

**BARNET VIRTUAL  
SCHOOL  
ANNUAL REPORT  
2020-21**



## THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL

The Virtual School is the key educational advocacy service for all children in care (CIC), whether educated in Barnet or placed out of authority. The focus of our statutory duty is to improve educational outcomes through challenging and supporting schools, academies, and specialist settings to ensure that CIC:

- Attend school on a full-time basis
- Receive the best possible opportunities as learners by accessing mainstream education or where appropriate specialist or alternative provisions and through attending school which are judged to be at least good in Ofsted inspections
- Maintain at least expected rates of progress relative to their starting points on becoming looked after
- Close the achievement gap with their peers

The Virtual School acts as a champion for CIC by fulfilling the responsibilities of being a highly ambitious, proactive and effective 'Corporate Parent'. There is a clear emphasis on the need to raise aspirations and improve rates of progress and to close the attainment gap between CIC and their peers.

The Virtual School is not a registered educational provider - it is each school/academy that is directly responsible for improving the rates of progress and educational outcomes of CIC on roll. However, through the effective use of Personal Education Plans (PEPs), the Virtual School holds schools and academies to account in relation to the:

- provision offered
- level of aspirations encouraged
- setting and reviewing of SMART targets
- attendance of young people
- reduction of fixed term exclusions and need to find alternatives to permanent exclusions

The Virtual School team is responsible for ensuring that Pupil Premium Plus for children in care is managed to improve educational outcomes and has primary responsibility for ensuring that there is a suitable education in place for all children in care, this includes overseeing admissions, managed moves and education moves brought about through care placement moves. The Virtual School team works with children at times of placement change, school change and periods of challenge in their lives to ensure that engagement with education is sustained. It also provides advice and information to support children who were previously looked after and are now subject to adoption orders, special guardianship orders and child arrangement orders.

## 1. Key Performance Indicators 2020-2021

<b>KPIs</b>	
Average Progress 8 score of looked-after children in the top 10% when compared to CIC nationally.	There is no Progress 8 information available
Gap between (i) A8 for Barnet CIC and A8 nationally for all pupils and (ii) P8 for Barnet CIC and P8 nationally for all pupils is in the top quartile.	Barnet just above national in the Attainment 8 measure  The rank in Attainment 8 between 2019 and 2020 improved from 99 <sup>th</sup> in 2019 to 74 <sup>th</sup> in 2020.  There is no Progress 8 information available
90% of 0-16 year olds PEPs are good or better	Achieved
75% of 16-17 year olds PEPs are good or better	Achieved
RWM in KS2, at the expected standard, is in the top quartile	N/A
The percentage of 16-17 year olds who are NEET is below 20% by the end of March 2021	10.8%

## 2. School Context (as of 30/7/21)

		<b>2018/ 2019</b>	<b>2019/ 2020</b>	<b>2020/ 2021</b>	
	<b>Nursery</b>		11	12	
	<b>% of children SEN support</b>			2	
	<b>% of children with EHCPs</b>			3	
<b>Statutory age group</b>	<b>Statutory age</b>	191	196	195	
	<b>Reception</b>		4	7	
	<b>Key Stage 1</b>		16	14	
	<b>Key Stage 2</b>		43	37	
	<b>Key Stage 3</b>		51	53	
	<b>Key Stage 4</b>		82	84	
	<b>Boys/girls</b>	111/80	113/83	109/86	
	<b>% of children from ethnic minority groups</b>		70.6%	73.3%	
	<b>% of children SEN support</b>		19.8% (39)	21.5% (42)	
	<b>% of children with EHCPs</b>			24.9% (49)	24.6% (48)
				O/B   I/B	O/B   I/B
				33   16	30   18
	<b>Number of UASC</b>	18	25	35	
<b>Children without a school place</b>		0	2		

<b>Post 16 age group</b>	<b>Post 16</b>	157	135	152		
	<b>Male/female</b>	113/44	96/39	113/39		
	<b>% of children from ethnic minority groups</b>		78.5%	79.6%		
	<b>% of children with EHCPs</b>		14%(19)		13.8%(21)	
			O/B	I/B	O/B	I/B
			11	3	16	5
	<b>Number of UASC</b>	39	67	76		
	<b>NEET Year 12</b>		11	19		
	<b>NEET Year 13</b>		14	14		
<b>NEET 16/17 year olds</b>			20			

### 3. COVID-19

Over the last year, we have continued to adapt our working practices in the light of the pandemic and the changing impact on education and young people.

The impact on young people has been significant and has affected people in different ways. However, the team have continued to support the education of Barnet LAC effectively over the period and we have seen an increase in attendance across the year. All our statutory aged children were offered places in school in the Spring Term 2021 and the take up was better than in the Summer Term 2020. Attendance has increased across the Summer Term 2021 (see attendance section). For those who did not attend in person in the Spring Term, engagement with online learning was variable with some finding it easy to adapt to and others really struggling to keep motivated. With our post 16 cohort, the majority who are in education had to learn remotely which was challenging for many and they have welcomed the return to in person teaching.

Over the year, the Virtual School has continued to support young people's well-being, engagement, and achievement in a number of different ways. These include:

- Provision of laptops to enable remote learning (e.g. since September 2021 over 93 have been given to young people). Interpreters have been used on occasions to support young people with laptop set up
- Tuition provided to all students in April 2020 for a fixed period to support whilst schools set up remote learning
- Home learning ideas given to foster carers and was a focus in PEPs
- Guides to support children with understanding coronavirus and return to school distributed
- Virtual School webpages populated with links to weblinks to support learning and well being
- Range of enrichment opportunities still provided (see on) and foster carers and young people encouraged to participate
- Schools encouraged to be imaginative in PPG+ funding requests e.g. increase in musical instruments and take up of 'hobbies' to promote practical life skills
- Increase in contact with young people through calls, WhatsApp etc.
- Increased support for young people in applying for 6<sup>th</sup> form/colleges
- Close contact maintained with foster carers during lockdown
- Year 6/7 transition lead supported foster carers with creative approach using websites to see virtual tours, uniform, staff etc and provision of profile passports during first lockdown
- Training sessions continued to be offered to carers and D.T.s
- Termly newsletter sent to foster carers and twice termly to D.T.s

- Flexible approach to PEPs across the year including COVID PEP in Summer Term 2020. Caseworkers took the lead on PEPs in the Summer Term 2020. The full PEP was implemented across the academic year for statutory age children
- Increase in attendance at PEPs by caseworkers
- Ensuring focus on engagement in learning and well-being in PEPs
- Well-being ideas given to foster carers
- Close monitoring of attendance

Much of the information usually reported on is still simply not available e.g. end of year outcomes, attendance, so the reported data on outcomes is limited.

#### 4. Attendance (statutory age children)

Absence over time – children in care for more than 12 months (Local authority interactive tool - LAIT)

% absence from school of children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months												
Local Authority, Region and England		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Change from previous year
302	Barnet	6.70	7.80	5.20	6.30	6.80	6.40	4.00	5.50	3.40	6.40	3.00
988	Outer London	-	-	-	4.30	4.20	4.20	4.10	4.50	4.60	4.40	-0.20
	Statistical Neighbours	5.71	4.86	4.48	3.95	3.74	3.83	3.75	3.93	4.10	4.20	0.10
970	England	5.80	5.50	4.70	4.40	3.90	4.00	3.90	4.30	4.50	4.70	0.20

Persistent absence over time (attendance less than 90%) Local authority interactive tool - LAIT)

% of children looked after who are classed as persistent absentees												
Local Authority, Region and England		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Change from previous year
302	Barnet	-	-	-	11.30	18.30	18.00	6.70	10.60	7.40	10.50	3.10
988	Outer London	-	-	-	10.50	9.60	10.30	10.00	11.70	11.20	10.00	-1.20
	Statistical Neighbours	-	-	-	11.30	8.37	9.40	11.60	11.18	11.66	10.36	-1.30
970	England	-	-	-	10.10	8.90	9.00	9.10	10.00	10.60	10.90	0.30

#### Official Data Release for Children Looked After (CLA) 2019/20

Due to the pandemic and the associate issues in accurately recording and publishing attendance data in 2019/20 academic year the DfE only published Autumn term attendance. The data below is not directly comparable with previous attendance publications.

	Number of Pupils	Attendance Rate	Rank	Authorised Absence	Rank	Unauthorised Absence Rate	Rank	PA	Rank
Barnet	98	93.2%	125	3.7%	72	3.1%	136	14.3	102
England	34450	94.5%		3.8%		1.7%		12.5	
London	3520	94.1%		3.7%		2.2%		13.2	

- In the Autumn Term 2019, Barnet's attendance rate was lower than all comparators.
- The rank for this measure is in the lowest quartile.
- Barnet's authorised Absence rate is in line with the National and London Averages.
- Barnet's unauthorised absence rate is nearly twice the rate of the national average and the ranking is also very low.
- The small pupil numbers in this cohort can cause greater variation, especially when compared with National and London averages.

Further investigation of Barnet's attendance figures shows has revealed an explanation of these figures.

Welfare Call monitor the attendance of 26,000 children in care and comparison with this larger group shows the impact of having a large Y11 cohort - 15.6% of the group monitored by Welfare Call are in Y11. In Barnet it is 24.44%.

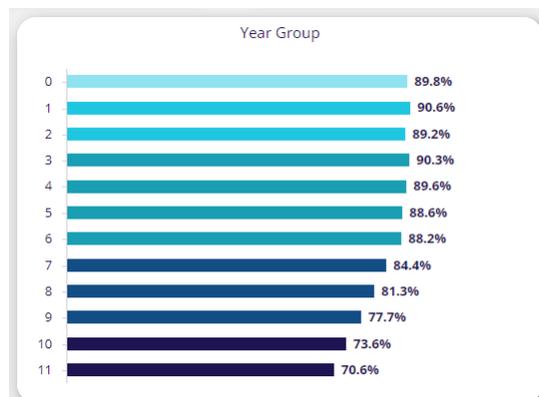
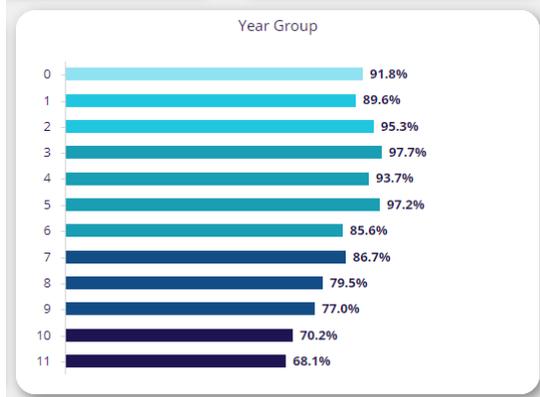
Barnet's figures are very similar to the national average, but with Barnet pupils having significantly higher attendance in most KS1 & KS2 year groups. Barnet's Y11s attendance is slightly below the average, and because Barnet has a large proportion of Y11s (almost a quarter of the cohort, 10% higher than the national average) the lower attendance in that age group has a much more significant affect in lowering the Barnet attendance as a whole than it does nationally.

- For Year Groups Reception to Y10, the national attendance is 83.83% an increase of 2% compared to when Y11s are included. For Barnet, removing the Y11s results in an attendance figure of 83.3% gives an increase of 3.5%
- Attendance for Reception to Y6 is 93.01% compared with a national figure of 89.32%. However, this only contributes 30% of Barnet pupils. Nationally it is 40%. Not only are Y11s lowering Barnet's overall attendance more significantly than nationally, it would appear the relatively low numbers in primary school are not able to boost the attendance figures in the same way as occurs nationally.

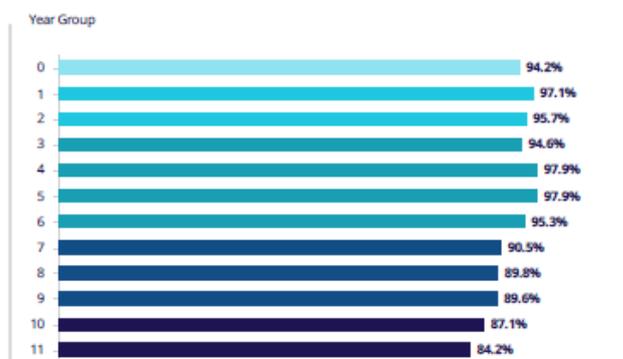
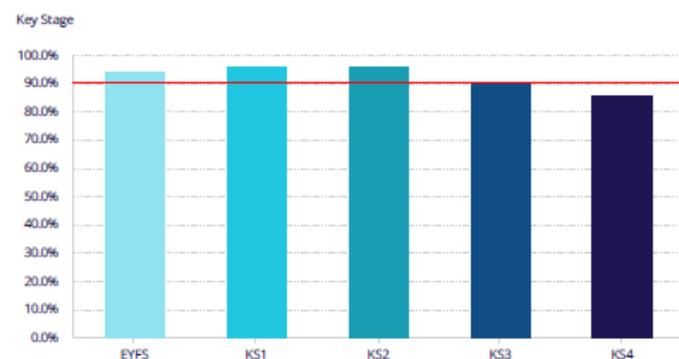
W/E 7<sup>th</sup> May

**Barnet Virtual School**

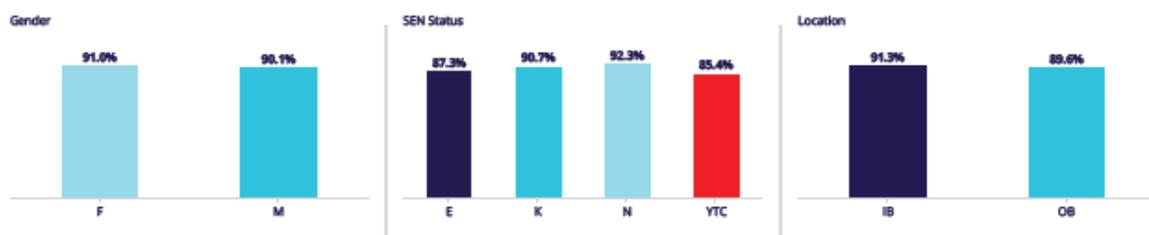
**Welfare Call wider group (26,000)**



Current attendance



Attendance since the return to school in April is strongest amongst primary age children, with a clear drop off in Y11. It is this cohort who have struggled most with the return to school. Across the whole cohort, there has been little variation between gender, SEN status or location. There was however been an increase in attendance across the half term and into the beginning of June (currently 93.3%) which dropped slightly into July (90.51%)



Attendance Comparison - 2019-20 and Autumn Term 2020-21 (taken from Welfare Call)

	Autumn 19 /Spring 20	Summer 20 (schools limited opening)	Autumn 20	Spring 2021 (schools limited opening)	Summer 2021
Numbers (all)	177	186	165	177	192
Attendance (all)	87.9%	44.2%	92%	64.45% (Spring) 79% (Aut/Spring)	90.51%
Number with 100% (all)	27	31	56	20 (Aut/Spring)	46 (23.6%)
Number of eligible children (in care for 12 months plus)	116	116	115	129	128
Attendance (in care 12 months plus)	93.4%	54.4%	91.9%	63.7% (Spring) 79.3% (Aut/Spring)	91.4%

Persistent Absence (below 90%)

Across the year, it is hard to draw meaningful conclusions about persistent absence figures as have been extraordinary. Looking just at the Summer Term does not give meaningful information as to children at PA status as the time scale is too small.

Attendance remains a key priority and the Virtual School continues to implement the actions started in the Autumn Term.

- Analysis of absence reports in Welfare Call to ensure accuracy
- Contextual attendance information included in PEPs – we have slightly altered the PEP format so that attendance is a priority and targets are being set if it is a cause for concern
- Ensure caseworkers are getting weekly reports of attendance for their caseload
- Introduce half termly attendance monitoring meeting to track attendance and identify pupils who are persistently absent and or whose attendance is dropping off

## 5. Exclusions

	Number of fixed-term exclusions						Number of permanent exclusions			
	Autumn 2019	Spring 2020	Summer 2020	Autumn 2020	Spring 2021	Summer 2021	2019/2020	Autumn 2020	Spring 2021	Summer 2021
No of pupils	10	7	1	7	4	7	0	0	0	0
No of exclusions	14	15	1	7	4	14	0	0	0	0
No of days excluded	36	42.5	1	17.5	15.5	56	0	0	0	0
No of exclusions with day 1 provision	13	14	0	7	3	14	0	0	0	0

	In Borough								
	Fixed-period exclusions				Permanent exclusions				
	2019/2020	Autumn 2020	Spring 2021	Summer 2021	2019/2020	Autumn 2020	Spring 2021	Summer 2021	
Total number of pupils excluded	7	3	2	3	0	0	0	0	
Total number of days lost	34	8.5	10	40	0	0	0	0	
	Out of Borough								
	Total number of pupils excluded	11	4	2	4	0	0	0	0
	Total number of days lost	45.5	9	5.5	16	0	0	0	0

N.B In the academic year 2019-20, Barnet had a lower rate of fixed term exclusions for children looked after continuously for at least 12 months than the same group nationally (10.34% compared with 11.38%)

Of the children who received a fixed term exclusion, the majority of children were boys in secondary provisions - one child was in primary. Four girls had exclusions compared with 11 boys and the highest ethnic group to receive exclusions was White British but they are also the largest group in the Virtual School. Typical reasons for exclusions continue to be:

- Physical assault on an adult or child
- Verbal abuse
- Threatening behaviour
- Bringing in banned items
- Not following instructions

Exclusions enforced without clear reason are challenged by the Virtual School and schools are expected to provide alternative education from the first day of the exclusion, whether this be a placement at an alternative school or tutoring. As part of the Virtual School strategy this is communicated to schools as soon as we are made aware of an intention to exclude or an exclusion. We work with schools to look at alternatives to exclusions and support with putting in place preventative measures.

## 6. School Places

Number of children currently without a school place: 2

Number of directions for a school place: 0

Changes in circumstances – Summer Term 2021 (brackets Summer Term 2020)

No. of pupils:	Same School Place	Change in school place
Same placement	165 (169)	2 (7)
Change in placement	16 (9)	7 (5)

Looking at the Summer Term, there were a number of young people who changed placement and schools. These were due to a number of reasons including:

- Moving placements so needed to change schools
- Moving back to live with a parent from an out of borough specialist placement
- Moving to a new residential home with education on site
- Under a section in a mental health acute unit

Educational Provision – Ofsted Judgements

	Total	No in good /outstanding schools	No in requires improvement /inadequate school	Unknown	Reason for placements in requires improvement /inadequate school
<b>In Borough school</b>	99	90	5	4 Schools not yet inspected	Children already attending prior to coming into care
<b>Out of Borough school</b>	81	64	5	12 Schools not yet inspected or academy convertors One school in Scotland.	Foster carer choice x 2 Already attending before RI grading x 2 Older sibling already attending.

## 7. Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

The Personal Education Plan (PEP) for each child includes progress and attainment information as well as recording interventions, often funded through the Pupil Premium Plus Grant, to ensure the child achieves well. The Virtual School works in partnership with teams in Children and Families and with Designated Teachers in schools, to ensure that each child has an up to date, effective and high-quality PEP that focuses on education outcomes.

### Summer Term 2021

Information provided as of the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2021.

	Total Number of PEPs	Number of PEPs completed within statutory time frames	Number of incomplete PEPs/not uploaded.	Number and % rag rated green	Number and % rag rated amber	Number and % rag rated red
<b>Early Years</b>	12	12	0	11 91.6%	0	1 8.3%
<b>Statutory</b>	189	187	0	186 98.9%	3 1.58%	0
<b>Post 16</b>	151	151	0	149 98.6%	2 1.32%	0

The Early Years PEP was rag rated red as the D.T. did not complete their section, despite requests to do so. Amber ratings were due to social workers not completing the carer section or pupil voice section not being completed.

	Total Number of PEPs	Number of PEPs completed within statutory time frames	Number of incomplete PEPs/not uploaded.	Number and % rag rated green	Number and % rag rated amber	Number and % rag rated red
<b>Statutory</b>	539	536	3	494 91.65%	42 7.79%	3 0.55 %
<b>Post 16</b>	436	436	0	414 94.95%	22 5.04%	0

Over the whole year, 91.65% of statutory PEPs rag-rated as green. The ones rag-rated red were due to D.T.s not completing the PEP.

## 8. Achievement

We are unable to report fully on achievement from 2019/20 due to COVID-19. However there has been an official data release for KS4, although limited in its scope.

It is incomplete due to low pupil numbers meaning some measures for Barnet are redacted. Despite this, below is a breakdown of the Barnet figures compared to National and London Averages, the 'results' are not directly comparable to 2019. The data included in the sections relating to Children Looked After for 12 months or more in 31 March 2020.

## CLA – KS4 2020

	Number of pupils	Attainment 8	Rank 2019	Rank 2020	English and Maths 4+	Rank 2019	Rank 2020
Barnet	29	21.8	99	74	24.10%	N/A	65
National Average	6050	21.4			24.40%		
London	900	22.3			26.70%		

- Barnet is roughly in line with the national average (narrowly above in the Attainment 8 measure and narrowly below on the proportion of pupils attaining a four or above in English and Maths).
- The rank in Attainment 8 between 2019 and 2020 improved from 99<sup>th</sup> in 2019 to 74<sup>th</sup> in 2020.

### Current achievement

Looking at responses to questions in the PEPs, of those who answered, 80% of young people were reported to be making good or better progress and 75% were reported to be at least engaged and motivated most of the time. The highest responses came from our primary cohort with attitude to learning being less positive in Key Stage 4 and progress slower.

### **9. Planned Destinations – Year 11**

Destination	Number
College– A levels	4
College- vocational course	13
College – other course	16
Staying on at school – A levels	3
Staying on at school – special school	5
Changing to another school – A levels	3
Apprenticeship	0
Working	0
Other - please specify	Staying on at school other course – 1 Joining a new specialist provision - 1
NEET	5

## 10. Post 16 Cohort

### Engagement with education, employment and training

	In Borough	Out of Borough
Apprenticeship	1	0
Working	2	2
College/6th Form/SEN Provision	20	82
Engaged in a short course	2	2
NEET due to being new to care UASC	3	4
NEET - other	7	16
In secure unit	0	3

### **Young people who are NEET**

At Post-16 the young people not in education, employment or training present a significant challenge and engaging them is no easy task. The category includes those in psychiatric units, pregnant or who frequently go missing thus are even harder to engage in education or training.

In 2020, 39% of care leavers were NEET nationally. Currently, we have 22.9% of our Year 12 and 13's who are NEET. However, 4.8% of these are unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people who are relatively new into care.

### Action undertaken

Supporting young people who are NEET is a key area and caseworkers work closely with them to support reengagement into education, employment, or training. The BEETs team support with connections within various industries whereby companies head hunt young people who are searching for either a work placement or apprenticeship. Construction and motor vehicle apprenticeship/placement have been of interest to young people. Two companies - North London Garages and Galdris Construction - have considered a few of our young people in the Summer term as potential candidates. One young person has successfully secured and started his apprenticeship with Galdris and is thoroughly enjoying it.

Two different mentoring programmes developed by the BEETs team have also proved very effective in engaging young people. The first is the Bridging the Gap programme where young people can gain a qualification in employability skills, money management and a refresher in basic English and Maths. There is a monetary incentive of £150-200 upon successful completion of the course. The programme helps prepare young people for further education, training or employment. All young people are assigned to a mentor on a 1:1 basis who support them in planning their next steps in the world of work or education including help with finding opportunities and submitting applications.

The second is the RON Project which is more focused around mentoring and coaching. It is dynamic, personalised, asset driven, and strengths based. Sessions with young people are tailored around boosting their self-esteem, helping them to vision their purpose in life,

strengthening the power of their mindset, developing emotional intelligence, and planning their goals and how to achieve them. Many of our young people face various challenges and low morale so the RON Project aims to work with individuals tailoring a programme of intervention relevant to them and their journey to help overcome certain barriers.

#### Action undertaken

1-1 work providing advice and guidance regarding action planning for the future.  
 Support for young people who are NEET regarding applications for courses.  
 Course ideas/opportunities provided on a regular basis to professional network.  
 Follow up on progress on a regular basis (weekly or fortnightly).  
 Continue to build relationships and trust through meetings and telephone contact.  
 Support young people with interviews/visits when possible.  
 Maintain regular communication with professional networks so as not to duplicate actions.  
 Refer to BEETs if young person is not engaging  
 Liaise with placement to support young people

#### Planned Destinations for Year 13 September 2021

<b>Destination</b>	<b>Number</b>
Higher Education - university	4
College	35
Staying on at school	1
Educated at home	
Illness	
Pregnancy	
Specialist provision	
Re-engagement provision	
Work training programme	1
Apprenticeship	
Working	5
Other - please specify	Two in prison Two looking for employment One engaging in short course/looking for employment
NEET	14
Unknown – please comment	2

#### Higher Education

We were delighted that in 2019, we had 4 young people who went onto university. Young carer leavers from Barnet went to:  
 Liverpool John Moore - Criminology  
 Brunel - Business Marketing Management  
 King's College - Computer Science  
 Middlesex - Law

### **11. Staffing**

The Virtual School got approval to appoint a School Business Manager who is now in place and taking over a lot of the administrative and finance tasks. One caseworker left at the end of the summer to work for a family member and has been replaced.

a. Current Staffing

<b>Staff member's name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Additional comments</b>
Paul Whitcombe	Executive Head Teacher	1 day a week
Sarah Deale	Headteacher	
Julie Locke	Senior Case worker	KS3/4 and senior role
Jane Thrift	School Business Manager	
Maria Skoutaridou	PEP Coordinator with additional responsibilities	Reducing to 2 days from September
Allan Newby	Caseworker	EYFS/Primary
Hannah Hudson	Caseworker	KS2/3
Ornella Rochfort	Caseworker	KS4
Frasier Stroud	Caseworker	Post 16
Aiysha Iqbal	Caseworker	Post 16
Amy Wight	Senior Learning Mentor	Transition Hub
Nathanael Ribas	Admin	Transition Hub - 3 days
Daniel Matsuzaka	Outreach Learning Mentor	Transition Hub
Samuel Okine	Outreach Learning Mentor	Transition Hub

b. Professional Development

Training attended during the year included

- Pathways activity to identify strengths and areas for development for the school Part 2 led by Amy Gibb and Parminder Chana .
- Race and Identity in LAC (DT training attended by team)
- Race and Identity follow up (team only)
- Fragile Fearful and Fragmented – Barry Carpenter
- Emotional based school non-attendance
- Advanced Designated Safeguarding Lead training
- National Association for Virtual School Heads webinars
- Welfare Call training on monitoring attendance and use an Analytics
- Prevent training
- Thriving not Surviving – Adopt London North

- The Transition Hub staff continue to receive regular training from Professor Catherine Carroll (St Mary's University) and the Barnet Educational Psychologist attached to the Hub (Amy Gibb)
- Race and Identity follow up
- National Association for Virtual School Heads conference (as it was held virtually, all team members could attend)
- Power of Language – Dr Karen Treisman
- Introduction to the Rights and Entitlements of Care experienced young people
- Preparation for Ofsted - Become
- Welfare call training
- Pathways activity to identify strengths and areas for development for the school Part 3 led by Amy Gibb and Parminder Chana .

Visits to team meetings from Charles Rice Jasmine West, Linda Orr (SEND), Juliette Thomson EP (Exclusions and LAC) and Joanne Kelly (PRU)

The whole Virtual School team has had training on Gateway. We have also bought into training units from AC Education and have allocated each team member 3 units so they can choose which they are interested in doing.

### c. Supervision

Caseworkers had 1:1 supervision with the senior caseworker monthly.

A group supervision is carried out to support more difficult cases and share expertise. This is supported by the Educational Psychology Team who also carry out supervision for the senior members of the team.

## **12. Engagement with Stakeholders**

### **a. Children**

#### Enrichment Activities

<b>Term</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Age group</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Outline</b>
Ongoing	A New Direction – ongoing 1-year project	13-17 years old	4	Arts enrichment programme for young people in care co-designed with Care Leavers, addressing issues and topics they feel are pertinent to them. Young people who are participating are building a community through a creative platform, supporting each other during transition phases, raising public awareness of this process, learning about their rights and having their voices heard.
Autumn Term	Strength in Horses	Year 7 - Year 12	1	Strength and Learning Through Horses' provides an alternative experience for young people who sometimes find it difficult to engage in traditional therapy and classroom settings but thrive in the inclusive outdoor setting of the stables. The expert team of Clinic Psychologists, Psychotherapists and Horse Behaviour Experts work with young people helping them to translate the horse's behaviour into observations which are meaningful for the young person. The outcomes to be achieved includes: (i) Engagement with the therapeutic process (ii) Confidence building, assertiveness and increased self-awareness (iii) Relational difficulties including building effective communication and trust (iv) Problem solving, team work and developing more helpful interactions with others (v) Specific skills development including supporting engagement in education and work settings (e.g. listening, persistence, and patience).

Autumn Term	Phoenix Outdoor Centre	Years 5-8	4	This took place at the Phoenix Outdoor Centre is situated on the Welsh Harp Reservoir and provided some great outdoor activities for our young people. The aim of the day was to have great fun in a safe outdoor environment, including <u>Orienteering</u> and <u>Kayaking</u>
Autumn Term and ongoing	Shaftesbury Project (Harrow School)	GCSE	4	The Harrow School Shaftesbury Enterprise and Virtual Schools 1:1 and small group tuition and mentoring is a programme devised by the Director of Shaftesbury Enterprise. Barnet Virtual School joined the programme in Autumn 2020. The programme currently delivers 1:1 subject specific GCSE online tuition and/or mentoring to Children Looked After Each session runs for approximately 40 to 60 minutes at a time.
Autumn Term – cancelled (only 1 session took place)	Celebrate Me	Year 10 girls	2	In partnership with Brunel University, young people took part in a 6 week programme all about empowering young women. The aim was to learn how to identify the confidence they already have, acquire tips and techniques to overcome nerves and self-doubt and reinforce a good self-image, all whilst making friends with our likeminded young women. However, it did not work well as a virtual activity and was stopped
Autumn Term	We are Heroes	Years 3-6	30	‘Storytime’ are a social enterprise and one of the biggest magazines for schools in the UK. They’ve been working hard this year on a new project - the ‘We Are Heroes’ mini magazine, funded by the British Academy. We Are Heroes is a collaboration between Storytime and Queen Mary University of London. It contains carefully chosen myths and legends that have parallels to experiences of lockdown that children could be facing - such as staying at home or protecting yourself, with extra activities produced in consultation with a children’s mental health expert. There will be six editions in total from October through to March. It aims to give children a creative way of processing the situation they find themselves in.
Autumn and ongoing	Letterbox	Years 1/3/5	22/ 30	The Booktrust runs The Letterbox club which aims to provide children with parcels full of high-quality books and resources, to help encourage reading and learning. Letterbox Club can help looked-after students to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build their confidence in reading, maths and their self-esteem</li> <li>• Feel remembered, valued and excited about receiving their parcels</li> <li>• Spend time with their carers/families and peers to share stories and play games</li> <li>• Have continuity through receiving their parcels despite any placement moves</li> </ul> Each child registered will receive six parcels, with a total of up to 14 fiction and non-fiction books, 10 maths games, around 40 items of stationery and other resources. Feedback from carers has been positive –  <i>‘All three children are enjoying the contents and look forward to receiving the next box. On behalf of the children, thank you all once again for such a brilliant scheme, it couldn’t come at a better time’.</i>
Autumn/ Spring	What Works for Children in Social Care Letter Project	Years 12/13	FE – 52 HE – 17	This is part of a research project which aims to increase the number of young people leaving care going onto higher and further education. What Works for Children’s Social Care (WWCSC), the Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education (TASO), Become and the National Association of Virtual School Heads (NAVSHs) are seeking to increase the number of young care leavers in HE and further education (FE), building on research carried out by the Behavioural Insights Team. This found that sending a personalised “nudge” letter to students from someone they could identify with, was effective at raising the number who apply to, and accept offers from, selective universities. Letters are written by care experienced young people in HE and FE will be sent to young people in year 12 and 13 (or equivalent) who are currently in care. The letters will encourage young people to think about applying to

				HE/FE, setting out the support available (financial and other) to young care leavers and signposting to Become's Propel website and free advice line. Two letters are to be sent out in November 2020 - one from a young care leaver in HE and one from a young care leaver in FE - and two to be sent out in March 2021 - again one from someone in HE and one from someone in FE.
Autumn	Post 16 Pathways	Years 12/13	5	Post 16 Pathways Presentation by Middlesex University. This was a virtual presentation aimed at getting young people to think about options. Now that we have a link person at Middlesex, we are hoping to be able to offer more sessions
Spring Term	Debate Mate	Years 9-13	6	A series of virtual sessions, young people had the opportunity to practice lots of different elements to debating – thinking on their feet, structuring an argument and backing up their argument, whilst developing their public speaking skills and learning to articulate their views clearly. This is done in a very engaging, fun way using topics that are relevant to them. Young people then practice these skills with a final 'debate challenge' and all young people were given a certificate for participating in the programme.
Spring – Summer Term	Book Club	Year 3-8	8	Designed and led by Virtual Schools, this is a virtual book club which takes place once per month. Children are sent a book each month ahead of the meeting. The aim of this book club is to foster a love of reading, so sessions are kept fun and informative to boost enjoyment and comprehension.
Spring Term and Ongoing	Shaftesbury Project (Orley Farm)	Year 6	4	The Harrow School Shaftesbury Enterprise and Virtual Schools 1:1 and reading/maths tuition and mentoring is a programme devised by the Director of Shaftesbury Enterprise. Barnet Virtual School joined the programme in Spring 2021. The programme currently delivers 1:1 subject specific KS2 online tuition and/or mentoring to Children Looked After Each session runs for approximately 40 to 60 minutes at a time.
Spring/ Summer Term	Philosophy Club	Years 5/6	5	Critical Thinking Skills for Y3 to Y6 – the chance to converse and discuss lots of different ideas. In the sessions, the young people are presented with an idea or other stimulus such as a story or poem or short film and are then asked questions to engage them in conversation with each other.
Spring Term	MyBnk	Years 12/13	2	Virtual event 'Money Works' hosted by MyBnk. The programme is aimed at Post-16 LACs to promote a better understanding of money management, bank accounts, credit cards etc. as they begin their journey into semi-independent/independent living. The programme covers digital aspects of money management, delivered via Zoom. In order to receive the qualification, young people are required to complete and submit a work booklet. Young people will receive an e-certificate as accreditation if they pass the programme.
Spring Term and Ongoing	Brunel Mentoring	Years 12/13	5	In partnership with Brunel University, young people take part in a 10 week Mentoring Programme, delivered by Care Leaver "Ambassadors" – all have DBS and safeguarding training. Over the 10 weeks, the mentor and mentee cover such topics as finding work, looking at different university courses, Propel website etc. The programme also works well with UASC, as a number of the mentors are UASC themselves and can answer more specific questions about things that concern them. Mentors and mentees can also be matched by language.
Spring Term	Big House Project	Years 12/13	1	Big House runs theatre-based workshops for YP aged 16+ who are care experienced or at risk, including NEET, at risk of offending etc. They offer a 12-week programme: 4 weeks life skills which includes budgeting, nutrition, healthy living etc., 4 weeks rehearsal for putting on a play and 4 weeks of shows of their play. There is a whole host of different skills the YP could develop: acting, writing, stage craft – lighting, scenery, costume, etc., filming and editing, producing and directing – such as movement director, assistant producer etc. During the 12 weeks they will be mentored, and at the end of the 12 weeks, given support in their chosen pathway.
Summer 1	Campfire Project	Year 5-8	8	Working with the Barnet based charity, 'Live Unlimited', the campfire project took place every Saturday for 6 weeks at a local venue. Delivered by Forest School-trained practitioners from the charity Wild About Our Woods, young people learnt to build fires, put up a shelter, carve a spoon and cook on an

				open fire. The desired outcomes from this activity included: Improved health and wellbeing, feeling happier, learning new skills, feeling more confident, making new friends, taking risks and trying something different.
Summer 2	Phoenix Outdoor Centre	Years 5-8 Years 9-11 Year 6	1	Re-booking due to cancellation back in October as a result of Covid safety. This took place at the Phoenix Outdoor Centre situated on the Welsh Harp Reservoir and provided some great outdoor activities for our young people. The aim of the day was to have great fun in a safe outdoor environment, including <u>Orienteering</u> and <u>Kayaking</u> .
Summer 2	Arvon	Year 11	3	Barnet Virtual School took 3 Year 11 students for a fun week away following all of their hard work. This trip is designed for students who enjoy writing and like being creative, and would be inspired by exploring beautiful scenery, watching special guest performances, taking country walks and playing fun games. This project aims to build life and independence skills at an old Millhouse which used to belong to the famous English poet, Ted Hughes, in West Yorkshire from Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> July – Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> July 2021. The course is run by Arvon - <a href="http://www.arvon.co.uk">www.arvon.co.uk</a>
Summer 2	Strength in Horses	Years 7-11	2	As above
Summer 2	Regent's Park Open Air Theatre	Year 11 REC-Y2	15 15	Family days out at Regent's Park Open Air Theatre. For Year 11s, the production is 'Romeo & Juliet', a play which many of our young people have studied. For the young children from Reception – Year 2, the show is called 'Dragons & Mythical Beasts'.
Summer 2	Orley Farm	Year 3/4	4	Orley Farm School hosted an activity day for Years 3 & 4 Looked After Children across 4 Virtual Schools including Barnet Virtual School. There were a carousel of activities such as 'capture the flag', 'rounders', 'mini sports race' and 'scavenger hunt', with some kind of bouncy slide for everyone at the end. A pizza lunch was also included!
Summer 2	ESOL Summer Camp	Years 9-12	15	Barnet Virtual School with Winchmore Tutors hosted a week long Summer Camp to support Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children with developing their English Language skills. The camp took place in Woodhouse College. The focus was academic mornings (English Pre-Entry/Entry Level 1) and afternoon activities (examples: team sports, cooking, trip to local café, University tour, Wall Climbing).
Summer 2	Opera Holland Park Singing	Years 3-9	2	Singing Classes for Y3-Y9 - a series of singing sessions, where participants learnt singing techniques from professional opera singers, enjoyed some live music and singing with a pianist, and learnt the music and story of Janacek's opera The Cunning Little Vixen. The participants will be invited to Opera Holland Park once reopened in the summer to have some live workshops in the park, and to finally watch the production of Cunning Little Vixen. Each session was led by a singer with a background in education and choir leading.

### Stepladder Project

This is a tailor-made incentivised learning programme for 15-17 year olds who have been in care for at least one year (with Child Trust Fund). Online modules covering Literacy, numeracy, financial capability, future planning and employment are completed, resulting in a monetary contribution to their savings account, which they can access when they turn 18.

At the end of the Summer Term there were 35 young people successfully registered and there have been 5 full completions of the programme to date since August 2019. So far the total amount paid out in incentive payments is £17,800. There are 15 active learners of the 35 registered and out of the 6 steps required to complete the programme the below highlights their progress.

- 5 have completed the programme in full

- 3 have achieved step 5
- 4 have achieved step 4
- 5 have achieved step 3
- 2 have achieved step 2
- 1 has achieved step 1
- Total number of young people over 18 who have completed – 3
- Total number of young people under 18 who have completed - 2
- Total number of young people under 18 where no steps have been completed – 8

Caseworkers continue to work closely with the Step Ladder Mentor to confirm registrations of young people to monitor user engagement and follow up with those who haven't registered yet. There has been slight delay this term due to the Stepladder Mentor leaving and temporary staff covering the role, we are hoping the regular contact with the Share Foundation will resume in the Autumn term.

We expect the number of registration and engagement to increase as Caseworkers continue discussing the programme in PEP meetings and reaching out to relevant network such as foster carers, schools, Designated Teachers and the young people directly. The Stepladder project manager is liaising with Barnet Virtual School to put a training/information session for foster carers to increase engagement in the Autumn term. Caseworkers continue to promote the Stepladder Project in PEPs and conversations with carers and social workers

### Aim Higher

Aim Higher provides discrete activities as well as progressive programmes to target learners who are underrepresented in higher education, to stay in education and progress. The LAC network within Aim Higher has been developing and delivering programmes to support LACs to explore opportunities around accessing higher education. In the Spring Term, 6 referrals were made to the 'Map of Me' Programme which enables the KS4 cohort to be mentored by a university student for 6 months building on confidence skills and goal setting.

3 of the 6 referrals have now successfully completed the 'Map of Me' Programme in June 2021.

The feedback has been very positive and with 2/3 young sharing that they found it very helpful and would recommend it to other young people. They particularly found that speaking with a university student helped them to gain a more realistic understanding of university life and an increased motivation to do well. One young person had to drop out of the programme due to unforeseen circumstances, but they shared that they would like to sign back up next year to complete the course.

### **b. Family Services**

The Virtual School has continued to work closely with Family Services, attending a number of meetings including Permanency Panel, Permanency Tracking Meeting and Vulnerable Adolescents Panel ensuring a clear link with the wider team. The Virtual School are also represented on CPOG, a multi-agency group which coordinates and advances the Corporate

Parenting plan in Barnet to improve outcomes for children in care and care leavers. The Headteacher is meeting monthly with Kate Jeffrey, Head of Service, Corporate Parenting.

The Virtual School is now represented on the BOP working party and attended the relaunch event with young people.

A pre-recorded training session for new social workers is being developed which can then be sent to all new starters along with an information pack is being developed

### **c. Designated Teachers**

The Virtual School has continued to send out two newsletters a term to our Designated Teachers and to offer a range of training. A New to Barnet/DT booklet has also been written which is now sent out to all new schools.

In the Autumn Term there were two training sessions for New to D.T./Barnet run by the Inclusion Advisory Team. We also held a training session on Race and Identity in Looked After Children. This proved very popular and so we ran the same session again which was offered out to staff in Education and Skills. Running the sessions virtually has enabled us to include D.T.s all over the country.

In the Spring Term, we offered a virtual training session on the **Power of Language**, delivered by Dr Karen Treisman. It was a thought-provoking session and had very positive feedback. This was then built on in two follow up sessions with our E.P.s who delivered two workshops:

**Supporting conversations with LAC around race and identity** How to have sensitive conversations with LAC around their race and activities to help LAC explore their racial and cultural identity

**Language that nurtures** Scenario based discussions, focusing on using language that connects and nurtures and how to use nurturing language when a LAC is in fight/flight/freeze or collapse mode

We also ran a training session specifically targeting our post 16 D.T.s. This focussed on:

- Challenges and risk factors for young people in care Post 16
- Co-ordinating and Managing the PEP process in a Post 16 setting
- Improving outcomes for young people in care in post 16 education
- Working strategically to support young people in care in your setting

In the Summer Term, we offered a virtual training session on 'Race and Identity in LAC – where are we now?'. All participants felt it would improve their practice in their workplace and increased their knowledge. We also hosted another session specifically targeting post 16 D.T.s to support them in their setting

### **d. Foster Carers**

Termly newsletters have been sent to foster carers and training offered across the year. Topics covered have included:

Behaviour as Communication - carers were able to give their in-put on issues arising within their home setting, differing from what they sometimes experience or have experienced with their own children.

Gaps in Learning with one session for primary and one for secondary

Managing, understanding, and organising homework and supporting reading in the home which gave a range of ideas to support young people with homework, including ways to break down difficult tasks as well as techniques and strategies to help with word reading, reading for meaning and reading for enjoyment.

Understanding and navigating the SEN processes in school which was to support carers with understanding what is meant by a SEN and the different SEN processes in school, as well as knowing where to get help and advice, and how a child/young person with Special Educational Needs can be supported within a school setting

An introduction to Emotion Coaching' Emotion Coaching a parenting technique that helps children understand their feelings.

Supporting your young person through the transition into the next school year which aimed to give an understanding of how to support with transition into the new school year.

#### **e. Educational Psychology (E.P.)**

The Virtual School has two days of EP support and over the year, they have supported the team in a variety of ways including:

- Supervision for senior members of the team
- Work Discussion Groups for caseworkers to explore working practices
- Consultation sessions for caseworkers to explore complex cases
- Direct pieces of work / assessments with young people, carers and schools for complex cases
- Training for caseworkers, designated teachers and carers
- Newsletter article to support D.T.s with young people returning to school
- Consultation slots for foster carers
- Research focus (currently post USAC young people with suspect learning needs)

Their input has been invaluable and has really supported young people in challenging situations.

#### **f. SEND and Inclusion**

Within the Virtual School there are a high number of children with special educational needs. Monthly meetings are held with the Head of SEN Assessments and Placements team to discuss any difficult cases and there is also occasional representation on the Complex Needs Panel to discuss and agree applications for EHCP assessments and funding requests.

#### **g. Pupil Placement Panel**

The Virtual School attends the fortnightly Pupil Placement Panel, a multi-agency group which monitors all statutory age pupil without a school place and formulates plans to ensure a school placement is identified or an education plan put in place.

#### **h. Inclusion Advisory Team (I.A.T.)**

The Virtual School has continued to benefit from the support of the I.A.T. team. The team have delivered a range of training, supported with Year 6 to 7 transition and carried out specific casework. They also carried out an independent review of the Virtual School which will be presented to the Challenge Committee.

#### **i. Working party - UASC with additional needs**

The Virtual School has set up a working party to look more closely at the issues for UASC young people who may have additional learning needs. An initial meeting was held in June 2020 and a small working party has been established including representatives from Barnet and Southgate College, the Refugee Council, social workers, educational psychologists and Westminster social care and Virtual School.

The reason for this focus is the number of post 16 UASC who appear to have additional learning needs but due to their levels of English are not adequately assessed therefore they

do not receive the appropriate support in college. This then results in them reaching adulthood without appropriate knowledge/support in place which makes it hard for them to maintain independence and puts them at risk of exploitation. The aim is to establish how UASCs can get effectively assessed in terms of ALN which would therefore mean meeting the criteria/funding being agreed for extra support. This can then be used to help identify extra-support needed in adulthood as well.

To date several meetings have been held, background reading carried out and a questionnaire written and sent out to colleges. The results of the questionnaire have been collated and sent out to those who completed it. These participants have also been invited to the next meeting in August.

### **13. Transition Hub (YEF Project) – Hassan Sufi**

Achieving for Children's Virtual School (Kingston, Richmond, Windsor and Maidenhead), in collaboration with Barnet Virtual School and St Mary's University were awarded a £750,000 research grant, for two years, by the Youth Endowment Foundation for a feasibility study to implement a Transition Hub for children in care aged 11 to 14 who are dealing with a significant transition in their lives e.g. new to care, new school, change of placement or school. This is hosted at Whitefield's Secondary School and was launched in October 2019

Barnet TEAM (Transitioning Everyone to Achieve More) Hub continues to advance its role in supporting children new to care and children in care experiencing a transition in home/school placement within the care system. As with other provisions, the Hub had to adjust to a virtual platform in which all students were on a bespoke virtual outreach support service around their social, emotional and academic needs. The Hub now continues to operate from Whitefield school providing In reach support and tuition for up to six weeks, as well as Outreach support. This outreach service occurs up to twice weekly for the first six weeks, which then gradually reduces as the child becomes better equipped to manage their difficult personal circumstances as a result of trauma, also taking into consideration the additional challenges arisen due to Covid-19. The service emphasises a school/carer/student ready approach to ensure all parties working directly with the child are empowered and assisted in ensuring the best possible outcomes for the child.

Over the course of the year (Sept 2020-July 2021) the Transition Hub has supported 15 students with 4 benefitting from In reach support (i.e. in the Transition Hub at Whitefield) and 11 benefitting from Outreach support either virtually or visiting them in their schools.

The feasibility research project was due to finish in August 2021 but an extension was granted for a further term (until December 2021). We have recently been told that YEF will be funding a further two terms (until July 2022) when the project will shift to an Outcomes Study Project.

Sarah Deale July 2021

## Appendix 1

### Other qualifications

In addition to G.C.S.E.s, young people achieved a range of other qualifications. These included:

Subject	Level 1	Level 2	
P.E. Sports BTEC	6	3	
Health and Social Care	2	1	
Hair and Beauty	1		
IT BTEC	1		
Spoken Language		1	
ESOL	2		
Science	2		
History	1	2	
Enterprise BTEC		1	
Construction BTEC	1	1	
Business		2	
Dance BTEC		2	
Functional Skills			
	Entry level	Level 1	Level 2
English	6	2	
Maths	2	3	1
Vocational skills	2		

### Young people who achieved no qualifications:

- 1 had significant mental health issues, poor attendance and placement moves
- 1 was attending the Pavilion and had poor attendance
- 1 had mental health issues and poor attendance and is planning to retake next year
- 1 was UASC and will be taking exams next year
- 1 had an EHCP and is working within KS2
- 1 had an EHCP and multiple school/placement moves
- 2 were new to care in the Summer Term – one UASC and one NEET.
- 1 was UASC with very poor attendance

## Appendix 2

### End of 13 Results

This is a breakdown of qualifications achieved – many young people achieved more than one.

Qualification			
<b>A Levels</b>			
Business – B History – D P.E. - C	Economics – B History – C Persian – A* BTEC Engineering - distinction	Chemistry – C Psychology – C Biology – C	Dance - B Computer Science – D English Literature - B
			Psychology – C Media – B Sociology – A
Diploma in Performing Arts – Distinction (A level equivalent)	1 1		BTEC level 3 Music - Pass 1
ESOL – pre-entry	2		NVQ Hair and Beauty – Level 1 1
ESOL Entry Level 1 (L1)	4		Technical Certificate in Business Enterprise – Level 2 1
ESOL Entry Level 2 (L2)	8		Electrical Installation – Level 2 1
ESOL Entry Level 3 (L3)	6		Business Level 2 1
Functional Skills – L1 Maths	4		Art and Design Level 2 1
Functional Skills – L2 Maths	4		Creative Industries – Level 2 Merit 1
Functional Skills – L3 Maths	4		Sports Btec – Level 2 2
Functional Skills – L1 English	1		Plumbing L2 1
Functional Skills – L2 English	1		Motor Vehicle mechanics Level 2 1
ICT L1	1		Extended diploma in Sport – DD (leads onto equivalent of A levels) 1
ICT L2	1		GCSE retake 12
ICT L3	3		

Reason	No. of pupils
NEET	19
Prison	1
Special school	1
Did not complete course	3
No grading system	2
Employment	2
New to college	1

No qualification at  
the end of Year 13

