



Northamptonshire Virtual School

Annual Report 2021-2022 Academic Year

Virtual School Head: Charlotte Franks

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Acronym Key

Acronym	Detail
CiC	Children in Care / Child in Care
CME	Children Missing Education
DfE	Department for Education
DT	Designated Teacher for Looked-After Children
EHC	Education and Health Care
EHCP	Education and Health Care Plan
EM	English and maths
EO	Virtual School Education Officer
EY	Early Years
FT	Full Time
IRO	Independent Reviewing Officer
KS1, 2, 4	Key Stage 1, 2, and 4. That is, at the end of years 2, 6 and 11 (when children are most often 7, 11 and 16 years of age respectively).
L4+ EM	Level 4 or higher in both English and maths GCSE
LA	Local Authority
LAC	Looked-after Children
NEET	Not in Education, Training or Employment
NNC	North Northamptonshire Council
OC2	The OC2 cohort refers to those children continuously looked after for 12 months at 31st March each year.
OOC	Out of County
PEP	Personal Education Plan
PP+	Pupil Premium Plus
QA	Quality Assurance
RWM	Reading, writing and maths
SEMH	Social, Emotional and Mental Health
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability
SGO	Special Guardianship Order
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound
UASC	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children
WNC	West Northamptonshire Council
VS	Virtual School
VSH	Virtual School Head

Executive Summary

Key Strengths

In the 2021-2022 academic year, there were 1083 statutory-school age PEPs, all of which were quality assured. The Virtual School provided direct support at 46% (503) of these PEPs through attending the meetings.

There is a 3-year trend of consistently good compliance with statutory school age PEPs; 90% in 2019-2020, 97% in 2020-2021 and 97% in 2021-2022.

There is a 3-year trend of improving quality of statutory school age PEPs with 56% in 2019-2020, 64% in 2020-2021 and 79% in 2021-2022 being quality assured as good.

There is a 3-year trend of improving compliance with Early Years PEPs; 82% in 2019-2020, 91% in 2020-2021 and 93% in 2021-2022.

Compliance with post-16 PEPs has had a spiky performance over the last three years, with an overall reduction at 83% in 2019-20, 97% in 2020-21 and 76% in 2021-22.

The proportion of good PEPs at post-16 is also not in the line with the trends at statutory school-age, varying from 72% in 2019-20, 63% in 2020-21 and 68% in 2021-22. Recent audits suggested further work is required in developing quality assurance processes. This is partially complete at the time of writing.

In 2018-2019, 25.9% of OC2 Northamptonshire Children in care achieved a 9-4 pass in English and Maths, compared to 17.8% nationally. For 2019-2020 this pass rate rose to 29.2% for the Northamptonshire OC2 cohort, compared to 24.4% nationally. Figures for North Northamptonshire in 2022 have not yet been released.

The percentage of post 16 Children in Care in Education, Employment or Training (EET) has seen a 3-year trend of improvement: 74% in 2020, 81% in 2021 and 84% in 2022.

The Virtual School have represented children in care at all governing board hearings and independent review panel hearings where the child's exclusion was being considered. The role of the Virtual School has been to ensure that the voice and journey of the child, the implications of exclusion and the potential alternatives to exclusion are well understood by the panel.

A total of 139 young people have attended one or more of the Virtual School participation programmes during the academic year.

The Virtual School delivered training to a range of stakeholders including designated teachers, governors, social care, carers, parents, and guardians.

The Virtual School have been able to support adoptive parents to make good choices around education when children have moved into their placement. This advice and support ensure children have good education and support in place before being discharged from care.

Children are well supported as they transition from care to adoptive parents. The Virtual School's support has ensured that children are out of education for the shortest time possible when transitioning to their adoptive parents. The Virtual School have supported the fostering of relationships between adoptive parents and their children's school.

Future Areas for Development

- To raise the completion % and quality of PEPs at Post 16.
- To enhance our intervention, offer for education settings to ensure they are best placed to improve the outcomes of children with a social worker.
- To develop engagement and participation with Children in Care.
- To support schools in responding to the new exclusion's guidance: in particular, advice on what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place.
- To support other services in discharging their statutory duties towards children in care with SEND.

Outline of the Virtual School's structure, activities, and achievements in 2021-2022

The Role of the Virtual School

The role of the Northamptonshire Virtual School is to promote the educational achievement of children in care to North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council, wherever they live or are educated. The Virtual School team work with colleagues in social care and education services, and professionals at schools and settings, to ensure that our cohort of children in care are accessing education, and that high-quality plans and support are in place.

The statutory duty of the Virtual School Head is stated in guidance from the Department for Education and sets the framework through which local authorities discharge their statutory duty under 22(3A) and 23ZZA of the Children Act (1989), The Children and Families Act (2014) and section 4 of the Children and Social Work Act (2017).

- [Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children \(2018\)](#)

The Virtual School has several key duties which we are required to perform. These are to:

- maintain an up-to-date roll of our children in care (from birth until age 18);
- have robust procedures in place to monitor the attendance, exclusion and progress of our children in care;
- inform schools when they have a child in care on their school roll;
- promote and monitor the completion of Personal Education Plans (PEPs);
- monitor and devolve the Pupil Premium Plus Grant;
- contribute towards the Corporate Parenting role by providing educational advocacy.

The Virtual School Team

Description of structure

The Virtual School is made up of a team of dedicated professionals who support outcomes for children in care in a variety of ways. Below is a description of the positions within the service:

The Virtual School Head: This is a statutory post within each local authority who is discharged with the duty to monitor and champion the education of children in care and to devolve, as appropriate, Pupil Premium Plus. Charlotte Franks was appointed to this position in April 2019.

Team Managers: There are three Team Managers who support the team, direct and supervise the work of Education Officers, and lead on development projects within the service.

Education Officers: There are nine Education Officers (EOs) within the structure who support children from early years to post-16. The Education Officers each monitor the education of a cohort of children (based on a locality model), support education settings, quality assure PEPs and provide training, information and advice to a range of stakeholders. A named EO has principal responsibility for overseeing the cohort of children missing education (CME).

Participation and Engagement Officer: This officer is responsible for engaging our children in care in wider curriculum activities. They develop and support delivery of a large range of activity programmes during the school holidays.

Performance Officer: This officer is responsible for system development, data analysis and supporting the production of reports for the Virtual School Head and Team Managers, and to support the service in using data effectively to execute our duties.

Virtual School Coordinators: There are three Coordinator positions, each focusing on a different aspect of the Virtual School's operations and supporting the execution of statutory processes. The roles include:

- a PEP Coordinator, who monitors and oversees the ePEP system, supports schools and professionals in the completion of PEPs, and liaises with social

care colleagues to ensure PEPs are arranged and completed according to agreed timescales;

- an Attendance and Inclusion Coordinator, who monitors the Virtual School's attendance and suspension data, and supports with the monitoring of the CME cohort, and the NEET cohort;
- a Pupil Premium Plus Coordinator, who monitors and coordinates the devolvement of Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) and the Early Years Pupil Premium Plus (EYPP) funding to schools and settings, and ensures this funding is transmitted accurately and according to agreed timescales.

Structure

Virtual School Head (x 1)
Team Manager (x 3)
Education Officer (x 9)
Participation and Development Officer (x1)
Performance Officer (x 1)
Personal Education Plan Coordinator (x 1)
Attendance and Inclusion Coordinator (x 1)
Pupil Premium Plus Coordinator (x 1)

VS Staff Training and Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Virtual School Good Practice Event, June 2022

The Virtual School Head, in conjunction with regional VSHs from the East Midlands region, organised a conference in June 2022 which was attended by approximately 150 staff from the ten local authorities in the East Midlands region. The conference featured an engaging keynote address by the broadcaster Ashley John-Baptiste on his experience of the care system, with attendees then attending multiple breakout sessions, including sessions covering:

- The Department for Education's Post-16 Pupil Premium Plus trial;
- Use of the Signs of Safety methodology for PEPs (*session delivered by the Northamptonshire Virtual School*);
- Using data to appropriately identify developing concerns regarding CiC;

- External interventions available to support young people's SEMH and engagement.

Training delivered by the Virtual School

Summary

The Virtual School delivers multiple training courses aimed at Designated Teachers, Designated Governors, parents/guardians of PLAC, and colleagues in social care. All our courses are delivered free of charge, and provide information and advice specifically tailored to each audience. Multiple iterations of our courses are delivered across the academic year.

Our training programmes are delivered remotely, which enables easier participation from external attendees, and from attendees based outside Northamptonshire. Training opportunities are communicated to schools and settings by regular broadcast messages to DTs and DT supports on ePEP, in our communication with headteachers, and in our correspondence with schools with newly appointed DTs or DTs who are seeking to improve the quality of submitted PEPs. A total of 83 attendees, including delegates from 58 schools and settings, have attended our courses in the current academic year.

Below is an outline of the training courses organised and delivered by the Virtual School in 2021-2022:

Designated Teacher Training

The Virtual School runs training sessions for those newly appointed to the role of Designated Teacher (DT), in addition to refresher sessions for current DTs, which we recommend DTs attend every three years. These two courses provide a comprehensive outline of how DTs can support young people in care, and discuss topics including: the voice of the child; Pupil Premium Plus funding; raising awareness and staff training; SEN; mental health; partnership working, and admissions.

ePEP System and PEP Quality Training

This course is aimed at Designated Teachers and other members of school staff responsible for completing and completing PEP documentation, alongside social workers. The course explores the expectations the Virtual School has to ensure each

section of the PEP is of high quality. Participants are given an overview of why each section of the PEP is important and the kinds of responses that are both good and poor.

Governor Training

This course is aimed at nominated governors for looked-after and previously looked-after children, and interested governors and chair of governing bodies. The course covers the importance of governors advocating for looked-after and previously looked-after children (LAC and PLAC), how governors can support and challenge their school's Designated Teacher to ensure all LAC and PLAC are receiving a high quality education which suits their individual needs; and also learn more about the processes and policies associated with LAC and PLAC, including Pupil Premium Plus funding.

Social Care and Virtual School Partnership Working

This course is aimed at social workers of children in care to the Northamptonshire Children's Trust. This course gives an overview of how social workers can effectively promote the education of looked-after children through partnership working with the Virtual School. There will be an opportunity to ask general education questions that are not covered in the session. Topics covered included:

- School moves and applications
- Special Educational Needs and EHC plans
- Good communication with school
- Non-mainstream schools
- The PEP

Promoting the Education of Previously Looked-After Children (PLAC)

This course is aimed at parents and guardians of previously looked-after children, and examines how parents or guardians can work with schools effectively to support their child's education. It explores the duties schools have regarding previously looked-after children and advises on how parents or guardians can best advocate for their child. Areas covered include:

- educational achievement of PLAC

- what schools must do
- relationship building with school
- Pupil Premium Plus
- information sharing
- admissions
- choosing a good school

Quotes from Training Programmes

- "Thank you so much for the refresher training. Absolutely loved it, both myself and my colleague really enjoyed the interaction with you and other members of the Zoom meeting. It's good to listen to someone who is able to hold your interest due to the knowledge they have around the content of the training. I felt totally at ease with you and loved that you continued to ask us if we were all ok and giving time for us to ask you questions. I have definitely learnt things today that I was not aware of due to changes in guidance etc. A very enjoyable training session." - *Designated Teacher*.
- "Most useful LAC + PLAC session provided by the Virtual School" - *Designated Teacher*.
- "I have found this evening very valuable" - *Adoptive Parent*.
- "This was a really useful training session and will stand us in very good stead going forwards" - *Designated Teacher*.
- "a really interesting, informative and well-presented training session" - *School Governor*.
- "[the staff] said you were excellent and enjoyed the [whole school] training" - *Headteacher*.

Participation Programmes

The Virtual School ran a wide range of holiday activity programmes in the 2021-2022 academic year. Our programmes are designed to provide young people in care with the opportunity to take part in new activities, make new friends, and to provide foster carers and placements respite during the school holidays. We believe that engaging

vulnerable young people in positive activities and offering safe and trusted adults for the young people to talk to, encouraging a belief in their ability to succeed.

Our programmes are run during each school holiday period, and over the summer break, with activities are provided for young people resident in North and West Northamptonshire. Children in care to other local authorities are also welcome to attend, along with foster siblings and adopted children. A total of 139 young people have attended one or more of the Virtual School participation programmes during the academic year.

A selection of programmes we provided in 2021-2022 is displayed below:

- A virtual paint club, with materials delivered to young people's placements.
- Drama programmes, with young people producing and starring in a play presented to foster carers and councillors.
- Music and song writing programmes, providing young people with the opportunity to practice on a variety of different instruments and then to write and record their own songs.
- Sports programmes, including a tour of Northampton Town Football Club, football, rugby, hockey and rounders events, and a visit to a water park.
- An overnight camping visit to a horse therapy centre. Young people were able to practice caring for horses, trekking with llamas and alpacas, and sailing.

A selection of comments from foster carers and young people is displayed below:

- "The little one had the BEST time at Stable Mates, camp out, absolutely buzzing when she got home. Also exhausted so already tucked up, thank you again!" - *foster carer.*
- "We have secondary aged children in our care. There are next to no activities for children of this age group, so the support given by virtual school in providing these amazing variety of activities are greatly appreciated." - *foster carer.*
- "Thank you for offering these activities. Please never underestimate how much these are needed for the children and carers. Keep up the good work!" - *foster carer.*

- “3 children attended they all said it was the best summer ever all staff were friendly and funny, they all felt safe and had a great time!” - *foster carer*.
- “Great opportunity for the kids to get out and do some structured activities. Our young person did struggle when first attending these sessions but has now grown in confidence and welcomes the opportunity to get out and mix with others. As carers we really are grateful to be able to have some things in the diary especially over the 6-week holiday to help keep the kids busy.” - *foster carer*.
- “It was amazing I loved the horses and the camp I made new friends when can I do it again.” - *young person*.
- “The best, we love them and want more, especially stable mates and adventure ways. Leaders lots of fun. Loads new challenges and activities this year I was living my best life thank you.” - *young person*.
- “I made loads of new friends on the camp and rode a horse I had never done this before thank you.” - *young person*.
- “I enjoyed it. I liked the pedal karts best it was hard work I had the best day.” - *young person*.

Virtual School Advisory Panel

To offer scrutiny, the Virtual School has an Advisory Panel which meets once a term to review the performance of the Virtual School. This panel of ‘critical friends’ is made up of four headteachers and principals (representing primary, secondary, special, and further education settings), managers from social care, the Independent Reviewing Officer Service, and Education Psychology, a foster carer representative, a representative of alternative provisions, and Councillors.

The panel is chaired by Councillor Fiona Baker (Lead Member for Children, Families and Education on West Northamptonshire Council) and the termly report which the Virtual School produces for each meeting is then subsequently shared with the Corporate Parenting Board.

This year, sessions of the Advisory Panel have examined and reviewed the specific support provided for our Early Years cohorts, our post-16 cohorts, and the cohorts of young people who are missing education, and the cohort of persistent absentees, in

addition to termly reviews of the Virtual School's performance across all educational phases.

Children Missing Education (CME)

The Virtual School closely monitors all young people who are not enrolled at a school or setting. The Virtual School has a designated Education Officer who monitors the cohort of children missing education, supported by the Attendance and Inclusion Coordinator.

This officer liaises closely with connected professionals in social care, the IRO service, the Education Psychology service, and the Education Health and Care Team to identify the barriers preventing young people from being enrolled at a school or setting, and support and advocates securing a full-time educational placement for this cohort of children.

Previously Looked-After Children

The [statutory guidance](#) for Virtual Schools released in February 2018 increased the duty of the Virtual School Head to support the educational achievement of previously looked after children by making available information and advice to:

- any person that has parental responsibility for the child;
- providers of funded early years education, designated teachers for previously looked-after children in maintained schools and academies;
- any other person the authority considers appropriate for promoting the educational achievement of relevant children.

The Virtual School's training offer provides advice and support for schools and settings working with previously looked-after children, alongside training for the parents and guardians of previously looked-after children.

Our Children and Young People

Profile of the Virtual School Cohort

The data presented in the 'Profile of the Virtual School Cohort' section uses information for the Virtual School's cohort as of the 31st March 2022, unless indicated otherwise. The data presented in the charts below covers the statutory school-age cohort unless indicated otherwise. Due to rounding, the sum of percentages may not always total 100%.

Cohort Overview

As of the 31st March 2022, there were 512 young people in care to North Northamptonshire¹, of which 359 were of statutory school age.

Figure 1: Age profile of the Virtual School roll by academic phase, as of the 31st March.

	Academic Year 2021	Academic Year 2022
Reception	22	13
Key Stage 1	37	42
Key Stage 2	100	106
Key Stage 3	93	107
Key Stage 4	78	91

Gender

Figure 2: Gender profile of the Virtual School roll by academic year

	2021	2022
Male	165 (50%)	182 (51%)
Female	165 (50%)	177 (49%)

¹ This number includes children below nursery age, however this cohort is not displayed in this report as the Virtual School does not provide support for this group.

Ethnicity (Statutory School-Age)

Figure 3: Ethnicity profile of the Virtual School roll

	Number	%
WBRI - White British	287	79.9%
WOTH - Any Oth White b'ground	19	5.3%
MWBC - White & Black Caribbean	12	3.3%
MOTH - Any Oth Mixed b'ground	11	3.1%
BAFR - Black African	3	0.8%
MWAS - White and Asian	6	1.7%
MWBA - White and Black African	3	0.8%
OOTH - Any other Ethnic Group	4	1.1%
All other ethnicities	12	3.3%
Not Recorded	2	0.6%

Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP) and SEND

Figure 4: EHCP profile of the Virtual School roll by key stage

	No EHCP (2021)	EHCP (2021)	Total Cohort (2021)	No EHCP (2022)	EHCP (2022)	Total Cohort (2022)
Reception	21 (95%)	1 (5%)	22	10 (77%)	3 (23%)	13
Key Stage 1	32 (86%)	5 (14%)	37	38 (90%)	4 (10%)	42
Key Stage 2	79 (79%)	21 (21%)	100	86 (81%)	20 (19%)	106
Key Stage 3	66 (71%)	27 (29%)	93	76 (71%)	31 (29%)	107
Key Stage 4	51 (65%)	27 (35%)	78	62 (68%)	29 (32%)	91

The data in this section uses data provided from Personal Education Plans.

87 young people in the statutory school-age cohort were recorded as having an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), representing 24% of the cohort (rising to 28% for the OC2 cohort²).

² 'OC2' refers to the cohort of children who have been in care continuously for at least 12 months as of the 31st March.

Figure 5: SEND profile of the Virtual School roll by key stage

	No SEND (2021)	SEND (2021)	Total Cohort (2021)	No SEND (2022)	SEND (2022)	Total Cohort (2022)
Reception	17 (77%)	5 (23%)	22	7 (54%)	6 (46%)	13
Key Stage 1	26 (70%)	11 (30%)	37	25 (60%)	17 (40%)	42
Key Stage 2	46 (46%)	54 (54%)	100	56 (53%)	50 (47%)	106
Key Stage 3	44 (47%)	49 (53%)	93	37 (35%)	70 (65%)	107
Key Stage 4	39 (50%)	39 (50%)	78	42 (46%)	49 (54%)	91

The total number of statutory school-age CiC with recorded Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), including EHCPs, was 192, representing 53% of the statutory school-age cohort (rising to 55% for the OC2 cohort).

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

There were 9 young people in care who were Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) on the 31st March 2022 (including the post-16 cohort, which accounts for 33% of the UASC cohort).

School/Setting Locations and Ofsted Ratings

Figure 6: Proportion of the statutory school-age cohort attending schools and settings in Northamptonshire, neighbouring local authorities that border Northamptonshire, and local authorities which do not border Northamptonshire³

	2021	2022
North and West Northamptonshire	239 (74%)	254 (73%)
Local authorities (bordering Northamptonshire)	56 (17%)	63 (18%)
Local authorities (not bordering Northamptonshire)	30 (9%)	33 (9%)

³ This includes all upper-tier local authorities in the ceremonial counties which directly border North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire.

Figure 7: Ofsted ratings (outstanding, good, requires improvement, and inadequate) of schools and settings attended by the statutory school-age cohort, for schools and settings within and outside North Northants.

	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
North and West Northamptonshire (Total: 248)	45 (18%)	144 (58%)	38 (15%)	21 (8%)
Local authorities (bordering Northamptonshire) (Total: 62)	9 (15%)	46 (74%)	6 (10%)	1 (2%)
Local authorities (not bordering Northamptonshire) (32)	5 (16%)	22 (69%)	5 (16%)	0 (0%)
Total (342)	59 (17%)	212 (62%)	49 (14%)	22 (6%)

PEP compliance and quality (statutory school-age)

Figure 8: PEP completion by academic year

	PEP completed	PEP not completed
2021-2022	97% (1007/1036)	3% (29/1036)
2020-2021	97% (939/972)	3% (33/972)

Figure 9: PEP quality by academic year

	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
2021-2022	79% (798/1007)	19% (194/1007)	1% (15/1007)
2020-2021	63% (589/939)	33% (311/939)	4% (39/939)

Outcomes

Figure 10: Percentage of OC2 young people achieving a 9-4 pass in GCSE English and Maths, by academic year

	North Northants	Northamptonshire	National	Difference between the local and national figure
2021-2022	-%		-%	-%
2020-2021		32%	29%	+3%
2019-2020		28%	24%	+4%

Figure 11: Key Stage 4 - Average Attainment 8 Score

	North Northants	Northamptonshire	National	<i>Difference between the local and national figure</i>
2021-2022	-%		-%	-%
2020-2021		23.4	23.2	+0.2
2019-2020		23.5	21.3	+2.2

Figure 12: Early Years Foundation Stage - Good Level of Development

	North Northants	National
2021-2022	-%	-%
2020-2021	<i>Assessments not conducted due to Covid-19</i>	
2019-2020		

Figure 13: Year 1 Phonics Results - Working at/above standard

	North Northants	National
2021-2022	-%	-%
2020-2021	<i>Assessments not conducted due to Covid-19</i>	
2019-2020		

Figure 14: Year 2 Phonics Results - Working at/above standard

	North Northants	National
2021-2022	-%	-%
2020-2021	<i>Assessments not conducted due to Covid-19</i>	
2019-2020		

Figure 15: Key Stage 1 - Working at/above standard in Reading, Writing and Maths

	North Northants	National
2021-2022	-%	-%
2020-2021	<i>Assessments not conducted due to Covid-19</i>	
2019-2020		

Figure 16: Key Stage 2 - Working at/above standard in Reading, Writing and Maths

	North Northants	National
2021-2022	-%	-%
2020-2021	Assessments not conducted due to Covid-19	
2019-2020		

Attendance

Figure 17: Local and national data⁴ on attendance⁵ for children-in-care

	Overall Attendance (%) (North Northants)	Overall Attendance (%) (Northamptonshire)	Overall Attendance (%) (National)
2021-2022	88.6%		Not yet published
2020-2021		92.1%	90.9%
2019-2020		92.6%	Data not published

Figure 18: Local and national data⁶ on children-in-care classed as persistent absentees

	Persistent Absentees (%) (North Northants)	Overall Attendance (%) (Northamptonshire)	Persistent Absentees (%) (National)
2021-2022	29.6%		Not yet published
2020-2021		24.8%	30.4%
2019-2020		18.1%	Data not published

⁴ Using internal data for the 2021-2022 academic year, and the 2019-2020 academic year. Data for 2019-2020 uses information up to the start of the initial Covid-19 lockdown in March 2020.

⁵ Overall Attendance data adapted from the 'LAC Overall Absence' nationally published data.

⁶ Using internal data for the 2021-2022 academic year. Data for 2019-2020 uses information up to the start of the initial Covid-19 lockdown in March 2020.

Suspensions

Figure 19: Suspension data for the 2021-2022 academic year, by phase

	% of excluded CiC among whole cohort	Number of whole days lost
Primary	7%	57
Secondary	20%	26

Figure 20: Suspension data for the 2021-2022 academic year, by year groups in the secondary phase

	% of CiC Cohort	Number of whole days lost
7	17%	26.5
8	21%	62.5
9	31%	51.5
10	16%	73
11	19%	55.5

Figure 21: Local and national data on children in care with one fixed-term suspension, by academic year

	Children with one fixed-term exclusion (North Northants)	Children with one fixed-term exclusion (National)	(Difference from national figure)
2021-2022	13.9%	<i>Not yet published</i>	-
2020-2021⁷	11.9%	<i>Not yet published</i>	-

Permanent Exclusions

Two permanent exclusions were recorded in the 2021-2022 academic year. This is the first time in many years where a permanent exclusion of a child in care has occurred.

Early Years

On the 31st March 2022, there were 89 children in the Early Year's⁸ (EY) cohort.

⁷ Based on internal data for those CiC confirmed as being in care to NNC.

⁸ This includes all young people in care aged below the statutory Reception year group.

Figure 22: PEP completion by academic year

	PEP completed	PEP not completed
2021-2022	93% (79/85)	7% (6/85)
2020-2021	87% (65/75)	13% (10/75)

Figure 23: PEP quality by academic year

	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
2021-2022	80% (63/79)	19% (15/79)	1% (1/79)
2020-2021	80% (51/64)	20% (13/64)	0% (0/64)

Post-16

On the 31st March 2022, there were 64 children in the Virtual School's Post-16 cohort⁹.

Figure 24: PEP completion by academic year

	PEP completed	PEP not completed
2021-2022	76% (88/116)	24% (28/116)
2020-2021	97% (85/88)	3% (3/88)

Figure 25: PEP quality by academic year

	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
2021-2022	68% (59/87)	26% (23/87)	6% (5/87)
2020-2021	63% (53/84)	30% (25/84)	7% (6/84)

Figure 26: Proportion of the post-16 cohort in education, employment and training (EET), and those not in education, employment, training (NEET) by academic year

	EET	NEET
2022	54 (84%)	12 (16%)
2021	47 (80%)	12 (20%)

⁹ 'Post-16' specifically refers to the cohorts in Year 12 and Year 13.

Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)

For the 2021-2022 financial year the Virtual School received £2,345 of Pupil Premium Plus for each child in care of statutory school age. Funding was devolved to 407 young people attending 202 different schools and settings.

The Virtual School transmits the full yearly amount for each child in termly instalments if a PEP has been completed the previous term and was not deemed Inadequate. For those who are new to care the money is devolved once a PEP has taken place during the term they enter care.

Term	Amount per qualifying CiC
Summer 2021	£775
Autumn 2021	£785
Spring 2022	£785

The Personal Education Plan (PEP) provides a comprehensive plan of how the funding is spent and linked to smart targets. Progress is measured and reviewed at each PEP. Pupil Premium Plus is used for evidence-based intervention to support in the following areas:

- Academic achievement and progress
- Attendance and inclusion
- Social and emotional development
- Wider achievement
- Transition

The Virtual School identified a total of 49 pre-school children aged three to four in receipt of 15 hours of free childcare who were eligible for Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) and liaised with the Early Years Funding team to pay nurseries and early year providers. 30 different bases received this funding. The EYPP is used to narrow the gap in attainment and social development between children in care and their peers. Planned expenditure and associated progress is again recorded on the PEP.

In the 2021-2022 financial year, in addition to the Pupil Premium Plus payments to schools and settings (totalling just over £1.8million for the North and West Northants cohorts), the Virtual School has used centrally retained PP+ funding to commission and provide:

- An online PEP system (£21,875)
- An attendance collection and monitoring service (£38,025)
- The Virtual School Participation Programmes (£59,230)
- Support for placing young people in alternative provision (£43,129.75)

COVID-19 Recovery Premium

In accordance with the conditions of grant for Recovery Premium, the Northamptonshire Virtual School devolved the additional recovery premium to schools and settings for Children in Care. This grant was paid in two instalments in line with how the DfE paid the grant to local authorities.

The first instalment was in February 2022 in the 2021-2022 financial year and the second instalment will be paid in June 2022 in the 2022-2023 financial year.

For schools (excluding special schools) total recovery premium is £145, The first instalment of £73 was made in February 2022 for those on roll 31/01/2022. An additional £72 will be paid alongside the summer term Pupil Premium Plus payment for each eligible child.

For special schools and alternative provision settings total recovery premium is £290. The first instalment of £145 was made in February 2022 for those on roll 31/01/2022. An additional £145 was paid alongside the summer term Pupil Premium Plus payment for each eligible child.

The Northamptonshire Virtual School's expectation is that this additional funding will be accounted for in the child's spring and summer term PEPs.