



Haringey Council

Agenda item:

[No.]

Children and Young People's Consultative Committee On

Report Title: **Haringey's 'VIRTUAL SCHOOL' Head proposal December 2009**

Forward Plan reference number (if applicable): n/a

Report of: **The Director of The Children and Young People's Service**

Wards(s) affected: **All**

Report for: **Information**

1. Purpose (That is, the decision required)

This report sets out the proposal to establish a Head for the 'Virtual School' for Children in Care.

2. Introduction by Cabinet Member (if necessary)

3. Recommendations

Members of the Corporate Parenting CC are asked to note the contents of the report

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4. Director of Finance Comments

5. Head of Legal Services Comments

6. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

1. Background information

Haringey's 'VIRTUAL SCHOOL' Head proposal December 2009

The DCSF has recommended Local Authorities to adopt the model of a 'Virtual School' to track, monitor and raise attainment levels for all children in care. The recently published 'Improving Educational Attainment of Children in Care (Looked After Children) 2009 states:

'The 'Virtual School' in each Local Authority will 'rigorously track the schooling of every child in care, making sure ...that schools know when they have a child in care ...on their roll, and the school is putting in place appropriate additional targeted support for this child/children.'

Haringey has achieved very positive educational outcomes for Children in the Care of Haringey, Following year on year progress since 2005 Haringey Children Care now achieve above the national CIC averages. (See report for Corporate Parent Committee Nov '09).

Haringey's highly effective Children in Care Education Team, works in close partnership with colleagues in schools and services both in and out borough. This work is currently limited to raising the educational attainment of Haringey Children in Care aged 5yr – 16yrs.

The remit of the Virtual School would extend from 3 year olds in nursery provisions to 19 year olds in Key Stage 5 provisions.

There are 3 groups of children in care referred to in the DCSF documentation:

- Children in Care of **other authorities** educated in Haringey schools
- Children in the Care of Haringey educated in Haringey schools
- Children and young people in the Care of Haringey educated outside Haringey.

Head of the Virtual School

The 'Virtual School' Head would report to the Deputy Directors in Children and Families and School Improvement and Inclusion Services to improve systems for all Children in Care, prioritizing this group's access to targeted interventions, continuity of schooling and better life outcomes.

The 'Virtual School' Head will:

- contribute at a strategic level across the CYPS in narrowing the attainment gap for all CIC, including other borough CIC
- provide education reports on progress to the 'Virtual Governing Body'
- provide data on CIC in Haringey schools to SIIS colleagues and improve coordination of its' use

- lead work with SIIS colleagues, including SIPs, in prioritizing CIC in schools
- be included in Headteacher meetings, as appropriate, to raise the profile and needs of Children in Care. This would include 'In Year Fair Access Panel'; dissemination of new strategies; launching of support initiatives
- influence decision making panels through regular attendance of – Resources Panel, Complex Needs and SEN panel
- chair the multi-agency Attendance Forum and ensure systemic issues are resolved at a strategic level
- manage the Children in Care Education team which will become the 'Virtual School' staff

Safeguarding

The Virtual Head will ensure Risk Assessments are in place for all trips and visits undertaken.

All staff under the management of the VSH will have up to date CRB checks in place. Photo or film images will not be released to any third party without explicit consent from young person and person with parental responsibility.

The 'Virtual School' staff

1 administrator

1 data manager

1 attendance officer

1 Connexions PA – in partnership with Connexions in Haringey schools and targeted services

Children in Care Senior Teacher – Early Years and Primary, Training Co-ordinator

Children in Care Senior Teacher – Project Development to raise educational engagement and attainment, 3yr-19yr

Teacher – Key Stage 5 (new post)

Children in Care Teacher – monitoring and tracking Key Stage 3 and 4, also managing the weekly after school study club for CIC

Educational Psychologist 0.4 – oversight of transition of children and young people with complex needs, in collaboration with Haringey Education Psychology and SEN Services. Education Advisor on the Long Term Care Panel.

The 'Virtual School' and Transition:

Approximately 20% of children and young people in care have Statements of SEN and have complex needs. The Virtual School through its tracking and monitoring system will ensure the 'Progression Guidance 2009/10' is implemented and used to inform planning. Transition reviews will be monitored and the 14-19 SEN Transition Panel will be kept up to date to enable young people's needs are met post 16 as appropriate.

The 'Virtual School' will:

- narrow the gap between the achievements of children in care and those of their peers; promote good educational outcomes.
- accelerate rate of progress of children in care by promoting their inclusion in additional targeted school based interventions;
- work closely with the School Improvement and Inclusion Service and School Improvement Partners to ensure that all Children in Care attending Haringey schools achieve the highest educational outcomes.
- work closely with Foster Carers, Social Workers, staff in residential units and across the range of education provision. This will ensure that all share high expectations of Children in Care and are clear about their roles in achieving positive outcomes for Children in Care
- ensure that robust procedures, strategies and systems are used to implement key legislation and guidance including:
 - Every Child Matters
 - National Strategies
 - The Common Assessment Framework (2006 updated July 2009)
 - The SEN Code of Practice
 - Revised Admissions Code
 - Revised Ofsted Framework (2009)
 - Progression Guidance 2009-10
 - Improving Educational Attainment of Children in Care (2009)
 - The Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children – Statutory Guidance for School Governing Bodies (2009)
 - Apprenticeship, Skills Children and Learning Act 2009
- advise School Improvement Partners and be part of the 'Vulnerable Children Conversations', to ensure Personal Education Plans are in place as part of the essential documentation required by Ofsted
- seek the views of children and young people 'on roll' of the Virtual School to inform the development of services and practices designed to enhance their life outcomes
- work with Head and Designated Governors for Children in Care, to ensure that robust monitoring of the progress of individuals in their school is embedded in school systems (using the statutory guidance).

The Virtual School 'Governing Body' will:

- develop cross-service agreement and multi-agency responsibility in the form of a strategic plan to prioritize the educational attainment of children in care
- set targets for the implementation of the strategic plan
- monitor performance and achievement and report to Corporate Parent Committee, the Children's Trust and the Children in Care Council
- ensure all stakeholders are aware of their responsibilities and are provided with regular feedback on the impact of their work;
- support and challenge the work of the Virtual School to maximise outcomes for Children in Care
- contribute to the Children and Young People's Plan, JAR and other reviews as required
- work with Young London Matters and other Local Authorities to self review and co-ordinate good practice with and for other authorities

It is proposed that the corporate parenting advisory group considers the membership of the 'Virtual Governing Body' which will oversee the work of the Virtual School and Local Authority network supporting children in care. Membership could include the following:

- Assistant Director of School Improvement and Inclusion
- Director of Children and Families
- 2 'Parent Governors' from the Corporate Parenting Committee
- Strategy Manager for Attendance and Welfare
- Primary, Secondary and Special Head teachers' representatives
- Haringey Primary Care Trust
- Senior Foster Care Manager
- Chair of The Haringey Local Fostering Association
- Tottenham Hotspur Foundation Community Manager
- CYPS participation manager
- Youth Offending Service manager
- CAHMs and Tavistock representation
- Youth Service manager

The 'Virtual School' Council

The 'Virtual School' Council will be a sub-committee of the Children in Care Council and will have an advisory/consultative role. The 'Virtual School' Council will be involved and consulted in the evaluation processes relating to the virtual school. The participation of young people and feedback on interventions will be formally sought and actively encouraged to inform the development of this work.

'Virtual School Council' and 'Virtual Governing Body' will provide feedback to the Children's' Trust on the progress of children in care in Haringey.

The Virtual School is a development from the very successful, well established work of the Children in Care Education Team which would be incorporated into the Virtual School

Changes to CIC Ed Team structure

One current teacher post would be promoted to extend the development of education and apprenticeship opportunities to Key Stage 5. This would build on the very successful partnership established with Tottenham Hotspur Foundation Community.

A new teacher post would deliver close tracking and monitoring of Key Stage 5 students to increase success at L3.

The current Team Manager post for CIC Ed team would be re-designated as Virtual School Head.