THE LONDON BOROUGH
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Annual Report
on
the Work of the Virtual
School

April 2015

Contents

1. **Background and current National Profile on the Attainment of Looked After Children**

1.1 Ensuring that Looked After Children (LAC) receive a high quality education is fundamental to improving their life chances and future success as active and emotionally and economically secure adults.

1.2 Nationally, numbers of Looked After Children have increased by 9% since 2007 and despite seeing improvements in educational outcomes since 2000, progress has been at a slow rate and significantly lower when compared with the rest of the school age population. The Department for Education Statistical First Release in December 2014 showed that, in in the academic year ending in the summer of 2014, only 12% per cent of looked after children who have been looked after for at least a year achieved five GCSEs, grade A*-C, including English and maths, compared to 52.1% per cent for non-looked after children. These figures represent outcomes for children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months up to and including 31st March 2014.

1.3 Like previous governments, the current administration has made narrowing of the gap between the achievement of looked after children and that of other children and young people a high priority. Everyone involved in the life of a Looked After Child can do more to support them to succeed in education and reach their full potential and overcome the structural barriers which exist in education hindering their overall progress.

2. Statutory Duties on Local Authorities as Corporate Parents

2.1 In July 2014, the government published 'Promoting the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities'. This guidance supersedes the March 2010 guidance and reinforces the statutory duty of a local authority to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child looked after by them includes a particular duty to promote the child's educational achievement.

2.2 In the same month, the government also published 'Out of Authority placement of Looked After Children, complementing the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations which came into force in 2011. This guidance sets out the importance of ensuring that education planning remains central to the care planning process, particularly when children move across local authority boundaries.

2.3 Improving educational outcomes and ensuring that young people have access to education, employment or training post statutory education is one of the strategic priorities in Bromley's Corporate Parenting Strategy 2014-16.

3.   Looked After Children in Bromley

3.1 During the year, numbers of Looked After Children in Bromley have largely been in the 276 - 289 range. There have, however, been periods when the population has exceeded 300.
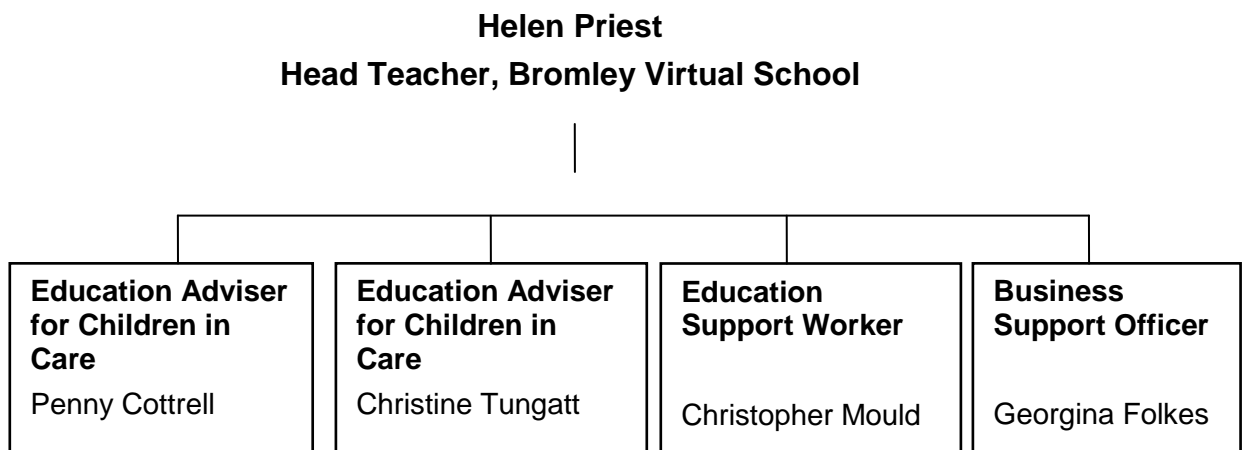
3.2 **Children in Care Population Data 2014-15**

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Total Number of Children in Care	280	282	293	289	294	288	289	304	284	286	278	276
Total Placed out of Borough (excluding pre-adoptive)	150	149	176	166	171	143	141	144	146	140	142	138
Number of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME	106	110	113	114	119	118	119	124	116	120	115	115

4. The Work and Impact of the Virtual School

4.1 Bromley Virtual School: Development and Service Delivery 2014/15

4.1.2 The Virtual School organisational structure chart is shown below.

Helen Priest
Head Teacher, Bromley Virtual School

Education Adviser for Children in Care	**Education Adviser for Children in Care**	**Education Support Worker**	**Business Support Officer**
Penny Cottrell	Christine Tungatt	Christopher Mould	Georgina Folkes

4.2 Bromley Virtual School Statement of Purpose

Bromley's Children in Care, regardless of their location, deserve the best start in life. Enabling them to secure good educational outcomes is key to ensuring that their dreams and aspirations can be realised. As Corporate Parent, Bromley Council is committed to ensuring that children and young people in care have access to high quality education provision and timely and appropriate support when it is needed. Securing good educational outcomes for children in care will enable them to live economically independent, successful and fulfilling adult lives.

The Bromley Virtual School works strategically across the local authority and in partnership with schools and other agencies, in order to improve standards of achievement for this group of children and young people, whether they are placed in Bromley or far from home.

Vision

To ensure that Bromley's children and young people in care have access to high quality educational provision and achieve at a similar level to all other children and young people.

Objectives

- to ensure that children and young people looked after the LB Bromley have access to appropriate, high quality education provision
- to champion high academic expectations, working with social workers, carers, designated teachers and Head Teachers to ensure every looked after child has an ambitious and challenging personal education plan
- to track and monitor the academic progress of children and young people in care, ensuring they are making progress in line with National expectations, by maintaining effective monitoring and recording systems

- to monitor the education provision and expectations for children, especially those with disabilities, who are working below the level of assessment and/or age-related expectation
- to provide training that will raise awareness of the importance of education for children in care, inform of changes to statutory guidance, provide clarity of roles and responsibilities for key professionals and share good practice
- work with within the local authority and with partner agencies to ensure continuity of schooling for children in care
- to support and challenge schools and other education providers to promote stability and success for children
- provide additional, personalised support through access to advice and guidance, 1:1 tuition and additional resources whenever need is identified
- to celebrate success

4.3   Measurements of success

4.3.1   Bromley Virtual School's Development Plan 2013-2015, *Delivering a First Class Education*, identified 7 priorities:

- Ensure that all looked after children and young people make progress that is at least as good as all other Bromley children
- Increase accountability and performance management of Virtual School
- Raise the aspirations of children and young people in care and the professionals that work with them
- Further embed personal education planning within care and pathway planning
- Improve post 16 engagement in EET
- Reduce persistent absence and fixed term exclusions
- Increase awareness and competencies of foster carers and social workers to ensure high quality support for children

4.4   Data

4.4.1   Tracking and monitoring attainment and progression are the foundation that holds all of this work together.   Working closely with social work teams, we have seen the timeliness of PEP activity improve dramatically.   The introduction of the progress monitoring forms has, in most cases, provided detailed information about the targets sets for individual pupils in core subjects and what needs to be achieved to attain them.   As a result, we have seen significant improvements in the quality of target setting information recorded in PEPs, giving social workers and foster carers a much better understanding of the detail of what children should be learning.   Alongside this detail, they can also see what support the pupil is being given in school or what needs to be put in place for them.

4.4.2   Throughout the year, the Virtual School has worked hard to embed the newly acquired WelfareCall 'Track' system.   The work of 'back-filling' academic data continues but it has been heartening to see the compliance of schools grow from 60% in the summer of 2014 to 83% for spring term 2015.   The Virtual School has begun to use this data, internally, to complement our existing understanding of the progress of individual pupils and of the likely outcomes for year-group cohorts.   One of the unexpected benefits that individual pupil profiles has provided is an instant visual comparison between national expectation of progress and the targets set by schools.   It has been pleasing to see that, for the most part, schools are setting targets that are more aspirational than the generally expected two sub-levels per year.   The Virtual School is now in discussions with the Quality Assurance team about how this information can be of use in LAC reviews and other child-centered meetings.

4.5   **Personal Education Plans (PEPs)**

4.5.1   The Virtual School has had a busy and successful year, building on existing priorities and embedding new responsibilities as well as promoting providing advice and support to social workers, carers and schools. A key focus of the year has been promoting high expectations and setting targets that clearly show an intention to close the gap for children in care in Bromley.   The timeliness and quality of Personal Education Planning has improved greatly during the year.

4.5.2   Following a trial period, the post-16 PEP is now embedding in practice. This is a discrete assessment, reflecting the nature of information that the Virtual School wishes to capture about the young people in this age groups and many PEP meetings continue to be supported by the Education Support Worker in the Virtual School. As with the School-age PEP, all completed post-16 PEPS are reviewed and authorised by the VSH.   This work is enabling the Virtual School to build relationships with FE providers and identify the support needs of individuals engaged on their courses but also of the cohort in general. It has made it possible for us to anticipate problems and offer support to individual students and institutions before issues develop to crisis point and to understand the range of professionals working with our students in their FE settings.

4.5.3   Every Looked After Child in an early years setting has had at least one PEP this year. Implementing the Bromley Early Years PEP has been one of the most notable activities of the Year. Every meeting has been chaired by an Education Adviser from the Virtual School.   They have been welcomed by schools and independent providers and professionals from both education and social care have found the meetings very helpful, with the discussions allowing a range of professionals to learn and share new information about young children and to identify routes into formal education and any possible barriers to success. PEPs are being undertaken for 3 year-olds as well as four year-olds and every meeting this year will include detailed discussion about the use of Early Years Pupil Premium Plus, with support being given to providers to complete the required monitoring documents.

4.6   **Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

4.6.1   The Virtual School has worked closely with colleagues in Special Educational Needs (SEN) to ensure that Looked After Pupils remain a priority group in the process of converting Statements of SEN into Education Health and Care Plans (EHC plans). In line with the 2014 SEN Code of Practice, the Virtual School is identifying children and young people who have known social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) difficulties that have, or are likely to have, an impact on their learning. Schools are being encouraged and supported in the gathering of evidence to request a statutory assessment for an EHC plan even in cases where children are of a borderline concern and their needs are currently being met within the school's funding arrangements. This is in the recognition that some Looked After Children may be facing ongoing trauma because of early neglect, abandonment and abuse which will continue to have an impact on their ability to engage and make good progress.

Bromley does not accept the model of 'Additional resource' funding, (frequently offered to schools for children who do not meet the threshold for EHC plans), for Looked After pupils because of their mobility. EHC plans are more appropriate for this highly vulnerable group.

4.6.2 There has been a parallel increase in activity between the Virtual School and the Preparing for Adulthood co-ordinators who undertake transition reviews of Statements of SEN for young people as they approach the end of statutory education and convert Statements of SEN to EHC plans. This work has included the preparation of plans for some young people, not previously known to the Virtual School, including a number who have become looked after during YR11 and some who have been referred by the Post Adoption Support team. These are young people who may never previously had their needs formally identified and supported and who would otherwise have fallen through the net and quickly become NEET in YR12 without the appropriate support.

4.7 Focus on Care Leavers

4.7.1 The work of the Virtual School in promoting higher aspirations for children in care has been rewarded by increased engagement of looked after young people post-16. In the autumn of 2014, all but one of the YR12 cohort began the academic year engaged in education or training. Of that group, a record number had been accepted into the sixth forms of their own or other schools, a departure from the previous pattern of transition to further education (FE) college. Most of the students who have made this choice have their sights set on university at the end of Key Stage 5

4.7.2 Bromley currently has 16 care leavers engaged in higher education. 8 of these are in their first year of study, one in the second year, 4 are in year three and two are in their fourth undergraduate year. Subjects range from English with Creative Writing to Biomedical Science Electrical and Electronic Engineering. I student (a young parent) is undertaking a post-graduate certificate of education having gained a 2:1 in Accountancy and English Language last year.

4.8 Enrichment

4.8.1 The Virtual School has had another successful year of close working with the Bromley Education Business Partnership (BEBP). The year has seen the development and strengthening of the LAC mentoring scheme, with 10 young people being referred and six being matched with mentors. Three referrals are currently in the matching process and a further referral was withdrawn when the young person was moved out of authority

4.8.2 A new project, developed by BEBP with support FROM Virtual School to secure work experience placements for Looked After young people within the local authority and local business has arranged 10 placements in its first year. Conceived, in part, as a mechanism by which to keep young people engaged over the long summer break, the project sought to identify young people in Year groups 11 and 12 who were not in education or employment (NEET) or at risk of becoming so. With a target of placing

25 Looked After young people over 2 years, the project has made contact with 27 young people and successfully placed ten in placements closely to their identified career choices. A further four are pending final agreement with matched employers. Placements within local authority include the education, finance and planning departments. Other placements are with a wide range of local business settings and include a veterinary surgery, a public housing provider and the Churchill Theatre.

4.8.3   The Virtual School has initiated the Key Stage 2 Enrichment Project for Looked After Children in partnership with the two grammar schools in the borough. This aspirational project has identified children in year groups 4 and 5 who are on track to achieve a secure level 4 or above at the end of key stage 2. Mindful that it is essential to avoid creating unrealistic expectations for young children, the project has been set up to give children the experience of spending time and working in a grammar school setting while providing challenging and exciting additional support for them. Launching in St Olave's Grammar School, Five YR5 pupils from schools within and outside the borough have been able to attend sessions in school where they have been provided with YR7 'buddies' who have attended enrichment and extension classes with them. Sessions are being delivered by teaching staff and sixth form students. This project does not guarantee grammar school places for these children but it will help them to prepare for entrance examinations should it be decided that a grammar school is the preferred option at secondary transfer.

4.8.4   Although Bromley is not a pilot authority, The Virtual School welcomed an invitation from the London Fostering Network to take part in the London Fostering Achievement Project. Funded for 1 year by the Greater London Authority and Department for Education, and backed by the Mayor of London the project aims to improve the educational outcomes of Looked After Children through developing more effective practice and working relationships by foster carers, teachers, leaders, CLA and the wider professional network. 19 Foster carers and ten designated teachers attended the training session and these were joined by a number of supervising social workers and Independent reviewing officers (IROs) for a half-day training event. Topics covered practical ways that foster carers can engage in children's learning and what makes an effective PEP. Master classes for foster carers and other professionals involved in the education of Looked After Children are on offer throughout the year.

4.9   Pupil Premium Plus

4.9.1   The Virtual School has risen to the challenging requirements of administering Pupil Premium Plus. The Virtual School Head Teacher joined Professor Steve Higgins on the platform of Bromley's Building Cohesion conference in November 2014 to challenge Head Teachers and Chairs of school governing bodies on the targeted use of funding for Looked After Pupils. Training has subsequently been delivered to school governors attending local authority training, foster carers and adopters. Pupil Premium questions are also regularly addressed in the termly Designated Teacher Forum. Further information about Pupil Premium Plus can be found in section 5, below.

4.9.2   The administration of Pupil Premium Plus has created a significant amount of new work for the Virtual School but the challenge is being met and, following a period of consultation with designated teachers and Head Teachers, the policy and procedures were completed (*'Bromley Virtual School Premium Pupil Premium Plus (Looked After Children) Policy and Briefing Paper April 2015'*, see Annex A, attached). The focus of the consultation work was to ensure that the process for accessing funding was not overly demanding of schools but that, at the same time, it ensured they were aware of the need for accountability.   It was agreed that the successful use of the existing progress monitoring form could be built upon, and so a revised version of this is being used for the administering of funds in the new financial year. The receipt of a completed monitoring form, together with a review of previous two PEPs, will trigger a decision on the release of funding for individual pupils.

4.9.2   Persistent absence was identified as an area of concern last year and it has been added as a priority in the Development Plan.   The reporting data includes children not on roll in a maintained or independent school or place in an alternative provision. Such pupils are provided with 1:1 tuition, usually taking place in their placements as rapidly as possible. Although this is less than ideal, pupils receive up to 25 hours of education in this way, monitored and supported by the Virtual School, but attendance at this provision was not being recorded. A new register mark has been created to identify students for whom daily 1:1 tuition is their main or only education provision. This mark will not be recognised legally but it does provide a more accurate picture of the engagement of those individuals. For other young people, who find it impossible to engage at all, the Virtual School continues to work with creatively with colleagues, identify new opportunities and extend offers.

4.9.3   The Virtual School was pleased to host the annual Celebration of Achievement for Looked After Young people and Care Leavers. The range of activities and achievements that is celebrated grows each year and it is clear that our young people benefit from seeing the success, both academic and social, of their peers. As is always the case, we applauded the ability to sign 'Hello' with the same vigour as the award of a university degree.

4.10   Academic Attainment

4.10.1 Because cohort sizes are very small, data represented as percentages can appear distorted although, because this the national reporting requirement, it is the only way that comparison can be made with national outcomes and statistical neighbour results. Wherever possible, we have shown outcomes as numbers of children as well as percentages.

4.10.2 **Key Stage 1 SATs 2014 (age 7)**

4.10.3 12 Bromley children in care ended KS1 in August 2014. Of these, 11 had been continuously looked after during the reporting period. For the purpose of this report, it is these 11 children that form the ***reporting cohort*** for academic year 2013/14, (the largest cohort since reporting began).

4.10.4 5 children (55%) achieved level 2, the National age-related expectation in Reading, Writing and Maths.

4.10.5 Three of these children (28%) have Statements of SEN and a further 3 have identified SEN without statements.

4.10.6 Four children were placed in adoptive (3) and special guardianship (1) placements out of authority during year 2. This, of course, necessitates a period out of school as they get to know their new families but, in each case, the Virtual School had negotiated admission to a new school   before the placement change and, in some cases, provided packages of support for integration into the new school. All four of those children *achieved as expected or better in KS1 SATs in May.*

4.10.7 **Key Stage 1 Pupil Level Data, 2014.**   *(Please see the end of this report for a glossary of terms)*

Indicator	**2014**	**2013**	**2012**	**2011**
Reading	55% (6 of 11 pupils	60% (3 of 5 pupils)	57% (4 of 7 pupils)	76% (6 of 9 pupils)
Writing	55% (6 of 11 pupils)	60% (3 of 5 pupils)	57% (4 of 7 pupils)	44% (4 of 9 pupils)
Speaking and Listening	64% (7 of 11 pupils	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported
Maths	55% (6 of 11 pupils)	60% (3 of 5 pupils)	42% (3 of 7 pupils)	76% (6 of 9 pupils)

4.10.8 Key Stage 2 SATs (Age 11)

4.10.9 9 Bromley children in care ended KS2 in August 2014. Of those 8 had been continuously looked after during the reporting period. These 8 children form the ***reporting cohort.***

4.10.10 Two children in the reporting cohort (25%) have Statements of SEN and a further 3 are at School Action Plus, making a total of 5 (63%) with identified special educational needs.

4.10.11 All but one of the children in the YR6 cohort who were working at the level at which they were eligible for SATs achieved *an increase of two or more levels of*

attainment or better in both English and Maths. The remaining pupil made exceptional progress in English, despite having special educational needs and experiencing two changes in placement in YR6.

4.10.12 **Key Stage 2 Outcome Data with Historical Context**

Indicator	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
N 99: Percentage of children in care reaching level 4 in English at KS2	Combined Reading, Writing and Maths scores **Bromley 63%**	Combined Reading, Writing and Maths scores **Bromley 55%**	**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	(5 of 8 pupils)	(5 of 9 pupils) **National** Not available	**Bromley** 28% **National** 56%	**Bromley** 40% **National** 52%	**Bromley** 80% **National** 47%	**Bromley** 20% **National** 47%

4.11 **Key Stage 4 Outcomes**

4.11.1 30 children in care ended YR11 in August 2014. Of these, 28 had been continuously looked   after for at least 12 months (to 31st March 2014) and these pupils form the **reporting cohort.**

4.11.2 67% of the reporting cohort have identified special educational needs, with **11 young people having a Statement of SEN.** This equates to 41% of the cohort having a Statement of SEN against a national figure of 2.8%.

4.11.3 Six of the young people in this year group were accommodated by the local authority during Key Stage 4. All have experienced 2 or more placements during KS4.   One student is out of chronological year group and will take GCSE examinations in summer 2015.

4.11.4 One student is a young parent who has experienced the removal of her child for adoption.

4.11.5 Only 10 young people in last year's reporting group were in Bromley schools and of those one was on roll in the Pupil Referral Unit and one in The Glebe. Seven children in the cohort were in mainstream schools maintained referral units in other authorities and 8 were in specialist residential provision. One young person was in a secure training centre and one young person was missing from placement during YR11 and had no identified education provision.

4.11.6 It is clear that schools are working very hard to secure good educational outcomes for children in care. Many of them have achieved remarkable results, despite on-going trauma and disruption but we know that some looked after young people have not achieved the target grades set for them. These young people and their schools will be consulted in the coming months in an attempt to identify what barriers they faced and what additional support they would have valued during key stage 4.

4.11.7 Looked After Children in Bromley do not yet do as well at KS4 as other their peers in Bromley but the authority is working very hard to close the attainment gap between them and other young people in the borough. Additional resources are being identified to address poor reading skills among the young people who enter care during adolescence and considerable work is being done with schools to ensure that young people are entered for functional skills awards where their social or academic histories have resulted in insufficient work being done for GCSE entry.

4.11.8 **GCSE outcomes 2014 with historical context**

GCSE results	2014 Reporting Cohort of 28 pupils	2013 Reporting cohort of 19 pupils	2012	2011	2010	2009
5 A* - C including English and Maths	14% (4 pupils)	**16%** (3 pupils)	11 % (2 pupils)	8.6% (3 pupils)	25% (4 pupils)	10% (2 pupils)
5 A* - C	25% (7 pupils)	21%	22 %	26%	43%	29%
5 A*-G	46% (13 pupils)	21%	55%	49%	63%	48%
1 A*-G	74% (20 pupils)	26%	88%	74%	75%	71%
Pupils leaving KS4 without level 2 functional skills Maths	50% (14 pupils)					
Pupils leaving KS4	53%					

without level 2 functional skills English	(15 pupils)					

5. Attendance and Exclusions

5.1 Attendance

5.1.1 Attendance data is collected daily, on behalf of Bromley, by Welfare Call Ltd. This data is reported to Bromley daily, weekly and termly. If a child is absent from school without authorisation, Welfare Call will telephone the foster carer to ensure that the carer knows the whereabouts of the child. If the foster carer is unavailable or if they were unaware of the child's absence, Welfare Call will then notify the child's social worker. The Education Support Worker within the Virtual School monitors the daily and weekly Welfare Call reports and liaises with other members of the team on a daily basis as well as in weekly pupil monitoring exercises.

5.1.2 The key indicator for the reporting of pupil absence from school is persistent absence. Persistent absentees are defined as having around 15 per cent overall absence rate For 5 terms of absence data, this equates to 46 or more sessions of absence (authorised and unauthorised), or 23 days. This definition was introduced in 2011. Before 2011 it was 20 per cent, equating to 25 days). The percentage is calculated by dividing the number of persistent absentees by the total number of children with absence data.

5.1.3 **Persistent absence for Bromley LAC (all figures report persistent absence over 5 half terms).**

Academic Year	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09
Bromley	15.3%	8.2%	6.0%	10.1%	8.2%	6.0%
All outer London	Not available	5.1%	6.7%	7.1%	8.1%	6.7%
All England	Not available	5.0%	6.0%	7.3%	7.8%	8.8%

5.1.4 Persistent absence rose sharply last year. Interrogation of this outcome showed that a larger than normal number of children with histories of absconding or who had been moved out of authority in an emergency and that some were placed in settings without access to suitable education. The majority of these children had complex needs and were already having difficulties engaging with school. A further period of no provision while the Virtual school put something in place pushed some of these pupils over the 23 day threshold. In some cases, the Virtual School provided 1:1

tuition or alternative provision but young people still could not be encouraged to engage.

5.1.5 It has been noted that a number of children who were engaging in alternative provision, but who were not on roll in a school, were included in this list. The Virtual School has subsequently created a new register mark so that these pupils will, in future be identified as having attended their provision and therefore not be labelled as persistent absentees.

5.1.6 This group of children included three children with complex health needs and associated long period of sickness and two, both with special educational needs, who were placed for adoption and for whom a longer than usual period at home for attachment work was considered appropriate before they took up places in their new school.

5.2 Exclusions

5.2.1 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.

5.2.3 Fixed term exclusions of looked after children have been reducing consistently since 2009. This represents a reduction both in the number of days and in the number of pupils experiencing exclusion. This trend is not borne out among our statistical neighbours, most of whom saw an increase in the numbers of fixed term exclusions in 2011.

5.2.4 **This table shows fixed term exclusions from 2009 to 2014:**

	no. days total FX	no. pupils represented	Bromley Schools	Other Schools	total schools
2009/10	232	33	9	21	30
2010/11	134	24	9	13	22
2011/12	126	23	11	12	23
2012/13	91	13	5	6	11
2013/14	85	16	6	7	13

5.2.5 30.5 of the 85 days of exclusion in 2013/14 were for a single pupil. While last year's annual report cited an example where the Virtual School took the decision to move a child who was experiencing repeated fixed term exclusions, on this occasion it was decided to do as much as possible to support the school to work with, and hold onto,

this YR11 student. The commitment to facilitating the opportunity to sit exams and experience success shown by the school in the face of disruption and verbal abuse as well as complaints from local business was remarkable.

5.2.6 A further 15.5 of the 85 days reported last year represent the total number of days of exclusion of a sibling group of 2, who had much larger history of fixed term exclusions (and one permanent exclusion) before becoming accommodated. For one of the siblings, some of these days were accrued within two weeks of the beginning of the autumn term. When it became apparent that the young person viewed a fixed term exclusion as a positive outcome for him, the Virtual School worked with the (alternative) education provider to identify ways to avoid allowing the student to manipulate his way into situations where a fixed term exclusion was the likely outcome.

6.   Pupil Premium Plus

6.1   Allocation

6.1.1 The decision was made to distribute the majority of the premium plus allocation for individual pupils to schools in 2014/15. Designated teachers were advised of the Education Endowment Fund Toolkit as a guide for a range of effective interventions and their cost/benefit ratio.

6.1.2   During academic year 2013/14 the Virtual School introduced an additional section to the Progress Monitoring Form asking for details about the use of Pupil Premium funding, including direct links with academic targets and outcome measurement methodology. Though some schools had already made enquiries about funding, many were, initially, slow to respond requests for proposals for use of the funding; out of authority schools, both mainstream and special, were noticeably less efficient at returning information. However, and full entitlements were paid to schools for 145 children. Remaining funding was used by the Virtual School for a range of provision and activities. Details can be found from 6.1.8, below.

6.1.3   Allocations to children in high cost residential settings and schools were made on a case-by case basis. The Virtual School did not take the decision to withhold funding for children in all of these settings but considered the needs of the individual child and the range and cost of resources and additional support already being provided. Where the education provider could demonstrate a clear link between the requested new resources or activity, and show a well-defined link with improved outcomes, pupil premium plus funding was approved. Sometimes, in discussion with social workers, it was clear that schools were asking for equipment or activities that should already have been provided within the placement and schools were asked to re-consider their requests.

6.1.4   The largest proportion of spend by schools was for 1:1 tuition for pupils. Evidence from PEPs suggests that around 50% of the tuition provided in this way was delivered by a qualified teacher, either in school or through a tuition agency. The remaining provision was delivered by teaching assistants, largely for younger

children. The Virtual School also provided 1:1 tuition for pupils using Pupil Premium Plus funding.

6.1.5   Over 35% of the allocated funding was used by schools in a variety of approaches to supporting social, emotional and mental health needs, both in the classroom and outside (by commissioning assessments, securing mentors or the use of additional teaching assistants). There is evidence that these approaches have resulted in improved outcomes for some pupils, in some cases, by simply supporting them to stay in the classroom or to acquire a renewed focus on achieving. Additional assessments will secure better long-term outcomes for children, and the Virtual School has particularly encouraged the use of speech and language assessments, both for early intervention purposes and for students whose behaviour or attainment might suggest a communication disorder but where Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) had already been ruled out or where there was not sufficient evidence to suggest an ASD assessment was required.

6.1.6   11% of allocated funding was used to the purchase of computer hardware. This complimented the provision already being made by the Virtual School and allowed it to provide laptops for a larger number of care leavers than it might have done otherwise.

6.1.7   Two schools chose to use funding to place children, otherwise at risk of permanent exclusion, in alternative provision. In one case, this proved to be very short term because the child was moved to a residential setting out of authority and in the second, improved attendance has been noted but the proof of the success of this activity will be seen in the ability of the student to arrive on time for his examinations this summer.

6.1.8   **Pupil Premium Plus: Breakdown of spend by schools 2014/15**
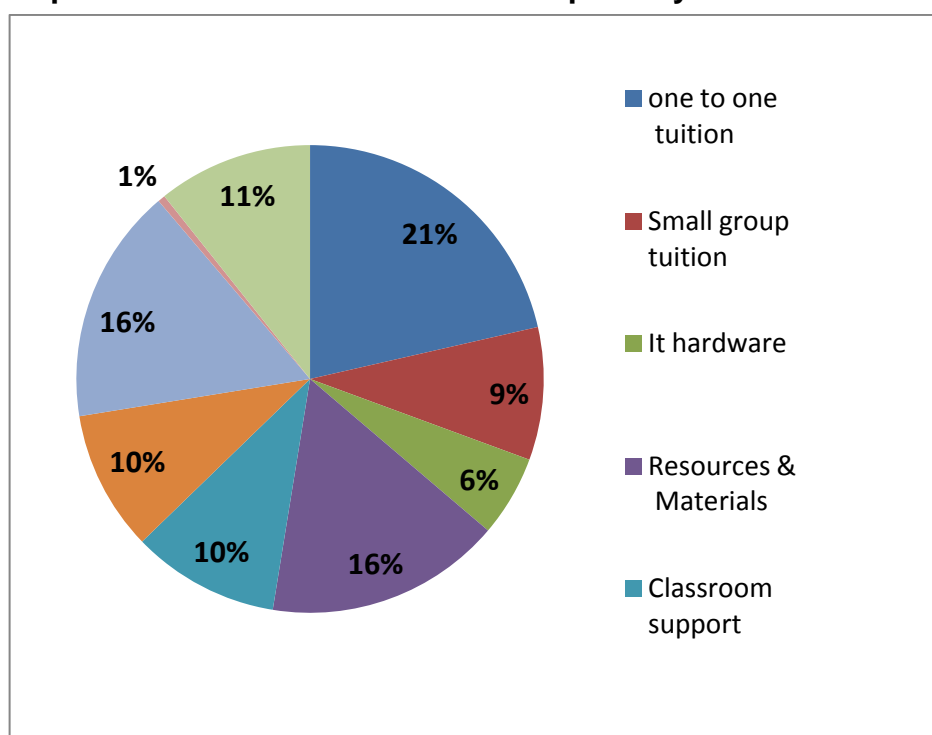
6.1.9   Some funding retained by the Virtual School was used also used for the provision of alternative education provision for a small number of very vulnerable pupils. This provision, either in the placement or in independent schools is closely monitored. Two YR 11 pupils, whose previous education had been severely disrupted, and who have accessed their education in this way during the year will take GCSE exams this summer. Securing places in an education setting that could meet the needs of such pupils and that were, at the same time, acceptable to them has proved very worthwhile. Without it, either or both of these students would have become further entrenched in their truanting and disruptive behaviours and may even have disengaged completely.

6.1.10 A number of schools, both inside and outside the authority were given additional funding from withheld pupil premium grant to provide additional support in the classroom and/or the playground, where the cost exceeded the original entitlement. This funding allowed schools to continue to provide for vulnerable children while additional assessments were undertaken or SEN funding released. In one case, it enabled a school to keep a child until a more suitable education provision could be identified.

6.1.11 The programme of 1:1 tuition provided for YR6 and KS4 pupils has been highly valued by young people and their foster carers.   In many cases, the original allocation of 20 hours per subject has been extended. Tutors are required to make contact with the child's designated teacher to agree a programme of study, which can be for the completion of course work, for revision or for practising exam questions and techniques.

6.1.12 During the year, the Virtual School has entered into a dialogue with Kate Cairns associates, resulting in the development of a partnership and securing Attachment Aware Schools training for a number of schools. A consultation event, involving two clusters of schools – one of primary schools already working hard to support very damaged children and the other the alternative provisions in the authority – identified priorities and timescales for whole school training that will take place over a number joint training. In addition, each organisation has identified its own targets and criteria for measuring outcomes from this piece of work. The knowledge acquired by the lead member of staff in these schools simply by attending the consultation event is an indicator of the longer term success of this project. A further 5 schools took up the offer of funding to develop their own package of training with KCA.

6.1.13 During the autumn and spring terms, the Virtual School led a series consultation sessions with a number of senior managers and designated teachers from Bromley schools to decide on the policy and processes for allocation of Pupil Premium Plus in financial year 2015/16. This was a valuable piece of work and it led to the creation of application processes and forms that were acceptable to schools and to the subsequent acceptance of the policy, and the associated paperwork and timescales, by the Schools' Forum.

6.2 Case studies

6.2.1 Pupil A is a YR 5 pupil in a mainstream primary school who was presenting with significant social, emotional and mental health problems after the death of his mother and rejection by wider family members. Despite physical aggression and repeated disruption to the class group, school showed a high level of commitment to A understanding that school represented the single consistent factor in his life, especially when his foster placement broke down. The Virtual School provided additional pupil premium plus funding for and an experienced teacher who could provide consistent access to the curriculum for A when he could not manage the classroom setting. This has allowed the school to hold onto A during a difficult transition to a new foster placement and to achieve a period of calm and stability for him gradually reintegrating him back into his class. The school has subsequently take up the offer of whole-school Attachment Awareness training, which will be funded by the Virtual School from top-sliced Pupil Premium Plus in the new financial year.

6.2.2 Pupil S is a YR8 pupil in a mainstream, secondary school in-borough. With a history of neglect and previously unquantified learning difficulties she can, occasionally, present as a highly visible child with behaviour problems. S made very little academic progress during YR7 and was frequently out of the classroom, having been removed because of abusing staff or encouraging other pupils to engage with her in disruptive behaviours. The Virtual School worked with the designated teacher to identify areas for improvement and pupil premium funding was used to devise and implement a series of short and medium-term interventions which would have an impact on academic progress. These included a specialist additional educational needs (AEN) teacher for 1:1 English lessons for two hours per week, At the same time, a full educational psychology assessment was undertaken to provide an understanding of the size and nature of the learning problems encountered by S. Agreement to proceed to statutory assessment has subsequently been achieved, and S has made significant progress, both academically and socially since the start of YR8. As a result of targeted TA interventions and behaviour modelling, there have been many fewer interventions for poor behaviour because S has been observed to be remaining on task and completing work. S's reading comprehension has improved as a result of more frequent opportunities to read with an adult have increased fluency. In Maths, S is rapidly moving towards catching up with the deficit she brought with her at secondary transfer. This is largely as result of pooled pupil premium funding being used to create a primary-like learning environment for a small group of children where a much greater degree of repetition and repetition.

6.2.3 J is a YR5 pupil in a mainstream primary school. He achieved level 1C for maths and reading at KS1 and P8 for writing. The school has provided significant additional support for this pupil throughout his time with them but pupil premium has allowed them to increase the targeted 1:1 support. Literacy interventions - 1:1 daily reading to progress inference and deduction skills and phonological awareness training - have allowed him to make two sub-levels of progress in reading and one sublevel in writing, although his writing remains an area of concern. Counselling and support for

anger and anxiety in the form of Worry Box, have improved his emotional stability and self-esteem and so are creating more opportunities for learning.

6.2.4   B is a YR11 student in a mainstream secondary school. An able student, she asked for additional tuition and revision materials herself. Pupil premium funding paid for 20 hours each of 1:1 tuition in English and Maths and a place in a holiday revision programme during the February half term. She was provided with a laptop computer to help her with homework and organisational skills and ha also had drumming lessons, which had helped her to focus for longer periods of time.   B has grown in confidence and is expected to achieve good results this summer. She is likely to study maths and physics at A level next year.

Glossary of terms used in reporting tables:

Terminology	Definition
National curriculum levels	At Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, attainment in the National Curriculum is measured against 8 national attainment levels between the ages for 5 and 14. Level 1 is the lowest level and level 8 is the highest and is attained by the most able pupils at age 14.
	Each level is divided into three sub-levels:
	C – starting to work at this level
	B - working well within the level
	A - the child has reached the top of the level and is working towards the next level
	Children are expected to considered to be progressing well if they have made two sub-levels or progress in an academic year.
P scales	Performance scales (P scales) are used at the end of key stages 1, 2 and 3 for reporting teacher assessment in English, mathematics and science for children with special educational needs who are working below level 1 of the national curriculum.
	P levels can be recorded from P1 to P8, with P1 being the lowest.
	P levels can further broken down in to i or ii (e.g. P3ii being a higher level than P3i)
TA	Teacher assessment. A teacher assessment is recorded where a child is absent from school on the day of the test of is considered to be below the level of assessment,
	Teacher assessment levels are also used where a curriculum area is no longer subject to national testing.
S	Statement of Special Educational Needs
SA	School Action is used when there is evidence that a child is not making progress at school and there is a need for action to be taken to meet learning difficulties. SA can include the involvement of extra teachers and may also require the use of different learning materials, special equipment or a different teaching strategy.
SA+	School Action Plus is used where SA has not been able to help the child make adequate progress. At SA+ the school will seek external advice from the other support services, the local Health Authority or from Social Care.