

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 9 February 2022

**Subject:** Annual Virtual School Head's Report providing an overview of the work of Manchester's Virtual School Team to promote the Education, Employment and Training of Our Children and Young People during 2020-21.

**Report of:** Director of Education

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### **Summary**

The report from Manchester's Virtual School Head for Our Children and Young People provides an overview of the work that has been undertaken, through the Corporate Parenting Partnership, during 2020-21 to promote the education, employment and training of the Children and Young People in the care of Manchester (referred to as Our Children and Young People from this point), Manchester Care Leavers, Previously Looked After Children who attend education settings within Manchester and Young People supported by the Youth Justice Service.

The report shows that in spite of the continued challenges posed by the global pandemic, improvement activity involving all partners has been ongoing, our children and young people have continued to be well supported in their Education, Employment and Training and most importantly they have continued to attend and access learning, make progress and achieve well.

The presentation version of the full Virtual School Head's report is attached for those who would like more detailed information. It provides comprehensive information about the impact of the different types of work that has been undertaken, challenges faced, the progress and outcomes that have been achieved by young people and next steps for further improvement.

### **Recommendations**

The committee is asked to consider the content of this report, reflect and comment upon:

- The work of the Manchester Virtual School Team and multi-agency partners to promote the education, employment and training of Our Children and Young People and those young people supported by the Youth Justice Service.
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**Wards Affected:** All

**Environmental Impact Assessment** - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

Through the learning and education system children are informed and understand environmental issues and the negative impact of carbon; promoting safe and healthy lives.

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	It is important we build a safe, healthy, happy and successful future for all of Manchester's children so that they can benefit from and contribute to the sustainability of Manchester thriving, economically diverse and successful. Children and Education Services work with all schools and early years settings in Manchester to promote children's learning and engage with those children and their families who need help, support and protection. The aim is for children to be safe, healthy and make progress in terms of education, training, social development so that they are successful and contribute and benefit from living in Manchester.
A highly skilled city: world class and home-grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Children and young people matter in Manchester. The work of the Children and Education Directorate is driven by a commitment to provide opportunities and achieve positive outcomes, building a safe, happy, healthy and successful future for all of the city's children and young people
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Increase the influence Manchester's children and young people have on decisions that impact on them by supporting and enabling their voice to be heard; promoting a fair and inclusive place to live and work.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	A safe and effective children and education system is important to promote the awareness and inclusion of children in the engagement of wider societal issues; which together with a successful education offer make Manchester a place parents and carers choose to visit, live and work.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Continually improve outcomes and opportunities for all children and 'reduce the gap' against the national attainment average

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**Background documents (available for public inspection):**

None

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Government guidance, Promoting the Education of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-children> outlines the Statutory responsibilities of Local Authorities, including each Local Authority's Virtual School Head. The corresponding guidance, The Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-children> outlines the statutory duties for education settings.
- 1.2 The report from Manchester's Virtual School Head for Our Children and Young People provides an overview of the multi-faceted work that has been undertaken, through the Corporate Parenting Partnership, during 2020-21 to promote the education, employment and training of the Children and Young People in the care of Manchester (referred to as Our Children and Young People from this point), Manchester Care Leavers and Previously Looked After Children who attend education settings within Manchester. It provides information about the impact of the different types of work undertaken and about the progress and outcomes that have been achieved by young people.
- 1.3 The report also provides information about the joint work between the Virtual School Team and the Manchester Youth Justice Service to strengthen the multi-agency work to promote the education of all young people supported by the Youth Justice Service.
- 1.4 The 2020 global COVID-19 pandemic has, over the past two years, placed unexpected, wide ranging and multiple pressures on Children and Young People and those who support them. One outcome of the pandemic has been that the national 2019-20 and 2020-21 end of Key Stage Assessments have not been undertaken. The outcomes data provided within this report is based on the grades that were awarded to Our Children and Young People based on teacher assessment and predicted grades.
- 1.5 Unless otherwise stated, the data within this report refers to children and young people who have been in the care of Manchester for 12 months or more as of 31st March 2020.
- 1.6 During 2020-21 the Virtual School Team has been working hard with Social Workers, Designated Teachers, Personal Advisers, Carers, Youth Justice colleagues, Independent Reviewing Officers, other services and partners to support Our Children and Young People, from 2- 25 years, in their Education, Employment and Training and to enable them to attend well, make good progress, achieve good outcomes and to progress into positive destinations at every stage.
- 1.7 The views, wishes and feelings of Our Children and Young People about their education and life as a whole, summarised in the full Virtual school Head's Report, inform and sit at the heart of the Virtual School approach. The work of

the Virtual School has informed and influenced the development of Manchester's Inclusion Strategy

[https://secure.manchester.gov.uk/directory\\_record/376574/manchester\\_inclusion\\_strategy](https://secure.manchester.gov.uk/directory_record/376574/manchester_inclusion_strategy)

- 1.8 In all of our conversations, quality assurance, advice, guidance and training the whole team is, in line with the Manchester Inclusion Strategy, focused on ensuring that every child and young person, whatever their age, identity, circumstances or ability, experiences a sense of belonging, feels respected and valued for who they are and is effectively supported to lead a safe, happy, healthy and successful life. The full Virtual School Head's report provides an insight into the views, wishes and feelings expressed by our Children and Young People during 2020-21.

## **2.0 Background – Key educational headlines for Children and Young People**

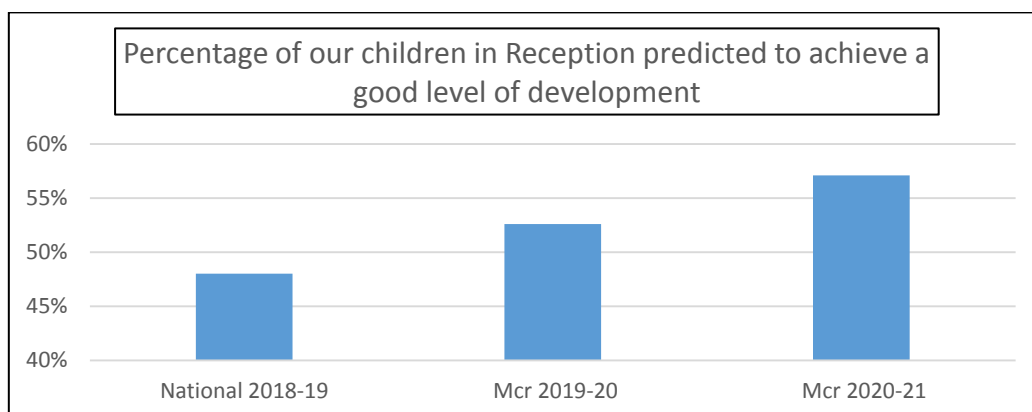
### **2.1 Summary of the outcomes achieved through the work of the Virtual School**

- Children and young people with an approved, up-to-date Personal Education Plan (PEP) in place; EYFS - 73%, Year 1– Year 11 – 96.4% & Post 16 – 89.5%.
- 82% of children in Reception – Year 11 attend good or better schools,
- Maintained overall attendance of 88% during 2020-21 with 94% attendance by half term 1 2021-22.
- Reduced fixed term exclusions from 292 in 2018-19 to 191 in 2020-21.
- Prevented 3 Post 16 exclusions.
- Prevented 5 exclusions of young people supported by Youth Justice.
- Supported children into new schools in a timely way.
- Increased the number of 16- & 17-year-olds in full-time EET from 65.7% in 2018-19 to 71%.
- Increased the number of 16- & 17-year-olds who are currently NEET and who are accessing positive activity supporting them towards and into EET from 28% in 2018-19 to 47%.
- Secured employment opportunities for Young People including within the Our Town Hall project and with other construction companies.
- Provisionally 37% of Young people in Year 11 were assessed by their schools as having achieved grade 4+ in their English and maths GCSEs and 12.3% achieved grade 5+ in their English and maths GCSEs.
- Ensured the right transition support is in place for young people at key transition points.

### **2.2 Outcomes for Our Children in Reception**

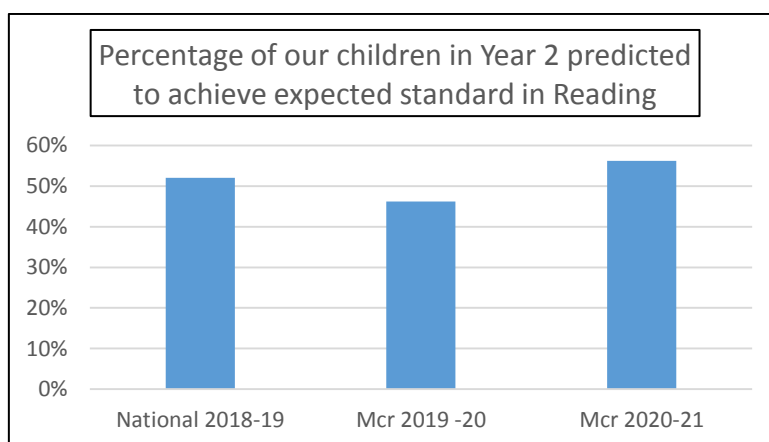
- Designated Teachers have reported that 68.7% of children are on track to achieve a good level of development. This is an increase from 51.3% the same time on in 2020.
- Designated Teachers have assessed that 75% of children are making the expected level of progress regardless of their ability.

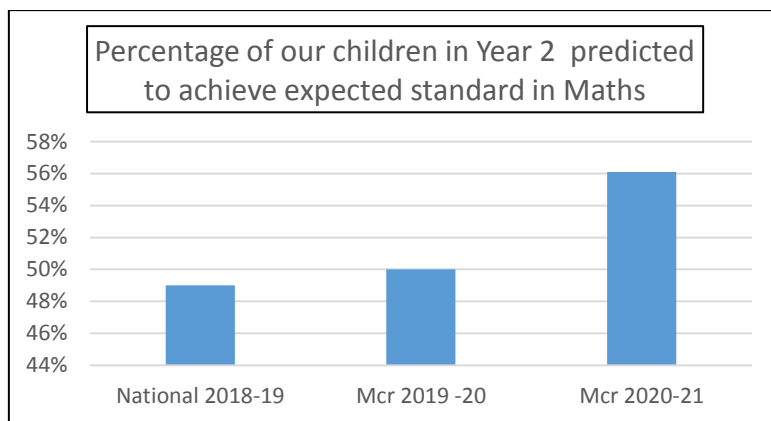
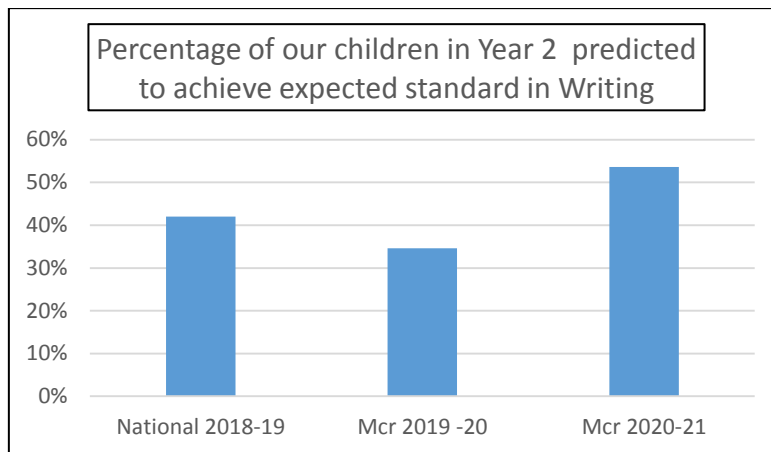
- Overall DTs report the positive impact Pupil Premium has made the main use has been learning resources (24.7%), interventions (15.3%) and 1:1 support (12.9%)



### 2.3 Outcomes for Our Children in Key Stage 1

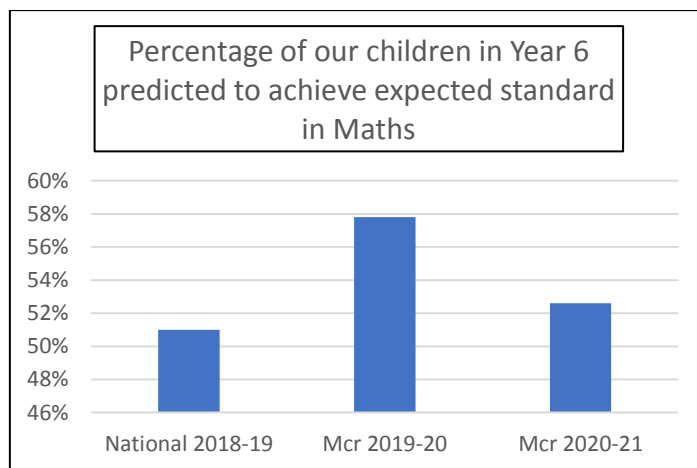
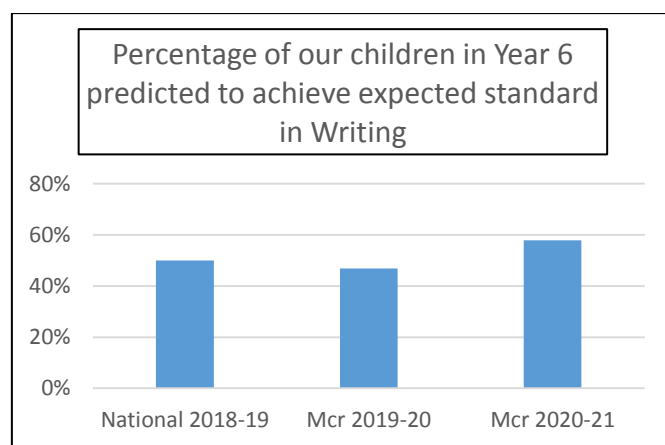
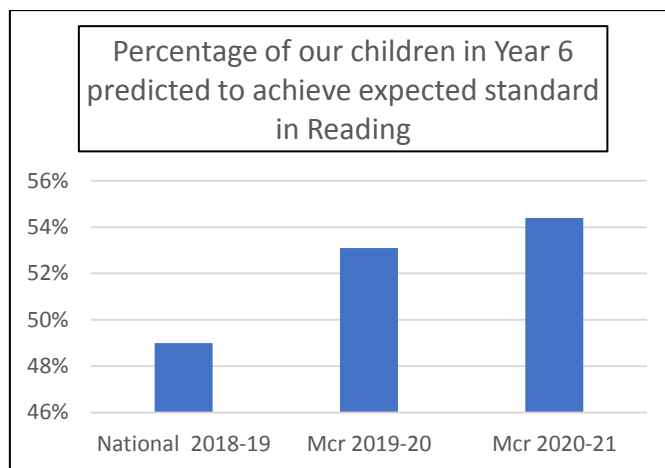
- 56.1 % of children have been assessed by their school to be reaching national standards in reading, an increase from 46.2% in 2019-20
- 53.6 % of children have been assessed by their school to be reaching national standards in writing, an increase from 34.6% in 2019-20
- 56.1% of children have been assessed by their school to be reaching national standards in maths, an increase from 50% in 2019-20
- 75.6% of children are reported by their schools to be making at least expected progress in reading.
- 58.5% of our children are reported by their schools to be making at least expected progress in writing
- 65.8% of our children are reported by their schools to be making at least expected progress in science.
- Overall, DTs report positive impact of Pupil Premium. The main uses in Key Stage 1 have been 1:1 support (26.2%), therapeutic interventions (23.1%) & school interventions (12.3%).





## 2.4 Outcomes for Our Children in Key Stage 2

- 54.4% of children have been assessed by their school to be reaching national standards in reading, an increase from 53.1% in 2019-20
- 57.9% of children have been assessed by their school to be reaching national standards in writing. an increase from 46.9% in 2019-20
- 52.6% of children have been assessed by their school to be reaching national standards in maths. This is a decrease compared with the 57.8% of children achieving this measure in 2019-20
- 49.1% of children have been assessed by their school to be reaching national standards in Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS), an increase from 37.5% in 2019-20
- 82.4% of children are reported by their school to be making at least expected progress in reading.
- 75.4% of our children are reported by their school to be making at least expected in science and maths regardless of their ability.
- Overall DTs report positive impact of Pupil Premium. The main uses in Key Stage 2 have been therapeutic interventions (16.3%), 1:1 School support (9.7%), and music (6.5%)

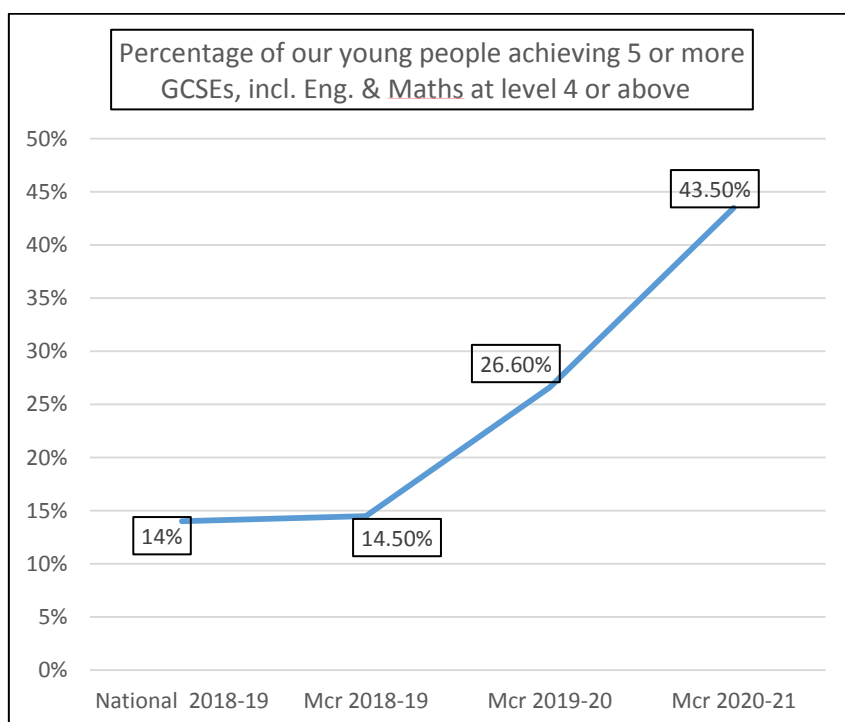
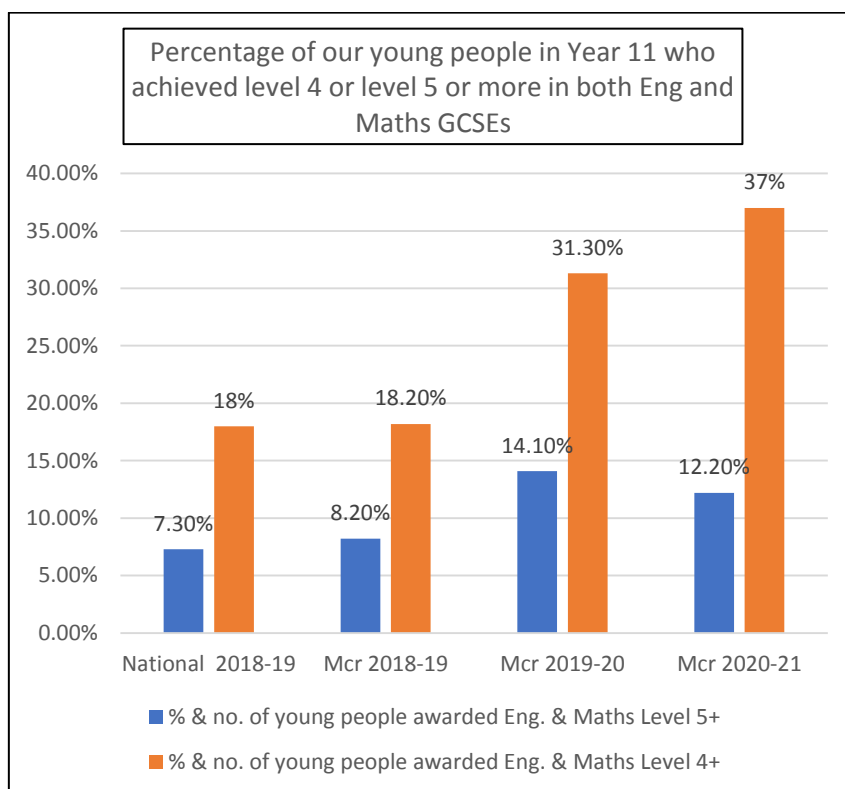


## 2.5 Outcomes for Our Young People in Key Stage 4

- 33% of young people in Year 10 were assessed as being on track to achieve Grade 4 or above in English and maths by the end of Key Stage 4.
- 65.5 % of Year 10s were assessed by their schools to be making expected progress.
- 37% of young people are reported by schools to have achieved 4+ in both English and maths GCSEs which is an increase on 2019-20 at 31.3%
- 12.2% of young people are reported by schools to have achieved 5+ in both English and maths GCSE.

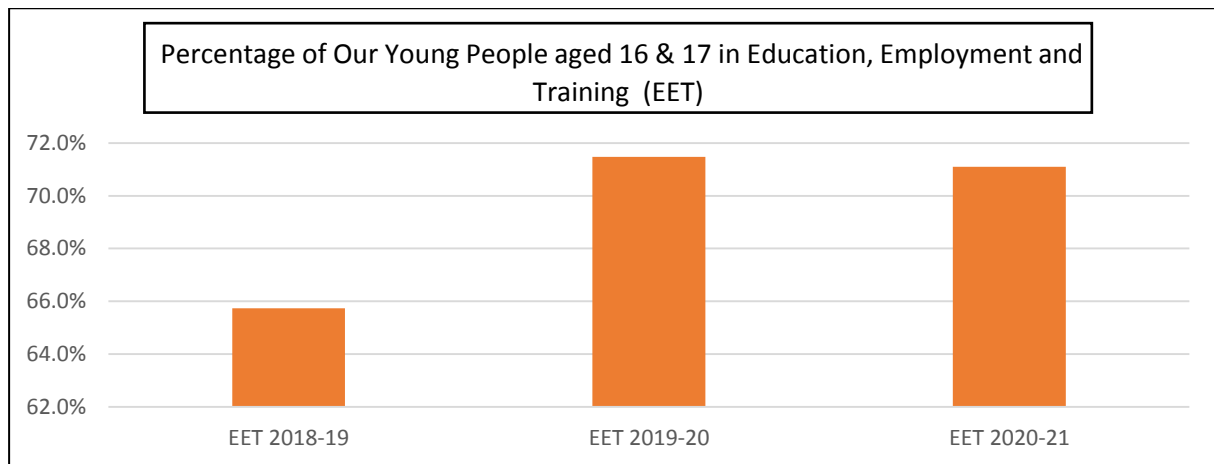


- 71.6% of Year 11s were entered for GCSEs an increase from 2019-20 at 66.6%.
- 43.5% of young people who were entered for GCSEs achieved 5 GCSEs Grade 4 and above including English and Maths, an increase from 2019-20 at 26.6%
- Overall DTs report the positive impact of Pupil Premium The main uses have been tuition (28.1%), IT equipment (25.9%) and resources (11.1%).



## 2.6 Outcomes for Our Young People in Key Stage 5

- 80.7% of young people achieving Pre-Entry Level qualifications
- 81.4% of young people achieving Entry Level qualifications (some continuing across academic years)
- 76.1% of young people achieving Level 1 qualifications
- 80% of young people achieving Level 2 qualifications
- 90.77% of young people achieving Level 3 qualifications



## 2.7 Outcomes for Unaccompanied Young People

- 89% of all those young people enrolled on ESOL courses, achieved 2 or more qualifications in functional skills and personal development
- 92% of all those young people enrolled on ESOL courses were retained in their education settings and are either continuing or progressing on to the next level of study

## 2.8 Outcomes for Young People who are Care Leavers

- 8.6% (98 young people) aged 18-25 are in Higher Education and 5 young people are being supported at Masters Level.
- 12 young people attended and completed bespoke CSCS Card training course resulting in immediate 50% conversion rate into employment/training
- 18 young people engaged with We Mind The Gap, bespoke intensive support programme
- 79 young people accessed ring fenced EET opportunities with over 50% positive success rate over the year

## 2.9 Outcomes for Young People Supported by the Youth Justice Service

- 86% of Young People attended schools judged by Ofsted to be good or better.
- 53.5% of all young people supported by the Youth Justice Service had a PEP in place by Summer 2021

- 70% were entered for GCSEs, which is about the same for young people who have been looked after for 12 months or more at 71.6%
- 9.5% of young people achieved 4+ in both English and Maths 9.5% and achieved 5+ in both English and Maths.

### 3.0 Attendance at Education Settings – what has been achieved during 2020-21

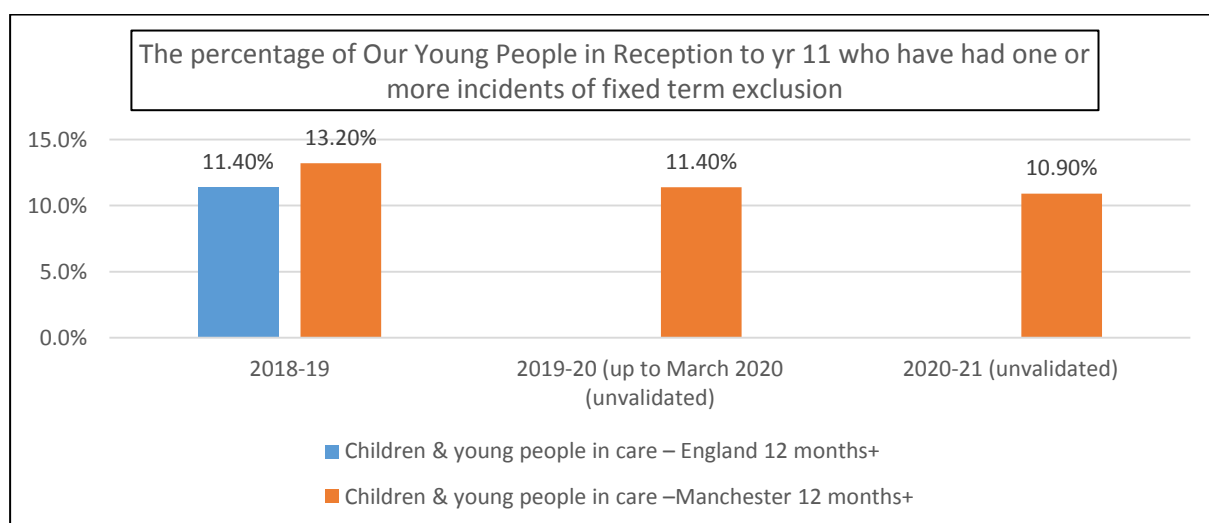
- Continued monitoring of attendance through use of the Manchester COVID contact page within each young person’s Personal education Plan (PEP).

#### School attendance 2020-21:

- 91.2% attendance in Primary
- 85.6% attendance in secondary
- 88% attendance in all mainstream schools
- 87.8% attendance in special schools
- **Autumn term 2020-21** attendance was very positive and in-line with 2019-20 at 94.8%
- **Post 16 average attendance** 78.80% at end of June 2021
- 55.38% of children in Post 16 settings had attendance between 75% and 100%
- 6.92% of children in Post 16 settings had attendance below 25%

### 3.1 Exclusions from Education settings

- Reduction in the percentage with one of more incident of fixed term exclusion from 13.2% in 2018-19 provisionally to 10.9% in 2020-21.
- Reduction in the number of secondary fixed term exclusions from 258 in 2018-19 to 146
- Prevention of 3 Post 16 exclusions.
- Prevention of 5 exclusions for young people supported by Youth Justice.



## 4.0 Conclusion

2020-21 has presented many opportunities as well as significant challenges including those arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Virtual School Head and Virtual School Team would like to acknowledge the hard work of all the children and young people during 2020-21 and to thank them for their engagement and participation in developing and reviewing their Personal Education Plans (PEPs). We ran a 2020-21 Achievement Awards process to celebrate Young People's achievements, but unfortunately this could not be a face-to-face event. 250 young people were nominated, and certificates, vouchers and trophies were distributed. We look forward to being able to celebrate young people's achievements back in the Whitworth Hall in the University of Manchester during 2021-22.

4.1 The Virtual School Team would also like to acknowledge the hard work of all the partners who have worked to support the Education, Employment and Training of all of Manchester's Children and Young People including Designated Teachers, Social Workers, Educational Psychologists, Youth Justice colleagues, Independent Reviewing Officers, Leaving Care Personal Advisers, Carers and family members. Key information from this report will be shared with all partners who are involved in the care, education, employment and training of Our Children and Young People.

4.2 2021-22 brings with it a cautious sense of optimism for us all as confidence increases in the ability to safely have face-to-face contact with children and young people and with colleagues. The Virtual School looks forward to the benefits of face-to-face networks, training session and working alongside social work colleagues in the different locality buildings. We know from young people's PEPs that overall, they are glad to be back accessing learning in person. We hope that next year's Virtual School Head's report will be one that reflects that face-to-face learning could take place throughout 2021-22.

4.3 **During 2021-22 the key high-level priorities for the Virtual School are to:**

- Ensure all young people are being appropriately supported through their PEPs in their education and well-being, in the wake of the global pandemic.
- Refresh our Virtual School training offer to the wider workforce working to promote the Education, Employment and Training (EET) of Our Children and Young People, offering face-to-face training wherever possible including with a focus on literacy, equality and diversity, trauma and attachment, listening and responding to the views of young people and supporting positive transitions.
- Promote a strong focus on listening to what is important to young people in relation to their circumstances and personal identity through the revised voice section within the PEP.
- Continue to reduce the number of young people receiving fixed term exclusions through early intervention, appropriate assessment and reasonable adjustment.

- Continue to work with partners to embed the use of the Youth Justice PEP and improve the educational experience, attendance, progress, outcomes and progression of young people supported by the Youth Justice Service.
- Continue the close working between the Virtual School and the Leaving Care Service to further improve young people's education, employment and training experiences, outcomes and progression and to continue to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment and training.
- Continue the close work of the Virtual School with Manchester's Work and Skills Team and local employers to further expand and support young people into high quality, well supported employment and training opportunities.
- Ensure the new Virtual School duties to promote the education of children and young people, (aged birth to 18 years) with a social worker are effectively implemented. In Manchester this will be delivered within the context of the Manchester Inclusion Strategy.
- Ensure the successful Manchester Post 16 Pupil Premium bid is effectively implemented, and impact evidenced and shared with the DfE and other key partners.