Walsall Virtual School for Children In Care

Annual Report 2021/2022

Walsall Council

Index

Executive Summary

Although schools continued to face Covid disruption in the autumn term, this academic year has seen a welcome return to some sort of normality for children and young people.

Staff within the Virtual school returned to a more focused way of working, with more direct work with children and young people, and face-to-face meetings taking place.

The overall number of school-age children in care has increased over the last 12 months from 573 in 2021 to 595 at the end of July 2022.

The Pupil Premium funding continues to be available to all children in care aged 3-18 and is distributed to schools through an individual 'needs-based' model requested through the child/young person's personal education plan. In addition to pupil premium funding, School Led Tutoring (SLT) and Recovery Premium grants were allocated to authorities in 2021/22.

The majority of PEPs continued to take place online, resulting in Virtual School staff attending over 900 PEPs in the 2021/22 academic year. We have continued to see improvements in our PEPS, especially in early years and primary schools with 94% of the PEPs being rated good or better in the Summer term.

The number of children who achieved a GLD at the end of reception increased by 10% in the 2019 early years data.

Children in KS2 made more progress in reading, writing and maths compared to other pupils in the same prior attainment group.

At Key Stage 4, we have seen an increase in the number of young people gaining 5 or more 4-9 GCSEs (or equivalent) passes from 18% in 2019, to 22% in 2022.

We continue to raise awareness of the impact of trauma and unmet attachment needs in our schools. To date, we have over 40 schools involved in the project and a further 6 due to join the project in September 2022.

Purpose of the report

The purpose of the report is to provide an overview of the work of the Virtual School during the academic year 2021/22. The report reflects on achievements and identifies areas of development to achieve the best outcomes for our children in care.

Contextual data in this report is for all Walsall's children in care as of 31st July 2022.

Attainment data in this report is for children who have been in care for 12 months or more as of 31st March 2022.

The Role of the Virtual School

The role of the Virtual School is to promote the educational achievement of children in the care of Walsall Local Authority, wherever they live or attend school. The Virtual School team work with partners to ensure that education is provided, children's needs are met, and planning is of high quality. Our key responsibilities are:

- Coordinating and quality-assuring all Personal Education Plans (PEPs).
- Monitoring and challenging schools to make effective use of Pupil Premium in line with the 'Pupil Premium Grant 2021 to 2022 Conditions of Grant and Pupil Premium: Virtual Heads' Responsibilities.
- Tracking the academic progress, attendance and exclusions of all children in care
- Using our tracking data to highlight individuals who are not on target to achieve their predicted outcomes and providing them with additional educational support.
- Ensuring children with special educational needs or disabilities are supported appropriately.
- Implementing a range of targeted interventions to raise academic standards.
- Providing support and challenge to students, schools, social workers and carers.
- Ensuring effective transition between schools or specialist providers.
- Encouraging our young people to have high aspirations about their futures and remove barriers to further education.
- Leading training for foster carers, designated teachers, school governors and staff, and delivering bespoke training for alternative learning providers.
- Celebrating Achievements

Links to Walsall Strategies

The Walsall Corporate Parenting Strategy is committed to improving outcomes for children in care and care leavers and have pledged to:

- Do everything they can to make sure children and young people have the very best education and training possible.
- Support young people in taking up opportunities for further education and apprenticeships.
- Help care leavers with their career plans.

To support these pledges the Virtual School has:

- Further developed our pre-apprenticeship scheme to provide a 12-week package of support to our children in care and care leavers which includes a monthly wage, funding for transport & equipment and the allocation of a mentor.
- Worked closely with all our schools to ensure first-day provision is put in place for any child who receives a fixed term exclusion.
- Provided apprenticeship opportunities to three care leavers.
- Enabled all year 11 students to have access to additional tuition to support their GCSEs.
- Ensured that when a child moves school they are placed in a good or outstanding school if it is the best school to meet their holistic needs.
- A robust attendance monitoring process in place to ensure that children do not miss education.
- Through targeted use of Pupil Premium and School Led Tuition funding, provided focussed support to children working just below their expected levels of attainment or requested additional support with their learning.
- Developed a Corporate Mentoring Scheme.
- Further developed our Attachment Aware Schools Project.

The Virtual School Team (as of 31st July 2022)

The Virtual School is a multidisciplinary team of dedicated professionals who provide support and guidance to our children and young people in a variety of ways.

Staff roles and responsibilities:

Role	Responsibility
Virtual School and Vulnerable Groups Lead	Provides strategic leadership
Education Advisor x 2 (primary and secondary)	The Education Advisors monitor the attainment and progress of children and allocate appropriate resources where needed. They are also responsible for ensuring pupil premium is used effectively to improve educational outcomes
Key workers x 6 (EYFS, Primary x 2, secondary x 2, Post 16)	Key workers model and coach strategies to improve outcomes, attend PEP meetings, provide advice and guidance to parents/carers and social workers in relation to improving education. Key workers also work alongside designated teachers to help facilitate and improve personal education plans.
Mentors	Mentors work alongside young people to develop appropriate relationships to engage, motivate and remove barriers to learning. Our mentors also support children through transitions.
Tutors	Tutors provide tuition in or out of school and either face-to-face or online. Our tutors also support parents and carers with home learning activities.
Careers Advisor	The Careers Advisor provides information, advice and guidance to young people aged 14-19 in relation to their career aspirations. She supports young people making a transition to HE and FE and works alongside out NEET young people to identify appropriate post-16 provision.
Education Liaison Officer	Our Education Liaison Officer has lead responsibility for children who were previously in care, children under Youth Justice and other vulnerable groups. They also provide specialist advice to schools where children and young people are at risk of exclusion
SEN Casework Officer	Our SEN Casework Officer works part-time in the SEN assessment team to enable us to have a better oversight of those children and young people undergoing an SEN assessment and avoid any drift and delay in the EHCP process.
PEP/Attendance Coordinator	The PEP/ Attendance Coordinator manages our ePEP process and tracks and monitors the attendance of our children and young people.
Speech & Language Therapist	Our Speech and Language Therapists (SaLTs) support schools and carers, provide training and work directly with children and young people to maximise their communication skills.
Educational Psychologist	Educational Psychology Services are commissioned to support children who are experiencing social and emotional difficulties within the school or care placements.
CAMHS Practitioner	The primary role of the CAMHS practitioner is to support education placement stability by delivering direct support to designated teachers, teachers and support staff to increase and improve the emotional wellbeing and mental health provision for children.

The Virtual School Advisory Board

The Virtual School reports termly to the Virtual School Advisory Board. The board is chaired by a Walsall primary school head and consists of the following people.

- HT Primary School (Chair)
- Principle IRO (Vice Chair)
- Assistant Principle-Local Secondary Academy
- Group Manager Youth Justice Service (Vice Chair)
- Early Years Adviser
- School Improvement Manager
- School Governance Manager
- Head of Service- Corporate Parenting
- Foster Carer
- Post 16 Officer- Walsall College
- Head of Service-Safeguarding

The Virtual School sits structurally under the Access & Inclusion Service but is geographically situated within Children's Social Care to support and work closely with our Corporate Parenting social worker teams. The Virtual School Lead reports directly to the Director of Access & Inclusion and is part of the Access & Inclusion Senior Management Team.

The Virtual School cohort- A profile of our learners

As of 31st July 2022, there were 595, 3–18-year-olds who were on our role. This is a slight reduction on the previous year. The cohort was made up of 54% male and 46% female. 55% of children are educated in Walsall and 45% educated outside of Walsall. Of those children educated outside of Walsall, 85% are educated within the West Midlands.

Year Group	Phase Summary	No. of LAC	Male	Female	Walsall School	OOB School	SEN Support	EHCP
-2	83	22	6	16	15	7	3	0
-1		32	17	15	21	11	4	1
R		29	11	18	19	10	6	3
1	163	22	11	11	18	4	2	3
2		23	13	10	15	8	6	3
3		32	12	20	16	16	7	6
4		21	13	8	13	8	4	3
5		35	22	13	22	13	8	10
6		30	15	15	12	18	5	11
7	221	35	22	13	14	21	11	13
8		33	13	20	18	15	6	12
9		39	18	21	25	14	8	9
10		58	31	27	27	31	10	24
11		56	31	25	32	24	16	18
12 & 13	128	128	84	44	58	70	22	28
Total		595	595	319	276	325	270	118	144

What type of schools are our children and young people attending?

Statutory guidance 'Promoting the Educational Achievement of looked after children' states that children in care should be educated in good or outstanding schools and unless there are exceptional, evidence-based reasons, children in care should not be placed in a school judged to be Inadequate.

We always aim to place a child in a good or outstanding school if it's in their best interest to do so. We will never place a child in an inadequate school unless there are no alternative options, and we carefully monitor the education of those placed in schools which require improvement.

We recognise the importance of placement stability so would not move a child from a school rated less than good if the young person was safe, happy and making progress. If a school receives an inadequate rating, a meeting is held with the child's parent/carer and social worker to discuss what actions should be taken. We also discuss any move of school with the young person if appropriate to do so. In the last 12 months, we have not moved any young person due to the school being given an inadequate Ofsted rating.

As of 31st July 2022:

- 92% of children in early year's settings attend a good or better provision.
- 93% of children attend a primary school rated good or better.
- 76% of children attend a secondary school rated good or better.

Overall, 85% of children in care attend a good or outstanding provision.

There is a small number of children who are placed in schools/settings which do not have an Ofsted grade due to being an academy converter or new school. These have been excluded from the figures which are based on schools with an official Ofsted grade.

Special Educational Needs

Children in care are 4 times more likely to have a special educational need than all children and are almost nine times more likely to have an education, health and care plan than all children (DfE 2019).

In 2021/22, 133 (23%) children and young people had an EHCP and a further 99 (17%) have an identified SEN without an EHCP. This equates to 39% of our cohort having an identified SEN.

The table below is based on March 22 published data and compares Walsall EHCP figures to that of national and regional averages.

Area	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Walsall CiC	19%	22%	24%	24%	23%
West Mids CiC	24%	24%	24%	24%	25%
England CiC	26%	26%	27%	27%	28%

Children in care are 3 times more likely to have Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) as their primary needs than their peers. This is reflected in Walsall where 79 (59%) of our Children and young people have SEMH as their primary need.

Due to the high number of requests for an EHC assessment and the specialist intervention required to ensure we were meeting the needs of all our children and young people with special educational needs, the co-located SEN Casework Officer post was made a permanent post. This enabled closer working between the SEN team and Virtual School and reduced the amount of drift and delay when children go through the graduated response.

In 2021/22 the Virtual School made 14 Parental requests for a SEND Assessment, all of which resulted in the child/young person having an Education Health and Care Plan.

The Virtual School Lead attends the External Placement Panel to advocate for children in care when additional funding or a change of placement is required.

Attainment and Progress

The virtual school track and monitor the termly progress of all children in care from the age of 3-18. Attainment data is collected by ePEP and analysed by our primary and secondary education advisors. Where concerns are raised that expected progress is not being made, our advisors will liaise directly with schools to discuss appropriate interventions.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, schools have not administered primary statutory assessments, and key stage 4 pupils have not sat formal exams, since 2019. Therefore, due to disruptions in education, comparisons to previous result years should be made with caution. Data from 2018 and 2019 has been included where appropriate as this was the last formally assessed year.

Children in care data for Key Stage 2, Key Stage 4, absence and exclusions has been taken from the **Outcomes for children looked after statistical first release** (SFR) published in March 2023. Early Years Foundation Stage, and Key Stage 1 data is not provided in the SFR, therefore these figures have been collated directly from schools.

Where appropriate, the data for comparative groups has also been provided. This data has been taken from the Outcomes for Children Looked After statistical first release and the Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT).

Academic outcomes

Early years practitioners were instructed to complete the statutory EYFS assessment in the summer term of the 2021-2022 academic year when a child reaches the age of five.

The EYFS profile is intended to provide a reliable and accurate assessment of each child's development at the end of the EYFS. Practitioners use their professional judgement to assess the child's knowledge and understanding against 17 early learning goals (ELG).

Children are defined as reaching a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the EYFS if they have achieved at least the expected level for each ELG in the prime areas of learning and the specific areas of mathematics and literacy. The ELGs are displayed in the table below.

	Areas of Learning	GLD	Early Learning Goals	Valid Values
Prime Areas	Communication and Language	✓	E01 - Listening, Attenion and Understanding	
		✓	E02 - Speaking	
	Personal, Social and Emotional Development	✓	E03 - Self-regulation	
		✓	E04 - Managing Self	**2** *Expected*
		✓	E05 - Building Relationships	
	Physical Development	✓	E06 - Gross Motor Skills	
		✓	E07 - Fine Motor Skills	
Specific Areas	Literacy	✓	E08 - Comprehension	**1** *Emerging*
		✓	E09 - Word Reading	
		✓	E10 - Wriitng	
	Mathematics	✓	E11 - Number	**A*** *Absent*
		✓	E12 - Numerical patterns	
	Understanding the world		E13 - Past and Present	
			E14 - People, Culture and Communities	
			E15 - The Natural World	
	Expressive Arts and Design		E16 - Creating with Materials	
			E17 - Being Imaginative and Expressive	

* If **any** goal is marked A, then **all** goals must be marked A

From September 2021, the new EYFSP framework became statutory for all settings to follow. There is no longer an award of 'exceeding' and the areas of learning and early learning goals have changed from the previous framework (see table above).

In 2022, 54% of children in our care achieved a good level of development at the end of reception.

EYFS - % Achieving a Good Level of Development
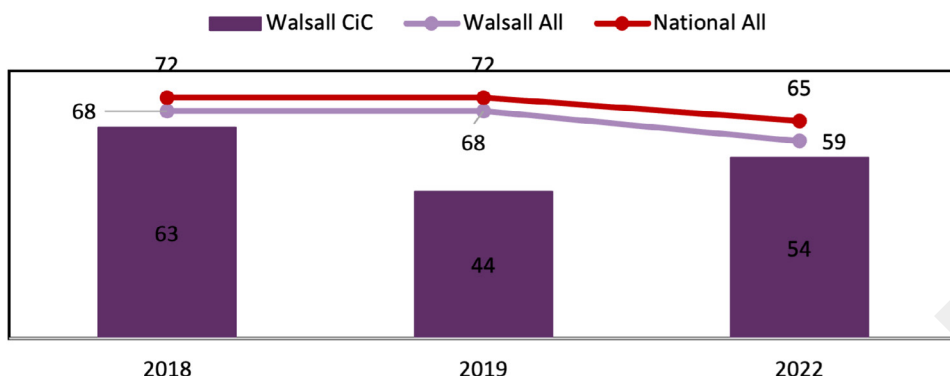
Compared to 2019, the percentage of children in our care achieving a good level of development has increased by 10% closing the gap to Walsall All from 24% in 2019 to 5% in 2022. The gap to National has also closed from 28% in 2019 to 11% in 2022.

Female children in our care performed better than male children in our care with 71% of the female cohort (12 out of 17 pupils) achieving a good level of development compared to 27% of the male cohort (three out of 11 pupils).

Nine children in our care attended an out-of-borough school and 19 attended a school in Walsall. 63% of children in our care that attended a school in Walsall (12 out of 19 pupils) achieved a good level of development compared to 33% (three out of nine pupils) of children in our care that attended a school outside the borough.

33% of children in our care with SEN support achieved a good level of development (two out of six pupils) compared to 72% of children in our care with no SEN (13 out of 18). 0% of children in our care, with an EHCP, achieved a good level of development.
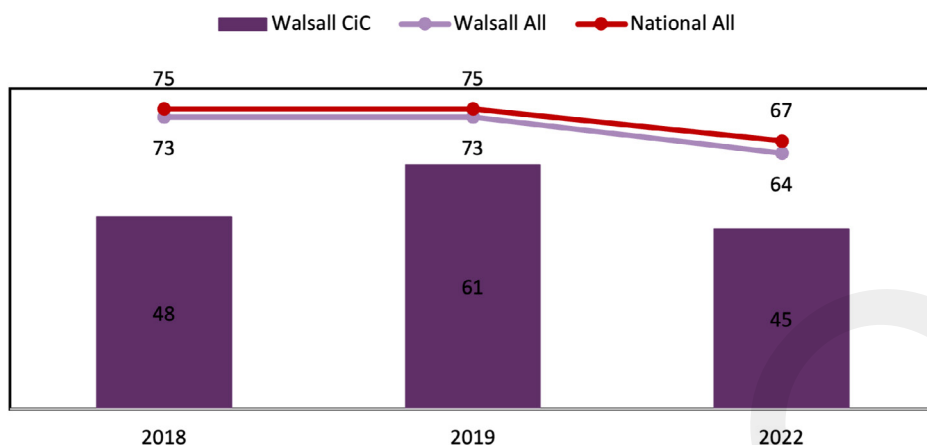
How well do our children do in Key Stage 1

Pupils take national curriculum assessments in year 2, at the end of Key Stage 1, when most pupils reach the age of 7.

In 2021/22, schools were instructed to administer their assessments during the month of May.

Children in care in Walsall performed better in KS1 maths than in reading, by 5%, and writing by 20%.
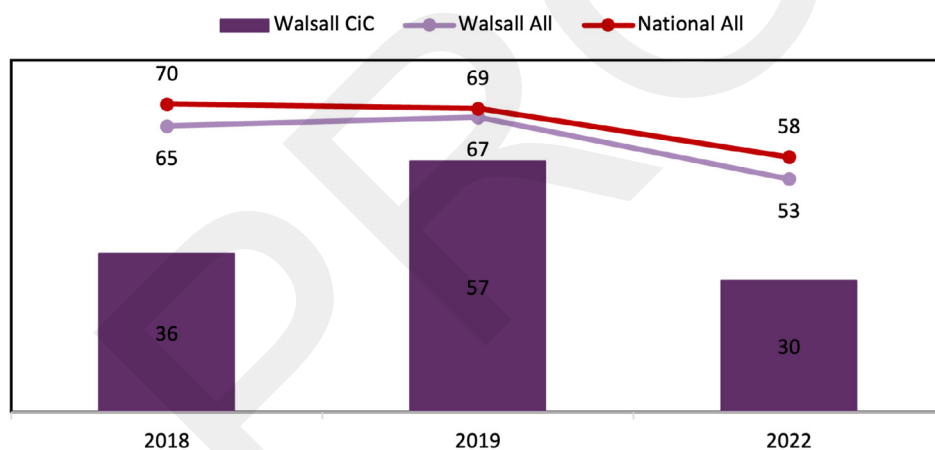
The headline results for 2022 are as follows.

KS1 Reading - % Achieving the Expected Standard

Legend: Walsall CiC | Walsall All | National All

Walsall CiC: 2018 = 48, 2019 = 61, 2022 = 45
Walsall All: 2018 = 73, 2019 = 73, 2022 = 64
National All: 2018 = 75, 2019 = 75, 2022 = 67

45% of children in our care achieved the expected standard or above in Key Stage 1 reading, 22% lower than National All and 19% lower than the overall Walsall LA average.

The gap to Walsall All has widened in 2022, compared to 2019, by 7%. The gap to National has also widened by 8%.

KS1 Writing TA - % Achieving the Expected Standard

Legend: Walsall CiC | Walsall All | National All

Walsall CiC: 2018 = 36, 2019 = 57, 2022 = 30
Walsall All: 2018 = 65, 2019 = 67, 2022 = 53
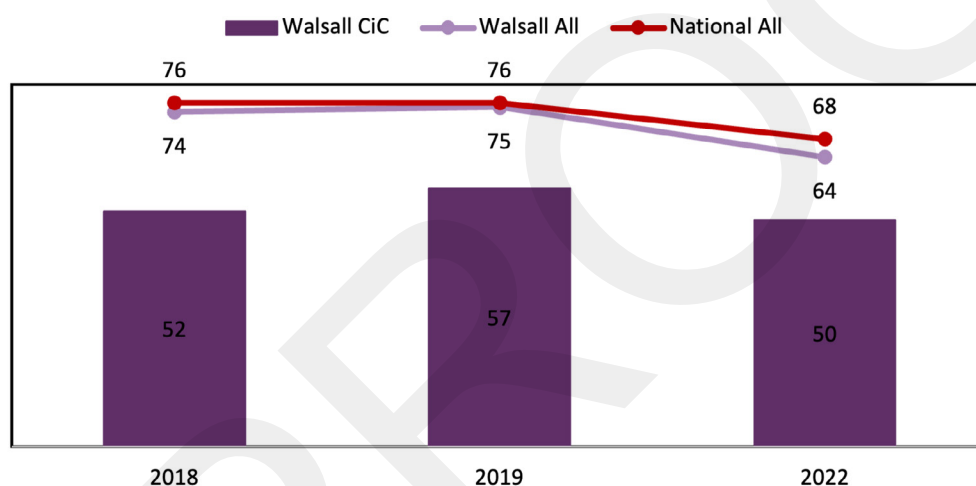National All: 2018 = 70, 2019 = 69, 2022 = 58

30% of children in our care achieved the expected standard or above in Key Stage 1 writing, 28% lower than National All and 23% lower than the overall Walsall LA average.

The gap to Walsall All has widened in 2022, compared to 2019, by 13%. The gap to National has also widened by 16%.

KS1 Maths - % Achieving the Expected Standard

Legend: Walsall CiC | Walsall All | National All

Year	Walsall CiC	Walsall All	National All
2018	52	74	76
2019	57	75	76
2022	50	64	68

50% of children in our care achieved the expected standard or above in Key Stage 1 Maths, 18% lower than National All and 14% lower than the overall Walsall LA average.

The gap to Walsall All has widened in 2022, compared to 2019, by 4%. The gap to National has narrowed slightly by 1%.

Male children in our care performed better in all three Key Stage 1 subjects than looked after females:

- 38% of female children in our care (three out of eight females) achieved the expected standard in Key Stage 1 Reading compared to 50% of male children in our care (six out of 12 males).
- 25% of female children in our care (two out of eight females) achieved the expected standard in Key Stage 1 Writing compared to 33% of male children in our care (four out of 12 males).
- 38% of female children in our care (three out of eight females) achieved the expected standard in Key Stage 1 Maths compared to 58% of male children in our care (seven out of 12 males).

A higher percentage of children in our care attending a school in Walsall reached the expected standard than those attending a school out of the borough:

- 25% of children in our care attending a school out of the borough (2 out of eight pupils) achieved the expected standard in Key Stage 1 Reading compared to 58% of children in our care attending a school in Walsall (7 out of 12 pupils).
- 25% of children in our care attending a school out of the borough (two out of 8 pupils) achieved the expected standard in Key Stage 1 Writing compared to 33% of children in our care attending a school in Walsall (4 out of 12 pupils).
- 38% of children in our care attending a school out of the borough (3 out of 8 pupils) achieved the expected standard in Key Stage 1 Maths compared to 58% of children in our care attending a school in Walsall (7 out of 12 pupils).

A higher percentage of children in our care with no special education needs reached the expected standard than those with an SEN:

- Reading – All nine children in our care that achieved the expected standard in Key Stage 1 Reading had no SEN. Of those with no SEN, 69% achieved the expected standard (9 out of 13 pupils).
- Writing – All six children in or care that achieved the expected standard in Key Stage 1 Writing had no SEN. Of those with no SEN, 46% achieved the expected standard (6 out of 13 pupils).
- Maths – Of the 10 children in our care that achieved the expected standard in Key Stage 1 maths, nine had no special educational need and one had SEN code Q. Of those with no SEN, 69% achieved the expected standard (9 out of 13 pupils).
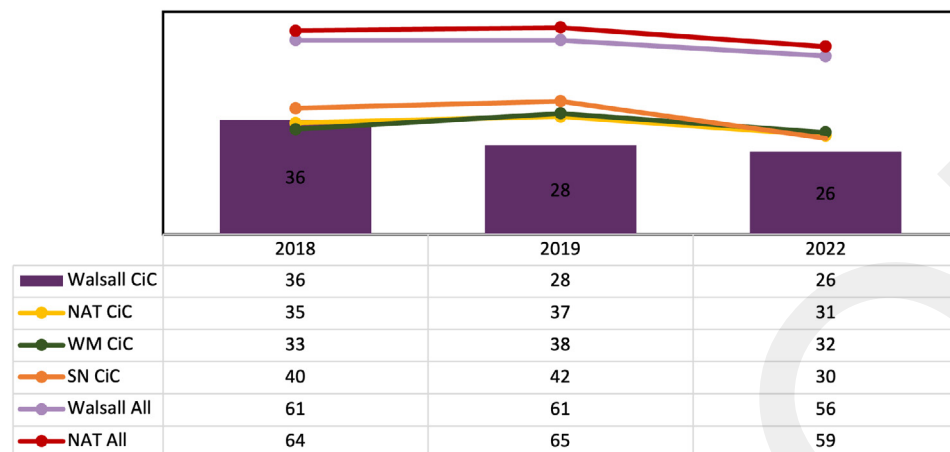
How well do our children do in Key Stage 2

Pupils take KS2 national curriculum assessments in year 6 when most children reach the age of 11 by the end of the school year. Pupils take tests (commonly referred to as SATs) in reading, maths and grammar, punctuation, and spelling (GPS) and receive a teacher assessment (TA) in reading, writing, maths, and science.

26% of Key Stage 2 children in our care achieved the expected standard or above in reading, writing, and maths combined.

KS2 - % Pupils Achieving the Expected Standard In Reading, Writing, and Maths Combined (RWMC) Comparison

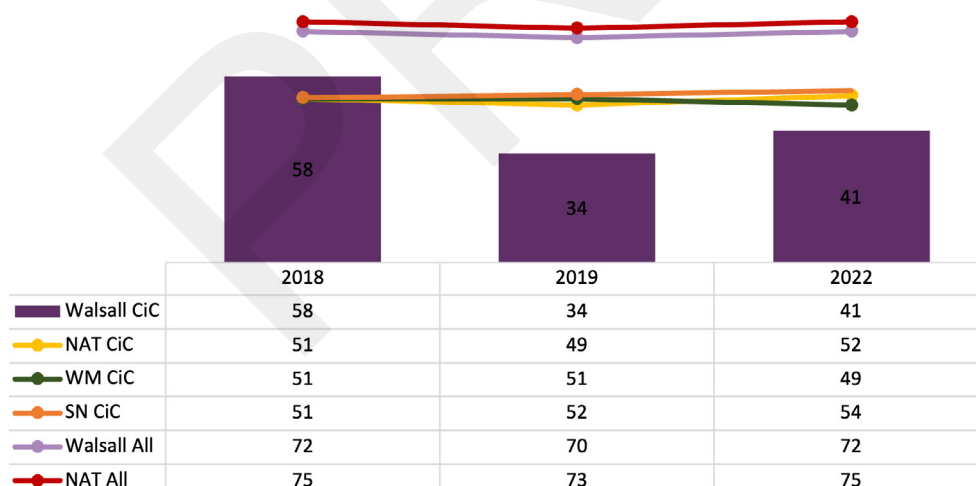|	2018	2019	2022
Walsall CiC	36	28	26
NAT CiC	35	37	31
WM CiC	33	38	32
SN CiC	40	42	30
Walsall All	61	61	56
NAT All	64	65	59

Compared to 2019, the percentage of children in our care who achieved the expected standard or above in reading, writing and maths combined has decreased slightly by 2%.

The gap to National All has narrowed from 37% in 2019 to 33% in 2022 and the gap to the overall LA average has also narrowed from 33% in 2019 to 30% in 2022.

Walsall CiC ranked 59th nationally out of 152 local authorities, 8th out of the 11 West Midlands LAs with a published average, and 7th out of Walsall's 10 statistical neighbours with a published average.

For the individual KS2 subjects, the 2022 results for children in our care are as follows:

KS2 - % Pupils Achieving the EXS+ in KS2 Reading

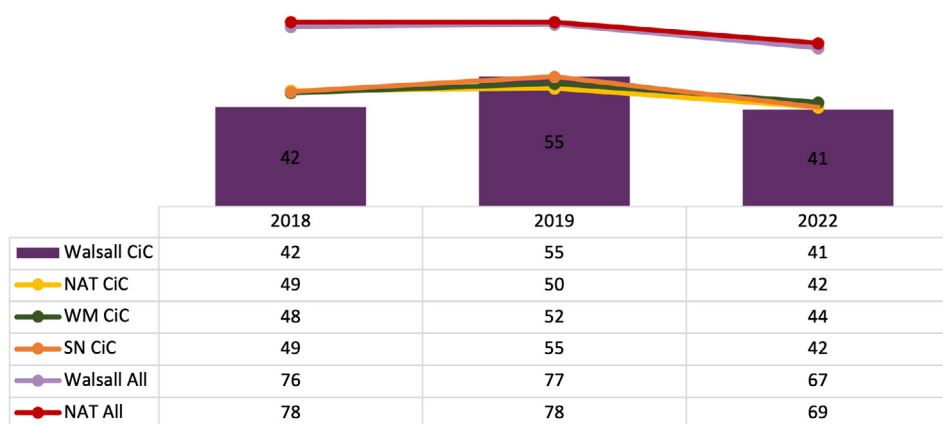|	2018	2019	2022
Walsall CiC	58	34	41
NAT CiC	51	49	52
WM CiC	51	51	49
SN CiC	51	52	54
Walsall All	72	70	72
NAT All	75	73	75

41% of children in our care in Walsall achieved the expected standard or above in KS2 reading. This is 7% higher than in 2019 when 34% reached the expected standard.

The gap to National All has decreased from 39% in 2019 to 34% in 2022. The gap to Walsall All has also narrowed from 36% in 2019 to 31% in 2022.

Walsall CiC ranked 94th nationally out of 152 local authorities, 11th out of the 14 West Midlands LAs, and 11th out of Walsall's 11 statistical neighbours matching Dudley's average of 41%.

KS2 - % Pupils Achieving the EXS+ in KS2 Writing TA

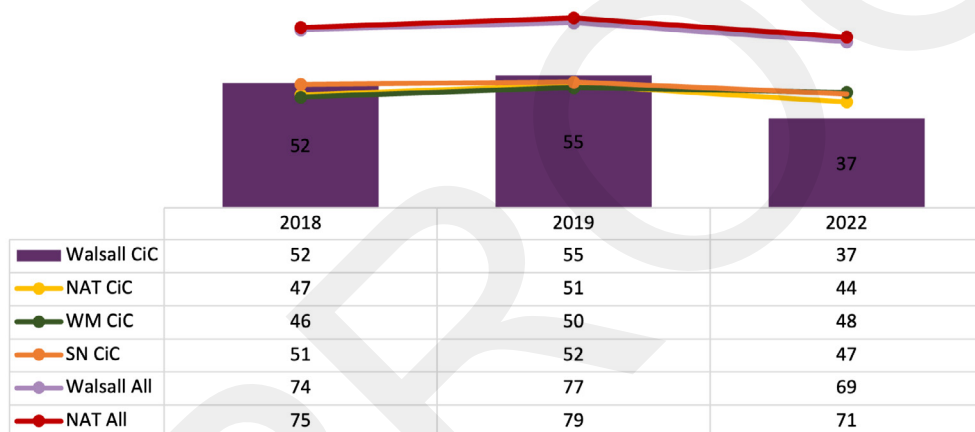|	2018	2019	2022
Walsall CiC	42	55	41
NAT CiC	49	50	42
WM CiC	48	52	44
SN CiC	49	55	42
Walsall All	76	77	67
NAT All	78	78	69

37% of children in our care in Walsall achieved the expected standard or above in KS2 maths in 2022. This is 18% lower than in 2019 when 55% reached the expected standard.

The gap to National All has widened from 24% in 2019 to 34% in 2022. The gap to Walsall All has also widened slightly from 22% in 2019 to 32% in 2022.

Walsall CiC ranked 76th nationally out of 152 local authorities, 12th out of the 14 West Midlands LAs, and 10th out of Walsall's 11 statistical neighbours.

KS2 - % Pupils Achieving the EXS+ in KS2 Maths

|	2018	2019	2022
Walsall CiC	52	55	37
NAT CiC	47	51	44
WM CiC	46	50	48
SN CiC	51	52	47
Walsall All	74	77	69
NAT All	75	79	71

Key Stage 2 Progress

This progress measure indicates the amount of progress pupils have made from the end of KS1 to the end of KS2.

It is a value-added measure, which means that pupils' attainment is compared to the achievements of other pupils nationally in the same prior attainment group.
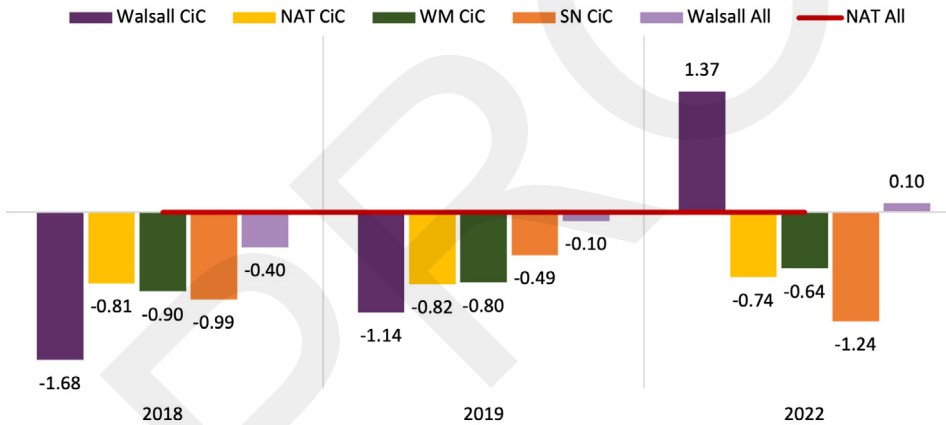
KS2 Average Progress - Reading
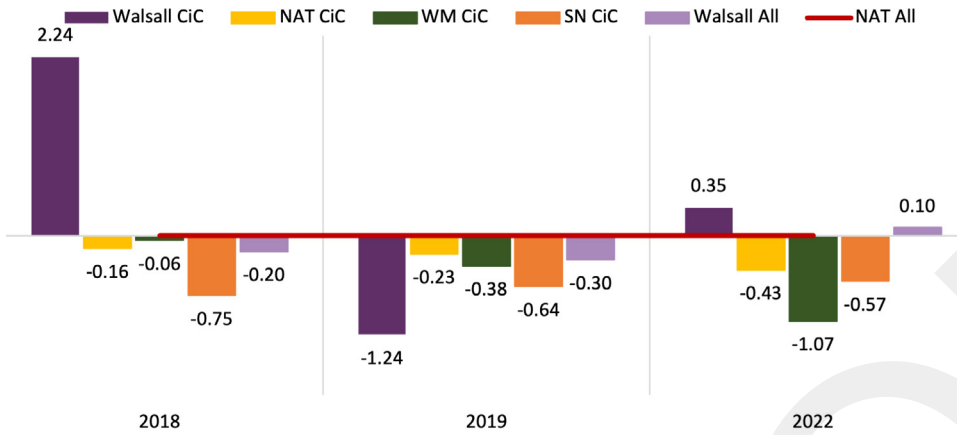
Compared to 2019, the reading average progress score for children in our care in Walsall has made a large improvement from -1.24 to 0.35, making more progress than national, regional, and statistical neighbours CiC as well as Walsall overall and the National average.

Walsall CiC ranked 44th nationally out of 152 local authorities, 2nd out of the 14 West Midlands LAs, and 4th out of Walsall's 11 statistical neighbours.
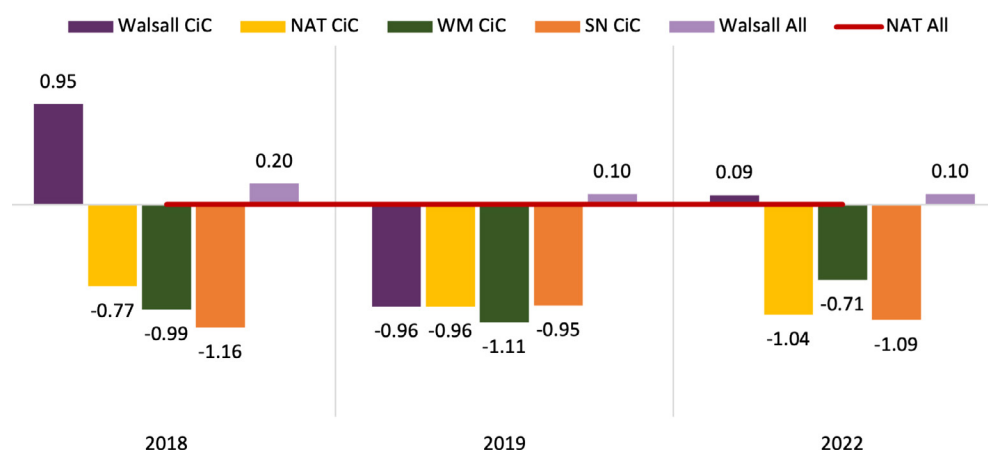
KS2 Average Progress - Writing

Compared to 2019, the writing average progress score for children in our care in Walsall has made a large improvement from -1.14 to 1.37, making more progress than national, regional, and statistical neighbours CiC as well as Walsall overall and the National average.

Walsall CiC ranked 20th nationally out of 152 local authorities, 2nd out of the 14 West Midlands LAs, and 1st out of Walsall's 11 statistical neighbours.

KS2 Average Progress - Maths

Compared to 2019, the maths average progress score for children in our care in Walsall has improved from -0.96 to 0.09, making more progress than national, regional, and statistical neighbours CiC as well as the National average. Compared to Walsall overall, Walsall CiC was slightly below by 0.01.

Walsall CiC ranked 30th nationally out of 152 local authorities, 4th out of the 14 West Midlands LAs, and 4th out of Walsall's 11 statistical neighbours.

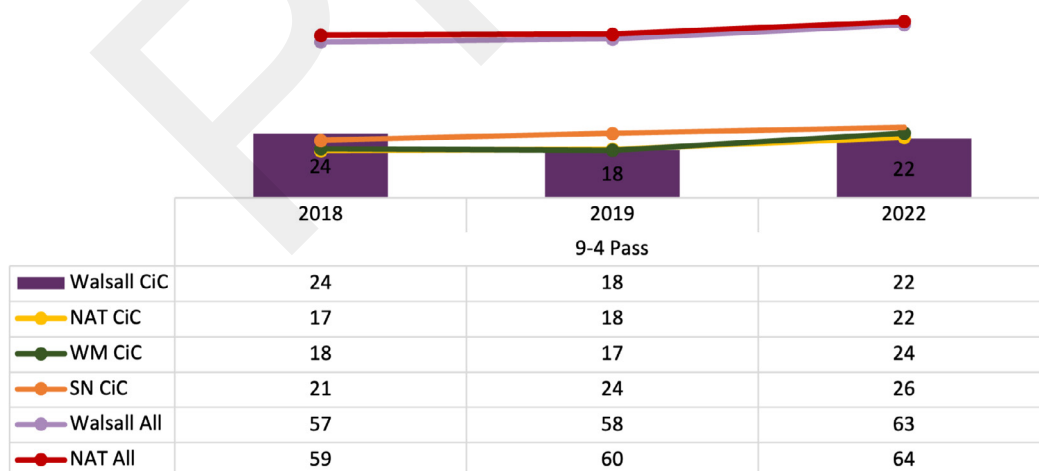### How well do our children do in Key Stage 4

Due to the pandemic, for the past two years, pupils have been awarded their key stage 4 results by their teachers. During these years we have seen an increase in key stage 4 attainment outcomes.

In 2022, pupils returned to exams. In the interest of fairness, Ofqual decided to make 2022 a transition year as the 2022 key stage 4 pupils still had disruptions to their education following a period of pandemic recovery. Therefore, in 2022, grading has been moved to a point midway between 2021 and 2019 (the last time pupils sat formal exams).

For the 9-4 and 9-5 pass in English and maths, the English element can be achieved if a pupil has been entered for English Language or Literature.

The chart below displays the published 9-4 pass in English and Maths only. Published data for the 9-5 measure has been suppressed and replaced with the letter 'c' (Confidential). This is where data has been deemed to be sensitive and potentially identifiable. Therefore, charts for this measure have not been included.

KS4 - % Achieving a 9-4 Pass in English and Maths

	2018	2019	2022
		9-4 Pass	
Walsall CiC	24	18	22
NAT CiC	17	18	22
WM CiC	18	17	24
SN CiC	21	24	26
Walsall All	57	58	63
NAT All	59	60	64

22% of children in our care in key stage 4 achieved a 9-4 pass in English and maths, 4% higher than in 2019.

Between 2018 and 2019, children in our care have remained in line or above the national children looked-after average. Walsall CiC was slightly below regional in 2022 by 2% and 4% lower than the statistical neighbour average.

Compared to 2019, the gap to Walsall All has widened slightly from 40% in 2019 to 41% in 2022. The gap to National remains at 42%.
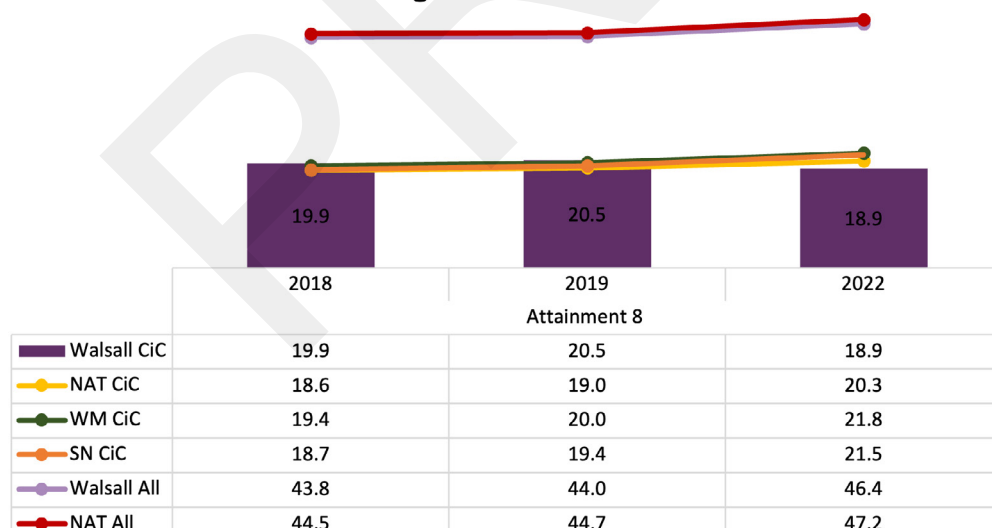
In 2022, Walsall CiC was ranked 67th out of 152 local authorities, 10th out of the 12 West Midlands LAs with a published average, and 9th out of Walsall's 9 statistical neighbours with a published average.

The average Attainment 8 score for children in our care has decreased by 1.6 points in 2022 from 20.5 to 18.9 moving below children in care nationally, regionally and the statistical neighbour average.

Compared to Walsall All, the gap to Walsall All has widened in 2022 by 4 points from 23.5 in 2019 to 27.5 in 2022. The gap to National All has also widened by 4.1 points from 24.2 in 2019 to 28.3 in 2022.

In 2022, Walsall CiC was ranked 94th out of 152 local authorities, 12th out of the 14 West Midlands LAs, and 9th out of Walsall's 11 statistical neighbours.

KS4 - Average Attainment 8 Score

	2018	2019	2022
		Attainment 8	
Walsall CiC	19.9	20.5	18.9
NAT CiC	18.6	19.0	20.3
WM CiC	19.4	20.0	21.8
SN CiC	18.7	19.4	21.5
Walsall All	43.8	44.0	46.4
NAT All	44.5	44.7	47.2

The average Progress 8 score for children in our care has decreased by 0.5 points in 2022 from -0.90 to -1.40 moving below children in care nationally, regionally and the statistical neighbour average.

Compared to Walsall All, the gap to Walsall All has widened in 2022 from 0.79 in 2019 to 1.4 in 2022.

In 2022, Walsall CiC was ranked 82nd out of 152 local authorities, 12th out of the 14 West Midlands LAs, and 8th out of Walsall's 11 statistical neighbours.

12. Attendance and Exclusions

Due to the disruption during the 2020/21 and 2021/22 academic years, caution should be taken when comparing absence data to previous years.
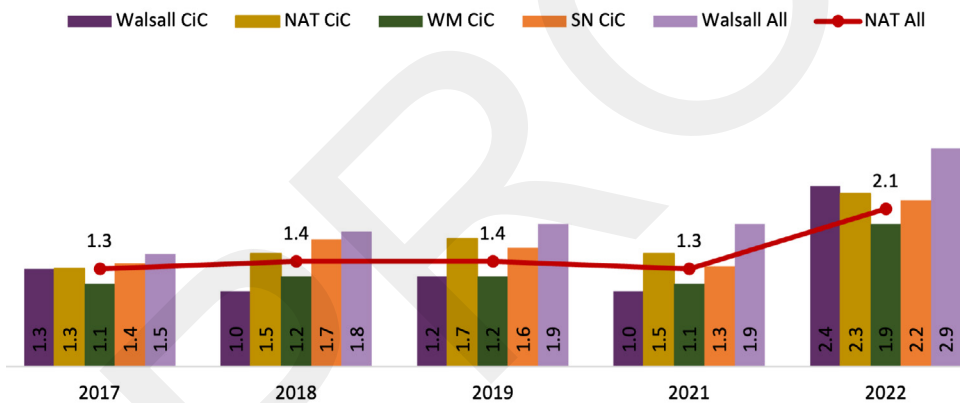
Overall Absence
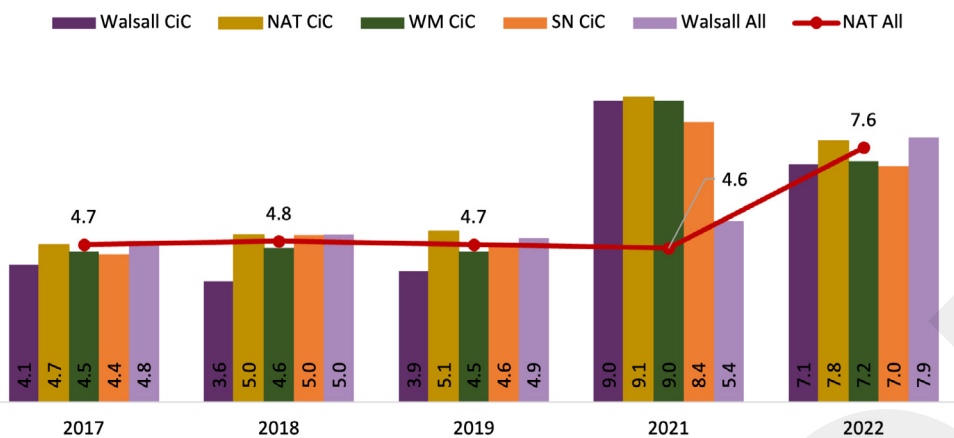
Overall absence rates decreased by 1.9% in 2022 compared to 2021. Walsall CiC was below national and regional children in care and slightly above the statistical neighbour average by 0.1%.

Walsall CiC overall absence rate was below Walsall overall by 0.8% and below the national rate by 0.5%.

Walsall CiC ranked 45th nationally out of 152 local authorities, 9th out of the 14 West Midlands LAs, and 6th out of Walsall's 11 statistical neighbours.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence rates increased by 1.4% in 2022 compared to 2021. Walsall CiC was slightly above national CiC by 0.1%, regional children in care by 0.5%, and the statistical neighbour average by 0.2%.

Walsall CiC unauthorised absence rate was below Walsall overall by 0.5% and above the national rate by 0.3%.

Walsall CiC ranked 84th nationally out of 152 local authorities, 13th out of the 14 West Midlands LAs, and 8th out of Walsall's 11 statistical neighbours.
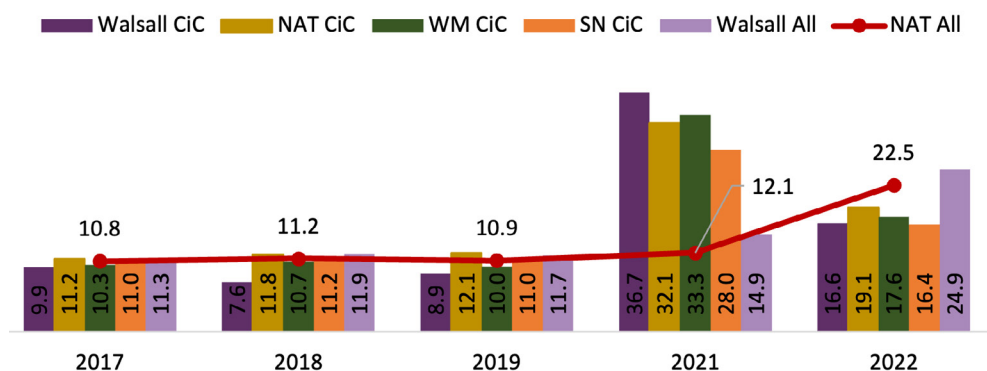
Persistent Absence

Legend: Walsall CiC | NAT CiC | WM CiC | SN CiC | Walsall All | NAT All

	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022
Walsall CiC	9.9	7.6	8.9	36.7	16.6
NAT CiC	11.2	11.8	12.1	32.1	19.1
WM CiC	10.3	10.7	10.0	33.3	17.6
SN CiC	11.0	11.2	11.0	28.0	16.4
Walsall All	11.3	11.9	11.7	14.9	24.9
NAT All	10.8	11.2	10.9	12.1	22.5

Persistent absence rates decreased by 20.1% in 2022 compared to 2021. Walsall CiC was below national CiC by 2.5%, regional children in care by 1.0%, and slightly above the statistical neighbour average by 0.2%.

Walsall CiC unauthorised absence rate was below Walsall overall by 8.3% and the national rate by 5.9%.

Walsall CiC ranked 42nd nationally out of 152 local authorities, 5th out of the 14 West Midlands LAs, and 6th out of Walsall's 11 statistical neighbours.

Looked After Call' collected attendance and exclusion data for Walsall children in care. The system notifies staff in the Virtual School when students have an unauthorised absence, are suspended from school and when a student has 5 consecutive days of authorised absence. This enables our Education Support Officers to immediately challenge any absences, recall the PEP meeting and identify resources or interventions to improve attendance and reduce exclusions.

To address the unauthorised absence figure, we introduced weekly monitoring meetings to highlight any young person who had an unauthorised absence. Absences were addressed with school and carers and actions were identified and implemented to help support any anxiety-based school absence.

In some instances, school miscoding was identified, this was challenged by our Attendance Officer.
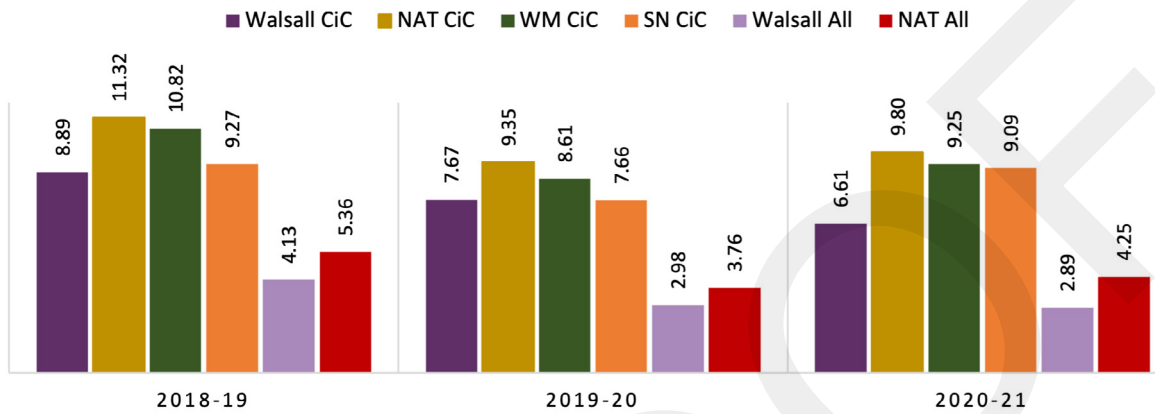
Exclusions

Permanent exclusions

There have been no permanent exclusions since 2005. The virtual school team work closely with schools to prevent any issues from reaching crisis point and explore appropriate alternative options better suited to meeting the need of the young person.

We challenge any schools that consider a permanent exclusion and implement appropriate support, using Pupil Premium Plus funding to avoid the exclusion.

Fixed term suspensions

% Of pupils with one or more suspensions

Legend: ■ Walsall CiC ■ NAT CiC ■ WM CiC ■ SN CiC ■ Walsall All ■ NAT All

2018-19
- Walsall CiC: 8.89
- NAT CiC: 11.32
- WM CiC: 10.82
- SN CiC: 9.27
- Walsall All: 4.13
- NAT All: 5.36

2019-20
- Walsall CiC: 7.67
- NAT CiC: 9.35
- WM CiC: 8.61
- SN CiC: 7.66
- Walsall All: 2.98
- NAT All: 3.76

2020-21
- Walsall CiC: 6.61
- NAT CiC: 9.80
- WM CiC: 9.25
- SN CiC: 9.09
- Walsall All: 2.89
- NAT All: 4.25

Compared to 2020, the percentage of suspensions has decreased by 1.06% for Walsall CiC.

Walsall CiC remains below the national, regional and statistical neighbour average CiC rate and in 2022 widened the gap to national CiC from 1.68% to 2.47%.

Compared to Walsall overall the gap has narrowed from 4.69% in 2020 to 3.72% in 2022. The gap to National has also narrowed from 3.91% to 2.36%

Walsall CiC ranked 12th nationally out of 152 local authorities, 2nd out of the 14 West Midlands LAs, and 3rd out of Walsall's 11 statistical neighbours.

Every effort is made to prevent suspensions and virtual school staff work closely with schools to find alternative options to a suspension.

One-off exclusions are difficult to prevent, particularly for children out of the borough and although we are notified of the exclusion straight away, it is normally after schools have decided to exclude. Children and young people who received multiple exclusions all receive ongoing and often intensive support from staff at the Virtual School.

13. Key Stage 5

The Virtual School are responsible for children in care up to the age of 18.

Priority is given to ensure all young people at the end of KS4 have a suitable identified destination and remain in employment, education or training.

Our secondary key worker attends all year 11 PEPs to ensure those who are at risk of becoming NEET have appropriate intervention in place.

We use our Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI) in key stage 3 and 4 PEPs to provide early identification of any young person who would be at risk of NEET.

Our careers advisor now works with young people from year 9 to ensure they have the right advice and guidance to support them in their chosen post-16 career path.

The Virtual School Head also chairs the monthly NEET Action Group (NAG) where all young people aged 16-25 who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET are discussed.

We aim to get the best outcomes for our care leavers by working with them as individuals, ensuring wherever they are placed, they are engaged in education, employment or training commensurate to their ability and aspirations. Each young person receives support and guidance towards their desired destination. For those young people moving on to university, the Virtual School has continued to remain involved at each step of the process.

The table below shows the provision of all young people in years 12 and 13 as of the 31st March 2022.

2021/22 post 16 provision	Number
6th Form	17
6th Form (specialist provision)	6
College	50
Training provider	13
Employed	5
Apprenticeship	3
Army	2
Remand/custody	2
NEET	30
Total	128

Care Leavers Apprenticeship Programme

The Apprenticeship Programme for Care Leavers was specifically established to provide those Care Leavers who are interested in pursuing a career with the local authority, the experience and qualifications needed to secure permanent employment and so achieve adult independence and economic wellbeing.

The Programme provides care leavers with the opportunity to access paid work through an apprenticeship for a fixed-term period (normally 13 – 18 months) during which time they can gain confidence, learn new skills and gain qualifications.

To ensure all young people on apprenticeships received the right support we have developed a Pre-Apprenticeship offer to all care leavers, this includes:

- A 12-week paid trial to ensure the apprenticeship is right for the young person before an official sign up.
- A named mentor to support them through the duration of the apprenticeship.
- A clothing/equipment allowance to ensure they are fully equipped when starting the apprenticeship.
- Help with travel costs to and from the work placement.
- Tuition support to help with maths/English element of the apprenticeship.

5 young people were engaged on or due to start an apprenticeship as on 31st July 2022.

This year we moved from a Business & Admin Apprentice to a Teaching Assistant apprentice to work with children in care in early years. Our apprentice will be working in a number of primary schools supporting our children in early years and key stage 1.

14. Placement stability

Underpinning all aspects of the work carried out by the Virtual School is our commitment to minimise any disruption to our children's learning. Research is clear that when a child moves school, the impact on their progress can be significant and can contribute towards the attainment gap between children in care and their peers. We make every effort possible to maintain a school placement when a child moves home.

Managers from the virtual school attend social care panels where children who may be at risk of their placement breaking down or who are undergoing a planned move are discussed. This enables us to plan and implement any school move.

The Virtual school take lead responsibility for all school moves, including those where a child moves school due to SEN needs, moved to an adoptive placement, moves to a placement where attending their current school is unrealistic and emergency schools move to ensure safeguarding.

In 2021/22 53 children moved school, of which;

- 42 moved school due to a placement move.
- 1 young person requested a move of school.
- 2 young people moved to avoid a permanent exclusion.
- 8 young people moved due to a change in the SEN needs.

15. Personal Education Plans

Since adopting the electronic PEP, we have seen a significant improvement in the quality of our PEPs. We now have a robust PEP document that is a comprehensive and evolving record of the child's education journey.

The majority of PEPs in 21/22 continued to take place online. This again allowed the virtual school staff to attend a high number of PEPs. The Virtual School teams attended 1019 PEP meetings in the academic year.

The percentage of PEPs completed within time scales was 100% in the autumn term, 97% in the spring term and 95% in the summer term. The majority of those not completed within time frames were due to PEPs not being signed off before the end of the term rather than PEPs not taking place. We still have work to do to ensure PEPs are completed within timescales. Schools are allocated two weeks from the date of the meeting to the completion of the PEP form.

We continue to quality assure our PEPs and provide support and training to assist settings, schools and colleges to improve the quality of their PEPs.

This year we reviewed our Quality Assurance process and moved from rating PEPs as Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement and Inadequate to meeting or not meeting the expected standard. We did this to ensure a more consistent approach to quality-assuring PEPs.

The quality of PEPs improved in 2021/2 from 76% being rated as meeting the expected standards in the autumn term to 82% in the spring term and 84% in the summer term.

An evaluation of our PEPs was completed at the end of the academic year, this highlighted:

- 90% of our PEPs in early years met the expected standards.
- 93% of our PEPs in primary schools met the expected standard.
- 74% of our PEPs in secondary schools met the expected standard.
- 63% of our PEPs in post 16 provision met the expected standard.

This piece of work has enabled us to identify where we need to focus to further improve our PEPs.

In addition to the QA process, we monitor every PEP to review the academic progress of children and plan any support or interventions required.

16. Pupil Premium Plus

The Virtual School's main budget is the pupil premium plus which is devolved to the local authority and is used as seen appropriate by the VSH to improve outcomes for children in care. The local authority received £1,139,670.00 pupil premium for the 2021/22 financial year. This is a reduction of 53k from the previous years. Allocations are based on the number of pupils in care for 1 day or more in the previous financial year.

In addition to the pupil premium funding, we received further funding from the DfE to help children and young people catch up after covid. We were allocated £58,072.50 School Led Tutoring Grant and £64,163.00 Recovery Premium.

In line with our pupil premium policy, we continued to deliver a needs-based model of allocating pupil premium funding.

We continue to review our services to ensure we are meeting the educational, social, emotional, and personal needs of our children and young people. This year, the focus was to use pupil premium to help children and young people catch up from missed education through the Pandemic.

The tables below provide a breakdown of activities funded through pupil premium, school-led tutoring, and recovery premium.

Pupil Premium Spend 2021/22
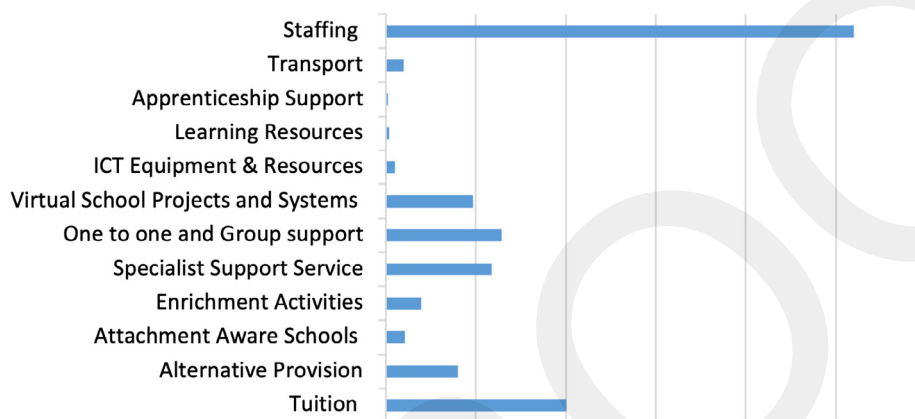
Virtual School Projects funded by pupil premium.

It is part of the role of the virtual school to provide the support needed to help children realise their short and long-term academic achievements and aspirations.

Alongside the academic support we provide we also run several activities and projects to ensure our students can experience learning in a variety of different ways and in different settings. These include:

Artslink Project

Artslink was set up in 2018 by a consortium of 14 Virtual Schools across the West Midlands. Its mission is to create a high-quality arts and cultural offer which all children in care across the West Midlands can access. The Artslink offer is underpinned by a model of a progression pathway which provides a range of experiences and opportunities that enables children in care to develop their interests and talents. During Covid, the Artlink team sent out learning resource packs to children and young people in care and delivered online fun and learning activities.

Aspire 2 Uni (A2U)

The Aspire to University Project (A2U) is a project jointly run by Wolverhampton University, The Aspire to University Project (A2U) is a project jointly run by Wolverhampton University, Walsall, Sandwell, Wolverhampton and Staffordshire Virtual Schools

The scheme is an awareness-raising programme with the aim of increasing the number of children in care achieving successful outcomes pre and post-16 and consequently entering university.

To support young people to progress to higher education, Aspire2Uni designs and delivers a programme of informative and engaging outreach activities that give young people more information and advice about what university is about, how to get there and what to study. They also offer work experience opportunities and support young people to achieve their qualifications by providing mentors and a tutor if needed.

There are currently over 30 young people on our Aspire 2 university programme. We have 7 cohorts running at present from Years 7- 11. Each cohort has 3 outreach activity days a year, 1 per term.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a book gifting programme for children aged 0-5 operated by the Dollywood Foundation, Dolly Parton's charity. Their mission is to inspire a lifelong love of books and reading by placing books into the hands of children.

All children enrolled in the Imagination Library programme receive a free book every month from birth until their 5th birthday.

Storytime Magazine

Reading for pleasure is so important it's now part of the national curriculum, and magazines for children play an important role in that, as well as books. This is why we have subscribed to the magazine for all children in years 1-4. Each magazine is packed with brilliant tales for both boys and girls and each magazine includes a pack of resources relevant to each edition. The magazine is delivered monthly directly to the child's home address.

Magazine subscription

Pictures, short stories and activities open the door to the most reluctant readers, so to encourage our young people in KS4 to continue reading and help spark their interests, we offer all our young people in years 10 & 11 a free annual subscription to a magazine of their choice.

Summit2Success

Summit2Success is a project we run for Year 7 & 8 students. The project runs for 9 weeks and has a focus on building resilience, confidence and social skills. As well as the weekly sessions, the group attend one day at an outdoor centre and finish off the course at a weekend residential. Young people are identified through their PEP and given the option to attend.

Early Years Enrichment Pack

Early education and care can have a huge educational and emotional impact both short and long-term. We have created a pack of activities and resources for carers to use with our youngest children to support their development. We work with carers, parents and social workers to model how to use the resources. There is a range of fun activities designed to stimulate enjoyment while developing key skills. The pack is delivered termly to the child's address.

Book in a Bag

We have developed our own book gifting programme for children in primary school. These children will receive books with carefully crafted activities to go with them to cultivate a continued love of reading. They will receive their book in a bag once every term.

Attachment Aware Schools Project

As part of the local authority's Building Resilient & Inclusive Communities & Schools (BRICS) Project have developed our own Attachment Aware Schools Project. The project aims to increase awareness of trauma and attachment in relation to children's behaviour and learning.

The project is now in its third year and as of 31st July 2022 43 schools are involved in the project.

We currently have 8 platinum award schools, 7 Gold award schools, 6 silver award schools, 18 Bronze award schools and 4 schools working towards their bronze award.

17. Support for previously children and young people who were previously in care

Under the **Children and Social Work Act 2017** local authorities and schools have a statutory role to support young people who have previously been in care such as those who have been adopted from care and who left care under a Special Guardianship Order or a Child Arrangement Order (Residence Order). The Virtual School has always provided support, advice and guidance in relation to children who were previously in care but as a result of the additional funding provided by the DfE to help support VSHs to deliver the additional duties we appointed a highly skilled officer who has a wealth of experience working with children and young people who have previously been in care to take on this responsibility.

We currently have 280 children who were previously in care attending schools in Walsall. This is a reduction of 39 since last academic year.

- 132 left care through a Special Guardianship Order.
- 113 left care through adoption.
- 28 left care through a Child Arrangement Order.
- 7 left care through a Residency Order.

Some of the work we have carried out in relation to children who were previously in care is:

- Challenging schools to avoid drift and delay in relation to the admissions.
- Challenging schools in relation to exclusions.
- Attended school meetings.
- Provided intervention from our own staff.
- Contribute to the SGO carers newsletter.
- Challenge schools on the use of pupil premium funding.

18. Support for children and young people with English as a second language

Although we have relatively small numbers of UASC in Walsall, the number of young people arriving in Walsall has increased slightly over the last 12 months to 18 young people classed as UASC.

To provide support to this cohort of young people we commissioned the work of a local tuition company that specialised in providing a bespoke package of support to our unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people.

All children in care with English as their second language receive a laptop to help with communication and to enhance their studies. They also receive a Pearson (Nimbl) tablet. The tablet provides young people with access to a whole library of interactive resources specially designed to help them with their schoolwork.

19. Training for professionals

The Virtual school has a role to ensure that professionals working with children in care have the right knowledge, information and skills to enable them to fulfil their role in contributing to improving the educational outcomes of all care-experienced children.

In the 2021/22 academic year the following training was delivered to schools, social workers and foster carers:

- Identifying and supporting care experienced children with communication needs in early years.
- Identifying and supporting care experienced children with communication needs in primary.
- Identifying and supporting care experienced children with communication needs in secondary.
- How to use the SDQ.
- Parenting using emotion coaching.
- Social emotional and wellbeing plans- uncovering behaviour.
- Trauma Shame and Empathy.
- Assessment and intervention pathway.
- Loss and grief in care.
- Executive functioning

20. Celebrating Achievement

This year, as a big thank you to our children and their families our celebration event was held at Drayton Manor Park and Zoo.

The event was attended by over 300 children and adults. They all got to spend the day in the park and zoo and had full access to all rides and activities. A barbecue-style buffet lunch was provided, and all children left with a goody bag.

21. Case studies

Due to Covid restrictions direct work with children and young people this year has been limited.

1. Early Years Intervention

Child's core experiences

R came into care in 2016 due to substance misuse by parents. She was aged 23 months. R is 1 of 2 siblings and since coming into care has had 4 foster placements. She has been with her current carers since June 2017 and is placed with her older half-sister. The family are moving to another borough in the near future.

School Context

R attended a local nursery school before transferring to a different primary school where she has remained since September.

Child's needs at school

R is on the SEN register and is working below ARE in writing and mathematics. During the summer 2022 Term school noticed there had been a rise in R's SDQ score. She was raising questions in school about her identity. There have also been a lot of changes in social workers for R recently. R has been diagnosed with dysfluency and is being supported by the Virtual School Speech & Language Therapist

Following discussions in R's PEP, the Education Support Officer and Head Teacher discussed the support that R could benefit from. Her SDQ score had increased since her previous PEP and the school had seen a significant increase in the 'conduct' area of the questionnaire. As her emotional score was also still high, a 'Drawing and Talking' intervention was discussed.

Intervention

Drawing and Talking started with R in the Autumn Term. 12-weeks of this intervention took place. R worked well and enjoyed the time sessions. She drew a range of pictures and would talk for a short period of time, however, she struggled with staying on that task for 30 minutes and would need a break in that time.

Child's Views of the support

R expressed how much she enjoyed the time she spent drawing and talking. She was always happy and smiling when coming out of lessons for the sessions.

Impact of Intervention

R made good progress in the Autumn Term and the school said that her behaviour was more settled. The school feel the intervention went well and a few extra visits have been arranged to help R before her transition to her new school.

2. Early Years Intervention

Child's Core experiences

D came into care aged 1 year old due to neglect and domestic violence, she has been in care for a total of 1035 days on a Placement Order. D has had 1 foster placement, where she currently resides with her youngest sibling. D was born with scoliosis (curvature of the spine) and a deformed rib cage, which had impacted her early development. D has attended 2 nurseries.

School Context

D started her educational journey aged 2 when she started attending a local private nursery chosen by her carer. The private day nursery was very small, with a steep staircase to climb to her room on the top floor.

Outdoor access was at the front of the property, consisting of several plastic trikes on a concrete patio, and no plants or grass. D had delayed development in her speech and language and her social development, working at around aged 2 years in this area.

Child's Needs at school

D was finding communicating difficult and only using single words. D would get upset if she couldn't see an adult and she lacked engagement with peers. D had difficulty with managing the step stairs independently.

D did not have access to a rich outdoor environment which was impacting on her social development.

Intervention

A WELCOMM language assessment prompted a referral to NHS speech and language therapy department, the A WELCOMM language assessment prompted a referral to the NHS speech and language therapy department, the waiting list was over 20 weeks. To ensure D did not have to wait, the Virtual school speech and language therapist conducted an assessment within 10 days and set targets to support nursery staff and carers at home.

D's carers have English as a second language, they sometimes used their language to communicate with each other and D.

Carers received support from virtual school which included a home visit, the opportunity to attend MAKATON training and targets to work towards.

The nursery received 2 visits from the speech and language therapist and they were given targets and strategies, the same as carers on how best to support D's speech development.

Virtual School, carers and professionals agreed that D would benefit from attending an education setting that provided more space, this would help with her spinal condition, confidence and independence. A garden with nature would provide more opportunities to develop her curiosity, sensory needs, social development and language skills.

The virtual school supported a nursery move to ensure a smooth transition. An Outstanding OFSTED rated nursery was sought which provided a language-rich environment with MAKATON-trained staff, forest school indoor/outdoor learning environment, ground floor provision and child-centred learning.

The virtual school Speech and language therapist visited the new setting on 2 occasions to review her progress and set new targets.

Child's View of support

D is now much more confident; she doesn't cry when an adult is out of sight. She joins in with songs and rhymes and will make her need known using her words. D is now using 3-4 words in a sentence. She is more independent.

D's carer reports "She enjoys nursery very much, she asks to go when she is not there, DD loves routine and is starting to make friends with others, she particularly loves the mud kitchen and the babies".

Impact of Intervention

D is much happier and more confident in her new nursery. She attends daily language groups and now participates in singing and rhymes. D is now putting 3 and 4 words together in a sentence and is now able to communicate her needs instead of crying.

D is now aged 4 and is working only one section slightly below her age-related expectations.

Staff are hopeful that they can continue to try to narrow this gap even further in time for her to start school in September.

D is no longer needing direct support from SALT.

D's physical development is monitored by yearly health checks, her physical development is within age-related expectations.

D's social development is still below age-related expectations however is making progress, she is starting to play alongside others more and is starting to seek other peers.

It has given her direct access to Special support service Speech and Language therapy within a timescale to help her when she has needed it most.

This has narrowed some of the gaps in her learning in time for her starting school this September.

3. Improving the educational outcomes of young people in KS4

Child's Core Experiences:

JC has been in care since 2017 as is currently living in a residential home. JC is on a full care order.

School Content:

JC was in year 11 at a local Secondary School. The school had 1022 students on role and an Ofsted rating of 'Requires Improvement'. The designated teacher has also recently been made Associate Principal.

Child's needs at school:

Attendance at school had been very good at 98.2%. JC was on target for predicted level 4 grades in GCSE English Language and GCSE Literature. JC had been receiving Literacy tuition and the two main areas of focus that required significant support concerned inference skills and the development of clarity in his writing as he found it hard to organise and structure his ideas on paper.

JC's SEN reflect his needs within school and were identified as 'communication and interaction' and there was an amber flag regarding issues affecting learning and social interaction, but which also indicated that he coped well with support and was developing resilience. CAMHS were also part of the wider support and there was a wide range of extra support in place at school.

JC had a friendly nature towards staff and a small circle of peers that he felt comfortable with. There had been some issues regarding JC's self-identity, and this had led to some conflict with some of his peers.

JC had healthy attachments with staff and actively sought support from a designated, trusted teacher. He was making sense of his individuality and was also experiencing anxiety regarding his preparation and study for GCSE's. This was further impacted by additional study obligations and expectations of independent study work/revision.

Intervention:

To support JC, the Virtual School Offer included an initial meeting with JC in school, leading to the design and delivery of a supportive GCSE English Language programme by the Virtual School Tutor. This support would initially be provided every Wednesday morning. This support took place within the sixth-form library as it was the only designated space available.

The programme included:

- **Reading -** to address inference issues regarding typical GCSE language extracts. Past GCSE papers, BBC Bitesize, textbooks and revision guides all supported reading practise.

- **Writing -** to address issues with clarity and structure. Focus on PEE structure, paragraphing, planning, modelled exemplars, writing under mock exam conditions and re-drafting ideas, all supported writing development. Word banks and thesaurus work.

- **Revision –** to address subject knowledge, memory recall, contextual knowledge and to develop awareness of thematic connections with other texts.

The SMART goals of this support were:

1. JC is able to understand the objectives of typical GCSE Language questions.

2. JC is able to use strategies to make meaning from a text.

3. JC is able to use strategies to improve his writing.

Child's view of support:

JC commented from the outset that he found it hard to structure his ideas in writing, on paper, that they would "go off in all directions, I'd forget what I started writing about." He was very motivated to succeed so that he could go on to college but stated that he felt anxiety to achieve the results he needed. He could articulate answers satisfactorily verbally but stated that he would often forget the objective of the question and he found it hard to work under timed conditions. He stated that it was hard to revise because of the amount of independent work he also had for several other subjects.

Impact of Intervention:

JC expressed that he enjoyed the support from the tutor, and this was reflected in feedback given by the DT who frequently came along during sessions or after them, to check on progress and provide updates on JCs progress in class.

JC is now able to spot patterns in texts and able to make basic inferences and interpretations of texts, enabling him to read between the lines. By annotating texts, JC was able to develop his initial responses to texts and over time, start exploring texts on deeper levels.

JC is now able to plan his responses to the more challenging GCSE Language questions. In doing so he has a point of focus to gain control over thinking and his writing – not only in a logical sequence but within the boundaries of time limits.

JC's writing skills have improved, he actively makes use of a thesaurus to vary his vocabulary, he has increased his confidence to experiment with sentence types to structure his writing and his writing now better reflects his subject knowledge.

JC has increased his knowledge and understanding of sensory writing, and this made enough impact for his teacher to praise him for his progression and achievement in this area.

JC was able to use a range of acronyms to respond to a variety of texts; DAFOREST, SOAPAIMS, PEE etc. as approaches to look for specific types of language and make comments about them, or to structure responses. He was also able to extend into making comments about the effect.

JC benefited from the 1:1 support of the tutor. As his confidence grew, he was able to move away from a certain degree of self-doubt and gain a sense of achievement from his improved understanding of language and this was seen also to address his anxiety levels.

Accordingly, the sessions appeared to improve JC's self-esteem, particularly in regard to how he felt about his own capabilities. Over time he started to ask less about opinions of his writing and instead, started asking more focused questions about his choice of vocabulary and for meanings of vocabulary that was new to him.

JC was still reluctant to work and undertake independent study. Each time he was set work, he did not object or complain, but he never presented work back in school, however, he was working within a large range of extra support and his workload seemed extensive enough.

JC has developed in all areas of the programme, and in general, is showing improved levels of anxiety regarding GCSE English Language preparation. His motivation to pursue his ambitions in health and social care was seen to increase and he was increasingly optimistic about his future.

4. Improving the educational outcomes of young people with an EHCP

Child's Core Experiences:

H came into care in 2019 aged 6 years old due to physical abuse. H has 1 full sibling, 5 half siblings and has had five foster placements. She currently resides with foster carers; however, she is transferring back to the care of her maternal grandmother.

School Content:

H finished KS1 working below ARE, she has however made good progress in her literacy since then to be at ARE. She has an EHCP for SEMH.

H is band 6 for SEMH and she shows a high level of need within school, she was attending a mainstream school and had previously been suspended due to behaviour. When she returned to school in September, she struggled in the classroom environment and easily became overwhelmed. This led to an incident in which multiple members of the class became hurt and H worked separately from her class. H was working within the SLT offices and family liaison workers' office full time; all of her breaks were spent with an adult, and she had little time with her peers.

Child's needs at school:

H was becoming overwhelmed in the classroom environment, and this led to an incident where multiple children became hurt. Her school asked for an emergency EHCP review as they could no longer meet her needs.

Intervention:

H received intervention from the Virtual school around self-regulation and once a new school was identified transition work was also completed with her. The interventions around self-regulation focused on using Karen Treisman resources, the first sessions looked at triggers, body mapping and situations which have led to H becoming overwhelmed. Over the course of 5 weeks, we built up a bank of regulation techniques, which H chose as methods that could help, including the use of fidget toys for 'tingling' in her hands. Her SMART target was for her to express her emotions to staff and to be able to assimilate back into a classroom environment. After Christmas the intervention focused on H's transition, Karen Triesman resources were used to support H with the changes she had gone through and her new school environment to ensure she had a successful transition.

Child's view of support:

H's engagement fluctuated through the interventions, to begin with, she engaged well, however as she settled more at the school and moved back into class, she was less likely to come to work with me as she was able to complete classwork with friends.

Impact of Intervention:

During the first few weeks of support, H was not within the classroom and engaged well with activities focused on emotion coaching, she was able to talk about situations and body map what she felt during these times. Over the course of these 5 weeks, H was able to begin reintegration into classroom and peer situations, her first time working with a peer was 3 weeks after beginning direct work. From week 4 onwards H was seen to be able to stay in the classroom for longer without becoming overwhelmed and in some cases removed herself and was able to work with specific children well, it was following this that she was not as engaged due to wanting to work with her peers. HB was able to fully reintegrate into the classroom by the middle of November and although still showed some dysregulation and times of being overwhelmed no further incidents occurred with peers. H has partially achieved her target linked to expressing emotions, the new school are continuing to support this using emotion coaching, as she will express emotions to staff but can still struggle to name them. Support from myself gave H new strategies for coping in times of dysregulation, it also allowed her to look at any signs within her body that could highlight to her that the situation was overwhelming. Through the support, H was able to integrate back into the classroom and work successfully with peers.

After Christmas H transitioned to her new school, I completed work with her for 5 weeks at the new school reducing the time each week and ensuring H was aware of the number of sessions left. We completed some exercises around her move, her thoughts about the new school, and what she liked. She also showed me some of her schoolwork, and her new classroom and talked about children within the classroom. Her first half term showed some areas of positivity in her behaviour however she did struggle at times as she settled into the new school, many children presented with the same needs as her and this was very different from the previous setting. She has since settled better into school and they have seen that she has developed a good relationship with the Headteacher, using time with her as a reward for positive days.

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