TOGETHER FOR CHILDREN **CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**	
DATE:	**13th July 2020**
REPORT AUTHOR:	**Linda Mason HEAD TEACHER Virtual School**
SUBJECT:	**Head Teacher's Report**
PURPOSE:	**FOR INFORMATION**

1. SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide the Corporate Parenting Board with an update report for the Board in the context of Covid 19. This report highlights the work of the Virtual School in supporting the educational provision for Children Looked After during this period. As agreed with the Board the report provides an outline of the format of the current personal education plans (EPEPS) that were implemented in September 2019.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Board is requested to receive the report for information

3. Context

Currently as of 7 July 2020 we have 598 Children Looked After.

3.1   COHORT   Source Virtual School Data 7 July 2020

	Total	Male	%	Female	%	EHCP F	EHCP M	SEND Support F	SEND Support M
PRE									
Pre School	119	52	44	67	56	0	0	0	0
Nursery 1	22	17	77	5	23	0	0	0	0
Nursery 2	1	1	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	142	70	49	72	51	0	0	0	0
PRIMARY									
Reception	25	13	52	12	48	0	0	3	2
Year 1	24	15	63	9	37	0	0	2	7
Year 2	23	12	52	11	48	0	2	1	4
Year 3	27	17	63	10	37	0	1	3	3
Year 4	22	11	50	11	50	1	0	2	5
Year 5	33	18	55	15	45	1	3	5	5
Year 6	34	21	62	13	38	2	3	4	7
	188	107	57	81	43	4	9	20	33

SECONDARY	Total	Male	%	Female	%	EHCP F	EHCP M	SEND Support M	SEND Support F
Year 7	40	21	53	19	47	1	3	4	7
Year 8	44	25	57	19	43	1	7	7	5
Year 9	50	30	60	20	40	0	10	1	12
Year 10	35	22	63	13	37	1	6	3	11
Year 11	38	20	53	18	47	0	2	5	10
Total	207	118	57	89	43	3	28	20	45
POST 16									
Year 12	53	34	64	19	36	3	8	6	9
Year 13	8	7	88	1	12	0	2	0	3
Total	61	41	67	20	33	3	10	6	11
TOTAL CLA Population	598	336	56	262	44	10	47	46	90

3.2 NEET

NEET	22	Male 17	77%	Female 5	23%	EHCP Female 3	EHCP Male 4	SEND SUPPORT Female 0	SEND SUPPORT Male 6

3.3 SEND

SEND SUPPORT	M	F	% of phase
PRIMARY	33	20	28
SECONDARY	45	20	31
POST 16	12	6	30

EHCP	M	F	% of phase
PRIMARY	9	4	7
SECONDARY	28	3	15
POST 16	10	3	21

3.4 SEND Analysis

The SEND CLA population in total is 193 (SEND Support + EHCP). Therefore 33% of all current CLA have an identified SEND. 136 or 23% of CLA receive SEND support in school with some support of external agencies. 57 or 10% of CLA receive more intensive support due to the EHCP assessment, a significant number attend specialist educational provision in Sunderland and out of area too.

3.5 Out of Area and Other Local Authorities

We have 98 children looked after attending schools in other local authorities. 77 of these are living in and attending schools in local authorities in the North East mainly in Durham and Stockton.

We have 20 children looked after by other local authorities attending schools in Sunderland a significant number attend specialist provision.

Source Virtual School Data and Welfare Call   7 July 2020

3.6 OFSTED CATEGORY

CATEGORY	TOTAL Reception to Year 11 - 395	%
Outstanding	51	13
Good	254	64
Requires Improvement	47	12
Inadequate	35	9
Not Applicable (eg new academy)	8	2

4 STRUCTURE

4.1 The Virtual School has been restructured to better reflect the needs of cared for children and former cared for children. We have successfully externally recruited strong candidates to two new posts (Senior Lead and Inclusion, Safeguarding and Intervention Officer – Post 16) during the Covid 19 lockdown period.   They will take up their posts over the coming weeks and this will be fully operationalised in September 2020. Other structural changes include the re - designation and new job descriptions for two posts: Inclusion, Safeguarding and Intervention Officers with specific Key Stage responsibilities (Early Years KS1 and KS2 and, KS3 and KS4) they will also hold responsibility for key areas of SEMH and SEND and an increase in teaching capacity. The new Senior Lead post will hold responsibility specifically for former cared for children and EPEPs.

4.2 Data and Performance

Work has been completed to improve data held across different management information systems and teams and this work will be further advanced by the development of an Education Service Performance Team. This team will work across all education services to support robust data gathering and coherence, data analysis and reporting including the Virtual School.

5 COVID 19 Virtual School Response

5.1   Since Covid 19 lockdown the Virtual School staff have all worked remotely. Together with social care and schools the service identified, using RAG methodology, which children needed to be prioritised. All children out of area and in children's homes were identified as top priority as were several children who had complex needs. The role of the Virtual School was to maintain twice weekly safe and well calls, to offer support with education alongside the home school's input, speaking with both carer and child. All cared for children received at least one call from the Virtual School a week. This was in addition to calls from schools and Social Worker. Some carers were overwhelmed (positively) by the response from all professionals and it has been stated for example that: "I'd rather have 5 calls a week than feel isolated and unsupported."

5.2   The service has maintained contact with schools to confirm which children were attending throughout this period and this was maintained during the return to school for Reception, Year 1 and 6.

5.3   Working with Welfare Call the EPEP format was adapted to ensure it reflected the remote and online teaching that schools and children were involved with. EPEPs

have been maintained at 94% during this period. The Virtual School team have maintained links with Social Workers and school Designated Teachers throughout this period and have attended virtual cared for children reviews and Strategy meetings accordingly. The service also maintained contact with schools to advocate for children's attendance if it was appropriate to do so.

5.4 The Head Teacher is Chair of the North East Regional Virtual School as well as a Board member of the National Association of Virtual School Head Teachers (NAVSH). This has proved particularly useful during Covid19 as regular webinars were held by NAVSH and provided the opportunity to remain in touch with the DFE, OFQUAL and Ministers to ensure CLA and Virtual Schools were central to policy and guidance decisions. Sharing of good practice was a key aspect to this relationship.

5.5 TfC and the Virtual School purchased laptops for all children in children's homes and worked with schools on the use of Pupil Premium to buy laptops where this was necessary, in the very early stages of lockdown, to ensure all children looked after had access to relevant technology. All cared for children have been allocated a DFE laptop and 4G dongle where appropriate.

5.6 Prior to Covid the newly created NEET coordinator for cared for children and SEND young people role, had evidence of early impact on outcomes for that cohort of young people. The programme has developed a partnership approach to supporting the targeted groups and in the first year helped to start the development of a new post-16 pathway, improved mentoring opportunities and created a range of specific training opportunities for young people at risk of becoming NEET.

6 Welfare Call Electronic Personal Education Plans (EPEP)

6.1 **What is a Personal Education Plan (PEP)**
The Personal Education Plan (PEP) is the statutory tool to ensure that everyone is actively prioritising the education of the child or young person, carefully tracking their progress and supporting them to achieve well and to be aspirational. All children looked after (CLA) have a statutory Care Plan, which is drawn up and reviewed by the Local Authority that looks after them. The Personal Education Plan (PEP) is a legal part of the Care Plan; which is a statutory requirement for LAC from being in preschool provision up to the age of 18.

The key personnel who should be involved in every PEP meeting are:
The child or young person
The child or young person's Social Worker
The child or young person's Carer
The Designated Teacher or named lead for LAC from the child or young person's education or training setting, nursery, school, college or provider.

6.2 Giving the child or young person a voice

Everyone should ensure that at every stage the child or young person is fully involved in the meetings and the decision making processes in relation to their care and education. The young person should be fully supported to participate in their PEP meetings to ensure that their wishes and feelings about their education are taken into account in the development, implementation and review of their PEP.

The Virtual School wants all professionals to begin the completion of each child or young person's PEP by talking with them and completing with the child/young

person's voice section within their EPEP. These views should then be referred back to at each stage of developing the rest of the young person's PEP. These conversations will take very different forms depending upon the young person's age, abilities, specific learning or language needs and/or frame of mind at the time. Everything should be done to support them in an appropriately personalised way to be able to voice their views, wishes and feelings. It should be noted that each young person will be expressing their views on a daily basis and not just in preparation for their PEP meeting.

If the child or young person is either too young or feels unable to attend their PEP meeting their views must be brought to the PEP meeting by the most appropriate person and the key discussion points should be shared in an appropriate way with the child or young person after the meeting.

6.3 Accessibility

The EPEP system is accessible at anytime from anywhere meaning that schools and social workers can access it from school, within the authority, during the PEP meeting or at home etc. This enables the completion of certain sections of the EPEP document prior to a meeting taking place. The EPEP is not to be used instead of an actual meeting taking place. The meeting, involving all parties who have a responsibility to the child, including the child themselves, is a fundamental part to the whole PEP process and it must be ensured that this still continues so that everyone's input, feedback and comments can be taken into consideration for the future planning of the child.

6.4 Content of EPEP

The EPEP has a number of sections:
- The PEP meeting
- About Me
- My Education
- Attainment
- Careers information
- My Views, Wishes and Feelings
- Targets and Outcomes
- Other info

Each of these sections can be set to being completed by the Designated Teacher only, Social Worker only or by both.

To support the change in education delivery and remote learning a new Covid 19 Form and Covid Contact Form was created. The focus was on remote learning but also on the mental health and wellbeing of the CLA and transition planning where relevant. There was also an opportunity to include regular contact information.

The example EPEP in Appendix 1 is a full PEP and contains attainment and progress data for each stage of a child's education. However, what the Designated Teacher will see will only relate to the age group of the child. 80% of what is entered on the initial EPEP will remain the same, only the review elements eg attainment, and progress, targets etc will be reviewed each term, this reduces workload.

The EPEP enables messages to be sent through to the Virtual School. Documents such as the EHCP, Education Psychology reports, photographs, awards etc can also

be added to the child's file. The EPEP targets reflect any EHCP targets, they should not be different.

Each EPEP has to be signed off by the Designated Teacher. The Virtual School will then Quality Assure the EPEP (see appendix 1 QA document).

6.5 IRO Training and access

All IROs have been trained and given access. They can see each EPEP as it is completed.

6.6 Social Worker Training and access

In the Autumn term 2019 it was agreed that all Social Workers would have access to EPEPs via an upload to Liquid Logic until they were fully trained, this would be done by the Virtual School. The EPEP training was initially deferred to enable Signs of Safety training to be fully rolled out and embedded as a priority. Training was due to begin in March 2020 but was interrupted by Covid 19. This will be resumed as soon as we are able to begin, hopefully in the Autumn Term 2020.

7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
Full utilisation of the Pupil Premium grant in support of improving educational outcomes

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS
Appendix 1

EPEP Bobby Test Child
EPEP Virtual School Guidance
EPEP Virtual School Quality Assuring an EPEP

9 CONTACT

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