

BRIEFING REPORT

CARDIFF Children Looked After (CLA) Education Annual Report

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

CARDIFF Children Looked After Education Annual Report

Background

The 'Cardiff 2030' highlights the continuing importance of focused action in several areas, including the continuing need to improve educational outcomes for Children Looked After.

Since the last Educational Report to CPAC 2021-2022 there have been changes to the LACE (Looked After Children in Education) Team, the assessment processes for schools linked to the curriculum changes as the Curriculum for Wales is adopted across the year groups and key stages and the continued implementation of the ALN Reform.

CLA Virtual School Cardiff

The pilot for the Virtual School (VS) and the role of the Virtual School Headteacher (VS HT) in Wales started for Cardiff in July 2022. The application for Welsh Government pilot funding was successful in July 2022. From September 2022 to March 2023 scoping work was carried out to consider the needs of Cardiff, this included the creation of the job description and person specification for the role of the VS HT. The recruitment process began in February 2023. The first VS HT was appointed in March 2023.

The application for the next year of Welsh Government funding for the Virtual School and Virtual School Headteacher has been received. The completed application must be received by 20th September 2023. The application will draw upon the work so far, the challenges ahead and the priorities identified for Cardiff.

The Virtual School Headteacher has provided a written review to Welsh Government of the work of the Cardiff CLA Virtual School. There was a follow up online interview with the research group carrying out the evaluation. The evaluation of the pilot will be published in the near future. No definite date has been set.

The National Development Group for CLA met in July 2023 for the first time since the last meeting pre pandemic. There are plans in place for the Virtual School Headteachers to meet and to work collaboratively. There are 22 local authorities (LAs) in Wales and currently there are 4 Virtual Schools and Headteachers. Other

LAs continue to work as they were. There are different reasons for this. One key reason is specifically related to the profile of the LA.

Reference the report presented to CPAC in November 2022. The report provided the background of the Virtual School model in Wales as well as identifying the key role and purpose of the VS and VS HT.

Reference the report to Scrutiny 4th July 2023. The report included key points of the work so far, the challenges ahead and the support needed to continue to bring about improvements and changes as identified.

Curriculum for Wales

For primary schools, the roll-out commenced in September 2022. Secondary schools who chose to roll-out the curriculum to Year 7 also started in September 2022; with the curriculum being mandatory for Year 7 and Year 8 from September 2023. The curriculum will roll-out year by year until Year 11 by 2026.

Assessments across the Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 have changed in line with the curriculum. We can no longer report on overall numbers and percentages of Outcomes at the end of Foundation Phase (Y2) and levels at the end of Key Stage 2 (Y6) and Key Stage 3 (Y9). Schools develop their own assessment and tracking processes to measure individual pupil progress. We will be working with schools to review the Personal Education Plans (PEP) format we use to accurately reflect the personalised assessments, where the pupil is with their development and learning and what is needed next to secure further progress

GCSE qualifications remain for 2022-2023. There are plans to reimagine a new generation of GCSE qualifications and reshape the wider 14-16 qualifications offer through Qualifications Wales.

ALN Reform

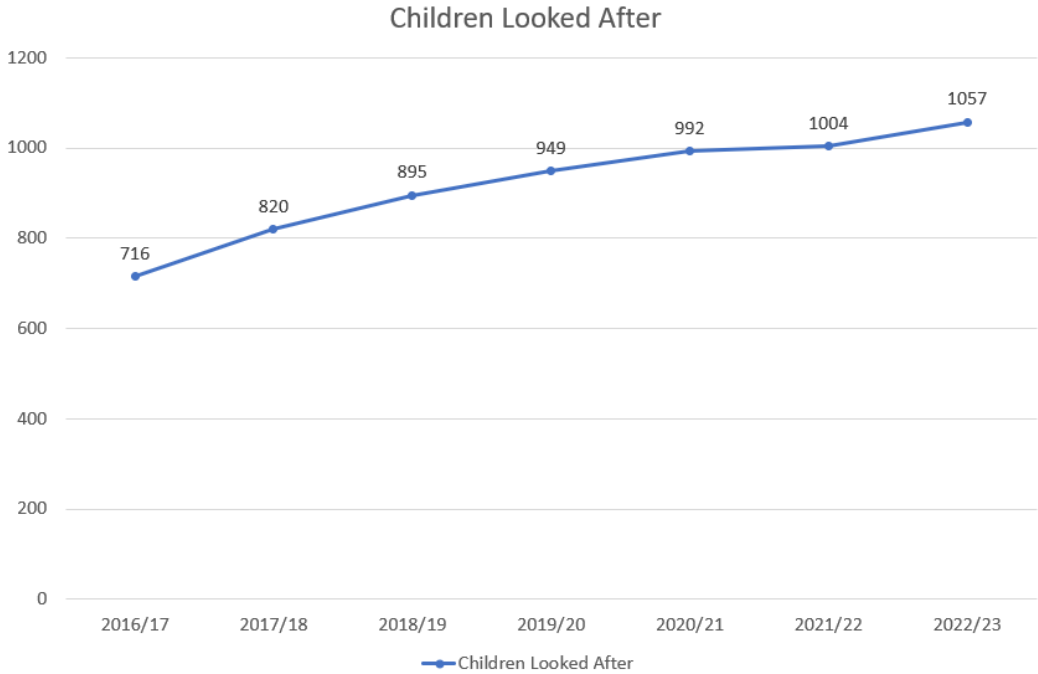
The ALN Reform is an important change for our children and young people. We have a very experienced Specialist Inclusion Teacher who oversees our children and young people who have identified Additional Learning Needs (ALN). The teacher has developed excellent relationships with schools and education settings. Through her expertise our children and young people have accurate and detailed Independent Development Plans (IDPs) that reflect their needs and how schools must provide for their ALN. The meetings held prior to the IDP being agreed and finalised are Person Centred Planning (PCP) meetings. The voice of our children and young people is integral to the meeting and outcomes. Where a pupil needs an IDP this becomes one document with their PEP.

We can see from the number of ALN notifications over the past year that the numbers of LA maintained IDPs for our children and young people are increasing. In 2021-2022 we had 7 new notifications in mandated years and in 2022-2023 we had 24. We know that the number of Specialist Provision requests is also increasing. The category of ALN need, Behaviour, Emotional, Social Development, is the most significant need.

There are a number of challenges Education face as we transfer the existing Statements to IDPs, carry out the reviews and ensure we have the correct provision to meet the many complex needs.

Introduction

The children identified as Looked After for the purposes of this report are those identified by Children’s Services on March 31st, 2023. The cohort is constantly changing due to adoption and children moving in and out of care.



The number of Children Looked After (CLA) in Cardiff continues to increase. The needs of the children in the system are also becoming more complex. We are still experiencing the challenges the pandemic brought and the recovery from the pandemic. This remains a challenge for all children. For our children and young people who have already experienced high levels of trauma and attachments difficulties the pandemic has brought further challenges. We work closely with schools and education settings, Children’s Services and Health to make sure their ability to learn and readiness to learn are prioritised; their social and emotional and mental health wellbeing is central to their educational outcomes.

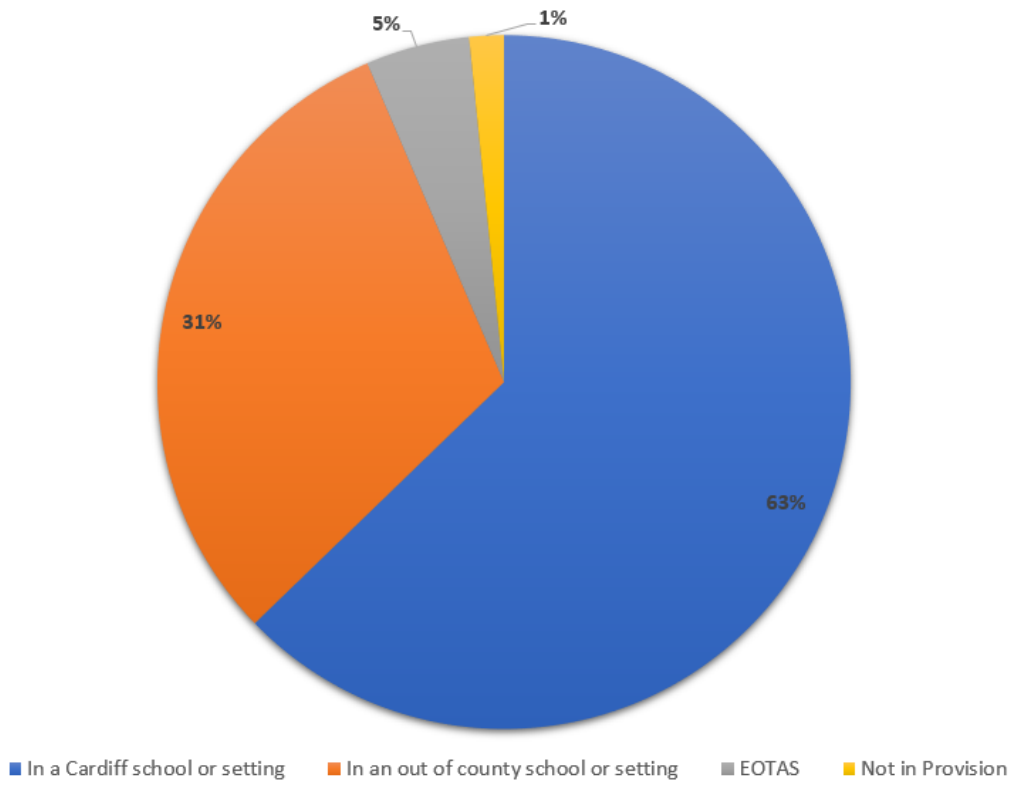
We are seeing an increase in the number of ALN notifications and the number of IDPs needed alongside an increase in the numbers of specialist provision requests places because a place in a mainstream school is not able to meet their complex needs. Specialist Provision places are increasing within Cardiff. Education and Children’s Services are working collaboratively to develop provision within Cardiff.

Given the numbers and challenges many of our children continue to achieve individual success and progress well in education, training, and employment. Our school staff, Education teams and Children’s Services work closely with our Virtual School Team to support our children and young people in many ways to allow them to feel safe and trust the adults around them. We have very good practice that continues to develop across all our settings that shows the adults understand the impact of working in consistent ways, responding with warmth and kindness and

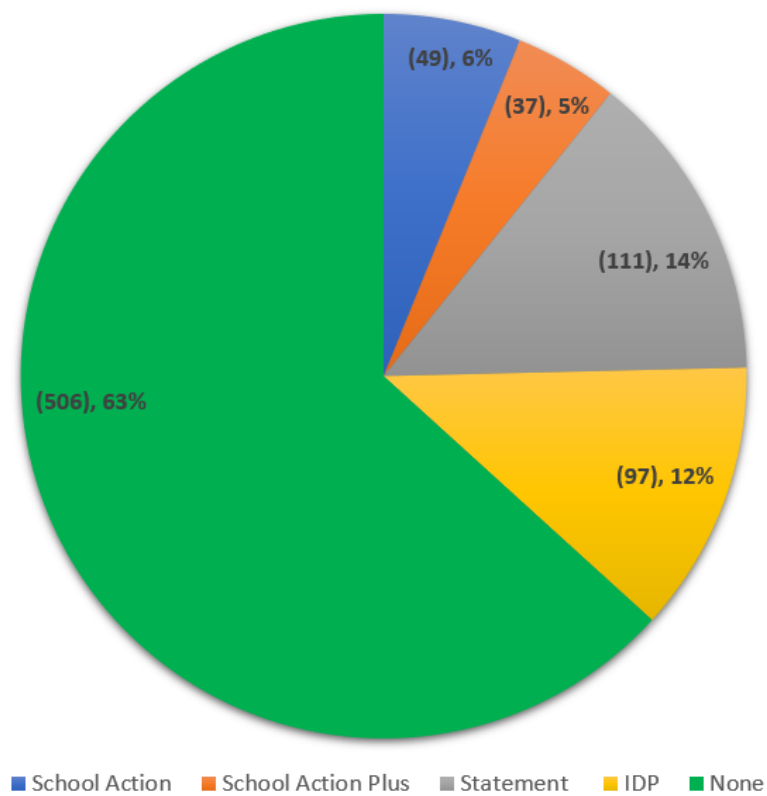
showing importantly the ability to really listen to what our children and young people are saying and need.

Information that can be shared

Where Cardiff Children Looked After are being educated:



Cardiff Children Looked After identified as having Special Educational Needs (SEN) / Additional Learning Needs (ALN)



Cardiff Children Looked After that have been 'Not in Provision'.

Time spent Not in Provision (NIP) academic year 2022/2023:	
Number of CLA from March 31st cohort NIP academic year 2022/23 living in Cardiff	11
Av school days NIP (Cardiff)	73
Number of CLA from March 31st cohort NIP academic year 2022/23 living in OOC	19
Av school days NIP (OOO)	71

Exclusion data

Incidents of Fixed Term Exclusions (FTE)	76
Days lost	142.5
CLA with 1 or more FTE	34
Average exclusion length	1.88
CLA with 5 or more days FTE	7
Categories FTE	
Assault/Violence (Pupil)	12
Assault/Violence (Staff)	8
Damage to Property	2
Disruptive Behaviour	21
Other	12
Substance Misuse	2
Verbal Abuse	19

Incidents of Permanent Exclusions (PEX)	2
CLA with 1 or more PEX	2
Categories PEX	
Assault/Violence (Staff)	1
Other	1

Progression of our Children Looked After into education employment and training.
Unable to provide until after 31/10/2023.

Successful Transition to Employment Education or Training:		
	# Y11	Y11s in a confirmed destination on 31 st October 2023
Total number of CLA in EET on October 31st		
%		
Total number of CLA in EET on October 31st (Cardiff)		
%		
Total number of CLA in EET on October 31st (OOC)		
%		
Total number of CLA in EET on October 31st (EOTAS)		
%		

Personal Education Plans

Personal Education Plans:	
Total number of CLA with a PEP this academic year	580
%	73%
Total number of CLA with a PEP this academic year (Cardiff Schools)	409
%	80%
Total number of CLA with a PEP this academic year (OOC Schools)	167
%	73%
Total number of CLA with a PEP this academic year (EOTAS)	36
%	82%

This year marks the second year that learners have completed formal exams and assessments since 2019, moving towards the return of pre-pandemic examination arrangements. The WJEC has given consideration to the disruption learners have experienced when deciding grade boundaries and Qualifications Wales have confirmed a national approach to results rather than school-specific.

The Virtual School Team have collected GCSE results for our pupils, but the full report will not be available until the end of October. An update report will be provided at the next meeting. However, we can share some important successes for our pupils.

Success stories

Pupil R

Destination: A levels at Sixth Form

- B English Lang
- B English Lit
- B Biology
- B Chemistry
- B Physics
- A* RS
- B Welsh Second Lang
- C Computer Science
- B Spanish
- P2 Welsh Bacc
- C Skills Challenge

Pupil D

Destination: A levels at Sixth Form

- C Maths
- C English Lang
- G Welsh Second Lang
- B Biology
- B Chemistry
- B Physics
- C RS
- B Food and Nutrition
- D H&SC
- Pass Welsh Bacc
- B Skills challenge

Pupil C

Destination: A levels at College

- C Maths Higher
- B Biology
- D Chemistry
- B Physics
- F Welsh Lang
- E Religious Studies
- F Computer Science
- C PE
- P2 Welsh Bacc
- C Skills Challenge
- A* Level 2 Certificate in Financial Capability

Pupil G

Destination: A levels at Sixth Form

- C Maths Higher
- C English Lang
- B English Lit
- BC Science
- B Welsh Second Lang
- C RS
- C Business
- C D&T
- Grade 5 Sociology
- P2 Welsh Bacc
- C Skills Challenge

Pupil S

Destination: A levels at College

- C Maths
- D Numeracy
- B English Language
- C English Literature
- C Applied Science
- E RE
- C PE
- C Art and Design
- Level 2 Pass Hospitality

Pupil K

Destination: A levels at College

- C Maths
- C Numeracy
- C English Lit
- C English Lang
- CD Science Double Award
- E Geography
- BTEC L1 Sport Pass
- BTEC L2 Pass in Personal Teamwork and Personal Dev in the community
- NCFE L2 Equality and Diversity
- L2 Pass WJEC Hospitality & catering
- Pass* Skill challenge
- L1 Pass Welsh bacc

What are we doing well to support our children in Education?

- ❖ Collaborative and integrated working with Education and Children's Service
 - VS is represented on Children's Services panels such as Resource Panel, Brighter Futures and Unregistered Placement. This means improved communication and relationships and educational decisions are discussed in a timely manner.
 - VS HT has regular meetings with representatives from Children's Services to discuss specific points that need to be discussed to improve outcomes.
 - Joint Education and Children's Services meetings are held regularly with agreed agendas and actions across both directorates.
 - VS HT meets with Director and Assistant Director of Education to discuss and plan the strategic work.
 - Liaising with social workers and Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO), supporting, providing advice, making direct contact with schools and attending meetings such as CLA reviews to ensure the needs of our children and young people are heard.
 - Regular meetings with colleagues in Education including the Inclusion Team, Admissions and Emotional, Health and Wellbeing Team to ensure our children and young people are prioritised.
 - Representing the VS on panels to discuss ALN notifications, CLA IDP Quality Assurance, Specialist Provision Requests, Education Risk considering education costs for children and young people placed in and out of county.
 - Working closely with Educated Other Than at School (EOTAS) to track our pupils, secure other resources and monitor registered educational groups such as tuition.

- ❖ Working with schools and other education settings in and out of county
 - School visits are prioritised according to need; these have helped significantly when there has been a notification of Additional Learning Needs (ALN).
 - School visits have been planned to review the CLA pupils. Where these have been completed this has provided excellent opportunities to improve ways of working.
 - The work of the Specialist Inclusion teacher, responding to ALN notifications, Person Centred Planning (PCP) meetings with the school and other professionals involved, writing the LA maintained IDP, reviewing the IDP and transferring the previous Statement of Educational Need to an IDP.
 - Providing termly governor training on Corporate Responsibility, explaining the role of governors, the role of an identified link governor for CLA and providing strategies to ensure the CLA are groups of children and young people in all schools are prioritised.

- ❖ Leadership and managing the change from the LACE to the VS Team

- Weekly Team meetings and INSET days to provide efficient communication systems and a whole Team approach to have shared objectives to achieve the desired outcomes for our children and young people.
 - Developing existing highly effective and efficient processes and procedures.
 - Comprehensive pupil files for the VS Team to ensure actions are completed and the pupil remains at the centre of all the decisions made.
 - Monitoring and tracking attendance figures.
 - Tracking pupil progress and achievements.
 - Collecting PEPs for all children and young people.
 - Liaising with Admissions in relation to new admissions, in year applications, changes, as well as liaising for our of county CLA moving into a Cardiff school or setting.
 - Planning and leading Designated Teacher Forums ensuring good communication, sharing of excellent practice, providing CPD opportunities, hearing the voices of our young people.
 - VS HT meetings with the National Development Group for VS Wales and representatives from WG.
 - Providing support to CLA Cluster Leads school developing the action plans that directly support our children and young people linked to the grant funding from WG for CLA, CLA PDG grant.
- ❖ Developing partnerships and relationships with other professionals and agencies
- Links and working with Goleudy, new Health, Children's Services and Education group.
 - Links and working with CASCADE, CLASS Cymru.
 - Attending the SAFE Partnership meetings to improve the wider understanding of the safeguarding issues for our pupils.
 - Links and working with colleagues at CAVC; including plans to provide school holiday sessions to encourage engagement and inspire future outcomes and improved life chances.
 - Strong links with Enfys.
 - Securing new ways of working i.e., a play therapist is working with one of our children. A case study will be completed to show the impact and influence next steps.

Priorities and future plans in Education to improve outcomes for Children and Young People Looked After

24th July 2023 this was the first INSET Day for the whole VS Team. It marks the first of whole day training opportunity for the Team to reflect on the work so far, consider what has gone well, what we need to improve, the challenges we face, identify the priorities and set key objectives and actions for the year ahead.



Vision

We have a strong vision of what we want to achieve in Education through the integrated and collaborative approach between all Education Services, Children's Services and Health.

Funding

The financial security of the WG grant continuing is integral to the development and future success. The current situation does not support future planning. Commitment and clarity are needed from WG. The education, training and employment of our children and young people must be everyone's responsibility.

Impact

The needs of our children and young people are diverse and complex. Each child and young person is an individual and reporting on impact will be important to develop the use of case studies. There will be some data, quantitative, as well as recognising the place and significance of the narrative, qualitative, in the form of case studies.

Timescale

It is still early days and there is still a significant amount of work to do; keeping our children and young people at the centre of all our work as well as prioritising the wider, longer term strategic work to secure the sustainability of making improvements for our children and young people. So far, the networking, reaching out to a wide range of professionals and agencies, improved communication and relationships have already had a direct impact on improvements for our children and young people.