London Borough of Bromley

PART 1 - PUBLIC

**Briefing for Care Services Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee
Wednesday 22 January 2014**

EDUCATION OUTCOMES OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN 2013

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1. **Summary**

1.1   The role of the Bromley Virtual School is to ensure that the London Borough of Bromley fulfils its corporate parenting responsibilities to provide children in care with good education opportunities (Helen Priest has the role of Head Teacher). The Bromley Virtual School does this by providing a tailored package of support where needed and tracking children on an individual basis to ensure they are making good progress.

1.2   The Virtual School tracks children from when they become looked after throughout their educational career and works closely with schools, alternative providers and carers to ensure that the educational needs of our looked after children are consistently and appropriately met to achieve good outcomes.

1.3   The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information in relation to key areas of attainment for Bromley's children in care during the 2012/13 academic year.

2. **THE BRIEFING**

2.1   The Virtual School offers both universal and targeted support to the children, their schools, their social workers and foster carers. Universal support is provided by way of ensuring that schools are aware of the needs of children in care and can respond positively.

2.2   Every looked after child has a Personal Education Plan which focusses upon areas of individual learning to ensure children and young people achieve the best that they possibly can. As a result, many children receive additional individual support in their schools, either provided to meet an identified need through Pupil Premium funding for personalised support, or through support offered by the Virtual School.

2.3   For the purpose of this report the YR2 group is made up of only eleven pupils, six of whom were accommodated after the beginning of the reporting period (three children from the cohort

are now placed for adoption). The KS2 reporting group is made up of 10 pupils who have been looked after continuously for 1 year between April 2012 and March 2013. Because of the very small cohort sizes, we can see larger swings from year to year. Accordingly we show both numbers and percentages in the tables below.

2.4   By the end of Key Stage 4, cohorts will usually be made up of between forty and fifty students. This year's group is exceptionally small, with only 33 in total. Fourteen of these young people were accommodated after 1st April 2012 and so are not part of the reporting cohort. Despite becoming looked after so late in YR10 or in YR11, there are some remarkable outcomes for this group; the result of some exceptional foster carers and effective joint working between professionals. One child from this group went from 38% attendance before becoming looked after in the autumn of YR 11 to achieving three A's, four B's and one C at GCSE.

2.5   Key Stage 1 SATs 2013 (age 7)
2.5.1   11 Bromley children in care ended KS1 in August 2013 but only 5 had been continually looked after during the reporting period. These 5 children form the ***reporting cohort.*** 3 (66%) achieved level 2 in Reading, Writing and Maths

2.5.2   The remaining two children both have Statements of Special Educational Needs and are working below the level of assessment.

Table 1 - Key Stage 1 achieving level 2 or above				
		2011	**2012**	**2013**
Reading	**Bromley**	66%	57%	60% (3 of 5 pupils)
	National	59%	67%	69%
Writing	**Bromley**	44%	57%	60% (3 of 5 pupils)
	National	53%	57%	61%
Maths	**Bromley**	66%	57%	60% (3 of 5 pupils)
	National	63%	71%	71%

2.5.3   Based upon the local data Bromley has seen a slight overall improvement in performance from 2012 although remains behind the national average. However, caution must be observed as the reporting cohort is so small.

2.6   Key Stage 2 SATs (Age 11)
2.6.1   15 Bromley children in care ended KS2 in August 2013 but only 9 had been continually looked after during the reporting period. These 9 children form the ***reporting cohort.***

2.6.2   All but one of these children has made two or more levels of progress in English and Maths during KS 2 (8 out of 9 pupils). The child who has not made this progress is a severely disabled child, who is making progress below national curriculum levels.

Table 2 – Key Stage 2 level four and above					
Indicator	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
N 99: Percentage of children in care reaching level 4 in English at KS2	New combined Reading, Writing and Maths scores **Bromley 66%** (5 of 9 pupils)	**Bromley** 28% (2 of 7 pupils) **National** 64%	**Bromley** 50% (5 of 10 pupils) **National** 59%	**Bromley** 100% (5 of 5 pupils) **National** 54%	**Bromley** 40% (4 of 10 pupils) **National** 59%
N100: Percentage of children in care reaching level 4 in maths at KS2	**National** Not available	**Bromley** 28% **National** 56%	**Bromley** 40% **National** 52%	**Bromley** 80% **National** 47%	**Bromley** 20% **National** 47%

2.6.3 8 (88%) pupils made 2 levels of progress or more in English; 8 (88%) pupils made 2 levels of progress or more in Maths. This matches national outcome data for progression in KS2 for looked after children.

2.7   Key Stage 4 Outcomes 2013 (age 16)

2.7.1 33 children in care ended YR11 in August 2013; Of these, **19** had been continuously looked after for at least 12 months (to 31st March 2013) and these pupils form the **reporting cohort.**

GCSE Results		2011	2012	2013 All LAC Pupils (33 pupils)	2013 Reporting Cohort (19 pupils)
5 A*-C Including English and Maths	Bromley	8.6% (3 pupils)	11% (2 pupils)	18%	16% (3 pupils)
	National	13.6%	15.0%	Not available	15.3%
5 A*-C	Bromley	25.7%	22.2%	27%	21%
	National	33.4%	37.2%	Not available	36.6%
5A*-G	Bromley	48.6%	55%	27%	21%
1A*-G	Bromley	74.3%	88%	33%	26%
Sat GCSE or equivalent	Bromley	66%	88%	36%	26%

2.7.2 Of the reporting cohort 16% of pupils (3) achieved 5 GCSEs at A*-C including English and Maths. This is above National outcomes for KS4 looked after children.

2.7.3 78% pupils (15) in the reporting cohort have identified SEN - 3 (16%) have Statements of Special Educational Needs. 6 (32%) are at School Action Plus

2.9   Analysis

2.9.1   Overall, children in care education performance at key stages 1 and 2 was as expected given the very small reporting cohort. Performance at key stage 4 was slightly lower than our prediction because as well as the relatively small number of children and young people within the reporting cohort (this was a very small year group compared to normal years) we also identified a number of themes that emerged during the year; for example:

- A higher than average proportion of this year's cohort has been moderately or completely disengaged during year 11. This figure has been impacted by the higher than normal number of young people that became accommodated at aged 15 plus. Many of the late entrants to the cohort were already refusing to attend their education provision and some had no identified school at all when they became looked after. Some young people, including a number who had previously been high achieving, experienced placement breakdowns or other serious disruption which caused them difficulties in engaging at any level. For some of our young people it is hard for them to focus on education. Most schools work hard to keep young people on track but, ultimately, academic targets are missed despite high levels of support.

- The alternatives on offer are sometimes not suitable for looked after young people in crisis or for those with complex and challenging behaviour. For example, we had a small number of young people that had been the perpetrators of sexual assault against other young people. Maintaining these young people in any educational resource whilst at the same time safeguarding other young people, can present a significant challenge.

- The impact of removal of GCSE Equivalence. This year, a number of young people who might, in previous years, have achieved a number of GCSEs by virtue of having gained other qualifications which had GCSE equivalence now have no GCSE successes at all. It is not clear if this will have any impact on their future education, training or employability.

2.10   Bromley Looked After Pupil Exclusions

2.10.1 Bromley has had no reported permanent exclusions of looked after children since 2008 and, the number of fixed term exclusions has decreased year on year over this period. This is the result of increased levels of support offered to both individual pupils and their schools by the Virtual School and of improved collaborative working between the Service and colleagues in the Behaviour Service, SEN and Education Welfare and our local schools.

2.10.2 Permanent Exclusions have largely been avoided by managed moves (planned transfer to other maintained or alternative provisions). The decision to affect a managed move rather than allow a 'natural progression' to permanent exclusion and subsequent placement in a pupil referral unit is usually driven by two factors: (a) the reluctance to allow the pupil to have a permanent exclusion on their record and (b) the nature of pupil referral unit provisions and the mix of students already attending. Looked after children have precedence in the school admissions code and tend to have the highest priority for admission.

2.10.3 The expectation of the Virtual School is that children will remain in mainstream schools and that schools are challenged and supported to keep pupils on roll. Bromley provides both the challenge and support very well, often keeping children in school and allowing them to complete courses and take national examinations. However, when a student is experiencing multiple fixed term exclusions, there is a judgement to be made about the value of continuing to make them attend a provision in which they are extremely unhappy and are not engaging

(or are being purposely being disruptive) and then removing them to a new provision in which they can make a new start. Both options present challenges and both carry the risk of a poor outcome.

2.10.4 Fixed terms exclusions 2009 – 2013

	Number of days total FX	Number of Pupils	Bromley Schools	Other Schools	Total
2009/10	232	33	9	21	30
2010/11	134	24	9	13	22
2011/12	126	13	5	6	23
2012/13	91	13	5	6	11

NOTE: The exclusion data presented here is raw data for all look after children in these years and not the data used for government reporting. Fixed Term Exclusions (FX) of Looked After Children have been reduced year on Year since 2009. This trend is not reflected universally in the statistical neighbour group, where there was an increase in the numbers of pupils with FX in 2011

2.11 Case Studies on Looked After Children and Young People in KS2 and KS4 reporting Cohorts (Eligible children)

2.11.1 Attached to this report (Appendix A) is an additional paper which provides a more in depth view of the journeys of individual children through education. The paper provides a pen picture of all of the children in the KS2 reporting cohort (11years old) and of a selection of the KS4 cohort (16 years), with reference to the issues highlighted in this report.