Title of report: Virtual School Head Annual Report 2025–2026

Summary of what the report is about:

This report focuses on the progress and outcomes for children within the Virtual School. The key outcomes demonstrate a sustained improvement in inclusion, attendance, participation and attainment for children supported by the Virtual School, alongside significant reductions in suspensions, permanent exclusions and barriers to education. These achievements have been underpinned by strong partnership working, targeted interventions, high-quality educational planning and an enhanced focus on belonging and support for children in care, children in need, those on child protection plans and children in kinship care.

Overview of our children and young people:

- At the end of the reporting period, 516 (491 in 24/25) children and young people were part of our school as Children in Care or Care Leavers.
- 333 children and young people on Child Protection Plans and 1080 children and young people on Child in Need plans sat within the extended role of the Virtual School.

What are the key messages of this report?

- Delivery of 4th Knowledge Exchange Programme in collaboration with University College London - working in partnership with a cross-phase group of specialist and mainstream providers to develop practice
- Proactive staff training offer implemented and focused annual conference on Belonging for our children
- Reduction in suspensions for Children in Care over a three-year period
- Ensured that there has been no increase in suspensions for children with on Child in Need plans
- Reduction in the number of permanent exclusions for Children in Care (0 children) and for children on Child Protection Plans (6 children compared to 20)
- Increase in attendance 88% (Children in Care), 77% (children on Child Protection plans) and 80% for Children in Need
- Reduction in the use of reduced timetables for Children in Care over a three-year period
- Reduction in Children in Care not having a school place over a 3-year period
- Increase in the number of Post 16 who are in Education, Employment or Training (75% monthly average) (Children in Care)
- Outstanding PEP Quality Assurance (98% good or outstanding)
- Weekly celebrations of 267 children and young people who have excelled in education or overcome significant barriers
- Delivery of a bespoke Key Stage 4 programme to support our Children in Care back into school and Post 16 provision
- Development of our support for children in kinship care arrangements
- Good outcomes for phonics, year 4 multiplication check, Key Stage 2 SATs, GCSE and Post 16 for Children in Care

We need to focus on:

- Improving attendance for those children with persistent and severe absence
- Reduce suspensions for children on Child Protection plans
- Embedding our children’s voice within our work
- Working with locality practitioners and partners to develop good practice to reduce suspensions, particularly for children with Special Educational Needs
- Develop a robust monitoring report for children with a Social Worker who are Electively Home Educated in preparation for Children's Wellbeing Act.
- Develop bespoke training for Virtual School on Post 16/18 offer
- Monitoring of attainment outcomes for Children on Child in Need and Child protection plans