

Meeting Name:	Corporate Parenting Committee
Date:	11 November 2024
Report title:	Annual Virtual Headteacher's Report 2023-2024
Ward(s) or groups affected:	All
Classification:	Open
Reason for lateness (if applicable):	N/a
From:	Virtual School Headteacher

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 the Virtual School Headteacher 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 2023-24

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 the Virtual School Highlights Report 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 Resources

19. A concurrent was not applicable for this report.

Other officers

20. None.

REASONS FOR LATENESS

21. It has not been possible to circulate this report five clear days in advance of the meeting. The delay in finalising the report was ensuring that it contained full and accurate data for 2023-24.

REASONS FOR URGENCY

22. The Corporate Parenting Committee should be provided with the most current information on delivery of services and outcomes for children in care and Care Leavers, so that it can hold services accountable for work to improve the lives of our children and young people and direct the ongoing delivery of the Corporate Parenting Strategy. The virtual head teacher is a key part of delivering this service for children in Southwark and it vital to present this report to the committee in a timely way.

23. The consequences of delayed reporting to the committee could potentially lessen the informed deliberations of the Committee's work planning for the future municipal year.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Equalities Act 2010	Education Directorate, Children and Adult Services, 4 th floor, 160 Tooley Street, SE1 2QH	Usha Singh 020 7525 54076 07548712129
Link: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents		
Council Assembly, 25 November 2020 – Item 6.1 – Appendix A Refresh of the Council Plan: Borough Plan	Education Directorate, Children and Adult Services, 4 th floor, 160 Tooley Street, SE1 2QH	Usha Singh 020 7525 54076 07548712129
Link: https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s92006/Appendix%20A%20Southwarks%20Borough%20Plan%202020.pdf		
Department of Education: SEND	Education Directorate, Children and Adult Services, 4 th floor, 160 Tooley Street, SE1 2QH	Usha Singh 020 7525 54076 07548712129
Link: https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/special-educational-needs-disabilities		
The Health Inequalities Framework 2020	Education Directorate, Children and Adult Services, 4 th floor, 160 Tooley Street, SE1 2QH	Usha Singh 020 7525 54076 07548712129
Link: https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s90726/Appendix%201.pdf		
Climate Change Strategy	Education Directorate, Children and Adult Services, 4 th floor, 160 Tooley Street,	Usha Singh 020 7525 54076

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
	SE1 2QH	07548712129
Link: https://www.southwark.gov.uk/environment/climate-emergency/reaching-net-zero/our-plan-for-net-zero		
Southwark Stands Together	Education Directorate, Children and Adult Services, 4 th floor, 160 Tooley Street, SE1 2QH	Usha Singh 020 7525 54076 07548712129
Link: https://www.southwark.gov.uk/engagement-and-consultations/southwark-stands-together		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Virtual Headteacher's Report 2023-24
Appendix 2	Highlights Report

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	David Quirke-Thornton, Strategic Director of Children and Adult Services	
Report Author	Usha Singh, Virtual School Headteacher	
Version	Final	
Dated	6 November 2024	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments sought	Comments included
Assistant Chief Executive – Governance and Assurance	No	No
Strategic Director of Resources	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		6 November 2024