Lincolnshire Virtual School Annual Report

For the academic year 2022 – 2023

Lincolnshire
COUNTY COUNCIL
Working for a better future

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1.0 Introduction

The role of the Virtual School is to promote the educational achievement of children in care, children previously looked after, and children with a social worker. Whether educated in Lincolnshire or placed outside of the authority, the Lincolnshire Virtual School team works in partnership with professionals to support our children and young people to fulfil their potential, and access opportunities on the same basis as their non care experienced peers. The team supports our children and young people in care on a case work basis, endeavouring to build strong relationships and to develop the confidence, self-esteem, and resilience of our students.

The Virtual School ensures that every child in our care aged 3 – 18 years has an up to date, effective and high-quality Personal Education Plan (PEP) that focuses on the improvement of educational outcomes and informs the allocation of Pupil Premium. Providing support and challenge that encourages high aspirations and individual achievement, with minimal disruption, is central to improving immediate and long-term outcomes for our children in care. In addition, the Virtual School ensures social workers, Designated Teachers and staff in education settings, carers, and Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) understand their roles and responsibilities for initiating, developing, and reviewing each child's PEP. The Virtual School also ensures that professionals are aware of the specific needs and potential educational barriers for children previously looked after and those with a social worker.

1.2 The purpose of this report

This statutory annual report for the academic year 2022 to 2023 highlights the work of the Lincolnshire Virtual School, the Local Authority, and partner agencies to improve educational outcomes for children and young people in the care of Lincolnshire aged 3- 18 years, children previously looked after, and those with a social worker. The report covers the cohort characteristics, the quality of provision, and the progress and attainment at all key stages from Early Years to Key Stage 4 for our children in care.

Key messages within this report are:

- The Lincolnshire Virtual School Team continues to be ambitious for all our care experienced children and those with a social worker. We understand that promoting better educational outcomes is everyone's business. We provide training, challenge, advice and support to schools, Children's Services colleagues, foster carers, parents, and other professionals, so that they can better advocate for the learning of children and young people in their care.
- There remains a continued and growing emphasis on the development of trauma informed home and educational environments, where the specific emotional and educational needs of our children and young people are understood and their potentials fulfilled.
- Most of our children and young people aged 3-18 continue to attend education settings that are graded good or better by Ofsted.

- Pupil Premium is allocated to schools in a timely way and is linked to targets outlined in the children and young people's PEPs. Personal Education Plans are reviewed three times per year, or more if appropriate, for all children and young people in care aged 3-18. A robust quality assurance process promotes consistency in quality and effectiveness across all PEPs.
- Early intervention is key to promoting outcomes. Consequently, all children in care or entering care aged 3-13 continue to receive support from our Specialist Teachers, so that schools are better informed of strategies to improve communication and language needs, if appropriate. A newly extended training pathway enables professionals to further develop their skills in meeting the needs of our young people.
- The Virtual School team works closely with our children and young people, with the specific aim of developing strong and effective working relationships. The voice of our children and young people is heard. We celebrate successes and provide opportunities for them and their families to be better understood. We endeavour to stick with them when things don't go so well and put any potential setbacks into context.

2.0 Our vision to improve outcomes

The Virtual School's vision for improving outcomes is aligned to Lincolnshire Children's Services Children in Care (CiC) and Care Leavers' Strategy 2022-2025.

Our overarching aim recognises that we want all children and young people to be cared for within their families/local communities, and we will support families to provide nurturing, resilient parenting so that children and young people realise their potential within their birth families. Where children/young people need to be looked after by Lincolnshire, we will support quality family and friend time. We will do everything we can, across our partnership to care for them and nurture their aspirations, so that they feel safe, loved, and are heard so that they can realise their potential. This not only applies when children are in care, but also where we have a duty to support them as previously looked after children. Working with our partner agencies and communities, we will individually and collectively provide nurturing, resilient parenting, and support as we would for our own children. This strategy sets out what we will do to achieve this vision with reference to Priority 4 of the Strategy (Learning and Aspirations).

In adherence to the principles outlined in The Children's Services Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy 2022-2025, and in partnership with Children's Services colleagues and stakeholders, the Virtual School priorities for 2022-2025 are as follows:

- Developing strong partnerships to promote expected attendance levels and reduce suspensions from school.
- Ensuring all children make good progress based on prior attainment, including those accessing Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) specialist provision through highly effective Personal Education Plans and effective use of Pupil Premium.
- Further improving access to education, employment, and training opportunities. As well as, raising the profile of post 16 children in care and care leavers, through the effective allocation of Post 16 Pupil Premium funding and with support from employment coaches.

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- Enabling all Designated Teachers, IROs, carers and appropriate parents to have access to quality training and professional development.
- Reducing school moves whenever possible to help maintain placement and educational stability.
- Applying and sharing best practice to better support and inform our workforce in meeting the needs of children in care, previously looked after children, and children with a social worker.
- Embedding the principles and foundations of Caring2Learn within our training offer to education settings, parents, carers, and professionals supporting our most vulnerable children and young people.
- Working in partnership with schools and early years settings to strengthen parental and carer engagement in learning.
- Developing regional partnership working and network links.
- Improving practice and provision through the development of peer support.

3.0 The structure of the Virtual School

The Lincolnshire Virtual School consists of a team of skilled and resilient professionals who are aspirational for our children in care, and act as education advocates to achieve the very best outcomes.

Every young person in the care of Lincolnshire aged 3-18 has an allocated Education Progress Co-ordinator, who facilitates termly PEP meetings and communication between all professionals. They provide a high level of support to Designated Teachers, social workers, IROs and carers in identifying and overcoming any potential barriers to our children accessing and attending good quality settings, monitoring progress and attainment and having high aspirations. Due to the increase in the number of children in care resulting in higher caseloads, additional grant funding was utilised to create two additional Education Progress Co-ordinator posts, to ensure appropriate focus and support for individual young people continued.

Following the retirement of the previous post holder in February 2023, the existing Team Manager took on the Interim Virtual School Head post for the remainder of the academic year, resulting in a vacant Team Manager post.

Virtual School Team

Interim Head of the Virtual School

Sarah Lane

Caring2Learn Manager

Krysta Parsons

Business Support Assistant

Alison Allwood

Team Manager

Vacant

Education Services Co-ordinator (ePEP)

Rhiannon Wilson

Education Progress Lead – South

Lois Daniels

Education Progress Lead – North

Trish McDonnell

Academic Progress Leads

Jennifer Dunning
Lee Brooks

Education Progress Co-ordinator

Wendy Bond

Education Progress Co-ordinator

Stella McKillop

Education Progress Co-ordinator

Mandy Evans

Education Progress Co-ordinator

Jon Drake

Education Progress Co-ordinator

Linda Welch

Education Progress Co-ordinator

Grace Cooper

Education Progress Co-ordinator

Lisa Hay

Education Progress Co-ordinator

Laura Jackson

Education Progress Co-ordinator

Lucy Brown

Education Progress Co-ordinator

Karen Bentley

4.0 Training and development

The Virtual School has a duty to ensure that there are appropriate arrangements in place to meet the training needs of those responsible for promoting the educational achievement of children in care and previously looked after children and young people, including both social workers and school staff. The existing Virtual School training pathway has been further developed and extended to provide a range of training events delivered by Virtual School Co-ordinators and the Caring2Learn team. The pathway identifies appropriate training for those new to role through to experienced Designated Teachers, as well as learning support assistants. It also includes a combination of face to face and virtual events which can be accessed by carers and Children's Services staff. The Virtual School is integrated within Children's Services and benefits from and contributes to LCC's excellent training offer. The Virtual School Team provides support and training across our residential, Early Help and fostering teams, and our carer community. This includes the circulation of One Minute Briefings for teams to refer to and input at other team meetings.

4.1 Virtual School training pathway

A total of 193 Designated Teachers and Assistant Designated Teachers completed training with the Virtual School during the academic year. This included:

- Introductory e-learning for those new to role
- ePEP training, also attended by foster carers, social workers and residential key workers
- Meeting the needs of children in care
- Meeting the needs of children previously looked after
- Termly Virtual School briefings to hear key updates and share good practice
- Bespoke training for schools and multi-academy trusts

The Virtual School continues to develop training opportunities in response to feedback from schools, educational settings, and professionals.

4.2 Virtual School annual conference

In July 2023, we held our first in person conference for headteachers and Designated Teachers since the pandemic. 100 education staff and 30 Children's Services staff attended the event at Hemswell Court. The keynote speech was delivered by Louise Bombèr, who is an internationally renowned author, expert, speaker, and teacher focussing on the needs of children in care and previously looked-after children. We also had a range of workshops delivered by both Children's Services teams and external partners, topics included: Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA); supporting pupils who have experienced trauma; the body talks to the brain; the importance of language; supporting parental engagement; writing to the child in Personal Education Plans; and the value and importance of music education. Each attendee was also provided with a copy of Louise's book 'Know me to teach me'. Feedback indicated

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that 95% of respondents found the conference keynote and workshops interesting and useful. Comments included:

"Excellent. I have followed Louise's work over many years and found her books really helpful and inspiring."

"Very engaging and informative. Lots of useful points to work on and use."

"All of it was very useful - I have already spoken to the SLT about a whole school, therapeutic approach to all children in the school."

"The keynote speaker's input was fabulous - will be disseminating it at our next training day."

4.3 Caring2Learn

The Virtual School has continued to deliver the Caring2Learn learning and development programme, good practice framework, the Caring Schools Award, and the hub support network. In November 2022, we held a presentation event for the Caring Schools Award and presented awards to 26 schools who had achieved the award over the previous two years.

In the Spring Term of 2022, we developed and ran a pilot programme of a series workshops for parents and carers in 4 primary schools. This programme, called Parents2gether, included information on home learning, emotional regulation, wellbeing, behaviour management, and supportive parenting approaches to help parents and schools work together to support their children to achieve. The sessions were supported by school staff and feedback from the sessions was extremely positive, with respondents stating that attending the sessions had helped them understand their children's behaviour better and built their confidence in providing home learning activities. Three more pilot programmes were then delivered in collaboration with the Early Years team as part of their transition networks. These were held in Lincolnshire nursery and early years settings and their linked feeder reception class schools, and focussed more on helping parents and schools ensure a smooth transition from early years into school. Future developments include 'train the trainer' sessions aimed at early years and school staff, enabling them to deliver the programme on a sustainable basis in their own settings.

A multi-agency strategic task and finish group was created during the academic year to shape the future direction of the Caring2Learn approach. This has resulted in the future development of the Caring Schools Toolkit into an online audit of provision which can be accessed by all schools and utilised as a school improvement tool, without the need to complete an award assessment. The task and finish group also reviewed the new joint training offer, and explored ways in which the Caring2Learn approach could continue to be embedded across Children's Services as part of their business as usual.

Over the last 12 months we have delivered 50 Caring2Learn workshops including: Caring Schools Award; Trauma Awareness and Trauma Informed Practice; Restorative and Relational Practice; A Relationships based Approach to Inclusion; Relational Repair; An Introduction to Social Pedagogy; Supporting Grief, Loss & Positive Endings; Kids Skills; Creating Calm; and Supporting Sleep & Addressing Nightmares & Night Terrors. These have been attended by over 400 foster carers, education, and Children's Services staff, as well as teachers and support staff from 40 different schools. We have also delivered a range of whole school training as INSET days and twilight sessions to 8 schools attended by over 350 teaching, learning support, and pastoral staff teams. Feedback on these workshops and training sessions has been

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consistently positive with 98% of respondents saying they found the sessions useful and informative and would support their day-to-day practice. In July 2023 we began work on producing a joint programme of training and development which brings together all the Virtual School training and Caring2Learn workshops into one coherent offer. This includes a newly updated Designated Teacher Training Pathway which will be launched for the next academic year.

5.0 Cohort characteristics

5.1 Our children in care

The rate of children in care in Lincolnshire decreased slightly in 2023 slowing the increases seen over the last few years. The rate is still higher than the lows seen in 2019 and 2020 but remains much lower than the rates seen for all of Lincolnshire's comparators. All of Lincolnshire's comparators saw increased rates in 2023 compared to 2022, with a small increase for National and East Midlands, and a larger increase for Lincolnshire's statistical neighbours.
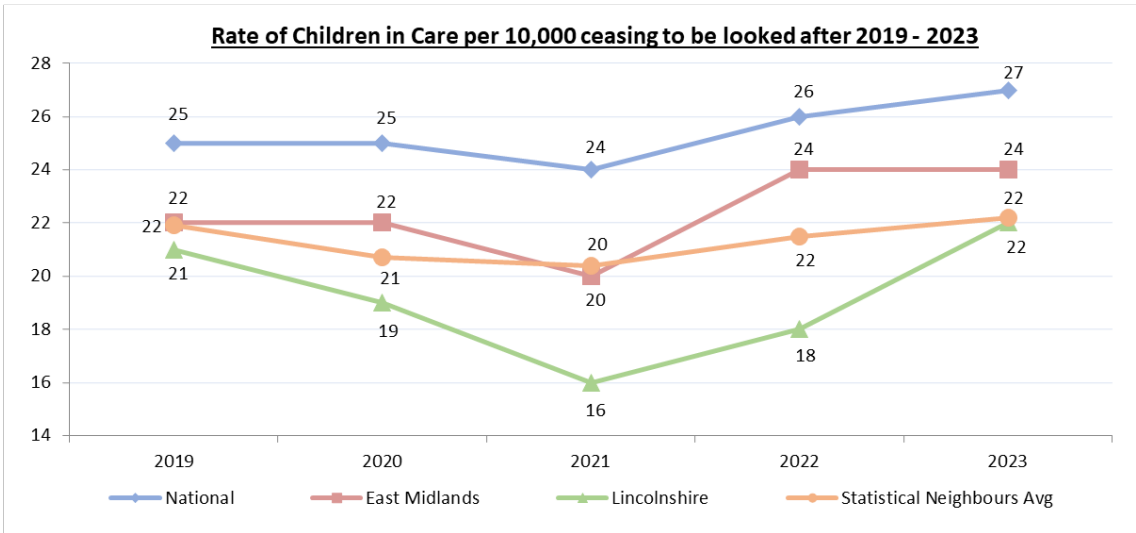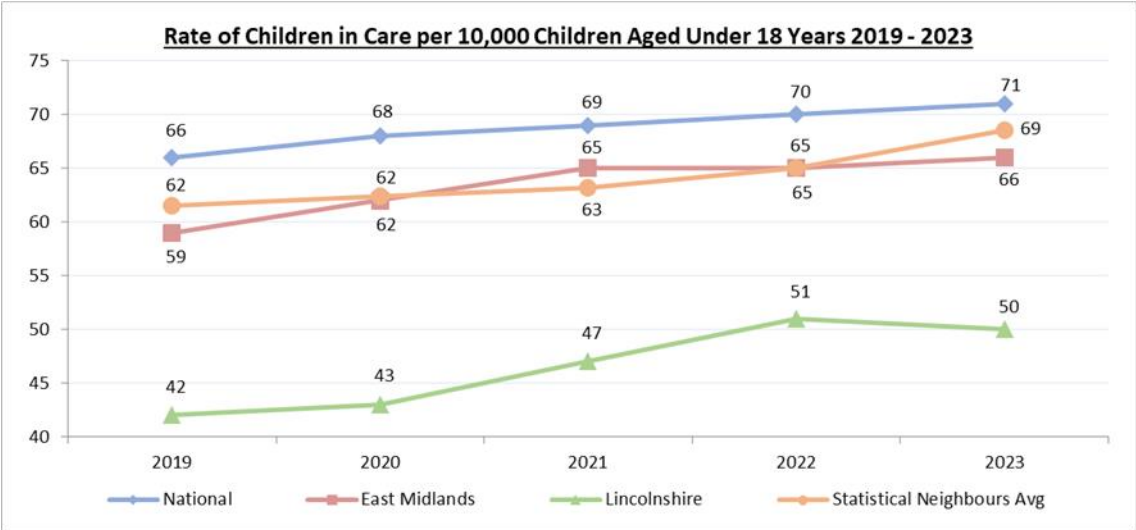
The decrease in rate for Lincolnshire was driven by an increasing rate of children ceasing to be looked after (18 per 10,000 in 2022 and 22 per 10,000 in 2023). This was a much steeper increase than that seen for each of our comparators.

Rate of Children in Care per 10,000 starting to be looked after 2019 - 2023
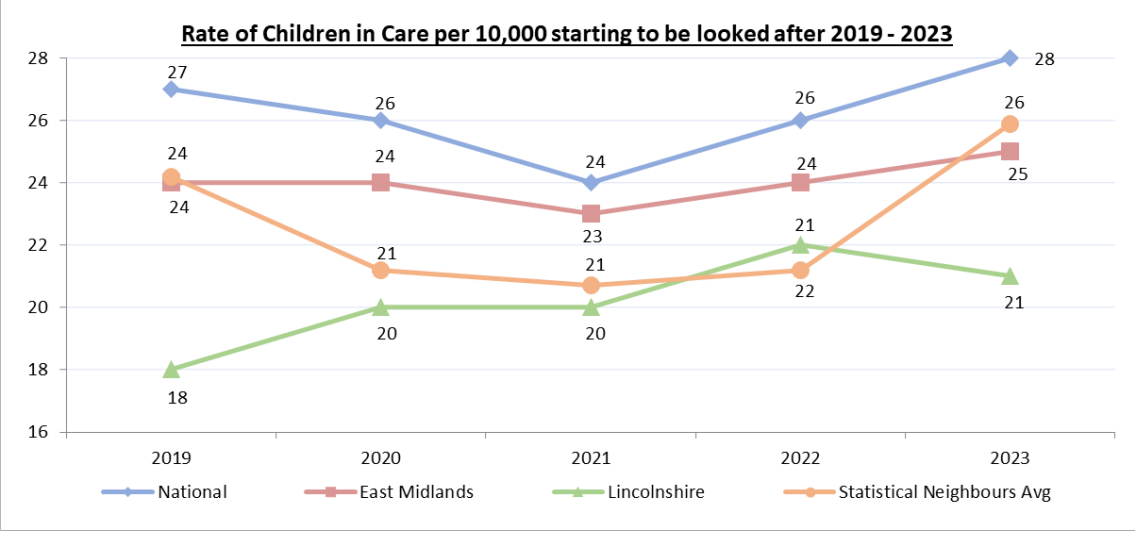
Almost 6 in 10 of our children in care are male. Most of our pupils are of secondary school age, equating to 41% of the children in care cohort. The largest year group is Year 12, making up over 15% of the cohort alone. In total 22% of our children in care cohort are post 16.

Number of Children in Care by National Curriculum Year Group and Gender

Year Group	Male	Female
Year 13	25	19
Year 12	62	33
Year 11	52	24
Year 10	33	28
Year 9	15	19
Year 8	18	24
Year 7	20	23
Year 6	10	16
Year 5	20	17
Year 4	16	13
Year 3	15	7
Year 2	18	11
Year 1	18	10
Reception	10	6
Nursery 2nd Year	18	6
Nursery 1st Year	11	2

Male 58%   Female 42%

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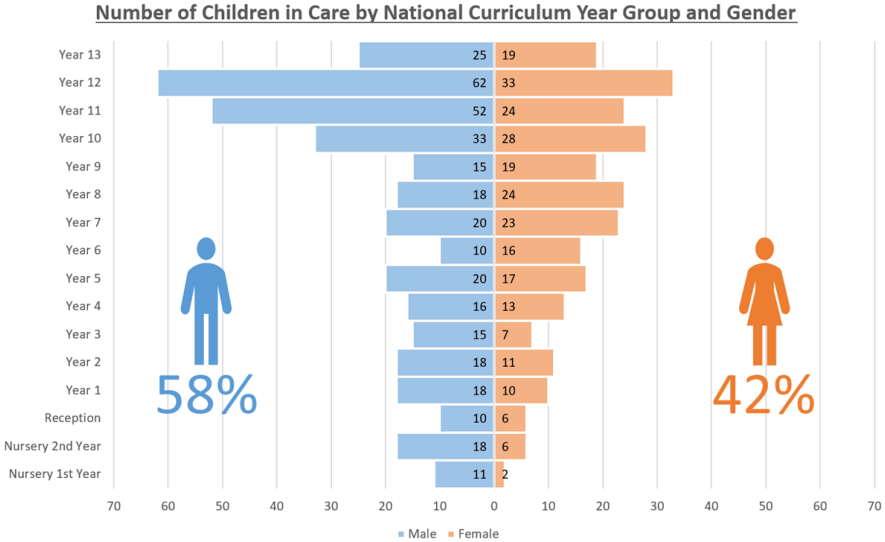
Thirty percent of our children in care cohort are primary school age, whilst a further 6% of our cohort are of nursery school age.

The majority of our children in care are White British, making up over 85% of our cohort.

Diversity of our Children in Care of Statutory School Age

85.6%

4.2%   3.5%   2.1%   1.4%   0.7%   0.9%   0.5%   0.5%   0.2%   0.2%

■ Any Other Asian Background   ■ Any Other Black Background   ■ Any Other Ethnic Group
■ Any Other Mixed Background   ■ Any Other White Background   ■ Black - African
■ Chinese   ■ White - British   ■ White and Asian
■ White and Black African   ■ White and Black Caribbean
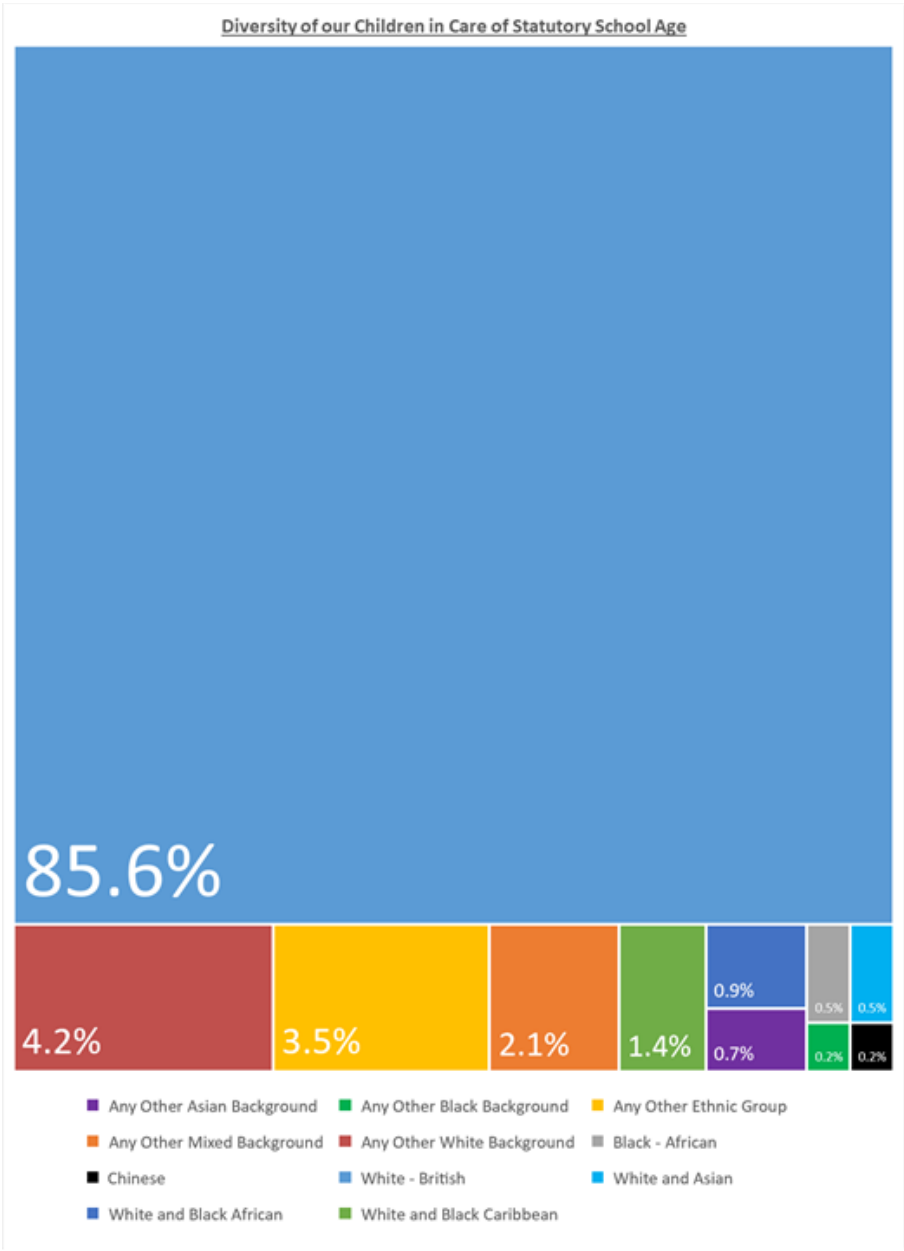
5.2 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

The numbers of young people entering care in Lincolnshire as Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) increased significantly in 2023 compared to 2022, as a result of the National Transfer scheme and is the highest it has been in the past 5 years. This increase in 2023 is consistent to the trend seen across all our comparators. The percentage of children in

care in Lincolnshire that are UASC (9%) is in line with national data (9%), and above our regional East Midlands (8%) and our statistical neighbours' average (8%).

Number of Children In Care UASC 2019 - 2023

Percentage of Children In Care UASC 2019 - 2023
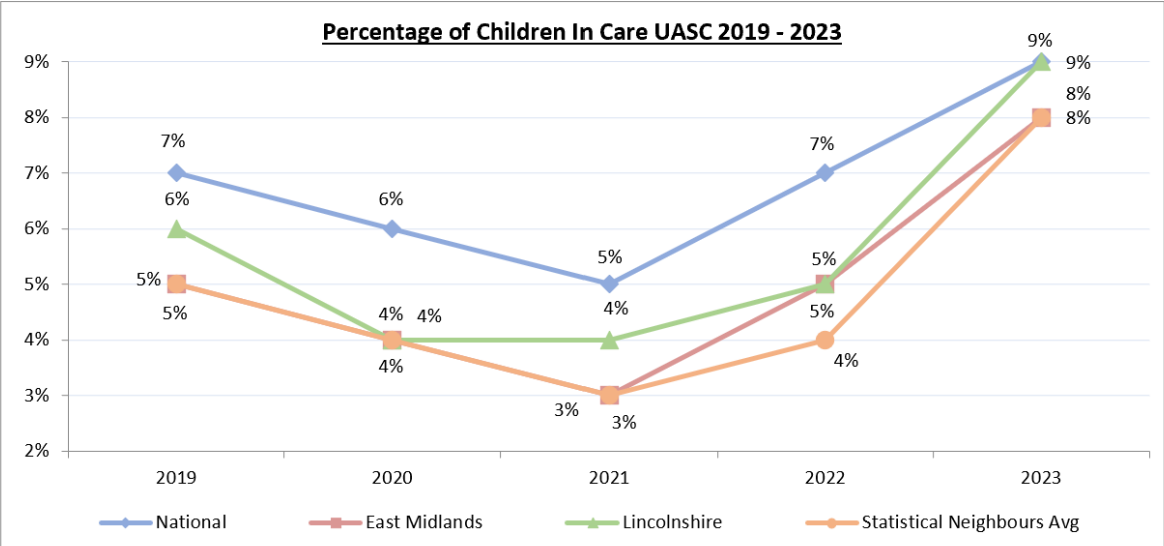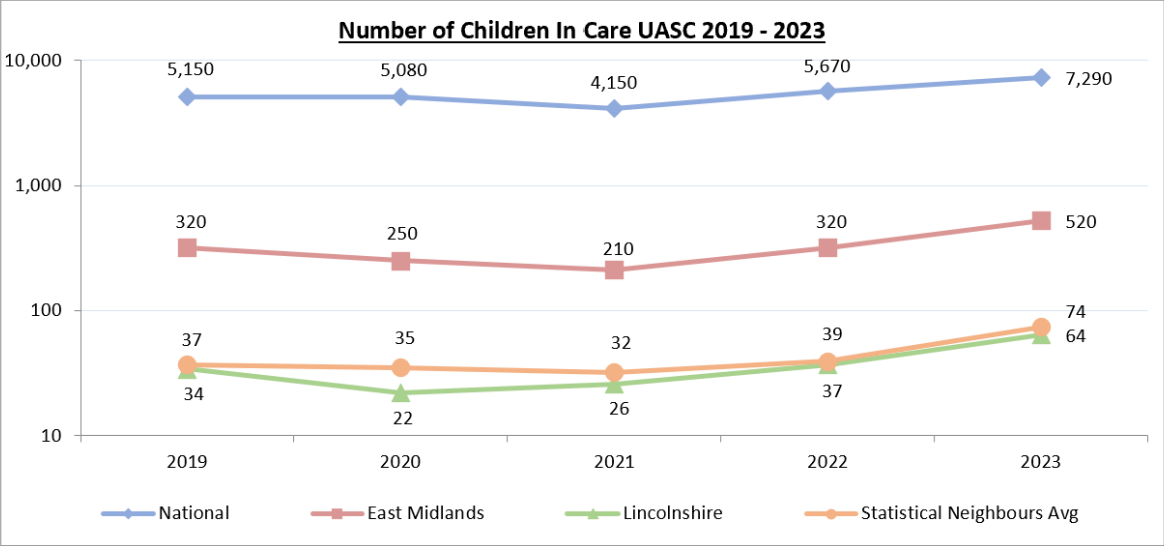
5.3 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Nationally, 4.0% of the total pupil population have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). National statistics indicate that children in care are nearly four times more likely to have special educational needs when compared with all children nationally. They are also nearly eight times more likely to have an EHCP.

Lincolnshire children in care have a much higher rate of EHCPs (38%) compared to all our comparators (National 30%, East Midlands 29%, statistical neighbours 31%). The trend still looks to be increasing despite a drop from the highs seen in 2021 (41%).

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SEN Status: Lincolnshire CiC compared to National, Regional & Statistical Neighbour CiC and National All Pupils
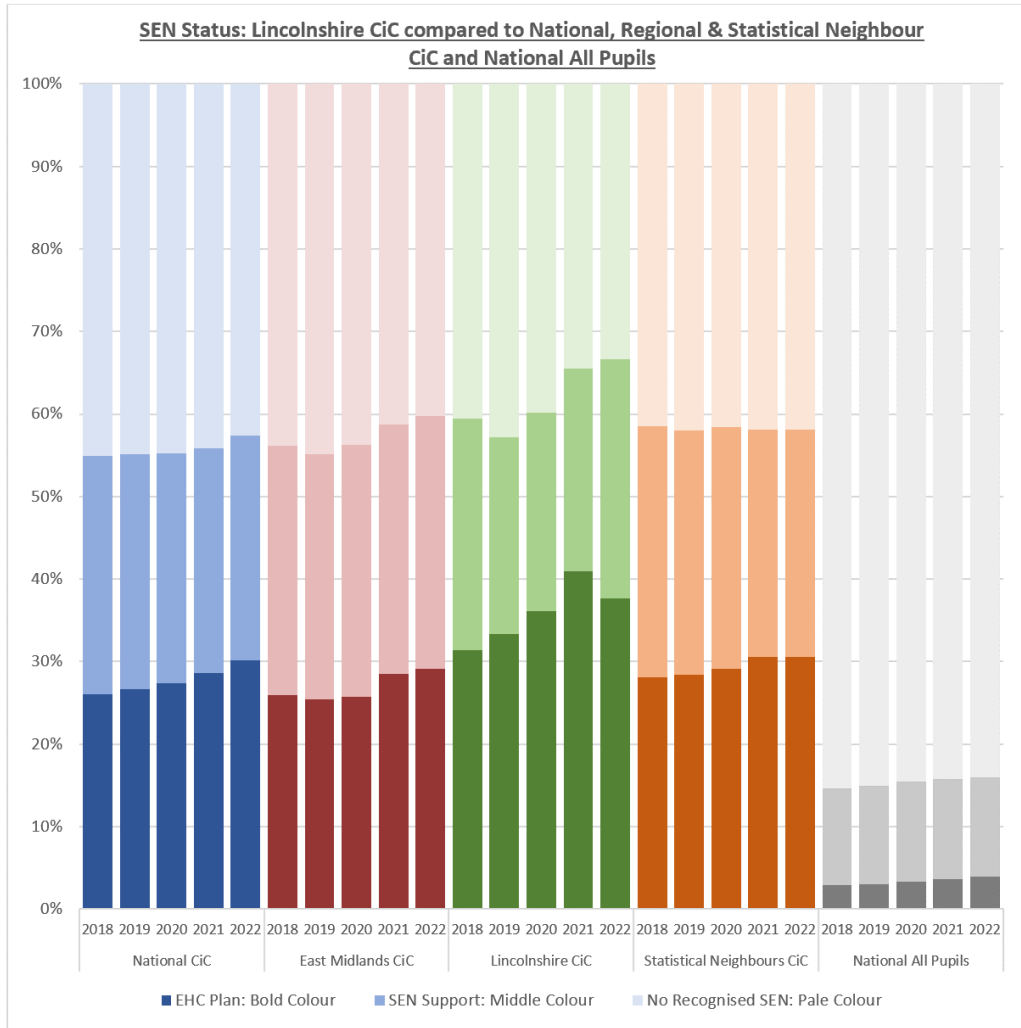
In England, the percentage of children in care with SEN is 57%; of which 27% are at SEN Support and 30% have an EHC plan. This is below the rates seen for Lincolnshire children in care where 67% have SEN; of which 29% are at SEN Support and 38% have an EHC plan. Lincolnshire is also above our other comparators for the percentage of children in care with SEN; with the regional East Midlands figure of 60% and our statistical neighbours' average of 58%.

Lincolnshire saw an increase of 1% in SEN rates for children in care to 67% in 2022, despite the drop of 3% seen in the rate of EHC plans. This is due to an increase of 4% in SEN Support between 2021 and 2022.

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Graph Key: SEMH = Social Emotional & Mental Health, **MLD** = Moderate Learning Difficulty, **ASD** = Autistic Spectrum Disorder, **SLCN** = Speech Language & Communication Needs, **SLD** = Severe Learning Difficulty, **SPLD** = Specific Learning Difficulty, **PMLD** = Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulty, **VI** = Visual Impairment, **HI** = Hearing Impairment, **MSI** = Multi-Sensory Impairment, **PD** = Physical Disability, **OTH** = Other Difficulty & Disability, **NSA** = SEN Support but no specialist assessment or type of need
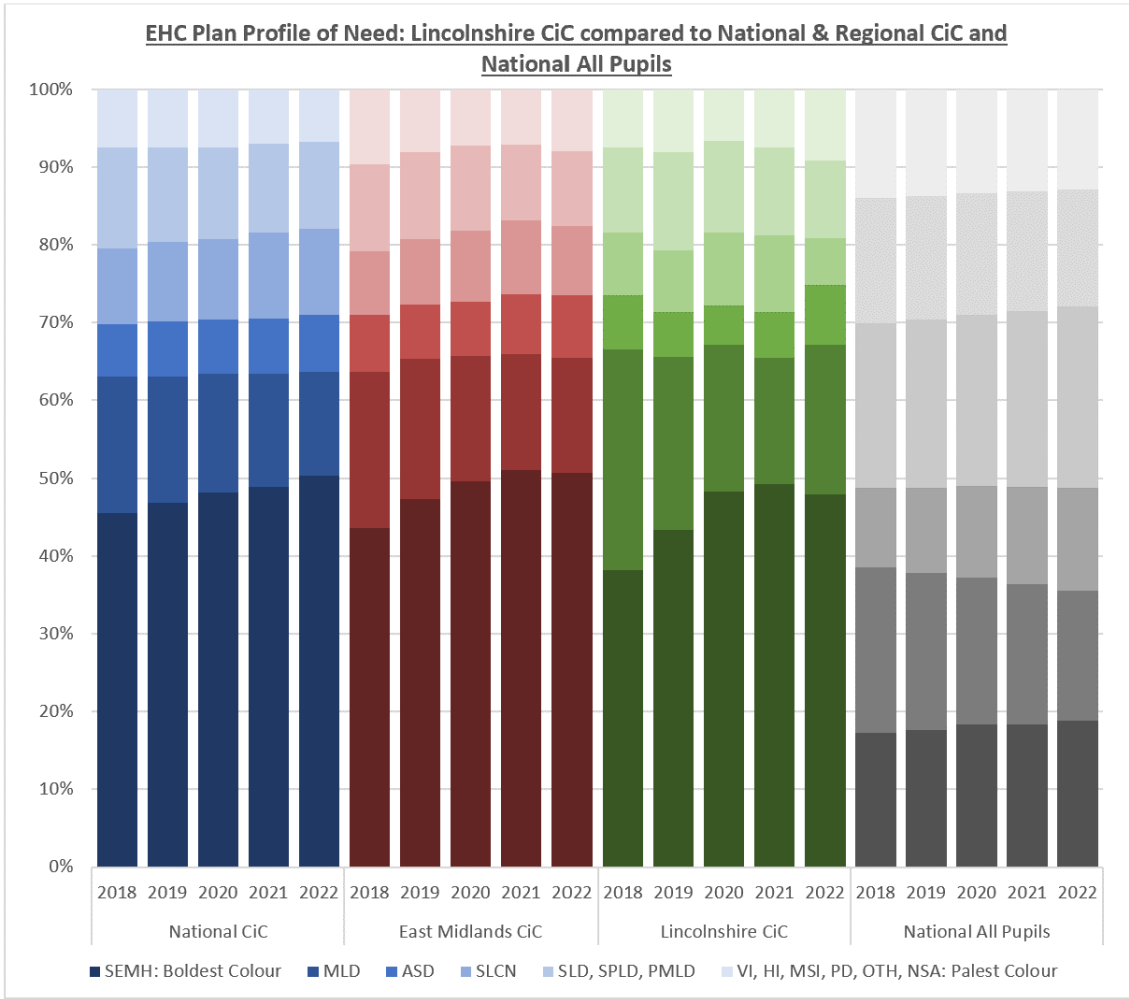
The most common primary identified special educational need for children in care is Social, Emotional and Mental Health. This is typically between 45-50% of children in care and is a much higher rate compared to all SEN children nationally, which is typically 17-20%. These children may be supported in either a mainstream setting or a specialist provision. This category of need can often be attributed to experiences that a child had before they entered care, including trauma, inconsistent early years attachment, and in some cases Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder.

Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Speech Language & Communication Needs (SLCN), and Social Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH) seem to be the fastest growing primary identified need types amongst all SEN children nationally. Although, it only appears to be the trend in SEMH that we have also seen amongst children in care in Lincolnshire.

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6.0 Quality of provision

Between November 2017 and January 2018, the DfE consulted on changes to official statistics in reporting Ofsted outcomes. As a result of this consultation there was a change in the way the latest inspection data is reported for all providers. The grades from the predecessor schools will now be included for schools that have not yet been inspected in their current form, to provide a more comprehensive view of the sector.

6.1 Early Years (Reception)

In accordance with data correct as of 31st March 2023, 88% of our children in care placed both in and out of county who were aged four or five, were attending good or outstanding settings as graded by Ofsted. This is a drop of 1% compared with last year.
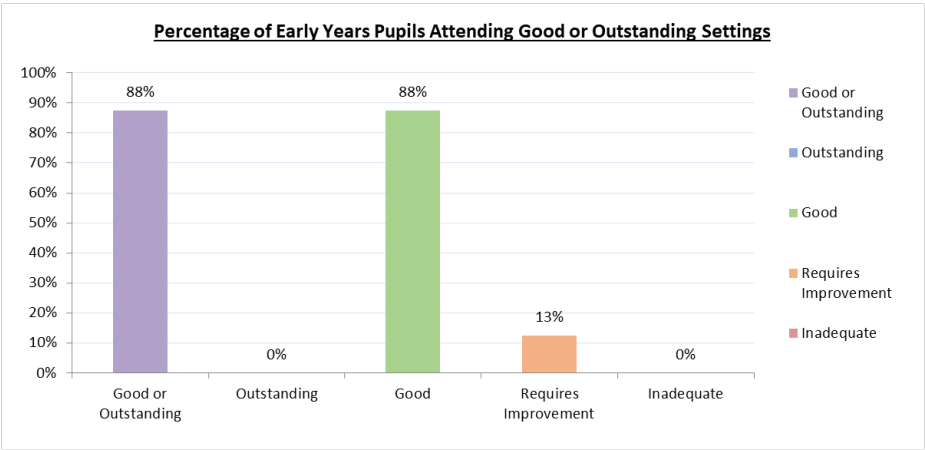
6.2 Statutory School Age

The percentage of children who are of statutory school age attending good or outstanding schools both in and out of county, has increased by 1% compared to last year (84% compared to 83% last year).

In line with statutory guidance, good or outstanding education setting will be prioritised when a new school place is needed. When a child attends a school whose rating lowers following an Ofsted inspection, a multi-agency discussion considers if a school move would be in the best interests of the child and where appropriate, additional support is provided for any of our pupils attending schools that are graded less than good.

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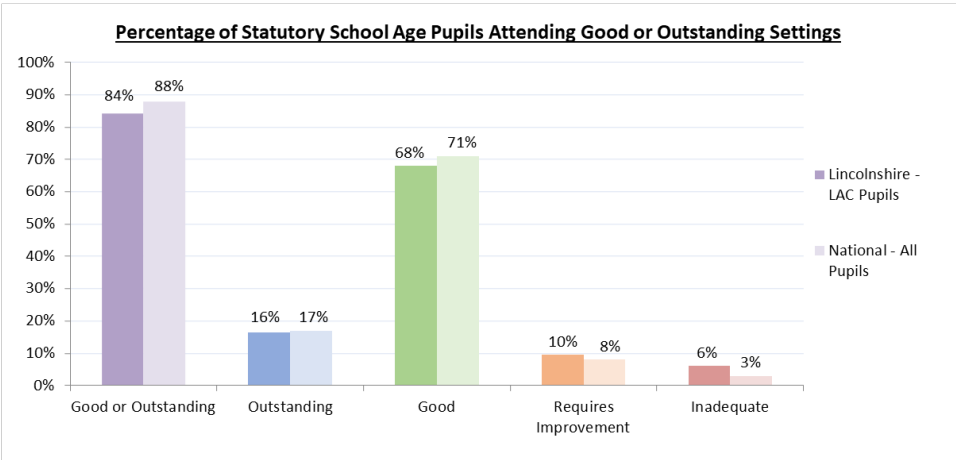
6.3 Post 16

Currently, 69% of our post 16 students are attending a good or outstanding setting, with 31% requires improvement and 0% inadequate. This is a decrease of 2% compared to last year, when 71% was reported. Our post 16 students are supported (as per case example below) through the PEP process and, as is the case with our statutory school age students, we work with our wider Chil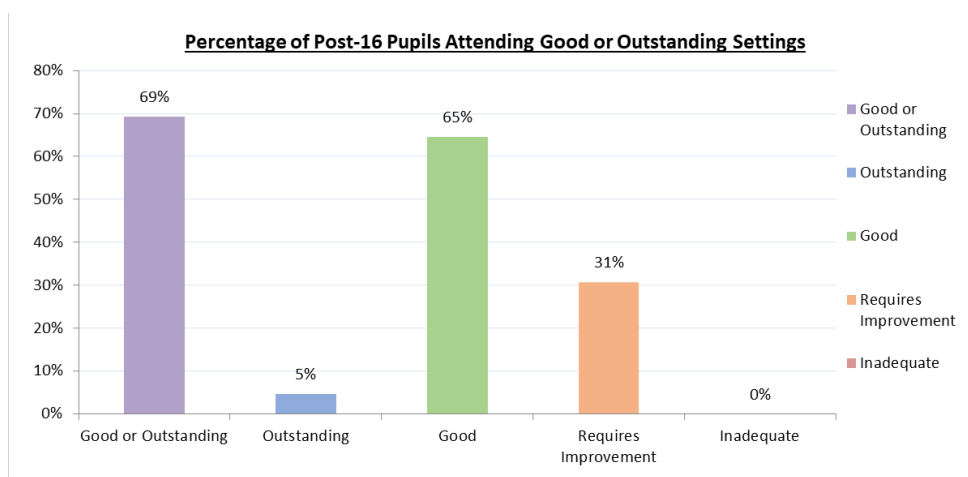dren's Services colleagues and others to provide additional support for students attending settings judged to be less than good by Ofsted.

Percentage of Post-16 Pupils Attending Good or Outstanding Settings

7.0 Personal Education Plans

It is a statutory requirement that every young person in care aged 3 – 18 has a Personal Education Plan. In Lincolnshire, these are recorded electronically and may be referred to as ePEPs. Every child aged 3-18 must have an initial PEP within 10 school days of coming into care. Virtual School co-ordinators facilitate meetings involving the young person and all supporting professionals to develop the PEP. These meetings focus on the voice of the young person, their attendance, academic progress and attainment. They also recognise what is working well, identify any potential barriers, and set SMART targets and agree actions. The PEP is reviewed termly and informs the use of Pupil Premium, interventions, and multi-agency support to enable the young person to make progress. PEPs are now written to the child and this has ensured that the young person is put at the centre of the plan and has had a positive impact on the content and style of language used, making the information much more accessible to the young person.

7.1 PEP compliance

PEP compliance for statutory school aged children for the academic year 2022-2023 has consistently exceeded target (99%). Regardless of where our children and young people are living, three termly meetings are held with these usually taking place either virtually, or at the child/young person's place of education. If a young person is not engaging in education, employment or training, the termly PEPs focus on identifying the potential barriers and identifying opportunities and next steps for supporting their transition back into education or into employment, if appropriate.

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PEP Compliance	Autumn Term 2022	Spring Term 2023	Summer Term 2023
Statutory Age	99%	99.53%	100%
Early Years	100%	100%	98.15%
Post 16	99%	99.30%	100%

7.2 PEP quality assurance

Prior to sign off, each PEP is quality assured by the Virtual School co-ordinator and rated red, amber, or green, with additional comments on how the quality of the PEP can be improved. PEP quality assurance (QA) judgements are moderated at monthly team meetings and a sample is moderated on a termly basis by the Virtual School leadership team.

To add a further layer of robustness, a termly stakeholder PEP QA meeting was introduced this academic year. An IRO, social worker, foster carer, and Designated Teacher along with the Virtual School leadership team now review a sample of PEPs and feedback is provided to the team. This has had a positive impact on further supporting the consistent quality of the PEPs and there are plans to involve a wider range of stakeholders in this process.

8.0 Pupil Premium grant allocation

The Virtual School Head has a statutory responsibility for the allocation of Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) funding (also referred to as Pupil Premium in this report). PP+ funding is allocated to education settings through the PEP process. Children in care aged 3-5 years were eligible for an annual allocation of Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) of £342 during 2022-2023. The PP+ grant allocation per statutory school aged child in care was £2,410 as outlined in the DfE Pupil Premium 2022 to 2023 technical note. The following information relates to the financial period April 2022 – March 2023.

8.1 Early Years Pupil Premium

The Virtual School allocated £33,858 Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) funding to early years settings during the 2022-2023 financial year. EYPP funding is requested via the PEP process and linked to interventions to improve outcomes. All funding was allocated to early years settings to support children's progress, attainment, and transition into school.

8.2 Pupil Premium Plus for statutory school aged pupils

The allocation from the DfE for the financial year 2022-2023 was £1,185,720; this total is based upon 492 statutory school age children being in the care of Lincolnshire as documented in the final DfE children in care (SSDA903 collection data report) 2022-2023.

75% of the total allocation of PP+ funding went directly to schools. This funding was allocated via funded targets on the ePEP system and included initial allocations ranging from £500 to £1,000 each, as well as additional requests from schools based on individual children's needs. 4% of PP+ funding was used to directly commission 1:1 tuition support, whilst another 4% was used to fund assessments and interventions undertaken by the Specialist Teaching Team (STT) and the Extended Communication and Language Impairment Provision for Students (ECLIPS) Team to inform academic target setting. 2% was used to fund the Letterbox Club reading and numeracy intervention which promotes learning at home, whilst the remaining 15% was used centrally to fund resources for additional support of students, which included resources and staff training.

PP+ Expenditure Financial Year 2022-2023

Legend:
- Direct to schools
- Tuition
- Intervention: WellComm/STT/ECLIPS
- Intervention: Letterbox Club
- Central use (support and resources)
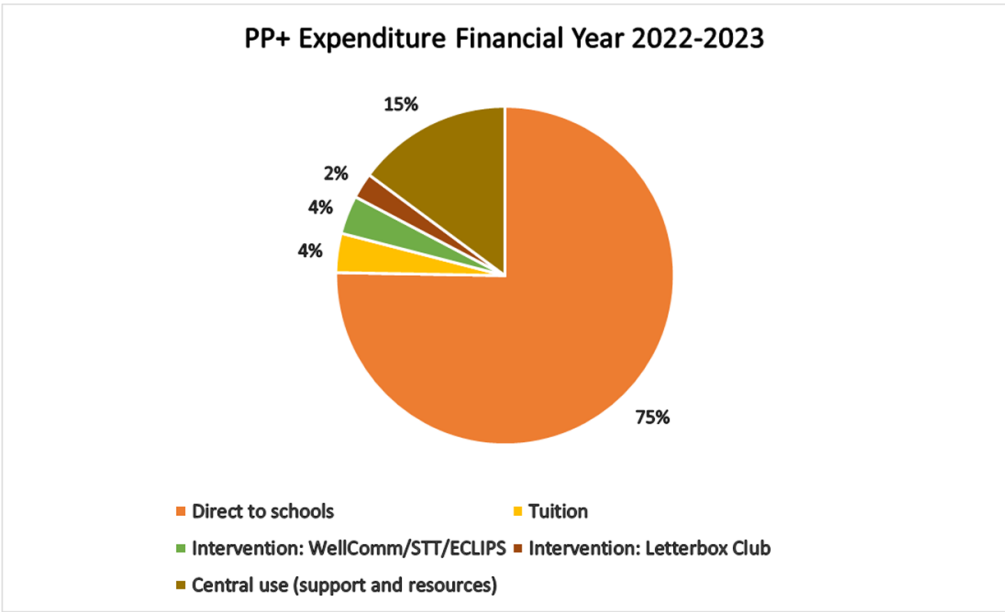
The Virtual School also received two additional grants as part of the recovery plan following COVID-19; Recovery Premium and School Led Tutoring (part of the National Tutoring Programme). Funding from both grants was allocated to statutory school aged children on roll at maintained schools and was sent directly to their schools.

8.3 Post 16 Pupil Premium funding

Along with a small number of other local authorities, Lincolnshire Virtual School received a grant as part of the second year of the DfE pilot which extended PP+ funding to support post 16 students in care. 63% of funding was allocated to Further Education (FE) colleges and other post 16 educational settings where a significant number of our students were on roll. This was used strategically by the colleges and settings in a variety of ways, including:

- Additional pastoral support and associated staffing costs to support the quality and delivery of PEPs.
- Sports and other enrichment activities to promote wellbeing and attendance.
- Whole staff training on trauma informed practice and the needs of children in care.
- Enhanced provision of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) lessons for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children.

The remaining 37% of post 16 PP+ funding was allocated through the PEP process and was used to purchase resources and interventions for individual young people. Some of this

funding was sent to other teams within LCC Children's Services and post 16 settings for them to purchase the agreed resources in addition to the Virtual School directly purchasing items. Resources and interventions for individual young people included:

- Laptops to enable completion of course work.
- Additional tuition/online learning courses to promote attainment.
- Equipment and/or clothing needed for courses and work experience placements.
- Contributions to driving lessons to enhance employment opportunities.
- Bicycles or contributions to travel costs to enable education, training, or work experience attendance.

Post 16 PP+ Expenditure Financial Year 2022-2023

- Direct to FE colleges and Post 16 settings (strategic)
- Purchasing of resources and interventions
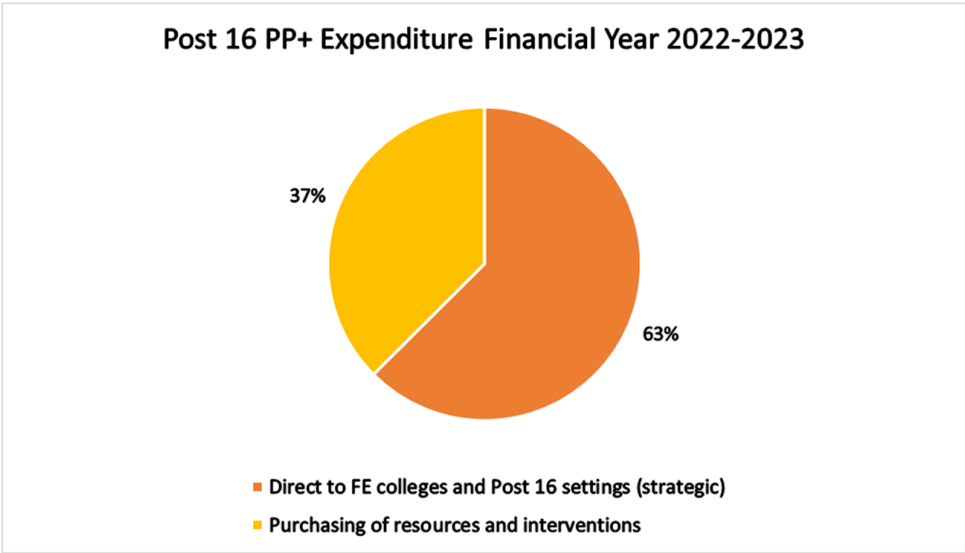
8.3.1 Post 16 case study

DD has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan with a primary need of Social Emotional and Mental Health Needs. She had a difficult end to Year 11 due to the sudden closure of her independent school mid-way through the year. Her Virtual School Co-ordinator supported her transition to another setting to complete her statutory education.

The Virtual School Co-ordinator worked closely with the SEND Caseworker to ensure DD's EHC plan was fully updated before being shared with the local college as part of the statutory consultation process. The college initially raised some concerns as to whether they could meet DD's needs but following a meeting with the young person, facilitated by the Virtual School Co-ordinator, a place was offered.

Unfortunately, DD's GCSE results were lower than she had been expecting and she became very disheartened. Despite a further meeting with the college, her Virtual School Co-ordinator and DD, she decided that she was not yet ready for a large college or the level of written work needed. The Virtual School Co-ordinator supported DD in exploring other options to enable her to re-sit her GCSEs and think about her next steps. She started at the setting and settled in well, completing Year 12.

Following a placement move at the young person's request, DD engaged with the career's advice offered at her setting and with the support of her Virtual School Coordinator, she

applied for a place on the L1 Hair and Beauty Course at her new local college. DD asked her Virtual School Co-ordinator to accompany her to the meeting where she was able to confidently answer all the questions and was offered a place to start in the new academic year.

9.0 How regularly do our children attend?

9.1 School attendance

Due to covid restrictions in early 2020, there is no nationally published attendance data for the whole year of 2020. Autumn term 2020 data has been included as a comparison though absence is usually higher in the Autumn term compared to a whole year of data. The 2021 data also shows a significant increase in absence rates for children in care. This is due to Spring term 2021, when only the children of critical workers and vulnerable pupils could attend school during the period of lockdown from 4th January 2021 to 8th March 2021, when restrictions were lifted for all other pupils. Other pupils who were not eligible to attend school during restrictions, were recorded as 'not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus'. This means that the absence rates for pupils who were prioritised to continue attending school will be higher than for those who were not eligible to attend.

The Autumn term 2020 and whole year 2021 and 2022 data show Lincolnshire children in care trending towards attending less regularly than our national and statistical neighbour average comparators.

It should be noted that significant increases in absence have been seen across the board across all comparators in 2022. The increases have been larger in Lincolnshire and have impacted all pupils. Lincolnshire's overall absence rates for all children has also increased and Lincolnshire now has higher absence rates (absence rate of 8.0%) than all our comparators (East Midlands 7.5%, Statistical Neighbours 7.9%, and National 7.6%).

The main reason for the large increases across all comparators appears to be absence for illness. Nationally absence for illness averaged around 2.5-2.6% pre-pandemic and increased to 4.4% in the most recent academic years (2021-22) data, representing an increase of around 1.8% on average for illness nationally. Lincolnshire saw a larger increase in illness in the 2021-22 academic year of 2.3%. Absence for illness averaged around 2.8% pre-pandemic and increased to 5.1%; this is 0.8% above national and 0.7% above the regional East Midlands average.

Percentage Overall Absence for Children in Care 2017 - 2022* *(*2020 Autumn Term Only)*
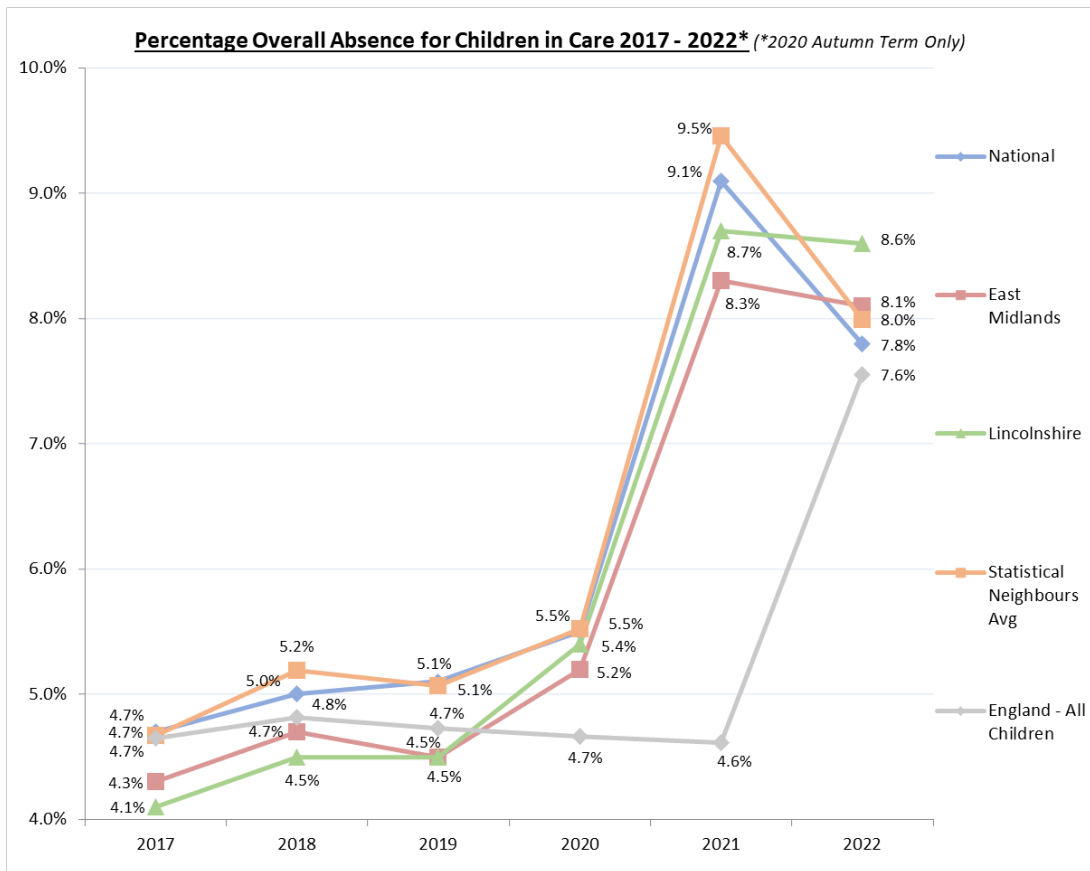
9.2 Persistent Absence (80 – 91% attendance)

The Autumn term 2020 and whole year 2021 and 2022 data indicate that Lincolnshire children in care are trending towards higher persistent absence rates when compared to our national, regional, and statistical neighbour averages. This has left Lincolnshire children in care with a slightly higher persistent absence rate (20.3%) than all our comparators in the most recent year of data.

As with overall absence, there have been large increases in persistent absence across the board for all pupils and all comparators in 2022. The peak in persistent absence for children in care in 2021 was an anomaly compared to all pupils and was due to pupils of critical workers and vulnerable pupils attending during lockdown as described earlier. Lincolnshire's persistent absence rate for all children has increased significantly from 12.3% to 24.5% and is now above the persistent absence rate for Lincolnshire children in care (20.3%) and our comparators' figures for all pupils.

The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex and are often specific to individual pupils and families. For our children in care, these may include:

- Placement changes which may involve time out of school due to a mid-year application for a new school.
- A young person's wellbeing manifesting in emotionally based school avoidance.
- A temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs.
- Suspension.

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Percentage Persistent Absence for Children in Care 2017 - 2022* *(*2020 Autumn Term Only)*
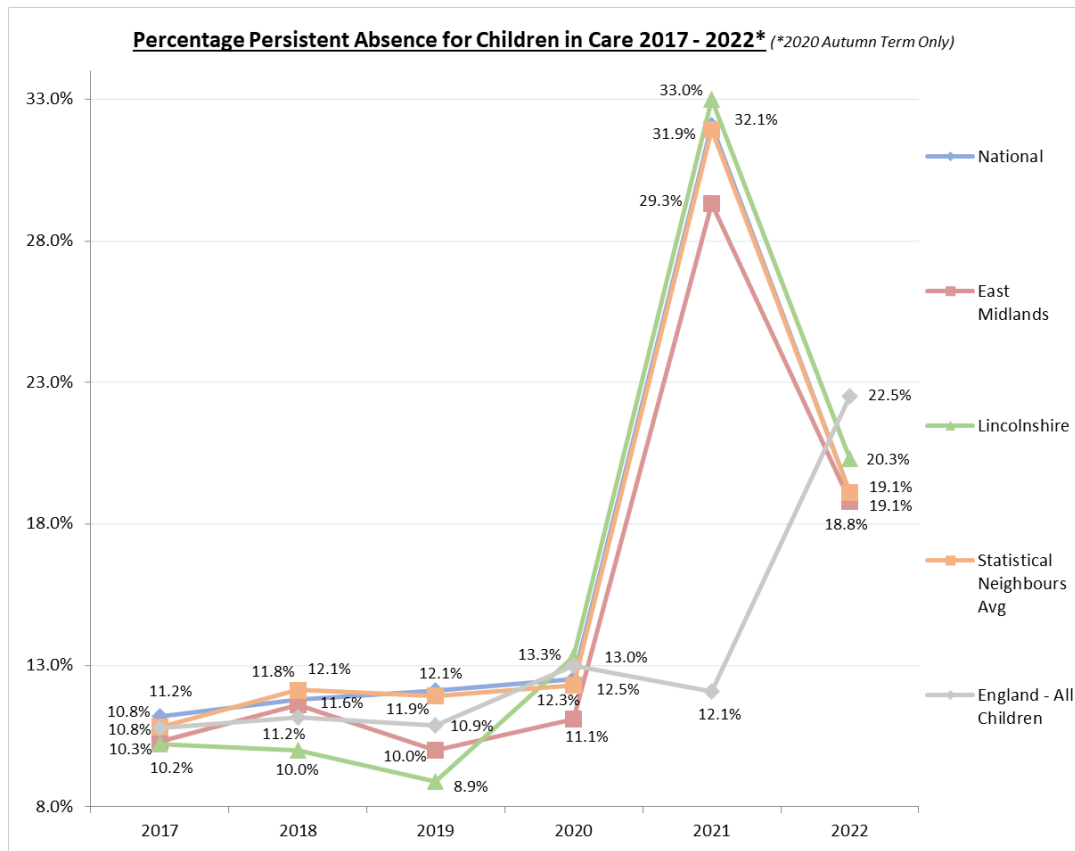
9.3 Suspensions

From September 2021, the Department for Education replaced the term "fixed term exclusion" with "suspension". Nationally (2017 – 2020), children in care have been around 5 times more likely to be suspended from school for a fixed-term than the national average for all pupils. Lincolnshire children in care were around 4 times more likely to be suspended from school than the national average for all pupils between 2017 and 2018.

There was a large increase in suspensions in Lincolnshire in 2019. This saw the suspension rate in Lincolnshire align with the statistical neighbour average and above our regional and national rates. There was a consistent drop in suspension rates in 2020 across the board for Lincolnshire and all our comparators. The drop seen for Lincolnshire was much greater than all our comparators with the Lincolnshire rate dropping back down the rate seen prior to 2019.

There has again been another large increase in suspensions for all children in Lincolnshire in 2021. This has seen the suspension rate in Lincolnshire to be above all our comparators.

Percentage One Plus Suspension for Children in Care (CiC) 2017 - 2022
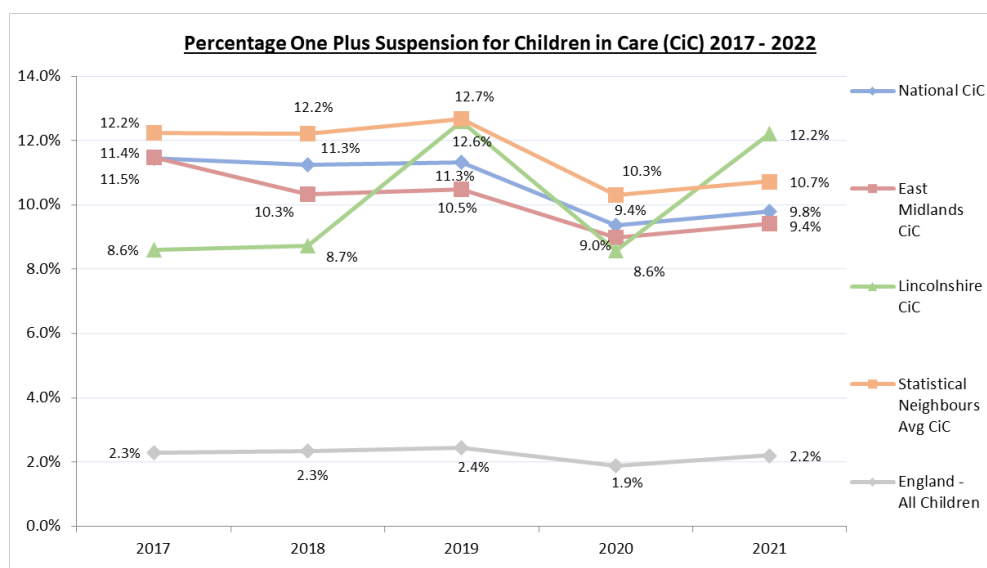
9.4 Permanent Exclusions

The DfE does not publish data relating to the permanent exclusion of children in care. Locally sourced data indicates that in the 2020-21 academic year, one child in care received a permanent exclusion despite significant support and challenge from the Virtual School. The young person had a successful transition into the local authority provision for students who have been permanently excluded and continued to attend regularly and made progress.

9.5 Virtual School support to promote inclusion

Following a focused scrutiny on attendance through the PEP quality assurance process, attendance descriptors were added to the recorded percentages to raise awareness and strengthen aspirations. One of the contributing factors for a PEP to be rated 'green', is that there now must be a recorded discussion and agreed action if the young person's attendance is below the expected 95%.

In addition to the individual monitoring of attendance through the PEPs, half termly monitoring meetings have been introduced. Cohort attendance data is rigorously scrutinized to promote early identification of patterns of reduced attendance to ensure that all professionals supporting individual children can work together to remove any barriers to improved attendance.

The Virtual School Progress Co-ordinators are in regular contact with schools, particularly when a child or young person is at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion. Schools are reminded of the support available to reduce the risk of suspension and early conversations are encouraged to enable the Virtual School to provide additional funding for interventions to support our children.

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# 10.0 How well have our children and young people in care achieved?

10.1 Early Years

10.1.1 Early Years case study

When AA came into care, she was attending an early years' setting in the grounds of a mainstream primary school. AA presented with very complex needs which were being met in the setting with additional support. Following assessments funded by the Virtual School, it soon became clear that AA needed more specialist support than could be provided by the mainstream primary school she was due to transition to. All professionals agreed at a Personal Education Plan meeting that an EHC needs assessment request would be submitted. Following this assessment process, an EHC plan was issued which stated that AA's needs should be met in a special school. Following a placement move out of county, the Virtual School Co-ordinator liaised with the other local authority SEND team to identify an appropriate school. AA then returned to Lincolnshire and the Virtual School Co-ordinator played a key role in communicating with all professionals to identify appropriate education provision. A special school place was found but was only available at the start of the next academic year. Agreement was sought for AA to attend the nursery school next door to her prospective school for the remainder of the summer term. The Virtual School Co-ordinator arranged a PEP meeting to enable all professionals to share information to support the nursery school in meeting AA's needs and to plan a smooth transition into school. Due to the co-ordinated support, AA has successfully started school, making significant progress in her first few months there.

10.1.2 Early Years – Good Level of Development (GLD)

From 2022 onwards there have been some changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. The core areas of learning and development remain the same, but there have been changes to the early learning goals within each area of learning to make them clearer and more specific. This does mean that comparisons between years cannot be made.

In 2023, Lincolnshire's Children in Care (CiC) GLD percentage increased by 14% to 43%. This is likely to be in line or better than our comparators. In the Literacy area of learning 48% of Lincolnshire CiC pupils achieved the expected standard; an increase of 9% when compared to last year (39%). This is likely to be in line with or better than our comparators. In the Mathematics area of learning 67% of Lincolnshire CiC pupils achieved the expected standard; an increase of 17% when compared to last year (50%). This performance will be well above our comparators.

EYFSP Outcomes 2018 to 2023
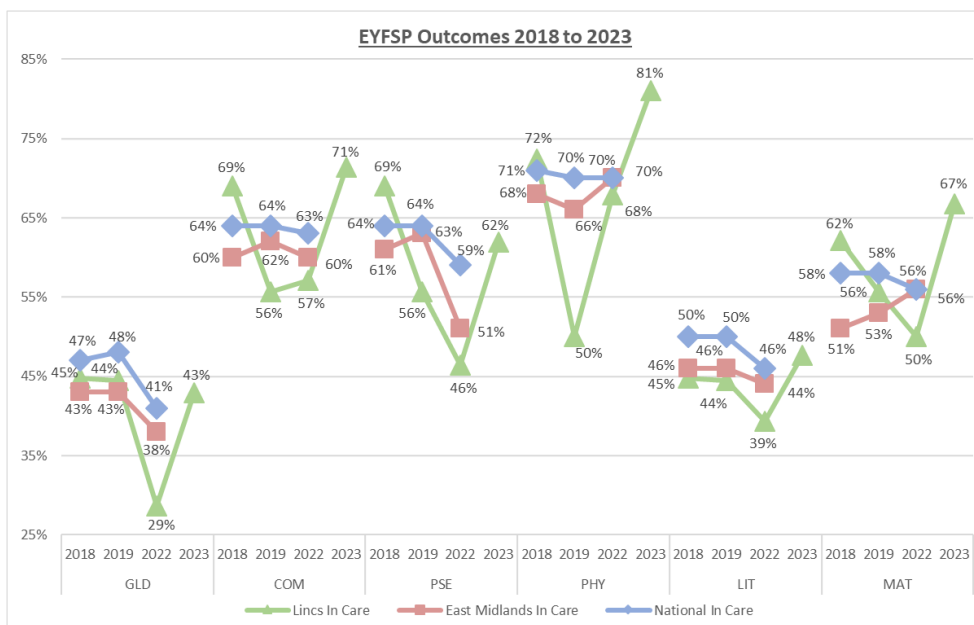
10.2 Key Stage 2

10.2.1 Key Stage 2 case study

BB had been having a very challenging time in placements which impacted on her ability to engage in education. She struggled to access learning in the classroom, her academic progress had stalled, and she found it hard to regulate her emotions and maintain friendships. BB was at significant risk of permanent exclusion due to the challenging behaviour she was exhibiting. The Virtual School Co-ordinator facilitated a multi-agency meeting where it was agreed to apply for a short-term intervention place at the local authority alternative provision academy to provide BB with some stability in her education and to identify how best to support her learning. Her mainstream school maintained involvement during this interim placement and a long-term foster care placement was identified. With stability in her placement, some positive changes to behaviour began to be observed and transition back to her mainstream school started to be planned. BB transitioned back to her school well with great communication between school, the Virtual School Co-ordinator, and her new foster carers, with a bespoke timetable and enhanced support in place. Within a few weeks of being back at school and happy in her placement, BB was spending increasing time in the classroom, had formed good friendships, reconnected and made healthier relationships with staff, and began to fill the gaps in her learning. At a recent PEP meeting, professionals were delighted to hear that BB is now back on target academically, rarely out of the classroom, managing her emotions much more positively, and is happy and settled with her carers.

10.2.2 Key Stage 2 – Attainment

Although there is a general upwards trend in all the tested subjects of Reading, Maths and grammar, punctuation and spelling, Lincolnshire's children in care Key Stage 2 outcomes in 2023 are likely to be below national, regional and statistical neighbour comparators.

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The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths fell by 12% to 18% in 2023 compared to 30% in 2022. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading increased by 9% to 50%, our highest Reading outcome in the 5-year trend. In Writing, there was another drop from 41% in 2022 to 36% in 2023. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in Maths increased by 3% to 36% between 2022 and 2023. In grammar, punctuation and spelling, Lincolnshire children in care also saw an increase from 30% in 2022 to 32% in 2023.

Key Stage 2 Outcomes 2017 to 2023
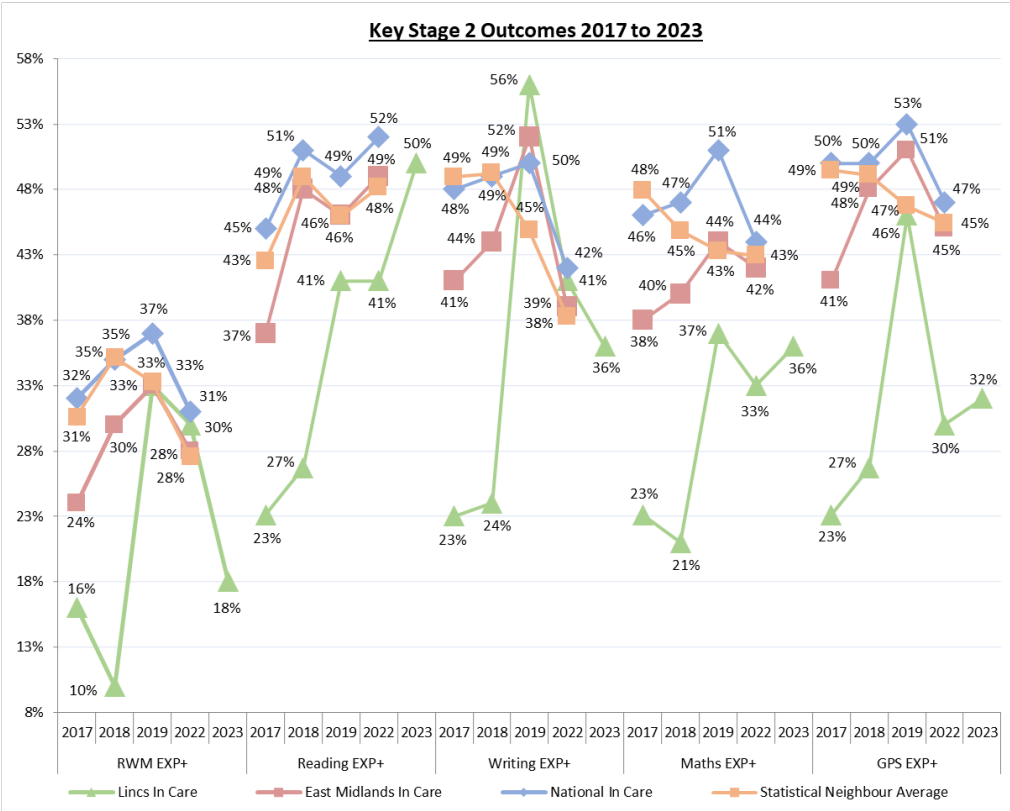
Lincolnshire's children in care Key Stage 2 progress outcomes between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in 2023 show a mixed picture. Our progress is likely to be above (Reading), similar (Writing) and below (Maths) to our national, regional and statistical neighbour comparators. This data shows that despite attainment data being below our comparators, for the past 3 years our progress data has been similar or above our comparators.

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Key Stage 2 Progress 2017 to 2023
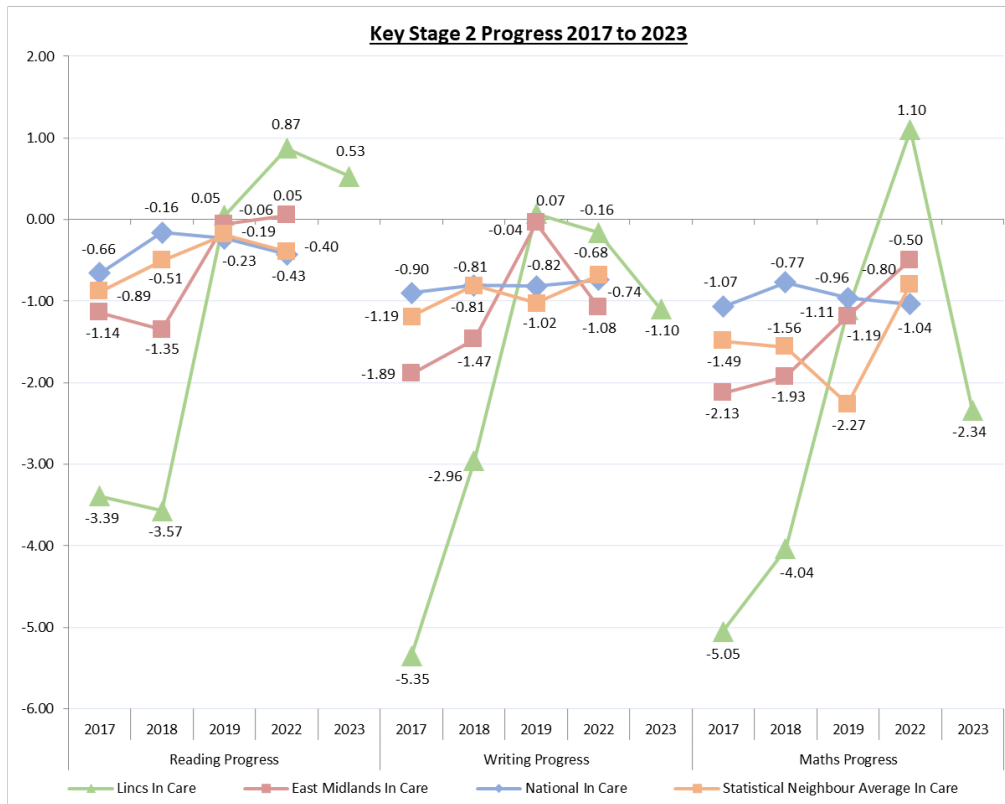
The graph below shows the outcomes for the same children from when they were assessed at the end of Key Stage 1 and again at the end of Key Stage 2. A marked improvement was seen in Reading and indicates accelerated progress where more children achieved the national expected standard at the end of Key Stage 2 than they did at the end of Key Stage 1. An increase was seen in Writing and a drop seen in Maths.

Attainment in Reading, Wiritng and Maths from KS1 to the End of KS2
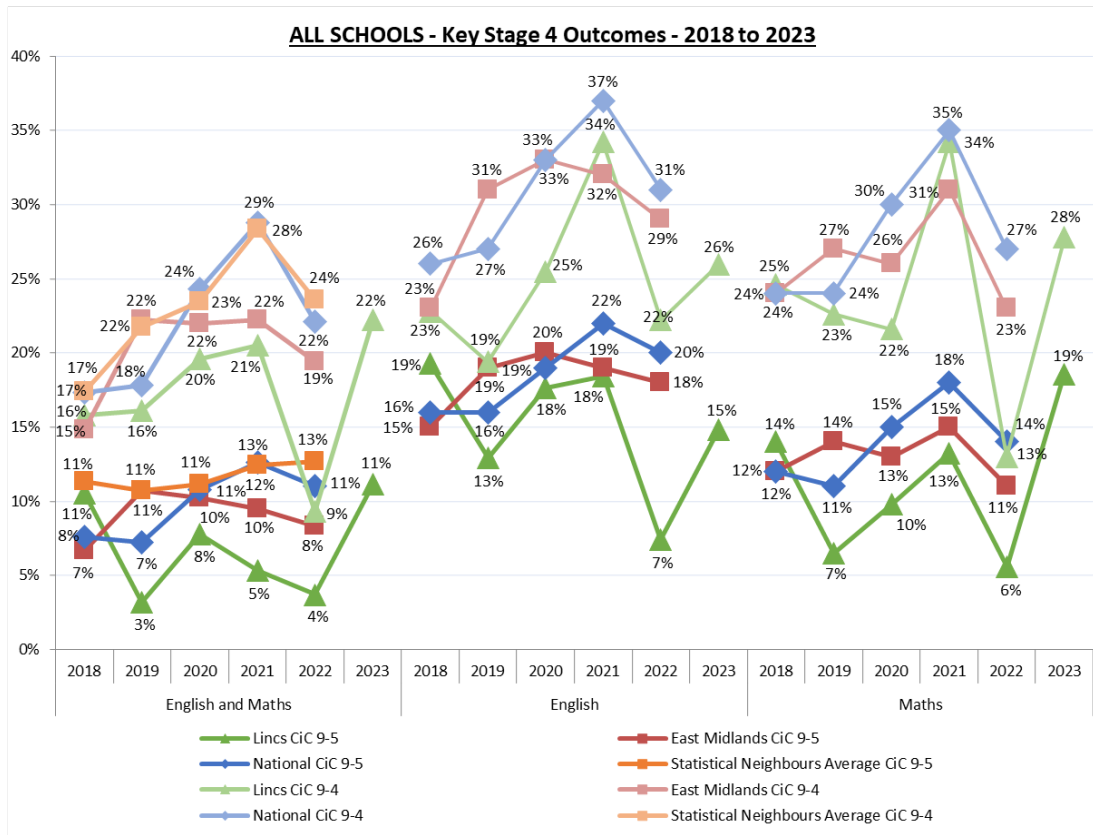
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10.3 Key Stage 4

10.3.1 Key Stage 4 case study

CC came into care in 2015 and has been living with the same foster carer since 2016. CC had identified additional needs and at a Year 6 PEP meeting, the foster carer raised concerns about how CC would cope in a mainstream secondary school and asked if he could attend a special school. The PEP meeting enabled the supporting professionals to reassure the foster carer that the young person's needs were being met in mainstream provision and that attainment data suggested mainstream remained appropriate. A robust transition plan was agreed to support CC's move to his local secondary school and home tuition, funded by Pupil Premium, was put in to bolster CC's academic progress. Home tuition has continued to be in place to support with Maths and English and this was extended in Year 10 to support CC with exam preparation, revision and to consolidate learning in other GCSE subjects. Termly PEP meetings have enabled professionals and carers to monitor CC's progress and identify if any further support or resources are needed. As a result of this, CC is on track to achieve his predicted GCSE grades 4 in English and 3-4 in Maths.

10.3.2 Key Stage 4 – Attainment

Exams years 2018, 2019, 2022 and 2023 were exam assessed, whereas 2020 and 2021 were centre assessed grades. The use of centre assessed grade makes any comparison to years where exams were taken difficult.

The outcomes of grade 5 or above in English and Maths have shown an increase of 7% to 11%, compared to last year (4%). This should be broadly in line with national, regional, and statistical neighbour averages when compared to the previous 5 years of data (no national or regional data for 2023 has been published at the time of this report). The outcomes of grade 4 or above in English and Maths have also shown a large increase of 13% to 22%, compared to last year (9%).

Increases were also seen in the individual subjects of English and Maths, both for grade 4 or above and grade 5 or above. The largest increases were seen in Maths with a 15% increase in grade 4 or above and a 13% increase in grade 5 or above.

ALL SCHOOLS - Key Stage 4 Outcomes - 2018 to 2023

Legend:
- Lincs CiC 9-5
- National CiC 9-5
- Lincs CiC 9-4
- National CiC 9-4
- East Midlands CiC 9-5
- Statistical Neighbours Average CiC 9-5
- East Midlands CiC 9-4
- Statistical Neighbours Average CiC 9-4

Progress 8 measures the progress between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 of a pupil by comparing their Attainment 8 score at Key Stage 4 with the average Attainment 8 scores of all pupils nationally who had a similar starting point, calculated using assessment results from Key Stage 2. These scores can be aggregated to give an overall Progress 8 score for a cohort of pupils.

The Progress 8 score is represented as a positive or negative number either side of zero. A score of zero means that pupils in the cohort have made the same progress on average as those with similar prior attainment nationally, with a positive score meaning they have made more progress and a negative score meaning they have made less progress. *For example, a negative Progress 8 score of -1 would mean that pupils on average had achieved 1 grade less than pupils with the same prior attainment nationally and vice versa for positive progress scores.*

The progress 8 score for Lincolnshire children in care is likely to have improved compared to last year to -1.08 (-1.41 in 2022, -1.29 in 2019, -1.29 in 2018) when national data is published. Our performance in 2023 could be above our comparators when looking at past performance between 2018 and 2022.

Key Stage 4 Progress 8: 2017 to 2023
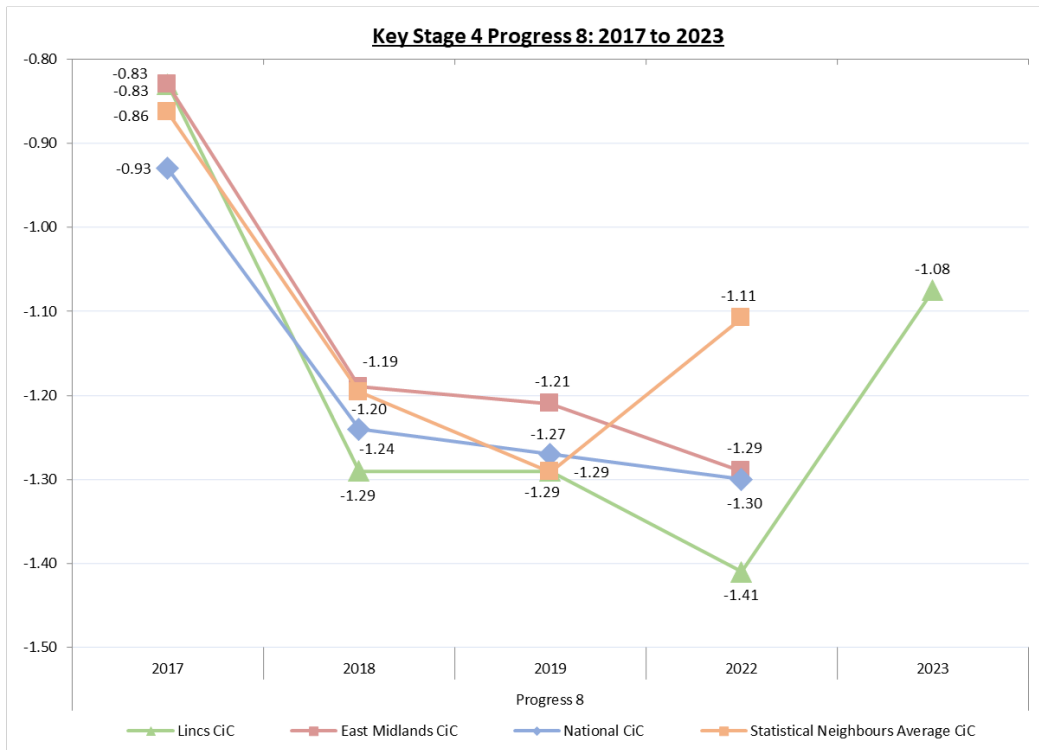
The following graph shows outcomes for the same children from their assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 and again at the end of Key Stage 4. A marked improvement was seen in English and Maths, which indicates accelerated progress where more children achieved the national expected standard at the end of Key Stage 4 than they did at the end of Key Stage 2. Smaller increases were also seen individually for each subject in English and Maths.

Attainment in English and Maths from KS2 to the End of KS4
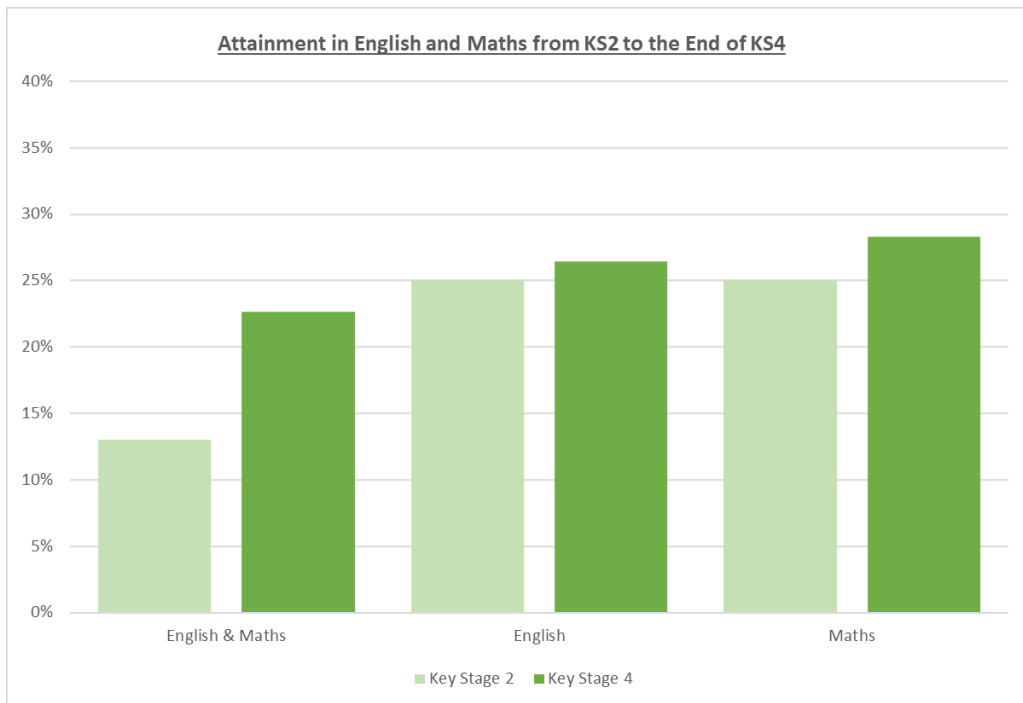
10.4 Virtual School interventions to promote progress and attainment

Cohort progress tracking meetings were introduced during this academic year. These enable the Virtual School leadership team to scrutinise the progress of individual year groups to inform any future interventions. Where young people were identified as working below their target grades, individual PEPs were scrutinised to ensure appropriate interventions, targets, and actions were being discussed and put in place to promote the young person's progress.

Specialist Teaching Team (STT) assessments continue to be commissioned for specific cohorts of children who are new into care. The detailed reports identify any underlying difficulties and include suggested targets to inform the PEP. The revised PEP Quality Assurance framework includes a focus on the implementation of STT targets within the Personal Education Plans.

Tuition continues to be recognised as an effective intervention to promote academic progress. Pupil Premium is allocated to schools who can provide this tuition, or tutors are commissioned directly from the LCC SEND Home Tuition team, if schools cannot identify an appropriate tutor.

The Virtual School commissions WellComm assessments, which focus on language and communication for all early years children. These are carried out either by the Early Years Specialist Teachers or the Specialist Teaching Team; these assessments identify suggested targets to further develop our children's progress in this key skill, which underpins academic progress across all subjects.

To promote home learning, the Virtual School has developed some new training sessions specifically for foster carers to help them understand the GCSE curriculums for Maths and English, which we hope will have a positive impact on our young people completing homework. For our younger children, Letterbox parcels from the Book Trust, which include reading books and fun games to promote Literacy and Numeracy, are posted to their homes.

The Virtual School training offer includes focused training on interventions to promote reading, writing and Maths. We are planning to commission a bespoke training course for a number of our secondary schools which will focus on effective strategies for teaching assistants in supporting our young people's learning in Maths and English.

11.0 Individual achievements of our young people

Despite the many challenges that some of our young people face, we are delighted to share some of their significant achievements.

11.1 Year 13 achievements

Student A achieved the required A level grades to secure a place to study Film and Television/Drama and Theatre at Aberystwyth University.

Student B secured a placed at MGA Academy of Performing Arts in Edinburgh to study a BA Hons in Musical Theatre.

Student C secured a place at Northampton University to study E-Sport Gaming.

11.2 Year 11 GCSE achievements

Student D achieved grade 8 in Mathematics; grade 7 in English Literature, Chemistry, and Physics; grade 6 in English Language, Further Mathematics, History, and Biology; grade 5 in French, and Food Preparation & Nutrition.

Student E achieved grade 8 in English Literature; grade 7 in English Language, Combined Science, History, and Sociology; grade 5 in Mathematics, and Spanish; Distinction in Performing Arts.

Student F achieved grade 7 in History; grade 6 in Religious Studies; grade 5 in English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Biology, and Chemistry; grade 4 in Physics; Distinction in Performing Arts.

Student G achieved grade 6 in Mathematics; grade 5 in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics; grade 4 in English Literature, and Design & Technology; grade 3 in English Language; Merit in Health & Social Care; Pass in Construction.

Student H achieved grade 7 in English Language; grade 5 in English Literature, Mathematics, and Combined Science.

Student J achieved grade 6 in Mathematics; grade 5 in Combined Science, French, and Art & Design; grade 4 in English Literature, Design & Technology, and Photography; grade 3 in English Language.

Student K achieved grade 5 in English Literature; grade 4 in English Language, Mathematics; grade 4,3 in Combined Science; Distinction in Sports Studies; Merit in Engineering.

Student L achieved grade 5 in English Language; grade 5,4 in Combined Science; grade 4 in Mathematics.

Student M achieved grade 4 in English Language, Mathematics, Geography, and Food Preparation and Nutrition; Distinction in Sports Studies; Grade 3 in Combined Science.

Student N achieved grade 5 in Mathematics, grade 4,4 in Combined Science, Merit in Sport, Music & Performing Arts; grade 3 in English Language and English Literature.

11.3 Our young people's wider achievements

In his Year 9 Autumn Term report, student O achieved 10 outstanding attainment grades.

Student P was filmed as part of a project to share his lived experience. He also played the pantomime dame in his school production.

Q played a lead role in Annie in front of a paying audience.

R wrote a short story that school printed and put a copy in their library for everyone to read. She received a Deputy Headteacher's award for it and read it to everyone during school assembly.

The school followed S's suggestion of holding a coffee morning as a fundraiser for victims of the Turkey/Syria earthquake. He had great fun manning the 'Guess the unicorn' stall.

T was voted class rep and sat on the School Council.

U received a certificate for 'Most Improved in Drama' from his school and was recognised by the Jack Petchey Foundation as an Outstanding Achiever.

W won the Excellence Award at her post 16 setting.

X won at trophy at his school's Year 6 celebrations for being kind.

Y was nominated for the Personal Progress award at his school for achieving so much academically, personally, and socially.

12.0 Extensions to the Virtual School role

12.1 Previously looked after children

The Virtual School continues to work in partnership with our Adoption colleagues to promote educational outcomes for children who are previously looked after and have left care through either a Special Guardianship Order, Adoption, or Child Arrangement order. The whole team have the skills and knowledge to respond to queries from parents, carers, and professionals involved with previously looked after children and offer advice, support, and signposting to other agencies if appropriate.

Lincolnshire Virtual School has been represented on the Regional Adoption Agency (Family Adoption Links) Education Working Group and throughout 2023, we have worked with Virtual School representatives from North Lincolnshire, Rutland, Northamptonshire, Leicestershire and Leicester City to develop an Education Passport, which is a series of documents to support schools and parents to work together to address the specific needs of previously looked after children.

12.2 Children with a Social Worker (CWSW)

Over the last year we have continued to develop the role of the Virtual School in promoting the education of children with a social worker (CWSW). Funding for this strategic leadership role is confirmed until the end of March 2025 and the non-statutory guidance 'Promoting the education of children with a social worker' was updated in June 2022 to now define the term 'children with a social worker' to include:

"……all children who have been assessed as needing or previously needing a social worker within the past 6 years due to safeguarding or welfare reasons. It includes all children aged 0 to 18 across all education settings subject to a child in need plan or a child protection plan."

In August 2023 there were a total of 3189 open social care cases with 432 children on a Child Protection plan. As yet, we have no mechanism for tracking children who have previously had a social worker within the past 6 years, but are working with both the census and performance teams to explore how this can be tracked.

Our support has been focused on the following activities as defined in the non-statutory guidance:

- enhancing partnerships between education settings and the local authority so agencies can work together in a child focused manner.

- identifying the needs of the cohort and addressing barriers to poor educational outcomes to ensure pupils make educational progress.

- offering advice and support to key professionals such as social workers, Designated Safeguarding Leads, Designated Teachers, and school leaders to help children make progress, including through increasing their confidence in using evidence-based interventions.

The Caring2Learn Manager, who is the strategic lead for CWSW, liaises with Children's Services teams and professionals, including the Child Protection Chairs and IROs, Future4Me, Early Help, Attendance, Inclusion and Pupil Reintegration, and FAST to offer advice and guidance. This includes continuing to raise the profile of education and ensure it is a focus alongside safeguarding and welfare concerns for children and young people. A briefing and guidance document has been developed for social workers to support their knowledge and understanding of key educational issues and where they can access further guidance and support across Children's Services.

In July 2023 a pathway was formulated to support social workers to fulfil their new responsibilities as part of the new 'Statutory Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities on Permanent Exclusion and Suspensions'. During the academic year 2022/2023, 24 children on a Child Protection or Child in Need Plan were permanently excluded from their school without representation or appeal by the child's family or social worker. It is proposed that the pathway will outline new processes to ensure social workers have the knowledge and confidence needed to challenge schools and advocate for children on a child protection or child in need plan who are permanently excluded from schools. This will include exercising their right to attend the Governors' Pupil Disciplinary Committee and make representations for the child.

Training on the role of the Virtual School, meeting the needs of vulnerable children, and therapeutic approaches has been delivered to social work apprentices, newly qualified social workers, the Early Help and Future4Me teams, and the Pupil Reintegration Team.

The Virtual School has also collaborated with the Education Support team on the Lincolnshire Attendance Strategy which was launched following the publication of the new DfE guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance'. Included in this strategy is the tracking of attendance data for specific groups such as children open to social care and Future4Me on a term-by-term basis.

In order to support further partnership and multi-agency working, the Caring2Learn Manager is now co-opted onto the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) Education Subgroup and attends meetings to further develop the links with schools and education settings. This has enabled the Virtual School to contribute to the development of partnership wide safeguarding policy and awareness raising with schools around the needs of CWSW.

13.0 Priorities for the future

In adherence to the principles outlined in The Children's Services Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy 2022-2025, and in partnership with stakeholders, the Virtual School priorities 2023-2025 are as follows.

We will work in partnership with children and young people, schools, social care teams and carers to provide high quality learning opportunities for all by:

- Continuing to develop strong partnerships and robust monitoring to promote expected attendance levels and reduce suspensions from school.
- Ensuring all children make good progress based on prior attainment, including those accessing SEND specialist provision through highly effective Personal Education Plans and effective use of Pupil Premium.
- Further improving access to education, employment and training opportunities, and raising the profile of post 16 children in care and care leavers through the effective allocation of Post 16 Pupil Premium funding and the introduction of employment coaches.
- Enabling all Designated Teachers, IROs, parents, carers, and appropriate professionals to have access to quality training and professional development.
- Reducing school moves whenever possible to help maintain placement and educational stability.
- Applying and sharing best practice to better support and inform our workforce in meeting the needs of children in care, previously looked after children, and children with a social worker.
- Embedding the principles and foundations of Caring2Learn within our offer to education settings, parents, carers, and professionals supporting our children in care.
- Developing regional partnership working and network links.
- Improving practice and provision through the development of peer support.

Underpinning these priorities, we will ensure that:

- Our young people's voices are heard and listened to.
- We celebrate the achievements of all our children and young people.
- Our children in care have effective Personal Education Plans that are reviewed termly.
- Our children have access to good early years provision.
- Our children are admitted to good settings and schools without undue delay.
- Our children are encouraged to attend extra-curricular and recreational activities they enjoy as available through the local offer.

14.0 Summary

This annual report covers the activity of the Lincolnshire Virtual School in the academic year 2022-23 and describes how we have fulfilled our statutory duty to promote improved educational outcomes for our children and young people in care and previously looked after children, and our non-statutory duty to promote educational outcomes for children with a social worker. The report outlines the specific and ever-changing characteristics of our cohorts of children in each year group and provides a context against which their outcomes are better understood.

Using case examples, it also highlights the positive impact that the work of the Virtual School has had on individual children and young people. The Virtual School team understands the need for patience, resilience, innovation, and the importance of building effective relationships to ensure that we can create the environments in which our children and young people can thrive.

In this report we demonstrate:

- A commitment to promoting continuous professional development within the Virtual School team. Also, a determination towards training and support work with Designated Teachers, social care teams, foster carers, IROs, and others.
- The Virtual School team and our SEND, Commissioning, and Social Care colleagues work effectively to ensure that our children and young people are placed in provision Ofsted graded Good or better, and regularly review the placement of those in less than good schools regularly.
- Ongoing development of robust processes to monitor the quality of Personal Education Plans and young people's attendance and academic progress.
- That Pupil Premium is allocated to schools in an efficient and timely manner with the impact of interventions recorded on the PEP, which is reviewed at least three times per year or more often if necessary. Pupil Premium is utilised strategically to fund early intervention strategies.
- That we value the need to build strong relationships with our children and young people over time so that trust can be developed, and advocacy can be effective and based on the views of the child. We take the time to celebrate individual success and see the importance of celebrating success more widely, as appropriate.
- That we have high aspirations for our children and young people and recognise that understanding their needs, building their emotional resilience and self- esteem goes hand in hand with promoting their academic progress.

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