

Report to: CHILDREN'S TRUST
Meeting date: 1 March 2011

Outcomes for Children in Care

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Introduction/Summary:

- 1.1 In the 2010 Key Stage 2 National Tests for 11 year olds 4 out of the 17 children [23.5%] in care achieved a Level 4 or above in English and mathematics. This is in line with school projections but significantly below the national average. For 5 x A* - C GCSE with English and maths, 3 out of 24 sixteen year olds in care achieved 5 x A* - C GCSE with English and maths. The performance has improved from 9.38% in 2009 to 12.5% in 2010. Nationally, 12.0% children in care achieved this benchmark figure. A further 5 students achieved 5 x A*-G or equivalent.
- 1.2 There has been a significant increase in the number of children in care since September 2010.

Recommendations:

Recommendation 1: To note the contents of the report.

Recommendation 2: The Trust is asked to note both the projected improvement in achievement in 2011 and the significant increase in the numbers of children in care between September 2010 and January 2011.

Purpose:

For information

National Indicator:

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Circulation: Trust members, senior advisors, advisors and guests. This document should be treated as Private and Confidential.

Consultation: -

Background papers: -

1. Introduction / Background

- 1.1 There are currently 240 children in care on roll as of 13 Jan 2011, up from 191 in September 2010; the largest increase is in Key Stage 4 numbers. There are currently 66 children in care aged four years or below.

2. Current Progress

- 2.1 There have been significant changes in the way the cohorts for children in care National Indicators are fixed. In the past, cohorts have been based on children who have been in care for a year in the September they sat their KS2 SATs or KS4 examinations. The current Y11 and Y6 cohorts will be based on children who are in care from March 31 2011 until March 31st 2012 and take KS2 SATs or KS4 examinations in 2011. Therefore, we will have a clear indication of the starting point for the cohorts on March 31st 2011.
- 2.2 In September 2010 schools were targeting 6 out of 31 children in care in Year 11, i.e. 19% to achieve 5 x A*-C with English and maths. Current data suggests that it is now 5 out of 35 children in care, i.e. 14.3%. Only 5 children in care attend LBBB mainstream secondary schools.
- 2.3 Y10 children in care numbers have increased from 25 students in September 2010 to 33 in January 2011. In September 2010 schools were targeting 4 out of 25 children in care, i.e. 16%, to achieve 5 x A*-C with English and maths; current data suggests that it is now 5 out of 33, i.e. 15.1%.
- 2.4 Y6 children in care numbers have increased from 17 to 20 since September 2010 when schools were targeting 8 out of 17 students to achieve a Level 4 in English and maths, 47%. This has now changed to 8 out of 20 students, or 40%, an improvement on last year's figure.

3. Key Actions Taken

- 3.1 The Lead Officer for children in care has worked with the Attendance Team to ensure that Welfare Call has been used strategically to enable patterns of attendance to be scrutinised with an immediate follow-up. The 90% attendance of children in care is enabling them to access more education. The immediate target is to reach the borough average attendance figure for all children.
- 3.2 We have increased the capacity of Designated Teachers to deliver improvements in outcomes for children in care. The first Designated Teacher Network Meeting was hosted by Gascoigne Primary School. Sydney Russell School presented on their Aim Higher children in care partnership with the University of East London and Gascoigne Primary School outlined their highly effective tracking and support systems. The first termly Designated Teacher Bulletin was published in the autumn 2010 term; the second bulletin and network meeting are planned for the end of March 2011.
- 3.3 We have implemented a quality assurance cycle which has sampled the quality of education and progress for children in care in six secondary schools in the autumn

term 2010. The meetings were held with Designated Teachers and individual children in care in the six schools and had both a monitoring and training focus. In the spring term 2011 we are focusing on six primary schools; four visits have been undertaken by early February.

- 3.4 The Looked After Children advisory team continues to run twice yearly Governor Training Workshops and to publish a Governors' bulletin to provide updates on children in care issues and to draw attention to the need for Governing Bodies to hold schools to account for the progress of children in care. Twelve governors attended the most recent workshop which received very positive evaluations.
- 3.5 Matthew Cole, Director of Public Health, NHS Barking & Dagenham, has written to advise all GPs undertaking Health Reviews for children in care that they will not receive payment unless a Healthcare Plan is completed with the intention of improving the quality of health care planning for children in care.
- 3.6 There are currently 23 non LBBB children in care placed in our schools. Informal reciprocal arrangements with neighbouring local authorities are in place to support these young people. We work with virtual head teachers when problems arise for non-LBBB children in care within our borough schools. They in turn support us with issues in their schools. Where local authorities use Welfare Call to monitor non LBBB children in care in borough schools we are able to access that information. To formalise reciprocal arrangements and develop monitoring procedures we have set up an East London Network for Virtual Headteachers. The first network meeting is scheduled for March 2011 with representation from Redbridge, Havering, Waltham Forest, Newham and Thurrock.
- 3.7 Schools have been reminded about the National Strategies funding for 1:1 tuition. Take-up is improving: twelve primary/junior schools, Trinity Special School and four secondary schools have used the funding for children in care.

4. Priorities and Further Action

- 4.1 Improve the quality and completion rate of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) by training Designated Teachers and social workers on a regular basis and by system improvement. Review the quality and impact of PEPs as part of the termly monitoring visits. In the longer term investigate the use of an electronic PEP.
- 4.2 Ensure that the policy for the use of the Educational Allowance is fully understood by all professionals. Encourage the use of the allowance to fund the activities that a parent might provide, e.g. individual tuition and educational resources.
- 4.3 Integrate the children in care Outcomes Group with a Governing Body for the LBBB Virtual School by inviting one secondary and one primary head teacher representative to become members of the expanded group.
- 4.4 Maintain and enhance the established partnership with Further Education. We have recently embarked on a new partnership project with the University of East London/Frank Buttle Trust.
- 4.5 Obtain up-to-date information on school-based extra-curricular activities and additional support currently being offered to gain a more rounded profile of children in care progress.

- 4.6 When local authorities have completed their financial planning and the personnel are confirmed, establish a partnership with two other local authorities as means of peer monitoring for improvement.