

Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee

Monday, 01 December 2014 at 14:00

County Hall, County Hall, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 7QP

AGENDA

- | | | |
|---|--|---------|
| 1 | Minutes of the last meeting held on 22 September 2014 | 3 - 10 |
| 2 | Apologies for Absence | |
| 3 | Declarations of Interests by Members and Officers:- (see note below)
(a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests
(b) Private Interests (pecuniary and non-pecuniary) | |
| 4 | Members Visits to independent children's homes | 11 - 12 |
| 5 | Children Who Run Away or Go Missing From Care | 13 - 18 |
| 6 | Autumn Term Report for the Virtual School for Looked After Childrent | 19 - 44 |
| 7 | Work Programme | 45 - 48 |
| 8 | Foster Carers Items | |

Notes

- (1) Councillors are advised to contact their Research Officer for details of any Group Meetings which are planned for this meeting.

- (2) Members of the public wishing to inspect "Background Papers" referred to in the reports on the agenda or Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act should contact:-

Customer Services Centre 0300 500 80 80

- (3) Persons making a declaration of interest should have regard to the Code of Conduct and the Council's Procedure Rules. Those declaring must indicate the nature of their interest and the reasons for the declaration.

Councillors or Officers requiring clarification on whether to make a declaration of interest are invited to contact Christine Marson (Tel. 0115 977 3887) or a colleague in Democratic Services prior to the meeting.

- (4) Councillors are reminded that Committee and Sub-Committee papers, with the exception of those which contain Exempt or Confidential Information, may be recycled.
- (5) This agenda and its associated reports are available to view online via an online calendar - <http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/dms/Meetings.aspx>

Meeting	CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-COMMITTEE
Date	Monday 22 September 2014 (commencing at 2.00 pm)

Membership

Persons absent are marked with an 'A'

COUNCILLORS

Liz Plant (Chairman)

John Allin
Boyd Elliott
Kate Foale
Alice GricePhilip Owen
Sue Saddington
Jacky Williams**Foster Carer**Dawn Clements
Aleks Jackowska
Sarah Maiden**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Di Brady	-	Service Manager, Childrens Social Care
David Ebbage	-	Assistant Democratic Services Officer, Policy, Planning & Corporate Services Department
Steve Edwards	-	Service Director, Childrens Social Care
Michelle Lee	-	Aftercare Service Manager
Izzy Martin	-	Service Manager, Independent Chair Service
Philippa Milbourne	-	Business Support Assistant, Children, Families & Cultural Services Department.
Shelagh Mitchell	-	Service Manager, Adoption

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 9th June 2014, having been circulated to all Members, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

Councillor Alice Grice replaced Councillor Colleen Harwood for this meeting only.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

END OF YEAR REPORT FOR THE INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER

Izzy Martin updated members about the activities within the Independent Reviewing Officer Service during April 2013 to March 2014.

The report focused on the key functions of the IRO's and highlights the work undertaken in respect of children and young people.

Over the past year there had been a continued focus to increase the number of permanent staff within the service; the recruitment drive had been very successful with only 2 posts left to fill. With that being so successful, the group are now more settled and cohesive.

Service Managers now observe IROs in reviews and chair meetings to promote consistency and individual development. Feedback from agencies had been positive about the chairing skills of the Nottinghamshire IROs.

IROs gathered information and offered feedback in respect of the involvement and contribution of social care and external organisations. Where there had been significant concerns relating to practice or drift, the IRO initiated alerts to the social care team manager or raise the practice issue with the relevant external organisation. During 2013-2014, a total of 190 alerts were raised. This was a significant increase over the previous two years and evidences that the IROs are more robust in challenging the local authority where appropriate about concerns relating to practice, including any delay in progressing recommendations.

The following were the key themes noted with regard to the alerts processed:

- incomplete assessments causing delay in decisions about planning
- permanence options for young person not fully explored
- pathway plan not completed fully
- delay in requesting initial LAC Review when child placed in a Regulation 24 placement with family
- delay in making application for court proceedings to be initiated to secure permanence for children
- lack of preparation for young person leaving care absence of appropriate paperwork; Personal Education Plan, health assessment and essential information

More recently the service introduced a system for raising practice issues with external organisations where there were concerns about their contribution to the needs identified in the child or young person's plan.

Participation and engagement of children and young people had improved. A 'Signs and Symbols' leaflet has been developed for 0-18 year olds. This work involved young people from the Children in Care Council, service providers, specialist schools and two IROs with specialist knowledge of working with children with disabilities. This has now been finalised and been printed.

Following questions from Members, the following points were made:-

- The IRO's are employed by the County Council, two service managers cover the service but their role is totally independent.
- Members requested data regarding the key themes from previous years so they could see the improvements made. This will be available at a future meeting. The information given was on reviews as well. In most cases better care plans are now in place and the IRO's purpose is to quality assure and protect that LAC.
- Section 4 of the report explained about the 190 alerts raised, but with the IRO's involved, cases have reduced to 70-75.
- Care plans are improving, dedicated Looked after Children teams are now fully trained which the IRO's and social workers are also being involved.

The Chair Izzy Martin for the clear and honest information in the report.

RESOLVED 2014/013

That the activities of the Independent Reviewing Officer Service from April 2013 to March 2014 be noted

ADOPTION SERVICES BI-ANNUAL REPORT

Shelagh Mitchell introduced the report to Members providing them a six-monthly update on activities in the Adoption Service from March to August 2014.

In her update the following points were made:-

There is a consistent media presence in Nottinghamshire which has helped more people to come forward and wanting to adopt children. The service has been taking children from other local authorities and placing them within the County. This has impacted positively on national performance on numbers of children waiting.

The number of adopters that Nottinghamshire County Council recruits continues to be approximately 60 per annum, thus performance has improved by almost 100% since 2011-12. This, coupled with the high numbers of children placed means we now have very few children waiting; we have now matched children who have waited a substantial period of time. Those now waiting have complexities which make them harder to place.

The adoption quarterly data has now returned to the Adoption Leadership Board, and included data regarding adults in assessment, or approved adopters. For adults the information had not been reported by all local authorities, but the first national reporting showed an increase in adopters and only about 30-40% of assessments being within six months (national figures). Nottinghamshire's Adoption Service currently processes approximately 60% of assessment within six months

Following questions from Members the following points were made:-

- The national average for performance is 30-40% so Nottinghamshire in general is way above that. The timescales for approving adopters is ambitious but with children who have complex needs can delay the process to find the right adoptee.
- In regards to placing children from other local authorities, the County Council receives the national standard rate of £27,000 from those authorities.
- Foster to Adopt is a set of new regulators. Place children with approved adopters and are able to take the child much earlier in child's care.

RESOLVED 2014/014

That the six-monthly update on activity in the adoption service from March to August 2014 be noted.

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN STRATEGY UPDATE

Steve Edwards updated the Sub-Committee on the progress of the action plan for the Looked after Children Strategy.

The strategy has been in there for 18 months now and has made a positive difference to lives of Looked after Children population. All the following points have now been completed:-

- a review of The Pledge for Looked After Children to ensure it continues to reflect the priorities of children in care in Nottinghamshire
- the establishment of a Permanence Panel to ensure greater scrutiny of permanent placements and ensure robust support arrangements are in place
- production of a new review booklet to ensure young people's voices are heard and that they shape their own care plans
- a new guide to adoption is available for older children and young people to help them understand the opportunities and challenges this presents, and how they can influence the process
- all new Looked After Children and existing Looked After Children with significant changes to circumstance will have a designated Educational Psychologist
- two additional Looked After Children Achievement Officers have been recruited to the Virtual School
- most district councils are now offering free or reduced cost sports and leisure activities for Looked After Children and young people
- a new data sharing system is in place between Health and Children's Social Care that will assist in identifying health concerns of Looked After Children
- the number of salaried carers for young people in need of specialist foster care placements has increased
- a new Family Assessment and Contact Service has been established which provides a consistent approach to contact across the County increased leave is available for Nottinghamshire County Council staff who is taking on the care of a child through a special guardianship order.

Following questions from Members the following points were made:-

- Members wanted to know if there was a more secure way of using social media for LAC. There is a detailed response which explains the reasons of why this was not progressed, which will get provided for Members to have a look at.
- Point 47 in the Appendix has now been completed. It is being put together now and will be brought to the next meeting.
- LAC is the highest priority in the school admissions code; some schools do have issues accepting LAC.
- Foster carers explained the difficulties of Facebook with having a LAC. Their first thought is to locate their birth parents.

RESOLVED 2014/015

That the update on the progress of the action plan for the Looked After Children Strategy be noted.

LEAVING CARE SERVICE UPDATE

Michelle Lee provided an update on the Leaving Care Team. The last update came to the March meeting; there has been no change to the structure or specification since then.

The number of young people the team have been working with has increased from 290 to 316 (July 2014). An increase had been predicted due to the higher numbers of looked after young people, especially the growing number of 16 and 17 year olds in care. There has also been an increase in young people returning for services after the age of 21 years due to returning to education and requiring support. The average Personal Adviser caseload is now 24.

64 of the 270 (or 23%) over 18 year olds open to the team live outside of Nottinghamshire. The majority are in adjoining areas with only 14 living outside a 50 mile radius of the County. These include young people who are at university and young people who have chosen to remain with foster carers over the age of 18 years.

An annual performance report is provided to the DfE annually. 2013/14 had seen a change in how and what is reported. Overall, of 235 care leavers (aged 18 to 21 years) 82% were in suitable accommodation and 38% were not in education, employment or training. It was not possible to compare these outcomes with previous performance due to the changes made by Government to the data collection criteria.

The LAC service considers accommodation options post 18 with young people from the age of 16 years. At 17.5 years, when the Personal Advisers are introduced to young people, the search for more permanent, stable and affordable accommodation begins in earnest. At 18 years the statutory duty of the local authority to provide accommodation ends and so the focus of activity is to support young people with

applications for housing as adults. A snapshot of the current circumstances of 19 year olds and above revealed that:

- 16% are living with friends or family
- 49% are living independently
- 9% are in semi-independent accommodation.

Those statistics are within a year of coming out of care.

4% (8) of the 193 19 to 21 year old care leavers were currently being supported in prison. Nationally 23% of the adult prison population has been in care and almost 40% of prisoners under 21 years were in care as children. Only 2% of the general population spend time in prison.

The Staying Put policy which allowed young people to remain with foster carers over the age of 18 up to 21 years proved to be very successful. According to financial records 19 young people are currently in a Staying Put arrangement. The weekly cost to the Authority for these arrangements in July 2014 was £3,200. Central Government has announced £40m funding for Staying Put across the country and Nottinghamshire's allocation is £67,058. At current running costs this will lead to a deficit of £99,342.

Following questions from Members the following points were raised:-

- Since the virtual school stops at 16 years of age, the LAC Strategy does help with the transitional work from education to employment. Schools did have the option of the career service but they now have to buy into that service.
- Members wondered whether the district councils could input any help with extra housing provision but this proved very difficult and only was arranged in emergency cases. .

RESOLVED 2014/016

That the Leaving Care Service Update be noted.

HOUSE OF COMMONS EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT ON RESIDENTIAL CHILDREN'S HOMES

Steve Edwards gave an update on a report issued by the House of Commons Education Committee which made a series of recommendations in relation to Residential Children's Homes.

The report noted that there were significant concerns relating to children being placed far away from where they came in to care from. National analysis has highlighted that some homes are located in close proximity to risks such as drug crime, registered sex offenders and prison releases.

Within Nottinghamshire, 72% of looked after children are placed within 20 miles of the address they came in to care from. This is above average when compared with other county councils.

RESOLVED 2014/017

- 1) That the recommendations made by the House of Commons Education Committee in relation to Residential Children's Care be noted.
- 2) That the activity taking place in Nottinghamshire to address the issues highlighted in the House of Commons Education Committee report be noted.

CONTACT SERVICE UPDATE

Di Brady provided an update on the changing role of the Contact Service with regard to LAC and the progress that had been achieved throughout a review of the service.

During her update, the following points were made:-

- The Contact Service provided a County-wide service and has been operational since June 2012, following an 18 month pilot project. In August 2013, 476 children were having contact arranged by the Contact Service compared with 269 in August 2012 – an increase of 77% in terms of caseloads.
- A Position Statement was submitted to the Programme Board in September 2013, with a series of recommendations. The decision was made to launch a project to explore some of the recommendations made and the project was initiated and an Interim Service Manager was appointed. The specific service areas that required improvement were listed in Paragraph 10 of the report.
- Children and young people have been consulted through the Children in Care Council and reported that:
 - 24% would prefer evening sessions (6-8pm)
 - 33% would prefer weekend sessions
 - They wanted venues which have activities they enjoy doing, are safe and are close to where they live.
- The current staffing and the role of the Contact Support Worker had been reviewed. Part of the review had also removed the role of the Contact Co-ordinator who provided a business support function. Other changes proposed within the model meant that the CSWs now arranged their own contacts and therefore proposed a reduction in business support posts. This had provided a number of significant benefits which were listed in Paragraph 16 of the report.
- Staff had historically been required to transport children across large geographical areas, this had been a very costly and inefficient use of resources and had led to a £64,624 spend on staff mileage during the first nine months of financial year 2013/14.
- For the current year, it is anticipated that there will be overall saving of £225,000.

RESOLVED 2014/018

That the update on the changing role of the Contact Service be noted.

WORK PROGRAMME

The updated work programme was considered by Members.

RESOLVED 2014/012

That the Committee's work programme be noted.

FOSTER CARERS ITEMS

All issues were dealt with at the recent FLAG meeting.

The meeting closed at 3.35pm

CHAIRMAN

22 Sept 2014

1 December 2014

Agenda Item: 4

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

MEMBERS' VISITS TO INDEPENDENT CHILDREN'S HOMES

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval to put in place arrangements to enable Members to visit Looked After Children and Young People who are placed in externally provided children's homes and report back on these visits to the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee.

Information and Advice

2. Members make regular visits (rota visits) to Nottinghamshire's children's homes. Reports on these visits are considered at Children and Young People's Committee and provide an update on Members' observations and any concerns about the homes and how these have been responded to by officers. It is proposed that from January 2015 Members will also undertake visits to externally run children's homes where Nottinghamshire's Looked After Children and Young People are placed and that the arrangements for the visits will be managed by the Group Manager, Access to Resources. Reports on these visits will be considered by the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee.

Other Options Considered

3. No other options have been considered.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

4. There are currently 80 Nottinghamshire Looked After Children and young people who are placed in externally provided children's homes. As corporate parents of these children Members will have the opportunity to ensure that these children are being provided with the best possible care and to raise any concerns which can be actioned by officers in conjunction with the external providers.

Statutory and Policy Implications

5. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such

implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That:

- 1) approval be given to put in place arrangements for Members to visit externally provided children's homes from January 2015
- 2) reports on these visits be considered by the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee.

Steve Edwards
Service Director, Children's Social Care

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Rachel Coombs
Group Manager, Access to Resources
T: 0115 9774153
E: rachel.coombs@nottsgov.uk

Constitutional Comments (LM 18/11/14)

6. The Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee is responsible for overseeing the County Council's responsibilities as the corporate parent of children and young people in care and may approve the recommendations in the report.

Financial Comments (KLA 17/11/14)

7. There are no financial comments arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C0535

1 December 2014

Agenda Item: 5

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

CHILDREN WHO RUN AWAY OR GO MISSING FROM CARE

Purpose of the Report

1. The report provides the Sub-Committee with information regarding children who run away or go missing from care. An annual report with regard to children going missing from both home and care was presented to the Children and Young People's Committee on 14 July 2014 and is available as a Background Paper.
2. The report also seeks approval to bring an annual report to the Sub-Committee regarding children who run away or go missing from care.

Information and Advice

Background

3. Children who go missing from care remain a particularly vulnerable group of children and young people. They may come to harm in a variety of ways including through sexual exploitation as a number of high profile national reports have highlighted.
4. The governance of children missing from care (and home) is through a multi-agency steering group, which meets quarterly and reports to the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB). There is also annual reporting to the Children and Young People's Committee and oversight by senior officers. In March 2014 a multi-agency audit of cases of young people who had been missing included an enhanced number of looked after children cases. The outcome, whilst allowing for areas for development, was relatively positive evidencing good multi-agency work and that good and adequate work led to positive outcomes for young people.

Data – key information

5. The key information available is that:
 - in common with national research children are more likely to go missing from care than from home.
 - the numbers of individual children going missing from care increased from 94 in 2012/13 to 124 in 2013/14. The total number of missing episodes recorded also

increased from 281 to 372. This is in contrast to missing from home numbers, which decreased. This LAC increase is potentially attributable to improvements in reporting and an ageing LAC population. This is being monitored during 2014/15.

- 76% of LAC children received a return interview in Quarter 2 July to September 2014/15; reflecting continued improvement in this area. 81% of these were completed in 72 hours, which is positive.
- 83% of multi-agency meetings are recorded as being held which is also an improving picture.
- 2013/14 data indicates that children are more likely to go missing from independent fostering and residential placements or if placed outside Nottinghamshire. This may be a reflection of the challenges that these young people present with, rather than necessarily a reflection about the quality of the placement.
- the reasons why children go missing from care are varied including relationship difficulties, boundaries, school based or drug or alcohol related issues. Social workers can work to support and address the issues if they know what the problem is.

National and Local Strategy and Partnerships

6. Strategically and operationally there is collaboration between a number of different agencies, as well as service areas within Nottinghamshire County Council. This includes the Children Missing Officer, the children's social care strategic lead, the placements service, looked after children's social workers and team managers, independent reviewing officers, LAC nurses, in-house fostering and residential services, the police, independent placement providers and colleagues from other local authorities where our children are placed out of county.
7. In January 2014 the Department for Education published revised 'Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care', which incorporated the Association of Chief Police Officers guidance (April 2013). As a result, the local NSCB inter-agency protocol *Children Who Go Missing from Home, Care or Education (2012)* was revised and published in October 2014. There is also a local strategy and action plan which reflects the guidance.
8. One of the most significant changes arising from the revised national documents is the introduction of new definitions of 'missing' and 'absent' by the police as well as an amended 'away from placement without authorisation' category. The changes to the police definitions were implemented locally in early November 2014. It will be important for there to be a consistent approach to responding to children missing from care which promotes safeguarding. The creation and input of the police missing co-ordinators roles which have been permanently in post since October are already perceived to have improved communication.
9. An important consequence of the adoption of the new police definitions is that information about those deemed 'absent' will be shared manually as opposed to through the automated system that operates for those children deemed 'missing'. The timeliness of the manual sharing of information may be a challenge but will be monitored.

10. The Local Authority has also considered the Ofsted 'From a distance' report which has implications for children who go missing. It recognises that children who are placed at a distance from home are more vulnerable to going missing and to exploitation. The Local Authority placement strategy is to place children within the County and close to home where possible.

Current Service Provision

11. Operationally the Local Authority, with partner agencies, continues to respond robustly to children who are reported to the police as missing from care. The Local Authority is able to evidence this work through the multi-agency audit, comprehensive data collection, monitoring and tracking and analysis including through a multi-agency 'hot-spots' meeting.
12. The risk of children going missing or from child sexual exploitation is considered as part of the young person's risk assessment within their residential or fostering placement. Missing issues are very much on the agenda of independent reviewing officers (IROs) who chair the Looked After Review meeting and monitor and have oversight of the child's placement.
13. When looked after children are recorded as missing by the police, a series of actions follow including trying to locate the child and complete a 'safe and well check'. The information is shared with the Children Missing Officer who subsequently requests the relevant social worker to complete a return interview. This is a discussion with the young person as to why they have gone missing and to plan support to prevent or reduce further episodes. From early November, with the introduction of the new NSCB protocol, some of the police aspects of the process changed for those children deemed 'absent'. However, there continues to be scrutiny and support for the young person via their social worker.
14. Nationally there is a challenge in relation to information sharing when children placed out of their own local area go missing, as there is no automated process for the host police authority to liaise with the placing authority. The children missing officer is reliant on other parties informing him/her of the episode and therefore in order to maximise the flow of information he/she is advised of out of county placements and he/she then endeavours to make contact with key people in the other local authority and other agencies.
15. The missing children protocol and the importance of the issue of missing children and sexual exploitation is promoted through a number of different ways across agencies. Information is, for example, cascaded through to independent fostering agencies and private residential providers through the social care placements team and key expectations are written into their contracts.
16. In terms of training, the issue is raised at NSCB 'What's new in safeguarding events' NSCB child sexual exploitation courses and through Placement Service training events. Before March 2015 there will be four children missing from home and care training events, two of which will focus in detail on looked after children. All of this work is intended to support the policy and practice guidance and improve outcomes for children.

Key Priorities for 2014/15

17. Currently the views of young people are being sought in relation to the return interview process. This is through a paper questionnaire, the web based Survey Monkey and face-to-face interviews. Looked after young people have been consulted about the design of the questionnaire. As part of this, the viability of an ongoing method to gain young people's views will be considered as well as whether or not information could be extracted on a regular basis by means of the social care case audit process.
18. The 'hot spots' and multiple missing meetings will also continue to identify and respond to any looked after children that are going repeatedly missing. This will include identifying any particular children's homes or foster carers where there are particularly high instances of children going missing as this may reflect standards of practice and care.

Summary

19. The issues relating to children who go missing from care are considered in a multi-agency and multi-disciplinary way. Where children go missing from care they are responded to robustly by the people involved in their care. It is recommended that an annual report is brought to the Sub-Committee for scrutiny.

Other Options Considered

20. No other options have been considered.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

21. The issue of children going missing from care is relevant to the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee.

Statutory and Policy Implications

22. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That:

- 1) the information relating to children who run away or go missing from care be noted.
- 2) annual reports on children who run away or go missing from care be brought to the Sub-Committee.

Steve Edwards
Service Director, Children's Social Care

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Terri Johnson
Service Manager Safeguarding (Strategic)
T: 0115 9773921
E: terri.johnson@nottsc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments (LM 19/11/14)

23. The recommendations in the report fall with the terms of reference of the Corporate Parenting Sub Committee.

Financial Comments (KLA 19/11/14)

24. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Children who go missing from home or care: end of year report 2013/14 – report to Children and Young People’s Committee on 14 July 2014

Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care – Department for Education, January 2014

Children who go missing from home, care or education – Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board inter-agency protocol, October 2014

From a distance: looked after children living away from their home area – Ofsted, April 2014

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C0513

1 December 2014**Agenda Item: 6****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION, STANDARDS AND
INCLUSION.****AUTUMN TERM REPORT FOR THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL FOR LOOKED
AFTER CHILDREN****Purpose of the Report**

1. To update the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee on the virtual school for the autumn term 2014 and to note the Pupil Premium Plus Guidance document.

Information and Advice**Virtual School Senior Leadership Team and Virtual School Improvement Plan**

2. The senior leadership team (SLT) met on 30 September 2014 and reviewed progress on the 2013/14 virtual school improvement plan and self-evaluation form (SEF) and discussed possible areas for inclusion in the 2014/15 documentation. Key stage 2 provisional data was shared which is an improving picture once again this year. Mathematics was identified as an area of improvement and the virtual school undertook to explore strategies to support schools to support LAC to improve their mathematical skills. This will be discussed at future meetings.
3. A further meeting has been arranged for 20 January 2015, when the agenda will cover any further outcome data released, updated SEF and improvement plan.

Virtual School Staff

4. The number of statutory school aged young people at the time of writing was 526. Of these, 336 are Nottinghamshire LAC in Nottinghamshire schools; 20 are in reception, 146 are primary age and 170 are secondary age. 65 are Nottinghamshire LAC placed in Nottinghamshire but educated in other local authority schools with 30 primary and 35 secondary. A further 78 are Nottinghamshire LAC placed out of county and educated in other local authority schools, 28 of primary age and 50 secondary. There are also 28 Nottinghamshire LAC placed out of county but attending Nottinghamshire schools; 11 are primary age and 17 are secondary. 19 are in residential placements with education.
5. In addition there are 140 LAC from other local authorities educated in Nottinghamshire schools, with 12 in reception, 64 primary and 64 secondary.

6. The three permanent Looked After Children Achievement Officers (AOs) continue to support schools, social workers, carers and the wider network for looked after children. The County has now been split between the three LAC AOs, allowing more capacity for managing out of county children and young people.
7. The officers continue to undertake training on the needs of looked after children alongside Designated Teachers from Nottinghamshire schools. They have attended training this academic year on child sexual exploitation and children missing from home or care.
8. The co-ordinator of the virtual school has returned from planned long term sick leave.
9. A business case for the appointment of a permanent fourth LAC Achievement Officer in the new structure has been written. Alongside this is a business case for a data manager to support the virtual school. These will go to Children and Young People's Committee for approval.

New Statutory Legislation

10. July 2014 saw the release of the legislation for local authorities 'promoting the education of looked after children'. The key points in this legislation are as follows:
 - the post of virtual school head or similar titled post is statutory
 - LAC pupil premium is managed by virtual schools to ensure it is targeted at raising the attainment of LAC.

Termly Designated Teacher Training

11. Further training opportunities for designated teachers for LAC are currently being explored. Kate Cairns and associates will be asked to deliver a day conference including workshops following the positive feedback from last academic year's training. This is planned for the summer term 2015.
12. Training is also planned for designated teachers new to post, delivered by the virtual school co-ordinator and the team manager for the virtual school. Two events are planned for 2 December 2014 and 15 March 2015. The session covers the role of the designated teacher, information on the virtual school team and their role in support of LAC and schools. They will receive useful resources, an update on the attainment and progress of LAC from the latest data evaluation and effective use of the pupil premium.

Designated Teacher Memos

13. These continue to be sent out regularly, minimally half termly. The coordinator uses this method to communicate information, news and events to designated teachers across the County. Feedback from designated teachers and head teachers has been positive and encourages contact from all schools with the virtual school.

School Links

14. Individual requests continue to be received for training from the virtual school on the needs of looked after children cross phase. The virtual school continues to offer bespoke training sessions to schools and FE colleges as a result.
15. Over the autumn term 2014 senior officers, accompanied by the co-ordinator of the virtual school, are visiting secondary schools who have Nottinghamshire LAC on roll. The purpose of these visits is to check on year 7 pupils new to the schools and their transition plans and the progress and attainment of LAC in other year groups. Reports are prepared following the visits and forwarded to the head teacher, designated teacher for LAC and the governing body. Where concerns are raised regarding LAC, whether it is behaviour or progress, a LAC AO will be allocated if not already involved. In these cases a further senior officer visit will take place in the spring term 2015. Some out of county schools will also be visited by the co-ordinator and the secondary head teacher from the SLT.

East Midlands Network

16. The last meeting was held on 26 September 2014 and the next will be hosted by Nottinghamshire County Council on 4 December 2014. The last meeting was attended by Alun Rees who is currently working with Oxford University on research around LAC, their needs and education. Alun is also developing a virtual heads e-book which will be an online resource for all those working with looked after children including independent reviewing officers, schools and social workers.

Social Care Links

17. The team manager and the co-ordinator for the virtual school delivered training to social workers on 17 September 2014. This looked at the shared challenges of supporting Nottinghamshire LAC to achieve good progress and meet age-related expectations wherever they are placed and in all educational settings. This included discussions on the completion of the new Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and involvement of LAC AOs in PEP meetings for the children they are supporting. Social workers were given an explanation of age-related expectations and what this means, the need to ensure that school changes are minimised and that as many LAC as possible access their learning in a good or outstanding Nottinghamshire school. This was very well received.

Floor Target Schools and schools not yet good

18. The virtual school continues to monitor looked after children in below floor target schools. At present there are 8 LAC in schools which are below the floor in 2014/15.
19. 63% of LAC attend good or outstanding schools in Nottinghamshire. Out of county, 70% of LAC attend good or outstanding schools. It is not the Local Authority's practice to move LAC from their schools if that school moves from outstanding or good judgements, as this is unsettling and detrimental to LACs' progress. Therefore the Virtual School will ensure that, should there be the need, the children/young people will have input from the LAC Achievement Officers to ensure their educational needs are addressed. Data will be

published in June for inspections up to the end of March 2014 this data will be refreshed on compilation of new data over the autumn term.

Data

20. The SIMS tracking system is not now being used for the collection of termly tracking data for LAC in or out of county. The Local Authority is currently investigating the most appropriate system to replace SIMS. In the interim the spreadsheet system has been reinstated.
21. Collections continue to be monitored by the Local Authority to support 100% return.

LAC Strategy Performance Measures

22. The updated evaluation of attainment and progress for looked after children at the end of key stage 2 based on provisional data for 2014 in comparison with 2013 shows an improving picture:
 - in reading, provisional results show an increase of 20% to 68% of the cohort (23 pupils) achieving Level 4 or above. More than a quarter of the cohort (9 pupils; 26.5%) achieved Level 5
 - in writing, provisional results of teacher assessment show an increase of 13.9% to 52.9% of the cohort (18 pupils) achieving Level 4 or above. 5.9% (2 pupils) achieved Level 5
 - in mathematics, provisional results show an increase of 13% to 65% of the cohort (22 pupils) achieving Level 4 or above. A fifth of the cohort (7 pupils; 20.6%) achieved Level 5
 - boys outperformed girls in the reading test in 2013/14 with more than three quarters (17 pupils; 77.3%) achieving Level 4 or above compared with half (6 pupils; 50.0%) of girls gaining this measure. Almost a third of boys (7 pupils; 31.8%) achieved Level 5 compared to 16.7% (2 pupils) of girls
 - in the teacher assessment of writing, outcomes between the genders are broadly in-line with each other at Level 4 or above. Just over half of boys (12 pupils; 52.2%) gained this measure compared with just over half of girls (6 pupils; 54.5%). At Level 5, girls slightly outperformed boys with 9.1% of girls (1 pupil) gaining this measure compared to 4.3% (1 pupil) of boys
 - in mathematics, outcomes between the genders are broadly in-line with each other at Level 4 or above. Almost two thirds of boys (14 pupils; 63.6%) gained this measure compared with two thirds of girls (8 pupils; 66.7%). At Level 5, boys slightly outperformed girls with 22.7% (5 pupils) gaining this measure compared to 16.7% (2 pupils) of girls.
23. Outcomes against other local authorities in 2012/13 ranks Nottinghamshire in:
 - KS2 reading: Joint 81st (where 1st is best) out of 88 published local authority results
 - KS2 mathematics: Joint 58th out of 87 published local authority results.
24. Using 2013/14 provisional LAC outcomes for KS2 against 2012/13 nationally published local authority tables would place Nottinghamshire:

- KS2 reading: Joint 28th, an increase of 53 places from 2012/13 position
- KS2 mathematics: 26th, an increase of 32 places from 2012/13 position.

25. As yet there is no data available for other key stages and no comparative national data for 2014.

Achievement Event

26. The 2014 Achievement event took place at the Albert Hall, Nottingham on Saturday 19 July. The awards are for a range of achievements such as good transition, good attendance, good progress, hard work, participation in extra-curricular activities and booster classes. It was very well attended with a total of 300 people in attendance, 108 of which were children and young people. The young people and their carers informed the virtual school that the venue was exceptional and in light of this it has been booked again for 25 July 2015. The special guest who attended the 2014 achievement event was Richard Whitehead who was very well received and young people and adults alike enjoyed his speech and meeting him following the presentations. The intended guest for 2015 is Ollie Hynd, para-Olympic swimmer.

Pupil Premium

27. This will be distributed to all schools with eligible LAC in and out of the Local Authority following the October 2014 final data check. Through the new statutory guidance to local authorities released July 2014, pupil premium funding has been firmly placed in the virtual school's jurisdiction. In order to ensure that pupil premium is appropriately used to support individual LAC, the co-ordinator will write out to all schools and request a detailed plan of the use and impact of pupil premium before releasing the funding. Last year's use and impact report is attached as **Appendix 1**.
28. In light of the legislation placing pupil premium under the virtual school, Pupil Premium Plus Guidance has been produced and is attached as **Appendix 2** for information.

Projects - Letterbox Club 2014

29. The Nottinghamshire Library Service and the Virtual School subscribe to Booktrust's Letterbox Club. The Letterbox Club aims to provide enjoyable educational support for looked after children. Children who are currently in school years 3, 5 or 7 will receive personalised parcels, direct to their address. The parcels contain books, number games and stationery items to use and keep, including:
- story books by authors such as Jacqueline Wilson, Roald Dahl, and Michael Rosen
 - non-fiction books looking at a wide range of subjects
 - stationery items, to encourage writing and drawing, such as age appropriate pens and pencils, scissors, stickers and note pads.
30. LAC received the last parcel in October 2014.
31. It is intended that this scheme will be continued for 2014/15 with the inclusion of year 1 in the cohort. The co-ordinator will attend the Letterbox annual conference to hear the evaluation of the first year roll out of year 1.

Personal Education Plan

32. Completed PEPs will be forwarded to the co-ordinator for quality assurance purposes. This is now embedded in social care practice.

Good News

33. The multi-modality project, reported in the spring term 2014 to the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee, is having a significant impact in terms of improving children's interest in and enthusiasm for reading. A number of emails have been received from carers highlighting the positive effect the project has had on their young people including one stating:

Further to our discussion, I would like to formally recognise the impact that the 'multimodal' literacy project has had on xx. Although the project is aimed at improving literacy in pupils, the impact the project has had with xxx is much broader. He has incredible computer skills and working with the iPad played to this existing strength. He and xxx have worked tirelessly on his projects and xxx loves using the different apps available on the iPad. The success he has had using the iPad has markedly improved his confidence with IT and he has thoroughly enjoyed exploring the functionality of the interactive apps. His confidence has grown, his self-esteem has grown and he now happily 'teaches' his friends how to create stories on the iPad. So from a personal point of view, this project which set out to achieve specific improvements in literacy has offered much more to xxx and I believe it's something which should be made available on a much wider scale.

34. A short report on the impact of the multi-modality project is attached as **Appendix 3**. The project will continue in to 2015 with a small cohort starting in Autumn term 2014.
35. This project was also included in the Autumn 2014 magazine English 4-11 produced by UK literacy association (UKLA).

Other Options Considered

36. No other options have been considered.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

37. This report is for information and policy approval.

Statutory and Policy Implications

38. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That:

- 1) the update on the virtual school for the autumn term 2014 be noted.
- 2) the Pupil Premium Plus Guidance document be noted.

John Slater
Service Director, Education Standards and Improvement

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Linda Foster
Team Manager of the Virtual School
T: 01623 434149
E: linda.foster@nottsc.gov.uk

Sue Denholm
Co-ordinator of the Virtual School
T: 01623 434149
E: sue.denholm@nottsc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments

39. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments (KLA 12/11/14)

40. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Spring term report of the Virtual School for Looked After children – report to Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee on 17 March 2014

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C0514

Appendix 1

Pupil premium expenditure	Impact
One to one tutoring – literacy, numeracy, reading, writing, maths, English, science Lead teacher appointments – reading & writing	Sub level improvement in a term Increased GCSE grade Accelerated progress from start point Reach secure 5 Cs in GCSEs Gap narrowing between LAC and peers Improved national curriculum grades through engagement with one to one Most improved student in the year group Maintenance of Gift and Talented status in maths 2 to 4 APS in reading, writing, science Gaps in knowledge closing Greater or in line progress
One to one emotional support through dedicated key worker	Increased social and emotional awareness Improved peer relationships Improved engagement in lessons and readiness for learning Less impact on engagement and readiness to learn on key transitions – junior to secondary, between key stages
Small group interventions	Increased confidence and self esteem Improvement in progress Gap in understanding being filled increasing progress A little ahead or in line with peers Key stage 1 a little higher in than peers in Key stage 2
EAL support Bi-lingual TA	Increased access to the curriculum Participation in school life A little ahead or in line with peers Key stage 1 a little higher in than peers in Key stage 2

Specialist advice, information and guidance	Options for continuing educational options post 16
Purchase of resources to support learning e.g. numicon	Increased access to curriculum Gaps narrowing Improved NC grades
Nurture provision	Social and emotional wellbeing improved Safe places to access in the school day improving access to classroom Dedicated staff for LAC to access improving readiness to learn 2 sub level progress in reading Whole level progress maths and writing 100% attendance
Social time support	YP access social time in the school day preventing isolation Access to extra learning support in social times Access to play support preventing exclusion through difficulties with peers Increased positive peer relationships
Homework support e.g. homework clinics	Improved homework engagement Improved NC grades due to homework engagement Improvement in reading skills making 1 – 2 years progress 100% attendance Quality of homework improved
Foreign trips Residential trips	Access to opportunities over and above normal school activities and experiences Increased GCSE engagement through field trip experiences A little ahead or in line with peers Key stage 1 a little higher in than peers in Key stage 2

ECAR Switch On	Increased reading abilities Increased engagement/understanding Whole level progress through Switch On
ICT provision e.g. laptops, ipads, kindles	Improved ICT skills for homework, exams Improved homework submission Improved access to online learning Maintain expected progress 100% attendance
Art therapy	Improved settling to learn in the classroom setting
Volunteer readers	Up to 3 sub level improvement in reading Improved engagement with reading
Specialist projects e.g. multi model project	Improved engagement with writing, reading Improved carer engagement with education
Saturday morning booster classes, reading club	Maintain progress to targets Increase in skills in maths and English Increased literacy skills and confidence in academic subjects
SATs intervention schemes	Whole level increase
Itobii (eye gaze technology) and training for staff	Increased communication and participation in lessons
Pre-exam breakfast club Revision clubs, guides, exam support	Increased confidence in exam taking
Social clubs after school e.g. football, free running, music tuition, Lego club	Improvement in self-esteem and confidence Positive peer relationships On track to meet targets in all subjects

	100% attendance A little ahead or in line with peers Key stage 1 a little higher in than peers in Key stage 2
Alternative provision e.g. REAL	Engagement in education 100% attendance Access to qualifications and securing p/16 pathways

**Nottinghamshire Virtual School
Pupil Premium Plus Guidance
for the Education of Looked After Children
2014-2015**

1. Introduction

There are significant national changes in the arrangements for Pupil Premium for Looked After Children (LAC) from April 2014 and this guidance is informed by two key Department for Education (DfE) documents:

- Pupil Premium Grant 2014 to 2015 Conditions of Grant (February 2014) (see Appendix 1)
- Pupil Premium and the role of the Virtual School Head 2014-15 - Frequently Asked Questions (March 2014) (see Appendix 2)

Throughout this guidance, the Pupil Premium for LAC will be referred to as **Pupil Premium Plus** to distinguish it from other forms of Pupil Premium allocations. The changes are as follows:

- from 1 April 2014 'Pupil Premium Plus' will see funding to support children and young people in care of statutory school age increase by £1,000 per pupil to £1,900 per child
- children and young people will now be eligible following one day in care according to the SSDA903 social care census March 2013 and aged 4 – 15 August 2012
- local authorities continue to be responsible for distributing the Pupil Premium Plus payments for LAC to schools and academies. However, in addition, Virtual School Heads are responsible for making sure there are effective arrangements in place for allocating Pupil Premium Plus funding to benefit children looked after by their authority
- the overall grant allocated to each LA will be calculated on a per capita basis. However, it does not have to be distributed on a per capita basis, given that children and young people in care have differing levels of need at different stages of being in care
- the grant must be managed by the Virtual School and used to improve outcomes and “narrow the gap” as identified in the Personal Education Plan (PEP) in consultation with the designated teacher
- as a result, PEPs will need to be monitored even more closely by designated teachers, the Virtual School team, social workers team leaders and Independent Reviewing Officers.

In addition and through a separate process, children adopted from care and those subject to residency order or special guardianship order from care will be entitled to £1,900 passed directly to the school. However, this grant is outside the remit of this guidance and will not be distributed by the virtual school.

As a result of the above changes, our allocation of Pupil Premium Plus needs to move to a “**child’s needs driven model**”, managed through high quality PEPs.

2. Pupil Premium Plus Guidance

2.1. Overall principles underpinning our child's needs driven model

- the Virtual School Headteacher is responsible for the use of Pupil Premium Plus to improve outcomes for all children in our care, wherever they live
- none of the grant will be used to pay for Virtual School management, administration or core staff salaries
- in the academic year 2014-15, all of the grant will continue to be distributed to schools on an annual basis to support all eligible children and young people to improve their educational progress and narrow the achievement gaps between children in care and their peers
- proposals to pool Pupil Premium Plus in a school to enhance services, providing its use is directly linked to individual children in care's needs via the PEP, are allowed
- Nottinghamshire County Council and the Virtual School Headteacher are Corporate Parents, so the question 'would this be good enough for my child?' is a central one in making decisions and evaluating the effectiveness of the use of Pupil Premium Plus.

2.2. How and why will the amount of Pupil Premium Plus vary from LA to LA?

- children's needs vary and can change significantly
- LAC may move schools due to care placement moves, infant to junior, primary to secondary or in year changes
- termly allocations rather than annual allocations.

In view of this, there will be a significant difference in the amount of Pupil Premium Plus distributed by all LAs.

2.3. Pupil Premium Plus will not be provided if:

- Pupil Premium Plus replaces funding which should already have been allocated to the school to support the child
- the planned use is to fund:
 - services that should be provided via a statement, SEN support plan or Education Health and Care plan
 - other statutory work e.g. statutory assessment or support from Health.
- the interventions put in place do not require any funding
- the school's own funding covers the cost of the interventions

- the PEP action plan does not meet requirements (see section 3.1)
- interventions have no link to the individual LAC's needs.

3. Management and accountability

The head of the Virtual School will be accountable to the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee for setting up a transparent and rigorous allocation process and ensuring maximised impact of the grant.

3.1. Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

- we will allocate to each school with a Nottinghamshire child in care on roll PPG on receipt of a **Pupil Premium Reply form** identifying how the school will use the Pupil Premium Plus and the links to the child/young person's PEP
- the Pupil Premium Plus must be used to improve educational outcomes for children and young people in care to Nottinghamshire in the following areas:
 - academic achievement and progress
 - wider achievement e.g. in an area in which the child is gifted and talented
 - transition into the next key stage and/or a new learning provider.

e.g.: TG is below national age related expectations in reading. To enable TG to accelerate progress in reading, he will have 40 hours of one to one support at £30 per hour, membership of Letterbox Club (organised via Virtual School) and 15 minutes a night of reading with foster carers recorded in his reading log. Time period for achievement of this target: September 2014 - July 2015. Measured by: progress from 2c to 3c within the academic year highlighted in termly data returns to the Virtual School.

- we have redesigned our Personal Education Plans and have consulted with Designated Teachers and Social workers on the design of the new PEPs. These are now in circulation and pupil premium is reflected in this document
- it is recommended, in the new legislation 'Promoting the education of looked after children' July 2014, that PEPs should take place **termly**. Further discussions will be held on achieving this for all LAC. However, where a LAC may be underachieving or struggling in an education setting termly meetings must be held as a minimum to support that LAC.

3.2 Allocation of funding to all schools with Nottinghamshire children in care and recoupment guidance

- the Pupil Premium Grant will be transferred once a year by the virtual school on receipt of the Pupil Premium reply form detailing the plan
- where there is a need to clarify what funding a school is providing from its own resources, the school will be contacted by the virtual school before Pupil Premium Plus can be allocated
- we will not recoup Pupil Premium Plus where a child moves during the term

- we reserve the right to recoup the funding if there is evidence that the funding is not being used to address the LAC's needs.

3.4. Allocation of grant to Nottinghamshire children in care placed in residential providers or non- mainstream settings and recoupment guidance

- we will provide extra funding to independent providers only on receipt of detailed reply forms linked to the child's PEP. These are already funded at a high level by central budgets
- the Pupil Premium Plus allocation will have to be approved by the Virtual School Head
- we reserve the right to recoup the funding if there is evidence that the funding is not being used to address the child in care's needs.

4. Pupil Premium Plus for Children and Young People attending Nottinghamshire schools and settings placed by other Local Authorities

- different approaches will be adopted by different LAs, as the contexts vary so much, in terms of the number of school-aged children in care, the size of Virtual School team and the existing operational budget for the Virtual School team (which varies enormously between LAs)
- Nottinghamshire schools who have Children and Young People in Care from other Local Authorities on their roll must contact the Virtual Head of the relevant Virtual School to request their Pupil Premium Plus guidance. Nationally, all Virtual Heads are responsible for the allocation of Pupil Premium Plus for all school aged Children and Young People in care within their authorities, even though the child/young person is educated in a Nottinghamshire school. The name and contact details of other Virtual School Heads teachers can be requested from the Nottinghamshire Virtual School team.

Appendix 1

Extracts from the Department for Education Conditions of Grant 2014-2015

Basis of the allocations to the local authority:

The Department will allocate a provisional allocation of £1,900 per child for the number of children looked after for at least one day as recorded in the March 2013 Children Looked After Data Return (SSDA903) and aged 4 to 15 at 31 August 2012. This allocation will be updated and finalised in October 2014 based on the number of children looked after for at least one day as recorded in the March 2014 Children Looked After Data Return (SSDA903) and aged 4 to 15 at 31 August 2013.

Use of the Looked After Children Premium:

The grant allocation for Looked After Children must be managed by the designated Virtual School Head in the authority that looks after those children to be used for the benefit of the looked after child's educational needs as described in their Personal Education Plan (PEP). The Virtual School Head should ensure there are arrangements in place to discuss with the child's education setting – usually with the designated teacher – how the child will benefit from any pupil premium funding. The local authority is not permitted to carry forward funding held centrally into the financial year 2015-2016. Grant held centrally that has not been spent by 31 March 2015 will be recovered.

Further enquiries were made to DfE for clarification and received the following response:

'There is no "right" for the provider (school) to have the £1900 Pupil Premium for CLA. As Virtual School Head teacher you will make a decision on how the money is best used. Some children will not require as much support as others, so in those discussions around the PEP and putting in place that extra support through PPG funding it may be that some support will be more than £1900 and some will be less. If you believe that, usually for those expensive independent providers, all aspects of support for the child (through the PEP) have been covered in the existing package then why would you make a PP payment to the provider? However if you decided that there was even more support that could be provided then you could use it - it would need to be detailed within the PEP and agreed with you as the Virtual School Head teacher. The amount you might use for such support is not fixed (i.e. at £1900) it will depend on what support is being given.'

Appendix 2

Pupil Premium and the role of the Virtual School Head 2014-15 FAQ

What changes have been made to the conditions of grant for the Pupil Premium for looked after children in 2014-15?

The conditions of grant state the following:

Basis of the allocations to the local authority

The Department will allocate a provisional allocation of £1,900 per child for the number of children looked after for at least one day as recorded in the March 2013 Children Looked After Data Return (SSDA903) and aged 4 to 15 at 31 August 2012. This allocation will be updated and finalised in October 2014 based on the number of children looked after for at least one day as recorded in the March 2014 Children Looked After Data Return (SSDA903) and aged 4 to 15 at 31 August 2013.

Use of the Looked After Children Premium

The grant allocation for Looked After Children must be managed by the designated Virtual School Head in the authority that looks after those children to be used for the benefit of the looked after child's educational needs as described in their Personal Education Plan (PEP). The Virtual School Head should ensure there are arrangements in place to discuss with the child's education setting – usually with the designated teacher – how the child will benefit from any pupil premium funding. The local authority is not permitted to carry forward funding held centrally into the financial year 2015-2016.

The conditions of grant for the pupil premium arrangements in 2014-15 are published on the Department's website and can be found here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/283193/Pupil_Premium_CoG_2014-15.pdf

What are the changes to the pupil premium arrangements for looked after children in 2014-15?

There are three main changes:

Firstly, looked after children attract a pupil premium of £1900, more than double the amount they attracted in 2013-14.

Secondly, the cohort of looked after children who attract the pupil premium is bigger and includes children looked after from the first day of care rather than, as previously, only those who had been looked after for six months or more.

Thirdly, for 2014-15 the pupil premium for looked after children must be managed by the virtual school head in the authority that looks after them. Unlike in previous years, there is no requirement for an authority to pass the funding onto the school where the child is on roll to contribute towards meeting the needs identified in their Personal Education Plan. The presumption, however, is funding is passed to the school and this is strongly encouraged.

Why have the arrangements for managing the pupil premium for looked after children changed for 2014-15?

The Department has changed the conditions of grant regarding how the pupil premium is managed for looked after children to reflect more effectively the particular challenges of supporting their education. Now that virtual school heads will be statutory they will be responsible as part of the corporate parent role to promote the educational achievement of the children looked after by their authority. Ministers therefore want them to have a greater role in working with schools to ensure that duty is fulfilled. And now local authorities attract pupil premium for children from the first day of care giving the virtual school head management of the looked after pupil premium is administratively less bureaucratic.

Does the virtual school head have to manage the budget or can this be delegated to a local authority finance team?

The conditions of grant for 2014-15 states clearly that the pupil premium grant allocation must be managed by the designated virtual school head for the children looked after by the authority. This has statutory force. It is a virtual school head rather than a local authority finance team who is best placed to know how to use pupil premium to maximise the benefits to looked after pupils. Virtual school heads should consult finance teams about the best way to distribute funding to schools.

Can the Director of Finance dictate that the pupil premium funding is passed directly to schools?

The conditions of grant state that virtual school heads should manage pupil premium funding. It is therefore for the virtual school head to decide how the pupil premium for looked after children is managed. That is an important part of how the virtual school head complies with the duty under the Children Act 1989 to promote the educational achievement of the children looked after by the authority.

Does the virtual school head have to give the money to schools?

There is no requirement to do so. There is, however, a strong expectation that virtual school heads will pass on pupil premium funding onto a child's education setting to be used to meet additional needs set out in his or her Personal Education Plan. That can be passed to the school on a termly or annual basis. Any funding not passed down to schools by the end of the financial year will have to be returned to the Department.

Does the virtual school head have to give £1,900 to schools or can they give a higher or lower amount?

The conditions of grant state that grant allocation for looked after children must be managed by the virtual school head. It is for the virtual school head to decide whether to provide £1900 to a school for a looked after child or a higher or lower amount. They can also decide on whether to pay termly or annually. They can also link allocation to the content of the Personal Education Plan as agreed with the school.

Can the virtual school head pool funding for some of the authority's looked after children?

The Department expects virtual school heads to manage the pupil premium to ensure that it promotes the educational achievement of all the children looked after by the authority. It may be appropriate to pool some pupil premium for activities to benefit the authority's looked after children more holistically. For example, it might be appropriate to use this funding to provide training for a group of designated teachers across the authority or a group of Teaching Alliance schools.

Equally, a virtual school head might negotiate with a school regarding pooling pupil premium funding for looked after children with the school's pupil premium to provide an enhanced and more intensive package of support for disadvantaged children generally.

Does the pupil premium for looked after children need to be passed to non-mainstream schools?

There is no requirement to do so. There should be a discussion about what provision is being delivered and what would be provided in addition to that in accordance with the child's Personal Education Plan, if the pupil premium funding was passed on to the non-mainstream education setting.

Can the pupil premium for looked after children fund a post in the virtual school?

Pupil premium is additional funding provided to raise the achievement of looked after pupils and close the achievement gap. It is not intended to fund posts that should be the responsibility of local authorities as a corporate parent.

There may be instances where some pupil premium funding can be used to support the work of a person where it can be very clearly demonstrated that their role has a significant contribution to promoting the educational achievement of the children looked after by the authority. That role could, for example, involve working with schools to raise the quality of learning targets in a child's Personal Education Plan.

Can some of the pupil premium for looked after children be spent on providing other central services that support their education?

Pupil premium funding is additional funding provided to support schools to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, including looked after children. It should not be used to fund central services that would reasonably be expected to be funded by local authorities, to comply with their duty to promote the educational achievement of the children they look after. As stated above, however, virtual school heads are responsible for managing the efficient use of pupil premium funding for the purpose it has been provided. They will therefore need to demonstrate a direct link between spending and raising standards of achievement for the children looked after by their authority, wherever they are placed.

Are virtual school heads accountable for the use and impact of the pupil premium on the achievement of looked after children, in the same way as headteachers?

Virtual school heads are responsible for making sure there are effective arrangements in place for allocating pupil premium funding to benefit children looked after by their authority. That means:

- making sure that pupil premium funding for looked after children is spent effectively and fully, given any underspend needs to be returned to the Department at the end of the financial year;
- being able to demonstrate how pupil premium funding managed by the virtual school head is linked to raising achievement for looked after children and closing the gap between their achievement and that of their peers; and
- having arrangements in place to engage with the looked after child's school (usually with the designated teacher) about how pupil premium funding allocated to the school is contributing to meet the needs identified in his/her Personal Education Plan.

Schools are accountable for the educational attainment and progress of all disadvantaged pupils who attract pupil premium on their roll, through Ofsted inspections and KS2/KS4 school performance tables. Virtual school heads and others involved in Personal Education Plans will want a constructive dialogue with schools about how best to support looked after children using the pupil premium.

The Ofsted framework for the inspection of children looked after services states that, as part of the performance information required, the inspector will ask for the annual report of the virtual school head. We would expect that to include information about how the pupil premium has been managed and the impact it has made.

But to whom is the virtual school head accountable within their local authority?

That depends on the line management arrangements in individual local authorities. Ultimately, however, the virtual school head is accountable to the Director of Children's Services and/or the Chief Executive and the Lead Member for Children.

How should the funding be allocated for looked after children in 2014-15 when the funding is based on one-year old data in the SSDA903?

It is important to distinguish the basis on which funding is allocated to local authorities from SSDA903 data and how that funding is managed by the virtual school head to support those children who are looked after during the 2014-15 period.

The provisional allocation is based on the number of children looked after for at least one day and aged 4 to 15 at 31 August 2012, as submitted in the SSDA903 in March 2013. This allocation is updated and finalised in October 2014, based on the number of children looked after for at least one day and aged 4 to 15 at 31 August 2013, as submitted in the SSDA903 in March 2014.

This funding should be managed by the virtual head teacher so it is used to support those children looked after by the local authority for one day or more during the 2014-15 period. This needs to take account of the fact that children move in and out of care.

How should virtual school heads give schools funding for children who have been looked after for a very short period?

It is up to virtual schools heads to manage pupil premium funding for looked after children during the 2014-15 period. Although £1900 is allocated for each looked after child, irrespective of how long they have been in care, this does not necessarily mean that virtual head teachers are expected to manage the funding on the same basis to schools. Virtual head teachers can therefore manage the funding to take account of the length of time in care, as well as other factors, if they wish. The funding, however, should always be to support the educational achievement of the looked after child, as described in their Personal Education Plan.

Can the virtual school head carry over pupil premium funding to 2015-16?

No. Any pupil premium funding that has not been passed to schools or spent by 31 March 2015 must be returned to the Department.

Can we give foster carers the pupil premium to spend rather than give it to schools?

The virtual school head manages pupil premium funding to support the education of looked after children, as set out in the Personal Education Plan. The expectation is that this funding is passed to schools unless there are clear reasons not to do this. It should not be used for activity that the local authority should normally be expected to fund as the

corporate parent, such as support for foster carers. Foster carers, however, have an essential role in supporting the education of the children for whom they care. Foster carers can therefore make a valuable contribution, such as with the Personal Education Plan.

Does the pupil premium for 2014-15 work in the same way as personal education allowances did?

No. The pupil premium is not a replacement for the personal education allowance. The pupil premium is much more focussed on support to improve the educational achievement of looked after children and close the gap between looked after children and their peers.

Can virtual school heads impose conditions on how schools use the pupil premium for looked after children?

We want local authorities to have a constructive and meaningful dialogue with the schools on the most effective use of the funding and not impose conditions. The funding should support children's Personal Educational Plan, overseen by the designated teacher in the school.

Can a school insist that they get £1,900 for a looked after child on roll?

It is up to the virtual school head to decide how the funding is managed, including how funding is distributed to schools. Although £1900 is allocated for each looked after child, irrespective of how long they have been in care, this does not necessarily mean that virtual head teachers are expected to manage the funding on the same basis to schools. Virtual school heads should also work closely with schools about how best to meet the needs identified in a child's Personal Education Plan with support provided through the pupil premium.

Can an amount be held by the virtual school head to administer the grant?

Pupil premium funding is additional funding provided to support schools to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, including looked after children. It should not be used to fund central services such as the virtual school head to administer the funding. The pupil premium should be used to provide additional support for looked after children in order to raise the achievement of looked after children.

What tips have virtual school heads got to share about how they have worked with schools up to now in how the pupil premium is used?

Talk to other virtual school heads in your area through the virtual school head regional structures.

Improving educational opportunities and outcomes in literacy for looked after children through a multimodal approach

Closing the Gaps Project 2013-14

The purpose of this report is to provide elected members with a brief overview and summary on the positive impact of a project which ran through the academic year 2013-14, centred on adopting a multimodal approach to learning. The outcomes contribute to the national agenda and Nottinghamshire LA's drive to close the gap for vulnerable groups. The intention was to support looked after children (LAC) to improve their engagement in literacy and encourage links between home and school through the use of multimodal texts including new technologies (specifically iPads). The premise was that the stimulating resources (e.g. multi-layered books) and latest technology would increase children's confidence in making individual choices as authors, allowing them to develop fundamental skills required today and remove some of the barriers to communication.

Project aims:

- ▶ To recognise, value and build upon children's wider literacy experiences
- ▶ To explore how technology can support children in engaging with and producing multimodal texts
- ▶ To motivate children in progressively becoming expert readers/ viewers and authors / 'writers' of multimodal texts
- ▶ To support home/ school partnerships and enhance learning

The group consisted of 18 schools including three secondary schools across Nottinghamshire. In total, 56 young people participated of which 32 were boys and 24 girls ranging from 4-14 years. 34 families, with at least one carer in each setting committed to supporting the young person with activities at home and liaising with all parties involved. A designated teacher was identified to support the child in school and this varied from the Head Teacher, to teaching member with responsibilities for looked after children or teaching assistant with this area of need as a primary role. Attainment levels in reading and writing were tracked throughout the year.

The project design drew on previous, smaller pilot projects and largely on the pleasing literacy outcomes obtained following the LA project in 2012-13. Academic data in the form of tracked reading and writing levels had shown that previously all children made progress in reading and writing, in addition, 35% made accelerated progress in reading and 35% made accelerated progress in writing (more than 2 sub-levels). Results reported in 2013-14 continued to reflect a positive impact. Whilst it is not possible to argue that this is due directly to the project and multimodal approach to learning, it may have contributed and did not hinder progress. In all cases there was also a reported increase in digital experience in the home and access to a range of quality texts.

Summary of outcomes:

- Evidence of progress in literacy attainment
- Increased engagement in literacy activities
- A strong sense of authorship and in authorial intent
- Children took pride in their work
- A knowledge of how texts work
- Enhanced ICT skills
- Improved confidence and a 'can do' belief
- An enthusiasm for books and book making
- Improved home school links
- Brought to light issues through interactions with texts and creation of stories

1 December 2014

Agenda Item: 7

REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR, POLICY, PLANNING AND CORPORATE SERVICES

WORK PROGRAMME

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider the Committee's work programme for 2014/15.

Information and Advice

2. The County Council requires each committee to maintain a work programme. The work programme will assist the management of the committee's agenda, the scheduling of the committee's business and forward planning. The work programme will be updated and reviewed at each pre-agenda meeting and committee meeting. Any member of the committee is able to suggest items for possible inclusion.
3. The attached work programme has been drafted in consultation with the Chairman and includes items which can be anticipated at the present time. Other items will be added to the programme as they are identified.
4. As part of the transparency introduced by the new committee arrangements, committees are expected to review day to day operational decisions made by officers using their delegated powers. It is anticipated that the committee will wish to commission periodic reports on such decisions. The committee is therefore requested to identify activities on which it would like to receive reports for inclusion in the work programme.

Other Options Considered

5. None.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

6. To assist the committee in preparing its work programme.

Statutory and Policy Implications

7. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of

children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That the committee's work programme be noted, and consideration be given to any changes which the committee wishes to make.

Jayne Francis-Ward

Corporate Director, Policy, Planning and Corporate Services

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Assistant Democratic Services Officer -

David Ebbage

Tel: 0115 977 3141

Constitutional Comments (SLB)

8. The Committee has authority to consider the matters set out in this report by virtue of its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (PS)

9. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All

CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME 2014-15

<u>Report Title</u>	<u>Brief summary of agenda item</u>	<u>Lead Officer</u>	<u>Report Author</u>
2 March 2015			
Spring Term report for the Virtual School for Looked After Children		Steve Edwards	Sue Denholm
Advocacy Service – NYAS		Steve Edwards	Mary Jarrett
LAC Strategy – children who self-harm		Steve Edwards	Rachel Coombs
Provision, achievements and progress of the Children in Care Council and participation of children and young people looked after 2013/14		Steve Edwards	Rachel Coombs
Independent Reviewing Officer Service - update	Six monthly update	Steve Edwards	Izzy Martin
Adoption Service	Six monthly report	Steve Edwards	Shelagh Mitchell
Looked After Children Strategy update	Six monthly report	Steve Edwards	Rachel Coombs
Leaving Care Service update	Six monthly report	Steve Edwards	Michelle Lee
Work Programme		Steve Edwards	
8 June 2015			
Summer Term report for the Virtual School for Looked After Children		Steve Edwards	Sue Denholm/ Linda Foster
End of year report for the Independent Reviewing Officer Service		Steve Edwards	Izzy Martin
Fostering Service annual report		Steve Edwards	Jayne Austin
County CAMHS Looked After and Adoption Team – service provision and developments 2014/15		Steve Edwards	Helen Daft
Improving health outcomes for children and young people in the care of the Local Authority		Steve Edwards	Sharon Thompson/ Rachel Coombs
Advocacy Service for Looked After Children		Steve Edwards	Mary Jarrett
Contact Service update		Steve Edwards	Di Brady
Work Programme		Steve Edwards	
To be placed			

