

Manchester City Council Report for Information

Report to: Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 10 January 2024

Subject: Annual Virtual School Head's Report

Report of: Director of Education

Summary

The report from Manchester's Virtual School Head provides an overview of the work that has been undertaken during 2022-23 to promote the education, employment and training of the Children and Young People overseen by the Manchester Virtual School. This includes Children and Young People in the care of Manchester, Manchester Care Leavers, Previously Looked After Children who attend education settings within Manchester, Children and Young People with a Manchester Social Worker and Young People supported by the Youth Justice Service.

The report shows that in spite of the continued challenges posed by the impact of 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 and make progress.

In line with the data for all Manchester children there have been improvements in the provisional Key Stage 4 results for the young people in our care compared to 2019. Whilst outcomes at the end of early years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 for the Children in Our Care have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels.

The presentation version of the full Virtual School Head's report is attached and provides detailed information about the progress and provisional outcomes of Our Children and Young People, their views, wishes and feelings and about the multifaceted work of the Virtual School Team and next steps for further improvement.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the outcomes and review the recommended next steps.

Wards Affected: All

<p>Environmental Impact Assessment -the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city</p>	
<p>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments</p>	<p>The report demonstrates the work being undertaken by the Manchester Virtual School to ensure that 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.</p>

<p>Manchester Strategy outcomes</p>	<p>Summary of how this report aligns to the Our Manchester Strategy/Contribution to the Strategy</p>
<p>A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities</p>	<p>Improving educational outcomes will contribute to Manchester's young people becoming happy, safe and highly skilled and have increased life chances. Improved educational outcomes will enable Manchester's young people to contribute to the economic growth and take advantage of the job opportunities created</p>
<p>A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success</p>	<p>Improving education, employment and training outcomes is essential for young people to gain qualifications and contribute to Manchester's economic success.</p>
<p>A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities</p>	<p>Ongoing monitoring and analysis of the progress being made, and the outcomes being achieved by children and young people overseen by the Virtual School allows for identification of priorities with the aim of improving children and young people's outcomes and ensuring all young people have the best possible opportunity to succeed.</p>
<p>A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work</p>	<p>Improving education, employment and training systems and opportunities for all children and young people will make Manchester an attractive place to live and work</p>
<p>A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth</p>	<p>An improving education system contributes to generating future growth by a highly skilled workforce and young people committed to reducing the carbon footprint.</p>

Contact Officers:

Name: Amanda Corcoran
Position: Director Education Services
Telephone: 0161 234 4314
E-mail: amanda.corcoran@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Jane Johnson
Position: Virtual School Head
Telephone: 0161 219 6913
E-mail: jane.johnson@manchester.gov.uk

Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy, please contact one of the contact officers above.

Annual Virtual School Head's Report 09 February 2022 [Choose agenda document pack - Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee 9 February 2022 \(manchester.gov.uk\)](#)

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-oflooked-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/designatedteacher-for-looked-after-children> outlines the statutory duties for education settings.
- 1.2 In 2021 the role of the Virtual School Head was extended by the Department for Education (DfE) to include a duty, as yet still non-statutory, to promote the education of children and young people, from birth to the age of 18 years, who have a social worker. These are children and young people who live with their parents and who are supported via a Child In Need (CiN) or Child Protection (CP) Plan. It is the young people's parents who retain parental responsibility for the children and young people and not the social worker. The information about these duties can be found in the DfE guidance document, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1086931/Promoting_the_education_of_children_with_a_social_worker_-_virtual_school_head_role_extension_2022.pdf
- 1.3 The report also provides information about the joint work between the Manchester 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 Unless otherwise stated, the data within the attached Virtual School Head's Annual Report presentation refers to children and young people who have been in the care of Manchester for 12 months or more as of 31st March 2022.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 During 2022-23 the Virtual School Team has continued to work hard with Social Workers, Designated Teachers, Personal Advisers, Carers, Youth Justice colleagues, Independent Reviewing Officers, other services and partners to support Children and Young People 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.
- 2.2 In all of our conversations, quality assurance, advice, guidance and training the whole Virtual School Team is, in line with the Manchester Inclusion Strategy, [Policies and strategies - Manchester Inclusion Strategy | Manchester City Council](#) 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.

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 Members are asked to note the outcomes and review the recommended next steps.

5.0 Appendices

- 5.1 Manchester Virtual School Head's report 2022-23 in a Power Point Presentation.