2024-25 Annual Report

AfC Virtual School

'Together we can achieve!'

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achieving for children

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Executive Summary

Executive Summary: AfC Virtual School Annual Report 2024-25

Overview and Mission The 2024-25 Annual Report outlines the progress and achievements of children looked after by Achieving for Children (AfC) across the Kingston, Richmond and Windsor & Maidenhead local authorities. The Virtual School champions the educational rights of these children, aiming to close the attainment gap, minimise educational disruption, and foster a culture of high aspirations. The school's responsibilities have also expanded to include previously looked after children, those on Child in Need (CIN) or Child Protection (CP) plans, and children in kinship care.

Attainment and Progress

- **Key Stage 1 (Phonics):** 100% of Year 1 students met the expected standard, maintaining the perfect rate from 2024 and exceeding the national average for all pupils (80%).
- **Key Stage 2:** 50% of students met the expected standard in Reading, Writing, and Maths. While this is a 10% decrease from 2024, it remains significantly higher than the 2024 national average for looked-after children (34%).
- **Key Stage 4 (GCSE):** Results decreased significantly this year and sit below national averages for looked-after children. Only 12.5% of students achieved a Grade 4 or higher in English and Maths (down from 53.8% in 2024), and only 8% achieved a Grade 5. Improving KS4 outcomes, particularly in English and Maths, is a primary focus moving forward.
- **Key Stage 5:** 87.2% of the eligible cohort achieved qualifications appropriate to their ability. The high proportion of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) in this cohort (52.5%), many of whom have only recently arrived in the UK, has meant a significant focus on Level 1 and ESOL qualifications. Notably, 100% of those entered for Level 3 qualifications passed.

Attendance, Exclusions, and Engagement

- **Attendance:** Overall absence for AfC Virtual School students was 10.2% (compared to 9% for looked-after children nationally), while persistent absence was 16.9%, which is lower than the national benchmark of 20.3%.
- **NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training):** AfC has successfully kept NEET figures well below national averages. The KS5 NEET rate was 12.6% (compared to 28.5% nationally), and the 16-25 care leaver NEET rate was 27.5% (compared to 36% nationally).

Educational Provision and Stability

- **School Quality:** The Virtual School successfully advocates for high-quality placements, with 98.5% of students in Kingston, 97.6% in Richmond, and 89.8% in RBWM attending schools rated "Good" or "Outstanding" by Ofsted.
- **Personal Education Plans (PEPs):** AfC achieved a remarkable 100% completion rate for PEPs across all three boroughs, with 97.3% quality assured as "Good" or "Outstanding".

AfC Virtual College and Extended Duties

- **Virtual College:** Launched in 2020, the college supports 16-25-year-olds with employment, training, and university transitions. This year, 7.5% of the eligible Year 13 cohort achieved a university place. The college also runs the "Welcome Programme," a vital 6-week ESOL and cultural integration course for UASC.
- **Extended Duties**: AfC actively supports children with a social worker and kinship carers. The Transition Hub, which provides 1-to-1 mentoring to improve attendance and engagement before absence escalates, supported 86 students this year.

Wellbeing, Finance and SEND Support

- **Pupil Premium Plus**: Funding (£300 per term) is strategically deployed for evidence-based interventions like 1:1 tuition, equine therapy, educational psychologists, and a highly successful Summer Activities Week aimed at building cultural capital and social skills.
- **Training**: AfC Virtual School leads the Attachment Aware Schools Award (AASA), which is currently active in 61 schools, training educators to adopt trauma-informed, relational approaches to behaviour.
- **SEND:** Pupil well-being is routinely monitored using Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQs) embedded in the PEP process. The report notes an ongoing structural challenge regarding inter-authority SEND funding disputes, which the Virtual School manages through persistent multi-agency advocacy

Overview of AfC Virtual School

Purpose of the Annual Report

The purpose of our Annual Report is to outline the achievements and progress of pupils within AfC Virtual School in 2024-25.

Data contained within this report is for children looked after by Achieving for Children on behalf of Kingston, Richmond and Windsor & Maidenhead local authorities with particular reference to those who have been in care for a year or more as of 31 March 2024. The report covers the broader activities of AfC Virtual School with sections dedicated to Extended Duties and AfC Virtual College.

This report will be presented to the corporate parenting groups in Kingston, Richmond and Windsor & Maidenhead; AfC Virtual School Board of Governors and the Children in Care Councils. AfC Virtual School operates a distributed leadership approach and this report is a collective achievement from a range of professionals.

Context

Local authorities have a duty under the Children Act 1989 to safeguard and promote the education of children in care wherever they live or are educated. The Children and Families Act 2014 amended the Children Act 1989 to require local authorities in England to appoint a Virtual School Headteacher 'who has the resources, time, training and support needed to discharge the duty effectively'.

A Virtual School Headteacher is the local authorities' lead officer responsible for ensuring that arrangements are in place to improve the educational experiences and outcomes of the authorities' children looked after as if they attended a single school. In 2018, Virtual School headteachers' duty was extended to support previously looked after children and in 2021 the Department for Education established Virtual School headteachers as the officer responsible for the progress of all children with a social worker. The Department for Education further extended the work of Virtual Schools from 2024 to include children in Kinship arrangements.

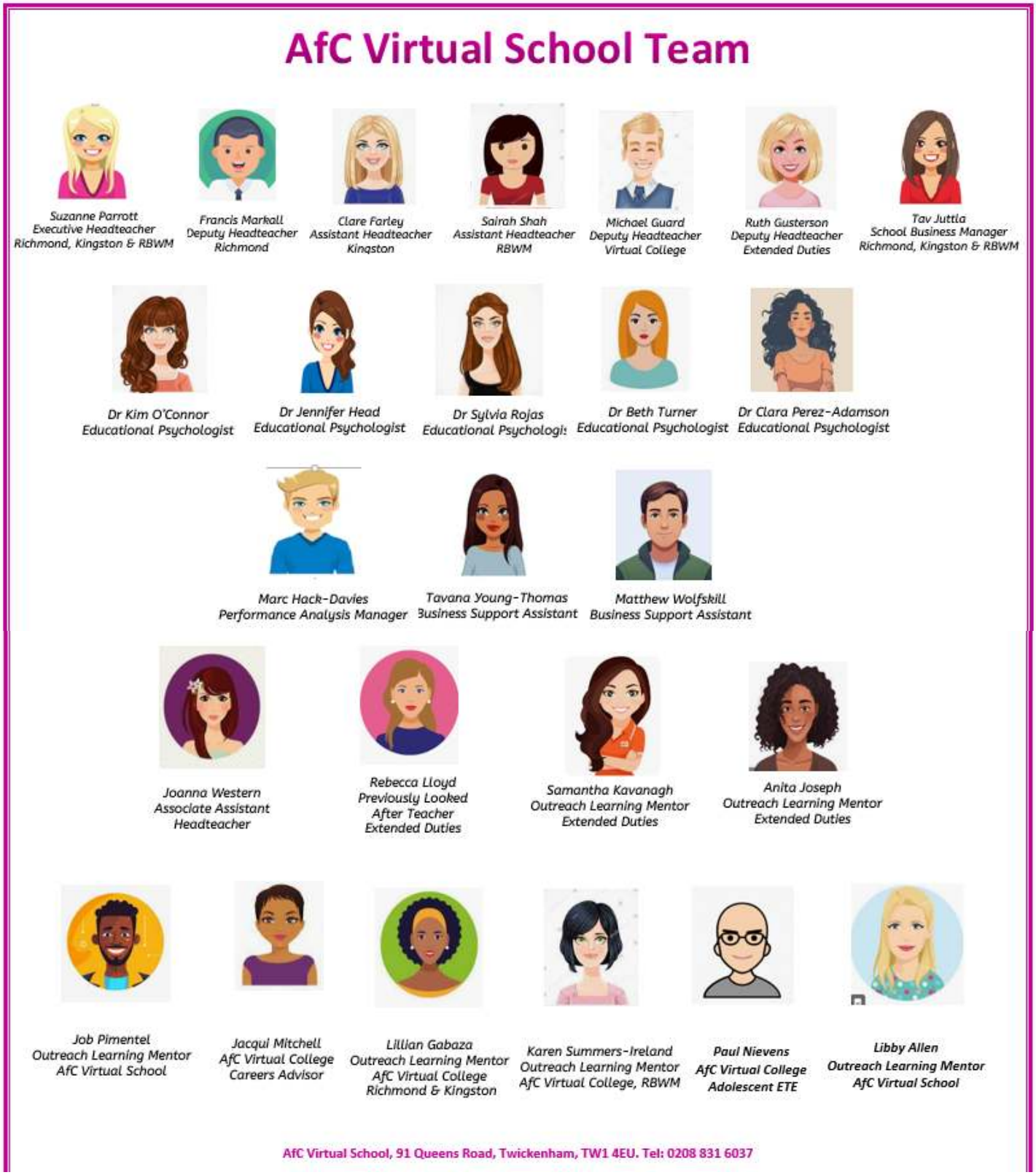
Achieving for Children is a social enterprise company created by the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames and the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames to provide their children's services. Since October 2017 this has included the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. In January 2016, Kingston's and Richmond's education services for looked after children were united as one school under the name 'AfC Virtual School' with a further expansion to include the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead in October 2017.

The role of AfC Virtual School

We know that children with a social worker face significant barriers to achieving good educational outcomes. Narrowing the attainment and progress gap between children with a social worker and their peers; minimising disruption to education and creating a culture of high aspirations are major priorities within Achieving for Children.

AfC Virtual School maintains accurate and up-to-date information regarding pupil progress and champions student's rights to educational stability. We do this by providing advice, training and information for social workers, carers, parents and schools; ensuring that each child or young person in care has an up-to-date education plan and by providing direct early intervention.

Staffing structure of AfC Virtual School



AfC Virtual School is located within the Social Care Directorate and line-managed by the Director of Children's Services in RBWM. AfC Virtual School's Executive Headteacher/Associate Director provides strategic leadership and is accountable to a Board of Governors, Corporate Parenting Groups and the Children in Care Councils.

AfC Virtual School is led by a Senior Leadership Team with additional staff including Educational Psychologists, a Careers Advisor, an ESOL teacher, a Youth Offending teacher, Outreach Workers and leads for Previously Looked After Children, Kinship, the UASC Welcome Programme, the Transition Hub and the Attachment Aware Schools Award.

Mission statement

The ten areas of our mission statement are adapted from the 'High Level Responsibilities for Local Authorities' as set out in 'Promoting the Education of Children Looked After' (February 2018) and 'Promoting the Education of Children with a Social Worker' (March 2024) . These golden threads are the foundation of our annual reporting, leadership areas and school improvement planning.

1. Attainment and progress: We are committed to closing the attainment and progress gap between children looked after and their peers through stringent tracking of data and provision of suitable interventions. We are dedicated to promoting a culture of high aspirations.

2. Attendance and exclusions: We rigorously monitor attendance and exclusions and act promptly where there are concerns to minimise absence and reduce exclusions.

3. Educational provision: We ensure that children looked after have access to a suitable range of high quality education placement options that take account of their duty to promote pupils' educational achievement. We champion educational stability and have strategies in place to support transition.

4. PEPs: We have robust systems to ensure up-to-date, effective and high quality electronic PEPs, which drive forward improvement.

5. Training and CPD: We structure an annual training programme which aims to meet the needs of those responsible for promoting the educational achievement of children looked after.

6. Finance and Business Management: We have systems in place to delegate Pupil Premium Plus to our school placements and AfC Virtual School uses funds imaginatively to raise attainment and improve wellbeing. We routinely monitor the impact of this spending to improve student outcomes.

7. Communication and working with others: We work together with partners 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. We regularly update our records so that effective information, reporting and data systems are in place.

8. AfC Virtual College: Care Leavers are supported into Education, Employment and Training. There are high aspirations around engagement in further and higher education. Apprenticeship pathways and opportunities are developed; partners are supported and challenged and training is provided. An Executive Board to advocate for this group is established. EET figures for care leavers increase.

9. Extended Duties | Previously Looked After Children: We are committed to closing the attainment and progress gap between children in need/previously looked after children and their peers through providing comprehensive information and advice to parents, educators and other professionals to promote the

educational achievement of this group. This includes a focus on reducing absence and exclusion and leading the Attachment Aware Schools Award.

10. SEND, SDQs and Health: AfC Virtual School supports additional educational and health needs of our children. This includes championing solutions with partner agencies to facilitate educational engagement and stability.

Performance Area 1: Attainment and Progress

Progress at Key Stage 1

Year 1 Phonics Percentage of students achieving expected:

	2023	2024	2025
AfC Virtual School OC2 Phonics	75%	100%	100%
Kingston Cohort OC2 Phonics	50%	100%	100%
Richmond Cohort OC2 Phonics	100%	100%	100%
RBWM Cohort OC2 Phonics	100%	100%	No pupils
National CLA Phonics	43%		
National All Pupils Phonics		80%	80%

Progress and attainment at Key Stage 2

Reading, Writing and Maths

	2023	2024	2025
AfC Virtual School	50%	60%	50%
Richmond CLA achieving expected	50%	50%	100%
Kingston CLA achieving expected	0%	66%	50%
RBWM CLA achieving expected	66%	60%	25%
National CLA achieving expected	37%	34%	35%
All National achieving expected	60%	61%	62%

Comment and analysis on Key Stage One and Two progress and attainment

There were eleven (11) OC2 Year Six students. Of which, three (3) were disapplied due to their needs (EHCP). 50% (4/8) of Year Six OC2 students met the expected standard in reading, writing and Maths (RWM). This is a decrease of 10% from 2024 (60%) but is 16% higher than the percentage of CLA (34%) achieving this standard nationally in 2024. In addition, the percentage (50%) of Year 6 OC2 students meeting the expected standard in RWM is below all students nationally (61%). In reading, 100% (8/8) met the expected standard, but in Maths this drops to 75% (6/8). Furthermore, Girls (60% 3/5) performed

better when compared to boys (33% 1/3) in terms of achieving the expected standard in RWM. Also, students living in the borough (50% 2/4) performed the same as those residing out of the borough (50% 2/4). It is also worth noting that students in 'Outstanding' schools (100% 2/2) performed better than those schools graded 'Good' (33% 2/6) by Ofsted. Clearly, there is a gap between the outcomes of SEN (0%) and non-SEN students (57%). We are continuing to work alongside our SEN colleagues, and the DfE, to resolve the conflict in the guidance between 1996 Belongings Regulations and the 2022 High Needs Funding Guidance. Overall, the positive outcomes are the result of a number of strategies in use across AfC Virtual School: Learning & Progress Meetings to monitor the students and initiate interventions (Educational Psychologist consultations & outreach support) to support them, attending Personal Education Plan meetings, organising face-to-face and online tuition, support to schools through pupil premium funding and 100% Personal Education Plan completion.

AfC Virtual School

Three out of three (100%) Year One students met the expected standard in Phonics. This is the same percentage who achieved the expected standard in 2024 (100%), above 2023 (75%) and above 2022 (40%). In addition, the OC2 2025 Year One cohort is above the national CLA percentage of students who met the standard in 2024 (43%) and that of all pupils (80%). 33% (1/3) of the 2025 OC2 cohort were female and 66% (2/3) were male. All OC2 students were located out of the borough (100% (3/3). Finally, OC2 students attending 'Outstanding' schools (1/3) performed the same as those students attending schools graded 'Good' (2/3) by Ofsted. One of the OC2 cohort had an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP), but their needs meant that they did not sit the Year 1 Phonics Test. The positive outcomes are the result of the aforementioned strategies in use across AfC Virtual School.

Progress and attainment at Key Stage 4

Average 8 three year trend

	2023	2024	2025
AfC Virtual School OC2	28	36.4	19.3
Kingston Cohort OC2	34	40.2	16
Richmond Cohort OC2	33.5	31.5	10.2
RBWM Cohort OC2	16	38.8	27.4
National CLA	19.5	18.3	17.3
National All Pupils	46.3	45.9	46

Average Attainment 8 - With and Without SEND

	2023	2024	2025
Non SEND Pupils			
AfC Virtual School OC2	31	37.4	27
Kingston Cohort OC2	41.3	39.3	42
Richmond Cohort OC2	33.2	28	18
RBWM Cohort OC2	15	44	29
National CLA	TBC	29	29.3
National All Pupils	TBC	49.8	50.2
EHCP Pupil			
AfC Virtual School OC2	21	35.2	10
Kingston Cohort OC2	27	41.5	7
Richmond Cohort OC2	35	33.8	2
RBWM Cohort OC2	16.5	26.5	22
National CLA	TBC	7.4	7.2
National All Pupils	TBC	14.2	14.8

2025 EBACC Entry

Whole School OC2	National CLA	National All Pupils
8.3%	10.2	40.5

AfC Virtual School OC2 English & Maths 4+

	2023	2024	2025
AfC Virtual School	18%	53.8%	12.5%
Richmond CLA	17%	40%	0%
Kingston CLA	40%	60%	0%
RBWM	0%	66%	27.3%

AfC Virtual School OC2 English & Maths 5+

	2023	2024	2025
AfC Virtual School	18%	23.1%	8%
Richmond CLA	17%	40%	0%
Kingston CLA	40%	20%	0%
RBWM	0%	0%	18%
National CLA	TBC	9%	7.9%
All National Pupils	TBC	53.1%	45.4%

Three Year Trend: Achievement of A Level / L3 qualification

	2023	2024	2025
Percentage (excluding UASC)			
Richmond CLA	35.3%	15.8%	22.2%
Kingston CLA	12.6%	16.7%	33.3%
RBWM	30.4%	0%	0%
Percentage (including UASC)			
Richmond CLA	23%	33%	12.5%
Kingston CLA	4.7%	18%	15%
RBWM	23.3%	0%	0%

Comment and analysis on Key Stage 4 progress and attainment

Overall, our results in all of the key areas are below the national averages for Children Looked After (CLA), and have decreased significantly since last year. Due to COVID-19, we are unable to measure the progress of this cohort based on Key Stage Two outcomes. There was an decrease in Attainment 8 across the school and in all three areas. In addition, there was a decrease (12.5%) in pupils achieving Grade 4 in English and Maths when compared to 2024 (53.8), but this is more in line with 2023 (18%).

However, there is a trend of underperformance in terms of students attaining English and Maths at Grade 5. This year it stands at 8% and just below the national average for looked after peers (9%), and well below parity with non-looked after peers (53.1%). Crucially, students without an EHCP (A8 = 27) performed much better than those with an EHCP (10). Moving forwards, we will be focussing on improving outcomes in English and Maths. This includes placing all of our children in 'Good' & 'Outstanding' schools, advocating against school moves (particularly at Key Stage Four) and utilising interventions to overcome barriers to learning: outreach learning support, educational psychologist consultations & one-to-one tuition. These processes start in primary school in order to achieve positive outcomes at the end of secondary education (Year 11).

Progress and attainment at Key Stage 5

Comment and analysis of Key Stage 5 outcomes

- 87.2% of the eligible cohort achieve qualifications appropriate to their ability or 55.7% of the entire cohort including non-eligible students. This compares with 46% of the entire cohort in 2019, prior to AfC Virtual College.
- 10% of the eligible cohort (6.5% of the entire cohort) undertook level 3 qualifications. This is a decrease of 1.4% against the previous year. 1 young person has completed year 1 of their level 3 course (2.5% of the eligible cohort). 52.5% of the entire Cohort are UASC and have been in the UK, on average 26 months with only 2 UASC young people working at level 2.
- 22.5% of the eligible cohort (14.7% including non eligible cohort) undertook level 2 qualifications. This has improved from 6.5% in 2019 but work to ensure year 11 outcomes in English and Maths will increase the numbers undertaking courses at this level and above.
- 65% of the eligible cohort (42.6% of the entire cohort) undertook level 1 or below qualifications. This includes young people enrolled at Specialist SEN provisions, ESOL and pre-entry English and Maths courses.

Level 3 achievement:

- 100% of those entered for Level 3 qualifications (4/4) achieved D or above passes. This is 9% higher than the national figure for all children in 2025.

Level 2 achievement:

- 55.6% (5/9) of young people who were entered for level 2 qualification achieved a level 2 qualification. This is a 15.8% decrease on the previous year.

Level 1 or below achievement:

- 96.2% (25/26) of young people entered at this level young people achieved qualifications of some kind. This includes a combination of ASDAN, ESOL, CSCS as well as pre-entry functional skills

University

- 7.5% of the eligible cohort of year 13 students achieved a place at university (4.9% when we include the non-eligible cohort). 75% of eligible Year 13 entered for Level 3 qualifications, achieved a place at university (3/4), this figure is 15% higher than 24/25 outcomes.
- The remaining 1 was supported into employment.

SEN Achievement:

- 91.6% (11/12) young people entered for Level 1-3 or below qualifications passed which is higher than non-SEN entrants within this cohort. A 74.3% increase on 2019.
- 9.5% of the SEN cohort were NEET. This is an 8.1% improvement on the previous year. This is also 9.9% lower than the whole cohort average.

UASC Achievement:

- 88.5% (23/26) of UASC eligible to be entered for examinations passed; higher than non-UASC entrants within this cohort.
- 90.5% of this cohort (19/21) completed level 1 qualifications or below. This was a combination of ESOL, maths as well as technical qualifications such as plumbing. This represents 71.8% of the entire UASC cohort including non-eligible.
- 18.8% (6 young people) were NEET during this period- a lower percentage compared to non-uasc groups.
- 12.5% of this cohort completed level 2 qualifications with no UASC young people completing level 3 qualifications.
- The average length of time in the UK for this cohort is 2.2 years (2 years 3 months in Kingston, 3 years 8 months in Richmond and 1 year 9 months in RBWM) which equates to starting UK education in the summer term (exam season) of year 11. This group also represents 52.5% of the entire cohort which is a strong factor for the higher percentage of level 1 and below qualifications undertaken in comparison to level 2 and 3 at this stage.

Richmond

Area	Qualification Level	Number of young people entered	Percentage achieved
Richmond	Level 3 (A Level, Btec, T-level)	3	100% (3/3)
	Level 2 (GCSE, Functional Skills Level 2)	3	33% (1/4)
	Level 1 or below (ESOL, Functional Skills level 1 or below, entry level qualifications)	14	100% (12/12)

In 2025, there were 19 Year 13 looked after children who had been in care for a year or more in the Richmond cohort. 63% (12) of these students were entered for and passed exams which were selected as appropriate to ability and included ESOL qualifications, GCSE and Functional Skills.

Of the 3 young people who completed level 3 qualifications, 3 achieved a place at university. 1 young person achieved a level 2 qualification and was supported into employment by AfC Virtual College with

the remaining 3 being supported to undertake further studies. All 12 young people who undertook level 1 or below qualifications completed their courses.

Personal Education Plan (PEP) completion figures for Post 16 were 100% completion for the Autumn Term, Spring and Summer Terms which maintains the high level of success from the previous year.

Kingston

Area	Qualification Level	Number of young people entered	Percentage achieved
Kingston	Level 3 (A Level, Btec, T-level)	1	100% (1/1)
	Level 2 (GCSE, Functional Skills Level 2)	1	100% (1/1)
	Level 1 or below (ESOL, Functional Skills level 1 or below, entry level qualifications	10	100% (10/10)

In 2025, there were 19 Year 13 looked after children who had been in care for a year or more in the Kingston cohort of AfC Virtual School. 52.6% (10) of these students were entered for and passed exams.

1 young person completed level 3 qualifications and gained a place at University. 1 young person entered and achieved level 2 qualifications. Finally, 10 young people were entered for Level 1 and below qualifications (including SEN related programmes), with all achieving a pass.

PEP completion figures for Post 16 remained consistently high across the school year with 100% completion rates across all three terms.

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Area	Qualification Level	Number of young people entered	Percentage achieved
RBWM	Level 3 (A Level, Btec, T-level)	0	0% (0/0)
	Level 2 (GCSE, Functional Skills Level 2)	2	100% (2/2)
	Level 1 or below (ESOL, Functional Skills level 1 or below, entry level qualifications)	8	87.5% (7/8)

In 2025, there were 20 Year 13 looked after children who had been in care for a year or more in the RBWM cohort. 50% (10) of these students were entered for and passed exams.

No young people completed level 3 qualifications. This is in part due to the increase in the number of young people who selected employment and apprenticeships (20% of the cohort).

2 young people who completed level 2 qualifications passed their examinations with 87.5% of the 8 young people who undertook level 1 and below qualifications achieving a pass. Of those who were not entered for exams, 5 young people were NEET (25%) with 3 young people undertaking 'The Welcome Programme' (AfC Virtual School's in house programme which delivered 8 hours per week of English language lessons alongside trips and activities). Whilst this provided a robust preparation for life in the UK education system, no qualifications are associated with the course.

PEP completion figures for Post 16 were consistently high across the three terms with 100% completion in all three terms.

Performance Area 2: Attendance and Exclusions

	Overall Absence			Persistent Absence		
	CLA OC2	CINO	CPPO	CLA OC2	CINO	CPPO
Richmond	13.6%	21.8%	30.6%	28.1%	49.6%	46.3%
Kingston	6.5%	31.4%	25.1%	5.7%	43.8%	42.6%
RBWM	10.3%	32%	19.5%	17.6%	46%	47.9%
National	9%	17.4%	21.8%	20.3%	46%	55.4%

KS5 Care leavers

	Overall Absence OC2	Persistent Absence OC2
Richmond	17.2%	57.7%
Kingston	28%	62.5%
RBWM	16.1%	46.2%

	Suspensions			Exclusions		
	CLA OC2	CINO	CPPO	CLA OC2	CINO	CPPO
Richmond	9.2%	4%	12.8%	0%	0%	0%
Kingston	11.1%	7.1%	11.3%	0%	0%	0%
RBWM	10.9%	10.2%	14.5%	0%	1.1%	0%
National	14.6%	14.2%	16.6%	0.14%	1.03%	1.10%

Comment and analysis on attendance and exclusions

We have developed a three wave Attendance Strategy:

Looked After Children

Wave 1 - within AfC Virtual School

- AfC Virtual School collects the attendance of all of Achieving for Children's Looked After Children from Reception to Year 11 daily whether they attend in or out of borough schools. This is shared with Assistant/Deputy Headteachers in AfC Virtual School who provide interventions to support absence.
- Attendance is a standing item at AfC Virtual School Meetings and line management
- Half termly 'Attendance Deep Dive' into every young person's attendance with the Data Manager and Assistant/Deputy Headteacher
- Termly Certificates and Prizes for improved and outstanding attendance
- Attendance Data shared in termly and annual reports and evaluated for action

- Close monitoring of attendance, by area leads, at pupil level - rag rating to highlight concern.
- Use of Pupil Premium to support wellbeing and support Emotional Related School Avoidance.

Wave Two - across the local authorities

- Attendance Data shared in monthly Performance Quality Innovation reports and evaluated for action within AfC Virtual School
- Training of Social Workers and other Local Authority professionals at formal events and through visits to team meetings
- Accountability to Board of Governors, Monthly Performance Quality and Innovation Boards, Corporate Parents, Scrutiny Boards etc

Wave Three - Within the Community

- Outreach Workers, Transition Hub and Educational Psychologists provide interventions to support absence in collaboration with schools and families
- Training provided to Designated Teachers and Foster Carers regarding the impact of absence and effective strategies
- Attendance discussed at Personal Education Plans and other professionals meetings

Extended Duties - Children in Need /Children on a Child Protection Plan

Wave 1 - within AfC Virtual School

- Establishment of a data collection approach with partners at Welfare Call triangulating our CIN and CP social care register with students' Department for Education, Unique Personal Numbers. This has achieved 92% school compliance.
- Recruitment of new staff to meet the challenge of the DfE Extended Duties.
- Analysis of CIN and CP data to identify targeted students and schools
- Development of Coaching approach for schools and other professionals
- Production of regular impact reports to understand areas for ongoing improvement and celebrate successes

Wave Two - across the local authorities

Established multi-agency Attendance Board to meet termly and aims to scrutinise the absence of children with a social worker.

- Absence data shared weekly with Social Workers of CIN and CP Children.
- EP/VS Clinics for Social Workers of Targeted support students. **49 cli**nics were held in 2024-25
- Audit of Child Protection and CIN Plans to assess focus on education
- Raising awareness activities e.g. attendance of team meetings in K, R and RBWM
- DSLs attended 1:1 coaching sessions with Extended Duties

Wave Three - Within the Community

- Extension of Training and Attachment Aware Schools Award to include Designated Safeguarding Leads and development of a Silver Award and Gold Award
- Extension of AfC Transition Hub to support CIN and CP Children as well as new into care.
- Questionnaire to schools asking for feedback on support that we can offer CIN and CP Children in their school
- School Safeguarding Clinics with Headteachers and DSLs in RBWM
- Collating attendance best practice brochure updates from schools
- Presentations to Headteachers and other forums (BOSH, Heads Together) to raise awareness of Children with a Social Worker's needs.

AfC Virtual College

Wave 1 Within AfC Virtual College

- Careers advice, Outreach Learning Mentor Support and Mentoring offer- pupil level support
- Monitoring of performance data and taking early and preventative action
- UASC Welcome Programme providing ESOL support

Wave 2- across the local authorities

- Overseeing 100% PEP completion with partners
- Visiting Leaving Care team and delivering training
- Multiagency NEET meetings every 6 weeks to ensure an action plan for every NEET 16-25

Wave 3 Within the Community

- Visiting Colleges routinely to discuss absence
- Executive Board for Care Leavers to champion attachment aware communities and support recruitment for Care leavers. Including Better Futures Business training events
- Better Futures employment events

How good is the attendance and exclusion of children with a Social Worker?

Looked After Children

Overall Absence for AfC Virtual School was 10.2% compared with the National for looked after children of 9%. Persistent Absence for AfC Virtual School was 16.9% compared with 20.3% for nationally looked after children.

In Kingston, Average Absence was 6.5% up from 6% in 20o4. In Richmond it was 13.6% up from 6% in 2024. In RBWM Average Absence was 10.3% up from 4.4% in 2024 Persistent Absence figures in Kingston were 5.7% a decrease from 17.9% in 2024 Richmond were 28.1%, an increase from 15.8% in 2024, and RBWM 17.6% an increase from 16.7% in 2024.

AfC Virtual School continues a trend of zero permanent exclusion closing the gap with the national data for both looked after and all pupils. Over AfC Virtual School the average percentage for students with one suspension or more was 10.4% as compared with 14.6% for looked after children nationally. Suspensions in Kingston were 11.1% up from 10.6% in 2024 in Richmond 9.2% down from 10.7% in 2024 and RBWM at 10.7% down from 13 % in 2024.

Care Leavers

For Overall Absence, Kingston saw an increase from 22.9% in 2024 to 25.7 in 2025. Richmond saw a decrease in absence from 18.6% in 2024 to 17.2. RBWM saw a decrease from 17.4% to 16.1%.

When measuring Persistent Absences, Kingston saw a decrease from 66.7% in 2024 to 60.5%. RBWM saw a decrease in persistent absence from 52% in 2024 to 46.2% in ‘25 and Richmond saw a rise from 50% in 2024 to 57.7% in ‘25. It is worth noting that there are no national absence figures for CLA young people or non CLA in KS5 to serve as a benchmark.

AfC Virtual School KS5 NEET figure was 12.6% compared with the national figures of 28.5% and 16-25 NEET group was 27.5% in 2025 compared to the national figure of 36%.

For Richmond young people the NEET figure in Key stage 5 was 12.9% and in line with the previous academic year. This is 3% lower than the same point in 2019. For those aged 18-25, the NEET figure at this same point was 31.5% compared to the national average for young people with a care background of 36%. This is 4.7% lower than the previous year.

NEET figures for Y12 - 13s in Kingston as of July 2025 saw a rise from the previous year to 16.2% compared to 14.3% in 2024. This figure remains below the national average for young people with a care background (28.5%). For those aged 18-25, the NEET figure at this same point was improved to 30.3% compared to the national average for young people with a care background of 36%. This is a 4.2% improvement on the previous year.

NEET figures for Y12 - 13s in the OC2 RBWM as of July 2025 was 12.9% compared to 8.4% in the previous year. Whilst this is an increase it remains well below the national average of 28.5% for young people in care at this age. For those aged 18- 25, at this same point, the NEET figure was 31.5. This is below the national average of 36% and an improvement of 2.5% on the previous year.

The low numbers of NEET figures can, in most cases, be attributed to the work AfC Virtual College has undertaken to ensure institutions consider the impact of instability and are therefore working harder to retain young people who would otherwise have been withdrawn due to low attendance. It is clear that we need to continue to step up the focus on KS5 attendance through collaboration with colleagues, carers and social workers.

Performance Area 3: Education Provision

Number of students in AfC Virtual School, 31 July 2023

	2022/2023			2023/2024			2024/2025		
	LBR	RBK	RBWM	LBR	RBK	RBWM	LBR	RBK	RBWM
Early years	3	7	4	5	9	4	7	7	7
Statutory school age	65	79	87	75	80	98	84	69	87
Post-16	68	54	68	50	52	48	42	47	50
Total	136	140	159	130	141	150	133	123	144
% R-11 with SEND	44.1	50.6	50.5	53.3	56.5	49	51.7	59.7	50
-% of national population with SEND							27.3%		

School Stability in a two year period

	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
Richmond	81%	73.3%	81.6%
Kingston	84%	74.1%	66.7%
RBWM	78%	75%	68.5%

School provision grading Looked After Children Attending

		% Good or Better Schools		
		2022-23	**2023-24**	**2024-25**
Richmond	In	100	100	100
	Out	100	95.7	95.9
	Total	**100**	**97.2**	**97.6**
Kingston	In	100	100	100
	Out	100	100	97.9
	Total	**100**	**100**	**98.5**
RBWM	In	100	100	88.4
	Out	98	95.6	91.1
	Total	**98.9**	**97.7**	**89.8**

Comment and analysis of Performance Area 3

School Stability

In 2024, the number of pupils in AfC Virtual School decreased to 421 pupils compared to 435 in 2023. School stability fell in all three areas: Richmond 81% to 73.3%, Kingston 84% to 74.1% and RBWM 78% to 75%. Out of a total cohort of statutory school age children of 253, 69 young people (27%) have experienced a school move in the last 2 years with 73% having stability. Looking at the 69 students who moved schools the highest proportion were in Key Stage Four:

EYFS	KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4
7.2% (5)	10.1% (7)	21.7% (15)	26.1% (18)	34.9% (24)

The Department for Education statutory guidance requires that wherever possible children are not moved school in Key Stage Four, as this negatively impacts on their outcomes. Additionally, the Department for

Education requires authorities to take significant steps to avoid a school move when a young person comes into care.

If we consider school moves in relation to cohort size the greatest percentage of school moves occur in Key Stage Two (KS2). All of these moves were to long term carers.

EYFS	KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4
23.8%	31.8%	24.2%	29%	25.5%

Common trends behind the school moves were moves to specialist SEND provision; moves due to placement breakdown or Child Sexual Exploitation risks; moves to secure accommodation and moves when coming into care.

When a school move has to happen AfC Virtual School works with the current and new school to provide as smooth a transition as possible. Every attempt is made to avoid time out of school but should this be unavoidable AfC Virtual School ensures that online tuition is available to that young person.

Links with SEND have also improved this year working towards timely moves, without drift. A school move authorisation form is now in place across AfC Virtual School, so that all school moves need to be approved at Associate Director level of AfC Virtual School and Social Care.

School Quality

No young people were placed in Requires Improvement schools this academic year. 98.5% of young people in Kingston were in Good plus schools, 97.6% in Richmond and 89.8% in RBWM. In Kingston and Richmond 100% of in borough young people attended good or outstanding schools. All young people in RI provisions were already attending when they came into care or attending when the ofsted grading was given. Stability is a priority for our young people so decisions were made to maintain the current education provisions with Risk Assessments in place.

Performance Area 4: Personal Education Plans

Annual Total PEP Completion and Quality ratings 2024/25

	Completion Total and Percentage	Average Annual Quality Rating Percentage
Richmond	**100%**	99.4% Good +
Kingston	**100%**	97.2% Good +
RBWM	**100%**	95.8% Good +
Total	**100% (1133/1133)**	**97.3% Good +**

The PEP process in AfC Virtual School is managed through an electronic system administered by Welfare Call. In 2024-25 we achieved 100% completion rate and 97.3% of PEPs were quality assured by AfC Virtual School senior teachers as being Good or Outstanding.

The ongoing use of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) demonstrates a commitment to supporting wellbeing in our schools and through using the shared online platform with social care professionals offers important information sharing opportunities.

Half termly PEP audits are undertaken by the Senior Leadership Team, where areas for improvement are identified, to support the ongoing improvement of PEP. PEP observations were also introduced so that paperwork and meetings can be compared to see if the meetings are also of a Good + standard. A report of the finding is shared with the senior leadership team and areas of improvement identified. Both of the above then feed into our training programme.

Three Year PEP Completion Rates

	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
Richmond	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**
Kingston	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**
RBWM	**99%**	**100%**	**100%**

How good is the PEP service for children looked after?

AfC Virtual School values the Personal Education Plan as a 'window to the provision'. We encourage our partners to celebrate pupils' success and we expect to see detailed feedback outlining the progress of our children.

The completion rate is excellent with 100% of children having termly PEPS. The Quality rating is also strong. We have further developed the quality of provision with observations of meetings and half-termly PEP audits. We are working on completion of PEPs by half term with a return to more face to face meetings and continuing to improve completion rates of SDQ's.

The remarkable PEP completion rates are sustained and are driving multiagency support for our children's education. The quality of audits has improved and provides useful recommendations to build on practice.

Performance Area 5: Training and CPD
Comment and analysis of training and CPD

Our training programme runs throughout the academic year and includes face to face and online networks, conferences and drop in sessions for all professionals involved with the cohorts we support. One of the main areas of training continues to be the Attachment Aware Schools Award - the year-long programme was offered to the second cohort of schools and developed with 61 schools across the three LAs taking part.

In addition to our foundation programme, the DHT, AHTs and Performance Analysis Manager have provided a range of bespoke training opportunities for social workers and designated teachers particularly in ensuring their skill around PEP completion. Designated Teachers are encouraged to lead whole staff training in their schools to raise awareness of Children Looked After and to disseminate learning from the network meetings. Our Educational Psychologists continue to contribute significantly to training, providing information on Attachment Theory to schools and foster carers.

The delegate feedback forms assist AfC Virtual School in developing training which most effectively addresses partners' needs. Examples of feedback include:

Title of training	Date	Comments	Feedback
Social Workers, PA's and IRO's Whole Service Event	12th October 2023	'This training has more than met my expectations and was most informative." "This was excellent training and very well organised. The speakers were super."	100% Good/ Excellent
Designated Teacher Forum for Looked After Children	17th Octob er	'This was really useful, thanks. Transition to secondary school information and support in this has been excellent.' 'I have really Enjoyed the break out room discussions'	100% Good/ Excellent
Designated Teacher Conference	26th Septe mber 2024	'Excited to take learning back to school. Challenging stereotypes and boys are seen in school.' 'Trauma informed strategies for Children in Care.' 'The EP workshops were excellent and highly relevant' 'Changing language used around schools especially in regard to boys' 'Great opportunity to reflect with colleagues'. 'Keeping up to date and Inspiring and thought provoking'	100% Good/ Excellent

Conference for Foster Carers and their Supervising Social Workers	4th Feb and 29 April	'Superb and enjoyable training by the VS'. ' Always great to reflect more on how we help our children by empathy rather than judging behaviour' 'Very well organised.' 'Helps to keep me more child focused and remain empathetic'.	100% Good/ Excellent
Designated Teacher Forum	13th May	'I really enjoyed this! Thank you - always informative. I have great ideas and resources that I want to share with my team.' 'It was a good mixture of presentation and sharing' 'The presentation was really useful and the time to talk to colleagues to know that we are all feeling similar is really helpful to help support us.'	100% Good/ Excellent

How good is the quality and impact of training for designated teachers, social workers and carers?

We know from our feedback that the quality of training offered by AfC Virtual School is very good. The focus going forward is on recruiting more delegates for foster care and social work training. To this end we have created a training brochure to raise awareness and promote advance booking. There has been some progress with targets to further improve this service

What are the key areas for improvement?
Were the Areas for Development set in the 2024-25 Annual Report met?

Development Area set for 2024-5	What were the outcomes met?
Triangulate the impact of training on student outcomes through closer examination of pupil data in relation to delegate attendance of AfC Virtual School training.	Not yet Met. Roll over to 2025-26
Embed the collection of post training feedback from delegates to further assess the impact of our training.	In progress
Develop a CPD strategy to better understand the training attended and delivered by AfC Virtual School Staff.	In progress

What are the areas for improvement for 2025-6?

Target 1: 95%+ 'Good' or 'Outstanding' feedback from every training event
Target 2: Improve attendance of training by 30%

Target	Who is responsible?
Continue to explore ways to increase attendance of training in particular for SW and FC. To include a robust marketing strategy monitoring of coverage.	AHT i.c Training
Triangulate the impact of training on student outcomes through closer examination of pupil data in relation to delegate attendance of AfC Virtual School training.	AHT i/C Training and DH i/c Learning and Progress - Report due Summer Term 2026

Performance Area 6: Finance and Business Management

Comment and analysis

AfC Virtual School is funded by a range of revenue streams. These funds are used to support pupil interventions, staffing and the administration of AfC Virtual School. Pupil Premium Plus funding is received by AfC Virtual School from the Department for Education and is used to finance a variety of strategic projects managed and coordinated by AfC Virtual School.

Pupil Premium Plus is designed to benefit the child in care and must be used to enhance and improve their educational outcomes. The child in care's voice and their specific needs are of paramount importance in considering the use and impact of this money by schools and settings.

AfC Virtual School's Executive Headteacher delegates £300 funding per student (£100 for Early Years students), each term to schools with children in care in Richmond, Kingston and Windsor & Maidenhead local authorities. Supplementary funding for students can be accessed through completion of an Additional Funding Form, which is processed at weekly AfC Virtual School finance meetings. The Additional Funding Form seeks information on the expected impact of the sum being requested and an outline of how delegated funds have been spent.

A Pupil Premium Plus page in the ePEP template enables AfC Virtual School to draw down data and monitor the impact of delegated pupil premium plus on pupil's educational progress and outcomes. Through our Designated Teacher training sessions we highlight the importance of research, ie: by the Education Endowment Foundation, and share which interventions have been identified as being effective in closing gaps in learning, ie: 1:1 tuition and metacognition.

In addition, Pupil Premium Plus funding has been dedicated to fund the School Business Manager, who works with AfC Virtual School's Executive Headteacher to manage finance, research evidence of impact, source and run strategic projects and to monitor additionality and added value. We also use this funding to strategically provide Educational Psychologists and Outreach Learning Mentors to support pupil outcomes.

AfC Virtual School Pupil Premium Plus accounts balanced at the end of the financial year 2024/25. There was no surplus or requirement to return monies to the Department for Education. All funds were spent on supporting the Education of Children in Care. Governance of AfC Virtual School provides accountability, scrutiny and challenge for all mission statement areas and there are annual meetings with the Link Governor for Pupil Premium Plus.

Additional funding from the Department for Education include the Previously Looked After grant, Post 16 Pupil Premium Plus grant, Extended Duties grant and Kinship Care grant All budgets are tracked at weekly finance board meetings led by AfC Virtual School's Associate Director/Executive Headteacher.

What is the evidence of AfC Virtual School's impact on improving the educational experiences and outcomes of children looked after and care leavers?

AfC Virtual School Strategic Projects

AfC Virtual School uses Pupil Premium Plus funding to provide a positive impact on attainment via a variety of strategic projects. An annual 'Pupil Premium Narrative' report is produced to evaluate the impact of strategic projects and inform decisions on the allocation of future funding. This report is available on request.

Strategic Funding - Some Impact examples:

Tuition: Both 1:1 and online tuition has strong evidence of impact as cited in the Education Endowment Foundation adding an average 5 months progress. It is found that tuition used strategically and through delegated funding contributes to closing the gaps in learning.

Equine Therapy: Research evidence shows that working with horses, combined with equine assisted learning, makes a difference. For example, in Real HorsePower programmes, this dramatically changed attitudes towards bullying and increased prosocial behaviours in schools. Our foster carers report improvement in confidence and social skills for children involved in this intervention.

Letterbox Parcels (Booktrust): Parcels are distributed for our children to foster carer homes and residential placements in all three of our local authorities. PALAC (Institute of Education/University College London) research supports this initiative to promote Literacy, Reading and Maths opportunities in the home.

Training Programme: Feedback is strong and delegates report they feel confident to cascade their learning to staff teams in their schools. Delegate feedback can be found under the Training Section (Performance Area 5).

Educational Psychologists: AfC Virtual School has invested in educational psychologists with specialist knowledge of looked after children. This strategic intervention has enriched our training offer and provides invaluable support to our children, their carers and schools. Through investment in Educational Psychologists we have been able to develop the Attachment Aware Schools Award and the intensive support offered in our Transition Hub. Impact reports are available on both programmes.

Summer Activities Week: Workshops including multisport activities, standup paddle boarding, kayaking, pottery, cookery, arts and crafts, river cruise and learnings, horse riding and fantastic team building skills with crate stacking, laser tag and more. This intervention is aimed at developing cultural capital and enhancing social skills - one of our primary aims is to improve learning needs with an academic component,

CARERS & YOUNG PEOPLE FEEDBACK on PUPIL PREMIUM FUNDED PROJECTS

I would like to thank you and the rest of the team for this fantastic opportunity for my girls. They had the most wonderful times attending the water sports and the pottery and the creation station - it was such a wonderful respite for me and such a wonderful way of connecting with their peers and friends and for me to make new friends too and them!

—----------

We went away feeling inspired and rested and very creative. Please pass on our gratitude and thanks for all the hard work involved.

—----------

Dear Everyone, hello, we just wanted to say thank you very very much to all of you for everything about this last week, it has been amazing. X has done what he always does which is refuse to leave the house or get off his phone, then when he has got to you he has had an amazing time, he has joined in things that he never would do normally, and has made friends and been very proud of the things he has made.

X says his favourite was cooking and also steering the boat and using the horn, but he actually enjoyed everything. Thank you all so much for having him and I hope you have a nice rest of the summer.

—----------

Thank you so much for this - we are beyond thrilled and it's amazing she coped and had such a great time, she hasn't stopped talking about it - so thankful to you guys!!

Thanks so much for all the activities!!
Everyone was so welcoming and friendly which really helped the kids settle in quickly. X's favourite was the Friday slime day - they both loved the whole day of water sports Thanks so much! Please include us again.

—----------

X had a wonderful time, he was a little hesitant before going as he
is shy and was not sure whether he would get on with others - he really enjoyed it.

X did the activity at Longridge and at Taplow, and I do wish that I put his name down for all of them, because he ended up having a good time and enjoyed making new friends at the activities.

—----------

As always, X and X had a great time during activities week so a big thank you to everyone else involved in putting on everything.

—----------

X enjoyed Albany Outdoors the most and said 'the games were really good and I made friends'.

—----------

X had the best day ever - an absolute highlight of our Summer, thank you so much!

—----------

Thank you so much for organising such a wonderful week of activities. X really enjoyed the Albany day and the craft/pottery afternoon.

She also enjoyed seeing some of the same children from last year and is going to keep in touch, which is lovely. Thanks again for making it all happen.

—----------

Tav, once again, huge thanks for last week. X had a blast! He slept so well on the weekend! Honestly I think you have nailed the itinerary.

Best thing = Cody's smile! He loved the week! Difficult to call out the absolute favourite. He loves water sports because he needs physical action. Being able to return to the same pottery studio was good too as he talked about what he had made over previous years – that repetition is helpful for stability and consistency. Therefore returning to the same Spanish Bit horseriding experience next year would be amazing - X already talks about going to see his horse named Rhubarb again one day! Ultimately you have built a brilliant week of activities which X loved! Thank you.

—----------

They loved horse riding and Paddleboarding the best - the most enjoyable thing was seeing old friends and reconnecting with them from previous sessions.

X's favourite things:

- Playing with X (one of the girls who attended)
- Favourite activity was the boat trip.
- Learned about how locks work with boats and tying boats up.

Y's favourite things:

- Pottery studio (because he got to paint it and loved it, it was really messy!)
- the boat trip (because he got to go really fast, steer the boat and check how deep it was in the lock).
- Learning how to drive a boat.

—----------

S (father): I just want to say how brilliant the week of activities has been. Both of my boys absolutely loved it, and it's so good to have a wide variety of activities for them to get stuck into. It makes for a very enjoyable start to the summer. Thank you so much for having them both again and for putting all the effort into arranging it. I'm not too sure where their suggestion of gymnastics and back flips (!) has come from, which isn't something they've previously shown an interest in, but feel free to take that on board in whatever way you wish. Thanks again.

—----------

X had a wonderful time and hasn't stopped talking about it since.

—----------

Thank you as always for all your support in organising the Virtual school Activities.
X always looks forward to these activities in the summer - X loved the pony riding!

—----------

Thank you SO very much for a lovely week of activities! Not only the girls loved it but it really boosted their confidence as well.

—----------

I am very grateful for this fantastic opportunity - thank you!

—----------

Thank you so much Tav, the photos are lovely. X had a great time.

—----------

I cannot thank you enough! It meant the world to us! The girls have excelled in their Social skills, confidence and the water sports. Also in their balance, creativity, group work skills, sensory play, and knowing that they are not the only children who are adopted!!!!

—----------

X really enjoyed the pottery painting. As X was not with any friends and was a bit shy and nervous on the first day, on the boat trip, one of the comments she made to me was one of the members of staff really looked after her and made sure she had someone to talk to.

—----------

Thank you so much to you and all of the team for organising such great activities and fun week for all the children. X is always very nervous to attend, as she attends on her own and without any friends from school,, and probably a bit more so this year, due to the teenage hormones..

However, it is lovely to see the change in her by the end of the week, when she has had a chance to make some friends. I asked if she would be happy to attend some activities next year and she said Yes, which is a win!

I wanted to email to say a big thank you for the wonderful opportunities that the camp provided for my daughter, X. She really enjoyed the different activities each day and loved being with the other children.

It is hard to find a camp aimed at slightly older children and X would not be happy to attend a camp with much younger primary school aged children. Also you and your staff understand her needs and have always been so kind and caring.

Thank you again for organising such a great week!

Pupil Premium Plus Delegated Funding - Examples of Pupil Impact from our schools.

BW' s December mock exams showed good progress towards his targets. He was pleased that his additional work and effort have had good results.

Improved emotional wellbeing and engagement. DK is able to access more learning in the afternoon.

HG is better at turn taking and tolerating his peers but still needs an adult on hand to support this. HG follows the routines in Reception with high levels of adult support. He uses the visual timetable to support.

JP continues to be fully engaged with the sessions and is improving all the time.

Feeling safe and secure and emotionally regulated. Making progress and closing gaps in knowledge.

Strengthened her musical skills and confidence. OW is meeting her targets

SS has made some progress in developing social skills within structured activities. SS has been supported to experience different opportunities and activities within the community. She speaks highly of these experiences, as detailed in her pupil voice contributions.

Is making good progress and his social skills are improving.

PC score has improved from 23 to 24. Can write CVC words. S does play with other children.

Have made positive improvements in attendances and contributions in classes and attending tuitions.

Positively, he is able to use emotional regulations to control his actions.

AH fluency as a reader has significantly improved with intervention.

BB progress is steady now in this subject with this intervention.

He accessed the support, and showed good relationships with school staff and friends.

F has improved both his spoken and written English. F has been able to access lessons and is making progress

ID has started having some fluency and confidence in his English language acquisition

JB has built a positive relationship with key adults and has shared his concerns and difficulties.

J continues to make excellent progress, his communication continues to improve and is supporting his academic and emotional progress.

KM has shown he is a good team player at the football club.

KM has attended the booster group and this has helped reinforce his learning in preparation for the SATs.

LQ is much better at communicating feelings and reacting more positively to difficult social situations. Accelerated progress in phonics seen in Spring Term.

How good is the quality and impact of funding available to the Virtual School

There are robust procedures in place for allocating, processing and distributing funds. Funding supports evidence based strategies which support pupil progress and wellbeing. Criteria and legislation underpinning budgets within Virtual Schools are well understood and systematically applied. Pupil Level Impact is collected termly from PEPs and strategic interventions and a report compiled. Annually a Pupil Premium Narrative Report evaluates the impact of the strategic initiatives in place. An independent routine audit gave AfC Virtual School finance the highest assurance rating in all areas.

What are the Key Areas for Development?
Were the Areas for Development set in the 2023-24 Annual Report met?

Target	Who is responsible?	Was this Met?
95% of termly pupil level impact reports are completed. Report shared termly with AD/EH	School Business Manager in collaboration with SLT and School Data Manager	Met
Recruitment needs met	School Business Manager, AHT i/c Extended Duties and AD/EH	Met
Attendance of School Activities Week increases through early promotion	School Business Manager, DH i/c Learning and Progress and AD/EH	Promotion of Summer Activities Week is now earlier in the year. Year on year attendance remains the same.
Pupil Premium Policy reflects increased budgets	Executive Headteacher	Met
Maintain standard of finance management	School Business Manager, DH i/c Learning and Progress and AD/EH	Met

What are the areas for improvement for 2025-26?

Target	Who is responsible?
Maintain standard of financial management across the service	School Business Manager in collaboration with the Executive Headteacher
Create additional guidance to support practice	Executive Headteacher
Source additional funding e.g. through engaging in research; bids to charity and income generation.	Executive Headteacher in collaboration with Deputy Headteachers

Performance Area 7: Communication and Working with others

Comment and Analysis

AfC Virtual School works collaboratively with the children in care council and a range of professionals within the local authority and across partner schools. AfC Virtual School staff attend meetings widely to advocate for educational stability, advise colleagues and where necessary champion change. The Executive Headteacher/Associate Director of AfC Virtual School attends social care heads of service meetings and contributes education data to the monthly performance management board meetings.

The Deputy and Assistant Headteachers attend Accommodation & Resource Panel, Permanency Planning Meetings and Network Meetings. The Executive Headteacher chairs the Learning and Development sub group for the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Additionally, members of AfC Virtual School attend school improvement meetings hosted by the Education Directorate and the Executive Headteacher attends Headteachers' Conferences and Forums.

Located within the Social Care Directorate, the work of AfC Virtual School is embedded within a multi-agency framework. It is through this connected and supportive network that the local authority is best able to raise standards of education of our children looked after.

AfC Virtual School works closely with Foster Carers and provides training to make sure that they are able to support the education of the children in their care. Deputy and Assistant Headteachers maintain regular contact with schools and colleges through training, and by attending meetings to ensure our students are supported to achieve. Additionally, training is provided to school governors responsible for children looked after so they can better support and challenge Designated Teachers in their schools.

The Executive Headteacher of AfC Virtual School attends the Pan-London network meetings, participates in the South East Virtual School Headteachers Network and attends the National Association of Virtual School Headteachers' Conferences. This engagement ensures that AfC Virtual School is aware of research, initiatives and developmental strategies that support looked after children's progress. Our out of borough children are supported by the strong links AfC Virtual School maintains across the Virtual School national community.

The Executive Headteacher of AfC Virtual School reports to the Corporate Parent groups in Kingston, Richmond and Windsor & Maidenhead and is accountable to AfC Virtual School's Board of Governors. Additionally, the Executive Headteacher of AfC Virtual School is accountable to monthly Social Care Performance Boards.

The work of our Performance Analysis Manager enables AfC Virtual School to be the local authorities' key resource on children with a social worker's education data. AfC Virtual School keeps contacts for Social Workers, Designated Teachers, Headteachers and Foster Carers to enable effective communication regarding training and interventions. A comprehensive schedule of reports ensures colleagues are updated on pupil progress and AfC Virtual School developments.

AfC Virtual School has developed a new data collection system dedicated to Children In Need and Child Protection children. This collects absence and exclusion data on a daily basis from schools with 96% schools compliance.

Performance Area 8: AfC Virtual College

Comment and Analysis

AfC Virtual College was launched in September 2020 and has been developed to ensure that young people with a care background, aged 16-25, are provided with the opportunities and assistance required to become independent, confident members of society.

The main aims of AfC Virtual College are to create an ethos of proactive and preventative support in order to promote the numbers of young people in Education, Employment and Training ('EET'), increase attendance at university and provide structures to encourage long-term success at adulthood. To help achieve its aims, AfC Virtual College has installed a number of initiatives:

- Pathways to Success: Different pathways have been created to support each young person based on their current context. It has been designed to ensure no one is 'left behind' and has well matched education, employment, and wider cultural capital opportunities.
- University talk series: Focussing on supporting young people from the ages of 14 and above, as well as foster carers and key workers, the talks, created in collaboration with a number of universities and the Care Leavers Covenant, are designed to ensure young people and their carers were better equipped to university university applications and the areas of support given to young people with a care background.
- Care Leaver 'NEET' Board: Undertaken every 6 weeks, the meetings, which are attended by department leads of each key service, meet to discuss strategies and SMART targets to support each individual NEET young person.
- Care Leaver Executive Board: A forum, including AfC Virtual College, alongside local councillors, university deans, business leaders and other members of the local community has been convened to champion opportunities for care leavers and aspire to an Attachment Aware Community. This helped lead to AfC becoming a signatory of the Care Leaver Covenant and RBWM and Kingston Councils declaring Care Status as a protected characteristic.
- Better Futures Business events held for both RBWM (52 attendees) and R&K (89 attendees). Businesses have become signatories of the Care Leaver Covenant with further work experience and employment opportunities provided to young people.
- Skills for Success Workshop: This one day workshop has been designed to support those aged 18-25 with preparing for EET opportunities. This includes CV updates, job/course applications and interview practice. The programme was undertaken twice and supported 10 young people, 7 of whom have since enrolled in courses of job roles.
- 'EET' Training for AfC staff: To ensure all staff are better equipped to support EET opportunities, AfC Virtual College hosted a training session to ensure Personal Advisors and Social Workers had a greater understanding of employment and course application processes in order to support the urgent and preventative ethos of AfC Virtual college.
- The UASC Welcome Programme: A six week ESOL programme, with cultural visits, designed to support Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking young people who are new to the UK. The intervention is designed to make it easier to access mainstream education alongside the programme. This has been extended to support young people aged 19 and those in Key stage 4 across all Local Authorities.

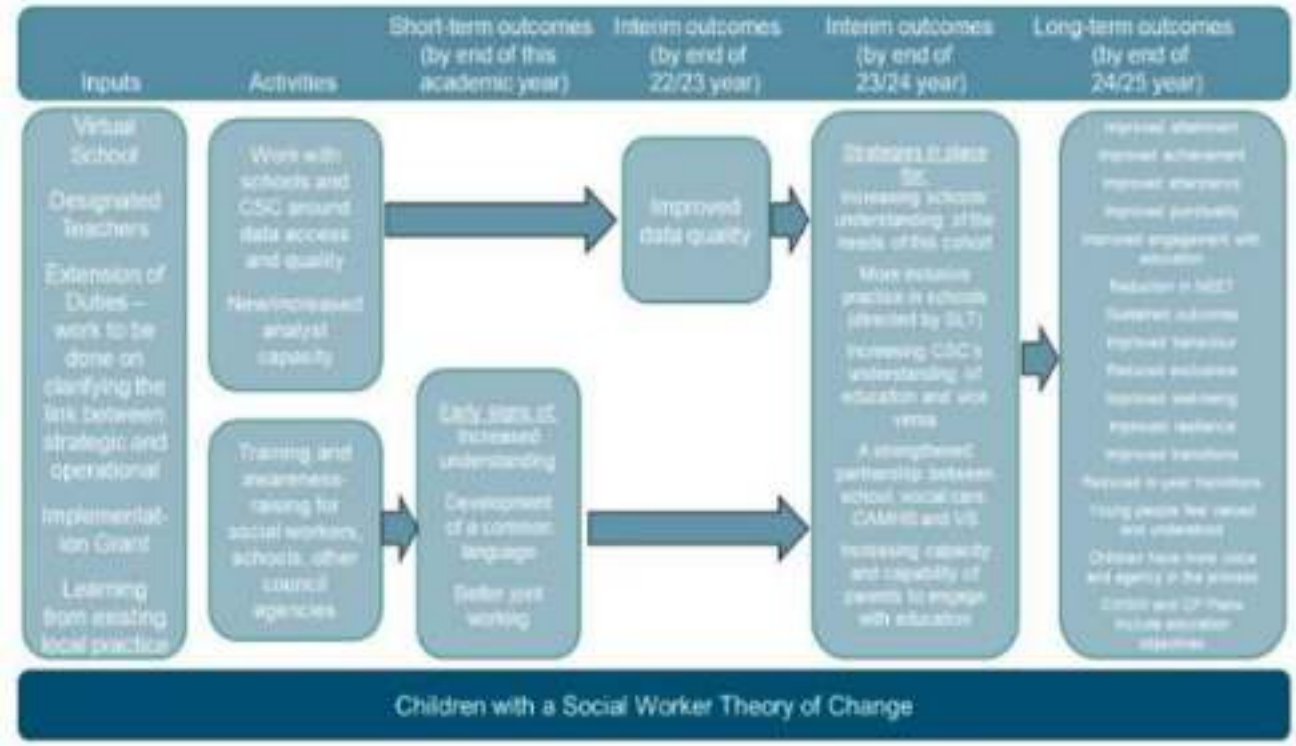
AfC Virtual College has achieved a great deal since launching in September 2020 and has significantly raised awareness of the education and employment needs of the Post 16 group. Feedback from partners including social workers, carers and young people has been positive. NEET figures are under the national percentages for care leavers and more students are achieving qualifications. We have been proactive in supporting the needs of unaccompanied Asylum Seekers and have created a bespoke ESOL programme which has seen all students make progress and transition to college.

Key Achievements in 2024-25

- 7.5% of the eligible cohort of year 13 students achieved a place at university (4.9% when we include the non-eligible cohort). 75% of eligible Year 13 entered for Level 3 qualifications, achieved a place at university (3/4), this figure is higher than the previous years. The remaining 1 student had deferred and attended university in 2026.
- 87.2% of the eligible cohort achieved qualifications appropriate to their ability or 55.7% of the entire cohort including non-eligible students . This compares with 46% of the entire cohort in 2019, prior to AfC Virtual College but is a slight decrease on the previous year.
- 10.4% 11.4% of the eligible cohort (6.6% of the entire cohort) undertook level 3 qualifications. This is a decrease of 1% against the previous year. This decline can be attributed to the fact that 52% of the entire Cohort are UASC and have been in the UK, on average 26 months with only 1 UASC young person working at level 2 or above. There has also been an increase in the number of young people who have a higher level of SEN need which has impacted the level of study they are undertaking. 100% of those entered for Level 3 qualifications (4/4) achieved D or above.
- 55.6% (5/9) of young people who were entered for level 2 qualification achieved a level 2 qualification. This is a 15.8% decrease on the previous year.
- 96.2% (25/26) of young people entered at this level young people achieved qualifications of some kind. This includes a combination of ASDAN, ESOL, CSCS as well as pre-entry functional skills
- Care became a protected characteristic in our three Local Authorities.
- Both Operational areas 1 and 2 become signatories of the Care Leavers Covenant.

Performance Area 9. Extended Duties | Previously Looked After Children: Comment and Analysis

Extended Duties of Virtual Schools



In 2021, the Department for Education extended the responsibilities of Virtual Schools nationally to support the education of children in need and those on a child protection plan. In 2021-22 we created a data collection system for CIN and CP children with 96% school compliance and we recruited two new members of staff. During 2022-23 The Transition Hub and Extended Duties were combined within one department and became Mission Statement 10.

*'The particular strengths of the (AfC) programme to date have been the: very **swift collection of CIN/CP data** which has then been effectively used to underpin other activities including: the focus on **attendance in training**, **AAS Award, Social Worker** Consultation **Clinics**, the **strengthening** of existing partnerships and establishing of **new collaborations'**. St Mary's University Research findings.*

In 2024-25 we continued to develop the Extended Duties strategy to raise awareness for this CWSW group which included the relaunch the AfC Transition Hub, increasing the offer in our Attachment Aware Schools Award, providing Educational Psychology Clinics to Social Workers, offering Safeguarding support to Schools in collaboration with social care and raising awareness through reporting and data sharing of student absenteeism. We conducted an Audit on the evidence of Education targets in CiN and CP Plans and sought the view of schools via a questionnaire. We started an audit of CiN plans with Social Care professionals.

Social Worker Clinics *December 2025* - Impact Report for School Year 2024/25

The table below shows the number of social workers who attended a one-to-one clinic with a senior member of Extended Duties and/or an Educational Psychologist since the beginning of our offer.

50 social worker clinics took place across 2024/25 in Ops 1 and Ops 2 by 36 social workers, 18 in each Ops.

Term / Year	Ops 1	Ops 2	Totals
Autumn 2024/25	7	9	**16**
Spring 2024/25	11	7	**18**
Summer 2024/25	10	6	**16**
TOTALS:	**28**	**22**	**50**

Full impact report see appendix:

We continued our work with St Mary's University who quality assured our offer against the Department for Education Theory of Change and findings from the report include:

'*This is being achieved through implementing a* ***thoughtfully considered strategic and extensive programme of activities*** *that combine universal and targeted activities and interventions.*'

AfC Transition Hub

In October 2019, AfC Virtual School, in collaboration with Barnet Virtual School (delivered by Cambridge Education) and St Mary's University were awarded a research grant, for two years, by the Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) for a ***feasibility study*** to implement a Transition Hub for children in care aged 11 to 14. The approach was a 'child ready', 'carer ready' and 'school ready' method covering four stages of change: 'Stabilisation', 'Adjustment', ''Initial school encounters' and 'Assessment & preparation'. All students were monitored via a 'Journey Planner' and the content of the intervention was underpinned by 'Positive Youth Development' '6C's' principles:



In December 2023 - December 2025 we continued with this model but extended the Transition Hub to include children on CiN and CP plans. We employed two Outreach Learning mentors offering 1:1 support where attendance is 80%-89.9%. The objective is to support engagement before absence escalates.

Children and young people are provided with support through a bespoke 12 week programme of 1 to 1 sessions with learning mentors. The learning mentors also work with schools, families and social workers to provide holistic support. The impact is measured through the PASS survey and Journey Planner. Transition Hub mentors have supported 86 students since December 2023.

Case Study 1

Child A was referred to for Transition Hub support because she was struggling to cope emotionally in school. She was put on a CP plan due to mum's mental health and domestic violence. A was very dysregulated at school before the programme started and struggled to maintain friendships. A also struggled to connect with the mentor during the first few sessions. The mentor asked the DSL if they could move to a space closer to A's class room,where she could see more familiar adults and feel safe. A went on to build a great relationship with the mentor in the following 9 weeks. Her confidence grew alongside her connection with her mentor and the key adults in school. A's scores on her Pass Survey and Journey planner showed the progress made throughout the programme. Pass Survey scores show an improvement in all areas:

	Feelings about school	Perceived learning capabilities	Self regard as a learner	Preparedness for learning	Attitudes to teachers	General work ethic	Confidence in learning	Attitudes in attendance	Response to curriculum demands
pre	47	4.6	11.9	11.9	4.1	72	2.3	11.3	32.5
post	71.3	49.6	43.3	40.4	100	76.9	96.1	56.8	32.8

Feedback from parents:

'I have seen a massive improvement in my child wanting to attend school and learn more

I have seen and felt the difference with the mentor being there for X. She has also made time to visit with me on a separate occasion so we could share thoughts on progress and well being. This was very helpful.'

'The mentor was absolutely amazing, she built a good relationship with my son who was really struggling. He would not want to go to school & then reminded he is seeing her, it would encourage him to go, she really helped X by listening to him, understanding him, and also helped majorly with some work he found difficult. I see a really positive difference in X thanks to her. I think she is amazing. So pleased children have support like this.'

'Very helpful to both my daughters. They really enjoyed it and have both benefited from it greatly

very helpful and kind. Informative and lets us know what is going on. She has been very helpful.'

Feedback from schools:

'Has worked well alongside school strategies and improved attendance to build confidence and resilience. It has supported engagement in school life and communication with adults and peers.'

'Although the programme has not yet been completed due to secondary transfer, the time we had was really helpful. As we had identified one of the child's needs was to build key trusted adult relationships and to know that they were valued and belonged - having the support of the hub was essential. This allowed us to embed and consolidate what we were doing in school and to give the child another key independent adult who was always there for them. Although at the time they resisted we feel this was their way of testing and as the hub professional remained consistent in their support, the relationship and the child's confidence grew. They have since settled in secondary and are reported to be doing well. Parent has called in to say thank you and how well they are all doing.'

Feedback from social workers:

'The parents have a better understanding on the impact of low attendance and the potential consequences if there is no improvements.'

'This intervention gives the child the opportunity to build a trusting relationship with a professional who is not part of the school or children's services. The intervention is tailored to the child's needs.'

Attachment Aware School's Award (AASA)

AfC Virtual School offers four levels on the Attachment Aware Schools Programme. We are embedding our criteria for our Platinum Board for those schools who have completed the three year course. This enables collaborative decision making and ownership of the programme between schools and AfC Virtual School.

The course offers year long training, EP coaching, regular training sessions for Designated Teachers and Designated Safaguarding Leads and a whole school change project based on an initial attachment audit. The Silver Programme allows for continued coaching, training as schools embed their work and with the Gold Programme schools become Attachment Beacons providing training to other organisations and creating interventions that engage families.

Feedback shown in the AASA 2024-25 Evaluation report:

"AASA is an excellent initiative and I am so glad I had the opportunity to take part"

Bronze Schools:

"Greater awareness and understanding of what behaviour means and the impact of trauma on children at school"

"Adults feel more confident in building relationships with vulnerable children which in turn has increased these children's trust in the adults at our school."

Silver Schools:

DTs/ DSLs were asked what further changes they have noticed in their school community as a result of continuing to take part in this project. The responses have been grouped into the following themes:

- **Use of a common language:** One school made reference to having adopted a common language for supporting emotionally dysregulated pupils. The DT/DSL stated that *"each staff member has a lanyard with prompts to support them with emotion coaching and restorative conversations".*
- **Increase in staff confidence:** One DT/DSL stated that **"***teachers and TAs have reflected upon the impact of their practice which demonstrates their greater confidence and the success of the project".*
- **Improved student regulation:** One school shared that children show an improvement in their emotional regulation skills, which has an impact on learning. The DT/DSL stated that "c*hildren are back in the classroom more quickly after being able to regulate themselves, meaning they have missed less learning time than they would have done in previous years".*
- **Change of culture and policy implementation:** Two schools made reference to positive systemic changes as a result of taking part in the project. One DT/DSL described their school's culture as a *"culture of kindness"*. A second school stated that students had noticed changes in some staff behaviors and staff reported successes in embedding the new relational policy.

Gold Schools:

All DTs/DSLs indicated a positive impact of the project on the wider school community, with four professionals specifically rating the level of impact as 'a great deal'. When asked about further changes noticed in their school communities from continued programme participation, responses highlighted that undertaking the programme has influenced a broad range of areas, as follows:

- Increased number of children attending school clubs over time.
- Improved parent feedback. One DT/DSL specifically noted *"excellent (and improved) parent feedback on whether they would recommend the school, feel their child is happy in school and feel their child feels safe in school."*
- Wider staff training: Training was successfully extended to wider staff, including lunchtime supervisors and wraparound care. One DT/DSL reported that "t*raining the wider staff, lunchtime supervisors and wraparound care, has been really interesting, they had a fixed mindset about children's behaviour. They are now engaging in conversations about why a child might behave in a certain way, they are becoming more curious. There is still more work to do but this project has helped get started!"*

Number of schools on the AASA programme at each level in 2024-25:

Total Bronze	31
Total Silver	19
Total Gold	27
Platinum	16
Overal Total	**93**

There is more detailed feedback in the AASA 2024-25 Evaluation report which is produced annually by one of AfC Virtual Schools link Educational Psychologists. This is available on request.

We have some outstanding attachment aware schools in our local areas who are meeting the needs of vulnerable children and we are sharing their best practice along with research on Relational approaches to behaviour management to support all our schools in becoming fully inclusive. Please see evidence below from current schools practice:

Post AASA 2025 - impact data:

School X:

Context	Exclusions	Attendance	Attainment
0 CLA; 2 CIN/ CP; 6 PLAC/ SGO	0 No change	3.9% PA Reduced for vulnerable pupils (by about 10%)	Expected or above at end of Spring term: 84%, 75% Year 1 Year 6, 64% Year 5, 63% Year 4, 75% Year 3, 56% Year 2 Improvement: Year 5 improvement from 20% to 40% Expected or above by end of Spring term and 60% to 75% in Year 3, other year groups have remained the same

School Y:

Context	Exclusions	Attendance	Attainment
0 CLA; 4 CIP/CIN; 4 PLAC	0 exclusions Reduced from 1 in previous year	7.1% PA whole school Reduced from 7.7% in previous years	74% expected standard (Yr6 23/24) Improvement: Evident in y3-5 summer assessment but year 6 data pending

During 2024-25, we saw a reduction in persistent absence and some increases in improvement in attainment.

Performance Area 8: Previously Looked After Children

Comment and Analysis

Since January 2019 we have had a lead teacher in post for Previously Looked After Children's education to respond to the policy document 'Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children' (Feb 2018) by providing information and advice to parents, schools, Designated Teachers and other members of the local authority. In October 2023 a new lead teacher was appointed, as part of the Extended Duties team who additionally leads the Transition Hub alongside the new Kinship duties.

The lead for Previously Looked After Children maintains a full caseload, supporting Designated Teachers with advice and training across a range of subject areas.

This includes:

- responding to emergency calls from parents and schools regarding exclusions and admissions across schools in all three boroughs of AfC;
- offering mediation between parents and schools;
- supporting staff across a wide range of schools, both mainstream and private to support Previously Looked After Children and those in kinship care;
- working with schools to suggest ways of using Pupil Premium Plus funding for eligible pupils;
- attendance at EHCP Annual Reviews and other professionals meetings to represent and advise;
- collaboration with professionals in areas including post-adoption support, SEN and admissions
- working closely with adoption agencies;
- managing subscriptions of parents, carers and Designated Teachers to the CATCH platform and working with them on content
- Delivering an online forum for parents and carers focused on supporting transitions

We support new Designated Teachers, especially those who are not aware of support available for adoptive and kinship families such as the Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund, and advise about Pupil Premium Plus. The lead teacher offers problem-solving consultations to Designated Teachers to develop their understanding of resources available and aspects of their role for children previously looked after.

The PLAC lead's work involves targeted direct work to support individuals alongside strategic work across all borough schools. This also includes working closely with Adopt London South and Adopt Thames Valley and collaborating with their social workers.

The lead teacher manages all aspects of the partnership with CATCH, encouraging parents, carers and schools to subscribe, liaising with the hub managers about content and attending webinars. She also provides regular emotional support for parents who feel they have nowhere to turn for support with their children when they are in crisis. Feedback from parents shows that they would have no alternative advice and support and feel less alone and more confident in moving forward.

The lead teacher is involved in training events, presenting at several of the Designated Teacher events and keeping Designated Teachers up to date with the latest developments either in person or online. Together with an EP, the lead teacher has developed a checklist for DTs and redesigned the Excellence in Education Plan.

The lead teacher has also led a Kinship Care project, with the aim of raising awareness of all forms of kinship care in AfC schools and developing support for the unique challenges faced by children in kinship

care. The lead teacher is working with cluster leads recruited from 11 schools across the 3 local authorities. These leads have worked together to offer training sessions on kinship care to schools in their clusters alongside developing support for kinship carers. As part of the project a padlet resource was developed for kinship carers. This has subsequently been demonstrated at a Coram BAAF conference and webinar for social workers across England. The lead teacher has also worked collaboratively with the heads of service in fostering and kinship to develop the kinship local offer.

What is the evidence of the Virtual School's impact on improving the educational experiences and outcomes of previously looked after children?

Previously Looked After Children/Children in Kinship Care Case Studies across Richmond, Kingston and Windsor and Maidenhead boroughs

Context: Year 7 child under SGO in a Richmond secondary school

This child had previously been on roll at a Hounslow primary school and the lead teacher was in contact with Hounslow Virtual School to support the transition. There had been concerns with her attendance while she was at primary school so the transition was carefully planned with the secondary school to support her needs. The lead teacher also liaised with her guardian to ensure that she felt confident to support her at home. Once she started secondary school, there was an initial meeting held to start the Excellence in Education plan. The lead worked closely with the pastoral support officer at the school to ensure that she had key adults and a safe space within the school. However, despite the support put in place, she increasingly struggled to attend school. In response to this, multi agency meetings were held with an Adopt London West social worker supporting the family. Further ERSA strategies were put in place to support her, including a referral to Anstee Bridge as a way of supporting her to engage with education and adults outside of her home environment. The creative focus of this alternative provision and the nurturing environment has enabled her to leave the house on a daily basis and to extend the time she is spending in school, increasing her attendance and supporting her mental health.

Context: Y10 SGO students in a RBWM secondary school

The lead teacher was contacted by a special guardian who had recently had an SGO put in place for her nieces due to the death of their mother. She wanted support with their education as she did not have children of her own and so was not familiar with the system and processes. The lead teacher supported her to apply for school places in a setting closer to her home and with the transition process as the children moved schools, as well as an application for transport. This also involved advising the new school on strategies to support them, such as putting in place an Excellence in Education Plan and suggestions on how to spend Pupil Premium Plus funding effectively. The children are now settled in the school, have had positive feedback from their teachers and there is also bereavement support in place. The lead teacher has also been able to signpost the aunt to peer support groups and parenting courses to help her to adjust to the new situation.

'I wanted to share the good news that the twins have been offered a place at X!! I can't thank you enough for your efforts, it was really appreciated.'

Feedback from DT Richmond primary school:

'Thank you so much for the resources and links. I found them incredibly useful and have a clear understanding of my next steps with the previously looked after child at our school.'

How good is the quality and impact of the Previously Looked After Children service?

There is a strong offer for this cohort of children with advice, training and facilitated support in place. The profile has been raised through effective communication and presentations across the network.

Performance Area 10. SEND, SDQs and Health

Identification and support of Children Looked After with Special Educational Needs and Disability

AfC Virtual School promotes multi-agency working across education, health and care to ensure support is in place to meet the needs of young people with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND).

- Attainment and progress is monitored through the Personal Education Plan (PEP). PEP meetings are held termly and a rigorous quality assurance criteria applied.
- If a young person has not been making expected progress, they are discussed at a 'Learning and Progress' meeting at AfC Virtual School, to consider appropriate next steps to identify any Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) / ensure appropriate support is in place to close the gap.
- Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings include AfC Virtual School, Social Worker, Designated Teacher, Foster Carer and young person. The PEP meeting may also include other professionals relevant to the young person e.g. School Nurse, special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator (if different from the Designated Teacher) Headteacher, Learning Mentor, Classroom Teacher, AfC Virtual School Educational Psychologist. Strength & Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQs) are embedded into the PEP process.
- The Personal Education Plan (PEP) form includes a Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) page prompting discussion of any identified SEND needs. This includes whether the young person is identified as receiving SEN Support or having an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), in line with the Code of Practice. The PEP form requires the school placement to provide information about the SEN provision in place to meet the young person's needs e.g. Individual Education Plans, up-to-date EHCP and Annual Review documents, which are reviewed during the PEP quality assurance process.
- Pupil Premium delegated funds are spent on interventions to support wellbeing and to close gaps in learning as identified in PEP targets.
- A young person who presents with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) will typically be assessed and supported by their school, following the SEN Code of Practice and utilising services available in the local offer.
- When an education provision does not have direct access to professionals that can effectively support the process of identifying Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND), or a young person is not in an education provision, AfC Virtual School Educational Psychologists can provide support to understand a young person's SEND, through consultation and possible direct work, as well as guidance regarding SEND school support and where appropriate, the EHCP process. AfC Virtual School Educational Psychologists will liaise with relevant education, health and care professionals to support their assessment and intervention planning.

Multi-agency working

- AfC Virtual School is aware of the conflict between the guidance produced by the Department for Education. Under The 1996 Belongings Regulations, a child looked after by a local authority for whom an Education & Health Care Plan is maintained is treated as belonging to the area of the local authority which looks after him/her. Under the Inter-authority Recoupment (England) Regulations 2013, recoupment is permitted in some cases and may be required in others. so that outside areas may reclaim the cost of the provision from AfC. Simply put, this means that out of the borough SEND
- Departments are happy to fund educational settings for children looked after living in their area, but only if they can recoup the money from AfC. The High Needs Operation Guide (February 2022) states that recoupment is 'not normally appropriate'. This is because "from 2018 the high needs funding formula and associated arrangements have been designed to ensure that local authorities' allocations of funding for SEND are based on the characteristics of the children and young people living in their area, including any Looked After Children.
- Essentially, some SEND Departments across the country believe that the Belongings Regulations take

precedence over the High Needs Funding Guide. Other SEND Departments believe the opposite to be true. This conflict is leading to inter-authority disputes over who is responsible for funding the educational placements of children looked after. Ultimately, this delays the process of a child looked after being able to attend an educational setting identified by AfC Virtual School.

- AfC Virtual School promotes close liaison with relevant professionals regarding children and young people with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND). These include half termly meetings between AfC Virtual School and the SEND Team and attendance by AfC Virtual School at Social Care planning meetings.
- Professionals meetings across education, health and social care, are held to ensure that there is efficient information sharing and joint problem solving involving the team around the child.
- Training is provided by AfC Virtual School to partners around the child including Designated Teachers, Foster Carers, Social Workers and School Governors. Due to COVID-19 a considerable online offer has developed.
- Termly Designated Teacher Forums are held to ensure effective information sharing. Designated Teachers access group reflective practice sessions facilitated by Educational Psychologists.

Meeting the Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) needs of young people new into care and those experiencing school moves

- AfC Virtual School expects that all young people new into care receive a PEP within the statutory timescale of 20 days. Please see above for how AfC Virtual School identifies, monitors and meets the SEND needs of young people in care, including those new into care, through the PEP process.
- When a young person is new into care, the AfC Virtual School Deputy or Assistant Headteacher liaises with school professionals to gather prior progress data and assessment information. If the young person has not been making expected progress, they are discussed at a 'Learning and Progress' meeting in AfC Virtual School, to consider appropriate next steps to identify any SEND / ensure appropriate support is in place to close the gap.
- If a young person is going to move to an out of borough school AfC Virtual School contacts the local Virtual School Headteacher informing them of a new looked after student moving into their area. Information around the school and the local offer is gathered to ensure appropriate provision is available.
- AfC Virtual School has developed a School Move Authorisation Form to provide a 'stop and think' moment to strive to reduce school moves in particular where placements break down.
- The Attachment Aware Schools Award is designed to support a trauma informed approach creating school environments where children feel safe and their emotions and needs are understood and supported.
- AfC Virtual School provides annual SEND reports, shares monthly SEND data at Performance Quality and Innovation meetings and presents SEND findings to our Board of Governors and Corporate Parents.

What is the evidence of AfC Virtual School's impact on improving the educational experiences and outcomes of children looked after and care leavers?

SEND Attainment 8 2025

Richmond	Kingston	RBWM	AfC VS	National CLA with SEND	National All SEND Pupils
2	7	22	10	TBC	TBC

EHCP Characteristics 2025

	Richmond	Kingston	RBWM
Attending Good+School SSA	94.3%	96.8%	92%
NEET (KS5 and above only)	9.5% of the SEN cohort were NEET. This is an 8.1% improvement on the previous year. This is also 9.9% lower than the whole cohort average.		
Not on Roll	0%	5.9%	3.7%
Less than 25 hours SSA	5.4%	11.8%	7.4%
Suspensions (Statutory School Age)	16.2%	8.8%	14.8%

SDQ – Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire

This is the fourth year that AfC Virtual School has used the SDQ's as part of their ePEP process.

Statutory School Age

In 2023/2024, 78.2% of Designated teachers returned their SDQ questionnaires and 77% in 2024/25. We aim to continue this improvement trend through raising awareness of the process with Designated Teachers, planning across the admin team from earlier in the year and promoting DHT / AHT follow up on non-returns.

In 2023/2024 - 69% of post 16 Designated teachers completed the SDQ returns and 67% in 2024-25. There were some barriers to completion at some colleges and we will explore solutions for these non completed questionnaires when we repeat the process in 2024-25.

SDQ Completion numbers with Total Difficulties Score outcomes with Area and SEND break down

	1. Close to average	2. Slightly Raised	3. High	4. Very High	Grand Total
Kingston	**33**	**7**	**7**	**16**	**63**
E	6	3	2	8	19
K	2	3	3	5	13
No	25	1	2	3	31
Richmond	**22**	**9**	**6**	**16**	**53**
E	3	2	3	6	14
K	1		2	1	4
No	18	7	1	9	35
RBWM	**47**	**10**	**11**	**17**	**85**
E	5	3	3	7	18
K	8	1	2	5	16
No	34	6	6	5	51

Key Characteristics
Statutory school age Very High Results

- 39 /141 (28%) Designated teacher results were Very High
- of the 49 Statutory School Age Very High results the following returns were made by foster carers:
- 12/45 (27%) Very High
- 3/45 (7%) High
- 4/45 (9%) Slightly raised
- 8/45 (18%) Close to average
- 12/45 (27%) No form completed

- The young person's SDQ is only sent to young people 11 and over. Of the 18 young people eligible the following returns were made by self assessment:
- 2/18 (11%) Close to average
- 1/18 (6%) Slightly Raised
- 0/18 (0%) High
- 2/18 (11%) Very High
- 13/18 (72%)No form completed

Statutory school age High Results

- 18/141 (13%) Designated teacher results were High of the 18 Statutory School Age High results the following returns were made by foster carers:
- 5/18 (28%) Very High
- 2/18 (11%) High
- 3/18 (17%) Slightly raised
- 5/18 (28%) Close to average
- 3/18 (17%) No form completed

Post 16 Very High Results

- 7/ 50 (14%) Designated teacher results were Very High
- of the 7 Post 16 Very High results the following returns were made by foster carers:
- 1/7 (14%) Close to Average
- 1/7 (14%) Slightly Raised
- 0/7 (0%) High

Of the young people with no SEN support all are receiving interventions through Pupil Premium plus including, EP consultation, ELSA support, school counsellors and mentors to support their level of need.

AfC Deputy heads and Assistant Head teachers are aware of the high and very high risk students. Results have been shared via a spreadsheet and completed to list interventions in place and next steps. Any cases of interest highlighted can be discussed with the AfC Educational Psychologist in their area and if concerns are raised set up a meeting with the school.

The majority of pupils (79%) have close to average or slightly raised readings in their Education SDQ, which is a positive reflection of the support that is in place.

To ensure that interventions are being effective they are discussed as part of the ePEP process termly, looking at the SDQ targets as well as at the effectiveness of the Pupil Premium Plus interventions. The SDQ provides another layer of scrutiny of the emotional health of our young people to enable them to achieve their maximum potential.

All SDQs are collected on the 'Youth in Mind' social care SDQ site allowing us to download data and monitor wellbeing at home and school. In 2025-26 a process is being developed to facilitate this cross agency analysis with input from social care, health and Virtual School professionals.

Appendix 1

Attachment Aware Schools Award Evaluation 2024-25
Available on request.

Appendix 2

St Mary's University Evaluation of Extended Duties
This report is available and can be found here

Appendix 3

Impact Report 2023/24
Clinics for Children With a social worker, children in need and child protection
Available on request.

Glossary

A	**AfC AHT** **AASA**	Achieving for Children Assistant Headteacher Attachment Aware Schools Award
B		
C	**CLA** **CiC**	Child looked after Children in care
D	DfE	Department for Education
E	**EHCP** **PEP** **EP** **ESOL** **EET** **EBACC**	Education health and care plan Electronic personal education plan Educational psychologist English for speakers of other Languages Education, Employment or Training English Baccalaureate
F	**Fast Tomato**	Careers online service
G	**GCSE**	Exams taken in Year 11 in Key Stage 4
H		
I	**IoE**	Institute of Education
J		
K	**KS1, KS2,** **KS3 , KS4,** **KS5**	Key stages of education in schools
L	**LAC**	Looked after children
M		
N	**NCER** **NOR** **NEET**	National Consortium for Examination Results Not on Roll Not in Education, Employment or Training
O		
P	**PEP** **PA**	Personal Education Plan Persistent absence

Q		
R	**RI** **RWM**	Requires improvement' Ofsted grading Reading, Writing and Maths
S	**SC** **SEND** **SDQ**	Social care Special educational needs and disabilities Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
T	**TLC Live**	Online tuition delivered live by qualified teachers
U	**UASC**	Unaccompanied asylum seeking child
V	**VSH** **VS**	Virtual School Headteacher Virtual School
W	**Welfare Cloud**	Agency which manages ePEPs and attendance
X		