



## Head Teacher Report

Peterborough Children in Care

Academic Year September 2021-August 2022

### PVS (Peterborough Virtual School) Vision

To ensure all children in care receive a high quality, aspirational education which meets their holistic needs in a safe environment and relationally driven culture.

### Guiding Principles

We believe that:

- the voice of the child/young person is of paramount importance
- all children and young people in our care should receive a high-quality, aspirational education
- all children and young people in our care should have an education that meets their holistic needs
- attuned connections are integral to the well-being of all children and young people in our care, resulting in reciprocal, trusting relationships
- effective liaison and integrated working with all key stakeholders is essential for person-centred planning

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## 1 Purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the activity of the Peterborough Virtual School for the academic year 2021-2022. It reflects on achievements and identifies areas in need of development to achieve the best outcomes for this vulnerable group.

### 1.1 Peterborough Context

Peterborough Virtual School sits within the Schools Standards and Effectiveness Team and is accountable to the Service Director of Education Peterborough and Cambridgeshire. The Virtual School Head teacher (VSH) is line-managed and supported by the Service Director of Education for Peterborough and Cambridgeshire and reports to Corporate Parenting Committee and Corporate Parenting Board.

Nationally, there has been a gradual increase in the numbers of Children in Care. In Peterborough, the numbers of CiC has remained broadly stable (between 350 – 374) for the last 8 years. The percentage of CiC in Peterborough who have remained within the same care placement for at least two years has increased from 69% in 2018 to 73% in 2021. This is higher than the national average. The number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children decreased in 2021 to 20 children; this reflects the national data for this year. The proportion of CiC in Peterborough with an Education Health Care Plan (29.9%) is above the national average for CiC (28.9%)

## 2 Role of the Virtual School

The Children Act 1989 places a duty on the Local Authority (LA) to promote the educational achievement of children looked after by them, wherever they live or are educated by:

- Working in partnership with all agencies to ensure appropriate education provision.
- Ensuring quality Personal Education Planning (PEP).
- Managing the Pupil Premium Plus funding for children in care.

Our role is to:

- promote high aspirations and raise achievement through challenge, support, and targeted interventions for children in care
- ensure that children in care access high quality teaching and learning
- work closely with all those involved in the care and education of children in care; providing training and support to help understand the issues and challenges they face
- co-ordinate and quality assure all Personal Education Plans (PEPs)
- monitor and challenge schools to make the most effective use of Pupil Premium Plus Grant (PPPG)
- ensure effective transition is provided between schools or specialist providers
- ensure Special Education Needs or Disability needs are identified and supported appropriately with an integrated plan
- celebrate the achievements of our children in care
- lead training for Foster Carers, Designated Teachers, school governors and bespoke training for educational settings and staff in schools
- provide advice and guidance to schools, parents and others for children previously in care
- promote the education of children with a social worker

The Virtual School does not replace the school or educational provision of children in care; it is an additional resource, which exists to support and challenge all those involved in the education of children in care. It is involved in, or promotes nationally and locally, various initiatives to enhance the educational achievement of children in care. All Peterborough children in care, from the age of 2 to 18 are monitored by Peterborough Virtual School regardless of where they are placed. A Personal Education Plan (PEP) is reviewed termly for each child and includes their progress and attainment information as well as a record of interventions, often funded through the Pupil Premium Plus Grant, to ensure every child is given the opportunity to make accelerated progress.

Peterborough Virtual School offers advice and guidance to those working with all statutory school-aged children who have been declared as being 'Previously in Care' who attend a Peterborough education setting. The remit for promoting the education of children with a social worker is also for those attending a Peterborough education setting.

## 2.1 Team Structure

### LA Funded Posts

Post Name	FTE
Virtual School Headteacher	FTE
Primary Education Coordinator	FTE
Post 16 Education Coordinator	FTE
Education Advisor for Children Previously in Care	P/T
Strategic Lead for Children with a Social Worker	FTE

### Pupil Premium Funded Posts

Post Name	FTE
Secondary Education Coordinator	FTE
Specialist Teacher Maths Primary & Forest School <i>(in partnership with Ravensthorpe Primary)</i>	P/T
Specialist Teacher of Literacy Primary <i>(in partnership with Nene Valley Primary)</i>	P/T
Early Years Advisor <i>(commissioned from Early Years Team)</i>	P/T
Educational Psychologist	FTE
Primary Higher Level Teaching Assistant <i>(in partnership with Nene Valley Primary)</i>	FTE
Business Support Officer	P/T

Recognising the needs identified in previous years, this team structure aims to achieve improvements to the educational outcomes of CIC through a school support model. This allows for a small team, with sufficient influence and expertise, to improve outcomes through support and challenge to all education settings. Additional expert staff provide interventions for individual children who are identified as requiring support with learning or self-regulation.

### 3 Cohort Characteristics

#### 3.1 Cohort Characteristics – Whole Virtual School

Peterborough Virtual School ( <i>March 31st, 2022</i> )	Pupils	% of Total
Total number on school roll (pre-school to Year 13)	317	100%
Peterborough CiC - in Peterborough schools or education settings	143	45.1%
Peterborough CiC - in Out of Peterborough Schools or Education Settings	167	52.7%
Peterborough CiC - Pre-school or Post-16 with setting unmatched	7	2.2%
Male	187	59.0%
Female	130	41.0%
Ethnicity - White British	201	63.4%
Ethnicity - Not White British	116	36.6%
*Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)	21	6.6%

*\*There is 1 in Year 11, 9 are in Year 12 and 11 are in Year 13*

	Academic Year Groups														
	Pre-school	Reception	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Cohort Count	17	4	12	6	13	13	17	22	22	36	33	23	26	46	27
% of Total	5%	1%	4%	2%	4%	4%	5%	7%	7%	11%	10%	7%	8%	15%	9%

Source: ePEP Database – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

### 3.2 Cohort Characteristics - SEND Pupils

Special Educational Needs	Pupils	% of Total Cohort
Number of Schools/education Settings attended	165	
EHCP or Statement of SEN (Special Education Needs) 42 of the children attend mainstream settings, 36 attend special schools, 6 are in residential settings, 1 is on an apprenticeship, 1 is awaiting placement, 3 are NEET and 1 is in a Secure Unit	90	28.4%

Academic Year Groups of SEND Cohort															
	Pre-school	Reception	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Cohort Count	1	3	0	7	5	3	11	7	12	13	7	8	9	4	1
% SEN Cohort	1%	3%	0%	8%	6%	3%	12%	8%	13%	14%	8%	9%	10%	4%	1%

Source: ePEP Database – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

### 3.3 Cohort Characteristics – Children Previously in Care

Children Previously in Care (CPiC)	Pupils	% of Total
Total number in Peterborough schools	257	100%
Primary School (including LA Maintained Nursery School) – total 59	167	65%
Secondary School – total 11	43	16.7%
All-through School – total 3	33	12.8%
Special School – total 5	14	5.4%

Source: Peterborough School Census Pupil Summary – October 2021

### 3.4 Cohort Characteristics – Children in Need or Child Protection Plans

	Children who have had a child in need plan (CiN) or child protection plan (CP) within the last 6 years			
	Child in Need (CiN)		Child protection (CP)	
	Cohort	% of cohort	Cohort	% of cohort
Total Cohort	456	100%	213	100%
Female	231	50.7%	119	55.9%
Male	225	49.3%	94	44.1%
Babies 0 to 2	71	15.6%	50	23.5%
Nursery/Preschool	27	5.9%	24	11.3%
Reception to Year 11	323	70.8%	138	64.8%
Post 16	35	7.7%	1	0.5%

*CiN/CP data captured from Liquid Logic on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2022*

## 4 Training and Development

The Virtual School is committed to developing the practice of professionals working with CIC so that they have the relevant knowledge, information, and skills to enable them to fulfil their role in contributing to educational outcomes and raising aspirations. This has contributed to an improvement in the quality of PEPs and a greater understanding of the importance of advocacy on the part of carers. Social workers and carers are actively involved in the PEP process and more confident in challenging around Pupil Premium as an example. Our website and You Tube channel house all our training materials and are publicised through our email broadcast facility within our electronic PEP provider, foster carer newsletters and our Twitter page.

We offer both live and virtual training to allow flexibility for our target audiences.

### 4.1 Designated Teacher Training

Training sessions for new to the role Designated Teachers, both in and out of city, addressing PEP completion specifically but also the wider role required are provided regularly. The sessions aim to equip school professionals with the necessary skills to maximise the achievement of children in care through excellent education planning. We hosted a virtual conference for Designated Teachers in September 2021, and whilst successful, was a logistical and involvement challenge highlighting the benefit of ‘live events.’

We also offer:

- Emotion Coaching
- Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated Person for CPiC
- Educational Considerations for CPiC
- Bespoke training packages for settings where required



Feedback from training sessions linked to the aims of the sessions indicate an increased understanding and confidence in all areas. Examples of feedback include:

### Emotion Coaching Training

Emotion Coaching training (1 full day) is delivered termly to school professionals. Combined feedback from the 21/22 sessions indicates that on average, attendees increased their knowledge and understanding of Emotion Coaching by 1.5 points and their confidence in using Emotion Coaching by 3 points from their initial baseline.

*"This has been so informative. I really understand how effective Emotion coaching can be and how you can alter a child's way of thinking. I now feel a lot more confident when dealing with children in school, especially some of the Looked After Children who have had a lot of change in their lives. I feel that I am now more able to confidently speak to these children and think of my own emotions first." (Designated Teacher)*

*"It has enhanced the skills I endeavour to practice in my role and given me a clearer idea of how to bring it to the Senior Leadership Team for a whole school approach. I am taking away so much - thank you." (Designated Teacher)*

### Educational Considerations for CPiC Training

Educational Considerations for CPiC training runs bi-annually across two – three-hour sessions. Feedback from professionals attending the March sessions showed an average score of 4.8/5 in understanding and confidence following the sessions.

*"The training course today was packed full of really useful resources and a great mix of presentation and discussion. I would highly recommend this training course and I would like to attend any further training delivered by the team. The trainer is extremely knowledgeable and her passion for this cohort of children shines through." (DT)*

*"A very thorough training, clear resources and good to have the theory to back up practice. Thank you" (DT)*

## 4.2 Social Worker Training

New social workers are referred to the VS for training in the completion of PEPs and other matters relating to education. To improve the offer, and maintain high levels of compliance and quality, fortnightly PEP clinics are held with VS staff available for training support and advice. There are also training modules developed by the PVS team on our electronic PEP provider and available on our website.

Social workers attended 89% of PEP meetings in 21/22. This was a decrease of 4.8% compared to 20/21 when all PEP meetings were held virtually and is also an indicator of the levels of staff sickness that was seen in 21/22. To ensure an increase in attendance at PEP meetings, our offer to social workers has increased to weekly PEP in-person and virtual PEP clinics. Furthermore, a development for 22/23 will be to ensure that social care managers are aware of PEP meetings dates and times and will therefore be able to offer a substitute when there is social worker absence.



## 4.3 Foster Carer Training

Our Educational Psychologist is available for consultation, and we offer a range of training opportunities for foster carers, both in house and agency.

- Vocabulary Development
- How to support your child with their education – Early Years/Preschool
- How to support your child with their education – Primary
- How to support your young person with their education – Secondary
- How to support your child with their education – Post 16 (for young people in Y9-Y13)
- How to support your child/young person with transitions (focusing on moving up from Primary to Secondary school)
- Supporting school readiness and transitions to school (Early Years)
- Supporting your child as a reader (FS and KS1)
- How to support your Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Child (UASC)
- Making a positive contribution to Personal Education Plans
- My future self - How to support your child to develop high aspirations
- Supporting your younger child as a writer (KS1)
- Supporting your older child as a writer (KS2)
- Supporting Children with Maths at KS1 and KS2

There has been an increase in attendance at PEP meetings (+1%) in 21/22 compared to the average of the last three years following the introduction of this extended training offer. There has been an improvement in the number of PEPs with the carer section completed. This will be an area for development in 22/23.

## 4.4 Connected Communities Project (*Trauma Responsive*)

### About the Connected Communities Programme

Connected Communities is a trauma-responsive project which aims to support schools to embed trauma-responsivity in their school environment, policy, culture and practice. The first year of the course is a training phase and the second year takes the form of network meetings to embed training content and share practice. There are currently 24 settings involved in this project at different stages.

Five schools completed the project by July 2022. Semi-structured solution-focused interviews with the two school participants and Headteachers of each setting were used to collect qualitative information about the impact of the project as seen below:

What is the impact of Connected Communities In Your Setting?



The following quotes from course participants exemplify some of the main themes noted above:

A safer environment

*“Making sure the safe space is moving forwards. It is taking the safe space back to where our vision was, around the school, not just in the classroom. Children need to know they have a safe space every day. I asked a young person about lunchtime support, which is making us think about safe spaces outdoors during more chaotic times.”*

Changing policies and practice: a relational approach

*“Themes from Connected Communities are now included in our behaviour policy. It has permeated everything we do. Connected Communities has given us other strategies. What you see is staff using an increasing number of strategies tailored accordingly. There is no pressure for staff that they are getting it wrong, they call on their training and knowledge and apply the empathetic ethos, linked to policy changes.”*

Improved Emotional Literacy Skills

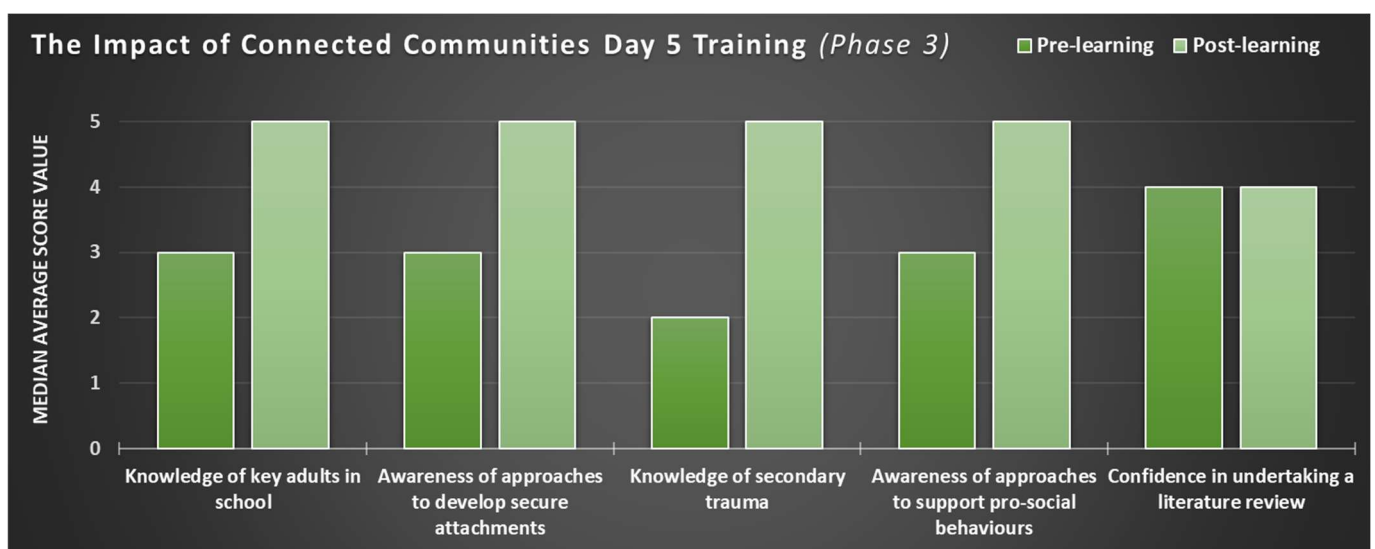
*“There are children and young people who are now regulated more frequently. Some are beginning to recognise those early feelings of dysregulation and are learning to do something about it.”*

Engagement with the trauma-informed lens

*“There is a changing culture towards understanding behaviour in school. Emotion Coaching is a tool to use to help children to regulate and to provide a greater understanding as to why behaviour may result in the tricky environment of school, why might it be tricky for them? How to work with them in the classroom rather than take it up to the Senior Leaderships Team to deal with.”*

## Evaluation Data

Quantitative and qualitative data is also collected after every training session. Below is an example of the impact of a training session showing the difference between pre and post learning:



The information above indicates that on average, attendees increased their knowledge, understanding and confidence by 1.8 points.

## Connected Communities Conference

On 21st November 2021, Peterborough Virtual School hosted a conference entitled 'Interpersonal Neurobiological Change: A Relational Challenge for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education.' The conference celebrated the impact of the Connected Communities course on the first cohort of schools. The conference introduced a relational challenge for practitioners attending. Two external speakers were used; Luke Rogers, BEM talking about the lived experiences of children in care and Mandy Ruddock, Occupational Therapist outlining sensory needs and how to support them. The conference had 137 attendees.

The attendees were asked to rate the relevance using a Likert Scale from 1 to 5 (1 being the least relevant and 5 being the most relevant of the Connected Communities conference to the attendees' practice. The average rating was 4.74 showing the conference was relevant and supportive of the work in schools.

Below are comments from the evaluations of the attendees, most of whom were Designated Teachers:

*"Thank you for a brilliant and worthwhile conference. There was a lot of information and useful resources to take away and use within my setting. I'm excited to continue to develop this area of support within my school."*

*"Just a big thank you from the children who will come through our school. I will ensure today's learning impacts them positively."*

*"I am dedicated to changing the way my practitioners see behaviour and direct them into opening their minds to our children's complicated needs."*

## 4.5 Children in Care Council

The voice of the child/young person is of paramount importance to our work as a Virtual School. To this end, staff members attend Children in Care Council (CiCC) meetings to seek the view of Children in Care. Staff attend CiCC meetings and Informal Corporate Parenting Committee meetings.

Activities with the CiCC have included:

- Improving ePEP questions for the child/young person section
- A Logo Competition where the winners of the competition worked with a local designer to professionally produce the new PVS logo
- Sharing with a range of professionals the 'Our Ideal Workers' video made by CiCC

The impact of this work is that the Children in Care feel that their voice has been heard:

*"The CiCC reflected that they feel empowered and informed about the impact of their feedback. They enjoy the pace of work and feel their timescales and capacity is respected by the Virtual School." (Youth Voice Worker)*

One of the winners of the Logo Competition was inspired by working with the designer and now wants to pursue this as a career. This has been supported by PVS by purchasing, through Pupil Premium Plus funding, software for the young person to develop his skills.



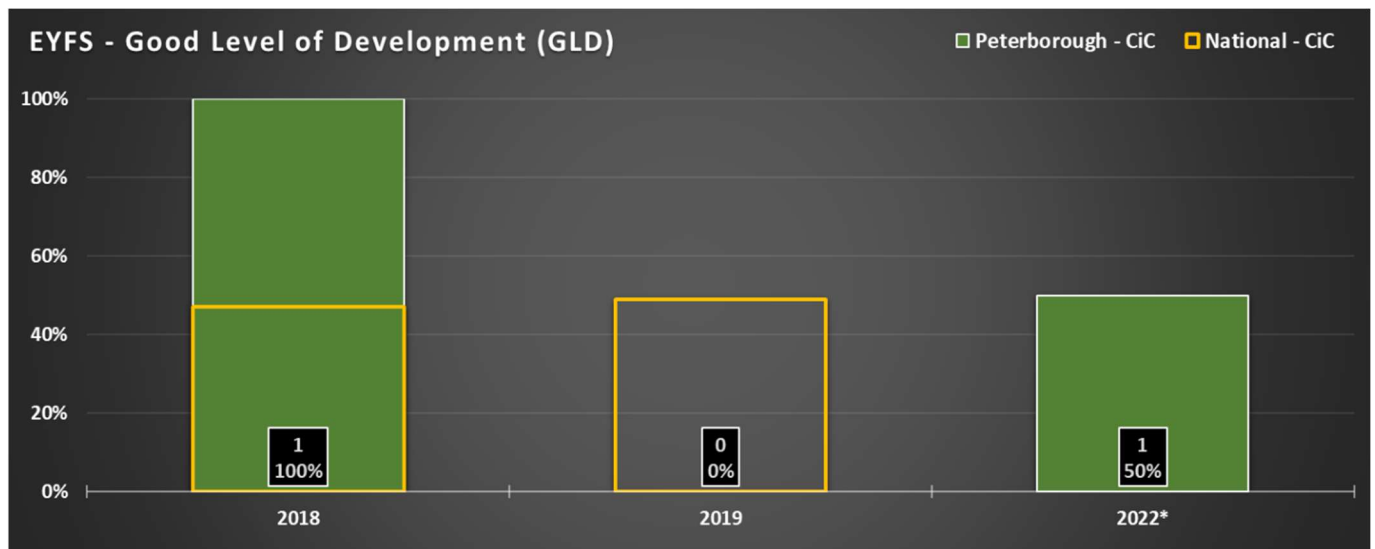
The 'Our Ideal Workers' video has been shared at all training sessions which will raise awareness of how professionals should best respond to CiC.

## 5 Learning Outcomes

### 5.1 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

This is the first set of teacher assessed EYFS judgements since 2019 with the previous two years being cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Children are defined as having reached a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the EYFS if they have achieved the expected level for the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) in the prime areas of learning and the specific areas of mathematics and literacy.



Peterborough - CiC Cohort		
2018	2019	2022*
1	2	2

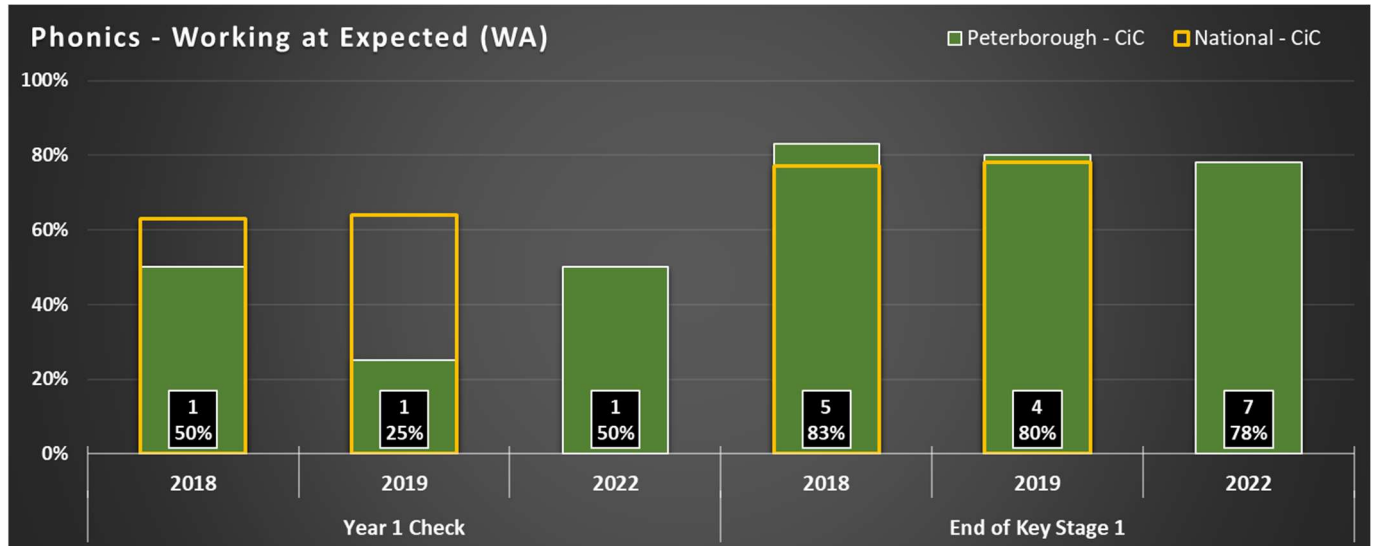
*\*The child who did not achieve GLD in 2022, was at the expected standard in all areas apart from fine motor skills and writing*

This cohort contained 2 children, so the data set is statistically unmeaningful.

To ensure that the number of CiC achieving a Good Level of Development grows in coming years, the Early Years Specialist attends all Early Years PEPs to ensure the quality of education is higher. Foster Carers have also been offered training, 'How to Support Your Child in Education: Pre-school and Early Years.' The impact of this training is currently unknown and will potentially be seen in the next academic year's results.

## 5.2 National Phonics Screening Check

These are the first phonics screening check statistics since 2019, after assessments were cancelled in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic. These statistics cover the attainment of year 1 and year 2 pupils. Those pupils who took these assessments in summer 2022 experienced disruption to their learning during the pandemic.

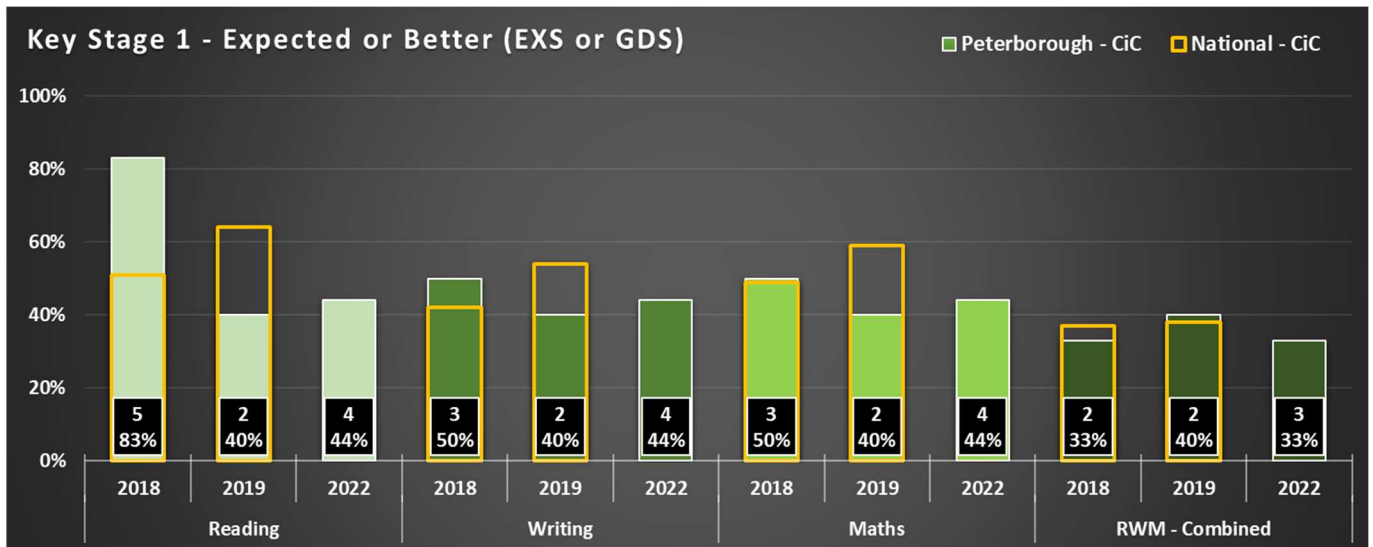


Peterborough - CiC Cohort			
	2018	2019	2022
Year 1 Check	2	4	2
End of Key Stage 1	6	5	9

The cohort size of Year 1 was 2 children. This data should therefore be read with caution due to the small data set. The cohort of Year 2 children shows 7 out of 9 children (78%) achieved the expected standard in the National Phonics Screening Check.

Supporting children to achieve this national standard was a key focus for Peterborough Virtual School's literacy intervention team who worked with settings to provide 1:1 intervention for children where required. The 2 children who did not achieve the expected standard are placed out of city and so the intervention team were unable to provide in-person intervention. They did, however, through attendance at PEP meetings ensure that sufficient support for the children was in place through their settings.

## 5.3 Key Stage 1

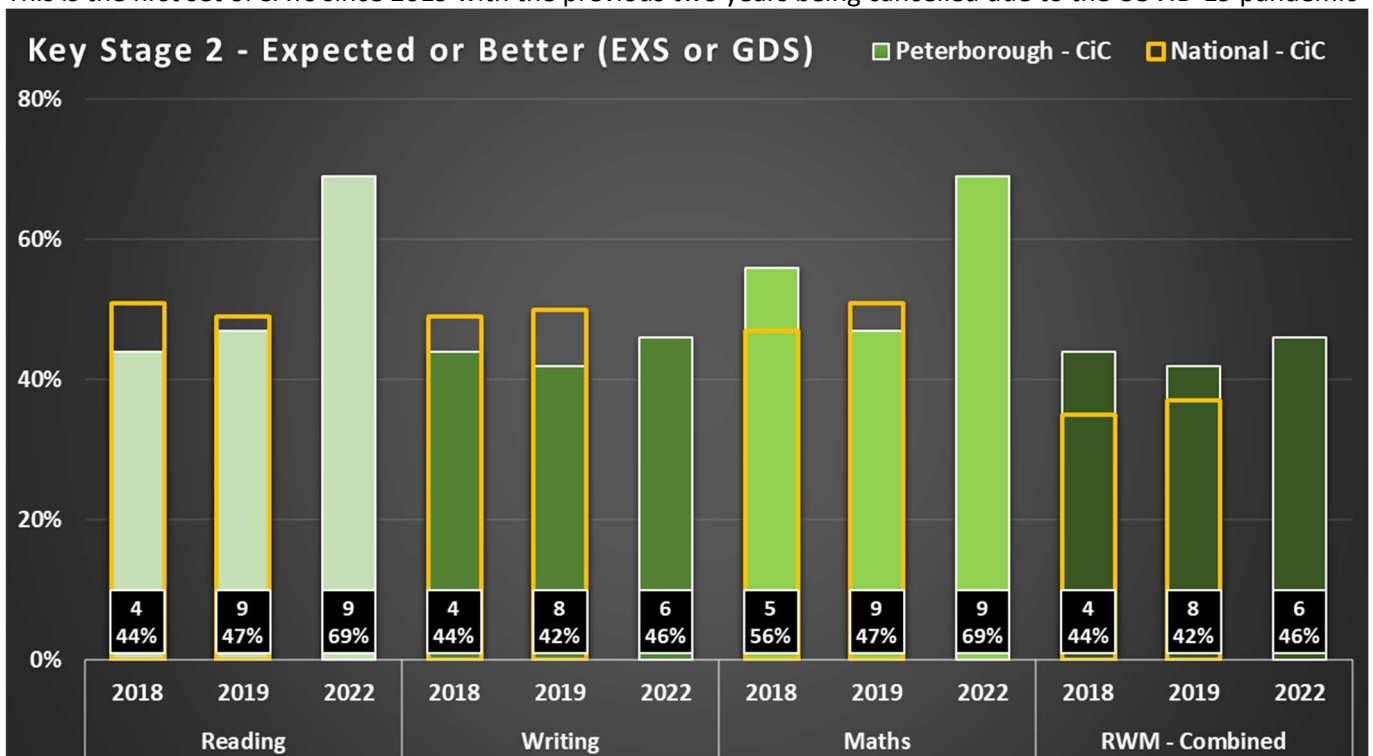


The core KS1 cohort contained 9 children. 56% of these children are educated out of city. This data shows that 44% of the cohort achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths with 33% achieving the expected standard in all three areas. This is broadly in line with the pre-pandemic performance in 2019.

The attainment and progress of the KS1 cohort will continue to be tracked by PVS to ensure that progress continues and is accelerated where possible. This will be done through the PEP meeting process and through the provision of Pupil Premium Plus funding to support where appropriate.

## 5.2 Key Stage 2

This is the first set of SATs since 2019 with the previous two years being cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic



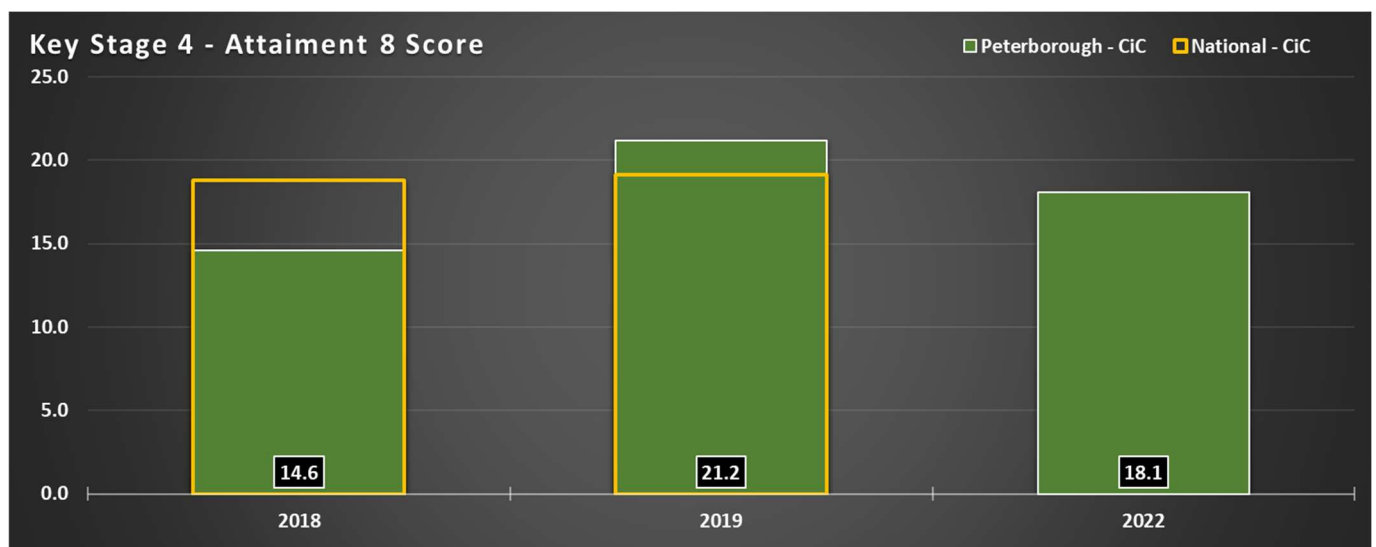
Peterborough - CiC Cohort		
2018	2019	2022
9	19	13

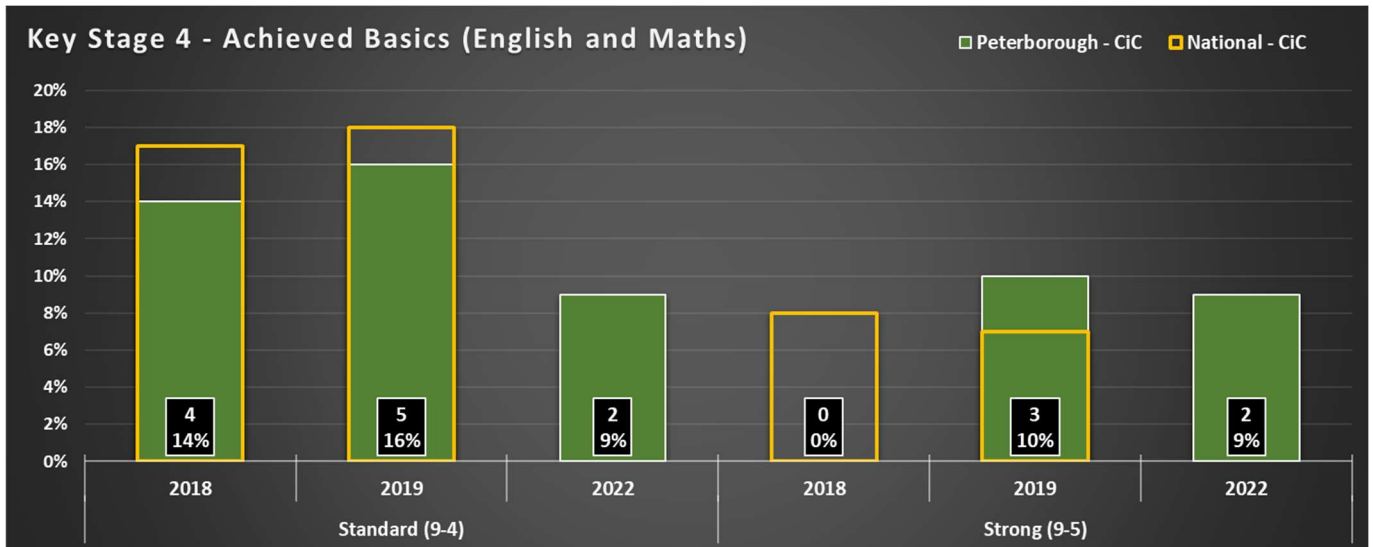
These results are still provisional, with the official CiC outcomes due in March/April 2023. Five students did not sit the Statutory Assessment Tests. The decision not to sit these assessments lies with the headteacher at the child's school in consultation with PVS. This could be for children with significant learning difficulties who are unable to access the tests or for children who experience significant emotional events in the lead-up to the assessments. The CiC students performed strongly in Reading and Maths and were on par with the rest of the LA. The teacher assessed writing figure was lower, which in turn impacted the combined figure.

The number of children achieving the expected standard in maths and reading are equal to those pre-pandemic. This is testament to the tracking of attainment at the start of the academic year and subsequent challenge to schools where required; PVS led in-person interventions; funding for tuition and discussions with settings around ensuring the children were emotionally regulated to sit the tests. The emotional regulation of children was important to highlight with settings due to Year 6 children being the most common year group in primary school to be classified as their social, emotional and mental health 'significantly affecting their learning.' (ePEP internal data)

### 5.3 Key Stage 4

This academic year saw the return of the summer exam series, after they had been cancelled in 2020 and 2021 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, where alternative processes were set up to award grades. This cohort had experienced a disrupted KS4 education due to the Covid pandemic.





Peterborough - CiC Cohort		
2018	2019	2022
29	31	22

The Key Stage 4 core cohort was 22. Two of the students were either in Hospital or Youth Custody so did not sit any exams. A further 2 students refused to sit their examinations. This is reflected in the increase (13% to 17%) in children and young people whose social, emotional and mental health was deemed to 'significantly affect their learning.' (ePEP internal data) 27% of this cohort have an EHCP. 50% of this cohort are educated out of city.

As with the other data sets, this data is unvalidated and therefore should be treated with caution. Although the final figures for all students was released on the 20<sup>th</sup> October 2022, as with Key Stage 2, the outcomes for CiC nationally will not be published until March/April 2023

The Attainment 8 score of 18.1 for the core cohort is like that achieved prior to the pandemic when it was 21.2. The basic measure for English and Maths is at least 9-4 in both subjects for a standard pass and at least 9-5 in both subjects for a strong pass. The figure for both is below the pre-pandemic figures of 16% and 10% respectively for the core cohort. This is mostly due to the maths results, with several students just 1 level below the required figure to get a Standard combined pass.

In 22/23 the attainment and progress tracking system for KS3 and 4 will be reviewed to enable finer scrutiny of attainment and progress levels throughout secondary.



## 5.4 Post 16

At the time of writing this report, the attainment and progress data for post-16 young people is not fully complete. It is therefore not possible to report on this cohort in full but a summary to date is provided.

### NEET

The average proportion of Young People who were NEET across 21/22 was 18.5%.

The number of YP who are not in employment education or training (NEET) fluctuates for Children in Care (CiC). In September of any academic year the figure is normally low and increases around November when young people (YP) either decide not to continue their course or are withdrawn / excluded from the setting. In most cases, it is due to low attendance or lack of engagement / commitment.

PVS works closely with all stakeholders to support YP and attend meetings where necessary to help sustain the education placement. All NEET YP have regular NEET Support Planning meetings at least once every half-term by working closely with them and professionals to ensure all support is in place and efforts are made to remove barriers to re-engagement with ETE (Education, Training or Employment). These opportunities can include Prince's Trust (Team Programme), Job / Work clubs, online courses, practical courses such as park ranger, traineeships, Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card training, and various other course such as Prince's Trust 'Get Into' initiative which cover a wide range of work experience opportunities.

### Year 12

The Year 12 Post-16 cohort comprises 46 young people, 17 of whom are Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC), of the one's doing their studies at Peterborough Regional College we have 75% passing their entry level courses and moving forward to other levels. Nine are doing similar courses with another provider but no results have yet been passed to the Virtual school. Many of the other students are doing practical subjects such as Bricklaying, construction and Childcare with other doing more academic subjects such as Maths and sociology with an eye to perhaps moving forward to university. Approximately 7 have become NEET for various reasons.

### Year 13

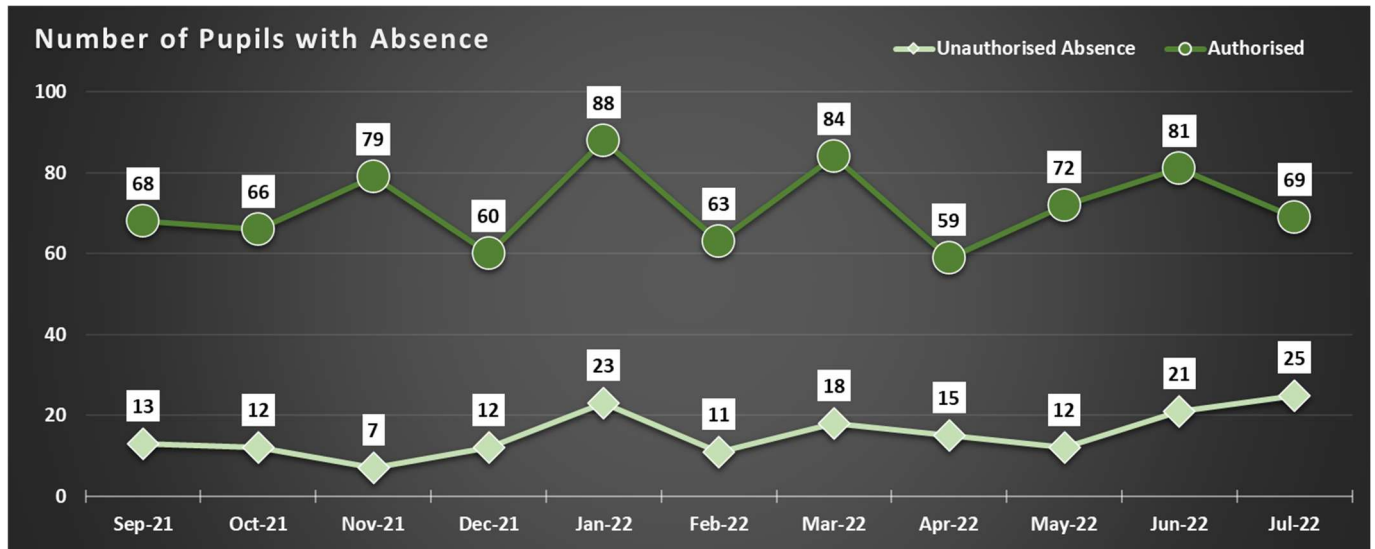
Year 13 data has been supplied by further education providers for 23 out of 50 of our Post 16 young people. The remaining providers are being regularly contacted in order to obtain further data. Nine of those 23 are Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC). They have all been attending Peterborough Regional College mostly doing ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) courses. They have a 78% pass rate and have been moving on the next levels or up to Functional skills.

The remaining 14 young people have been doing a wide range of subjects and levels ranging from one student doing A-Level Maths and Further maths, getting a grades A and A\* respectively to another doing a City and Guilds in Site Carpentry

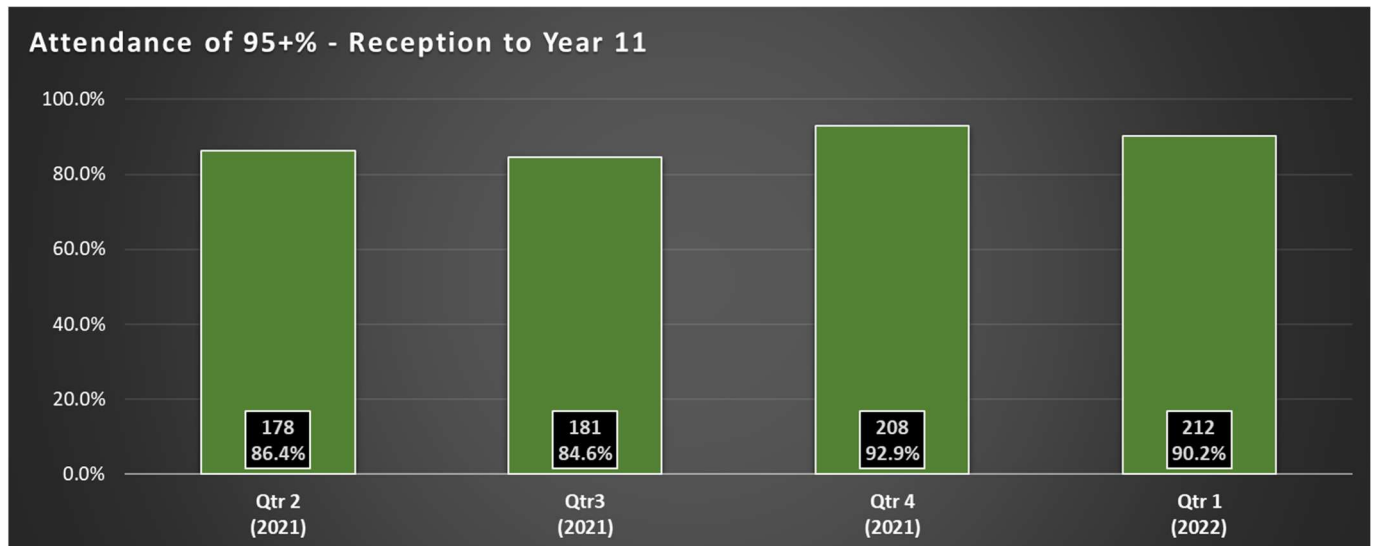
## 6 Inclusion

### 6.1 Absence

Attendance data always runs a year behind the other data releases, the 2021-22 data is not due for release until March/April 2023.

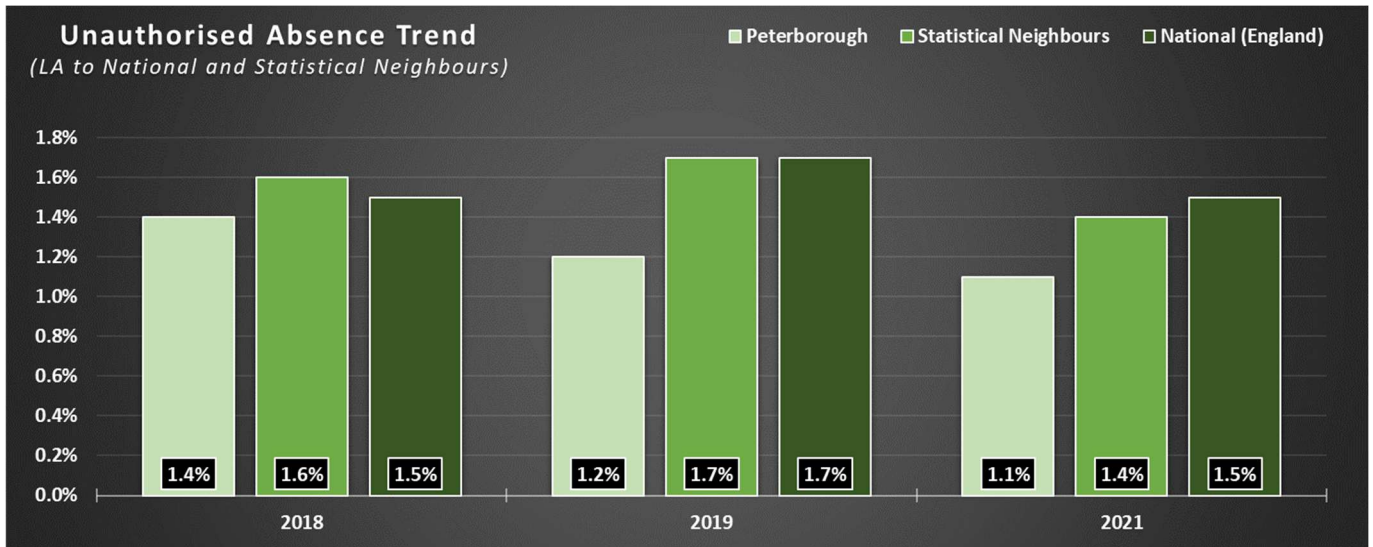


Source: Looked After Call – main dashboard

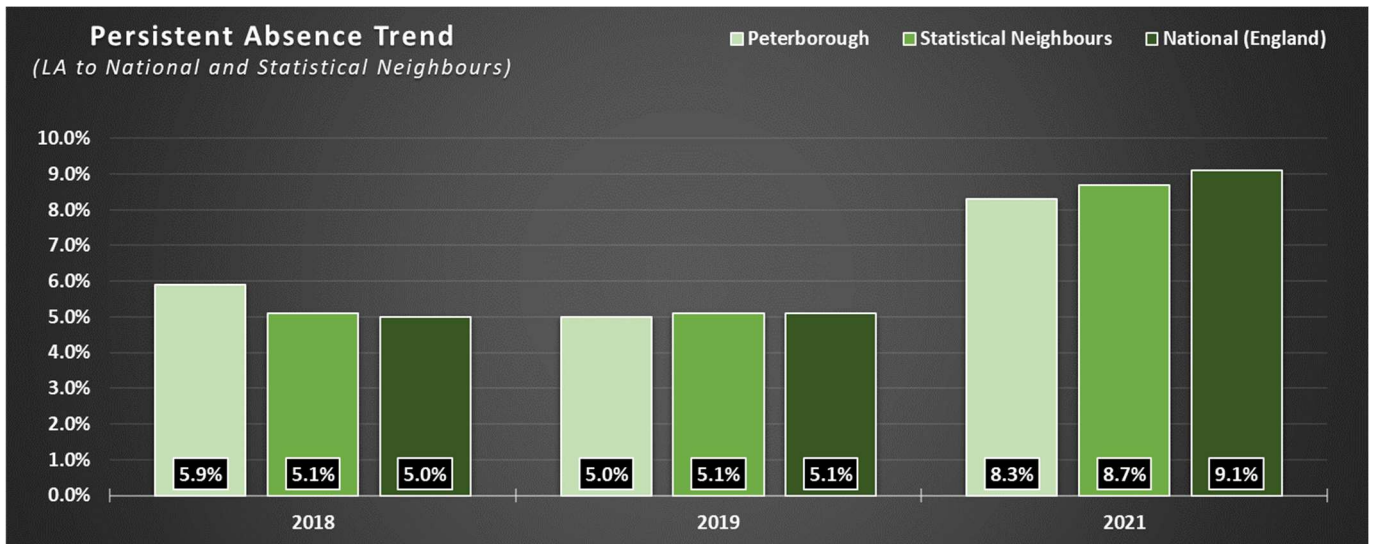


Source: Looked After Call – main dashboard

Total Cohort			
Qtr 2 (2021)	Qtr 3 (2021)	Qtr 4 (2021)	Qtr 1 (2022)
206	214	224	235



Source: DfE - Local authority interactive tool (LAIT) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-interactive-tool-lait>



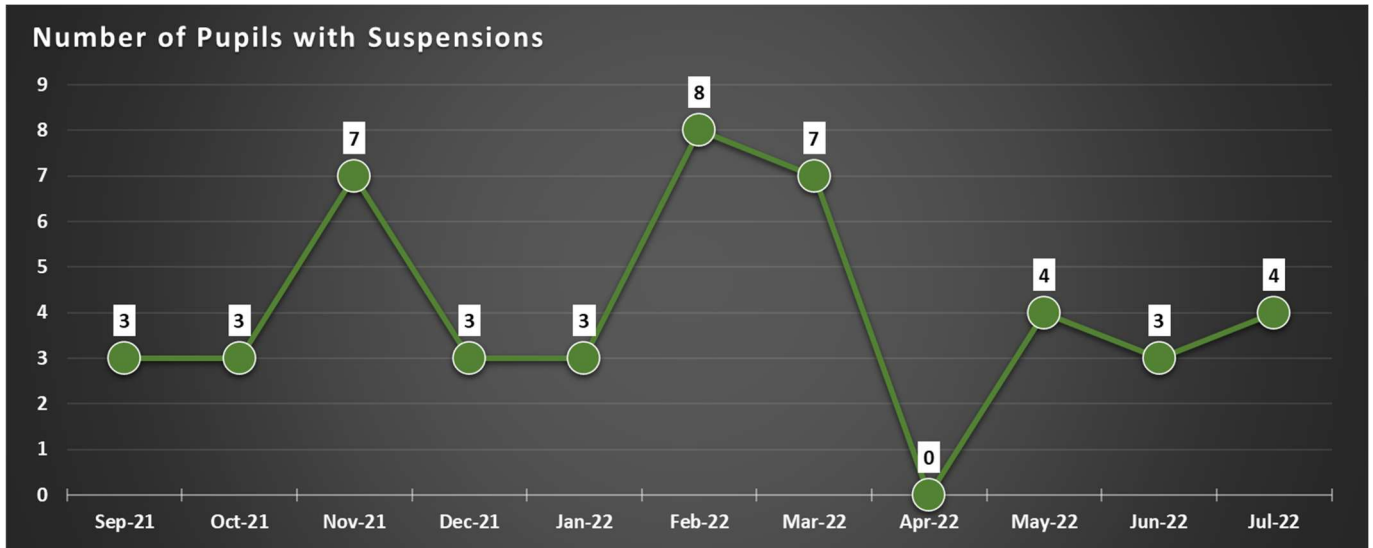
Source: DfE - Local authority interactive tool (LAIT) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-interactive-tool-lait>

Over the past 3 recorded years Peterborough’s unauthorised absence rate has fallen year on year and has been consistently lower than our Statistical Neighbours and the National figure.

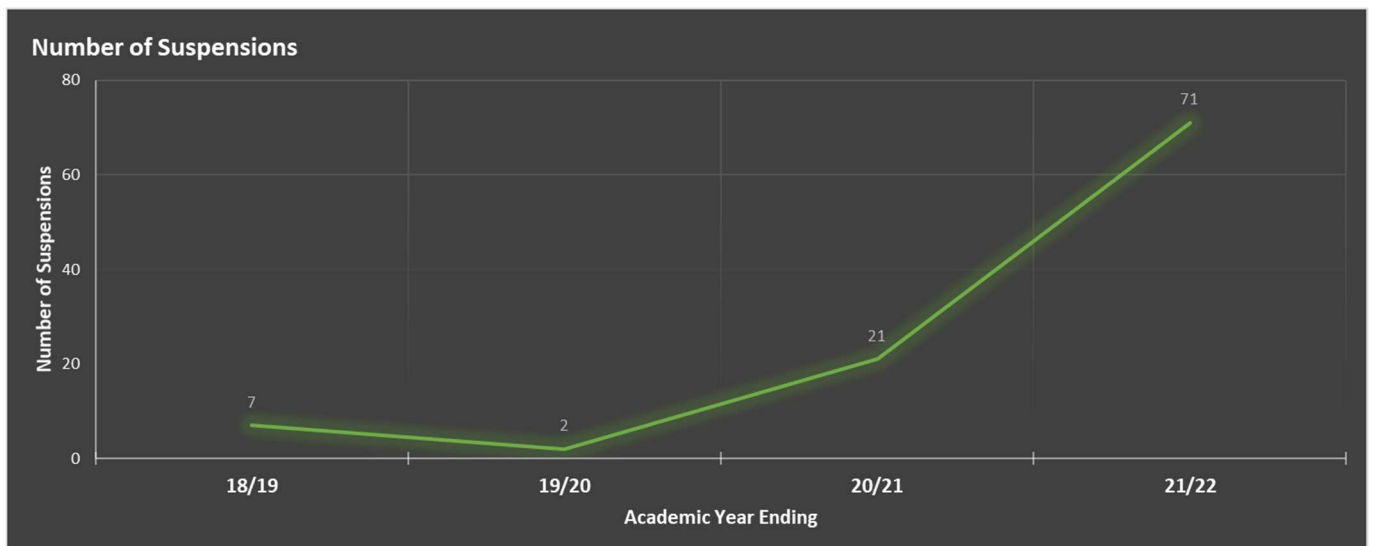
The persistent absence rate had fallen between 2018 and 2019 but has mirrored our Statistical Neighbour and National figures with a sharp rise as we come out of the pandemic. That said Peterborough’s persistent absences are lower than the National of 9.1% and below the statistical neighbour average.

This is an area to address in 22/23 to ensure that the persistent absence rate decreases from its sharp rise. The EP will support the team with strategies to support Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance to ensure they are able to offer the specialist advice required to CiC for whom this is appropriate. The Specialist Educational Psychologist will continue to be consulted as required.

## 6.2 Exclusions and suspensions



As part of the attendance data set the Suspension data is also a year behind the other data sets with the 2021-22 figures due out in March/April 2023.



Headteachers have a duty to work with the Virtual School Head to try and avoid the suspension or exclusion of a Child in Care and make sure that they have the support in place to thrive and make progress. We receive information on suspensions from our external attendance service or are advised of these by Designated Teachers, social workers, or carers. The Virtual School is quick in its response to any suspensions or threat of permanent exclusion so that a joint plan for the child can be implemented.

For those children and young people who had a suspension PVS staff attend return to school meetings to support the child and carers and to ensure robust plans are in place to minimise the risk of further instances of suspension. In the case of any repeat suspensions, additional education meetings are held to check that all necessary support is being given. An example of PVS work in this area is one Child in Care, living and attending school in Wales, was permanently excluded in 2022 but PVS assisted the social worker to appeal, and the exclusion was overturned by

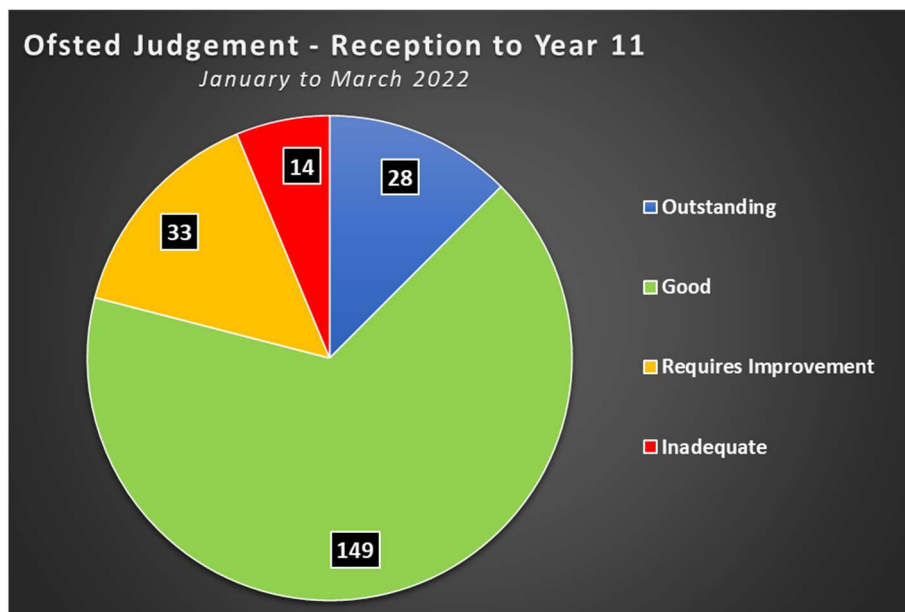
an independent panel. This enabled the child to remain in education and PVS has ensured that there has been a successful reintegration and improved engagement from the Designated Teacher to support the child ongoing.

This year has seen a significant increase in the number of suspensions for Children in Care. This is reflected in the increased referrals to social, emotional and mental health support services, along with the increased number of referrals to the Specialist Educational Psychologist. The increase in suspensions corresponds to the re-opening of schools following the pandemic. When national data is released, it is likely that the Peterborough picture will mirror the national trend of increased suspensions. This is an area for development in 22/23 to ensure that settings are applying behaviour policies flexibly to meet the needs of CiC.

### 6.3 Quality of Provision

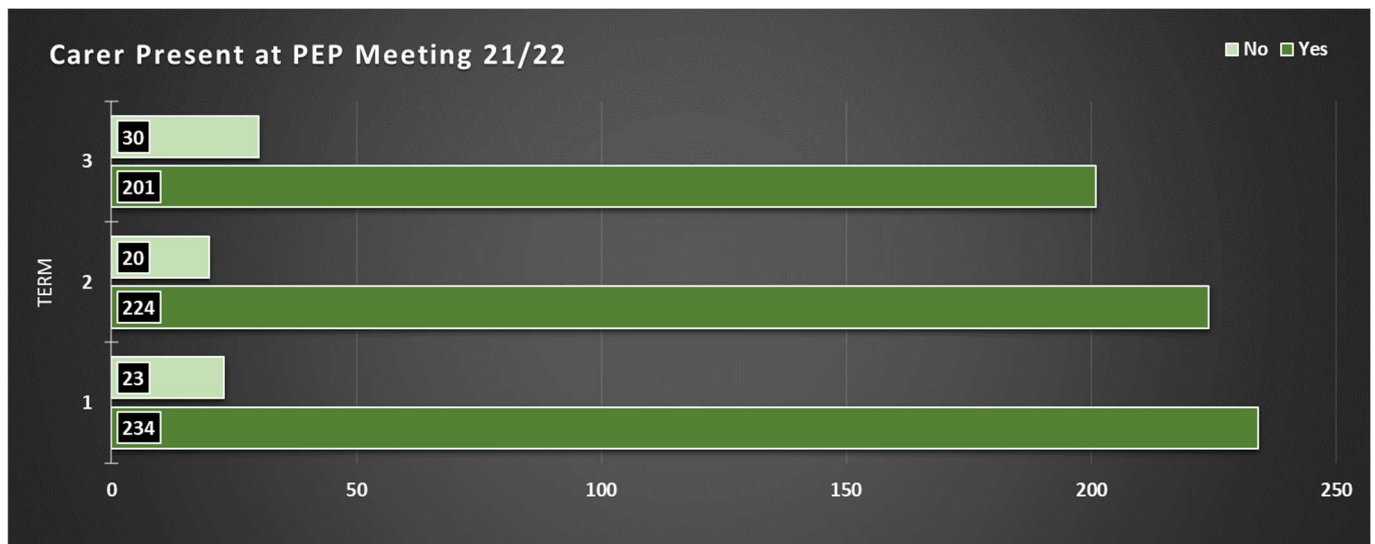
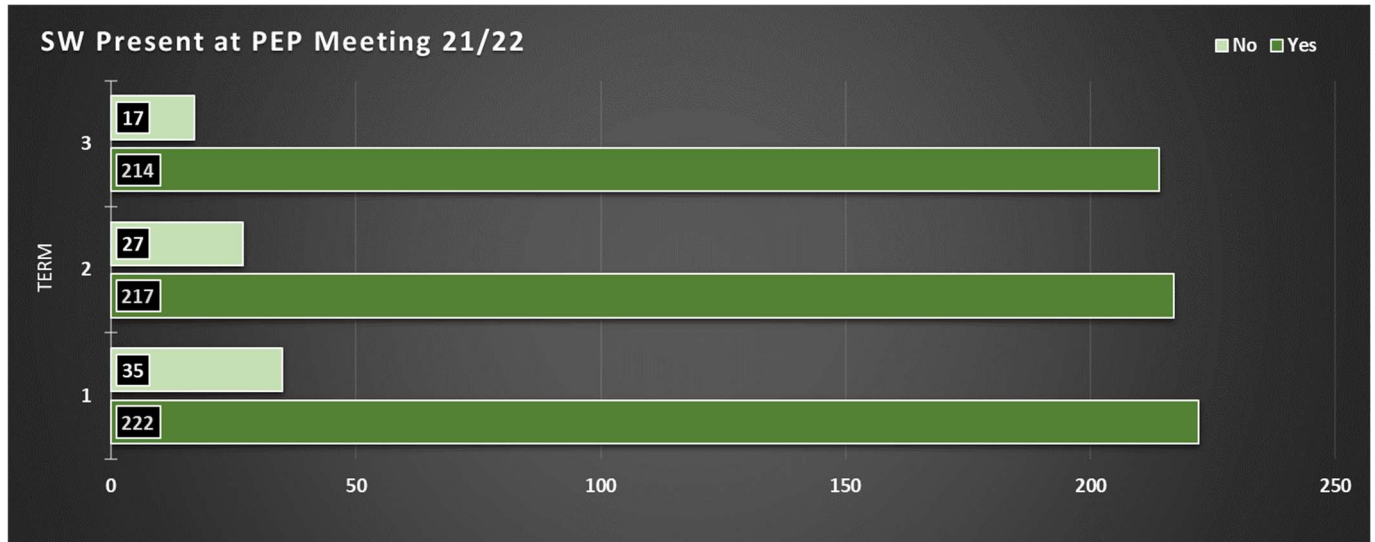
% CIC attending school judged to be good or better	
Year 2	64% (14 pupils)
Year 6	80% (20 Pupils)
Year 11	79% (29 Pupils)

The lower percentage of children attending a school judged to be good or better in Year 2 is due to several of the schools converting to academies and have not been re-inspected yet, therefore previous judgements remain. It is expected that conversion to an academy and membership of a multi academy trust will drive improvements. PVS monitors all children, but those in schools judged to be less than good, are subject to closer scrutiny.



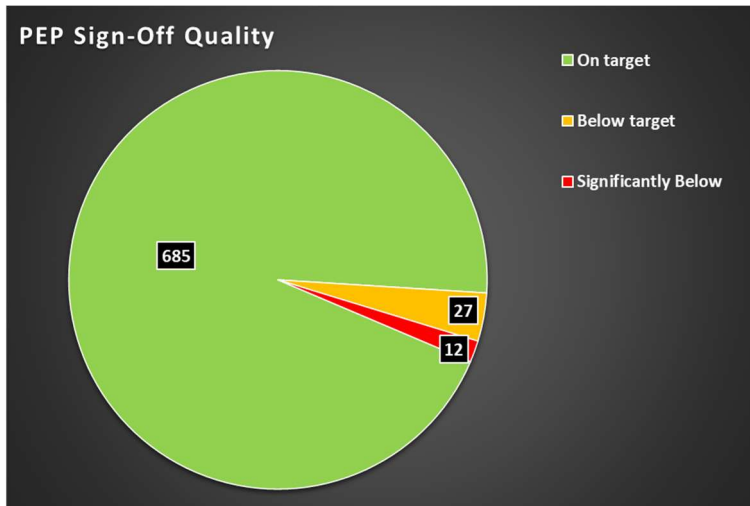
## 7 Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 there were 732 PEP meetings held. PEP meetings are led by the Designated Teacher in settings and attended by Social Worker, Carer and the child/young person if they wish to. PVS supports social workers and Designated Teachers in the management of the PEP process, offering training and a fortnightly PEP clinic. Our school support model does not require VS staff to attend every PEP meeting, however, VS staff will attend the PEP meetings for all newly into care children, when a change of school place occurs, or where a child is in crisis and attendance is requested by the school or social worker.



Attendance at PEP meetings is consistently high for both social workers (89% of all PEP meetings) and carers (90% of all PEP meetings) but there are occasions when a social worker or carer is unable to attend due to sickness or other unforeseen circumstances. In these circumstances, it is at the discretion of the Designated Teacher and PVS staff whether the meeting takes place.

Every PEP is quality assured by PVS staff and those judged to be below an acceptable standard trigger additional support and challenge from the VS team. Most PEPs (95%) are judged to be 'on target' meaning following quality-assurance, the PEP meets the expected standard in all areas. For those that fall 'below target,' PVS staff will provide bespoke support, training and challenge to the relevant professionals to ensure rapid improvements are made.



Ensuring that PEP meetings occur and that they are a high standard is one of the most powerful tools that we have to ensuring CiC are receiving a high quality, aspirational education. The PEP meetings ensure that carers and Social Workers are aware of the educational provision for the child or young person and therefore are able to support them with a greater knowledge base. To ensure the completion of PEPs continues to improve, in 22/23, additional training ‘High Quality PEPs’ for Designated Teachers will be launched.

## 8 Pupil Premium Plus Grant (Financial Year 2021-2022)

The Pupil Premium plus Grant allocation for Financial Year 2021/2022 was £619,080. This was based on a £2345 per pupil allocation for children who had a period of 24 hours or more in the care of Peterborough City Council.

£320,329 was devolved directly to the educational settings. This amount includes the cost of partnership staff, Attachment Awareness/ Connected Communities training hub. Payments to schools are made termly upon submission and approval of SMART targets within a quality assured and time compliant PEP. These targets are reviewed at each PEP meeting to hold the school to account and to ensure appropriate interventions are in place to support progress. In exceptional cases, educational settings applied for additional funding to support children requiring intensive short-term interventions tailored to their individual needs and circumstances.

The remaining £298,751 was used to support the work and improvement of the VS.

Allocation	Cost £
Additional tuition	£36,761
Letterbox Club (see report below)	£9,689
External PEP and Attendance Services	£38,381
Staffing – EP, Early Years, Secondary Coordinator, Secondary Support, Literacy and Maths Leads, Primary HLTA.	£212,205
External subscriptions or commissioning	£1715
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£298,751</b>

## 8.1 Letterbox Club

Once again, the Letterbox initiative has been very well received by our Primary aged cohort of children in care, of whom 74 have received seven monthly packages during 2022. Each pack is posted out by our staff to the child's home address, ensuring they get to experience the excitement of a parcel arriving at home for them. This has the added benefit of the child realising that they have a proper place within this world.

We decided, following feedback, that the younger children had greater benefit from these packs, so prioritise those in FS, KS1 and KS2. The main reason behind this is that as children get older and more expert at reading, they also develop stronger preferences, and it becomes more important that they can select their own reading materials, if they are to get the best out of them. Younger children still need guidance in selecting texts and need to experience all the genres available and suitable for them whilst they are still finding out what they really enjoy or gain most from.

Each package includes at least two newly published books (which ensures no duplicate books are sent) items of stationery to inspire writing, puppets or small toys linked to the texts for the younger children and maths games suitable for home play for all ages. This year for the first time we have added a new pack for those children who are older but have lower than expected reading skills, including books of higher maturity but lower readability, which have proved extremely helpful and fun for some of our students with special educational needs. The aim of this initiative is to encourage reading at home and to further interaction with foster carers and wider family members. Developing a language rich home environment is a priority and many children within this cohort have not had experience of this. The project contributes to building that love of literature that we so want for all our children.

For our very youngest children in care, from new babies to pre-schoolers, we have signed up to Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, and these children are sent a high-quality picture book each month direct to their home.

## 8.2 Outdoor Learning Adventure Report (Formerly Forest School)

In partnership with Ravensthorpe Primary School, Peterborough Virtual School (PVS) have continued to offer primary school aged children in carefree weekly sessions on their Outdoor Learning Adventure (OLA.) OLA is based around the principles of Forest School where children participate in self-selected fun, engaging and rewarding activities that promote key skills such as resilience, problem-solving, team working, creativity, independence and resourcefulness. Activities range from cooking on the fire, to designing and making things from natural resources, to building a den to enjoy a hot chocolate in, to simply playing in the mud kitchen. The use of tools and fire are also integral parts of OLA and encourage children to identify and manage risk. OLA provides children with an opportunity to spend time outdoors, make and maintain new friendships and to enjoy themselves. To ensure the children know what to expect, PVS produced a short video showing the site and activities they may take part in: [Outdoor Learning Adventure](#)



Outdoor Learning Adventure





OLA has three core staff members consisting of two Level 3 Forest School Leaders and one Level 2 Forest School Assistant. The OLA lead liaises with schools, social workers and carers to set appropriate targets for the child to achieve at OLA. These usually focus on soft skills such as making and maintaining friendships, building resilience or trying new experiences.

In the year 2021/22, fifteen children in care benefitted from attending OLA either weekly or twice weekly. Their ages ranged from 6 to 11. All children attending OLA this year achieved their set targets. For some groups, the focus is on enriching their education and soft skills. For other groups, the focus is supporting emotional regulation enabling them to remain in full-time education; this is done through building on the child's strengths and giving them a feeling of success and belonging. A particular success in 2021/22 was a Year 6 group with a focus on emotional regulation and the skills needed to transition into secondary school. Two children, attending different primary settings, were transitioning to the same secondary school so this enabled them to make a new friendship before even starting their transition which provided reassurance. The other children also benefitted from developing their skills of making and maintaining friendships as well as how to manage risks and embark on something new. For the children who attend, OLA is a place where they smile and succeed.

*"A truly fantastic experience for X, it provided exactly what they needed. It was invaluable to build their relationship with each other....[and] it encouraged independence." (Designated Teacher)*

*"[The] prolonged exposure to the group, not just as an intervention, gave more time for relationships to develop. It was off-site provision so a chance to be with other people who don't know her (start afresh with relationships) and a chance to be with peers in a similar situation at home. [I] would thoroughly recommend it." (Designated Teacher)*

## 8.3 Report of the Specialist Educational Psychologist

Reflecting the rise in suspensions and absence concerns, there has been a significant increase in the demand for Educational Psychology (EP) involvement in 21/22, from 20/21: the number of children with whom there has been EP involvement has increased by 26% and the tasks undertaken has increased by 76%.

Type of involvement	Number of children	
	2020/21	2021/22
Total number of children supported	39	49
Assessment to identify needs	12	14
Consultation with school and foster carers including reviews of progress	27	29
Sustaining placement/risk of placement breakdown	10	3
Preparation for adulthood	5	3
Return to school during the pandemic	1	0
Consultation with social workers	6	14
Indirect involvement via consultation with PVS team members	6	15
Multi-professional meetings including PEPs and annual reviews	7	52
Total interactions/tasks	74	130

Description of SEMH* recorded on ePEP	2020/21		2021/22		Change
	Count	Proportion	Count	Proportion	
There are no concerns regarding SEMH	462	44%	374	38.5%	5.5% decrease
The CYP's SEMH sometimes affects their learning	336	32%	342	35%	3% increase
The CYP's SEMH often affects their learning	113	11%	90	9%	2% decrease
The CYP's SEMH significantly affects their learning	135	13%	165	17%	4% increase

\*Social, emotional and mental health

The increase in EP involvement is also reflected in the increase in the number proportion of, and number of children and young people whose learning is significantly affected by their SEMH. Referrals to support services for SEMH has also increased (220 referrals in 21/22, up 28% from 20/22) The data would suggest that the re-opening of schools following the pandemic has had an impact upon some CiC and further indicates the need for education settings to be using a trauma-responsive approach.

PVS will continue to work with education settings to best support CiC with their SEMH and in 22/23, a staged trauma-responsive training package will be implemented. The funding for the EP will continue.

Feedback following EP involvement, shows that professionals and carers rated the service they received as 4.8/5 and 5/5 for service satisfaction.

Concerns before and after consultation were measured and show an average decrease of 1.2 following EP involvement.

When asked ‘What Helped?’ professionals indicated the following:

*“The EP was able to provide a high level of insight about our student, reframing and organising our existing information and understanding, contextualising behaviours in historic antecedents, and providing strategies and recommendations so that we can promote feelings of security and enable social emotional progress.” (DT)*

*“Being able to unpick specific needs through a thorough assessment and pinpointing specific strategies that the student was previously masking.” (DT)*

## 9 CPiC/CWSW

### 9.1 Children Previously in Care

The Virtual School has a statutory duty to provide advice, guidance and information to education settings, parents/guardians and a range of professionals around improving the educational outcomes of CPiC.

Referrals can be made for advice, guidance and information relating to education. PVS received 27 direct referrals in 2021/22, with most referrals coming directly from education settings or from parents/guardians. Most referrals are made for primary school aged children and the most common regarding how best to support emotional and behavioural needs. When PVS receives a referral, contact is made to the referrer usually within one working day to gather background information and establish next steps. The most common follow-up action is advice/guidance via telephone or email contact.

PVS enhanced its training offer for education settings regarding CPiC. Almost half of in-city schools have attended at least one training session and 17% have attended all courses available to them.

Course	Number of Schools Completed	% of Peterborough Schools
1	37	47%
2	16	21%
3	13	17%
All 3	13	17%

Feedback from all sessions has been overwhelmingly positive with an average score of 4.55 (out of 5) which shows that Designated Teachers feel confident and have a strong understanding of their role and how best to support CPiC. In 22/23, the settings who have yet to undertake CPiC training, will be targeted to attend. The Education Advisor liaises with professionals and parents/guardians to support children previously in care, including:

- attending quarterly support groups
- delivering bespoke trainings to guardians to support their children in education
- liaising with supporting organisations and charities
- member of the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) Partnership Board which sits quarterly
- part of the Eastern Region PCiC network group

These activities ensure the advisor is working in line with best practice and enables support to be given directly to parents/guardians as required who are then, in turn, better placed to support their children and young people.

## 9.2 Children With a Social Worker

Following the extension to the Virtual School Head role to improve the education outcomes for all children with, or previously with a social worker in the past 6-years, Peterborough Virtual School is working to create a strategic Peterborough Local Authority response.

Activity has included:

- Data collection and analysis to build an understanding of the cohort characteristics. This identified a need for improved data input for the education of CWSW in the social care recording system (Liquid Logic.)
- Promoting the extended remit of the VS within Peterborough Children's Services (particularly the Family Safeguarding teams,) the Education Directorate (attendance, EHE, admissions) and Peterborough education settings. A presentation was also made to the Regional Safeguarding Hub.
- In conjunction with advice from the Early Years Team, guidance for social workers has been created to empower them in their discussions with families of very young children, to encourage them to apply for childcare funding.
- Formation of a working-party of Designated Safeguarding Leads to share best practice and knowledge-share
- Attendance at regular Regional CIN/P virtual meetings to discuss challenges, share current strategies and best practice and to share ideas.

This resulted in increased of the role and the cohort of children concerned. The data collected will inform next steps. 22/23 will see further developments to this role with the inclusion of school visits to Designated Safeguarding Leads and a training offer to professionals to ensure improved educational outcomes for this cohort.

## 10 Priorities for 2022- 2023

### Priority One

To Improve the Application of Trauma-Informed Practice

- An identified collective of MATs & LA Schools will sign up to an agreed set of trauma-informed guiding principles
- The number of participating schools on Trauma-Informed practice training will increase

### Priority Two

To Collaborate effectively with all Stakeholders

- Governors will understand their roles and responsibilities regarding CiC, PCiC, CWSW
- The PVS website is an effective resource to support the education of CiC
- PVS is aware of the culture, policies, processes and practices in all education settings attended by our CiC

### Priority Three

To Improve Educational Outcomes for CYP in Care

- To minimise the disruption to CYP in care's education
- All PEPs will have an increased child/young person-centred focus
- All CYP will have the opportunity to engage in enrichment activities
- The personalised progress made by CYP in care with an EHCP is recorded in the PEP

Dee Glover, Virtual School Head.  
November 2022

## Appendix 1 Glossary

Term	Definition	Comments
Attainment 8	The Attainment 8 score is a measure that ensures all students are compared rather than those on the cusp of grade boundaries	This measure was introduced to the KS4 examination system in England because previous measures were not demonstrating attainment from a wide range of subjects.  However, the attainment 8 measure can give a negative score to a child who does not sit 8 or more GCSE examinations.
CiC	Children in Care	The statutory guidance refers to looked after children (LAC); The children of Peterborough and Cambridgeshire have rejected this term in favour of Children in Care (CiC).
CiCC	Children in Care Council	A participation group of Children in Care led by the Participation Team.
CPiC	Children Previously in Care	CPiC refers to a child who left care on an order, typically a Special Guardianship Order, Child Arrangement Order or Adoption Order.  The Virtual School has a duty to provide information and advice to the parents / guardians, education professionals, and other associated professionals, where the child attends a Peterborough education setting.  This was added to the Virtual School remit in September 2018.
CWSW	Children with a Social Worker	CWSW refers to social who are children in need or under a child protection plan or who have been in the past six years.  The Virtual School has a non-statutory strategic leadership role to promote education outcomes for this cohort of children.  This was added to the virtual school remit in September 2021.
Core Cohort	DfE Core Cohort	The 'Core Cohort' is the criteria used by DfE when it publishes its National attainment data for Children in Care.  The child must have been in care for 12mths or more on the 31 <sup>st</sup> March of the assessment year
DP	Designated Person	In Early years settings and for Post 16 providers the role is termed DP as the member of staff does not have to be a qualified teacher.
DT	Designated Teacher	It is statutory for all schools to have a designated teacher, whether they currently have children in care on roll or not.
EAL	English as an Additional Language	Children whose first language is other than English.
EHCP	Education Health Care Plan	A document which sets out the education, healthcare and social care needs of a child or young person for whom extra support is needed in school, beyond that which the school can provide.

Term	Definition	Comments
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages	ESOL courses can include areas such as survival English, functional language, specific speaking and listening skills, and sociocultural information.  They often have an element of citizenship training.
EET	Education, Employment or Training	EET refers to young people that have finished year 11 and are in education, employment, or training.
GLD	Good Level of Development	This is the national benchmark for children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (aged 5).
Key Stage (KS)	<p>Early Years Foundation Stage <i>(Pre-school, Nursery and Reception Classes)</i> Age range 0-5</p> <p>Key Stage 1 <i>(Primary School – Years 1 &amp; 2)</i> Age range 5-7</p> <p>Key Stage 2 <i>(Primary School – Years 3 to 6)</i> Age range 7-11</p> <p>Key Stage 3 <i>(Secondary School – Years 7 to 9)</i> Age range 11 – 14</p> <p>Key Stage 4 <i>(Secondary School – Years 10 &amp; 11)</i> Age range 14 – 16</p> <p>Key Stage 5 <i>(Various Destinations)</i> Age Range 16+</p>	The national curriculum is organised into blocks of years called 'key stages' (KS). At the end of each key stage, there is a formal assessment.
NEET	Not in Employment Education or Training	NEET refers to young people that have finished year 11 and are not in education, employment, or training.
PEP	Personal Education Plan	<p>The PEP is the education plan. It forms part of the wider care planning for the child.</p> <p>This plan is statutory, it is reviewed each term.</p> <p>PEPs begin when a child enrolls in early years education (from aged 2) and continues until the child turns 18.</p> <p>When a young person turns 18 and is in education, PEPs continue until the end of the academic year.</p>
PP+	Pupil Premium Plus	PP+ is additional funding for children in early years provision (the year before they start school) and for children in reception to the end of year 11.

Term	Definition	Comments
		<p>The funding is managed by the Virtual School and is used to promote education outcomes.</p>
Progress 8	<p>Progress 8 shows the students' progress across 8 subjects. This is calculated by subtracting the students estimated attainment (calculated from KS2 scores at the end of Primary school) from their actual attainment. This will be shown as a + or -. For example, 0.5 would represent a student being on average half a grade above expectation.</p>	<p>This measure was introduced and replaces previous measures based around the former A*-C grading system for GCSEs.</p> <p>This change was made because the data from the previous examination system did not reflect the progress that a child made over time, from the end of Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4.</p> <p>The average expected progress score is 0.</p> <p>If fewer than 8 subjects are taken, the score will be reduced further; for example, dropping a subject, will affect the overall score by approximately -0.5.</p>
SAMs	<p>Statutory Assessment and Monitoring Service</p>	<p>Responsible for children and young people with an EHCP and Special Educational Needs.</p>
Statistical Neighbours	<p>Peterborough's Statistical Neighbours are:</p> <p>Bolton, Derby, Medway, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Rotherham, Sheffield, Southampton, Telford &amp; Wrekin and Walsall</p>	<p>A list produced by Department for Education (DfE) that provides each Authority with a list of statistically similar authorities based on demographic data.</p> <p>The list is periodically updated, often in the years following the National Census</p> <p>This allows for more statistically significant comparisons than just the national data.</p>
UASC	<p>Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Child</p>	<p>Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) are children and young people who are seeking asylum in the UK but who have been separated from their parents or carers.</p> <p>While their claim is processed, they are cared for by a local authority.</p>

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