

Looked After Children Education Service (LACES)

**Annual Performance Report
September 2016**

“Education is the best provision for the journey into adult life”

Foreword

Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility to promote the educational progress and achievements of children in our care. The Looked After Children Education Service (LACES) has corporate responsibility to fulfil this requirement on behalf of Liverpool City Council.

As demonstrated throughout this report, LACES have developed an innovative approach to their service delivery. The service recognises the importance of emotional and therapeutic support for our most disengaged and challenging children, whilst supporting the progress of our under-achieving and less vulnerable learners.

The partnership arrangements with statutory services and the commissioning of specialist providers, gives LACES priority access to a wide range of provision, ensuring the most appropriate support is available to all our children looked after. The impact of these interventions has been reflected in the attainment outcomes, with our children consistently performing equally or better than their looked after peers nationally at all key stages. It is particularly pleasing to note that our 2015 Year 11s recorded their best ever GCSE results. I appreciate there is still some way to go to completely narrow the attainment gap, but our children in care continue to make steady progress.

As a responsible corporate parent we have high expectations for LACES, this report provides an informative summary of their performance during the 2015/16 academic year, for which I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the team.

Colette O'Brien

Director of Children and Young Peoples Services

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Head of Virtual School

The 2015/16 academic year was probably the most busy and in many ways most demanding since I came into post almost 6 years ago. We recorded significant increases in the number of enquiries for advice and information, attended more LAC reviews and professional meetings than in previous years and supported a growing number of children with complex needs. To enable LACES to maintain the quality and efficiency of our service we appointed **Kelly Carey** as Pupil Support Officer on 1st September 2015, whilst **Catherine Falco** our Administrator and Monitoring Officer returned from maternity leave in April 2016.

Having Kelly and Catherine was a welcome boost, who along with **Tony Mackrell** our Curriculum and Safeguarding Co-ordinator, enabled us to respond more effectively to children who were at risk of exclusion, under-achievement or recording poor school attendance. Having a full staff compliment was crucial as we extended our service to include more targeted support for our post 16 cohort.

LACES therapeutic support for our most challenging and traumatised children continues to grow (see pages 16-19), particularly through priority access to a range of statutory and commissioned services. Most notably the **Education Psychology Service, Behaviour/ADHD Coach, Life Story and Play Therapist, CAMHS Counsellors** and our in-school trauma and attachment awareness training.

More children than ever accessed our learning support programmes, such as our **Key Stage 1/2 Reading Programme** (see page 8), **Private Tuition** (see page 12), **Numeracy Support** (see page 10), **Off the Page Reading Project** (page 11) and targeted **Reading Recovery**.

Attainment outcomes provided a mixed picture for 2014/15. At **Key Stage 1** increases of **8%** and **6%** in **Reading** and **Writing** respectively and a **2%** fall in **Maths** to **76%** were recorded for children in care achieving their expected level. **Key Stage 2** outcomes recorded falls in **Maths (9%)**, **Reading (4%)**, **SPAG (5%)** and a **6%** improvement in **Writing**. However, it must be noted that 50% (22% for city) of this cohort had some form of Special Educational Need. The most significant improvement in attainment outcomes was recorded at **Key Stage 4**, with **23.5%** (13% previous year) of our Year 11s achieving at least **5 GCSEs at A*- C** including English and Maths (full attainment report available on request). I would like to extend my thanks to Linda Coady and Andy Rigby from the Education Data Analysis Team for providing such high quality and detailed reports.



As happens every year, schools continue to provide quite remarkable support to some of our most difficult to engage children, with many going beyond what could reasonably be expected. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to **Archbishop Blanch, Blessed Sacrament, Calderstones, Croxteth Primary, Everton Family Centre, Fazakerley High, Gilmour Juniors, Harmonize Academy, New Park Primary, St Christopher's, St Michael's Catholic Primary, Woolton High and St Michael's High in Crosby**, plus all those schools, too numerous to mention, who provide day to day education and nurturing support for our children looked after.

LACES continue to work collaboratively with our Social Care colleagues who are responsible for **39%** of all enquiries we receive, evidence of the value Social Workers and Independent Reviewing Officers place on our service and how much they prioritise the education of our children.

Our work with Hope University continues to develop. We are in the process of completing an 'Understanding the needs of vulnerable pupils' module for the 3 year School Teacher Training Course (including an impact evaluation). We want the next generation of school teachers to be more aware of the education and emotional needs of children who have experienced neglect, abuse or insecure attachments, to ensure their teaching practices recognise the needs and challenges of all vulnerable learners.

Looking forward, we will continue to improve our post 16 offer through pre-apprenticeships, work experience and training opportunities developed through the Cornerstones initiative (see page 15), increase the number and quality of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and extend our therapeutic interventions and services to support the educational progress of even more children and young people.

Finally I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to School Improvement Liverpool (SIL) Business Support Team and SIL Management for their support during the last academic year. I would also like to extend a massive thank you to Corinne Andrew, who left LACES in February 2016 and Kelly Carey who left at the end of August 2016, for their important contributions in the development and delivery of LACES services during 2015/16.

Colin Wayland

LACES Services

We continually review our services to ensure we are meeting the educational, emotional and personal needs of our children looked after. We commission a wide range of specialist provision to ensure priority access to professional support for our most complex, underachieving and disengaged children. The development of our service is achieved in consultation with designated teachers, social care practitioners and young people, alongside our internal monitoring and evaluation processes which measure the quality and impact of our programmes.

Our service delivery structure places an emphasis on early intervention, together with the capacity to respond to critical or irregular situations. The key principles underpinning our services are that they are child centred and accessible to children in care, based on their individual needs.

We divide our services into 3 areas of delivery

Universal Support

Priority/Fast Track Access to Statutory Services
Advocacy and Representation
Advice and Information

Statutory Requirements

Collection and Monitoring of **Personal Education Plans (PEPs)**
Training, Advice and Support for **Designated Teachers** and **Social Workers**
Allocation, Management and Monitoring of **Pupil Premium Plus Advocacy and Support** for pupils at risk of underachievement, exclusion or poor school attendance
Reporting and Responding to **Pupil Performance Outcomes Data**

Targeted Support

Private Tuition (NCY 5,6,10 and 11)
Educational Psychology (Out of City Pupils)
Classroom and Teaching Assistant Support (Reception - Key Stage 2)
'Off the Page' Reading Project (NCY 7 - 10 Liverpool based Pupils)
Literacy Programme (Key Stage 1)
Numeracy Support (Key Stage 1 and 2)
Career Connect Advisory Service (Key Stage 4)
Training/Workshops/Briefings (Designated Teachers, Carers, Social Workers and NQTs)
CAMHS Counselling Service (Key Stage 3 and 4)
Play and Life Story Therapy (Key Stages 1 - 3)
Behaviour Coaching (Key Stage 3 and 4)

We continually restructure our services to incorporate changes to statutory guidance, curriculum and the OFSTED Inspection Framework, but primarily to ensure all our children in care have access to the educational support and opportunities that will enable each of them to achieve their full potential.

Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

The Personal Education Plan (PEP) meeting is our key mechanism for monitoring and promoting educational progress for children looked after, and is reviewed every 6 months. Considering the young person's views, including discussing longer term aspirations, are important elements of the process. The PEP provided evidence of interventions, agreed targets, progress and identified personalised support. The PEP is an integral part of the child's overall care plan.

At the PEP meeting, discussions took place on how Pupil Premium Plus would be used to support educational progress and this was closely monitored by LACES, along with school attendance and agreed targets.

Collecting attainment predictions for Years 5, 6, 10, and 11, for national assessments and examinations, enabled early action if a pupil was at risk of underachievement.

Copies of all PEPs submitted were automatically sent to the school, Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO), LACES and the young person's Social Worker. LACES quality assured PEPs to review and develop their effectiveness.

During the 2015/16 Academic Year LACES received a total of **732 PEPs**, which on analysis demonstrated the diverse range of approaches and high quality of work and support schools are engaged in with our children in care.

Key Points

Carers were present at 79.9 % of PEP meetings. This conveyed a consistent message to the child, that education is important and relevant to their lives.

Pupil Premium Plus was spent on a diverse range of support to improve educational progress(See Page 22/23).

PEP completion is monitored by Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) at 6 monthly statutory LAC reviews. PEP meetings are always arranged immediately for any overdue PEPs.

Academic year 2015-16	Number of Submitted PEPs
Liverpool Schools	603
Merseyside Schools	96
Other Schools	33

The Liverpool PEP process is constantly under review to ensure that it is user friendly, efficient and effective. From September 2016 LACES appointed a PEP Coordinator who will provide additional quality assurance, increase the number of up to date PEPs and report on key data.

Early Intervention Reading Programme

We have now completed our fifth year of this programme which has been developed in partnership with a national literacy charity, **Beanstalk** (<http://www.beanstalkcharity.org.uk>). We have been able to support the literacy development of the majority of our Children Looked After (CLA) who were in Year 1 at Liverpool schools. Each of these pupils received 1:1 support from a trained reading helper, for two 30 minute sessions per week, in school. In May 2015 we contacted all Liverpool Head Teachers that had a child in care in their Reception class, to offer additional literacy support. When it was agreed that this was appropriate for both the pupil and the school, a trained reading helper was then placed in the school.



Winner of C&YP Star Award 2015 for Partnership Working

The logistics of recruiting/identifying, training and DBS checking appropriate reading helpers was achieved with planning and timely actions. All reading helpers were in place by the middle of the autumn term 2015. Each pupil received 1:1 support until the end of the summer term 2016. In addition to the year 1 CLA pupil, the trained reading helper had the capacity to read with 2 other CLA, or vulnerable pupils in the school.

Academic Year 2015-16	
Number of Liverpool Schools	21
Number of Merseyside Schools	2
Number of Year 1 CLA	24
Other vulnerable pupils in these schools, including LAC not in Yr 1	44
Total number of CLA beneficiaries	40

Beanstalk recently provided work experience for a Year 10 CLA pupil who stated ***“I cannot believe the experience Beanstalk has given me which has opened my eyes to the ‘real world’. I enjoyed the placement and will cherish the memory. I plan to use the quality of work to my advantage in the future.”***

We are currently working on arrangements with schools and Beanstalk, for the 6th year of this successful programme, to commence in the Autumn Term of 2016.

Class teachers said:

"V is much more confident and vocal in class. She has made good progress. V really enjoys going to Beanstalk and jumps up as soon as she sees the lady come in"

"Made progress within the age related strands - enjoys the discussions about the books and prefers being read to rather than reading. We have seen an improvement in all round general knowledge."

"His comprehension skills have improved and he explains the meaning of new vocabulary well."

"(He) has made good progress to move from below expectation in reception to expectation in year 1 and is more confident when reading."

"The staff are thrilled with the support that the children have been receiving and the accelerated progress that they have all made to date."

"...teachers have commented on the children's attitude to reading and one teacher in particular was thrilled with a recent score on a reading comprehension test paper, which had previously been a weak spot."

"He loved it and has become a much more confident reader."

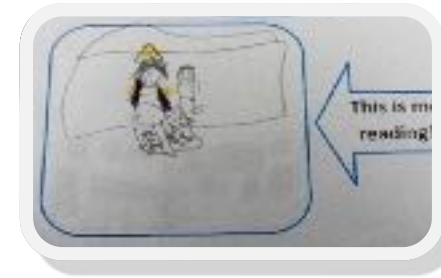
"The children enjoy their sessions and there is a marked improvement in their confidence in learning."

"... the experience has allowed children to foster a love of reading but has also boosted their self-esteem."

"(He) is doing well and enjoys his time spent with his reader support."

"He gets very excited when going out with the Reader Helper."

Pictures by children reading with Beanstalk



Pupils said:

The best thing about my Beanstalk reading session is:

"I just like reading a lot because it gives you adventures"

"I liked the poetry and I liked the jokes"

"Its fun to read. It makes you learn to read more"

"Animal poems, pop-up books and fairy tales"

"I get to do puzzles, read and play games"

"I have fun because we play Dino cards"

"My 'Fish in a Jam Jar' reading books."



Numeracy Support

In an effort to improve progress in Maths for our Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils, at the start of the 2015/16 school year LACES funded places for **3 primary schools** on the School Improvement Liverpool Numbers Counts Teacher Training Programme. A total of **32** children participated in the extra numeracy/maths tuition across the 3 schools. Outcomes in terms of the children's progress were quite remarkable:

School 1

7 children completed the programme and made an average of **22.1 months** gain in number age over 40 half hour sessions. The Numbers Count teacher has also trained 2 maths volunteers and is now sharing maths practice with his colleagues. Another **7 children** have now started on the programme.

School 2

4 children completed the programme and made an average of **25.3 months** gain in number age over 40 half hour sessions. The Numbers Count teacher shares her strategies and resources with her EYFS and Y1 colleagues. Another **4 children** have now started on the programme.

School 3

5 children have completed the programme and made an average of **12.2 months** gain in number age 40 half hour sessions. Another **5 children** are currently on the programme.

The success of this programme is evident when measured against the progress made by the children. For 2016/17 we will be extending the programme to a further 4 schools, including a special SEBD provider. These schools currently have 25 Liverpool children in care on their rolls.

LACES would like to thank Lisa Baggageley School Improvement Officer (Primary Learning Strategy) for her support in the development and delivery of this programme.



Off The Page - Reading Project



*"with a book its not like telly
'cos it's your imagination"*
(J aged 11)



"S may never be a real bookworm but he's a young man who can say "I've read 14 books in the last three months" and that begins to sow the seeds for new identities – "I'm a reader, I am somebody who has books in my life" – and those are the kind of profound shifts that make a difference in the long-term." (Reading Helper)

'Off the Page'

LACES have continued to work in partnership with the Reader Organisation during this academic year. Children Looked After were given priority to be included in a new project funded by Liverpool City Council's Families Programme. Thank you to LCC's **Gail Porter** and **Wendy Moss** for facilitating priority for LAC. This initiative promotes shared reading as a pleasurable and emotionally important activity.

The programme comprised of complimentary strands. 22 Children Looked After were included in a week long '**Book it**' Summer school. There were several family fun days and over 100 individual one-to-one reading sessions with trained volunteers, in the young person's home.

"I didn't do reading before, but it's fun and I love it now. Reading aloud is better than in your head. It's like you're on an adventure, you can understand more aloud."
(D aged 12)

"The teachers started to get fed up of me...they said to me at the start of the year, 'You're not gonna be allowed a place at our sixth form, you're gonna have to go elsewhere.' About two weeks ago I found out I was allowed a place in my sixth form. They were like "You've transformed into a whole different teenager, you're just so much more calmer and patient and getting into school and doing what you're meant to do' and I was like 'I know'"
(C aged 16)

Private Tuition

The statutory guidance on 'Promoting the Educational Achievement of Children Looked After for Local Authorities' advises that we ensure looked after children are able to access one to one tuition when appropriate. LACES have an ongoing programme of targeted 1:1 tuition, primarily in English and Maths, for those in Years 5 & 6, and Years 10 & 11. This is available to our CLA who are identified as being at risk of underachievement. Tuition may also be used to boost a young person's confidence. Additional tuition is intended to compliment the pupil's work in school. It also provides a clear message to both the young person and their carers, that educational achievement matters and is relevant to every young person's future.

Our tutors are supplied through a national private tuition agency, governed by a comprehensive service agreement that includes referral procedures, safeguarding requirements, and incorporates an agreed monitoring and evaluation framework.

Private tuition is made available to Liverpool children in care, irrespective of where they live.

A total of **729 individual tuition sessions** took place during the 2015/16 school year.

All referred pupils initially receive a block of 10 x 1 hour tuition sessions, which were followed by a written report, that helped determine if further tuition would be appropriate.

15 sessions per pupil is the average number of tuition sessions.



NCY	Liverpool Schools Number of pupils	Out of City Schools Number of pupils	Total Number of Pupils
2	0	2	2
3	1	0	1
4	3	0	3
5	3	0	3
6	3	4	7
7	1	2	3
8	2	1	3
9	0	0	0
10	5	5	10
11	14	6	20
12	0	1	1
		TOTAL	53

Evaluation of Tuition

The pupil's comments about tuition were recorded by the tutor at the final session. In addition Carers of all young people that received tuition were sent an evaluation form in June 2016, with separate parts for the carer and young person to complete.

32% of the evaluations were completed and returned.

100% of carers felt that the young person had benefited from home tuition and would recommend it.

What our young people said:

"My Tutor was perfect. They not only educated brilliantly but were also really patient and friendly to me."

"I really like tuition because it is fun and it has helped me a lot. It is also fun because we can go on math and English games."

"I've enjoyed learning more English. It helped me in school."

"it has been useful."

What our Carers said:

"The tutor had a real understanding of my young person's needs and how best to achieve learning. They built lessons around his interests."

"The best thing about tuition was that C actually sat and revised. It has been a nightmare trying to get C to do revision and it was fantastic that she worked with her tutor calmly, and for the most part quietly."

"T was able to ask questions that she was too embarrassed to ask in front of her class"

LAC Support/Mentoring programme

During this year, four key stage 4 pupils received academic/pastoral mentoring support from the Widening Participation and Outreach Team at the University of Liverpool. This raised attainment and built aspirations. We have learnt from this process and are now developing this initiative further, so that more young people benefit. Campus Experience Opportunities will also be offered in the new academic year.



Career Connect

For the third year in succession LACES commissioned Career Connect to provide advice and guidance for our 14 - 16yrs old pupils about their post 16 options. We particularly targeted those young people who were disengaged from education, less likely to achieve GCSE success, have recently left secure accommodation and those who are unsure of their options.

LACES referrals to Career Connect are responded to within 5 working days. Location, time and dates of interviews are agreed in consultation with the young person, their school, carer and social worker.

Andrew Williams (Career Connect Advisor) personally advised **19** of our young people between September 2015 and July 2016, agreeing personalised action plans for **13** of them. **11** of these young people lived in Liverpool and **8** in other parts of Merseyside. Those without action plans were current Year 9s who re-engaged with their education.

10 young people were placed in Alternative Education Provision (AEP) that reflected their vocational aspirations.

Each completed action plan contained details of:

- **The Young Person's Career Aims or Ideas**
- **Pathways to help them achieve**
- **What they need to consider to succeed**
- **A Personal Plan of Action, including options**
- **How to access further advice and support**



To support our post 16 young people to move into further education or take up training opportunities, LACES transfer a final portion of their Pupil Premium Plus funding to their new provision/placement. This can be used for items that will support their education including additional tuition, educational materials, course fees, or equipment.

This service is now an integral part of LACES service delivery and will be extended to include a full-time Career Connect Officer from **September 2016**, to enable us to improve our post 16 offer, including more access to pre-apprenticeships, work experience and traineeships through the Cornerstones project.

*Our aim is to give our most vulnerable children and young people opportunities to succeed and be the best they can be, because **we believe in every child.***



Cornerstones was developed from an aspiration of **Ian Goldrein QC** who wanted to give our most vulnerable children and young people opportunities to succeed in their educational journey and onwards into adulthood.

Ged Fitzgerald (Chief Executive of Liverpool City Council) invited local businesses and service providers to form a partnership of private, public and third sector organisations to develop the Cornerstones Concept. A steering group chaired by **Colette O'Brien (Director of Children Services)** provide governance and direction. An application for charitable status is currently in process.

At present there are 2 programmes being delivered as a direct result of Cornerstones. These are:

- **A reward and recognition scheme, 'Young Peoples Award' for children in care aged 7 - 12yrs who are given incentives to engage in activities and experiences that will enhance their social, personal and educational development.**
- **Access to vocational opportunities such as work experience, training and apprenticeships etc, for our post 16 young people, who are at risk of not achieving their vocational aspirations.**

The Young Peoples Award is a pilot programme that is being evaluated by **Sarah Greenhow** and **Julie Shaw** from Liverpool John Moore's University, to measure impact and long term viability of the scheme.

LACES have been a key partner in the planning and development of Cornerstones since the idea was first discussed in 2014. We are the strategic lead in the development of vocational and career opportunities, whilst School Improvement Liverpool have been commissioned by Cornerstones to manage the reward and recognition scheme.



Supporting Trauma and Attachment

Educational Psychology Service

LACES have access to 3 very experienced Senior Educational Psychologists. **Dr Joanne Bowden, Dr Suzanne Craig and Dr Alice Tilley** provide our children and their schools with priority access to personalised Ed Psych support. This includes advice about in-school interventions, cognitive assessments and training, primarily to our children attending school in other local authorities.



During the 2015/16 school year Joanne, Suzanne and Alice supported **33** Liverpool children looked after at schools in Wirral, Lancashire, Halton, Sefton, St Helen's and Liverpool.

The team conducted **21** Cognitive assessments, which supported **15** Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) applications. However, the most significant aspect of our Education Psychology support was their willingness to advise and support schools to adjust their learning environments and undertake interventions with pupils who were struggling to engage in their education.

'The support from Liverpool's Education Psychologist has been invaluable in enabling us to put in place the strategies that are now starting to make a difference to 'P' who is now much more engaged in his learning' **SENCO out of City Secondary School**

Our Education Psychologists work in partnership with the Primary Consortia Framework, to ensure the needs of children looked after attending Liverpool schools are given priority when referred for discussion, whilst they provide advice, guidance and intervention strategies for our children attending Liverpool secondary schools.

The impact of our Education Psychology service has helped reduce the number of fixed term exclusions, removals from the classroom and referrals to Fair Access Panels. 14 children were subsequently placed in education provision more appropriate to their needs.

LACES would like to express our sincere thanks and gratitude to Joanne, Suzanne and Alice for their professionalism, resolve and most of all their unwavering dedication. We would also like to extend a very special LACES 'Thank You' to **Katie Hinds (Principal Educational and Child Psychologist)** for her wonderful support and commitment to Liverpool children in care.



Advanced Solutions

From September 2014, LACES piloted an innovative behaviour management service based on a structured programme of therapeutic coaching sessions and ADHD counselling, delivered by **Rita Jones**, a qualified ADHD coach. The pilot was so successful that we retained the service for the 2015/16 academic year.



Rita worked with 7 young people who were struggling to engage in their education. Each presented extremely challenging behaviours, primarily due to neuro-development conditions. Rita provided 10 session blocks of 1:1 behaviour counselling for each young person, using the **'Why Try?'** tool. In addition, Rita liaised closely with their respective schools, to advise on intervention/support plans and monitor the child's progress. Additional sessions were provided until the young person became more settled.

The outcomes have been quite remarkable with 4 of the children re-engaging with their education. Whilst, several schools stated they now have a better understanding of the positive impact of personalised interventions and how quite minor adjustments to learning environments, can significantly reduce a child's anxiety and remove barriers to engagement.

Rita also presented at LACES **Looked After and Learning - 'Making a Difference'** conference in June 2016 when she detailed the **'Why Try?'** programme (see page 20). Some of the responses included:

'I will look at children back in school who may benefit from the 'Why Try?' Programme'

'Rita Jones ideas including tearing off the label was very informative and can be taken back to school.'

'Advanced Solutions is a fantastic resource/service that our school will be able to access'

LACES will again commission **Advanced Solutions** in the 2016/17 academic, as part of our continued development of targeted therapeutic support for our most vulnerable children.



Supporting Trauma and Attachment (continued)

CAMHS Counselling (YPAS)

During the last academic year LACES commissioned the Young Persons Advisory Service (YPAS) to provide a fast track counselling service for our Key Stage 3 and 4 cohorts, aimed at those young people who were disengaged from education, at risk of exclusion or trying to cope with emotional trauma.

Karen Kane was the LACES assigned counsellor.



Between September 2015 and June 2016 LACES referred 24 (17 in 2014/15) of our young people to YPAS. All referrals were made in consultation with the child's school/education placement, social worker, carer and other appropriate partners. An initial introduction/assessment meeting was arranged and Counselling sessions only commence if the young person agrees to engage. The young person could also terminate a session or the programme at any time. On average each young person attended around 11 sessions.

Number of Pupils Supported	Remained in School/Education Placement	Moved to more appropriate provision	Refused to engage or did not complete their sessions
24	13	6	5

"Since Karen has been supporting 'A' he has opened up more than ever to staff, and talks more about his feelings and interests" **Children's Home Manager**

I think the programme for the LAC children seems to be working well. I have had quite a bit of communication with Karen with regards to a couple of the children she is seeing from our school and that has been really beneficial in terms of keeping all parties in the picture and trying to ensure we are providing the best support possible for these students. Please pass on my thanks to those working with the LAC children at YPAS. **Assistant Head teacher Liverpool Secondary School**

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Karen Kane who left YPAS at the end of June 2016. LACES will now be allocated a new counsellor for the start of the next school year.

Life Story Therapy Service

Life story therapy engages the child in a therapeutic process to help them make sense of their history. They learn to understand how it has affected them and how their past can support them to make positive changes and build relationships. The impact of life story therapy is measured through the changes observed in the child during and outside the sessions, the completion of assessment and evaluation tools, and through feedback from schools, carers and the child.

Paula Price (Life Story Therapist) provides a structured programme of Life Story support for LACES. This is an outreach service enabling us to make referrals for children who, in consultation with Social Workers, Carers, Schools and where appropriate the young person, it is felt they would benefit from this intervention.

During the 2015/16 school year Paula provided Life Story Therapy to **7** of our children looked after. The sessions are usually one hour long, every 2 weeks for up to 20 sessions, these can be increased or reduced depending on access to relevant information and/or the complexity of the information being compiled.

One of the children Paula worked with this year has now been adopted, he will take with him a written record of 'his' story that will remain in his possession for the rest of his life.

Case study

Before therapy began the child (Year 3) required one to one support to remain in the classroom, unfortunately despite the additional support the child often ran away and would not engage in his lessons. Furthermore he did not interact with other children and often refused to go on the playground for his breaks.

During and following life story therapy, school reported that the child was making steady progress, although he continued to have a support worker, he was now engaging in his lessons and running away less frequently. The child now spends most or all of the day in the classroom working alongside his peers. This is having a positive impact on his learning and his interactions with his peers.

In self-assessment, the child no longer identifies friendships as a big concern. The carer feels the child is more settled, and that the benefits of the work will have far reaching implications in his future. The child said he ***“enjoyed his life story sessions”***.

School and Social Worker felt that there had been significant improvements in the child's behaviour and feel he will continue to make progress in all aspects of his life as a result of this intervention, including continued progress in his learning and emotional wellbeing.



Conference

Looked After and Learning - Making a Difference

The aim of the conference was to encourage attendees to reflect on how they can contribute to making a difference to the educational experiences and achievements of children in care; particularly those who are trying to cope with the impact of the trauma caused by abuse and neglect, and attachment difficulties.

The conference gave us an opportunity to raise awareness and understanding of how the experiences of LAC pupils can adversely affect their educational progress.

There were presentations from specialist services and post-care adults who have succeeded professionally, giving a range of perspectives on the educational needs of children looked after and how schools can make a difference.

The **128 delegates** who attended the conference were given an insight into the barriers faced by children in care and the speakers highlighted good practice that supports how schools work with vulnerable children.

	Outstanding/ Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Katie Hinds	99%	1%	0%
Lemn Sissay	99%	1%	0%
Rita Jones	87%	13%	0%
Dr Peter McParlin	92%	8%	0%
Overall Event	100%	0%	0%



Conference Delegates

LACES would like to extend our sincere gratitude to **Dr Jane Moore** (Head of School Teacher Education - Hope University), **Katie Hinds** (Principal Educational & Child Psychologist), **Lemn Sissay MBE** (Care Leaver, Author & Poet), **Rita Jones** (Director of Learning Coaching & Mentoring - Advanced Solutions), **Dr Peter McParlin** (Consultant Child & Educational Psychologist & Care Leaver) and **Abbie Powell** (Young Person)

*"Excellent thought provoking event.
Fantastic idea to have a current young
person in care speak - makes it all so
realistic"*

Conference Delegate



Case Study 1

T was a year 6 pupil referred by her Social Worker for home tuition to support her SATs preparation, as there were concerns that she may not achieve her age related expectations. The tutor reported that T was a capable student, and displayed academic skills and abilities higher than those expected. Numeracy was excellent, and all work sheets, tasks and exercises were completed quickly, to a high standard.

Reading skills were quite average to begin with, however T began to make incremental improvement during each allocated session as her confidence began to grow. T benefited from a variety of teaching strategies which helped draw out her subject knowledge and understanding. This one to one tuition in the home environment provided T with the additional support that enabled her to achieve better than predicted outcomes in her SATs in the summer 2016.

Comment from T *'I like tuition - I believe I am getting better each week.'*

Case Study 2

H is a Year 10 boy who was disengaged from his mainstream school, he was placed in an Arts based alternative provision. The provider stated that 'H is one of the politest, kindest and respectful students we have ever met. He came to the drama department and was really quiet. He quickly made friends and became a valued member of the group and was always willing to help others.'

The Designated Teacher said:

"It has been an honour to watch him grow as a performer and to see his confidence develop. He always works hard in all sessions and completes his work without fuss. We have all enjoyed teaching H and watching him mature through the process. We are looking forward to H progressing on the Level 2 Diploma Performing Arts Acting course."

Case Study 3

J was at risk of permanent exclusion from his primary school despite personalised interventions and support. J was very new to Care and was experiencing behaviour difficulties as a result of trauma and neglect. LACES identified a nurture provision and liaised with the primary school and nurture base to ensure a coordinated transition.

There has been a high level of multi-agency support including involvement from Educational Psychology Service, Social Care, LACES, Play Therapist, Behaviour Coach and both the primary school and nurture provision.

J is now settled in a foster placement and is undergoing statutory assessment whilst still attending the nurture provision.

Pupil Premium Plus

From 1st April 2014, the Department for Education introduced significant changes to the allocation and administration of Pupil Premium, most notably:

- Pupil Premium for Children Looked After will now be called **Pupil Premium Plus**
- Funding for eligible pupils increased to **£1,900** per child
- Children and young people will be eligible as soon as they enter care
- Virtual School Heads (VSH) are responsible for making sure there are effective arrangements in place for allocating Pupil Premium Plus to benefit children looked after by their authority
- The funding does not have to be distributed on a per capita basis, in acknowledgement that children and young people in care have differing levels of need
- The grant must be managed by the VSH and used to improve outcomes and achieve targets as identified in the Personal Education Plan (PEP)



Department
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Payment Period	1 st April 2015 - 31 st March 2016
Eligibility Criteria	Pupils aged 4 - 15yrs on 31 st August 2014 and at least one day in care on 1 st April 2015
Entitlement and allocation	<p>Each eligible pupil received between £800 - £1900</p> <p>Payments were made in two instalments of £800 and £1100, to ensure Year 6 pupils received part payments at their new school once they moved into year 7, whilst Year 11 pupils received the 1st instalment of £800</p>
Number of Liverpool Pupils Awarded	816 Liverpool children in care received an award
Amount Paid	Awards totalled £1.56m
Monitoring	Pupil Premium Plus expenditure must be recorded on the Personal Education Plan (PEP) form of each eligible pupil, which is then monitored by LACES
How funding can be used	Funding must be spent on each eligible pupil to improve their educational progress. For some pupils it could be about raising their confidence or self-esteem or improving their engagement in learning. The pupil premium provides an opportunity to be creative in the support schools provide their children in care, based on their individual needs and aspirations

How Pupil Premium was spent in 2015/16

Our evaluation of Pupil Premium Plus expenditure revealed how this funding enabled schools, in consultation with social workers, carers and at times the young person, to provide a range of support aimed at meeting the pupils learning, emotional and social needs. Consequently most of our eligible pupils had access to a range of different services or interventions, as illustrated below.

Funding was used by **42%** (339) of our CLA ensuring they were able to participate in school trips

29% (239) received additional classroom support enabling some of our most emotionally challenging pupils to remain in their class.

Significant amounts were used for learning support such as,

Reading **22%** (181), Small Group Work **30%** (247) and **27%** (220) receiving 1:1 Tuition.

Fast track access to specialist services such as Educational Psychologists, Counselling Services,

Child Psychotherapists etc were acquired for **9%** (73) of our pupils.

Access to enrichment activities at **30%** (243) and the purchase of IT equipment **19%** (155) is evidence of

the creative and targeted approach being used by schools in the expenditure of Pupil Premium Plus.



Designated Teacher Support

All schools have a statutory responsibility under the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 to assign a Designated Teacher (DT), to promote and monitor the Educational Achievements of all looked after children on their school roll. Designated Teachers can make a positive difference by promoting a whole school culture, where the personalised learning of every looked after child matters, their personal, emotional and academic needs are prioritised.

LACES have supported Designated Teachers through a range of approaches, including;

Enquiries - Phone and email support re LAC

LACES responded to a **530** enquiries from schools, related to CLA, including information about PEPs and Pupil Premium, Classroom Support, Exclusions and Admissions.

Termly Newsletter - *Looked after and Learning*

To support DTs to keep up to date with developments, good practice, changes in statutory guidance etc., LACES emailed DTs our termly newsletter titled, '*Looked After and Learning*'

Resources on School Improvement Liverpool Website

Information related to CLA is accessed via The School Improvement Liverpool Website: <http://www.ednet.co/Designated-Teachers>

Training

All Designated Teachers were invited to attend our '*Looked After and Learning – making a Difference*' conference at Hope University in June 2016. Three Designated Teachers for CLA took advantage of the opportunity to trial Trauma/Attachment Training for staff at their schools. This is currently being reviewed and may be developed further.

Designated Teacher Visits

During 2015/16 academic year, LACES visited several Liverpool schools to enable us to gain a better understanding of how schools manage their responsibilities for children looked after on a daily basis, and explored good practice that can be shared with other schools.



Top Tips for Designated Teachers

- 1. Identify yourself to the child or young person**
- 2. Protect and respect our confidentiality**
- 3. Make sure the child/young person has a friendship group in school.**
- 4. Give encouragement, encourage children to engage in after school activities, also include foster carers in what's available after school for children.**
- 5. Ensure children and young people understand their PEP**
- 6. Ensure that children and young people and their Carers understand what Pupil Premium Plus is for, and how it is to be spent.**
- 7. Ensure Social Workers are informed of high achievements and awards as well as negative behaviour.**
- 8. Don't give up on us – even if we sometimes make you despair.**

Liverpool Children in Care Council – Reviewed and updated June 2016

The Children in Care Council (CiCC) are available to speak to both pupils and teachers regarding support and information about the 'Journey through Care'. The CiCC can be contacted via Julie Cashin, Children's Rights and Participation Officer, Julie.cashin@liverpool.gov.uk

Presentations, Briefings and Workshops

Presentations and Briefings

An important element of LACES delivery plan is the need to raise awareness and improve understanding of the educational needs of children in care. Between September 2015 and April 2016 we delivered 9 training events to our key partners, with a total of 428 attendees including Social Care Managers, Teachers, Pastoral Staff, Post-Graduate Trainee Teachers and Carers.

Date	Content	Beneficiaries
September 2015	Innovative approach to Behaviour Management	25 Staff – different schools
November 2015	LACES and supporting LAC to Learn in school	105 PGCE students - Hope University
November 2015	Looked After and Learning	12 foster carers – private agency
February 2016	Looked After and Learning	55 PGCE students- LJMU
February 2016	PEPS and Pupil Premium Plus for LAC	110 LA Foster Carers and professionals
March 2016	Attachment Awareness for LAC	70 primary school staff
March 2016	Attachment Awareness for LAC	22 primary school staff
April 2016	Attachment Awareness for LAC	18 primary school staff
April 2016	PEP Developments	11 Social Care Managers

We already have several sessions in our diary for the 2016/17 academic year, including an awareness session at a secondary school inset day in September 2016. Also a presentation to post-graduates and trainee teachers at Hope University in October 2016.

Reporting and Scrutiny Schedule



The educational progress, achievement and performance of children in care are stringently monitored and subject to close scrutiny. LACES are required to report on attainment, attendance, progress and exclusion data to Elected Members, Children's Services Senior Leadership, Liverpool Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), Head Teachers and many of our statutory partners. The table below lists LACES reporting schedule for **2015/16**.

MEETING	FREQUENCY	ATTENDEES	LACES REPORT	FEEDS INTO
Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding Monitoring Panel	Once per school term	Elected Members, Senior Officers from Children's Services, Children in Care Council, Merseyside Police and Health	Attainment and Attendance of Children in Care	Education Select Committee
Safeguarding and Looked After Children Focus Group	Once per school term	Reps from Head Teachers Assoc, School Governors Service, School Safeguarding and School Improvement Services	Strategic Delivery of LACES statutory requirements and performance outcomes	Secondary, Primary and Special School Head Teacher Associations
Learners Who Need More Group	Monthly	Representatives from Head Teacher Assoc and Children's Services and Health Partners	Educational Attainment and Achievement of Children in Care	Liverpool Learning Partnership Board
School Improvement Liverpool Challenge Board	Twice Yearly	SIL Management	Performance against key priorities and agreed proxies	Liverpool Schools Forum

LACES are also inspected as part of Liverpool Children's service single inspection framework, our last inspection was May 2014

Attainment Data

The DfE released statistics on the Outcomes for Children Looked After in England, who have been in care continuously for 12 months, as at 31st March 2015. Liverpool council's Education Data and Analysis Team (ED&AT) compiled an Annual Report on Liverpool LACs Attainment performance for the academic year 2014/15. This report provides the context and detail for the outcomes in the tables below. The full ED&AT report is available at: www.ednet.co/LACES

Key Stage 2 pupils achieving level 4 or higher

	2013	2014	2015
Maths			
Liverpool LAC (45)	57%	67%	61%
National LAC (2,640)	59%	61%	64%
Reading			
Liverpool LAC	65%	77%	68%
National LAC	63%	68%	71%
Writing - Teacher Assessed			
Liverpool LAC	57%	58%	61%
National LAC	55%	59%	61%
SPAG			
Liverpool LAC	47%	53%	53%
National LAC	45%	49%	49%

Key Stage 4 (GCSEs)

	2013	2014 **	2015
5+GCSEs A*-C (inc E&M)			
Liverpool LAC (55)	15.5 %	13.0 %	23.2%
National LAC (4,940)	15.5 %	12.0 %	13.8%
5+GCSEs A*-C (Any)			
Liverpool LAC	44.8 %	18.5 %	30.4%
National LAC	37.2 %	16.3 %	18.3%

In 2014 ** the methodology of calculating this percentage changed regarding vocational education and early entry for GCSEs and cannot be compared to previous years.



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'I appreciate the need for a sharper way of measuring the progress children are making. A significant conclusion from the Rees report was that it would be better to measure the educational progress of looked after children, rather than comparisons with absolute attainment'

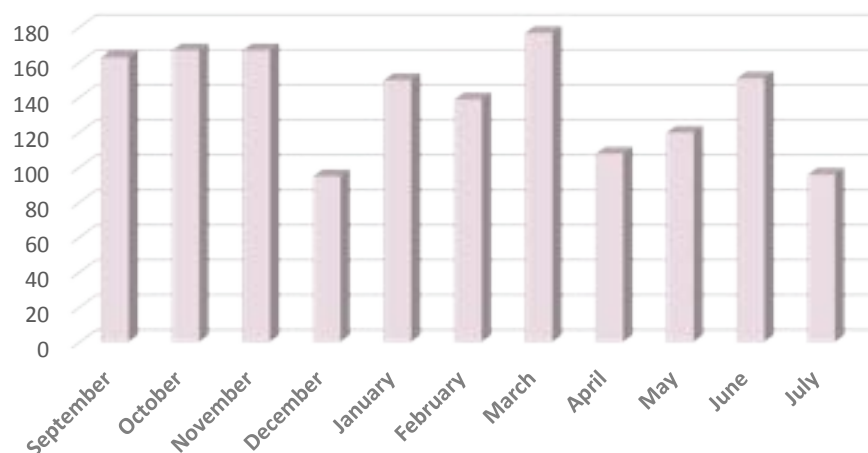
Edward Timpson MP Minister of State for Vulnerable Children and Families

[https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/
edward-timpson-speaks-to-virtual-school-heads](https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/edward-timpson-speaks-to-virtual-school-heads)

Between September 2015 and July 2016, LACES received 1533 telephone and email enquiries - A37% increase for the same period the year before.

Over half of all enquiries concerned Pupil Premium Plus or PEPs, queries were also made regarding tuition, behaviour support and school admissions/transfers.

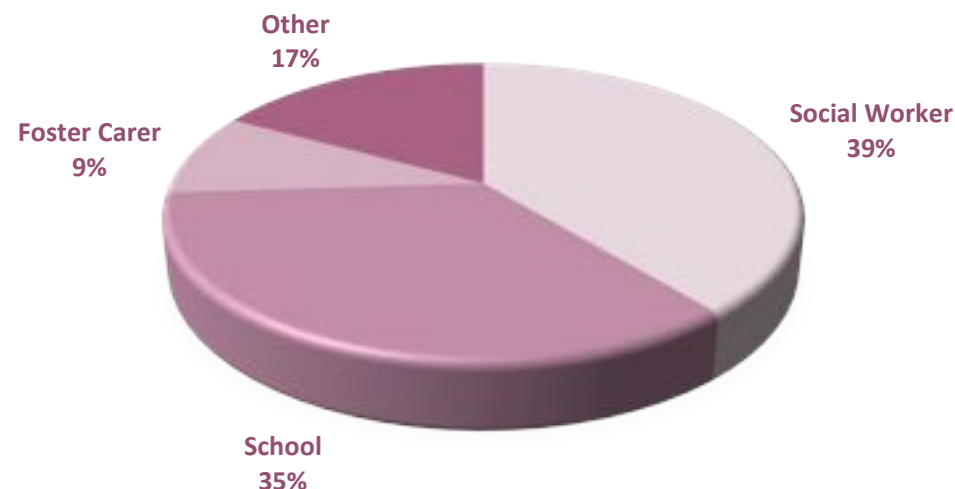
Monthly Enquiries



Meetings

School Meetings		LAC Reviews	
Liverpool	OOC	Liverpool	OOC
94	57	49	32

AGENCIES



LACES enquiries were mainly received from Schools and Social Workers. However, foster carers, care homes and other services continue to contact us to enquire about all aspects of educational support for children in care.

LACES provide advocacy and support to our children looked after who are at risk of exclusion, underachievement or have poor school attendance records. This often requires LACES officers to attend multi-agency meetings to agree the most appropriate support and interventions. During 2015/16 academic year, LACES attended **232** school meetings and reviews.

Feedback

During the 2015/16 school year LACES received a record number of expressions of thanks and gratitude from Schools, Social Workers, Carers and Partner Agencies. Here is a very small sample of what they said:

‘Thanks for advocating for E, and I’m pleased every thing has been ironed out’ **Social Worker Permanence Team**

‘You are stars!!!!!!!!!!
😊😊 Thank you’ **Social Worker Permanence Team**

‘It’s been lovely working with you, you have been great and LACES is a fantastic organisation 😊 Thanks again’ **Social Worker Court Team**

‘Thanks for your support today. Always good to have you in our corner!’ **Liverpool Primary School**

‘Would love for you to pass onto the team that we really do value your support and swift responses’ **Out of City Primary**

‘Thank you for your willingness to provide extra funding to help maintain things for L. I am also grateful that as a team you are so ‘hands on’ and available to support when things become tricky!’ **Fostering Agency**

‘That’s great. Many thanks for your help and guidance with this’ **Social Worker Assessment Team**

You have been fantastic over this situation and I’m really thankful that D has avoided a permanent exclusion on her record’ **Foster Carer**

‘Wow. A great big thank you for this support, it is wonderful to know that this support is in place to hopefully keep P placed within our school’ **Liverpool Secondary**

‘Thank you so much, I have spoken with K now, I really am very grateful and appreciate you taking time out to help’ **Special Guardian**

‘Thank you very much! We supported both children last year and it has been impossible to provide 1:1 for both of them this year. Thank you so much. This will help enormously’ **Liverpool Primary**

‘Thank you so much for your support with finding P a place so quickly’ **Liverpool Primary School**

‘This is brilliant news! Thanks for getting this moved forward so quickly’ **Out of City Childrens Home**

‘A massive thank you for your kindness and understanding, this has been a very difficult 9 months, so thank you for relieving me of at least one problem. Kind regards and best wishes’ **Foster Carer**

‘We are absolutely thrilled with this, it’s great to see the breadth of activity that you and the team coordinate for Liverpool children in care’ **Partner Agency**



Thank you so much for all
your help in securing Sam
a place at a new primary school.

We really are truly grateful.

Thanks once again, we really appreciated
it.

Extract of a thank you card from a Foster Carer

For more information please contact:

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