



**MAXIMISING OUTCOMES FOR LOOKING
AFTER CHILDREN SO THAT THEY DO NOT
BECOME NEET STATISTICS**



The Virtual School promotes the education of looked after children in Years R to 11

Interventions, such as becoming 'looked after', should, over time, serve to reduce the risk of a child becoming NEET later in life.

The Virtual School does therefore play an important role in this area.



The Virtual School Team consists of:

- Virtual School Headteacher (Part-time: 0.4)
- Education Liaison Officer
- Administrative Assistant

Key focus is to narrow the gap between the educational outcomes of looked after and non-looked after children, **particularly by the end of Key Stage 4.**



We do this by:

- Monitoring attendance and progress
- Practical support and challenge to the schools
LAC attend
- Building capacity



Smooth transition at end of Year 11

Looked after children at risk of becoming NEET at the end of Year 11 are identified as early as possible from around age 14, and receive targeted support from the Virtual School's Education Liaison Officer



Background

- Care Plan
- Personal Education Plan (PEP)
- 'Care Leaver' from age 16
- emphasis on planning for independence
- Pathway Plan
 - maximising further education and training opportunities, including apprenticeships
- Transfer to Care Management 16+ Team
 - Liaison till end of Year 11
 - Alerted to looked after children at risk of becoming NEET early in Yr11
- Virtual School Head provided annual report to CPG on outcomes at KS4 and Yr11 destinations



Note on Care Leavers from 16th birthday

Under 18 and still looked after - Eligible

Under 18 and no longer looked after - Relevant

Over 18 – Former Relevant



Looked After Children who become NEET statistics

For the purpose of this report, a review of the pre-16 experience of the looked after children who left school in the last two years and are currently NEET, according to statistics provided for the Scrutiny Committee by the CM 16+ team, has been carried out.



Concluding Remarks

The figures show that the vast majority of Year 11 looked after children continue their education in their school 6th Form or at College at the end of KS4. In the last two years, relatively few looked after children were NEET at the end of Year 11 or have become NEET subsequently.



Concluding Remarks

The risk factors for becoming NEET at the end of Year 11 are:

- Coming into care during Year 11 or late in Year 10
- Exhibiting very challenging behaviour at school and home
- Disengagement which may also result in low attendance, fixed term exclusions, reduced timetable and/or managed moves
- Lack of engagement with Alternative Education provision
- A history of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties
- Mental health issues
- Drug and/or alcohol misuse
- Absconding
- Criminal activity
- Becoming pregnant



Concluding Remarks

The risk factors for becoming NEET in Year 12 or 13 before the age of 18/19 also include:

- Lower/under achievement or lack of qualifications at the end of Key Stage 4
- A desire to leave care early i.e. before 18th birthday
- Living out of the area post 16 (which may be linked to living out of area pre-16)



Current strategies for ensuring no looked after child becomes NEET where this could be avoided

1. The on-going work of the Virtual School to:
 - ensure the best possible educational outcomes for all looked after children by the end of Key Stage 4 (Year 11)
 - raise self-esteem and aspiration among all looked after children
 - raise the expectations of teachers, social workers, carers and everyone involved with looked after children in terms of what children with experience of the care system can achieve



Current strategies for ensuring no looked after child becomes NEET where this could be avoided

2. Early identification from around age 14 and targeted support from the Virtual School's Education Liaison Officer.
3. Early involvement during Year 11 with Personal Advisers from the Care Management 16+ Team



Further strategies under development

1. 'Fair Access Protocol' in Southend - see 'Making a Fresh Start 2013'

Reducing the amount of time children with challenging behaviours spend out of school or alternative provision

2. 'Proposal to Develop Targeted and Specialist Provision for pupils with BESD in Southend'

Priory School, Renown Centre for Learning