the Virtual School Education Psychologist to complete a cognitive profile on Student A's strengths, interests, support needs and academic profile.
- EA arranged a SALT assessment focussed on social communication skills to prepare Student A for college, made a referral for additional maths and English tuition for 2 hours weekly for 10 weeks, gave IAG related to KS5 college courses and options and invited Student A to the Higher Education events to learn about university.
- EA attended network meetings with school staff, social care and CAMHS to discuss Student A's difficulties and over school refusal just before exams. Student A missed one exam. The network then arranged for Student A to be picked up and taken to exams in a taxi.
- EA remained in regular contact with Student A and the Social Worker regarding GCSE results day, college enrolment, the college and Southwark bursary.
- EA contacted Designated Teacher for CLA's and Head of Additional Learning Support at Southwark College for a transition meeting to explain Student A's vulnerabilities and ensure student has a safe space at college and additional learning needs are flagged up to ALS and all teaching staff.

### **Outcome:**

Student A achieved a grade 4 in English Language and English Literature; 44 in Science; 4 in Citizenship; Distinction in BTEC Media Studies; Business Studies 3; Maths 3 and Geography 2.

Student A achieving 6 grade 4s and above in the context of difficulties is phenomenal.

Student A has enrolled at Southwark College to do Level 3 BTEC Business Studies and GCSE maths programme.

## 19. Destination of 2022 Year 11 Cohort

19.1. The table below offers the destination information of the 2022 Year 11 Cohort. Over 90% of children have a confirmed destination.

Table 20: Destinations				
	Gender	SEN	Borough	Year 12 Destination
1	Male	EHCP	Croydon	Merton College
2	Male		Croydon	John Ruskin College - carpentry tbc
3	Female		Havering	Southend College
4	Female		Southwark	Lambeth College, BTEC H&SC L2
5	Male	EHCP	Swale	East Kent College, Canterbury College
6	Female	SEN Support	Southwark	Looking for apprenticeship
7	Male		Southwark	Saint Francis Xavier 6th Form College
8	Male		Wandsworth	Southfield Academy, ESOL
9	Female		Wirral	Wirral Grammar School for Girls
10	Female		Croydon	Graveney 6th Form, STAC
11	Female		Croydon	East Surrey College: Music
12	Male	SEN Support	Southwark	Westminster Kingsway Catering
13	Female		Southwark	Harris Academy Girls East Dulwich
14	Male	EHCP	Kent	Bradfields but notice served expected to move placement by September 6th
15	Female	SEN Support	Southwark	St Saviours & St. Olaves
16	Male	SEN Support	Southwark	SFX A Levels
17	Male	EHCP	Greenwich	Shooters Hill College
18	Male		Bromley	Bromley LSEC Level 3 Engineering
19	Male		Lewisham	Bromley L3 Building and Environment
20	Male	EHCP	Southwark	Lambeth College, Construction
21	Female	EHCP	Greenwich	Shooter's Hill College - Y12 BTEC Sports Extended Diploma
22	Male	EHCP	Colchester	Chelmsford College
23	Male	EHCP	Medway	Canterbury College, Catering L 2
24	Male	SEN Support	Southwark	Charter 6th Form
25	Female		Hackney	The City Academy 6th Form Hackney
26	Female	SEN Support	Southwark	Saint Francis Xavier 6th Form College
27	Male		Southwark	Southwark College TBC
28	Female		Croydon	Coulsdon College - L3 H&SC
29	Female		Southwark	Lambeth College
30	Female		Elmbridge	Richmond College, Kingston College - H&SC
31	Female	EHCP	Luton	Barnfield College
32	Female	SEN Support	Southwark	CTK Emmanuel, Lewisham BTEC Media Level 3
33	Female	EHCP	Southwark	The Brit School TBC
34	Female	SEN Support	Lewisham	Bromley College, BTEC H&SC 1/2
35	Female		Merton	Arc Globe, COLA, A' Levels History, English & Politics
36	Female		Greenwich	Shooter's Hill College, Level 2 Hair and Beauty

37	Female		Croydon	Southwark College, BTEC Business Level 2/3
38	Female		Lambeth	St Francis Xavier (SFX)
39	Male		Lewisham	New to Care(July 22) IAG to be provided
40	Female		Redbridge	New to care (Aug 22) ) IAG to be provided
41	Female	SEN Support	Southwark	The Charter School or City of Westminster , H&SC L3/2
42	Female		Southwark	City of Westminster College in September.
43	Male	EHCP	West Berkshire	Remaining at Priors Court - Specialist provision
44	Female	EHCP	West Sussex	Complex needs - will move from hospital when placement is found
45	Female	EHCP	Ashford	Ashford college Health and Social Care or LSEC College
46	Female		Lambeth	Bromley College/ Lambeth College
47	Male	EHCP	Merton	Croydon College L1 Plumbing
48	Male		Medway	Maximus UK
49	Male		Croydon	Westminster College - TBC
50	Male	SEN Support	Croydon	Apprenticeship, construction
51	Female	EHCP	Lambeth	In Evelina Hospital When she recovers would remain at Priory School
52	Female	EHCP	Kent	iField School Y12
53	Female		Westminster	Interview at Westminster College for Business Studies
54	Male		Croydon	Bromley College, Motor Mechanics
55	Female	EHCP	Southwark	Bethlem and Maudsley Hospital School
56	Female		Croydon	Harris Academy Bermondsey, SFX, COLA, A'L or BTEC H&SC L3
57	Male		Southwark	BOSCO- ESOL
58	Male		Croydon	John Ruskin or Croydon, ESOL
71	Male		Southwark	Southwark & Lambert College - ESOL
59	Male		Croydon	Lambeth College
60	Male		Lewisham	Lewisham College - ESOL
61	Male		Enfield	Mid Kent College
62	Male		Lewisham	Lewisham College, ESOL
63	Male		Medway	Mid Kent College, ESOL
64	Male		Lewisham	Lewisham College - ESOL
65	Male		Southwark	Southwark College ESOL
66	Male		Hillingdon	ESOL (West London College) when he moves to Hammersmith & Fulham
67	Male		Newham	Newham College
68	Male	EHCP	Merton	Lewisham College - ESOL
69	Male		Hammersmith & Fulham	Age disputed - ESOL
70	Male		Lewisham	Lewisham College
72	Male		Bromley	Lewisham College - Business L1/2

## 20. Key Stage 5

20.1. CLA in Years 12 and 13 receive the following support:

- Two peps per academic year up to the age of 18
- Advocacy regarding all aspects of education including interventions around exclusions
- Access to supplementary home tuition (10 weeks x 2 hours per week)
- Access to Education Psychologist and Speech and Language therapist.
- Access to an Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)
- Bespoke action plans for all those NEET including a weekly NEET Clinic
- Attendance monitoring
- Transition support from each year group: 11>12, 12>13, 13>Leaving Care.

20.2. **Breakdown of education provision of KS5 population 2022**

The following data represents a 'snapshot' of the cohort for the academic year 2022.

The figures vary through the year due to young people leaving/entering the service/ moving courses/ becoming NEET/ entering EET/ turning 18.

Table 21: Year 12 Destinations 2021/22		
Education provision type/destination	Number of YP	Percentage of yr 12 cohort
6 <sup>th</sup> form college	14	17%
FE college	52	63%
Alternative/specialist provision	6	7%
Vocational training/employment	1	1%
Education in custody/secure	1	1%
NEET	9	11%
Total	83	100%

Table 22: Year 13 Destinations 2021/22		
Education provision type/destination	Number of YP	Percentage of yr 12 cohort
6 <sup>th</sup> form college	14	16%
FE college	58	61%
Alternative/specialist provision	6	6%
Vocational training/employment	4	4%
Education in custody/secure	0	0%
NEET	13	14%
Total	95	100%

20.3. The majority of this cohort live outside of Southwark, however most continue to live within greater London.



20.4. The number of UASC has contributed to the high number of male students in Year 13 as the majority of asylum seekers are male.

20.5. 30 % of year 13 students have either an EHCP or SEN support.

Table 23: 2021-22 Yr13 cohort		
Reported Gender		
Male	71	74%
Female	24	26%
SEN/EHCP		
SEN Support	14	13%
EHCP	19	17%
Total SEN	33	30%
IN/OUT borough		
In borough	12	13%
Out of borough	83	87%

20.6. 82% of learners across KS5 achieved at the expected level for their course against 80% last year. This slight upturn of 2% could be attributed to a less disrupted academic year and the provision of supplementary tuition to students in KS5.

Table 24: Attainment levels/Outcomes			
Description	Year 12	Year 13	Total
Achieving/exceeding expected level	80% (78%)	85% (83%)	82% (80%)
Not meeting expected level	20% (22%)	15% (17%)	18% (20%)

20.7. At the end of academic year 2021/22 the following academic progress is recorded for our students (Previous year in brackets)

20.8. The high number of students studying at *Entry Level* reflects the number of UASC taking ESOL courses. Those studying at Level 2 will typically be on vocational courses at FE colleges. Level 1 are highly represented by those with an EHCP.

Table 25: Year 12 – Academic levels being studied	
Level	Yr 12
A' level/L3	19 (23%)
GCSE/L2	15 (18%)
L1	17 (20%)
Entry Level	23 (28%)
NEET	9 (11%)

Table 26: Year 13 – Academic levels being studied	
Level	Yr 13
A' level/L3	24 (24%) (2 students on first year of A' level)
GCSE/L2	11 (11%)
L1	14 (15%)
Entry Level	33 (37%)
NEET	13 (14%)



## 21.KS5 A' level Results and Destinations

21.1. The table below details A' level/ Level 3 results for exams taken in the 2022 exam series along with destinations for the coming academic year. 22 students sat A' level exams/ completed Level 3 extended Diplomas.

21.2. 13 students received offers from Universities. This a significant upturn for this cohort based on previous years.

Year	Taking A Level/ L3	Number progressing
2020	13	4
2021	14	5
2022	22	13

21.3. Other destinations include apprenticeships, employment and further study.

No.	Subject/grade	Subject/grade	Subject/grade	Destination 2022/23
1	Maths A level -E	Economics A level - C	Business A level- D	<b>Portsmouth University</b> - engineering and tech
2	Electrical Installation Level 3	<b>Pass yr1;</b> ongoing	Electrical Installation L3	College of North West London, Willesden Campus -
3	Sports L3	<b>Distinction</b>	Design and Technology A'C	<b>Greenwich University</b> BA Hons Business with Marketing
4	Art A level- A	Psychology A level -B	RS A level -B	<b>Nottingham Trent University</b> Interior architecture & Design
5	Plumbing and Heating - Gas L3	Course ongoing		Lewisham College
6	Business L3	<b>Distinction, Merit, Merit</b>		<b>Birmingham University</b> - Accounting & Finance
7	eNCFE Diploma in Sport and Physical Activity L3	GCSE Maths	GCSE English	Student withholding results/ IAG offered.
8	BTEC Sport L3 Extended Diploma-	<b>x 3 Distinction</b>		Employment-Amazon
9	BTEC Media Level 3	<b>Distinction Distinction*</b>	BTEC Business L3	<b>Kingston University</b> - Marketing and Advertising
10	Law A level - E	Sociology A level - E	Photography A level - E	<b>Coventry University</b> - Law in practice
11	L3 Business- <b>Distinction</b>	L3 Media- <b>Merit</b>		<b>University of Leicester</b>
12	A' Level geography- <b>A</b>	A Level Art <b>D3</b>	A Level Physics - <b>A</b>	Copywriting Vocational course by <i>New era learning</i>
13	Chemistry A level -C	Biol A level - <b>C</b>	French A L <b>A</b>	<b>Birmingham City University</b> - BA Education
14	Maths GCSE	H&SC L3 <b>D,D,D*</b>		<b>LSBU</b> - Adult Nursing
15	Physics, A level TBC	Sports A level TBC	Psychology A level TBC	Student withholding results

16	BTEC Electrical Installation <b>Level 3-pass TBC.</b>	CSCS card	BTEC Electrical Installation Level 2 Pass	Employment, seeking Electrical Installation apprenticeship 3 grade TBC
17	A Level Politics - <b>B</b>	A Level Sociology - <b>A</b>	A Level Law- <b>A</b>	<b>University of St. Andrews:</b> Politics, International Relations & Philosophy
18	Health and Social Care Level 3	English GCSE-results	Maths GCSE-results TBC	L3 BTEC Health and Social Care
19	A Level Media Studies - <b>C</b>	A Level Psychology- <b>B</b>	A Level Politics - <b>C</b>	<b>University of East Anglia/Liverpool:</b> Psychology
20	BTEC Sports and Coaching <b>L3 PPP</b>	Maths GCSE resit TBC		Applications for apprenticeship
21	A Level English Literature TBC	A Level Fine Art TBC	A Level PsychologyTBC	<b>Essex University</b> Law/Business
22		Criminology Diploma - <b>B</b>	BTEC Health and Social Care- <b>Merit</b>	<b>Kent University</b> Access to Health & Social Sciences course:

### The Virtual School Higher Education Season

21.4. Southwark Virtual School is proud of our record of supporting Looked after Students into University. These are students have overcome barriers to succeed at the highest level in statutory education and have chosen an academic path as an undergraduate.

21.5. This year we hosted a season of higher education and apprenticeship workshops in collaboration with University of York, London South Bank, UCL, University of Greenwich, Goldsmith's and notgoingtouni who delivered a session on apprenticeships. An undergraduate Care leaver she hosted a workshop sharing her own experiences.

21.6. Workshops were organised for LAC in the following areas:

- A) How to choose a University/Course
- B) Study Skills in higher education
- C) Student Accommodation
- D) *Will there be people like me/ will I fit in?*
- E) Student Finance
- F) Student support at University
- G) Apprenticeships- How do they work? Where do I find one?



21.7. The following is a representation of feedback received:

**A' level student, year 12**

*This workshop has made me feel more confident about making a choice about University.*

**Level 3 Student, year 13**

*I had no idea that there was so much support out there- I am going to Uni!*

**A' Level student, year 12**

*I've learnt so much from the finance workshop. I now know about what funding is available and entitlements! Thank you*

## 22.KS5 Pupil Premium at post 16 Pilot

22.1. In September 2022, Southwark Virtual School was selected by the DfE to receive additional Pupil Premium funding at 16+. This sum of some £80,000 was targeted at improving outcomes for LAC in years 12 and 13.

22.2. The following table illustrates areas of spend and projected outcomes.

Table 29: Post 16 pilot - Interventions		
Provision	Description	Outcome (projected)
Supplementary tuition	1500 hours of tuition provided at KS5	Improved summative assessment/exam results. Building confidence and competence in academic subjects.
Targeted spend	Including: Specialist equipment. Access to subscriptions related to study. Supplementary activities	Subject enrichment, enhanced academic support. Access to learning resources.
Student connection/ outreach	Virtual School APP This includes KS5 guides to Higher Education Apprenticeships Interview skills Exam preparation	Greater connectivity with cohort. Student access to important information relating to their learning and futures.
Student connection/ Outreach	Higher Education and Apprenticeship workshops	Provision of vital information to students making informed decisions about their future. Delivered over the course of seven workshops.
Training in Schools and Colleges	Trauma informed training aimed at Designated Teachers	Providing Designated Teachers with context, and insight into the potential complexities of LAC. Provision of strategies to enhance student retention. And achievement.
Targeted therapeutic support	Speech and Language Therapy service	SALT assessments and support provided to KS5 students in support of their academic and social progress.
	Education Psychology service	Students receiving the service of an EP develop a greater understanding of their own learning. EP assessments support teaching staff by providing insight into the individuals learning needs and barriers.

## 23.EET/NEET

23.1. In the published **National Statistic for Children looked after in England including adoption: 2021 to 2022**, Southwark is ranked Joint 9<sup>th</sup> in the country where statistics were measurable. Taking into account the size of our cohort, this is an exceptional result for the Virtual School.

- The Virtual School holds weekly NEET Clinics where the team analyses the NEET cohort.
- NEET Actions plans remains a key tool in the tracking of our NEET young people.
- NEET young people all receive IAG and are offered opportunities to return to EET.

**Table 30: National Statistic for Children looked after in England including adoption: 2021 to 2022**

Local Authority	age	activity	number	percentage
Rutland	Aged 17 to 18	Total in EET	11	100
City of London	Aged 17 to 18	Total in EET	15	100
West Berkshire	Aged 17 to 18	Total in EET	30	94
Leicester	Aged 17 to 18	Total in EET	64	89
Bath and North East Somerset	Aged 17 to 18	Total in EET	24	89
Kensington and Chelsea	Aged 17 to 18	Total in EET	42	89
Westminster	Aged 17 to 18	Total in EET	57	88
Cornwall	Aged 17 to 18	Total in EET	66	87
South Tyneside	Aged 17 to 18	Total in EET	32	84
Warrington	Aged 17 to 18	Total in EET	43	84
Southwark	Aged 17 to 18	Total in EET	81	84

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption-2021-to-2022>

### Case Study: Key Stage 5 Student

Student B has an EHCP and was excluded from School in Year 8.

Student B was transferred to a Pupil Referral Unit and then with Virtual School /SEN support to an Academy. In year 11 further support was provided to return Student B to mainstream school at a Technology College where Student B achieved good GCSE results. Student B was then supported onto a place at a Local FE college to study A' levels and received regular PEP's, TAC meetings and supplementary tuition.

This February Student B interviewed at Oxford University and has subsequently been offered a place to study Law at St. Hugh's College with an offer of AAA. Student B has predicted grades of A\*A\*A\*.

The intervention and casework around Student B illustrates the importance of advocacy and planning across the Virtual school in support of our students. It also highlights how the aspirational approach adopted by the Virtual School can help all students succeed.

#### Student feedback:

*Thank you very much for all the help you've given me over the years, especially in terms of the tuition and providing me with much needed educational support; which if I had not had I am almost certain that I would not have received my offer to study at Oxford.*

## 24.Virtual School Priorities

- 13.1. Strengthen our response to concern around persistent absence. Through targeted casework, data analysis, early intervention and regular multi-agency panels to agree priority actions.
- 13.2. Support the development of CPD to our Designated Teachers and Social Workers and School leaders, including attachment aware and trauma informed schools, by delivering a flexible and diverse training programme with an aim to improve inclusive practice, build capacity and reduce suspensions/exclusions.
- 13.3. To promote the educational outcomes of children with a social worker. Work with early years settings, schools, colleges and social care leaders to create a culture of high aspirations that helps all children with social workers to make educational progress.  
[Promoting the education of children with a social worker: Virtual School Head role extension](#)
- 13.4. In relation to National Tuition Funding and Covid recovery – Narrow the attainment gap, lost learning and mental health support. Continue to provide support and interventions for schools and children to improve outcomes and attendance, evaluating the impact of the intervention and use of Pupil Premium.

# Southwark Virtual School

## Highlights from Virtual School Headteacher's Report from 2022 CLA outcomes

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- At the time of this report, 394 students were recorded **on the roll** of Southwark Virtual School. 259 children are of statutory school age and 135 in Key Stage 5. Recorded as 170 females 224 males
- In Southwark, the proportion of Southwark's statutory school age looked after children with special educational needs is 43% (112) compared to 12.6% nationally with an EHCP is 32% (84) compared to 4% nationally
- 3% of Southwark CLA are educated in schools graded less than Good by **Ofsted**. This is down from 5% last year. Children only attend 'Requires Improvement' schools in exceptional circumstances, such as when a previously Good school has a RI inspection outcome but it is considered in best interests of the child to remain there.
- Over £830k of **Pupil Premium** grant has been received to promote the education of school aged learners. In addition to payments made to schools, funding is used to support exceptional needs funding, education psychologist, speech and language, fixed-term resourcing, supplementary and interim home tuition, exam support, online learning programme, digital resources, literacy mails outs and bespoke Covid recovery tuition.
- **Southwark has moved from PEP to ePEP (electronic PEP)** to improve monitoring of attainment and data sharing between all stakeholders. Personal Education Plan performance in the autumn term 2022 was reported as 80%. The target remains 100%
- In 2020-21, the summer series of exams for GCSEs, AS and A Levels were cancelled because of the pandemic. **Summer 2022 saw the return of a full exam series.** This impacts comparative year to year analysis.
- **KS4 GCSE outcomes:** 47% achieved a Grade 1-9 in English and Maths – an increase from 42% last year.
- **KS5 Outcomes:** 82% of learners across Key Stage 5 achieved at the expected level for their course against 80% last year. 22 students sat A' level exams/ completed Level 3 extended Diplomas.  
**13 students received offers from Universities.**
- **Southwark Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC):** 92% are aged 16+. 95% of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children were placed in an ESOL provision within 14 days of becoming known to Southwark Virtual School.
- **Destinations:** continues to be a strength of the Virtual School. KS4 destinations shows over 90% of CLA with a confirmed destination. KS5 national published data shows Southwark ranked joint 9<sup>th</sup> in the country for EET at 84%.
- **Persistent absenteeism** data shows 23% of looked after children with below 90% attendance. This is down from 28% and is attributed to post pandemic school refusal, new to care, care placement change and medical absences. Fixed term exclusions have also contributed to this increase. The Virtual School and Care Team have developed systems to address each individual case.
- **Children Missing Education:** 12 children currently have no school place confirmed. 9 have an EHCP. All children have tuition in place or offered. All are in school admission process with 3 expected to start imminently. Contributing factors are SEN sufficiency throughout the country and post pandemic engagement including the rate of mobility of looked after children in this cohort.
- **Virtual School Priorities:**
  - Strengthen our response to concern around persistent absence.
  - Support the development of CPD with focus on attachment aware and trauma informed schools
  - To promote the educational outcomes of children with a social worker.
  - Narrow the attainment gap and mental health support through national tuition and Covid recovery funding.

<b>Item No.</b> 11.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 19 April 2023	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Corporate Parenting Committee
<b>Report title:</b>		Overview Report of Quality and Safety Reviews of Children in Care with Disabilities and Complex Health Needs Placed in Residential Schools Registered as Children's Homes	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Director of Children and Families	

### RECOMMENDATION

1. That the corporate parenting committee note the findings of this report, so that the welfare and care of children with disability and complex needs remains a key corporate parenting consideration.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel<sup>1</sup> ("The Panel") has been undertaking a national review<sup>2</sup> ("The Review") into safeguarding children with disabilities and complex health needs in residential settings.
3. The review has been considering the experiences of children placed in three specialist independent residential settings located in the Doncaster area (Fullerton House, Wilsic Hall and Wheatley House) and operated by the Hesley Group.
4. The review is being led by Dr Susan Tranter, supported by Dame Christine Lenehan, Director of the Council for Disabled Children (CDC), for the National Children's Bureau (NCB).
5. The review focused on children with disabilities and complex health needs who are looked after children and who are currently placed in residential specialist schools which are registered as children's homes. It is estimated that there are around 1,700 children nationally who would meet these criteria. The review is considering allegations of widespread abuse (and which are subject to a live criminal and associated investigation). The Panel expects that families of children living in similar settings may rightly be concerned about the safety and welfare of their children if and when

<sup>1</sup> [Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

<sup>2</sup> [CHILD SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE VIEW PANEL: REVIEW OF CASES AT FULLERTON HOUSE, WILSIC HALL AND WHEATLEY HOUSE \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](http://publishing.service.gov.uk)



they learn about what has happened in the Hesley provision in Doncaster.

6. The review is being completed in two phases. Phase One reported in October 2022<sup>3</sup>. Its main findings were that children placed in the settings in Doncaster experienced sustained, significant abuse and harm over an extended period of time. The voices of children and adults were not heard. Placements far from home increased vulnerability and that some children were placed in such settings inappropriately.
7. Phase Two of the review has asked directors of children's services to ensure that quality and safety reviews are completed for all children in care with complex needs and disabilities currently living within placements with the same registrations (i.e., residential specialist schools registered as children's homes) to ensure they are in safe, quality placements.
8. The director of children's services was asked to provide an overview report on key findings and issues to both their local corporate parenting committee, and to local safeguarding partners, together with assurance that the quality and safety reviews have been completed.
9. The director of children's services was also asked to send a copy of the overview report on the quality and safety reviews to the relevant Department of Education regional improvement support lead (RISL). This was done in December 2022.
10. The panel's national review has highlighted how information may be held locally but that it is also important to develop a fuller and more comprehensive picture of quality in these type of placements. This will also allow for regional and national assurance that these actions have been undertaken.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

11. The council had 37 children placed in residential settings, but only a small number met the criteria specified in this review. A quality and safety review of the children who met the criteria was undertaken by an independent social worker on behalf of the council.
12. The findings are presented in detail in a closed report for the committee. The reason why this was presented in a closed report was because given the small number of children, details would make them very identifiable. It is necessary to put detail into the reports to provide the assurance that was sought by the instigation of this review process.
13. In summary the review found good levels of care and education for all children that met the review criteria. Safeguarding issues were dealt with appropriately and there were no major issues of concern.

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<sup>3</sup> [Safeguarding children with disabilities and complex health needs in residential settings - Phase 1 report \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)



### **Policy framework implications**

14. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 says that when a child or young person comes into the care of the local authority, or is under 25 and was looked-after by the authority for at least 13 weeks after their 14th birthday, the authority becomes their corporate parent. Local authorities have a responsibility for safeguarding all children, in line with Sec 47 of The Children Act 1989, but there are certain risks that particularly affect children in care and care leavers that corporate parents need to be aware of.

### **Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts**

#### **Community impact statement**

15. Many children in care come into care when sadly their families who are local residents cannot safely care for them and they are already part of the diverse Southwark communities.

#### **Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement**

16. The council is committed to providing fair and just services, addressing inequality. The welcome and provision of services to children with disabilities is an important way the council and its partners demonstrates their commitment these principles.

#### **Health impact statement**

17. There are no specific identified health impacts resulting from any of the proposals or recommendations, so a health impact statement is not necessary for this report.

#### **Climate change implications**

18. There are no specific identified climate change impacts resulting from any of the proposals or recommendations, so a climate impact statement is not necessary for this report.

#### **Resource implications**

19. There are no specific resource implications over and above the council's existing commitments resulting from any of the proposals or recommendations in this report.

#### **Financial implications**

20. There are no specific financial resource implications over and above the council's existing commitments resulting from any of the proposals or recommendations in this report.

## Consultation

21. There was consultation with the child, parents and staff involved with the child who met the review criteria.

## SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

### Assistant Chief Executive – Governance and Assurance

22. The assistant chief executive – governance and assurance notes the recommendation of the open and closed reports. In line with the Access to Information Procedure Rules of the Southwark Constitution, the closed report contains information exempted from publication and which must not be discussed at the meeting when the public are present. This exemption applies by virtue of paragraphs 10.3 and 10.4 (1&2).

### Strategic Director of Finance REF: [03EN2023-24]

23. The strategic director of finance notes the reports and agrees with the financial implications in paragraph 20.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Child Safeguarding Practice Review of Cases at: Fullerton House, Wilsic Hall and Wheatley House Specialist, Independent Residential Schools	Children and Families Directorate, Children and Adult Services 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor, 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH	Tendai Murowe 020 7525 0486
<b>Link:</b> <a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1047730/Letter_to_SoS_Doncaster_formal_launch.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1047730/Letter_to_SoS_Doncaster_formal_launch.pdf</a>		
Safeguarding children with disabilities and complex health needs in residential settings, Phase 1 Report	Children and Families Directorate, Children and Adult Services 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor, 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH	Tendai Murowe 020 7525 0486
<b>Link:</b> <a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1113508/safeguarding_children_with_disabilities_in_residential_care_homes_phase_1_report.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1113508/safeguarding_children_with_disabilities_in_residential_care_homes_phase_1_report.pdf</a>		

Southwark Council's Constitution dated 31 March 2023 – PART 4 – Access to Information Procedure Rules	Children and Families Directorate, Children and Adult Services 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor, 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH	Tendai Murowe 020 7525 0486
<a href="https://modern.gov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/g7700/Public%20reports%20pack%20Friday%2031-Mar-2023%20Constitution.pdf?T=10&amp;Info=1">https://modern.gov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/g7700/Public%20reports%20pack%20Friday%2031-Mar-2023%20Constitution.pdf?T=10&amp;Info=1</a>		

## APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Lead Officer</b>	David Quirke-Thornton, Strategic Director of Children and Adult Services	
<b>Report Author</b>	Tendai Murowe, Assistant Director, Quality Assurance and Practice Development	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	11 April 2023	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments Included</b>
Assistance Chief Executive – Governance and Assurance	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance	No	No
List other officers here	N/a	N/a
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	No	No
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>	11 April 2023	

<b>Item No.</b> 12.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 19 April 2023	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Corporate Parenting Committee
<b>Report title:</b>		Corporate Parenting Committee – Work Plan 2022-23	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Director of Children and Families	

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the corporate parenting committee agree the approach and work plan as set out in the report.
2. That the committee review and identify any further items for consideration in the work plan.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### Role and function of the corporate parenting committee

3. The constitution for the municipal year 2022-2023 records the corporate parenting committee’s role and functions as follows:
  - a. To secure real and sustained improvements in the life chances of looked after children, and to work within an annual programme to that end.
  - b. To develop, monitor and review a corporate parenting strategy and work plan.
  - c. To seek to ensure that the life chances of looked after children are maximised in terms of health, educational attainment, and access to training and employment, to aid the transition to a secure and productive adulthood.
  - d. To develop and co-ordinate a life chances strategy and work plan to improve the life chances of Southwark looked after children.
  - e. To recommend ways in which more integrated services can be developed across all council departments, schools and the voluntary sector to lead towards better outcomes for looked after children.
  - f. To ensure that mechanisms are in place to enable looked after children and young people to play an integral role in service

planning and design, and that their views are regularly sought and acted upon.

- g. To ensure performance monitoring systems are in place, and regularly review performance data to ensure sustained performance improvements in outcomes for looked after children.
- h. To receive an annual report on the adoption and fostering services to monitor their effectiveness in providing safe and secure care for looked after children.
- i. To report to the council's cabinet on an annual basis.
- j. To make recommendations to the relevant cabinet decision maker where responsibility for that particular function rests with the cabinet.
- k. To report to the scrutiny sub-committee with responsibility for children's services after each meeting.
- l. To appoint non-voting co-opted members.

#### **National and local context for care leavers**

- 4. There is national momentum towards improving outcomes for care leavers. The government introduced 'Keep on Caring' strategy in 2016, increased council statutory duties to care leavers in the Children and Social Work Act in 2017, appointed a national Adviser for Care Leavers who produced a report in 2018, alongside the national launch of the Care Covenant. The council has responded to the various recommendations, for example by prioritising education, employment and training outcomes for care leavers in the Council Plan and developing the care leaver local offer as well as increasing service capacity for the extended personal adviser duties to 25.
- 5. Although much has been done to improve services and outcomes for care leavers, the council has an ambition to go above and beyond, by creating the best Leaving Care Service possible, by co-designing this with young people, learning from other organisations and trialling new ideas to test what works best.
- 6. In 2017 the council and Catch22 received funding from the DfE Social Care Innovation Programme to work in partnership to design and test new ways of working to support care leavers. The Care Leavers Partnership (CLP) works to improve outcomes for young people in Southwark by working across boundaries, reshaping the service delivery model, unlocking capacity in the community, and co-designing solutions. There are a number of strands that the CLP is working on to achieve our goals.

#### **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 7. The corporate parenting committee review and update the work plan each

meeting. Following the beginning of the municipal year 2019-20, and reflecting on the momentum towards improving outcomes for care leavers, the opportunity has been taken to review how the committee works and present proposals to refresh this in relation to: non-voting co-opted members; committee approach; and work plan and suggested agenda items.

### **Non-voting co-opted members**

8. It is recommended that the committee is supported and enhanced by adding a number of non-voting co-opted members. By bringing perspectives, knowledge and experience from young people, practitioners, subject matter experts, council and local community representatives together with elected members, there will be more opportunity to add value to the committee in its work to improve outcomes for children in care and care leavers. This will promote wider ownership of the important work of the service and enhance plans developed to improve its work.
9. A **representative of Speakerbox**, Southwark's Children in Care Council, should be formally designated a non-voting co-opted member. This person would help the committee perform its role and function by bringing expertise by experience about how the system of support works around children in care and care leavers (3f above). The committee would recognise the person would preferably be consistent through the year, but may change. The council would support this person in that role, as well as Speakerbox, through its Children's Rights and Participation function, to enable as far as possible the Speakerbox member to be representative of the voice of children in care and care leavers.
10. A **representative from Southwark's frontline workforce**, who works face to face with children in care and care leavers, should be formally designated a non-voting co-opted member. This person would help the committee perform its role and function by giving a sense of the reality of work on the frontline to enable it to better seek to ensure that the life chances of looked after children are maximised (3c above). This committee member would be supported by the Children and Families Principal Social Worker to enable them to be a representative voice for those that work everyday with children in care and care leavers.
11. A **subject matter expert** who has undertaken extensive research and/or improvement work in the area of children in care and care leavers, should be formally designated a non-voting co-opted member. This person would help the committee perform its role and function by adding knowledge and experience that is outside the day to day ambit of those working within the Southwark system to help the council better secure real and sustained improvements in the life chances of looked after children (3a above). The committee member would be supported by the Quality Assurance Unit to ensure they provide a valuable and relevant contribution to every committee.
12. A **critical friend** from an area of the council outside children and adults

service, should be formally designated a non-voting co-opted member. This person would help the committee perform its role and function by adding knowledge and experience of the council outside social care and education areas to aid the development of a cross council approach to corporate parenting (3e above). The committee member would be supported by the quality assurance unit to ensure they provide a valuable and relevant contribution to every committee.

13. A **critical friend** from the local community, should be formally designated a non-voting co-opted member. This person would help the committee perform its role and function by adding knowledge and experience of the community and its assets and to aid the development of a wider community ownership of outcomes for children in care and care leavers. (3e above). The committee member would be supported by the Quality Assurance Unit to ensure they provide a valuable and relevant contribution to every committee.

### **Corporate Parenting Committee approach**

14. The traditional way of managing the committee has been for officers to prepare reports and then members to scrutinise this at committee meetings. It is proposed that the agenda is split into two halves: children in care and care leavers. The children in care section would continue in a more traditional way as described.
15. The care leaver section could be managed differently with a thematic approach where officers responsible for those areas would attend. A presentation would be made about the area, and then a workshop approach would be taken whereby committee members would be invited to question and discuss, with an aim of developing recommendations for improvement. The workshops will produce targeted actions that thematic groups can take away to put into practice to make lasting change for care leavers.
16. The suggested main themes would be housing; education, employment and training; health and wellbeing. Others could be developed depending on the areas that might be considered important at the beginning of the year “kick off” meeting (see 17 below), and capacity of the committee. It would be expected that those attending for the themed areas would be at Director level within the council, and at a most senior level from other organisations.
17. The municipal year would start with a ‘kick-off’ meeting. This will present performance data about the outcomes for care leavers and plans for improvement. This will help the committee look at what is happening in Southwark, in comparison to neighbours and nationally. Quality and performance analysts could be available at the meeting to respond to detailed questions to deepen understanding. The whole approach would help the committee develop its plan for the year with areas of focus for the year ahead as well as being a place to question the whole approach to improvement.
18. The committee may develop, as part of its agenda, engagement with some

areas between committee meetings. For example historically the committee has sometimes taken the opportunity to meet with SpeakerBox during some school holidays at focused events. These engagement opportunities could still be planned as an important aspect of the work of the committee that builds their knowledge and understanding, and thus the committee's capacity to deliver its role and function

### **Corporate Parenting Committee work plan – draft outline**

#### **19 April 2023**

- Speakerbox verbal update
- Virtual head teacher annual report
- Children in care and care leavers with disabilities
- Special guardianship
- Child safeguarding review placed in residential school
- Housing discussion/actions arising from committee on 1 March 2023 (verbal)

#### **5 July 2023**

- Speakerbox verbal update
- Annual health report for looked after children
- Race, ethnicity and gender proportionality
- Foster and Adoption Service annual reports.

### **SpeakerBox**

19. SpeakerBox, established in 2005, ensures that the views of looked after children and care leavers are used to influence decision making that affects their care and support particularly service planning and design. Representing children and young people between 8 and 24 years the group also provides a peer to peer networking support system for looked after children. The programme is operated independently and run by the young people themselves, although it is supported by the council's children services and councillors.

### **Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts**

#### **Community impact statement**

5. The work of the corporate parenting committee contributes to community cohesion and stability.

#### **Equalities (including socio-economic) impact and health impact statement**

6. Relevant issues will be addressed in the reports submitted to the corporate parenting committee.



### Climate change implications

7. The work plan process for the committee has no direct implications.

### Resource implications

8. There are no specific implications arising from this report.

### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Minutes of meetings of Corporate Parenting Committee	Constitutional Team 160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	<a href="mailto:Paula.thornton@southwark.gov.uk">Paula.thornton@southwark.gov.uk</a>
<b>Web link:</b> <a href="http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=129&amp;Year=0">http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=129&amp;Year=0</a>		

### APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

### AUDIT TRAIL

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Assistant Chief Executive – Governance and Assurance	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	No	No
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**CORPORATE PARENTING DISTRIBUTION LIST (OPEN)****MUNICIPAL YEAR 2022-23**

**NOTE:** Original held by Constitutional Team; all amendments/queries to  
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Councillor Esme Dobson			
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